



UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION



WORLD INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

WIPO-UNESCO REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE PROTECTION OF EXPRESSIONS OF FOLKLORE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

organized by
the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

in cooperation with
the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),

with the assistance of
the Government of Ecuador

Quito, June 14 to 16, 1999

RECOMMENDATIONS

Representatives of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela, and also representatives of the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) and the General Secretariat of the Andean Community, met in Quito, Ecuador, from June 14 to 16, 1999, under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), to discuss matters concerning the protection of expressions of folklore (which can relate to popular culture, traditional culture and traditional knowledge).

At the start of the meeting the delegates elected the attorney Nelson Velasco, President of the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property, as Chairman.

The experts from Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela made presentations on practical aspects, legal options and national initiatives in connection with the perpetuation, preservation and protection of expressions of folklore in Latin American and Caribbean countries, as provided in the program for the Regional Consultation.

The delegations made presentations on the position in their countries and subregions regarding the identification, documentation, dissemination and protection of their expressions of folklore.

After a wide-ranging debate, the delegations,

Considering:

That expressions of folklore are basic elements of national identity,

That Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with a wealth of expressions of folklore that form part of its cultural identity,

That there is ever-greater international recognition of the socio-economic value of expressions of folklore, and also growing commercial exploitation thereof,

That the situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is complex and diverse with respect to experience and the extent of, and resources available for, the protection of expressions of folklore,

That the momentum of globalization exposes expressions of folklore to a greater degree of distortion and misuse that is detrimental to national identity,

That the ever-greater development of the technology of communication media and technology in general represent both opportunities and also new challenges for expressions of folklore which necessitate the introduction of strategies and means of adequate protection to ensure that cultural diversity is maintained,

That the measures for the perpetuation, preservation and protection of expressions of folklore hitherto undertaken in the various countries of the region do not afford sufficient protection against distortion and misuse and the eventual disappearance of expressions of folklore,

That greater protection has various aspects, which may be subregional, regional and international as well as national, and that it is necessary to work in those different areas,

That the pioneering work of UNESCO and WIPO has contributed to greater awareness on the part of individual countries and to a strengthening of the protection of expressions of folklore;

Recommend:

That countries should promote the creation or strengthening, as the case may be, of national, subregional, regional and international legislation on the protection of expressions of folklore;

That UNESCO and WIPO should make the necessary legal-technical assistance and financial cooperation and experience available to Latin American and Caribbean countries to start, or where appropriate continue, their work of identifying, documenting, uniformly classifying, perpetuating, preserving and disseminating expressions of folklore;

That UNESCO and WIPO should provide assistance or cooperation with a view to heightening awareness and recognition of the importance of expressions of folklore and their protection by all segments of society;

That UNESCO and WIPO should continue their work of nurturing expressions of folklore and their protection at the international level, and that, to the same end, a Standing Committee should be created within WIPO to study and implement means of strengthening that protection, taking due account of the similarities and differences between traditional knowledge and other expressions of folklore;

That UNESCO and WIPO should carry out pilot projects in Latin America and the Caribbean in connection with the management of expressions of folklore.

The delegates expressed their appreciation of the hospitality shown by the Government of Ecuador in acting as host to the Regional Consultation, and also of the support provided by UNESCO and WIPO.

[End of document]