

## **Policies for culture and creative sector discussed**

KARACHI: A variety of suggestions were given by stakeholders on the first day of the two day consultation meeting organised by UNESCO Pakistan and the Centre for Culture and Development to discuss the state of affairs of Pakistan's cultural and creative sectors and to raise awareness about the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression in a hotel here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Andrew Senior, UNESCO consultant and an expert on culture and creative economy, said Pakistan had tremendous potential for boosting its rich cultural and creative sectors for socioeconomic and cultural development. The contemporary creative and art scene was rapidly emerging, opening new horizons in the country, he said. He was of the view that adopting strong cultural and creative policies was the key to successful globalisation. He also talked about the series of consultations that UNESCO has launched to engage major stakeholders.

Sharmeela Farooqui, minister for culture, government of Sindh, said nations that allowed their sense of history, culture and diversity to be lost ultimately got lost in history themselves. She told the attendees that her ministry was in the process of articulating a policy on culture for Sindh.

Balochistan's secretary for culture Noorul Haque Baloch said each province needed to have its own cultural policy by engaging the public with experts and policymakers for deliberation at each level.

**Source:** <http://www.dawn.com/news/1271679>

\*\*\*

## **‘A world without music and art would be boring’**

KARACHI: A workshop on the second and last day of the consultation meeting organised by Unesco Pakistan and the Centre for Culture and Development to discuss Pakistan’s cultural and creative sectors in a hotel here on Tuesday helped a group of creative individuals and entrepreneurs understand the importance of creative economy and the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The day began with opening remarks from Vibeke Jensen, director of UNESCO Islamabad. She said the event was part of a bigger project. She said its objective was to empower the government and civil society sectors to have a participatory approach to the subject. She, at that point, raised a question: ‘Can you imagine a world without music, the arts and dance?’ And then answered herself: ‘It would be a boring world.’

Ms Jensen talked about the convention calling it a treaty which protected and promoted cultural expression. She said Pakistan had yet to sign the convention. She said it would require a public-private partnership to move towards that goal. She claimed that the strength of the 2005 Convention was its innovative approach to policymaking. She said if Pakistan signed it, it would be able to have access to a wider market. She said participatory policymaking needed to broadly engage all stakeholders.

After Ms Jensen’s speech Unesco consultant Andrew Senior conducted the programme. Using his ‘business triangulation’ method, he told the participants there were three sides to the triangle — manager, entrepreneur and creative — and whoever felt that s/he fell into one of the categories should drop a card in that corner and stand there. The majority of attendees stood in the creative corner. Once that was done he asked everyone to introduce themselves. It was an eclectic mix of people, including a filmmaker, an art gallery curator, aspiring designers and a photographer.

When everyone settled back into their seats, Mr Senior gave his presentation, which was pretty interactive, with the help of slides. He asked the audience what they understood by the word ‘creative’, to which multiple replies came such as ‘out of the box’, ‘self-belief’ and ‘madness’. The response to entrepreneur was ‘focused’, ‘determination’ and ‘risk-taker’ whereas for the word manager the response came in the shape of ‘listener’, ‘speaker’, ‘trustworthy’ and ‘decision-maker’.

Describing the three, Mr Senior said there were many skills that entrepreneurs had while working with talented people, but management was different. He said a manager was always trying to make sure that the business was stable whereas with an entrepreneur there was an element of ‘instinct’. He said entrepreneurs and creative people had a vision, and entrepreneurship had the potential for creating jobs. He said creativity was as old as time and it’s a natural resource that’s evenly spread all around the world.

Speaking on the roots of the 2005 Convention, Mr Senior mentioned a few points such as English was a globally dominant language, civil society had become a critical actor and it was important to protect marginalised manifestations of culture. Highlighting convergence of concepts with regard to the convention, he said promotion was an economic activity and creative entrepreneurs were a critical part of civil society. He said the convention was the fastest ratified in Unesco history. He said there was no apparent resistance to it in Pakistan. When a participant raised a question about the ratification issue, another UNESCO consultant Salman Asif interjected and said out of the eight Saarc countries five were already signatories to it. He said Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal hadn't yet signed it.

Going back to his presentation, Mr Senior said the convention was a legally binding international instrument which provided framework for intellectual discourse, dispute settlements, trade and cooperation. He reiterated that the objective of the convention was to protect and promote diversity of cultural expression and to encourage dialogue among cultures.

Pointing out the significance of the digital age, Mr Senior said Google came in 1998, Facebook in 2004 and Twitter in 2006, creating a new industrial revolution. He said in Pakistan, too, there was an emerging paradigm of a systematic change, and changing business models. This made him shed light on the finer points of copyright issues and how they could be tackled. On the topic of building markets, he said in a big wide world, the local still mattered because "it's about your culture and heritage". He said the concept of creative economy was linked to museums, galleries, libraries and archives. He said working internationally meant that one was being able to collaborate and had an understanding of infrastructure of industries in other parts of the globe. He said with reference to creativity quality counted and a narrative that 'resonated' mattered.

In the second half of the workshop working groups were created who shared their ideas.

**Source:** <http://www.dawn.com/news/1271878>

\*\*\*