

## **Cultural goods export increased to \$276 million**

Pakistan's total exports of cultural goods have increased from \$60 million in 2004 to \$276 million in 2013 and they can get a further boost if the country signs a UNESCO 2005 convention for protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions. The UNESCO organised a consultative meeting on policies for Pakistan's culture and creative sector here in Islamabad on Wednesday wherein stakeholders from Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Fata and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expressed their viewpoint on importance of diversity of cultural goods and services.

They urged for a participatory process for policy-making and made recommendations for the signing of UNESCO 2005 Convention for the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions. They reaffirmed their commitment for continuous advocacy to devising effective policies and strategies for Pakistan's culture and creative sectors both at federal and provincial levels.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the UNESCO representative to Pakistan, Vibeke Jensen said that the recommendations coming out of the workshops will be shared in meetings later this year with both federal and provincial governments and parliamentarians to encourage signing of the convention.

More than 144 UNESCO member states have signed the convention since 2005 when it was adopted, she said, adding the convention advocates for the introduction of policies and measures that nurture creativity, provide access for creators to participate in domestic and international marketplaces where their artistic works/expressions can be recognised and compensate and ensure that these expressions are accessible to the broader public.

Mohsin S Haqqani, Secretary National History and Literary Division, reaffirmed the government's commitment to promote the diversity of cultural expression and initiatives for boosting Pakistan's creative sector.

He said the creation of a policy working group and key recommendations from these consultations will help the government in adopting appropriate and transparent policies for culture and creativity. He also said the government is undertaking preparations to sign the UNESCO 2005 convention.

Ammara Durrani, Programme Advisor Center for Culture and Development (CKU), briefed the participants about the two-year CKU Pakistan being implemented in Pakistan in partnership with national and international organisations, such as UNESCO, to support and promote rights-based art, cultural activities, creative industries and inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation at national and provincial levels. She lauded UNESCO's key role in facilitating a national platform for stakeholder dialogue that is aimed at recommending a robust and effective policy framework for Pakistan's culture sector to leverage and harness its dynamic potential and opportunities.

The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development also highlights the important role of culture in relation to education, sustainable cities, food security, the environment, economic growth, sustainable consumption and production patterns, peaceful and inclusive societies. Globally, the

creative economy has grown extremely fast over the past 20 years and is today worth an estimated \$4.3 trillion per year, contributing to 6.1 percent of the global economy.

**Source:** <http://www.brecorder.com/business-and-economy/189:pakistan/67608:cultural-goods-export-increased-to-276-million/?date=2016-07-21>

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