

37^º período de
sesiones del Consejo
de Derechos Humanos
de Naciones Unidas
en Ginebra

21 de marzo 2018
13:00 - 14:30
Sala XXIV
Palais des Nations



El arte es clave para formar a generaciones capaces de reinventar el mundo que han heredado. Refuerza la vitalidad de las identidades culturales y promueve la relación con otras comunidades, contribuyendo así a la construcción de un patrimonio común. Ayuda a formar ciudadanos tolerantes y dinámicos en nuestro mundo globalizado.

Irina Bokova, Directora General de la UNESCO, en UNESCO Semana internacional de la educación artística, 2012.

Presentación del acto y moderación

Arantzazu Acha de la Presa – Directora de UNESCO Etxea

Educación artística como herramienta de educación a los derechos humanos

Aranzazu Toledo - Directora pedagógica de escuela primaria, IIMA España

Educación artística en la educación formal

Gemma Carbó - Directora de ConArte Internacional

Habrá un pequeño catering antes del evento, cortesía de España.

Organizan:



Apoyan:



Colaboran:



37th session
of the United Nations
Human Rights
Council in Geneva

21st March 2018
13:00 - 14:30
Room XXIV
Palais des Nations



Art is a key to train generations able to reinventing the world that they have inherited. It reinforces the vitality of cultural identities and promotes the relationship with other communities, thus contributing to the construction of a common heritage. It helps to train up tolerant and dynamic citizens in our globalized world.

Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, at UNESCO International Week of Arts Education, 2012.

Presentation of the event and moderation
Arantzazu Acha de la Presa - Director of UNESCO Etxea

Art education as a tool for human rights education
Aranzazu Toledo - Primary School Director, IIMA Spain

Art education in formal education
Gemma Carbó - Director of ConArte Internacional

Light refreshments will be served before the event - courtesy of Spain.

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INTRODUCTION

Organized by UNESCO Extea (UNESCO Center Basque Country) and the Permanent Mission of Spain, the side event “Arts and Cultural Education as a Right”, took place on the 21st of March 2018 in conjunction with the 37th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. This event was organized with the support of Interreg POCTEFA – MIGAP (EU) and the Agencia Vasca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo, and was also co-sponsored by the International Catholic Center of Geneva (CCIG), the Instituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA), and International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education, and Development (VIDES International).

Ms. Arantzazu Acha de la Presa, Director of UNESCO Extea, moderated the event.

BACKGROUND

During the last few years, international organizations have showed a growing interest in the role of culture and cultural expression diversity in the field of education aimed at social transformation.

The first World Conference on Arts Education was held in Lisbon in 2006. The main outcome from the conference was the Road Map for Arts Education, a policy-guiding document aimed at raising awareness among all concerned stakeholders on the importance of Arts Education and its crucial role for improving the quality of education.

Four years later, in 2010, a second edition of the World Conference on Arts Education took place in Seoul. In the Closing Session, the “Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education” was presented which affirmed that arts education has an important role to play in the constructive transformation of educational systems. The Agenda sets three main Goals:

1. Ensure that arts education is accessible as a fundamental and sustainable component of a high quality renewal of education
2. Ensure that arts education activities and programs are of a high quality in conception and delivery
3. Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today’s world.

The Seoul Agenda calls upon UNESCO Member States, civil society, professional organizations and communities to realize the full potential of high quality arts education to positively renew educational systems, to achieve crucial social and cultural objectives, and ultimately to benefit children, youth and life-long learners of all ages.

Since 2011, UNESCO Etxea, together with the International Catholic Center of Geneva, has organized training sessions on the UN Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

The training program introduces the functioning of the UN mechanisms for the protection of human rights, combining theoretical presentations with attendance at a session of the Human Rights Council.

Previous training sessions were addressed to professionals in the field of international cooperation, education and development. The 2018 session, instead, targeted Arts educators, cultural managers, teachers and student teachers who wished to deepen their knowledge of international instruments for promoting the right to education and/or cultural rights.

Furthermore, the 2018 training also provided the occasion to organize a side event on “Arts Education as a Right” in conjunction with the 37th session of the Human Rights Council.

Taking into account the work of the Permanent Mission of Spain in the framework of the Human Rights Council with a particular focus on youth, UNESCO Etxea was happy to join forces to co-organize this event.

The presentations by the speakers, Ms Arantzazu Acha de la Presa (Director of UNESCO Etxea), Ms Gemma Carbó (Director of ConArte Internacional), Ms Aranzazu Toledo (Primary School Director - IIMA Spain), and Mr Emilio Pin Godós (Human Rights Adviser of the Permanent Mission of Spain), offered concrete inputs on how Arts Education can become a means for social transformation both in formal and informal education.

By bringing together members of civil society, experts and State representatives, this event created a space for dialogue and the sharing of information in order to identify the different ways of dealing with the issues identified.

The purpose of this brief report is to present a summary of the discussions which took place during the side event.

PANEL

Presentation of the event and moderation

Ms Arantzazu Acha de la Presa, Director of UNESCO Extea

Arts education as a tool for human rights education

Ms Aranzazu Toledo, Primary School Director - IIMA Spain

Arts education in formal education

Ms Gemma Carbó, Director of ConArte Internacional

Concluding Remarks

Mr Emilio Pin Godós, Human Rights Adviser of the Permanent Mission of Spain

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In her opening remarks, **Ms Arantzazu Acha de la Presa** (Director of UNESCO Extea) began by thanking all the organizations which jointly sponsored and helped coordinate the event, together with the donors.

Ms Acha de la Presa then went on to highlight how the United Nations Organization Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been the driving force of all efforts aimed at bringing together the worlds of Education and the Arts in recent decades.

In fact, since the 1970s, UNESCO has been stressing the crucial role of Arts in the field of education as well as the need to include Arts at all levels of formal and informal education.

During the 1980s, UNESCO initiated the Major Program XI “Culture and the future”, which included efforts to raise awareness and promote Arts education. Among other things, it encouraged an exchange between creators and society in order to improve the participation of people in artistic and intellectual life.

In 1996, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century submitted to UNESCO the report “Learning: The Treasure Within”, i.e. the famous “Delors Report”. In building the fundamentals of education in the Twenty-first Century, the Report stresses the need to reform and enhance the education system, valuing education through Arts and creativity.

Since 2000, UNESCO has developed a structured program on Arts education and creativity (i.e. the UNESCO Arts Education program), which resulted in the organization of expert meetings and international conferences, in the adoption of recommendations to be implemented in the education systems, and in the proclamation of the fourth week of May as International Arts Education Week.

Within this program, it is important to highlight the organization of the Second World Conference on Arts Education that took place in the Republic of Korea in 2010. The conference emphasized the value that creativity holds in the educational process of youth and life-long learners of all ages. On the same lines, the conference highlighted the social and cultural dimensions of Arts education.

The Seoul Agenda, adopted at the conference, presented an action plan developed around three main overall objectives: (i) Ensure that arts education is accessible as a fundamental and sustainable component of a high quality renewal of education; (ii) Ensure that arts education activities and programs are of a high quality in conception and delivery; and (iii) Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today’s world.

Ms Acha de la Presa explained how the learning of Arts and culture in formal and informal education represents one of the most powerful strategies to build a conscious citizenship

committed to the protection of human rights. The inclusion of Arts in education, through Arts education and through education for Arts, contributes to the full and integral development of children and youth. The development of creative abilities, self-esteem, a readiness to learn, the capacity to work in teams and the ability to think abstractly, find a very favorable environment in the Arts that allows the building of awareness, the acquiring of knowledge and the ability to express oneself.

As a result, the objectives of the side event were to: (i) share experiences on Arts education as a means of youth mobilization; (ii) encourage organizations working in education for social change to include artistic expressions in their activities with children and youth; and (iii) promote Arts and cultural education as a right and a requirement to achieve Goal 4 on quality education in the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda.

Finally, before giving the floor to the panelists, Ms Acha de la Presa welcomed the presence among the public of six young women working in the fields of Arts and education, who were participating in a training session organized in Geneva that week by UNESCO Extea in collaboration with the International Catholic Center of Geneva.

The first speaker to take the floor was **Ms. Aranzazu Toledo** (Primary School Director - IIMA Spain), who provided through the Project “Mi viaje” a concrete example of how Arts education is to be considered a valuable tool for promoting human rights education. She began with a brief presentation of the work of the Salesian Sisters, known at the United Nations as the Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in Special Consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In Spain, the Salesian Sisters run 42 primary and secondary schools and a university institute, several youth centers and hostels for children and adolescents in need, as well as other initiatives for migrants. Ms Toledo shared her experience as an educator in a Salesian School located in a central area of the city of Sevilla, whose students come from medium-high income families and benefit from a good quality of education. As a Salesian educator, she defined her mission to consist not only in the transmission of the curricula, but also in making children aware of the diversity of the society in which they live and to sympathize with other people living in more difficult situations than their own. Sensitizing the children to become more conscious and responsible citizens and leaders, committed to the promotion and defense of human rights.

She continued by explaining how her colleagues and herself truly believed their task was being well accomplished until they offered their students the possibility to meet with a young migrant woman, Deborah, and hear the touching testimony of her very tough journey to Spain from Nigeria.

Due to the insecurity and the extreme poverty she experienced in her country of origin and the even worst discriminations suffered by being a woman, Deborah decided to migrate. She travelled for almost two years, in the most dangerous conditions. Among other terrible experiences, she crossed the desert by foot, gave birth to her first son in a telephone booth, lived on the street with her newborn child without any assistance for several months and barely survived a trip on an inflatable boat where 45 out of 65 passengers died in the sea.

Hearing Deborah's story, all teachers were deeply touched and, at the same time, astonished by the fact that some of the students were not able to empathize at all with the young migrant women who had suffered so much and was now standing in front of them sharing her testimony. This acknowledgment motivated the educators to take action to address this situation.

They started by encouraging the students who felt more touched by the story of Deborah to share their emotions with their classmate. Music was used as a tool to create a conducive environment for the sharing. In the framework of Social Science teaching, students learned where Nigeria is situated and the possible itinerary of Deborah's travel. During the class of Mathematics, students calculated the daily mean of the kilometers travelled. During the class of Arts education, an exhibition of paintings was organized by the students illustrating what had impressed them most about Deborah's journey. The exhibition was visited by other students to whom the young authors explained their artworks. They were also disseminated through social media. In the language and literature class, the students explained the change that occurred in their perception of the reality of migrant people: every time they meet a migrant person on the street, they wonder how difficult it must have been to come here, how many friends had been lost during the journey, if he or she will never see his/her family again. The reflections of the students were also included in the exhibition in the form of captions to the paintings.

The result was that the young students now see people where previously they saw only numbers announced on the news, to which they did not pay attention. Ms. Toledo highlighted how this sensitization initiative went beyond the students themselves and also reached their families, since the children now paid attention to the news regarding migrants and discussed this with their parents. This experience showed the crucial role played by education to bring about a positive societal change. As stated by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its General Comment N° 13 concerning article 13 of the relevant Covenant¹, **“education shall be directed to the human personality's ‘sense of dignity’, it shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, and it shall promote understanding among all ethnic groups, as well as nations and racial and religious groups.”**²

Ms. Toledo's presentation also included some proposals for action, calling upon States to recognize the place education deserves, highlighting the importance of Arts education as an effective tool to promote human rights education among children, adolescents and society at large. Regrettably, at present Arts education is not adequately developed in school curricula, which allocates a very limited time to this subject (in Spain, only 1h30 minutes per week, 45 minutes of which are dedicated to music and 45 minutes to Arts and Crafts).

Arts education is a right of all, but even more importantly it is a right for all. It not only contributes to the full and integral development of students as direct beneficiaries, but it also produces a positive impact on society at large. Arts education is the ‘educational weapon’ that opens up the souls and allows emotions to flow, overcoming barriers and

¹ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

² UN Doc E/C.12/1999/10, § 4, p.2.

unifying us all as humankind. Last but not least, Arts education is a powerful tool for human rights education, without which the full and true respect of human rights, free of any discrimination, cannot be achieved.

Ms. Toledo concluded with an exhortation to consider “**each brush-stroke as an act of love for the others**”.

Next to take the floor, **Ms Gemma Carbó** (Director of ConArte Internacional) focused on the topic of Arts education in formal education. Despite the fact that the education and cultural systems represent two separated policy areas for the State, she stressed that educational and cultural models are closely interlinked. This strong connection between education and culture generates global challenges that impact directly the achievement of a sustainable human development and the full realization of human rights.

According to Ms Carbó, we are currently facing a global challenge in redefining the relationship between the education system and cultural policies. The realization of a new societal model aimed at ensuring justice, equality and peaceful coexistence will depend on how this relationship will be articulated. In Spain, the lack of participation in cultural life has a strong impact on a large part of the population, especially youth, for which the coordination between educational and cultural policies is very important.

Within the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, ambitions for education are essentially captured in Sustainable Development Goal 4 which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Accordingly, by 2030, all learners should acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development (The Target 4.7 - Education for sustainable development and global citizenship). UNESCO leads and coordinates the Education 2030 agenda which is encapsulated in SDG 4, through guidance and technical support within the overall SDG agenda.

Ms Carbó continued by noting with concern how the dominant technical approach has promoted a simplified and mechanical concept of life, almost completely deprived of vitality; this is a new concept of civilization that represents more a demotion than advancement. While brutality seems to be a natural outcome of this simplified life, this experience of dehumanization produces its most negative effects on the younger generations.

This reality urges a humanization of education and a valuing of its relationship with culture and arts.³ As stated by the *Special Rapporteur* in the field of cultural rights, in her recent report submitted to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2018, “actions in the field of arts and

³ See World Economic Forum, https://www.facebook.com/worldeconomicforum/videos/10155081394521479/?hc_ref=ARR_sYKOLYHpBylEhXJ5eoVEPSwgl2XgSkt9hzOSU04Zpct76mYn1Nt7Yj9CgVQxzsl&pnref=story

culture can make significant contributions towards creating, developing and maintaining societies in which all human rights are increasingly realized".⁴

In the same Report, the Special Rapporteur also pointed out how "The transformative power of arts and culture lies in the nature of the aesthetic experience, which links cognitive faculties with sense and emotions, creating platforms rich in potential for learning, reflection, experimentation, and the embrace of complexity. Artistic and cultural practices can offer experiences of non-coercive, constructive meaning-making and empowerment that can contribute to reaching a wide range of human rights goals."⁵ As a result, guaranteeing access to culture through education is even more urgent.

In the European framework, the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union on key competences for lifelong learning (18 December 2006) provides that "Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and performances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one's innate capacities. [...] A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression. A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self-expression and participation in cultural life."⁶

However, cultural awareness and expression are not on an equal footing with other competences taught in school curricula in the way they are evaluated. In order to address this shortcoming and face the challenge of assessing the acquisition of cultural awareness and expression, the OECD initiated a research project on assessing creative and critical thinking skills developed in an interdisciplinary teaching environment, which also covers arts and cultural instruction. As a result, skills belonging to cultural awareness and expression will be assessed in a 2021 PISA survey.

Not all artistic and cultural practices aim at shaping more inclusive and peaceful societies conducive to the realization of human rights. Social engagement towards that goal is a possibility for artists and cultural workers, but not a requirement.⁷ **Taking a human rights approach to evaluating the contribution that socially engaged actions in the field of arts and culture can make requires further thinking about objectives and methodologies.**⁸ With regard to Specific contributions and challenges, Ms Carbó mentioned: (i) Embracing cultural diversity, (ii) Overcoming fears and prejudices, (iii) Strengthening resilience; and (iv) Rebuilding trust and promoting reconciliation.⁹

Among the recommendations addressed by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, in her report of March 2018 to the Human Rights Council, Ms Carbó put forward the following two main action points: (i) Build partnerships and promote collaboration between

⁴ UN Doc. A/HRC/37/55, p. 1.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 3, § 3.

⁶ 2006/962/EC

⁷ UN Doc. A/HRC/37/55, p. 3, § 6

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 5, § 13.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 7 - 13.

educational institutions, cultural organizations and socially engaged artists; and (ii) Involve artists and cultural actors, including those working at the relevant local levels, in all stages of their work.

She shared her experience through the Project “Planters” of ConArte Internacional addressed to schools and educational centers of high complexity in Catalonia (Spain). The aim of this project was to integrate Arts education within the classrooms of primary and secondary schools. In 2014-2016, the Project “Planters” introduced the teaching of music, dance and theater co-managed by artists and teachers in 5 primary schools and 3 secondary schools of high complexity in four Municipalities of Girona’s Province.

Project activities always included the whole class as a group (with 25-30 students). Such activities were run by mixed teams of ConArte teachers and school teachers, working in tandem, to promote values and soft skills such as teamwork, collaboration, the discovery and respect of one another. Working with an artist in the classroom proved to be an extremely enriching experience allowing another point of and another way of reading different situations. Class preparation was facilitated through workgroups for educators, which provided an important space for debate and reciprocal learning in order to seek a shared methodology.¹⁰

In conclusion, Ms Carbó highlighted the results of an assessment study of the project, according to which Arts education in public schools improved the quality of education provided and generated social cohesion. Among several important outcomes for students participating in the project, she recalled a great improvement of their general learning skills, a direct positive impact on developing their intercultural abilities as well as an important indirect impact on their participation in the cultural life.

¹⁰ For more information on the Project “Planters”, please consult: <http://conarteinternacional.net/planters/>

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

The presentations by the speakers were followed by questions and comments from the public to stimulate debate. The first question addressed to the panel concerned the impact that the above mentioned projects produced on the families of the students. Other questions followed on strategies in place for extending the reach of these projects and the existing link between Arts education and the realization of sustainable development. Another comment pointed out how an education that does not take into account Arts is not consistent with the definition of the right to education under Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In fact, integral education cannot be realized without including arts as meaningful expression of the child.

The panelists then took the floor to answer the questions. On the subject of the impact of the project on indirect beneficiaries, the panelists highlighted once again the very positive impact of the described educational activities on the families of the students. In the experience of IIMA Spain, through the Project “Mi viaje”, the parents and relatives of the students involved were sensitized on the protection of the human rights of migrants. According to the representative of ConArte Internacional, the families of the primary school’ students are usually very supportive of the activities carried out through Project “Planters”. In contrast, in secondary school, the parents have a different perception of these activities and it has been necessary to raise awareness that arts education does not represent a waste of time for the students.

With regard to the reach of the project, panelists expressed the intention to replicate the projects in other educational settings and in other cities. In this regard, it was stressed the importance of establishing connections with the Municipalities, so that they can adapt the projects to the specificities of the context where the activities are carried out.

Concerning the link with the notion of sustainable development, it was clearly stated that the inclusion of Arts education is a requirement for the realization of an education truly oriented to sustainable development.

In this regard, Ms Acha de la Presa noted the absence of explicit reference to culture and Arts in the 2030 Agenda for the realization of sustainable development. She recognized that the Agenda is the result of a compromise which necessarily left out some important elements. However, she recognized the great value of the Agenda which provides an important framework for actions and recalled the responsibility we all share in enriching the Agenda with innovative implementation measures. Arts education represents indeed an important tool for the realization of the Agenda.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In his concluding remarks, **Mr Emilio Pin Godós**, Human Rights Adviser of the Permanent Mission of Spain at the United Nations in Geneva, warmly welcomed the very positive and constructive atmosphere generated by this side event.

He joined the panelists in reaffirming that the right to culture and to participation in cultural life is fundamental, especially during the first years of life, and instrumental in generating peaceful coexistence at local, national and international levels.

With respect to the presentation by IIMA, Mr Pin Godós recognized the remarkable contribution of the Salesian family to the realization of the right to education, with a special attention to the important role of educators in overcoming human and spiritual poverty, as showed by the inability of the students to empathize with the suffering of other human beings. Arts education plays a key role in the educational initiatives aiming to address these situations.

With respect to the presentation of ConArte, he pointed out that if we prove to be open to it, the Arts will change us for the better. Education has to “humanize” people and the Project “Planters” is a good example of how to create spaces to highlight what unifies us, instead of what divides.

This seems a difficult task to be accomplished, especially when the surrounding situation is not encouraging. However, Mr Pin Godós recognized that education is the appropriate and most valuable tool to handle this complexity by providing the needed skills to interpret our reality and make the best of it. One of the most ambitious outcome of these efforts is to achieve happiness. As one of the children participating in the Project “Planters” rightly pointed out: **“If there was not Arts, I would not be as happy as now”**.