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CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES
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Plenary III - High-Level Panel on “The role of Culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

SPEECHES AND POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Introduction:
- Stanley M. Simataa (Namibia), President of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Speakers:
- Emmanuel Nathi Mthethwa, Minister of Arts and Culture of the Republic of South Africa
- Guillaume Long, Minister of Culture and Heritage of the Republic of Ecuador
- Juan Pablo de la Puente Brunke, Vice Minister of Cultural Heritage, Cultural Industries and the Arts of the Republic of Peru
- Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of Friends on Culture and Development
Your Excellencies, honoured Ministers, dear hosts,

Mr Zhao Yide, Member of the Standing Committee of Communist Party of China Zhejiang Provincial Committee and Secretary of Hangzhou Municipal Party Committee,

Mr Zhang Jianting, Vice Mayor of Hangzhou,

Mr Bandarin, Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO,

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today’s international conference marks an important milestone in the field of Culture, but also in our pursuit of a better future, built on sustainable policies and practices that guarantee the protection and promotion of cultural diversity, environmental sustainability, quality education for all, inclusive economic and social development, and peaceful societies.

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has stated, “ours is a world of looming challenges and increasingly limited resources. Sustainable development offers the best chance to adjust our course”.

Last September, Culture was included, for the first time, in the international development agenda, through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in New York.

This Agenda has brought cultural heritage to the forefront of debates, particularly through Target 11.4 devoted to strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage in an inclusive, safe and resilient urban context. The safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage can indeed allow both enhancing and rethinking the identities of the urban settings and building more inclusive societies at the same time. The 2030 Agenda also shows that it is time to invest in culture, as an ever-renewable resource, to support the regeneration of deprived urban areas and stimulate innovation in increasingly urban societies.

In light of the many challenges that our world will continue to face in the coming decades, the international community needs to seek innovative approaches to operationalize and strengthen the integration of the cultural component into our agendas – not least to mobilize its power for the sustainability of our cities.

UNESCO’s Member States are deeply committed to advance on this path and have already acknowledged the need to establish strategic and operational guidance on the role of culture for sustainable urban development. The elaboration of the Global Report launched on this
theme last year will undoubtedly allow to meet such demand, particularly as it will clearly build on the long-standing and diverse expertise of UNESCO and its partners.

It is our hope that the Global Report will help guide future actions in the field of development, taking into account the significance of culture in an urban context in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, but also in view of the “New Urban Agenda” to be adopted at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Ecuador next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Culture is the thread upon which social and urban fabrics are knitted, but also the same thread that, once pulled, can cause the very same fabric to unravel. We must therefore keep in mind that once effectively protected and nourished, the diversity of culture can be conducive to quality of life and economic development, but also unity and peace.

Culture is expressed in many forms, both tangible and intangible. Last week, I officiated at the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in my country, Namibia, where the bearing of intangible heritage on sustainable development was brought to light. It served to remind us that living heritage, through its dynamic nature, holds an essential role in urban regeneration, particularly in an era of continual cultural exchange and dialogue born from increasing urbanization and migration flows.

Tangible heritage can also act as a wellspring of reconciliation in post-conflict societies and as a source of unity in increasingly multicultural cities. However, every day cultural heritage continues to be threatened and destroyed in many parts of the world. The identities and memories of peoples are under attack. Last month, as we participated in the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, the French population and particularly the youth were targeted in a series of attacks at places of culture and sport, where people from all walks of life gather to enjoy their affinities in the most fitting example of “living together”. My thoughts go to all those affected by these terrible attacks directed against culture and humanity, not only in Paris but worldwide.

Today offers us the opportunity to come together and discuss the multifaceted role of culture, from heritage to creativity in achieving sustainable urban development, to help guide negotiations on the “New Urban Agenda” next year for the forthcoming two decades. It is my sincere hope that the UN New Urban Agenda will set the stage towards a truly holistic approach, through which the safeguarding of culture and heritage can bring us closer to an inclusive urban environment, in which women and men of all regions of the world can live decently and in peace.

Thank you for your attention.
ADDRESS BY HON. EMMANUEL NATHI MTHETHWA, MINISTER OF ARTS AND CULTURE, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNESCO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES” HANGZHOU, PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, 10 DECEMBER 2015

Theme: “The role of Culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

Programme Director: Nada Al-Nashif

Mr Stanley M. Simataa, President of the General Conference of UNESCO.

Minister Guillaume Long, Minister of Culture and Heritage of the Republic of Ecuador.

Vice Minister Juan Pablo de la Puente Brunke, Vice Minister of Cultural Heritage, Cultural Industries and the arts of the Republic of Peru.

Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent representative of Peru to the United Nations, chair of the Group of friends on Culture and development.

Ladies and gentlemen
"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart."
- Nelson Mandela.

Tolerance of one another, acceptance of cultural diversity as a good, our approach is unity in diversity. Given the developments in the world, the reality is that our cities have become a world in one city, a world in one country.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has struck a chord with South Africans. The goals are consistent with the objectives set out in our own National Development Plan, our roadmap for development and transformation over the same period.

Of course, as a Minister of Arts and Culture, I am disappointed that culture is not one of the 17 sustainable development goals; an indication that we still have some work to do in placing culture at the centre of the development agenda.

South Africa will continue to be part of the efforts to realise this dream; where matters of culture inform development, influence development and ultimately, are regarded as central to development.

There is hope though. The vision articulated by the 2030 Agenda, sees a world free of hunger and poverty; a literate world, at peace with itself, where people have universal access to education, where food is sufficient, habitats are sustainable and where there is access to energy that is affordable and sustainable. In this world, there will be sustainable
economic development, decent work and universal respect for human rights and cultural diversity.

We in the cultural domain must make our contribution to this new vision; and set about doing what we do so well, changing the world. Internationally, the landmark conference on “Living with World Heritage in Africa, held in South Africa in 2012 made the statement that:

“If you do something for me without me, you are against me. You cannot say it is for me without me”

We must practice this commitment.

At a conference like this, many of us are of like minds, believing that arts, culture, language and heritage, as the defining features of humanity, are critical matters on earth, but a few things bear repeating. We cannot overlook the fact that culture is the single most powerful force that drives people; we see it every day and in South Africa, we have experienced its power. Culture creates personal and economic growth, culture educates, culture bridges divides, brings people together and builds nations. It allows us to come to terms with our past and learn from it. Culture is the defining feature of who we are.

From the very earliest stages, a critical aspect of the struggle for liberation in South Africa was one not just of political emancipation, but also freedom from centuries of cultural oppression as the colonial and Apartheid governments destroyed the cultural fabric of the South Africa people.

With a landscape shaped by legislation, such as the 1913 Land Act, that actively separated people from one another, policies such as Bantu Education created and reinforced inequality in every aspect of life, and relations that were fuelled by rhetoric that created mistrust and hatred it’s clear that interventions at the very foundation of our society is necessary.

Culture was at the forefront of the struggle against Apartheid, literature and theatre spoke for the voiceless, dance and performance demonstrated that the spirit of the nation had not been broken, South African and international artists advocated for change and most of all, educated the world about the plight of the majority of the people in the country. Productions like the renowned Amandla Ensemble toured the globe, contributing to anti-Apartheid movement and building relations that stand firm even today.

After the advent of democracy, at the centre of South African cultural development agenda were a series of fundamental interventions:

• Enshrining the rights of all South Africans to equality, freedom of expression and the right to practice the arts in the Constitution.
• Reshaping the education and training environment to be more inclusive, and also to include the arts.

We come from a country, where poverty was how the system worked, the deliberate social engineering exercise to divide people into black and white, rich and poor, urban and rural.
This imposition extended to knowledge, access to infrastructure, basic services and social capital.

A new policy was introduced to shape and develop the arts sector based on the principles of redress and transformation, access and equality. This policy is currently being revised and enhanced to ensure that we expedite our efforts to transform our society and nurture a vibrant national cultural life.

Culture continues to be recognised as a powerful force for transformation; South Africa's National Development Plan states that “Arts and culture open powerful spaces for debate about where a society finds itself and where it is going. Promoted effectively, the creative and cultural industries can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal.”

When we examine the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, we must recognise that the “people-centred” approach which is a principle espoused so strongly requires a shift in paradigm of development, new ways of doing things that truly involves people in the process, recognising not just what they don't have, but what they have. In so doing, people do not become the subject of development, but rather are drivers of development.

Global solidarity and inclusivity must be supported by culture, with deliberate effort made to bridge the divides, bond people together and foster productive relations.

We in the free South Africa have been the beneficiaries of internationalism and solidarity of a worldwide anti-apartheid movement where people in some countries even stood up against their governments and co-operations against racism and for equality.

Since the dawn of democracy, we have promoted a programme of intra-Africa solidarity with a call to action saying “we are Africa” and a festival of ideas throughout the month of May to commemorate the founding of the Organisation for African Unity now the African Union and to encourage common approaches and mutual understanding amongst Africa’s people through culture.

Furthering the aim of fostering a new world culture characterized by equality of nations and states, amongst the countries of the South will continue to forge South-South relations, China-Africa co-operation and build a world reality that embraces multiculturalism and multilateralism.

Our relations are further cemented in the grouping popularly known as BRICS. This forum is a gathering of minds that see as their responsibility the harnessing of our collective strength to improve the conditions of our people and to challenge the dominant negative narrative about the countries of the South. The cities of BRICS countries are among the most densely populated in the world.

In July this year, the Ministers of Culture of BRICS countries signed a cultural agreement that establishes a framework for co-operation in the fields of arts, culture and heritage. We are working together to develop joint projects. The growing cities of BRICS countries will
become the centres of cultural innovation and exchange and creativity, driven by people-to-
people interaction.

South Africa recently witnessed the extraordinary rise of a social media-based youth
movement called #Fees Must Fall, which was preceded by an equally significant movement
called #Rhodes Must Fall, prompting new policy, clear action and significant discussion
about the future direction of heritage and education policy, to name just a few.

The centre piece of the second phase of our transition is the radical economic
transformation. The struggle for economic rights is fundamental as we all battle the scourge
of poverty.

In South Africa, research we conducted in 2013 showed that more than 30% of cultural
enterprises are youth owned, and further that the creative sector as a whole contributed
2.9% to our Gross Development Product (GDP). Young people continue to show an interest
in the sector, with a significant proportion of people employed in the sector in South Africa is
under the age of 35.

Similarly, women in South Africa are provided with significant opportunities in the sector; an
almost equal number of women and men work in the sector, and 30% of enterprises are
owned by women. The sector thus presents economic opportunities for women and young
people, a fact which must be exploited to its fullest potential to achieve Goals 1 and 5.

In South African cities, culture has played a significant role in building habitable, humane
spaces. The iconic Market Theatre for example, once a fruit and vegetable market in
downtown Johannesburg, turned Apartheid policy on its head, by using zoning for multi-
racial retail interaction, to create a place of free expression, culture and solidarity for South
African regardless of race; a rarity at the time.

The theatre has continued to play an important role in the cultural life of Johannesburg, now
more than ever as the next phase of the Newtown Cultural Precinct, where the theatre is
based, begins. As significant new businesses in the area bring new foot traffic and a new
generation of people into the precinct, the Market Theatre will continue to offer its unique
blend of entertainment, political education and performance.

Similarly, just across the Nelson Mandela Bridge in Braamfontein, something of a
renaissance has taken place. Once a soulless and bland part of the central business district
of Johannesburg, Braamfontein is now home to music venues, museums, restaurants and a
number of cultural enterprises. New student accommodation, retail developments and
neighbour markets followed, creating a vibrant living and working space in the city. Culture at
work, staking its claim on Goal 11!

Goal 10 is something that many developing nations feel very strongly about. The gaps
between the “haves” and the “have nots” have grown, notwithstanding the valiant efforts of
the Millennium Development Goals, fuelled by the economic crisis, famine, war and drought.
I think that we would all agree that all countries, no matter how big or how small, have
significant assets in their heritage, culture, arts and language.
We must continue to utilise our international instruments to promote exchanges and trade, facilitate skills development and create access to markets for creative goods and services.

It is no accident that we are back in Hangzhou, a place where in 2013, we affirmed that culture is an essential part of sustainable development. We have talked, we have agreed and now, in pursuit of a global vision that we can all contribute to, we must breathe life into these words so that they become a reality.

Thank you
Sustainability requires public–private partnerships

Juan Pablo de la Puente
Deputy Minister for Cultural Heritage and Cultural Industries
Great responsibility and great opportunity

• 19,903 archaeological sites have been identified in Peru (urban and rural context). Specialists estimate that around 100,000 exist.

• Represent a great development opportunity. Archaeological sites in need can be transformed into centers of cultural, touristic and economic development, creating jobs, citizenship and identity. Transform city neighborhoods.

• Partnerships with local governments and private entities is essential to secure new resources and management skills to add value, sustainable in time.
Pucllana archaeological site
Miraflores District, Lima City
Temple of the Moon archaeological site.
Moche District, Trujillo City. (north facade, 1992)
Huaca de la Luna
Sector Fachada Norte – Año 1992
Recent legislative changes

• Considering the responsibilities and opportunities around the conservation of cultural heritage, in September the Executive branch approved the following:

  • Legislative Decree 1238: “Work for Taxes”. New tax framework for culture.

  • Legislative Decree 1198: Public-private co-management of archaeological sites, through Cultural Site Management MoU’s.
Leg. Decree 1238: “Works for Taxes”

• Last September, the Executive branch, under the initiative of the Ministry of Culture, approved Legislative Decree 1238. This new law incorporated “Culture” to a special tax framework called “obras por impuestos” (or “Work for Taxes”).

• “Work for taxes” allows a private company to finance and implement a public investment project, and to recover said investment as tax credit against the income tax.

• The inclusion of culture on the “work for taxes” framework represents a new and attractive mechanism to secure new funding for historic preservation projects.
Leg. Decree 1198: management

- Cultural Site Management is a process by which all components related to its protection intervene to achieve sustainable use; such as research, conservation, legal protection, property rights, security, funding, tourism management, interpretation centers, waste management, prevention of natural disasters, etc.

- Leg. Decree 1198 created the "Cultural Site Management MoU", as a special vehicle for Culture to attract funding and management skills from public and private sectors to protect and transform archaeological sites.

- This Legislative Decree was repealed by Congress.
Conclusions

• The origin of the main threats appears when a monument has no use and control. The Monument is subject to vandalism, illegal appropriation, environmental erosion, etc.

• Archaeological sites in need can be transformed into centers of cultural, touristic and economic development, creating jobs, citizenship and identity. Transform city neighborhoods.

• Cultural Site Management requires resources as well as different and specialized skills. Partnerships with local governments and private entities is essential to secure funding and management skills to add value. Thus, sustainability requires an inclusive approach to heritage management.
Address by Ambassador Gustavo Meza Cuadra,  
on the occasion of the International Conference on “Culture for Sustainable Cities”  
Hangzhou, People’s Republic of China, 10 December 2015

Theme: The role of culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

I am honoured to be here and express my appreciation to the people of China, to its government and to the municipal government of Hangzhou, as well as to UNESCO for this opportunity to discuss the crucial role of culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I am also honored to intervene after the Peruvian Vice Minister for Cultural Heritage, Cultural Industry and the arts. We represent one of the six or seven countries in the world, like China, where civilizations were originated more than 5000 years ago and are still thriving thanks to the vitality of its cultural heritage and the creativity of its peoples. In the recreation and evolution of our traditions and cultural values we can always rely for driving us towards sustainable development.

With your indulgence, I would allow myself to briefly recall some background history, as to take stock of where we come from, what we have achieved and where we are now, regarding the role of culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In 1983, another Peruvian, Ambassador Javier Pérez de Cuellar, then the United Nations Secretary General, appointed Gro Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway, as chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development. In 1987 the Brundtland Commission issued a report, entitled "Our Common Future", that coined the term sustainable development and, for the first time, called for an integrated approach to its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental.

Such reports informed the so-called Earth Summit, or the first United Nations Conference on Earth and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. The international community established as the first Rio principle that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and that we are all entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

The contribution of culture to the new notion of sustainable development was to be further assessed by UNESCO’s World Commission on Culture and Development, not-coincidentally chaired by Ambassador Pérez de Cuellar and confirmed, amongst others, by the renowned anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. In 1996, after three years of work, this Commission issued UNESCO’s global report entitled "Our creative diversity". The report acknowledged, and I quote, that

"Culture is a central variable in explaining different patterns of change and an essential determinant, if not the essence itself, of sustainable development, since attitudes and lifestyles govern the ways we manage all our non-renewable resources (...). Culture shapes all our thinking, imagining and behaviour.”

This report provided new understandings of the important role of cultural diversity and cultural heritages, not only as traditions or properties from our past, but as intangible, dynamic and certainly renewable assets. It made clear that culture contributes to the three dimensions of sustainable development.

And then, the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, in its outcome document "The future we want", while mainstreaming the notion of sustainable development into all of our developmental endeavours and calling for the elaboration of a new set of universally applicable Sustainable Development Goals, acknowledged the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognized that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

Consistent with the need to further fostering culture as an enabler and a driver contributing to its three dimensions, since 2010 the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations have been promoting a General Assembly resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development. We have just concluded the negotiations of the fifth one, to be adopted in these days. I'll come back to it in a few minutes.

We have also created in New York an informal Group of Friends of Culture and Sustainable Development, conformed by more than 30 UN delegations of countries from all regional groups. With UNESCO's support, building on the Brundtland and the Pérez de Cuellar reports, our Group of Friends have been actively engaged in promoting a greater streamlining of culture into the new Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The new Agenda builds of course on the Rio+20 outcome document, by providing an actionable and indivisible set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to be implemented in an integrated manner.

In paragraph 36 of the new Agenda's Declaration, our Heads of State and Government commit to foster inter-cultural understanding, tolerance, mutual respect and an ethic of global citizenship and shared responsibility. And they acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations not only can contribute to -- as stated in Rio+20-- but also are crucial enablers of sustainable development. No other enabler is given such status in the new Agenda.

These positive steps were not easy, because the SDGs and targets are meant to be actionable and measurable, whereas culture's contribution to sustainable development sometimes can be rather diffuse and intangible. Notwithstanding, the new Agenda also contains several targets reflecting it as a cross-cutting issue called to play a crucial role in its implementation:

- Target 2.5 calls for a fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge associated to food security and sustainable agriculture.

- Target 4.7 commits us to promote a culture of peace and nonviolence, and to appreciate cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development in the context of an education for sustainable development.

- Target 8.3 commits us to further promote creativity and innovation in order to achieve sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Target 8.9 commits us to further devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

- Target 11.4 calls us to strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

Almost 30 years after the Brundtland report and almost 25 years after the Pérez de Cuellar report, it seems fair to assess that culture has been mainstreamed into our new universal sustainable development framework. That’s the story of where we come from, what we have achieved and where we are at, in regard of the contributions of culture to sustainable development at the international level.

16. But of course, our story doesn’t end in 2015. The ambitious 2030 Agenda commits us to its implementation in the following 15 years.

The last target I’ve just referred, target 11.4 on the protection and safeguarding on cultural heritage is under SDG 11, intended to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Its achievement of course could and should benefit from UNESCO’s contribution. Moreover considering that in paragraph 34 of the 2030 Agenda our Heads of State and Government look forward to the upcoming United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III.

A first remark in these regards, speaking about the role of culture in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, is to welcome UNESCO’s initiative to dedicate its upcoming global report to the issue of Sustainable Urban Development and to understand this as an input to the New Urban Agenda to be adopted in the Habitat III Conference. History shows that evidence-based decision-making can make a difference, and this conference is a very timely opportunity to further discuss its contents to that end.

A second remark also related to evidence-based decision-making for implementing the 2030 Agenda and assessing the progress made in that regard, is to point out the need to pay attention to the global indicators framework being prepared by the Interagency and Experts Group conformed by the United Nations Statistical Committee. We can feel reassured that UNESCO is engaged in that process.

In this order of ideas, to conclude, I am glad to inform that in the resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development that is about to be adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, we are agreeing to give consideration, as appropriate, to the contribution of culture to sustainable development in the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With this we intend to ensure that the role of culture in its implementation is appropriately assessed at all levels, benefiting for that from initiatives as this conference and of UNESCO’s constant and qualified support. We are convinced that Hangzhou will be regarded as a landmark in these efforts to put culture at the core of the development agenda.