

SDG Summit 2023 Informal Stakeholder Dialogue
Inputs to the Zero Draft Political Declaration
7 June 2023

Statement of Ms. Alexandra Xanthaki
Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

Thank you for inviting me to take the floor.

I am Alexandra Xanthaki, the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights. I have focused a substantial part of my mandate on development and cultural rights.

I regret the lack of recognition of the importance of cultural diversity and cultural rights in development processes and the SDGs, and in the zero draft. Let's seize the opportunity provided by the SDG Summit to address this gap and affirm that cultural development should be an integral part of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.

The Zero draft should recall that “people and peoples must be the primary beneficiaries of sustainable development processes and affirm that sustainable development processes should be culturally sensitive and appropriate, contextualised to specific cultural environments and seek to fully align themselves with the aspirations, customs, traditions, systems and world views of the individuals and groups most likely to be affected”.

The Zero draft should also “recognize that cultural diversity is crucial for the human ecosystem and for the sustainability and resilience of the wider ecosystems, together with biodiversity, to which it is interlinked; and that it opens avenues towards implementation that recognizes the value of both traditional and modern knowledge and encourages their synergy; cultural rights are at the core of sustainable development processes”.

Finally, the Zero draft should “support the recognition of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, and recognize the need for a stronger place for culture throughout the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; the adoption of a stand-alone goal on culture in the post-2030 development agenda and the adoption of a global agenda for culture.”

All these points could be included in para. 36, in the form of additional sub-paragraphs.

I would also like to stress that a mention to the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022 should be added in para. 29.

Last year, I presented my report to the GA on these issues, which can be found on my website: [OHCHR | Report on cultural rights and sustainable development](#)
I thank you.

Summary of proposals for inputs in the zero draft in writing

- Para 11: We also remain resolved to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive, **culturally-sensitive** and sustained economic growth
- Add a new para. 15: “We confirm that cultural development is an integral part of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.”
- Para. 29: Add a mention to the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022.
- Add a new sub-paragraph after para 36 f: “We recall that people and peoples must be the primary beneficiaries of sustainable development processes and affirm that sustainable development processes should be culturally sensitive and appropriate, contextualised to specific cultural environments and seek to fully align themselves with the aspirations, customs, traditions, systems and world views of the individuals and groups most likely to be affected;”
- In para. 36, section “*Lever for SDG acceleration*” should start with the following two paragraphs:
 - j) We recognize that cultural diversity is crucial for the human ecosystem and for the sustainability and resilience of the wider ecosystems, together with biodiversity, to which it is interlinked; and that it opens avenues towards implementation that recognizes the value of both traditional and modern knowledge and encourages their synergy; cultural rights are at the core of sustainable development processes.
 - k) We support the recognition of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, and recognize the need for a stronger place for culture throughout the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; the adoption of a stand-alone goal on culture in the post-2030 development agenda and the adoption of a global agenda for culture.