Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for sharing the latest report of the Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights.

Regarding the questionnaire, we felt that most of the questions seemed to be addressed to Member States. However, to the question:

“Please indicate any developments in regard to the legal, administrative and policy measures in the concerned country and in the work and activities of your organization, and any examples of good practice that integrate a cultural rights approach or that implement recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur. In this regard, what has been done to ensure:

viii.         That various forms of fundamentalism and extremism do not infringe on the enjoyment of cultural rights (thematic reports A/HRC/34/56 and A/72/155). Please elaborate on any efforts to mitigate the negative impact of such ideologies and the movements which espouse them, and ensure respect, protection and realisation of human rights in general, and of cultural rights in particular, for all, and indicate if any specific attention has been dedicated to the impact on the cultural rights of women”

I would like to respond as follows:

“In the field of UNESCO’s work on culture in emergencies, references are often made to the Special Rapporteur’s reports, which have supported significantly UNESCO’s advocacy for the importance of cultural heritage and cultural rights, as well as the enhanced consideration of cultural heritage and the need for its protection in humanitarian and security policies. Indeed, the achievements towards the new, transversal Expected Result (ER 5) for Major Programme IV – Culture in UNESCO’s programme and budget for the biennium 2018-19, which concerns culture in emergencies, are measured notably through the number of policy decisions and actions taken by relevant intergovernmental actors in the framework of UNESCO’s international standard setting instruments that enable the integration of culture within humanitarian action, security strategies as well as peace-keeping and -building processes. This includes the Special Rapporteur’s reports, as well as the decisions of the Human Rights Council (eg A/HRC/31/L.17, A/HRC/RES/33/20, A/HRC/37/L.30) which cite her reports.

As such, it is clear that the Special Rapporteur is indeed very relevant to UNESCO’s field of work. Her advocacy efforts for a stronger consideration of cultural heritage, and access to it, as an integral component of cultural rights, and therefore the humanitarian and security implications of protecting cultural heritage, are very valuable.”

Thanks and best,

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