

Africa Caucus Statement: Culture

The Africa Caucus through IPACC wish to make the following recommendations in regards to the theme of culture:

- We note with concern how urbanization is affecting the loss of indigenous languages and their continued oppression.
 - *Member States should ensure official and constitutional status of indigenous languages.*
- We wish to affirm indigenous children's rights to mother tongue education and note the continued victimization of our children for speaking their languages.
 - *Policy should be drafted to constitutionally protect and enforce mother tongue instruction from an early age.*
- *We call on Member States to implement the relevant existing international instruments that address traditional knowledge, including UNDRIP, Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, and the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Expressions.*
- Ongoing international negotiations in this field, such as those under WIPO, the FAO, and the Working on Article 8(j) should not undermine but further support existing standards regarding indigenous traditional knowledge rights.
- Furthermore, there is a crucial link between the protection of cultural and biological diversity.
 - *We call on Member States to recognize this link when implementing international commitments, such as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of 2010.*

- *In doing so, Member States should fully include indigenous peoples in the drafting and implementing National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans.*
- We underscore the Forum's recommendation that UNESCO, and other cultural and academic institutions recognize and document the diversity and importance of gender relations in indigenous communities. Such research should draw on active community input.
- We call on WIPO to ensure that protection frameworks are put in place regarding traditional cultural expressions, such as artifacts. We request that the UN dedicate one day to display indigenous artifacts.
- We highlight the continued non-recognition of indigenous traditional forms of livelihood such as hunting, pastoralism and fisheries.
 - *We therefore call upon Member States to withdraw all restrictions on rights concerning traditional livelihoods.*
 - *We call upon Member States to comply with Article 20 of UNDRIP affirming indigenous peoples' right to be secure in their form of subsistence and to be able to freely engage in their traditional activities.*
- The Africa caucus notes the continued land loss through land dispossession by extractive industries, deforestation, as well as conservation policies.
 - *We recommend that indigenous peoples' rights to their lands, territories and resources be respected and protected as affirmed in Articles 25; 26 and 29 of UNDRIP.*