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**DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR THE**

**NINTH INTER-AMERICAN MEETING OF MINISTERS**

**OF CULTURE AND HIGHEST APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES**

**Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala – October 27-28, 2022**

**“Technology, creativity, and innovation as an opportunity for**

**developing and strengthening culture”**

(Approved during the regular meeting held July 26, 2022)

1. BACKGROUND

The COVID 19 Pandemic has severely impacted many of the key sectors and drivers of economic activity in countries all across the globe. The impact on the culture and creative industries has been particularly devastating. This has been evident especially in relation to venue and site-based activities, such as theatre, live music, festivals, cinemas, and museums. UNESCO estimates that an overall US$750bn contraction of the gross value added by cultural and creative industries has been experienced globally in 2020, which represents a dramatic setback in the capacity of these industries to be drivers of cultural, economic, and social outputs for sustainable development.[[1]](#footnote-2)/

The Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities is therefore taking place following this decline; and at a time when some countries have begun to remove many of the Pandemic era measures which precluded the site-based activities, which disrupted artists and other cultural practitioners from their traditional livelihoods.

The Ninth Meeting therefore offers OAS member states the opportunity to explore how artists and cultural practitioners managed to maintain their livelihoods during this period; including their adaptation to new circumstances, use of technology tools and support from government during this time. Perhaps more importantly, the meeting will allow for a further discussion on the potential role of technology, creativity, and innovation in strengthening culture, and artistic expression going forward. These discussions would include sharing information and experiences on how technologieshave been used in the collection, preservation, and dissemination efforts of arts and cultural heritage, and how to strengthen tangible and intangible heritage through innovation and use of new technologies.

B. PROPOSED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

At the Sixth Regular Meeting of the inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC) held virtually on April 27, 2021, the Committee received a presentation from the hosts of the Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities during which they proposed the following theme for the upcoming meeting: “Technology, Creativity, and Innovation as an Opportunity for Developing and Strengthening Culture”. It also highlighted the following four sub-themes which it proposed to include:

* Methodologies and Policies for Promoting the Management and Consumption of Arts and Literature
* The Economy and Creative Industries
* Research Models for Cultural Development
* Strengthening Heritage and Cultural Expressions

The Technical Secretariat of the CIC subsequently received comments from member states on the proposed topics and sub-topics for the meeting. To accommodate those comments, as well as to facilitate a more streamlined discussion of these issues during the upcoming meeting, the four proposed sub-themes were condensed into three, with the discussion on Research Models for Cultural Development being subsumed under the Methodologies and Policies for Promoting the Management and Consumption of Arts and Literature sub-theme. With the original theme, the three formal sub-themes to be discussed at the Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities are therefore the following:

* Methodologies and Policies for Promoting the Management and Consumption of Arts and Literature
* The Economy and Cultural and Creative Industries
* Strengthening Heritage and Cultural Expressions

The first sub-theme **Methodologies and Policies for Promoting Management and Consumption of the Arts and Literature** recognizes that one of the consequences of the pandemic has been the increased use of digital technologies by cultural professionals and consumers of cultural and creative goods. Artists, creatives, and other cultural professionals were challenged to explore the opportunities offered by technology to produce digital content in new consumable formats and to connect with audiences and new consumers of cultural and creative goods in new ways. This notwithstanding, challenges related *inter alia* to the digital divide; the uneven use by cultural practitioners and availability of technology across and within countries and regions have emerged. This necessitates the need for discussion on methodologies and policies for promoting technology in management, production, and consumption of the Arts, Literature, and other cultural and creative goods.

The Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities will provide a forum for discussions on strengthening the training of professional artists to integrate technology that supports monetization, and maximizes outreach and consumption of cultural goods. These discussions will share information on cultural development research models, to include but not be limited to using technology to generate research and cultural goods focused on pre-Colombian, Indigenous and Afro-descendant cultural heritage, digital strategies to promote consumption of arts and culture, and promoting literary works and other artistic activities using technology. In addition, the discussion would also provide an opportunity for conversations surrounding the use of current, and up-and-coming technologies to potentially include examples of use of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)[[2]](#footnote-3)/, and the role of cultural authorities in supporting their diffusion within the culture and creative industries.

The second sub-theme **The Economy and Cultural and Creatives Industries** acknowledges that the culture and creative industries in the Americas so adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are to a significant degree comprised of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), individual artists, creatives and other small-sized producers of cultural goods and services. While some of these may have survived the worst of the Pandemic, through the adoption and use of technology tools and support from governments and cultural authorities, others continue to struggle or have left these industries and sought other economic opportunities elsewhere. At the same time, the creative industries in the Americas are yet to realize their full potential and economic contribution, including for example empowerment of women in the cultural industries and arts. In these circumstances it will be important to promote the reactivation of cultural and creative industries and support for MSMEs in the culture sector, and to nurture and develop businesses in the creative economy.

The Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities will allow member states to share their experiences regarding efforts to nurture and develop creative entrepreneurs and businesses. This could include but not limited to examples of business incubator and accelerator models, using technology as a basis for maximizing outreach, developing technical skills and capacity building, as central tenets for reactivation in the sector, particularly in cultural industries and arts of the region. The reflections of the Mondiacult Forum will be taken into account in the interventions. The Meeting will also include discussion on policies and fiscal or other financial support programs for cultural and creative industries impacted by the pandemic, as well as how to strengthen measurement of the economic contribution of these industries through tools such within culture satellite accounts.

The third sub-theme **Strengthening Heritage and Cultural Expressions** seeks to facilitate discussion among Ministers on how technology tools can and have been used for the strengthening of heritage and cultural expressions in the Americas. It recognizes that information, communication, and digital technologiesare increasingly being used globally in the collection, preservation, and dissemination efforts of arts and cultural heritage. This includes for example, 3D configuration of ancient artifacts or applying Augmented Reality (AR) to supplement the perception of real-world environments including heritage.

Similarly, during the Third Phase of the project “Enhancing the Framework for the Development of a Heritage Economy in the Caribbean,” National Registers/Inventories of Heritage Places were established in two member states, for the documentation of Heritage places, so that countries know the location of their Heritage places and have full historical information on them -using ARCHES, an open-source geospatially-enabled software platform for Cultural Heritage inventory and management, developed by the World Monuments Fund and the Getty Conservation Institute.

The Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities will share examples of use of technologies for work, knowledge, and preservation of cultural heritage in OAS member states. The Meeting will also discuss how to strengthen tangible and intangible heritage through innovation and use of new technologies for dissemination and practice; and how to recognize and socialize the contribution of Indigenous, Afro-descendant and other local communities’ cultural and heritage and cultural expressions of the Americas utilizing information, communication, and digital technologies.

Other topics to be covered at the meeting include:

**Reception of Offers to Host the Tenth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities**

According to the annexes of the General Guidelines for Ministerial-Level Sectoral Processes within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), the member state interested in hosting a Ministerial meeting is invited to announce its intention at the previous Ministerial meeting so that it integrates the Troika (See CIDI/doc.228/17 Add. 1, item 10) and becomes part of the Ministerial process and activities in preparation for the next meeting.

**Election of Officers of the Inter-American Committee on Culture**

The Chair and two Vice Chairs of the Inter-American Committee on Culture will be elected.

Art. 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Committees (CIDI/doc.259/18): Each Inter-American Committee of CIDI shall elect a chair and two vice chairs, who shall hold office for three years or until the next regular meeting of the Committee. Their terms shall begin on the date of their election and shall last until the election of their successors. In the event that the Committee does not meet within that period, the elections may be held in the framework of regular CIDI meetings or the meeting of ministers and/or high authorities of the sector in question, provided that the item is included on the meeting’s agenda. The election shall be by affirmative vote of a majority of the member states.

**Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Declaration and Draft Plan of Action**

The Draft Declaration and Draft Plan of Action will be considered for approval.

**Other matters**

C.PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Discuss the potential role of technology, creativity, and innovation in strengthening culture, and artistic expression
2. Discuss policies and actions for promoting technology in the management, production, and consumption of the Arts, Literature, and other cultural and creative goods.
3. Allow member states to share their experiences regarding efforts to nurture and develop creative entrepreneurs and businesses and enhance the contribution of the creative industries in the economy.

D. EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING

1. Improved regional dialogue and cooperation on culture and development in the Americas.
2. Reach agreements to support the adoption of policies which incorporate Technology, Creativity, and Innovation in the Development and Strengthening of Culture in the Americas.
3. Adopt the Draft Declaration and Drat Plan of Action of the Ninth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities.

E. STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING

The Meeting will offer a forum for member states to share experiences and will serve to promote dialogue among ministers and highest appropriate authorities of Culture. Each of the plenary sessions will be devoted to one of the meeting’s specific sub-themes and will include written, oral, and visual presentations by ministers, other highest appropriate authorities of culture, or their representatives. In extraordinary circumstances presentations may include from among subject-matter experts, if deemed necessary to enhance the dialogue. After the presentations for each sub-theme, the ministers will have sufficient time—at least forty-five (45) minutes—to engage in in-depth discussions and present other considerations, share country experiences, or even suggest possible options for policies related to the area being addressed.

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1. . New UNESCO Economic Impact Outlook on The Creative Industries, downloadable at ttps://en.unesco.org/creativity/news/new-unesco-economic-impact-outlook-creative-industries [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. . An NFT is a digital asset that represents real-world objects like art, music, in-game items, and videos. They are bought and sold online, frequently with [cryptocurrency](https://www.forbes.com/advisor/investing/cryptocurrency/what-is-cryptocurrency/), and they are generally encoded with the same underlying software as many cryptos. See Forbes Advisor, April 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/investing/cryptocurrency/nft-non-fungible-token/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)