CULTURAL POLICY FOR NIGERIA
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CULTURAL POLICY FOR NIGERIA

PART I

PREAMBLE

1. Introduction

1.1. Culture is the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organisation thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours.

1.2. Culture comprises material, institutional, philosophical and creative aspects. The material aspect has to do with artefacts in its broadest form (namely; tools, clothing, food, medicine, utensils, housing, etc.); the institutional deals with the political, social, legal and economic structures erected to help achieve material and spiritual objectives; while the philosophical is concerned with ideas, beliefs and values; the creative concerns a people’s literature (oral or written) as well as their visual and performing arts which are normally moulded by, as well as help to mould other aspects of culture.

1.3. Culture is not merely a return to the customs of the past. It embodies the attitude of a people to the future of their traditional values faced with the demands of modern technology which is an essential factor of development and progress.

1.4. When therefore we talk of self-reliance, self-sufficiency and a national identity as the core of our national development objectives, we are referring to culture as the fountain spring of all policies whether educational, social, political or economical. The strategies of national development would thus depend on the understanding of the culture, the adaptation of its elements for political, educational and economic development, as well as its strengths for social integration and development.

2. Scope

2.1. In the effort to elaborate and work out a cultural policy, the real task is not so much to prescribe a normative definition of culture, as to grapple with the understanding of the nation’s cultural conditions, needs, aspirations and goals, and on the basis of such understanding, to enunciate a set of rules, decide on requirements and priorities and sketch the ways and means for attaining the laid down goals.

2.2. A cultural policy is imperative in order to incorporate such an essential part of our history into our general national development process, because, culture as a force has both its own economic and political consequences in the life of any nation.

2.3. It is equally part of the process of retrieving and restoring our history and our heritage, in order to protect and project them for posterity. As such, it forms an integral part of our educational process.
2.4. A sound cultural policy can determine how best this vital element can be used as a factor in our domestic and foreign policies.

2.5. Finally, a cultural policy would facilitate the management, rational selection and determination of cultural programmes with emphasis on specific areas of government participation.

3. **Objectives of the Cultural Policy**

3.1. The policy shall serve to mobilise and motivate the people by disseminating and propagating ideas which promote national pride, solidarity and consciousness.

3.2. The policy shall serve to evolve from our plurality, a national culture, the stamp of which will be reflected in African and world affairs.

3.3. The policy shall promote an educational system that motivates and stimulates creativity and draws largely on our tradition and values, namely: respect for humanity and human dignity, for legitimate authority and the dignity of labour, and respect for positive Nigerian moral and religious values.

3.4. The policy shall promote creativity in the fields of arts, science and technology, ensure the continuity of traditional skills and sports and their progressive updating to serve modern development needs as our contribution to world growth of culture and ideas.

3.5. The policy shall establish a code of behaviour compatible with our tradition of humanism and a disciplined moral society.

3.6. The policy shall sustain environmental and social conditions which enhance the quality of life, produce responsible citizenship and an ordered society.

3.7. The policy shall seek to enhance the efficient management of national resources through the transformation of the indigenous technology, design-resources and skills.

3.8. The policy shall enhance national self-reliance and self-sufficiency, and reflect our cultural heritage and national aspiration in the process of industrialisation.

4. **Methods of Implementation**

4.1. The Cultural Policy shall be expressed in four broad categories of State action, namely:

   (a) preservation of culture,
   (b) promotion of culture,
   (c) presentation of culture, and
   (d) the establishment of administrative structure and the provision of funds for its implementation.

4.2. **Preservation of Culture**

4.2.1. Cultural preservation in this context shall relate to the promotion of cultural property whether of concrete or non-concrete nature, past or present, written or oral, or relating to values or facts of history.
4.2.2. Its objective is not to ossify or mystify, but to ensure harmony with contemporary realities and the demands of change and development and to prevent a mindless sweeping away of our cultural heritage; a situation which can only result in disorderly change and societal instability and eventual creation of a people completely cut off from its cultural roots.

4.2.3. Cultural preservation, to be meaningful and have integrity, must be aided by research. Documentation on audio and video tapes, film, etc. will constitute an important part of this research.

4.3. **Promotion of Culture**

4.3.1. The State shall take steps to encourage the integration of traditional values into the fabric of daily life.

4.3.2. The State shall promote formal and informal education as vehicles of inculcating these values in consonance with our national aspirations.

4.3.3. The State shall ensure the provision of conscious cultural dimensions to all aspects of national planning.

4.3.4. The State shall give practitioners in the arts relevant roles and assignments in the development process.

4.3.5. The State shall foster the development of Nigerian languages and pride in Nigerian culture.

4.4. **Presentation of Culture**

4.4.1. Cultural presentation refers to the means by which culture is disseminated. Its objective is to facilitate the accessibility of arts and culture to the widest spectrum of Nigerians.

4.4.2. Nigeria culture shall be presented through the popular vehicles of the theatre, films, exhibitions, seminars, workshops and publications. Presentation shall involve the active use of the mass media.

4.5. **Administration and Financing of Culture**

4.5.1. The State shall establish administrative structures and institutions for promoting the objectives of the cultural policy.

4.5.2. The State shall provide the framework to enable these administrative structures and institutions to generate funds.

4.5.3. State action shall enhance the generation of revenue from private sources.
PART II

FOCUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

5. Education

5.1.1. The State shall recognise the fact that a people who have succeeded in transmitting their culture to the younger generation have succeeded in promoting and perpetuating that culture.

5.1.2. The State shall encourage the promotion of culture right from the homes through informal education, through the school system to the universities.

5.1.3. Since education is a life-long process, the State shall also involve older folks through continuing of further education.

5.1.4. The State shall ensure the cultural relevance of education and make it serve as a means of integrating the individual into his society and environment.

5.1.5. The State shall promote the mother tongue as the basis of cultural education, and shall ensure the development of Nigerian languages as vehicles of expressing modern ideas and thought processes.

5.1.6. The State shall ensure cultural education featuring traditional games, recreation, civic and moral values, arts and crafts.

5.1.7. The State shall recognise that culture is dynamic and ensure that the educational system reinforces the nation's capacity for change.

5.2. Curriculum

5.2.1. The State shall ensure at all levels of education, a curriculum featuring aspects of education which will enhance the common heritage of Nigerians as brothers and fellow citizens with a common destiny.

5.2.2. The State shall also seek to inculcate in the child at all levels of education an awareness of his history, folklore, beliefs and thought-system to enable him gain knowledge of the physical, as well as the spiritual properties of the society in which he lives.

5.2.3. The State shall seek to make the content of education relevant to Nigerian and African societies, their probems, goals and aspirations.

5.2.4. The State shall encourage the participation of pupils and students in vocational and leadership training programmes which will prepare them for positions of responsibility in the society.

5.2.5. The State shall seek to orientate teacher education towards ability to inculcate in the pupils Nigerian values, pride in and empathy for the national cultural heritage.

5.2.6. The State, at the university level, shall give emphasis to cross-cultural researches.
5.3. **Total School Environment**

5.3.1. The State shall ensure the structuring of the total school environment from its physical organisation to its pattern of inter-personal relationship such that an authentic Nigerian message as well as pride in the Nigerian cultural heritage is easily transmitted to the child.

5.4. **Continuing Education**

5.4.1. The State shall promote functional literacy for improving the occupational capacity of the masses and their vocational skills, in order to prepare them adequately for a meaningful role in national development.

5.5. **Educational Materials and Book Development**

5.5.1. The State shall ensure that books and teaching aids used in our educational system are products of our society with most of their messages drawn from the Nigerian experience.

5.5.2. The State shall promote the book industry and local authorship through writers’ workshops, grants and awards.

5.5.3. The State shall promote a reading culture.

5.5.4. The State shall promote the development of indigenous manpower in the printing, publishing and distribution of books.

5.5.5. The State shall provide incentives for the development of the printing industry.

5.5.6. The State shall provide special encouragement to the writing of books in Nigerian languages.

5.6. **Libraries**

5.6.1. The State shall recognise that Libraries play a crucial role in the promotion of the cultural heritage.

5.6.2. The State shall promote the establishment of library services at Federal, State and Local Government levels.

5.6.3. The State shall ensure that libraries are stocked with books, films, records and tapes on arts and culture.

5.6.4. The State shall promote the integration of library services into the educational system.

5.6.5. The State shall promote the establishment of special and public libraries in order to encourage and popularise reading.

5.6.6. The State shall promote the establishment of mobile libraries in order to reach the widest spectrum of Nigeria.

5.7. **Archives**

5.7.1. The State shall recognise that a nation’s archives are its most important source of information for the study of her political, social, economic and other developments.

5.7.2. The State shall promote the establishment of archival institutions at Federal, State and Local Government levels.
5.7.3. The State shall provide adequate regulations for the acquisition and protection of and access to these rare assets.

5.7.4. The State shall promote the collection, preservation and dissemination of important documents relating to governments, private bodies and individuals.

5.7.5. The State shall encourage their accessibility to the widest Nigerian public.

6. The Arts

6.1.1. The State shall preserve, promote and establish conducive conditions for creativity by encouraging the establishment of strong national professional associations for artists, authors, dramatists, film makers, etc.

6.1.2. The State shall promote and encourage the establishment of writers’ clubs, art clubs, creative centres, for encouraging creativity and popularising the arts.

6.1.3. The State shall support the associations and clubs through government subventions, grants and other forms of assistance.

6.1.4. The State shall encourage through these creative movements and government institutions international links and exchanges for the nation’s developmental and cultural benefits.

6.1.5. The State shall make provision for the custodianship of international cultural materials in order to bring into proper focus, Nigerian culture in the Black and African world.

6.1.6. The State shall establish institutions and programmes for the preservation, presentation, promotion and development of the literary, performing and visual arts.

6.1.7. The State shall promote the continuity of traditional arts, and the development of Nigerian arts and artists, and give full scope to artists to project their art and skills as part of national growth and development.

6.1.8. The State shall promote the functionality of the arts in order to enhance their viability.

6.1.9. The State shall enact laws to protect Nigerian artists and writers and ensure that they enjoy the fullest material and spiritual benefits from the products of their artistic and literary works.

6.1.10. The State shall guarantee freedom of artistic expression and make institutional and infrastructural provisions for housing and developing the arts, and promote competitions, expositions and talent hunts in all the arts.

6.2. Literature

6.2.1. The State shall preserve and present oral tradition, folklore, poetry, drama, essays, novels and short stories through the theatre, film, video and audio tapes and in written form, and popularise them by producing them in Nigerian languages and promoting them through the school system, language centres, writers’ workshops, book development councils, the media, etc.
6.3. Performing Arts

6.3.1. The State shall preserve and present Nigerian music, dance and drama on film, video and audio tapes, slides and in written form, etc.

6.3.2. The State shall establish a National Troupe of Nigeria whose repertoire shall draw their materials from drama, dance and music.

6.3.3. The National Troupe of Nigeria shall be part of the National Arts Theatre.

6.4. Fine Art

6.4.1. The State shall preserve and present Nigerian antiquities in wood, fabric, stone, metal, bone, clay, ivory, etc., as well as on rocks, walls and in sacred shrines and make appropriate laws to protect them from theft and illegal exportation, or destruction as a result of ignorance or hostility.

6.4.2. The State shall:

(a) Establish a comprehensive survey on a continuous basis to identify and locate these artefacts.

(b) Enhance the recording of items by photographs and slides, films and filmstrips, and descriptions of their ethnographic nature and significance.

(c) Provide physical protection against damage and steal, and

(d) Enact appropriate legislation to protect these artefacts against damage, theft or sale and to provide for means of their recovery within or outside the country.

6.4.3. The State shall:

(a) Negotiate recovery of Nigerian works of art taken away during colonial time as well as since independence,

(b) Ensure Nigeria's participation in international conventions which shall aid the recovery of works of art taken away to foreign countries during colonial times or illicitly transferred from the country since independence, and provide for the restitution of any stolen work of art, and

(c) Sign all relevant international conventions which can aid Nigeria’s attempts to protect and recover her cultural property.

6.4.4. The State shall promote competitions, exhibitions and talent hunts in fine and applied arts.

6.4.5. The State shall establish a National Gallery of Art whose objectives shall be:

(a) To serve as repository for artistic creations since the birth of the country as a nation,

(b) To promote the creative genius in Nigerian artists, and

(c) To promote research, art education and appreciation.

6.4.6. The State shall establish legislation to vest in the State or its National Gallery of Art all works acquired with government funds wherever they may be located.
6.4.7. The State shall establish a legislation which shall regulate the outflow of contemporary art from the country and at the same time establish a fund to enable those that should remain in the country in the national interest to be acquired.

6.4.8. The State shall ensure that the National Gallery of Arts is located in the Federal Capital with centres in other parts of the country.

6.5. Crafts

6.5.1. The State shall recognise the fact that crafts are a valuable material heritage which form a tangible part of historical and contemporary culture.

6.5.2. The State shall recognise the economic and cultural roles of crafts in national development and shall provide adequate resources for their identification, preservation, promotion and development.

6.5.3. The State shall establish a National Crafts Advisory Council whose objectives will be:

(a) to foster the preservation and development of craft skills and document the indigenous technology responsible for the creation,

(b) to enhance the status of the Nigerian artist/craftsman by protecting his rights and promoting his forks,

(c) to promote and encourage the adaptation of traditional design and craft to the needs and requirements of modern times, and

(d) to provide marketing avenue for Nigerian crafts at home and abroad.

6.5.4. The State shall encourage the establishment of craft villages, craft shops and training facilities, develop crafts as small scale industries and make appropriate laws for ensuring the protection of designs, and processes of the creations of Nigeria craftsmen.

6.5.5. The State shall recognise the role of women in the handing down and renewal of craft activities and encourage women organisations to set up craft shops and co-operatives.

7. Tourism and Mobility of People within Nigeria

7.1.1. The State shall recognise that the mobility of people is a major factor of cultural growth and development.

7.1.2. The State shall:

(a) make it possible for any Nigerian to move into and settle in any community,

(b) preserve and protect our traditional modes of leisure and promote them alongside imported ones, and

(c) institute appropriate means of travel and leisure which shall be at the disposal of all citizens and shall encourage Nigerians and non-Nigerians to spend their vacations within Nigeria.
7.1.3. The State shall promote and encourage domestic tourism by creating facilities that would encourage Nigerians to travel on holidays within the country.

7.1.4. The State shall protect and preserve traditional institutions like craft villages and centres, and make available for public pleasure open spaces and squares for recreation.

7.2. National Parks and Sites

7.2.1. The State shall establish parks, beaches, zoos and game reserves for the, recreation and leisure of the public and shall create easy access to them and the country’s national springs, waterfalls and other attractions.

7.3. Monuments

7.3.1. The State shall preserve as monuments, old city walls and gates, sites palaces, shrines, public buildings, private buildings of historical significance and monumental sculptures, and protect them from neglect, desecration or destruction.

7.3.2. The State shall ensure that monuments shall be preserved by:
(a) declaration as monuments under existing laws,
(b) acquisition as monuments under existing laws,
(c) appropriate maintenance for public educational purposes,
(d) legislation to enable government exercise planning control in matters threatening structures and sites of historical importance,
(e) documentation through photographs and other means,
(f) legislation to enable the State protect private buildings of historical importance by preventing:
   (i) alteration to their structures or facades,
   (ii) encroachment or other actions which shall endanger them, and
   (g) legislation empowering the State to protect contemporary buildings of exceptional design and excellence.

7.4. Museums

7.4.1. The State shall establish museums as repositories of relics of our past achievements and as sources of inspiration to the present generation.

7.4.2. The State shall promote the accessibility of Museum objects to the generality of the people through mobile Museums.

7.4.3. The State shall promote the appreciation of museum objects and assist the public to understand and animate them by means of exhibitions and live performances.

7.5. Halls of Fame, and Light and Sound Shows—Son et Lumiere

7.5.1. The State shall promote the establishments of exhibition employing varying display techniques to enhance the appreciation of Nigerian cultural heritage, and project its cultural assets in order to develop tourism.