

Final Declaration



WE, representatives of Argentinian, Australian, Brazilian, Canadian, Chilean, Danish, French, Korean, Mexican, Polish, Spanish and European professional associations of writers, composers, screenwriters, directors, performers, independent producers, distributors, publishers, broadcasters and distributors from the film, radio/television, book and music sectors of our respective countries, gathered in Montreal for the **First International Meeting of Professional Associations from the Cultural Milieu**, declare that:

- only with access to a broad diversity of artistic expression reflecting the richness, complexity and variety of human experience can culture be enabled to play its true role;
- by virtue of their unique and irreplaceable role, artistic works, cultural productions and cultural goods and services are not commodities like any other and can therefore not be reduced to economic terms alone;
- free market forces cannot guarantee that culture is able to fully play its role and that the objective of cultural diversity is attained within every society and worldwide, even less so in this era of globalization;
- while respecting freedom of expression, States and governments have both the right and the duty to preserve, develop and implement their own cultural policies, which are essential to cultural development and to the support of the diversity of cultural expression in every society and worldwide; the exercise of such a right must not be subject to retaliatory measures;
- in applying the rules that usually govern international trade agreements to the cultural sector, there is a risk that many key cultural policies would be dismantled.

Based on these principles,

we urge all States, within the context of the ongoing WTO services negotiations or all other bilateral, regional or global trade agreement or treaty negotiations currently underway, **to**:

- refrain from making commitments of any kind that would limit the rights of States and governments to set their own cultural policies in the sectors of creation and interpretation of artistic works, as well as the production, dissemination and distribution of cultural goods and services; and,
- firmly oppose the establishment of any negotiating or discussion group dealing with audio-visual matters or any other cultural sector, within the WTO or any other forum for the negotiation of international trade agreements or treaties;

we agree to present this declaration to our respective governments and cultural agencies, as well as to other professional associations within our own and other countries;

we believe it necessary to pursue a process of reflection together, particularly with respect to mechanisms that could provide an international legal basis for the fundamental right of States and governments to freely adopt the cultural policies they deem appropriate; as a working hypothesis, we consider that such a right could only be effectively implemented in a forum in which the importance of defending, protecting, promoting, disseminating and preserving the cultural expressions of all countries were predominant;

we recognize the need to raise greater awareness on these issues, both among our own members and the public at large;

we wish to promote in our respective countries the emergence of inter-associative links dedicated to asserting the sovereign right of States to set and defend their own cultural policies, and to promoting cultural diversity;

we agree on the creation of a follow-up committee made up of representatives of our associations, whose mandate it will be to:

- present this declaration to all major international meetings scheduled for the coming year, including the International Network of Culture Ministers, the General Conference of UNESCO member States, the Francophonie Summit, the Ibero-American Summit and the WTO Ministerial Conference; and,
- to prepare a plan for the organization and financing of a second meeting of our associations in the Fall of 2002, a meeting that could be co-organized by the Coalition for Cultural Diversity and alliances of professional associations from other countries.

Montreal, September 13, 2001

Members of the follow-up committee

Nemesio Juarez, Secretario General
Directores Argentinos Cinematograficos (DAC), Argentina

Ian David, President
Australian Writers' Guild, Australia

Pierre Curzi, Co-Chair
Jack Stoddart, Co-Chair
Coalition for Cultural Diversity, Canada

Paulo Slachevsky, Coordinador
Grupo de editoriales independientes de Chili, Chile

Pia Raug, Vice-Chairman, *Danske Jazz, Beat, og Folkemusik Autorer*, Denmark

Cécile Despringre, Chargée des Affaires européennes, *Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques*, France

Jean-Henri Roger, Membre du CA
Société des réalisateurs de films (SRF), France

Gabriel Larrea, Coordinador de Asuntos Internacionales, *Sociedad de Autores y Compositores de Musica (SACM)*, Mexico

Jorge Bosso, Secretario General
Federacion de Actores del Estado Español (FAEE), Spain

Joao Correa, Secrétaire général, *Fédération européenne des réalisateurs de l'audiovisuel (FERA)*, Europe

Krzysztof Tchorzewski, Board Member,
Stowarzyszenie Filmowcow Polskich, Poland

Secretariat of the Committee

Robert Pilon, Executive Vice-President
Louise Vachon, Project Director
Communications and International Relations,
Coalition for Cultural Diversity, Canada