



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Artistes Open Dialogue

True Colours Festival

Asia-Pacific Festival of Artists with Disabilities

9:00 a.m.-13 p.m.

Saturday, 24 March 2018

Singapore Indoor Stadium

Singapore City,

Singapore

<https://truecolours.sg>

Introduction

In today's world, 15 percent of the population, over one billion people, have some kind of disability. This figure underlines the fact that persons with disabilities are surely an important actor in society and this emphatically includes the sphere of cultural life. We can find a number of outstandingly talented people with disabilities all over the world across the fields of arts, music, literature, sports, academia, and beyond. However, their talents have not received their deserved share of attention compared with their colleagues who do not have such disabilities.

In the context of the Asia-Pacific Festival of Artists with Disabilities, the *Artistes Open Dialogue* is a featured event being organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and The Nippon Foundation. The purpose of the Open Dialogue is to bring together artists with disabilities alongside other relevant stakeholders such as governments, civil society, academics, and private sector with a view to:

- Sharing their views on how artists with disabilities can more actively and on an equal basis participate in cultural life, and
- Discussing the current implementation of Article 30 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) - *Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport*,
- Encapsulating the conclusions of the Open Dialogue in an Outcome Statement which would encourage all relevant stakeholders to take prompt and effective measures to achieve a greater involvement of artists with disabilities in cultural life and empower them to make informed decisions about their career development, and that of their colleagues.

It is hoped that the Open Dialogue will raise awareness about talents of artists with disabilities and in particular will play a role in encountering negative impressions which can hold back their performance and undermine their confidence; from this will follow, in the longer term, facilitation of social inclusion and realization of the human and specifically cultural rights and fundamental freedoms of artists with disabilities.





Background

Under the leadership of the United Nations, the world aspires to sustainable development by following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Goals which aim at economic, social and environmental development and human wellbeing at an individual and personal level. Human rights, therefore, are a prerequisite to achieving this Agenda, and so disability-related issues within the scope of the UNCRPD are relevant to a broader set of goals, such as quality education for all, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, universal access to information and the benefits of scientific and technological progress. Consequently, the full inclusion and empowerment of artists with disabilities are critical elements of the sustainable development agenda as a whole, and which cannot be fully achieved without embracing culture and art.



The UNCRPD adopted in 2006 by the United Nations plays a leading role in the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. Article 30 is currently the one Article which guarantees the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural activities and recognizes their entitlement to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit but also for the wider enrichment of society. However, the cultural inclusion of persons with disabilities has a significance beyond their purely cultural rights and contributes to the fulfillment of other rights and fundamental freedoms which UNCRPD guarantee in specific articles:



Article 32:

Promotion and development of the cultural rights of artists with disabilities should be pursued on the basis of intensive and consistent international cooperation and capacity-building, which would require the exchange and sharing of information, best practices and training programmes worldwide.

Article 8:

Art works created by artists with disabilities will surely encourage people to think differently about disability issues and will serve to raise awareness.

Article 9:

Signatories are requested to take appropriate measures for making available cultural materials in accessible formats utilizing inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Article 12:

Works created by artists with disabilities should be protected by intellectual property law on the same basis enjoyed by artists without disabilities.

Article 13:

Artists with disabilities should have an equal access to justice when their rights are violated.

Article 27:

Artists with disabilities should not be disadvantaged in terms of access to work and to employment rights including the right to form and participate in professional associations and trade unions.

Article 24:

UNCRPD signatories are urged to ensure equal opportunities for artists with disabilities in an educational setting to express their personality as well as to develop their talents and creativity on equal terms with other students.

Article 21:

Art is a way of expressing our thoughts and feelings, therefore art should be accessible to all as an essential ingredient of freedom of expression and universal access to information and knowledge.



It is clear, therefore, that the UNCRPD provides a comprehensive normative framework for delivering the cultural and other human rights of artists with disabilities in a manner which fully integrates them into the global development agenda and the programme of action which follows from that.

Objectives of the Open Dialogue

The *Artistes Open Dialogue* aims to:

- Reaffirm the continued importance and relevance of the UNCRPD, in particular as regards the participation of artists with disabilities in cultural and social life;
- Deepen understanding of the importance of arts and culture and share good practice on the empowering artists with disabilities in the cultural sphere on a worldwide basis;
- Demonstrate the relevance of the arts and culture to the realization of rights embodied in the UNCRPD, such as access to information and knowledge, gender equality, accessibility and international cooperation;
- Foster the exchange of opinions on appropriate concrete measures required of all the relevant stakeholders to empower artists with disabilities;
- Eliminate as far as possible the negative attitudes, impressions and stereotypes which can result in discrimination towards artists with disabilities;
- Provide substance and impetus for the Outcome Statement which will be a legacy and call to action from the True Colours Festival in Asia-Pacific region.



Points for the Open Dialogue

The following themes will be discussed in the Open Dialogue with artists with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders:

- The current situation of cultural rights of persons with disabilities and enabling factors in Asia-Pacific region and worldwide (enabling factors);
- The policies, strategies and programmes: challenges to the inclusion of artists with disabilities (challenges);
- Recommendations for ensuring inclusion of artists with disabilities (things to be done); and
- Elaboration of the Outcome Statement.

Agenda



9.00-9.30 Registration

9.30-10.00 Opening ceremony

Mr Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO (Moderator)

Mr Ichiro Kabasawa, Executive Director of The Nippon Foundation, Japan

H.E. Mr Kenji Shinoda, Ambassador of Japan to Singapore

10.00-10.15 Musical performance

Mr Ejin Nimura, UNESCO Artist for Peace, Japan

10.15-11.00 PART I. The current situation of cultural rights of persons with disabilities and enabling factors in Asia-Pacific region and worldwide

Ms Stuti Kacker, Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights Programme and Former Secretary, Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, India

Ms Jane Constance, UNESCO Artist for Peace, Mauritius

Ms Kazuyo Morita, Japan

11.00-11.15 Break

11.15-12.00 PART II. The policies, strategies and programmes: challenges to the inclusion of artists with disabilities

Ms Saima Hossain, Licensed School Psychologist and Member of WHO's expert Advisory Panel on Mental Health, Chairperson, National Advisory Committee on Austin and Chair of the International Jury UNESCO/Emir Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah Prize for Digital Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Bangladesh)

Mr Satish Kapoor, Founder and Director, Brotherhood, We Care Film Festival, India

Mr Pete Sparkes, Drake Music Scotland, UK

Mr Alirio Zavarce, Director, No Strings Attached, Australia

12.00-12.45 PART III. Recommendations for ensuring inclusion of artists with disabilities

Mr Armoogum Parsuramen, President, Rainbow Foundation, Mauritius

Ms Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs, India

Ms Onn Sokny, Epic Arts, Cambodia

12.45-13.00 Closing ceremony and Outcome Statement

Presentation of the Outcome Statement by Mr Andrew Taussig, Rapporteur of the *Artistes Open Dialogue*

Closing remarks by Mr Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

Musical performance by Mr Eijin Nimura, UNESCO Artist for Peace, Japan