

Montevideo. May 07, 2015

URUGUAY REPORT
Comments and suggestions on UNESCO Draft Statutory Instrument
for museums and collections.¹

Regarding the draft document submitted in relation to the development of a UNESCO normative instrument, entitled A NEW INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SETTING INSTRUMENT: THE PROPOSED UNESCO RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF MUSEUMS, THEIR DIVERSITY AND THEIR ROLE IN SOCIETY, it should be pointed out:

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- Our total support for this initiative, given UNESCO's need to have a document of this nature, that specifically addresses museums and their collections.

- That there are three elements that could be incorporated in the document. They were clearly identified by ICOM to mark the International Museum Day, in his last three editions:

- 1- Creativity associated with museums and social changes. Creativity to match these institutions to the historical moments in which they live and the social changes that they are generating. Creativity to promote social change in order to strengthening democratic social processes and to achieve a full exercise of human rights in the context of building a committed and responsible citizenship.

- 2- Build museums' networks, understood as a collective based on respect for diversity, promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

- 3- The important role that museums can play when it comes to raising awareness of the need for protecting the environment, promoting public understanding of the issue, as part of the educational role that, by definition, had been developed by museums.

In response to this general framework, then we propose the following changes and/or additions to the base document:

- In "Introduction"

Item 4: Add that museums are also **spaces for the creation and democratization of knowledge and spaces for intercultural dialogue.**

Item 5: Add that **museums contribute to the public understanding of various issues related to past, present and future of humanity and the universe.**

Item 6: As in other parts of the document, we believe that's necessary to point out that **when we talk about tourism we must include the concept of social tourism, especially linked to cultural tourism and promoting social inclusion of population's vulnerable sectors.**

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• In "Definition and diversity of museums"

Item 9: We note the importance of heritage preservation for future generations, but is equally important for present generations. Museums are important only if their proposals impacts on the present. We therefore propose **to include the present generations and not just the future ones.**

• In "Globalization"

Item 11: We propose to incorporate that every management model to be applied in a museum must consider and respond to the context in which the institution is located.

• In "Preservation"

We propose to include a point in this section, with the following wording:
In museums, preservation function should not be understood as an end but as a mean. It is the key to achieving the goal of a comprehensive democratization of public access to the enjoyment and knowledge of museum collections.

• In "Communication"

Item 21: It is proposed to add that **museums should also provide knowledge and experiences that contributes to the understanding of different topics.**

• In "General Policies"

- In this item a specific point highlighting the importance of developing and strengthening public policies for museums, especially recommending that to member countries, should be remarked.

- Likewise, it should stress the public and democratizing vocation of museums, regardless whether they are managed by public or private entities.

- Another proposed point to incorporate is related to professional technical training. States should promote the development of regulated training, of technical-professional in character, in the different areas or disciplines that conforms the museum environment, ensuring the existence of qualified personnel to adequately perform all the functions that characterize the institution.

Item 25: Since the role of States is central, especially in public museums directly managed by them, we propose to incorporate the following paragraph after a comma, as follows: "... because inadequate support results in the deterioration and irreversible loss of heritage, to the detriment of present and future generations".



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ⁱ This document has its original version in Spanish.