

## Cuba

The line followed by the Cuban Revolutionary Government, since 1959, is the result of a historical continuity, based on a national thinking for independence. The main principles of the national project are to legitimize its sovereignty, the economic progress, social justice and the participation of the people. In the Cuban social model, culture is an irreplaceable instrument to pass on the ethical and aesthetic values which favor the human growth and the quality of life in a context of a national and international projection of arts and culture as a more humanized act of creation.

For Cuba, culture takes on responsibility in favor of diversity and the attention to the needs while supporting the self-determination of identity, the cultural rights and the national values, the safeguard of our identity, against foreign challenges and trends, assuming cultural diversity in accordance with the State policy. While taking this into account as well as the importance culture has for the promotion of the national identity, strategies are outlined to guarantee their viability and strengthening, within a framework of respect, the attention to and development of all artistic manifestations through different processes such as identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection and revitalization.

During these last four years, important actions have continued to be implemented to reach the cultural and diverse education among Cubans. The cultural policy plays a regulatory role while including several social actors as part of a system thus reaffirming the right, in conformity with the letter of the 2005 Convention, Cuban citizens have to take part in the cultural processes, together with the institutions, artists and creators in the sociocultural actions carried out in the neighborhoods and communities as well as the participation in the artistic and literary creation and appraisal.

The final objective of the Cuban sociocultural project has always been, particularly after the signing of the 2005 Convention, to upgrade the quality of life and the welfare of the population, the development of the society, the defense and promotion of diversity on the principle of respect to all cultures and the cultural work for the development of arts and the individuals as the core of development, the socialization of all those groups and individuals who are reserves of identity, the popular and traditional culture, the artistic and literary creation as well as of the whole national and international heritage.

Significant examples of the implementation of the 2005 Convention and of the actions taken to consolidate the Cuban cultural policy were the inception of the National Commission of Intangible Heritage and of the Subcommission of Cultural Diversity made up by representatives of governmental entities and the civil society; the attention to and, in a great extent, the strengthening, given the difficulties we are facing, of the 2091 basic cultural institutions set up in the 169 municipalities of the country<sup>1</sup>; the increase of the promotion of the artistic and literary appraisal taught by more than 2 000 arts instructors all along the country; the production of "Punto de Partida" ("Starting Point"), an educational program produced by the Cuban Television, with a week programming cycle for more than a year on Intangible Heritage and the African traditions in Cuba as well as other cultures.

In the last four years the Cuban cultural policy has been improved; measures were adopted which contributed to widen the interaction of culture and the socioeconomic development of the country, encouraging the civil society and the widest involvement of the different actors of the society as intellectuals, creators, professional artists and others. Likewise, the relations with the National System of Education, television, radio and press were deepened. Work was also made towards the preservation, development and protection of the sociocultural heritage and the search and use of suitable technological alternatives in order to facilitate the cultural processes. The development of a creative and participatory cultural life and the

pluralist management of diversity have been secured. The incentive for the artistic and literary creation, emphasizing the national and international promotion was encouraged as well as the effective participation of the population in its cultural development, bringing about the establishment of active and critical audiences; cultural research, development and communication were fostered; quality of the training and the upgrading of the specialized technical staff of all the staff of the system, particularly the management, were systematically improved and the cultural-economic relation system was developed and widened. There has been a strengthening of the production and viewing of programs through "University for All" (television) and also the creation of the "Educational" and "Multivision" TV channels, something that brought about the upgrading of the cultural level of both the students of the national plan of education as well as of the civil society all together while providing the people an educational and cultural, formal and informal programming which covered throughout its duration very diverse topics, Cuban ones and from different cultures in the world, thus favoring the spreading and understanding of the cultural diversity.

All the aforementioned and the detailed information in the Report and its Annexes has not been easy to fulfill by an underdeveloped country with a serious economic situation intensified by the inhuman economic, political and cultural blockade it has endured for more than fifty years. Cuba has faced big challenges it has positively met thanks to the political will of the Government and the Cuban people.

The globalizing situation that prevails in this world we are living today which hugely affects culture is the main challenge for the coming years.