



Painting by Cedric Georges

Reconciling Cultural and International Trade Policies

The entering into force of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity on 18 March 2007 was a decisive step towards the reconciliation between national cultural objectives and international trade policies. It is widely recognized that the convention is not a goal *per se* but a tool to promote cultural, social and economic development. Globalization is a reality that brought about profound changes in the way cultural and creative products and services are created, reproduced and commercialized in national and international markets. UNCTAD's viewpoint is that time has come to go beyond polarized debates usually characterized by "for or against" but rather look for a nuanced and constructive approach. The issue is not whether governments should be "leading or responding" to the needs of the cultural and creative sectors but rather how public policies can correct market imbalances and promote development and poverty alleviation, particularly in developing countries. The Convention recognizes the distinctive nature of cultural goods and promotes plurality of cultural offers. It sets a series of principles and steps to safeguard cultural diversity, and the sovereign right of Member States to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions within their territory and at the global level. Gradually, consensus is emerging already expressed by the 57 States that have ratified the Convention so far, that international cooperation is needed to support specific needs of developing countries to foster the emergence of a dynamic cultural and creative sector. Now, pragmatism is needed to move from commitments to action. The UNCTAD secretariat is pleased to be associated with UNESCO, the Member States and the civil society on this endeavour aiming at a successful implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

From São Paulo, Brazil to Accra, Ghana UNCTAD XII, April 2008



UNCTAD Member States and the secretariat had a busy period in April negotiating the theme and sub-themes for UNCTAD XII,

which will be held from 20-25 April 2008 in Accra, Ghana. The quadrennial ministerial conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is the highest body of the institution and sets its mandates for the next four years. With the presence of the Minister of Trade and Industry of Ghana, the preparatory process for UNCTAD XII was launched. "Creative industries and development" is one of the two topics already proposed by governments for pre-events leading to intergovernmental debates. The secretariat is committed to promote the "Creative Africa".

In this context, it should be recalled that it was at UNCTAD XI in 2004 that the topic of "creative industries and development" was firstly introduced into the international economic and development agenda. The São Paulo Consensus negotiated among 153 Member States agreed in its paragraph 91 that:

".. the international community should support national efforts of developing countries to increase their participation in and benefit from dynamic sectors and to foster, protect and promote their creative industries".

Since then, the UNCTAD secretariat has been pro-active in promoting a series of policy-oriented international actions, and building synergy among relevant UN agencies to enhance cooperation aiming at strengthening the creative economy and industries in developing countries.

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OECS Development Conference: Vision 2015

Creative Economy a Viable Option



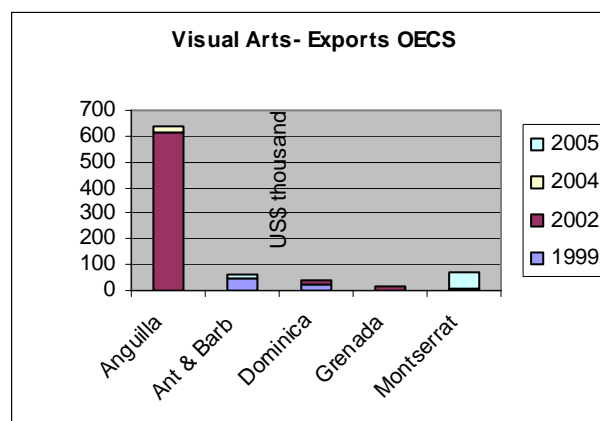
The government of St. Lucia and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States hosted the first OECS Development Conference. This high-level event took place in Castries, St. Lucia from 29 to 30 January 2007.



UNCTAD pointed out that cultural assets, creativity and talent are abundant in the Caribbean region and can be used as a tool for cultural, socio and economic development. Governments are, therefore, encouraged to put in place integrated

The OECS invited UNCTAD to join policy-makers of its nine member States in their efforts to shape a long-term vision for the development of the Eastern Caribbean. The OECS has a unique model of integration which has been providing positive results over the last 25 years. A new treaty with plans for an Economic Union is guiding economic policies in the sub-region. The creative economy was presented by UNCTAD as a feasible option to foster development in this group of small islands developing states. The conference was opened by the Prime Minister of St Lucia, the Chairman of the OECS authority and a number of Ministers from member states. By bringing together government officials as well as experts from UN-ECLAC, the European Commission, the World Bank, CARICOM, the West Indians University among others, the conference examined key economic and policy issues to be tackled in the near future, identifying development priorities for this sub-region, home of a population of 584 thousand people.

inter-ministerial policies to support their creative economies. As development should be inclusive, these strategies are likely to be more effective if built at grass-roots levels through mutually-reinforcing actions at national and community spheres.



UNCTAD and OECS Building a fruitful Cooperation

As an immediate follow-up to the Conference, the Director General of OECS Dr. Len Ismahel, visited UNCTAD in Geneva last March. Fruitful discussions were held with the Chief, Creative Economy & Industries Programme, with a view to explore concrete forms for technical cooperation between the two institutions aiming at optimizing the linkages between tourism and trade of creative products and services at the OECS region, particularly in art crafts, visual arts and music festivals. Innovative multi-disciplinary policy action combined with institutional and capacity-building activities are expected to contribute to harness the unrealized potential of creative capacities in the OECS region. Efforts will be made to identify partners willing to finance the implementation of a tailor-made technical assistance project for these micro states and territories.

An attempt was made by the UNCTAD secretariat to analyze the recent evolution of exports of some creative products from the region, despite the existing gaps in the collection of national trade statistics for creative products and services. Noteworthy was the case of visual arts. Anguilla exported over 600 thousand dollars in 2002, thanks to the inauguration of a big hotel complex and an art exhibition that attracted tourists' art-consumers. Another illustrative case is the growing importance of the St. Lucia Jazz Festival to promote development and socio-economic growth in the island. In 2006, the event attracted 14 thousand tourists generating over 61 million dollars of income in few days.



Bringing the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity to Life

Underlying that cultural diversity is the wealth of Europe, the German government in its capacity at the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in collaboration with the German Commission for UNESCO, hosted a major conference held in Essen from 26-28 April 2007, attended by 500 participants from more than 60 countries. The event was organized in several thematic sessions focusing on film, music, role of civil society, urban public space, media politics and north-south cooperation. The State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany shared his vision from the foreign policy perspective. Recalling the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, he emphasized that in Europe culture stands for diversity, for dialogue, exchange and understanding. The State Secretary for Culture of the Land of North-Rhine Westphalia made the welcome address to participants announcing that Essen will be the European Capital of Culture in 2010. The city was chosen very consciously as venue because it is an example of transformation through culture. The Ruhr region, with its heavy industrial facilities, was the pillar of European integration as part of the "European Coal and Steel Community" during the second half of the XX century. Today, at the post-industrial era, attention has turned to the creative economy as a means to achieve urban refurbishment and socio-economic integration through innovative cultural and creative programmes.



UNCTAD addressed Forum 3 on North-South Cooperation and Trade Policy. Recalling that global processes and multilateral policies are instrumental on cultural diversity issues, the Chief Creative Economy Programme told that cultural diversity is not an explicit topic of the WTO Doha Round. Nevertheless, audiovisuals and other cultural services are discussed under the GATS Agreement. Little progress has been made so far to liberalize trade in services in general and audiovisuals in particular and very few commitments were made for cultural services. Regarding mobility and temporary movement of persons, GATS Mode 4 can facilitate artists and creators from developing countries to deliver cultural services in world markets but views remain contending. Concerning the TRIPS Agreement, topics related to cultural diversity specially the protection of traditional knowledge and folklore have not received much attention, negotiations focused on biotechnology and traditional medicines. UNCTAD concluded that Articles 14 and 16, namely on Cooperation for Development and Preferential Treatment for Developing Countries have common objectives, and can be used to support the efforts of developing countries to strengthen their creative and cultural industries. The implementation of Art. 18, "International Fund for Cultural Diversity" can channel concrete actions. Finally, regular consultations among the secretariats of UNESCO, UNCTAD, WTO and WIPO can facilitate the process of bringing the UNESCO convention to life.

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Vitalizing African Cultural Assets

The Danish Centre for Culture and Development, the Norwegian Stromme Foundation, Hivos of Netherlands and the Goree Institute from Senegal with support of the International Network for Cultural Diversity, organized the ARTERial Conference held in Goree Island, Dakar, Senegal last March. More than fifty key figures from Africa's independent art world met, UNCTAD was invited but unable to attend. Debates focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the art sector in Africa. Positive developments like the blossoming of contemporary dance, the emergence of African cinema and the mainstreaming of African music were main topics in the agenda. A Steering Committee was formed to work in the preparation of a master plan for Africa's art sector. Funds and donor organizations will also better attune their policies and activities to improve effectiveness and action. UNCTAD will be pleased to join in this endeavour by promoting the "Creative Africa" at UNCTAD XII.

Jamaica Creative Industries Plan

The Jamaica Promotions Corporation –JAMPRO is promoting and facilitating investment and export in target sectors focusing on the creative economy. In their views, the creative industries show a high growth potential and strong pull-through benefits to other key sectors of the Jamaican economy. The Creative Industries Vision 2012 : A Review of Jamaica's Creative Industries Plan was presented and launched in April 2007. UNCTAD was invited to comment on the plan which was presented at the Creative Industries Global Forum held in Kingston. At the occasion a Treat for Film Co-Production between Jamaica and the United Kingdom was signed. The forum was also the opportunity to associate Jamaica Brand with creative industries as a means for communicating national identity. In 2012, Jamaica is expected to be a global hub for creative industries.

Sharing Knowledge : UNCTAD and Universities Creative Economy and Industries

Over the last decade, UNCTAD has been working more closely with civil society and the academia. The relationship between the secretariat, universities and research institutions around the

world is essential for advancing policy-oriented research on trade-related and emerging economic development issues. As the creative economy and the creative industries are new evolving concepts, the UNCTAD secretariat has been interacting with a growing number of universities in advanced and developing countries as well as in economies in transition. This dialogue has three main objectives: (i) to share knowledge and benefit from empirical and applied research carried out in this innovative field; (ii) to learn from national experiences and cases studies allowing for comparative analysis at international level; and (iii) to engage in an intellectual exchange with professors and students in areas of mutual interest. The result is a win-win situation to the three parties involved. The academia is pleased to see their work taken into consideration for the formulation of



international policies; the UNCTAD secretariat gains by using solid academic research as the basis for its policy oriented analysis; and the students are the main beneficiaries of this constructive synergy. Furthermore, UNCTAD staff have been sharing knowledge through lectures on issues related to its mandates. There is growing interest for the topic creative economy and the interface between culture and economics. The secretariat is regularly invited not only to address international conferences but also for make presentations for groups of students visiting the United Nations premises at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. These photos are an illustration, featuring a group of 60 students from the Austrian Krems University of Applied Sciences that visited UNCTAD on 16 April 2007.

Since 2004, the number of students requesting internship at the UNCTAD Creative Economy Programme increased. Regrettably, the Programme is small and unable to accommodate all the requests but the secretariat is pleased to be able to provide few opportunities.



Upcoming UN - Creative Economy & Industries Events:

<i>Events</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>City, Country</i>	<i>Website / contact</i>	<i>Agency</i>
First session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions	18-20 June	UNESCO, Paris	www.unesco.org E-mail:convention2005@unesco.org	UNESCO
CREATE-Rosario	August	Rosario, Argentina	www.unesco.org.uy	UNESCO

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