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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda: Secretariat's Report on its Activities

This document presents the Secretariat's report of its activities for the period 2014.

Decision required: paragraph 47

1. At its third ordinary session, the Conference of Parties to the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (hereinafter “the Convention”) requested the Secretariat to provide, at each of its sessions, a report on its activities.

2. The Secretariat presented its first Report of Activities to the fourth ordinary session of the Conference of Parties covering the period 2011-2013¹. This was preceded by three interim reports presented to the fifth, sixth and seventh ordinary sessions² of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (hereinafter “the Committee”).

3. At this session, the Committee is to review the Secretariat’s Report of Activities and take note of the achievements and challenges faced by the Secretariat during the first half of the 2014-2015 Biennium. It is organised in four main parts: duties, structure and composition of the Secretariat; main outputs/deliverables of the Secretariat in 2014; implementing UNESCO’s global priorities; and conclusion.

4. Progress made by the Secretariat is measured against the performance indicators defined in MLA 2, Expected Result (ER) 7³ adopted in the 37 C/5, to facilitate the effective implementation of the Convention by assisting its governing bodies, promoting information sharing and transparency at the global level and strengthening capacities of Parties – particularly developing countries – to design policies, measures and programmes that have a direct impact on the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of a diversity of cultural expressions.

5. Two main outputs/deliverables are defined under ER7 to determine the effective implementation of the Convention at the global and country level. They were identified on the basis of Resolutions adopted by the fourth ordinary session of the Conference of Parties (June 2013) and in line with priorities indicated by the seventh ordinary session of the Committee (December 2013). Cross referencing the ER 7 and the governing body decisions, the following outputs/deliverables can be reported on:

- *Global level:* governance mechanisms of the 2005 Convention effectively supported. This is to be achieved through the organisation of statutory meetings, the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (hereinafter referred to as “the IFCD”) and its fundraising strategy, raising visibility and the number of Parties to the Convention as well as processing of quadrennial periodic reports and monitoring measures to promote the objectives of the Convention related to digital technologies, public service broadcasting, the impact of the involvement of civil society and to specific articles of the Convention relating to preferential treatment as well as international consultation and coordination;
- *Country level:* Member States capacities strengthened through effective implementation of the global capacity building strategy, in particular, the preparation of quadrennial periodic reports as well as knowledge management activities.

Activities to achieve these outputs/deliverables are to be supported through both regular programme and extra-budgetary resources as available.

I. Duties, structure and composition of the Secretariat

6. The *primary responsibilities* of the Secretariat are to support the work of the governing bodies of the Convention and to ensure the implementation of their decisions, including the roles and responsibilities defined in the Operational Guidelines approved by the Conference of Parties. The work of the Secretariat is performed under the authority of the Director-General and in accordance with the Approved Programme and Budget adopted by the Organization’s General Conference, the 37 C/5.

¹ See Document CE/13/4.CP/7.

² See Documents CE/11/5.IGC/213/INF.3, CE/12/6.IGC/INF.3 and CE/13/7.IGC/4.

³ Progress can be regularly monitored through SISTER, C/5 Expected Result n°133.

7. The Section for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions includes *nine established posts* financed under the Regular Programme: two General Services and seven professional posts. In addition, one Associate Expert (P2) was supported by the Government of Spain (until March 2014). One Professional post (P3) was also financed within the framework of the joint agreement with the European Union (until November 2014).

8. The *structure of the Section* was reviewed at the beginning of 2014 in the context of the UNESCO restructuring and redeployment exercise and in consideration of the new Conventions' Common Services Unit created in July 2014. In September 2014, the Section was reorganised into two new units – the Programmes and Stakeholder Outreach Unit and the Policy and Research Unit, aligning the structure to the main priorities of the governing bodies and to the Secretariats of the other culture sector conventions. The Secretary continues to participate in the Cultural Conventions Liaison Group (CCLG). Professionals working in the Section participate in cross-Convention working groups related in capacity-building, international assistance, knowledge management and periodic reporting to exchange experiences and best practices, methods of work and potential synergies between them.

9. During 2014, the Secretariat also participated in several *audits and evaluations* that concern the Convention, including the IOS Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector that resulted in a desk study undertaken on the impact of the Convention on policy making at the country level. The desk study and its results are presented to the Committee in Document CE/14/8.IGC/5b. The Secretariat also supported the Chairpersons of the eighth ordinary session of the Committee and the fourth ordinary session of the Conference of Parties in their work for the governance audit of UNESCO and dependent funds, programmes and entities requested by the 37th session of the General Conference (see Document CE/14/8.IGC/6). The Secretariat continues to implement IOS recommendations on the IFCD as presented in Document CE/14/8.IGC/8 and the IOS recommendations on the working methods of the Culture Conventions as described in Document CE/14/8.IGC/5a.

II. Main outputs/deliverables of the Secretariat in 2014

Support for the governance mechanisms of the Convention at the global level

10. Among the performance indicators established to assess the effectiveness of the Secretariat's support for the governance mechanisms of the Convention at the global level in terms of outputs/deliverables are:

- effective organization of statutory meetings;
- processing requests for international assistance to the IFCD; promoting the visual identity of the Convention and increasing the number of Parties to the Convention;
- processing quadrennial periodic reports and monitoring the implementation of the Convention's objectives.

Organization of statutory meetings

11. Among the Secretariat's primary functions, as set out in Article 24 of the Convention, is to assist the governance mechanisms of the Convention and prepare documentation for the Conference of Parties and Committee as well as the provisional agenda of their meetings, and report on the implementation of their decisions. The work required to fulfil these functions is year-round and in many cases leads to long-term programmes of activity deemed priority by the governing bodies.

12. During the first half of the 2014-2015 Biennium, the Secretariat ensured the logistical organisation and preparation of documentation for the eighth ordinary session of the Committee held in December 2014 at UNESCO HQ in Paris. This session is held in English/French, 17 working documents and 7 information documents were produced and translated into English and

French. Two additional items were proposed to be introduced into the provisional agenda: on the current status and follow-up of digital issues (by France and Canada) and on an initiative to raise visibility of the Convention (by Canada). Background notes for these two items were prepared by the countries respectively and added to the provisional agenda by the Secretariat (see Documents CE/14/8.IGC/12 and CE/14/8.IGC/13). The Secretariat transmitted these requests to the Chairperson to inform the Bureau.

13. To help determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation of statutory meetings, the Secretariat issues a survey to collect quantitative and qualitative feedback. Immediately following the eighth ordinary session of the Committee, the Secretariat will distribute its third survey covering a range of issues from the quality of the working and information documents to time management, translation and interpretation services as well as communication with the Secretariat. The results of the survey issued at the end of the seventh ordinary session of the Committee are presented in Document CE/14/8.IGC/INF.7. The feedback provided was positive with highest scores for the quality of the working and information documents produced by the Secretariat. The area deemed requiring the greatest improvement was in the usefulness, clarity and ease of navigation of the Convention website. The cumulative results will be presented to the fifth ordinary session of the Conference of Parties.

International Fund for Cultural Diversity

14. Reports on the implementation of the IFCD by the Secretariat in 2014 are provided in separate documents submitted to the eighth ordinary session of the Committee. They include a Secretariat's report on the implementation of the IFCD (CE/14/8.IGC/8), on the implementation of the IFCD fundraising strategy (CE/14/8.IGC/9), on the use of the financial resources of the IFCD (CE/14/8.IGC/10) and on the project results 2012-2014 (CE/14/8.IGC/INF.3).

15. The work of the Secretariat on the IFCD demonstrates steady progress in achieving the expected results presented in the 37 C/5 that benchmarks the number of funding requests processed (172 in 2014 in comparison to 200 expected for the biennium 2014-2015) or the number of funding requests received from new countries⁴ (13 in 2014 in comparison to the 20 expected for the biennium).

16. Substantial improvement was also made in enhancing the understanding of the objectives and the scope of intervention of the IFCD for the fifth call for funding requests launched in January 2014, which resulted in a considerable increase in the number of eligible funding requests from 28% in 2013 to 43% in 2014. This result, however, raises challenges for the Secretariat to ensure the most effective operation of the IFCD within the limits of its human and financial resource capacities.

17. To date, the majority of the IOS recommendations on the evaluation of the pilot phase of the IFCD have already been fully implemented or are being implemented on an ongoing basis by the Secretariat. The implementation of the IOS recommendations has proven to streamline the management processes of the IFCD and improve its overall functioning. IOS Recommendation 7 "to develop a vision for the future direction of the IFCD and a results framework with short- and long-term objectives, time-frames and indicators", is being introduced into the management mechanisms of the IFCD with the aim to monitor and improve the performance of the Fund and measure progress attained in achieving its objectives.

18. The IOS recommendations also stressed the importance of managing the IFCD to maximize its impact and to ensure the success of its fundraising strategy. In June 2014, phase one of the IFCD five-year fundraising strategy came to an end. With the main objective to consolidate the IFCD's existing donor base (Parties to the Convention), the first phase (18 months from January 2013 to June 2014) successfully raised US \$1,060,893.86, which represents over 75% of the target amount of US \$ 1,434,875. By communicating the project achievements and impact through various communication tools of online newsletters (e-update), multimedia stories, brochures and the Convention website, the Secretariat is progressively increasing the IFCD's visibility. It is foreseen that such tools will support fundraising activities and contribute to the

⁴ In 2014, new countries submitting applications to the IFCD are from El Salvador, Guyana, Morocco and Swaziland.

implementation of phase two of the strategy – reaching out to external donors – that takes place over a period of 24 months from July 2014 to June 2016.

Raising visibility and the number of Parties to the Convention

19. The Conference of Parties at its fourth ordinary session approved a new visual identity for the Convention in the form of an emblem to raise visibility of the Convention. Resolution 4.CP 12 requested the Secretariat to ensure the emblem's protection under Article 6ter of the Paris Convention. The Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO wrote to the Deputy Director-General of WIPO to request the communication, under Article 6ter(3)(b) of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, to States party to the Paris Convention and to the Members of the World Trade Organization not party to the said convention, of the emblem of the 2005 Convention. This was followed by several exchanges that are ongoing between UNESCO and WIPO legal departments to clarify certain issues.

20. The Secretariat has taken steps to ensure the immediate distribution of the emblem as soon as it is communicated by WIPO. For example, the Secretariat has requested all Parties to the Convention to submit information on their national contact point responsible for managing the use of the emblem at the national level. To date, the Secretariat has received contact information from 47 Parties. It has also prepared a web page dedicated to the emblem to help facilitate requests for the use of the stand-alone emblem as well as pdf versions of the Brand Toolkits for use of the Emblem (whether stand-alone or linked).

21. The third ordinary session of the Committee held in December 2009 adopted a strategy⁵ to increase the number of Parties over a period of three years that is closely linked to visibility and information sharing activities. This strategy (2010-2013) aimed to achieve 140 Parties by the end of 2013 with a focus on countries from under-represented regions, in particular the Arab states as well as Asia and the Pacific region. One performance indicator related to the increase in the number of Parties to the Convention was adopted in the 37 C/5, aiming at 7 new ratifications during the biennium 2014-2015. While the Secretariat has been made aware of new country ratifications, the legal instruments of ratification have not yet been deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO.

22. To enhance ratification in the Asia-Pacific region as well as to share experiences on how to strengthen the implementation of the Convention at national levels, the first-ever meeting of focal points for the Convention was hosted by the UNESCO Bangkok Office from 4 to 6 March 2014. The meeting, co-organized with the International Federation of Arts and Culture Council Association (IFACCA), brought together nine Parties to the Convention in the region and other countries currently considering ratification.

23. Activities undertaken by the Secretariat to promote ratification and visibility of the Convention also included the design and production of a new information kit to be published in early 2015 with extrabudgetary support provided by the Government of Spain.

Quadrennial periodic reports and monitoring the implementation of the Convention's objectives

24. Two separate documents are submitted to the eighth ordinary session of the Committee on quadrennial periodic reports: New reports and analytical summary (CE/14/8.IGC/7a) and Preliminary draft revisions to the Operational Guidelines on Article 9 (CE/14/8.IGC/7b) that provide greater detail on the activities implemented by the Secretariat in 2014.

25. In summary, eleven Parties were to submit their first periodic reports in 2014 to be processed and analyzed by the Secretariat. In addition, those Parties who had not yet submitted their reports due in 2012 or 2013 (= 45 reports) were encouraged to do so. As of August 2014, the Secretariat received six reports: 3 of the 11 expected in 2014; 3 due either in 2012 or 2013. In total, during the 2012-2014 period, the Secretariat has received, processed and analysed 71 of the

⁵ See Document CE/09/3.IGC/211/4

total 116 reports due for submission; representing 61% of the total. The main difficulties expressed by the forty-five countries who have yet to submit their first report are lack of expertise and/or information infrastructure. These challenges are expected to be addressed through the implementation of a capacity-building programme for periodic reporting.

26. The Secretariat was also tasked to carry out a transversal review of the reports received in 2012-2014 on priority themes identified by the seventh ordinary session of the Committee, namely, on the role of civil society⁶, digital technologies⁷ and public service broadcasting⁸ in achieving the objectives of the Convention. The results are presented in the Secretariat's analytical summary of periodic reports. The individual studies are presented to the Committee in several information documents.

27. In addition, the Secretariat undertook two global consultations among Parties and civil society that are aimed at contributing to activities monitoring the implementation of the Convention:

- global consultation launched in March 2014 with Parties and civil society on the implementation and impact of *Articles 16 and 21 relating to preferential treatment, international consultation and coordination*. An analysis of the results of this consultation are presented to the Committee at its eighth ordinary session in Document CE/14/8.IGC/11. Over 100 documents were collected as a result of this consultation and are made available on the Convention website;
- a global survey launched in October 2014 on the implementation of the *1980 Recommendation on the Status of the Artist*. In the development of this global survey, synergies were made to collect information on common issues related to the status of the artist in both the Convention and the Recommendation, situating them within the larger context of efforts to integrate culture into the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda and the WIPO Internet Treaties. The results of the survey will be presented in a report to be examined by the Executive Board at its 197th session, and then transmitted to the 38th session of the General Conference.

28. It is within the context of these activities that the Secretariat faces one of its greatest challenges. In essence, there is a lack of expertise and/or resources available to carry out substantive monitoring activities on the impact of the Convention in policy making at the country level. The Secretariat has taken steps over the years to address this challenge by working together with experts who carried out the transversal thematic analyses as well as methodological work on the proposed revisions to the periodic reporting framework. It also worked closely with the IOS and experts carrying out a desk study on the impact of the Convention on policy making that informed the Secretariat's analytical summary of the periodic reports received in 2014. Finally, the Secretariat began to plan, fundraise and prepare for the production of the first Global Monitoring Report on the implementation of the Convention to be presented to the ninth ordinary session of the Committee.

Strengthening policy support through effective implementation of the global capacity-building strategy at the country level

29. Among the performance indicators established to assess the effectiveness of the Secretariat's support to strengthen national capacities to implement the Convention in terms of outputs/deliverables are the number of Parties receiving technical assistance to:

⁶ See document CE/13/8.IGC/INF.4

⁷ See document CE/13/8.IGC/INF.5. In addition, the Secretariat carried out a survey on digital technologies and the Convention to facilitate the debates of the Committee as it considered proposals for future action, defines the goals for such action as well as the expected results (see Document CE/13/7.IGC/13). Through this survey the Parties indicated their priority for future action to emphasise the collection of cultural policies and measures aimed at promoting the diversity of cultural expressions that are best adapted to the new technological environment as specified in the Operational Guidelines for Article 7. The framework for periodic reporting submitted to the eighth ordinary session of the Committee has been revised to incorporate this activity. In addition, the Spring 2014 IFCD e-update focussed on digital technology projects.

⁸ See document CE/13/8.IGC/INF 6.

- design/revise/implement policies and / or measures;
- prepare their quadriennial periodic reports;
- prepare funding requests for international assistance.

Given the necessity for capacity-building to be supported through knowledge management, additional outputs/deliverables have been identified related to:

- raising awareness and knowledge of the Convention;
- technical development of an online platform to share knowledge on policy making actions, tools and methodologies;
- production of training modules to support capacity-building activities.

Below is an overview of activities undertaken in 2014 that are in line with the Report of the Secretariat on the design and future implementation of a global capacity-building strategy (CE/13/7.IGC/INF.4) examined by the seventh ordinary session of the Committee.

30. As part of its overarching effort to implement its strategy on capacity-building through extra-budgetary fund mobilization, the Secretariat prepared in cooperation with Field Offices two concept notes for the Complementary Additional Programme (CAP) exercise for the establishment of a “Pipeline of Priority Proposals” related to the 37 C/5. The two proposals (“Monitoring the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions”, and “Strengthening national capacities for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions”) are available at the following link: <http://en.unesco.org/partnerships/partnering>. Pursuant to the priorities established by the seventh ordinary session of the Committee, a full-fledged project proposal was prepared and submitted to donors to support periodic report training.

Providing technical assistance

31. In 2014, the UNESCO/EU funded project, *Expert Facility to Strengthen the System of Governance for Culture in Developing Countries*, benefitted from renewed financial support from the EU to conduct four follow-up missions (Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Niger and Viet Nam) and remote follow-up for the other nine countries that received assistance in 2012 and 2013 (Argentina, Barbados, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, and Seychelles). The objectives of these activities were to ensure the sustainability of the results (especially those identified as having multiplier effects) and to broaden the validation process and the effective ownership by stakeholders of the objectives planned. The main results of the in-country missions were the development of strategic plans to accompany the new policies resulting from technical assistance including the identification of financial resources to support their implementation. Results for remote missions included, in particular, the publication of the first Creative Industries White Book in Mauritius, the creation of an inter-departmental committee to write a new cultural policy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a new mapping of the cultural industries in Barbados.

32. In February 2012, the Secretariat produced a comprehensive guide for technical assistance, to establish a common working methodology and approach for the implementation of the Convention in developing countries. A revised edition is being prepared on the basis of the lessons learned from the UNESCO/EU funded project and will be published in 2015. It will serve as a tool for future capacity-building technical assistance activities.

33. In order to provide wider visibility to the project, a Conference will be held with EU partners in Brussels in early 2015 with the participation of a number of stakeholders, beneficiaries and experts. The main objective will be to share experiences and good practices, draw lessons from the technical assistance missions, present an operational direction for the future of the Project. More specifically, this conference will serve to showcase lessons learned for public policy development in the field of cultural and creative industries, as well as discuss the impact of these missions on national development policies. Overall, it is foreseen that this conference will serve to mobilize interest from Member States and donors to ensure the sustainability of the project and present an action plan to support the Convention over 3 years.

34. In 2014, the Secretariat together with the Field Office in Dakar completed the implementation of the *UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators* (CDIS) that provided technical assistance to 12 countries to develop indicators and collect data in: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Namibia, Peru, Viet Nam, Swaziland and Uruguay. These countries served as a test base to develop several products and tools including the methodology manual on the CDIS indicators and online data tables to calculate the indicators and generate automated infographics. Other products include analytical briefs providing an overview of the individual country results as well as a CDIS Global Database to be published and distributed online in English, French and Spanish in early 2015.

35. The CDIS has had a strong impact at the national level. For example, it has helped to reintegrate culture in national development plans in Namibia; triggered the first time inclusion of new questions on cultural participation in Swaziland statistics surveys; informed the first national cultural policy in Cambodia; revealed opportunities for enhanced stakeholder collaboration in the process of integrating cultural statistics in the National Plan for Good Living in Ecuador, and helped EUNIC (European Union National Institutes of Culture) to identify funding priorities in Ghana. The feedback indicates that CDIS offers concrete tools to advocate for culture's integration in development plans and national statistics. As extra-budgetary funding for CDIS comes to an end in December 2014, the Secretariat is actively fundraising to ensure the consolidation of the CDIS process and its scaling up so as to serve new countries and enlarge the CDIS Global Database.

Training modules and knowledge management

36. In 2014, the Secretariat launched preparations for the implementation of the Convention's long term capacity-building programme with an emphasis on the production of core tools. This included preparatory work on three new training modules, respectively on Understanding the Convention (module 1), Policy design and implementation (module 2), and Monitoring and periodic reporting (module 3). This work is supported in part through the UNESCO/EU funded technical assistance project and the Government of Spain. Experts were invited to work on the modules, including the design of unit structures, the production and consolidation of existing materials in a pedagogic, systematic and harmonized manner to be used by future facilitators of capacity-building workshops at the national or sub-regional level. These modules aim to generate a broad and common understanding of the Convention's aims and objectives and identify actions to be taken by key institutional actors to implement the Convention at country level. They are expected to be finalized in 2015. Pending available resources, the Secretariat is planning to produce three additional modules on: Project design, evaluation and implementation for the IFCD (module 4); Cultural statistics and indicators (Module 5); small and medium size micro-enterprise development (Module 6).

37. The training modules are informed by the evidence gathered by the Secretariat through the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity, the technical assistance missions, the quadrennial periodic reports, the UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators and the UN Creative Economy Report, Special Edition 2013.

38. In order to effectively manage this large quantity of information, the Secretariat is advancing its work to build a knowledge management system (KMS), as part of a wider exercise to promote transparency, capacity-building and informed policy making, serving in particular to enhance reporting, data collection, impact assessment and interaction with civil society. A first phase of the KMS was launched in November 2014. Should additional resources become available, the Secretariat and its knowledge management and monitoring activities would benefit from the implementation of Recommendation 10 of the IOS desk study to "initiate work towards the development of an overall results framework for the Convention, including objectives, indicators and benchmarks".

III. Implementing UNESCO's global priorities

39. Special attention was paid to UNESCO's two global priorities (Africa and Gender Equality) as well as to its overall work to advocate for the integration of culture in the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda.

40. The Secretariat undertook the following activities toward the achievement of the 37 C/5 Expected Result 7 with respect to **gender equality**:

- Carried out a gender analysis of IFCD funded projects and Parties' periodic reports (2012-2013). The findings and recommendations of that analysis are informing the Secretariat's results-based programming, so as to better address challenges for women's participation in the creative sector. Revisions will be introduced in the new application form for the sixth IFCD call to be launched at the beginning of 2015 in order to gather sex-disaggregated data on beneficiaries of IFCD projects.
- Published an online IFCD e-update on gender equality, showcasing the impact of IFCD projects on the empowerment of women and their participation in cultural life. (See <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/ifcd/media/e-updates>)
- Contributed significantly to the newly published UNESCO Report on "Gender Equality: Heritage and Creativity", that provides a global overview of the status of gender equality with regard to access, participation in and contribution to the creative sector. (See <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/gender-and-culture/gender-equality-and-culture/the-report/>)
- The Operational Guidelines on Article 9 'Information sharing and transparency' were revised with a greater emphasis on gender equality. The proposed revisions are presented to the Committee in Document CE/14/8.IGC/7b. If adopted by the Committee and approved by the Conference of Parties in 2015, it is expected that the revised Framework for Periodic Reporting will yield much more meaningful and specific information on policies and measures taken to promote gender equality in the creative sector within the framework of the 2005 Convention.

41. **Africa** is the region with highest ratification rate of the Convention. It also is the region with the highest number of IFCD projects. Indeed, six of the ten IFCD projects approved by the Committee at its seventh ordinary session are being implemented in Africa (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe). The projects vary in objective from strengthening cultural policies at the local level in Burkina Faso, supporting the film industry in Malawi, enhancing national strategies on copyright in Zimbabwe, to promoting the creative sector with civil society organizations in South Africa.

42. Africa is also the Secretariat's main priority region in terms of capacity-building. In 2014, two technical assistance follow-up missions were conducted in Burkina Faso and Niger. Based on the results from the previous missions, the follow-up mission in Burkina Faso provided additional support for activities to implement the Strategy for the Development of the Arts and Culture in the Burkina Faso Education System. The follow-up mission in Niger focused on additional support for activities to implement the Intervention Strategy of the *Agence pour les entreprises et industries culturelles (APEIC)* for the Structuring of Cultural Sectors in Niger and its Action Plan 2013-2015.

43. The Secretariat has continued to fundraise to ensure the consolidation of the CDIS process and its scaling up in Africa. UNDP funding and government contributions have been secured for implementation in Côte d'Ivoire, while negotiations are under way with UEOMA countries within the context of an agreement of cooperation between the UEOMA Secretariat and UNESCO.

44. As part of UNESCO's efforts to bolster the recognition of culture as a driver and an enabler of sustainable development in the **post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda**, the Secretariat organised advocacy events to introduce and promote the UN Creative Economy Report (CER) 2013 Special Edition, at UNESCO HQs during the General Conference on 14 November 2013 and at the United Nations in New York on 10 December 2013. The CER was jointly featured by UNESCO and UNDP during a special thematic debate on culture and sustainable development at the UN in New York in May 2014, and was also presented at several policy research conferences over the past year in London, Brussels, Bangkok, Kingston, Umea, Florence, Berlin and Rabat. The Chinese version of the CER was launched by the Director-General of UNESCO in Beijing on 4 June 2014, and the French and Spanish versions were published and launched in November 2014. The Arabic version will be published and launched by April 2015.

45. Within the framework of related high-level initiatives undertaken by UNESCO, the Secretariat organized, in cooperation with the Italian Government and with the support of the Tuscany Region and the Municipality of Florence, the third edition of the UNESCO World Forum on Culture and Cultural Industries from 2 to 4 October 2014 in Florence, Italy. This event, opened by the Director-General of UNESCO, brought together governmental decision-makers, representatives of the private sector and civil society, including international experts and academics from all regions of the world. The Forum resulted in the adoption of the "Florence Declaration", which recognizes the value that culture and the cultural industries bring as sources of creativity and innovation for sustainable development and calls upon governments, civil society and private sector actors to take action in global partnership to promote creative environments, processes and products.

IV. Conclusion

46. Overall, progress towards achieving targets and benchmarks for the biennium 2014-2015 remains on track. The greatest challenge to the effective implementation of the Convention remains – as has been the case for the past biennia - the steady reduction in Regular Programme funds and increase in workload and expectations by both the governing bodies and civil society stakeholders worldwide; as confirmed by the IOS audit of working methods of the Culture Conventions. The Conventions Common Services (CCS) Unit is supporting the Secretariat in the organization of statutory meetings and the associated administrative workload. The Secretariat requires, however, additional expertise to fully address new thematic fields of critical importance for the future of the Convention and determined as priority by the governing bodies, including on trade, culture and digital technologies. Parties are therefore invited to provide support to the Secretariat through, for example, the Associate Expert programme, secondments, or extra-budgetary resources for project appointments to work for a limited duration on specialized activities. In this context, a circular letter by the Director-General has been sent to Ministers responsible for relations with UNESCO on 12 March 2014 (see: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002269/226964e.pdf>).

47. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 8.IGC 4

The Committee,

1. *Having examined Document CE/14/8.IGC/4 and Document CE/14/8.IGC/INF.7;*
2. *Takes note of the Secretariat's report on its activities for the period 2014;*
3. *Invites each Party to determine the most appropriate mechanism to support the activities carried out by the Secretariat at Headquarters and in the Field;*
4. *Requests the Secretariat to present, at its ninth ordinary session, a report on its activities for the 2014-2015 Biennium.*