

Media Update

21 July 2016

UNESCO

Press Release

Consultation on policies for Pakistan's culture and creative sector started in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, 20 July 2016: Culture and creative sector stakeholders from GB, ICT, AJK, FATA and KP underlined today in a meeting in Islamabad the importance of diversity of cultural goods and services which are possessing enormous potential for socio-economic and sustainable development of Pakistan. They urged for a participatory process for policy making and made recommendations for the signing of UNESCO 2005 Convention for the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions. They reaffirm their commitment for continuous advocacy to devising effective policies and strategies for Pakistan's Culture and Creative Sectors both at federal and provincial levels.

UNESCO Pakistan has organized last consultation meeting on policies for Pakistan's culture and creative sector. Earlier, similar consultations were held in Lahore and Karachi with representation from the Government of Balochistan. The consultations are funded by the Government of Denmark under a program implemented with support from Centre for Culture and Development (CKU) which aims to empower governmental and civil society actors including the private sector to take part in a participatory policy making for the creative sector and to sign the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, Ms. Vibeke Jensen informed that the recommendations coming out of the three workshops will be shared in meetings later this year with both federal and provincial governments and parliamentarians to encourage a signing of the Convention. More than a 144 UNESCO Member States have signed the Convention since 2005 when it was adopted. She stressed that the



Convention advocates for the introduction of policies and measures that nurture creativity, provide access for creators to participate in domestic and international marketplaces where their artistic works/expressions can be recognized and compensate and ensure that these expressions are accessible to the broader public.

Addressing the stakeholders, Mr. Mohsin S Haqqani, Secretary National History and Literary Division, Government of Pakistan reaffirmed the Government of Pakistan commitment to promote the diversity of cultural expression and initiatives for boosting Pakistan's creative sector. He extended his profound gratitude to UNESCO for the organization of the consultation. He mentioned that the creation of a policy working group and key recommendations from these consultations will help the government in adopting appropriate and transparent policies for culture and creativity. He also mentioned that the government is undertaking preparations to sign the UNESCO 2005 Convention. Senator Rubina Khalid were also present on the occasion and deliberated on the culture and creative sector policy.

Ms. Ammara Durrani, Programme Advisor CKU Pakistan Programme, congratulated UNESCO and the Government of Pakistan for organizing these country wide consultations as part of UNESCO's project. She briefed about the two-year CKU Pakistan Culture and Development Programme being implemented in Pakistan in partnership with national and international organizations, such as UNESCO, to support and promote rights-based art, cultural activities, creative industries and inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation at national and provincial levels. She lauded UNESCO's key role in facilitating a national platform for stakeholder dialogue that is aimed at recommending a robust and effective policy framework for Pakistan's culture sector to leverage and harness its dynamic potential and opportunities.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the important role of culture in relation to education, sustainable cities, food security, the environment, economic growth, sustainable consumption and production patterns, peaceful and inclusive societies. Globally, the creative economy has grown extremely fast over the past twenty years and is today worth an estimated USD 4.3 trillion per year, contributing to 6.1% of the global economy. In Pakistan, total exports of cultural goods have increased from USD 60 million in 2004 to USD 276 million in 2013. It is therefore a very opportune moment for Pakistan to explore how the policies and governance of the culture and creative industries can be strengthened.

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UN Women

Press Release

A Panel Discussion on Progress towards Gender Equality in Punjab Province

21 July 2016: Earlier this year the Punjab Provincial Assembly passed the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016, the first legislation of its kind in Pakistan, and the South Asia region, to have its own implementation structure - Violence Against Women Centres (VAWCs).

The Australian High Commission and UN Women brought together today a number of influential Pakistani citizens to discuss progress towards gender equality in Punjab Province, taking as their point of reference the landmark Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016.

“Violence against women is a very serious problem affecting all societies and every country,” Ms Margaret Adamson, Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, said in opening the discussion. “Gender equality is a core foreign policy priority for Australia, and I am reassured to be joined today by colleagues from all sectors of society who are committed to advancing the rights of women and promoting gender equality, not only in Pakistan, but globally, both as a human right, and out of sheer economic good sense.”

Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan, in his address said: “Over the past few months, there seems to have been a surge in country-wide reported cases of violence against women with some



resulting in killings of a tragic nature taking a devastating toll on women, men, children, families, communities and all of Pakistan. Violence against women is one of the biggest threats for any society to fully function. Tackling the pandemic that reaches almost every woman once in her lifetime where 1 in 3 women experience violence, must be everyone's top priority." "The Government of Punjab is to be commended for taking a bold, progressive and much needed step to go ahead with their Protection of Women Against Violence Act, which if implemented in letter and spirit, will bring positive change for women in Punjab and set an example to provide remedies against violence for women and girls throughout Pakistan. We need to collectively support the State's and the judiciary to uphold their responsibilities to deter such crimes in the first place, and ensure that people who commit them are swiftly brought to justice," added Mr Kazi.

Mr. Salman Sufi, Senior Member, Chief Minister's Special Monitoring Unit (Law and Order Wing) in presenting salient features and significance of Punjab's comprehensive initiatives to protect women against violence shared: "The collective fight against ending violence against women requires a united front. Punjab Province has sent a message to the world that we will never accept violence against women as a norm in society. The Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016 speaks for itself as to this resolve."

The panel discussion, on 'progress towards gender equality in Punjab' hosted by Australian High Commissioner Adamson included Fauzia Viqar (Chairperson of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women), and Hina Jilani (Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan).

The discussion focused on provincial responsibilities (post-devolution) to ensure comprehensive measures protecting women and justice to women survivors. It also addressed Punjab's progress in other key areas towards gender equality: women's economic empowerment, education for girls, and women's voice in decision making.

The Chief Minister's Special Monitoring Unit (Law and Order Wing) was lauded by panellists and participants for spearheading drafting and passage of key legislation on the directive of the Punjab Chief Minister to end violence against women in the province. The legislation will provide a helpful model for other provinces and countries.

The event is part of Australia's tenure as co-chair of the Inter Agency Gender and Development Group (INGAD) in partnership with UN Women.



INGAD is a group of donors and multilateral agencies who have been working to promote gender equality in the development and humanitarian sectors and interagency coordination in Pakistan since 1985. INGAD is chaired by different donors and UN agencies on a biannual rotational basis. Australia is the current rotating co-chair of INGAD for the six months to August 2016 in partnership with UN Women (a permanent co-chair).

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