

***European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity***  
*(Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, Switzerland)*

**Final Declaration**  
**Meeting in Brussels, January 17 and 18, 2006**

The European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity supported strongly the adoption, thanks to the unanimity of the 25 Member States of the European Union and more largely of wide Europe, by the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO of the Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions on October 20, 2005.

Promoted actively by all the Coalitions for Cultural Diversity throughout the world (33 to date<sup>1</sup>), this convention poses the international legal bases for the development of cultural policies defending cultural diversity actively.

At the European level, the Coalitions have praised the good implementation of the mandate which made it possible for the European Commission to negotiate the convention in the name of the European Community and of the 25 Member States and to accelerate the global process of negotiation.

**Call for a fast ratification of the Convention**

The European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity launch today a call for the fast ratification of the convention by the European Community and its Member States so that Europe, after Canada, illustrates itself among the first ratifications. A fast ratification by the European Community and the Member States would guarantee not only an entry into force of the convention but would also show a significant political signal of the major attachment of Europe to cultural diversity.

In this context, the European Coalitions praise the adoption by the European Commission on December, 21 2005 of a proposal for a decision of the Council opening the way with the Community ratification and invite the Member States to start their own internal ratification procedures without delay.

The European Union will also have to make proposals for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity provided by the Convention, in the context of the development aid.

**Cultural Diversity in the internal policies of the Union**

The principle of cultural diversity must impregnate the whole of the internal policies of the European Union. For this reason, the European Coalitions will exert their greatest vigilance on the following files of Community policy:

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<sup>1</sup> Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Ecuador, France, Germany, Guinea, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, South Korea, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Peru, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Uruguay and Venezuela

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### **- Revision of the "Television without frontiers" Directive**

The revision of the "Television without frontiers" Directive is the first practical exercise of implementation of the principle of cultural diversity since the adoption of the UNESCO convention. The European Coalitions greet the European Commissions' proposal of December 13, 2005 which requires from the Member States to take care of the promotion of European works by the new operators of audiovisual media (of video-on-demand for example).

The European Coalitions will be vigilant with respect to the European Parliament and to the Council on the maintenance and the reinforcement of this measure so that it guarantees the development of a great cultural diversity on these new and future means of communicating works to the public.

### **- Budgetary allocation of the Culture and Media Programs**

The European Council of December 2005 traced the broad outline of the budget of the European Union over the period 2007-2013, which is far from reaching the proposals made by the European Commission. Culture and creation should not be seen as if they were relegated after all the other priorities. The political will of Europe in cultural matters must be translated into financial terms and the budgetary allocations of the Culture and Media Programs must be at the height of the stakes and the political ambition of Europe.

### **- Directive on Services**

The proposal for a Directive on Services will be the subject of a vote in first reading in the European Parliament in February. The perspective of excluding only the audiovisual sector from the directive is not enough to calm down our serious worries about the global consequences of this text on culture as a whole. The cultural and audiovisual services, the collective management organisations of intellectual property rights and the culture-workers (performing artists and technicians) shall be taken out of the scope of the directive on services.

### **- International Trade Negotiations in WTO**

The member States of the World Trade organization (WTO) have adopted a ministerial declaration in Hong Kong on December 18, 2005 to try to relaunch the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, notably on services. The European Coalitions fear a renewal of activities from the opponents to the UNESCO Convention in commercial fora to try to bypass the commitments taken at UNESCO in favour of cultural diversity. They will be very careful so that cultural and audiovisual services be preserved from any new liberalization attempt, including through bilateral or plurilateral negotiations.

### **Development of new Coalitions in Europe**

Lastly, the nine current European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity commit to actively promote the development of new Coalitions in all Europe.