

**RESOLUTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE INTER -GOVERNMENTAL
CONFERENCE ON CULTURAL POLICIES IN AFRICA, WHOSE PROVISIONS ARE
RELEVANT TO THE OAU**

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its Twenty-Seventh Ordinary Session at Port Louis, Mauritius, from 24 June to 3rd July, 1976.

Having before it the recommendations adopted by the Inter-governmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa organized by UNESCO with the co-operation of the OAU in Accra from 27 October to 6 November 1975

After consideration,

APPROVES recommendations Nos. 3, 7, 25, 36, 37 and 40

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

The Conference,

Aware of the fact that any authentically African cultural policy must draw sustenance from the various components of the cultural heritage,

Considering that African languages and traditions constitute the indispensable foundations of any educational and cultural advancement in Africa,

1. **RECOMMENDS** to African Member States that they:

- a) make a choice of one or more national languages where they have not already done so;
- b) gradually increase the use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at the various educational levels;
- c) establish departments of African linguistics in the African universities with a view to on-the-spot training of African linguists;
- d) set up specialized institutions designed to study and describe national languages, which may thus be source of invaluable support to teaching in African languages;
- e) assists regional and national centres, already in existence or to be created;
- f) give fresh impetus to mass literacy training in the African languages;
- g) collect oral traditions by means of recordings and transcription;

2. **INVITES UNESCO and OAU:**

to give top priority to the ten-year plan for the systematic study of oral tradition and the promotion of African languages and to collaborate actively in its implementation by providing it with the financial, material and technical resources needed to carry it into effect, in particular by having recourse to extra budgetary resources and Funds-in-Trust;

to give greater backing to activities in the following areas:

- a) thorough and critical study of African languages and traditions with a view of their utilization as basic ingredients in the educational system and in artistic creation and communication;
- b) design, development or equipping of supporting facilities with a view to providing African States with an adequate framework within which artistic and cultural expression can flourish;
- c) increased pooling of information and experience among the States in order to promote fruitful co-operation and mutual understanding,

3. **REQUESTS** the inter-governmental financing bodies and more especially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Development Bank, to assist in the implementation of the ten-year plan for the systematic study of oral tradition and the promotion of these African languages.

RECOMMENDATION No 7

The Conference,

Recognizing the need for an encyclopaedia dealing mainly with Africa;

Welcoming the work done so far by the Encyclopaedia Africana Project as a worthy example of intellectual co-operation among African States,

Desiring that this cultural co-operation among Africans should embrace all the Member States of the OAU as recommended by the Council of Ministers of the OAU in Addis Ababa in February 1975,

1. **RECOMMENDS** to the organization of African Unity that it:

urge all those States which have not yet responded to the Project's appeal to establish active National Co-operation Committees to work on the Encyclopaedia Africana not later than February 1976;

2. **RECOMMENDS** to African Member States that they:

- a) contribute financially towards the running of the Project's Secretariat in Ghana;
- b) urge their governments through the Council of Ministers of the OAU to vote annually adequate funds for the running of the Project in order to save it from collapsing;
- c) solicit funds from African foundations, individuals and financial institutions for the running of the project;
- d) publicize the Project in Africa through their Ministries of Information and Culture to enable it to be better known with Africa than it is at present;
- e) encourage with financial inducements through their Ministries of Education, Culture and Research their young scholars to write for the Encyclopaedia Africana;

3. **RECOMMENDS** to UNESCO that it:

give all possible support to this project.

RECOMMENDATION No 25

The Conference,

Considering that the widening of the notion of culture to include ways of thinking and acting and the attitude of societies to their condition and their future, confirms the idea whereby man is both the agent and the true end of development;

Being of the opinion that this widening of the concept necessarily leads to the recognition of cultural development as an essential dimension of global development;

Acknowledging that economic growth is a fundamental factor of development in that it governs the efforts of modern societies;

Asserting that these cannot be imposed on African societies which have a system of values of such a nature as will more effectively ensure their coming to full fruition in a spirit of social justice;

Considering therefore, that it is on policy decisions of an essentially cultural nature that depends whether this growth is directed towards and used in the service of men and societies in order to satisfy their most legitimate needs and aspirations;

Considering that present circumstances in Africa now reveal a will to develop in an indigenous way which involves a recovery of initiative stemming from the resolute assertion of cultural identity;

Considering that in their claim to the assertion of cultural identity, a claim common to all the peoples of Africa, African Member States demonstrate their determination to ensure the preservation and flowering of what is most authentic in the cultural values of Africa,

Considering that this awareness of identity, associated with a mobilization of society, represents a vitally important factor for national liberation and the building of the nation as well as a guarantee in international relations;

Considering that this is the spirit in which development can be linked with the promotion of human rights and regard for the personality of nations;

Noting that the General Assembly of the United Nations, at its sixth Special Session, adopted a Declaration concerning the establishment of a new international economic order together with a Programme of Action;

Endorsing the “Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation” adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its Fourteenth Session Article I of which states that “Each culture has a dignity and value which must be respected and preserved”;

Recalling the pertinent recommendation of the Inter-governmental Conference on the Institutional, Administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies (Venice, 1970) and those of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Europe (Helsinki, 1972) and Asia (Yogyakarta, 1973);

Recalling with satisfaction resolution 3,322 by which the General Conference of UNESCO, “convinced of the urgent necessity of giving greater prominence to culture in the development of individuals and societies”, decided at its Eighteenth Session to establish an International Fund for the Promotion of Culture of which it adopted the Statutes.

Aware finally, of the responsibilities incumbent on African Member States with regard to cultural development;

1. **RECOMMENDS** to African Member States:

- a) that they translate into practical terms the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human rights, Article 27 of which states that everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community”, and establish, as far as they are able the conditions necessary for the exercise of this right;
- b) that they lay down, in this connection, cultural policies in a spirit which conforms to the genius of the nation in just the same way as they lay down policies for all sectors entering into the organization of modern societies, bearing in mind the way which such policies interact with the policies followed in education, science and technology, communication, the environment and so on;
- c) that they consequently draw up Plans for cultural development integrated with national development plans and enjoying the necessary means for their execution;
- d) that they establish or consolidate national machinery for the financing of cultural development and bodies to assist cultural activities and artistic creation providing them with appropriate means of action;
- e) that they make voluntary contributions, so far as they are able, to the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture established under UNESCO’s auspices with the aims of widening the field of international action to promote cultural development and that they participate in carrying out its projects, especially on behalf of African Member States;

2. **URGES** the Economic and Social Council and the other specialized agencies of the United Nations system that are concerned in the matter;

- a) to adhere unswervingly to the view that culture, together with science and education, lies at the very heart of the development process;

- b) consequently in seeking to define the new international economic order and in preparing the Programme of Action, to bear in mind the practical implications which stem from this;
3. **STRONGLY URGES** international financing bodies, particularly the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Development Bank (ADB);
- a) to translate the above considerations into deeds by resolutely incorporating the cultural dimension into the priority criteria taken into account in the preparation of their programmes to assist the development of African Member States;
- b) in this connection, to give due consideration to national or regional projects which form part of the cultural policies of African Member States, especially projects covering the provision of infrastructure and facilities and the training of cultural development personnel;
- c) to make available to the Director-General of UNESCO extra-budgetary resources which would enable him to intensify his efforts to promote the cultural development of African member States on the same footing as for education, science or the environment, with all of which culture is fundamentally linked;
4. **REQUESTS** the Director-General of UNESCO:
- a) to transmit this recommendation with his backing, to the above-mentioned bodies and to such other authorities as he may be able to interest in the problems raised by the cultural development of African member States;
- b) to give all due effect to resolution 3,30, adopted by the General Conference at its Eighteenth Session, which, inter alia, “recommends the Director-General, when preparing the Draft Programme and budget for 1977 – 1978 (document 19/5), to increase substantially the resources of the Cultural Activities Department”, bearing in mind the recommendations made by the present Conference;

5. **INVITES** the Secretary-General of the organization of African Unity to endorse the present provisions and to submit them to the next OAU Conference of Heads of State and Government and to the preparatory conference of Ministers which he will call upon to convene meanwhile in this connection.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 36

The Conference,

Considering that the geopolitical and economic inter-dependence of African States and their common will to organize African Unity are the foundations and pledge of cultural co-operation in Africa;

Considering the cultural exchanges and joint cultural activities contributes to the mutual enrichment of cultures, to understanding among men and to peace between States;

Considering that cultural cooperation implies the acknowledgement of the value and dignity of all cultures between free and equal partners.

Considering that in Africa, cultural co-operation must be able to transcend ideologies and nationalism, the obstacles inherited from colonialism, and language barrier in particular;

Considering that the periodic co-ordination of the cultural policies of African Member States represents a decisive means of improving co-operation between them and with the rest of the world;

Ascertain in this connection the need for African Member States to make organizational arrangements at both regional and sub-regional levels;

Endorsing the Declaration of the principles of international cultural co-operation adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its Fourteenth Session;

Reaffirming the important stimulating and co-ordinating role of the Pan African initiatives entrusted by OAU to its African Cultural Council;

Considering it desirable that regional and sub-regional bodies of cultural co-operation be established;

1. **RECOMMENDS** to OAU that it:

- a) Support these initiatives and provide them with the intellectual and material assistance necessary to their development;
- b) Ensure, through its Cultural Council, the co-ordination of the activities of these various bodies with view to bringing about the convergence of efforts to promote African Unity,

2. **RECOMMENDS** to UNESCO that it:

Collaborate actively with OAU in this field and continue on an intensified scale its aid to the various regional and sub-regional bodies of cultural co-operation.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 37

The Conference,

Recalling resolution CM/RES. 371 adopted by the 23rd Session of the Council of Ministers and the 11th Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, with regard to drawing up a cultural Charter for Africa,

Recognizing that it is desirable to bring all African countries together by broad and diversified cultural co-operation;

Having taken note of the Preliminary Draft Cultural Charter presented by the Administrative Secretary-General of the OAU,

1. **INVITES** the Administrative Secretary-General of the OAU to convene as quickly as possible a meeting to examine the preliminary draft charter with a view to submitting it to the 13th Summit Meeting of OAU Heads of State, to be held in Mauritius in June 1976;
2. **FURTHER INVITES** member States of OAU to examine the Preliminary Draft Cultural Charter for Africa and to give the Executive Secretary-General of OAU their full support in implementing the above-mentioned resolution.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 40

The Conference,

DESIROUS to strengthen the mutual understanding, friendship and brotherhood between the peoples and the States of Africa,

INVITES the African Member States and the Organization of African Unity to take measures to ensure the exchange of cultural publications, museum objects, radio programmes and television films and the organization of sports events and youth festivals.