Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Mark LeVine I'm a professor of African and Middle Eastern histories and cultures, a 2021 Guggenheim fellow, and advisor to UNESCO, and co-founder of the refugee-based cultural organization, Kakuma Sound, which is based at the Kakuma integrated Refugee settlement in Turkana, Kenya.

Together with my Kenyan and refugee partners, in 2019 we created the organization Kakuma Sound. The goal of the organization was simple, to bring traditional musical instruments to the musicians and through them two dozen national, ethnic, tribal and religious communities living in the Kakuma refugee camp, created in 1991 and with 200,000 residents the oldest and second largest camp in Africa.

I'm writing to offer our experience as an example and template for work exploring cultural rights for migrants. Of course refugees are the ultimate migrants, as they are forced to migrate from one country to the next often with little hope of return, which makes their situation even more precarious than economic migrants who at least have the chance to go back and forth depending on their country of origin and where they wind up. What was clear to us from the beginning and has been born out by 3 years of activity is that traditional music remains one of the most important glues binding together migrant communities, especially when they include IDPs and refugees. It is well known but the implications are not well understood, how important music and other forms of intangible cultural heritage, particularly traditional ICH, is to the transmission of histories and identities between generations, as well as to maintaining communal coherence, solidarity, and mediation.

What started with 14 musicians now has over 600 members and has enabled one of the first major collaborations between UNESCO and UNHCR on non-educational activities, specifically organizing trainings and festival featuring traditional music from the community who live there. Over the last 3 years we have brought over hundreds of instruments from people's home countries, brought in trainers to help instruct musicians and ordinary people, especially children, to learn and understand their traditional heritage.

Our work in Kakuma Camp, whose two dozen communities reflect and have brought many of the conflicts from the surrounding countries to the camp, has shown in detail how traditional music can serve as a medium for intra and intercommunal communication, mediation, and solidarity. What's more, because of how difficult it is to bring traditional musical instruments with you when you become a refugee, by enabling them to be brought to the camp We have enabled the re-acquisition of ICH lost over decades by forced migration. Finally, our activities have enabled the professionalization of a new cadre of musicians who have been able to create groups and do performances in and outside the camp. This is helping further integrate the communities in the camp with the surrounding host community.

A full summary of our work, as well as examples of our music and videos, is available at [kakuma-sound.org](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fkakuma-sound.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7Chrc-sr-culturalrights%40un.org%7C490f20d811ba46e93ae708dab6d453df%7C0f9e35db544f4f60bdcc5ea416e6dc70%7C0%7C0%7C638023320311172327%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C2000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=5q1bqZsRXkd0tN5Icq4qE0ing%2BHXF0Rur4cFUJjVcIs%3D&reserved=0). The report on our major festival this summer is also available there. I am happy to discuss these issues further as I believe culture, and music in particular, have to be crucial to any assessment never mind improvement of the migrant experience, especially those of forced migrants.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for your work on this report.

Sincerely ,

Mark LeVine, PhD