**RESPONSE FROM NORWAY TO THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR FOR CULTURAL RIGHTS’ QUESTIONAIRE**

**I Cultural Rights in Norway**

MFA will forward the response for Norway’s national efforts*.*

**II** **Cultural rights in the Norwegian foreign- and development policy**

White Paper no. 10 (2014-2015) Possibilities for all – Human Rights in Norway’s Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation. The Norwegian Government pursues a coherent human rights policy, in which Norway’s efforts to promote and protect human rights are integrated into all aspects of its foreign- and development policy.

**Support to culture in Norway’s development cooperation**

The overall objective for Norway’s contribution to culture is a strong and free cultural sector.

**Normative documents**

*The UN Special Rapporteur for cultural rights’ reports are instrumental for the policy, priorities and channels for support in the cultural field, as well as for internal- and external communication. The reports “Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage” (2016)* and “*The impact of fundamentalism on the enjoyment of cultural rights” (2017) are particularly important.*

UNESCO’s culture conventions, in particular the 2005-Covention on the protection of a diversity of cultural expressions, are other normative documents. The intentions of the 2005- convention is to strengthen the *conditions* for culture, to improve the artists’ opportunities to develop as artists and to live from their art, as well as to continuously improve artists’ opportunities, which include promoting artistic freedom and combatting radicalisation and violent radicalism. The Norwegian Government’s Strategy for Freedom of Expression and the HR-agenda generally support these ideas.

**Two priorities for the Norwegian support**

1. *Artistic freedom, including artistic freedom of expression.*

MFA supports efforts that strengthen *the conditions for culture*. This can be development of policies (typically co-operation between artists’ organisations and authorities), platforms or meeting places for arts and culture, organisations or initiatives that work for the enhancement of artistic freedom and measures that promote the social-, economic- and cultural rights of artists.

1. *Contribute to the protection of cultural heritage*

Access to cultural heritage is important for individuals’ and groups of people’s sense of belonging, identity and history. Intended destruction of cultural heritage is a criminal act, and so is illegal trade with cultural objects.

Norway is a member of UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee 2017-2021. A special attention is paid to the protection and promotion of African World Heritage in this period.

**III Lessons learnt and the way forward**

Norway supports the mandate of the UN SR for cultural rights through the general support to OHCHR.

Norway cooperates with and funds UNESCO (artistic freedom and cultural- and world heritage) and UNODC on combatting the illicit trade with cultural objects.

Other key partners in the protection and promotion of cultural heritage are African World Heritage Fund and Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

Civil society organisations like Arterial Network, Roberto Cimetta Fund, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Freemuse, Arts Move Africa (AMA) and Norcode (copyright and collecting management organisations) also receive funding from the MFA. They all contribute to the promotion and protection of cultural rights.

Norway would welcome measures that may increase the knowledge about the work of the SR for cultural rights among stakeholders.

We will also encourage a continued close collaboration between the SR and the rest of the UN-system, in particular UNESCO, including efforts made to include cultural rights into the UPR-reports.

1. **The MFA’s key partners** suggest that the SR in the future:

* Look into the growing tendency of self-censorship among artists and cultural workers, also in “developed” countries.
* Elaborate more on the effects of “everyday-fundamentalism”, look more into how traditions prevent creativity and art
* Contribute to increased promotion of artistic expressions and creativity
* Focus (even more) on fighting gender based discrimination within the arts, including LGBTIQ and minorities
* Offer concrete solutions to member states to better promote and protect cultural expressions by changing laws, policy and measures used to persecute artists and cultural workers
* Increase the use of civil society research and information, engage more on policy opportunities and exchanges in her work
* Offer regular and systematic feedback on whether the SR has acted on cases/topics that have been submitted as complaints
* Strengthen her attention to creative copyright (Ref. HR Declaration, Art. 27)
* Further explore the integration of cultural rights in “conventional” cultural heritage interventions.