



Final Declaration of the Second International Meeting of Cultural Professional Organizations (The Louvre Declaration)

Cultural professional organisations from over 30 countries, representing all aspects of artistic creation, met in Paris from 2nd to 4th February 2003. They agreed on the following principles:

- works of the human spirit must not be reduced solely to their market value;
- the right of all peoples to cultural diversity is a fundamental human right;
- diversity of expression cannot exist without freedom of expression;
- cultural and economic domination of any kind threatens the intellectual and artistic expression of this diversity;
- countries have the right and the duty to pursue the cultural policies of their choice, free from external constraints, providing they respect human rights and freedom of expression.

Considering that culture is guardian of the collective memory of all peoples, the participants call on each country to:

- oppose liberalisation commitments of any kind relating to goods and services in all fields of culture;
- pursue an ambitious policy of supporting its own culture;
- promote the balanced international circulation of all creative works;
- implement an active program of solidarity with developing countries through policies of cooperation;
- participate in the development of a binding international convention, independent of the World Trade Organization (WTO) or any other international trade body, whose purpose will be to maintain and develop cultural diversity.

In light of WTO trade deadlines as well as regional and bilateral negotiations now underway, it is imperative that a Treaty be developed and adopted on an urgent basis to provide a legal foundation for the fundamental right of States and governments to freely establish their own cultural policies. It is essential that this process be transparent and reflect the real needs of cultural professionals. For this reason, the process for developing a Treaty at UNESCO must fully involve professional organizations from the cultural sector.

The professional organizations at the Paris Meeting urge the creation of coalitions for cultural diversity in all countries and call on governments to implement such a Treaty.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, the professional organizations decided to establish a liaison committee, composed of existing and emerging coalitions, in order to coordinate their activities and to support the creation of coalitions in other countries.