



PULSE

Newsletter February - March 2022

HEADLINES IN THIS ISSUE

PARTICIPATION IN UNESCO INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE (IGC)

PAGE 2

NHIMBE'S LEGISLATION TRACKER UPDATE

PAGE 5

UNESCO Convention
Inter-Governmental
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Diversity of
Cultural Expressions



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PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE 2005 UNESCO CONVENTION INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE (IGC)

The fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005 Convention) was held online from 8 to 11 February 2022.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Intergovernmental Committee, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) having interests and activities in the field covered by the 2005 UNESCO Convention who wish to participate as observers to a session or all sessions of the IGC, were asked to submit a written request to the Director-General of UNESCO. Only NGOs which met the criteria provided by the Annex to the operational guidelines of Article 11 (Role and participation of civil society) were eligible.

A total of 281 civil society organisations (CSOs) were contacted; of these, Nhimbe Trust was among 48 CSOs that submitted a complete application to the Secretariat to be admitted as observers to the fifteenth session of the IGC

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In recent years, Nhimbe Trust's participation in the work of the governing bodies has been strengthened. Thanks to the support of our funding partners Africalia and Mimeta that supported participation in IGC and CSO Forum meetings in Paris. Nhimbe Trust is also grateful to the Government of Zimbabwe for being appointed on the 2005 Quadrennial Periodic Reporting National Team.

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In line with the decisions and resolutions of the IGC and the Conference of Parties respectively, which guide participation of CSOs in the implementation of the 2005 Convention, collaboration between Nhimbe Trust and other CSOs – IGC has so far been enunciated around four main frameworks, namely:

1

The Civil Society Forum - a biennial forum the first edition of which was held on 12 June 2017, the second on 3 June 2019 and the third edition on 31 May 2021;

2

Oral and written reports - included on the agenda of each of its sessions was an item on the role of CSOs in the implementation of the 2005 UNESCO Convention, under which it invited civil society organisations to present activity reports. This was served by Nhimbe Trust contribution to the Government of Zimbabwe's (GoZ) QPR submission in 2020 and follow-up strategic engagements and dialogue with the GoZ and likeminded State Parties concerned with and active in the promotion of cultural rights and artistic freedom in Africa.

3

Participation of CSOs in the preparation of Parties' QPRs - In revising the Operational Guidelines on "Information Sharing and Transparency" and approving a new framework for QPRs in 2019, the Conference of Parties not only decided that Parties' reports should reflect the way in which civil society had participated in their preparation, but also invited Parties to provide information on measures supporting CSOs involved in the promotion of the 2005 UNESCO Convention. To facilitate Parties' cooperation with civil society in the preparation of their QPRs, the 2005 UNESCO Convention Secretariat developed an electronic form focused on measures implemented by CSOs, which Parties may download as they deem appropriate. Nhimbe Trust is a member of the national team and has contributed to the last two reports by the GoZ.

4

Meeting between CSO representatives and the Bureau of the IGC - a working meeting between CSO representatives and the Bureau prior to its meetings, to address specific issues of importance to CSOs. At the request of the Committee members, the time allocated for the meeting was doubled in 2021 from one hour to two hours. Nhimbe Trust was unable to participate in the 15th edition meeting due to prior commitments. However, we received an update on the outcomes of meeting from CSO who participated in the meeting.

Recurring Concerns Bedevilling IGC CSO Space

Although in recent years an upward trend has been noted in the number and diversity of African civil society representatives participating in the work of the IGC, a worrisome perpetual decline in representation continues to be witnessed. Global CSO political differences - turf wars - continue to polarise relations and perpetuate an entrenched effect on historical inequalities around access, equity and fairness. Neoliberalism is alive and unrelenting; now under the cover of cultural relations.

There is an overt - overbearing but subtle self-serving - censure of global south CSO dissent under the guise of "preserving the spirit of CSO-Parties diplomatic engagement".

When it comes to Parties, clearly there is no evidence of political will and a commitment to implement concrete support measures, including identifying opportunities to provide financial or in-kind resources to facilitate the participation of CSO representatives, particularly those based in Africa, in the sessions of the IGC online or physically in Paris.

Lastly, Nhimbe Trust wish to highlight that in some national contexts in Africa, cultural rights organisations continue to find it impossible to access the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) as their applications get vetoed by the NATCOMs or the designated official channels. This results in such organisations not applying at all as they stand no chance of being considered for possible support for work that's deemed anti-government, especially in respect of Goal 4 of the 2005 UNESCO Convention - to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Not all is doom and gloom. In conclusion we applaud the following decisions of the just concluded 15th IGC:

Transmission of new QPRs - We congratulate the African Parties that submitted their QPRs in 2021, despite the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nhimbe Trust will work closely with partner CSOs in the respective countries as part of our programme of monitoring Goal 1 (Support sustainable systems of governance for culture) and Goal 4 (Promote human rights and fundamental freedom) of the 2005 Convention - as elaborated in the Nhimbe Trust Regional Engagement Strategy for Africa; on Commitments on deepening and promoting cultural rights and artistic freedom.

Report on the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (2021) and recommended projects - Nhimbe Trust congratulates the following six experts who form the Panel of Experts to evaluate IFCD funding requests and make recommendations for the consideration of the IGC:

Group I: Ms Valeria Marcolin

Group II: Ms Lidia Varbanova

Group III: Mr Lazaro Israel Rodriguez Oliva

Group IV: Ms Anupama Sekhar

Group Va: Ms Ayeta Anne Wangusa

Group Vb: Ms Ghita Khaldi

And six alternate experts: ←

Group I: Ms Astrid Audibert

Group II: Ms Mira Burri

Group III: Mr Eduardo Saravia

Group IV: Ms Yoonhyung Jeon

Group Va: Ms Doreen Anthony

Group Vb: Ms Rima Mismar



Nhimbe's Legislation Tracker

The Legislation Tracker is a product of Nhimbe Trust's research on leverage rights to artistic freedom in Zimbabwe. It outlines legislation that has a bearing on the promotion and protection of cultural rights in Zimbabwe. It tracks the progress of the Government of Zimbabwe in aligning this legislation to the 2013 Constitution (Amendment no. 20). An inter-ministerial taskforce was set up by the Government of Zimbabwe in 2015 to align the country's legislation.

In addition to this tracker, Nhimbe Trust is part of the CSO Constitutional Consortium that conducts legislative analysis and makes recommendations on legislative amendments to the inter-ministerial taskforce.

Update: *Cyber Security and Data Protection Bill – now passed into Law as the DATA PROTECTION ACT.*

The purpose of this Bill is to consolidate cyber related offences and provide for data protection with due regard to the Declaration of Rights under the Constitution and the public and national interest, to establish a Cyber Security Centre and a Data Protection Authority.

[FIND IT HERE](#)

Nhimbe's Legislation Tracker



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