



THE MISSING GOAL: CULTURE2030GOAL URGES STRONG AND CLEAR RECOGNITION OF CULTURE IN THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE

JULY 2024

The latest revision of the UN Pact for the Future makes welcome references to the need to integrate culture into development policies, but risks perpetuating the status quo by failing to underline the need for a standalone Culture Goal.

The Culture2030Goal Campaign brings together representative global and regional arts, culture and heritage networks, united in the understanding that there needs to be a greater focus on culture in development agendas in order to realise its potential to drive positive change.

We believe that collectively, arts, culture and heritage sector practitioners, institutions and policy-makers not only help guarantee fundamental cultural rights, but can play a determining role in achieving development goals across the board.

We have strongly welcomed the recognition in many of this year's Voluntary National Reviews of SDG implementation that for development to be sustainable and effective, it needs to be culturally informed, culturally relevant, and culturally powered. For this to happen, culture needs to be seen as a distinctive goal and area of action.

The latest version of the Pact for the Future (Rev2), in its Action 11, stresses the role of culture in building a sense of identity and social cohesion. It also calls for culture to be integrated into economic, social and environmental development policies as well as supported through investment.

These steps are welcome, but reflect a narrow perspective which undervalues the role of culture as a determinant of how people think, act and interact, and so respond to development policies. This broader understanding is essential, and is already recognised in numerous Voluntary National Reviews.



In addition, by stepping back from a call for a standalone culture goal, the latest revision of the Pact risks the dilution and dissipation of efforts, with culture not seen as an area of focus on the same level as other areas of policy action. This is out of line with the approach taken by many Member States, and sends an unfortunate signal to the arts, culture and heritage sector as a whole.

Therefore, while recognising the desire of Member States not to pre-empt discussions around the post-2030 Agenda, we nonetheless urge that the next version should:

- | Affirm the importance of treating culture as a stand-alone Goal for policy action (going back to the wording of the Rev.1 of the Pact)
- | Affirm the need for culturally informed and culturally relevant approaches to sustainable development at all levels
- | Ensure that culture is the focus of the relevant action, creating an additional action on sport as required, or integrating it into Action 6 alongside other references to the importance of promoting wellbeing

Through these changes, the next version of the Pact can fulfil its ambition to turbocharge our aspirations to deliver for people and planet by fully mobilising the power of culture to drive change.



ANNEX BACKGROUND

During the process of creation and adoption of the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, several cultural global networks campaigned, under the banner ‘[The Future We Want Includes Culture](#)’, for the inclusion of one specific Goal devoted to Culture, and the integration of cultural aspects across the SDGs. In the context of this #Culture2015goal campaign, 4 documents were produced: a [Manifesto – Proposal for a Goal](#) (September 2013), a [Declaration on the inclusion of culture in the 2030 Agenda](#) (May 2014), a [proposal of indicators for measuring the cultural aspects of the SDGs](#) (February 2015), and a [Communiqué on the final 2030 Agenda](#) (September 2015) which highlighted “progress made” but also noticed that “important steps remain ahead”.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the #Culture2030goal campaign released on 20 April 2020 a Statement entitled “[Ensuring culture fulfils its potential in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)”, which was [officially launched](#) on 21 May 2020, on the occasion of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. The Statement has been [endorsed by the President of the United Nations General Assembly](#) and signed by more than 280 individuals and organisations worldwide.

The campaign has published two analytical (and critical) reports on the cultural dimension of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: “[Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#)”, analysing the National Voluntary Reviews, in 2019, and “[Culture in the Localization of the SDGs: An Analysis of the Voluntary Local Reviews \(VLRs\)](#)”, in 2021. The campaign has also promoted several discussions in the context of the [2020](#) and [2021](#) United Nations High-Level Political Fora (HLPF).

In 2021, the campaign published its [strategic vision](#). The campaign wants a stronger place for culture throughout the implementation of the current UN 2030 Agenda, the adoption of an explicit Goal for Culture in the Post-2030 Development Agenda, and the adoption of an ambitious and comprehensive Global Agenda for Culture.

In 2022, in the context of the UNESCO Global Conference on Cultural Policies organised in Mexico City, Mondiacult 2022, the campaign launched a [Zerodraft of a future Culture Goal](#), and welcomed the undertaking in the Final Declaration of the Conference to integrate a specific Culture Goal in the post-2030 development agenda, with the Statement “[Commitment to an explicit culture goal in MONDIACULT Declaration welcome: now is the time to deliver](#)”.



In 2023, we have seen five key high-level, cross-governmental declarations that recognise the need for an explicit culture goal.

- | First of all, on 23 August 2023, the leaders of the [BRICS group](#) committed to integrate culture into their national development policies as a driver and an enabler for the achievement of the SDGs.
- | Second, on 9-10 September 2023, G20 heads of state and government released their [G20 Leaders Declaration](#) including a whole heading on culture as a transformative driver of the SDGs. In particular, they called to advance the inclusion of culture as a standalone Goal in future discussions on a possible post-2030 development agenda.
- | Third, all UN Member States, meeting at the [SDG Summit](#) on 18 September 2023, reaffirmed the role of culture as an enabler of sustainable development, contributing to more effective and sustainable development policies and measures at all levels.
- | The Ministers of Culture of the European Union adopted the [Caceres Declaration](#) on 26 September 2023, committing to work for culture to be recognised in and of itself as a new sustainable development goal.
- | The UCLG Culture Summit, on 30 November 2023, in the [Dublin Statement](#) reaffirmed the commitment of cities and local and regional governments in favour of a Culture Goal.

Together, these declarations point to a strong and positive trend in favour of substantial efforts to integrate culture into development agendas. The Culture2030Goal campaign and its members stand ready to accelerate work in this area, working in partnership with relevant actors at all levels. The campaign also looks forward to seeing a meaningful place for culture in the preparations for the UN Summit of the Future in 2024, and in ongoing cross-governmental work programmes around the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.



I **Arterial Network**
Web: www.arterialafrica.org



I **Culture Action Europe**
Web: www.cultureactioneurope.org



I **ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites**
Web: www.icomos.org



I **IFCCD - International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity**
Web: www.ficdc.org



I **IFLA - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions**
Web: www.ifla.org



I **IMC - International Music Council**
Web: www.imc-cim.org



I **UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Culture Committee - Agenda 21 for culture**
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