

Widening Local Development Pathways
High Level Panel on Creative Economy and the Post-2015 Development
Agenda
UNDP and UNESCO Featured Event

Tuesday, 10 December 2013
United Nations Secretariat, ECOSOC Chamber
12.00 – 1.00 PM

Office of the President of the General Assembly
H.E. Paulette Bethel

H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez, Permanent
Representative of Peru to the United Nations,
H.E. Mr. Antonio Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the
United Nations,
Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development
Programme,
Mr. Yiping Zhou, Director, United Nations Office for South-South
Cooperation,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the President of the General Assembly H. E. John W. Ashe, I would like to convey his sincere gratitude to UNESCO and UNDP for convening this Joint High Level Panel highlighting the Special Edition of the Creative Economy Report 2013. As you may be aware, the President of the General Assembly has been a long-time champion of initiatives, programmes and platforms that promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation, including those which lead to economic development through creative industries. As the Report we are here to discuss so clearly highlights, this economic sector offers developing countries outstanding potential, and will likely play an increasing role in our quest for sustainable development post 2015.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the Rio+20 Outcome Document, our world leaders recognized [quote] “the natural and cultural diversity of the world and... that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.” [end quote]. Likewise, the General Assembly has adopted a number of resolutions that take up the matter of culture and development, with the most recent at its 66th session. In this resolution, Member States agreed that culture, [quote] “is an essential component of human development, represents a source of identity, innovation and creativity for the individual and the community and is an important factor in social inclusion and poverty eradication.” [end quote]. The

resolution goes on to say how culture can play an important role in reaching our development goals.

In a few days, the Second Committee of the General Assembly will consider a draft resolution on culture and development, which builds upon previous resolutions, calls for greater dialogue in the Assembly on the contribution of culture to the post 2015 development agenda, and mandates a high-level event to take place on this very issue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Investing in the creative economy reaps vast rewards for our societies - leading to valuable innovation, entrepreneurship, artistic expression, and enhanced quality-of-life. Although the true value that the creative industries bring to individuals and societies cannot always be measured, they are one of the main driving forces of development, bringing transformative change to the global, national and local levels. The Creative Economy Report 2013 highlights that investments in cultural capital tend to accrue in larger socio-economic benefits. The cultural sector is also particularly dynamic and growing rapidly; in the last decade, global trade in cultural goods and services more than doubled.

At the same time, we must also consider the broader benefits to individuals, societies and to our world at large. The exportation of culture indeed does provide economic value, yet at the same time it enriches us as individuals, leads to greater understanding of other customs, and supports social inclusion and empathetic societies.

Therefore it is incumbent upon us to ensure that all are well-aware of the true value of culture and creativity to sustainable development, as well as the positive spill-over effects to other sectors and industries. Investing in creativity is not just a pleasure we enjoy, it is a sound decision with numerous benefits.

In order to fully take advantage of such benefits, the Creative Economy Report states that more capacity and knowledge are needed at the local level in the cultural and creative sectors. Particularly at the village or community level, people are often unaware of the opportunities that exist and how to harness them for maximum benefit. Filling that knowledge gap, ensuring that policymakers become aware of what individuals and local communities have to offer, and identifying the needs and obstacles would all help to foster this growth. As the title of this special high-level panel suggests, promoting widening local developmental pathways also requires effective partnerships that involve the private sector and all relevant actors at the local level.

Another critical factor for successful creative economies is investing in new talent and supporting cultural entrepreneurs in fields such as business management, ICTs or social networking, and providing better infrastructure to the creators and their broader networks. Cities and local authorities, the hubs that foster the creative economy worldwide will have a key role to play here, as well as in promoting economic development and job creation –especially for the youth who thrive on culture and creativity.

The cultural and creative industry offer enormous potential for bettering our homes, our societies, our environment and our understanding of those who are different from us. We are committed to creating an inclusive and universal post-2015 development agenda precisely because we believe that prosperity should be available to all. Culture is not only a pathway to increased prosperity; it is a form of prosperity itself.

We look forward to our continued discussions on this issue and we are confident that the Creative Economy Report 2013 will provide useful insights on how to increase the benefits of creative and cultural programmes and industries.

Thank you.