



3rd edition

INTERNATIONAL AWARD
UCLG - MEXICO CITY - CULTURE 21

International Seminar

'Cultural Rights and Peace in the city'

Mexico City

18-20 October 2018

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction

On the occasion of the award ceremony of the 3rd edition of the [International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21](#), an international seminar entitled “Cultural Rights and Peace in the City” was held on 19 October 2018 at the El Rule Cultural Centre. The event was organised by the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico and the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

The objectives of the seminar included the following:

- To discuss the specific implications of cultural rights at the local level, and how they related with generating peace conditions for communities.
- To recognise cultural policies that, in cities around the world, have contributed to fostering the exercise of cultural rights in the city.
- To highlight the connections existing between cultural rights, the right to the city and cities’ sustainable development.
- To underline the need to include cultural aspects in international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals) and the New Urban Agenda.
- To give visibility to the central contribution made by the City of Mexico, through its cultural policy and its international engagement, to global discussions on cultural rights, cultural policy and sustainable development.

Six thematic roundtables were held throughout the day, addressing the relation between cultural rights, cultural policy, peace and cities from a range of perspectives, and leading eventually to the adoption of the Declaration of Mexico City on “Culture and Peace”. The latter was to be read in public the next day, in the framework of the Zócalo Book Fair and, following its translation into several languages, it has been made available to other people and cities wishing to adhere to it.

This document summarises the main contributions made during the seminar.

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ROUNDTABLE 1 | CULTURE, PUBLIC SPACE AND THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE

The seminar was inaugurated by **Martín Levenson**, as advisor to the Secretary for Culture of the City of Mexico, who welcomed all participants on behalf of Eduardo Vázquez, the Secretary for Culture. He presented the context of the event, held within the activities of the 3rd edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21, and highlighted the aim of addressing the relation between culture and peace.

Thereafter, the panel was moderated by **Mariana Flores**, the General Coordinator for International Affairs of the Head of Government of the City of Mexico, whose introduction stressed the enriching, learning contribution made by the International Award UCLG – City of Mexico – Culture 21, and highlighted the need to recognise the diversity of culture and its expressions in order for peace to be achieved.

Speaking next was **Freddy Montero**, the Director for Cooperation in Escazú, who stressed the fundamental commitment of culture professionals with the conditions of peace. This involves recognising diversity, in all its dimensions, and fostering the inclusion of everyone. In





Costa Rica, recent debates on sexual diversity have brought to the fore the conservativeness and intolerance that continue to exist among a significant part of the population, similarly to other Latin American countries, where women and minority groups have become a scapegoat for the unease of some social groups. When speaking of cultural rights, the right to self-expression and to choose one's identity, we are effectively addressing elements that may enable freedom and which are profoundly humane. This contrasts with the ideas of those who base their power on strength and repression. Within cultural action lies the basis of the democratic revolution we strive for: our responsibility involves generating the conditions for everyone to be able to express themselves with more freedom, and with inclusion and diversity.

WHEN SPEAKING OF CULTURAL RIGHTS, THE RIGHT TO SELF-EXPRESSION AND TO CHOOSE ONE'S IDENTITY, WE ARE EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING ELEMENTS THAT MAY ENABLE FREEDOM AND WHICH ARE PROFOUNDLY HUMANE. FREDDY MONTERO

Kiley Arroyo, the Head of Strategic Data and Knowledge at the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies – IFACCA, opened her presentation by referring to the need for public bodies to rethink their place and foster the exercise of cultural rights – to this end, it is necessary to improve work on data and information. She then considered whether it is possible to achieve peace without justice, and argued that it is not, for it is necessary to address the ways in which power and opportunities to intervene within society are distributed. In this respect, cities need to address the aspects which generate inequalities, such as the privatisation of public space, through new urban design. Culture can play a relevant role, fostering inclusive spaces which enable interaction among people from different origins, as exemplified by the case of Hunters Point in San Francisco, California.

IDENTITY-BUILDING ALSO REQUIRES REGULAR UPDATING. CULTURAL MANAGEMENT DEMANDS PERMANENT DIALOGUE AND CONSTRUCTION. JOSÉ ANTONIO MAC GREGOR

Carmen Pérez Camacho, the Director of C2 – Cultura y Ciudadanía, presented two projects related to the community-based dimension of culture. One of them, in Michoacán, addressed gender inequality in music activities, and this served to highlight the potential of music to foster respect, dialogue and cooperation. In the other one, in the Tlalpan area of Mexico City, indigenous groups were involved, fostering mutual knowledge among them and enhanced autonomy from governmental bodies. Both projects demonstrated the importance of

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looking after people's interests and concerns, as well as the potential of culture to generate social coexistence.

Finally, **José Antonio Mac Gregor**, the coordinator of Cultural Management at the Autonomous University of Querétaro, focused on the role of cultural projects to rebuild the social fabric. He recalled García Canclini's remark that 'identities are constructs narrated by ourselves' and drew a parallel between the way in which human identities and electronic devices are set up, including their memory, language, installation of applications, and communication. Just as in technology, identity-building also requires regular updating. Cultural management demands permanent dialogue and construction, as a process which provides memory and which should provide the ability to communicate. Ultimately, cultural management should involve a participatory process, permanent reflection, a connection between physical and symbolic spaces, and the aim to contribute to the exercise of cultural rights and the construction of citizenship.



ROUNDTABLE 2 | CITIES' CULTURAL POLICIES AND PEACE-BUILDING

This session was moderated by **Alejandro Salafranca**, the Director General for Information and Communication Technologies at the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico, who defined cities as 'laboratories of coexistence', stressing how they had shown continuity over history and how they could provide much knowledge as regards how to foster coexistence in high-density environments..

In her presentation, **Montserrat Tort**, the Director for Studies at the Institute of Culture of the City of Barcelona, described Barcelona's current efforts to foster a transversal approach to cultural and educational policies, thus addressing complex social challenges. This has made it necessary to address inequalities in culture: cultural policies should include



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inequality in their agendas – this is an issue which has been addressed in other areas in the past but rather less in the cultural terrain, and which requires new insights on the data available. It is also necessary to foster transversality in culture and education, going beyond short-term projects and establishing a solid, ongoing approach: cross-disciplinary groups, adaptation to different territories, addressing formal, non-formal and informal education, etc. Ultimately, Barcelona's current efforts aim to contribute to the exercise of cultural rights.


CULTURAL POLICIES SHOULD INCLUDE INEQUALITY IN THEIR AGENDAS. MONTSERRAT TORT

Speaking next was **Ivana Baukart**, the Coordinator of Malmö's Cultural Strategy. In recent decades, Malmö has moved from being an industrial to a knowledge-based city, and it has witnessed an increase in inequalities, as proven by the fact that different groups have very different life expectancy. The Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö suggested that, if existing inequalities had not led to major social problems, the key may lie in cultural action. In this context, Malmö found an ally in the Agenda 21 for culture, including its emphasis on human rights, culture as a key for sustainable development, and the importance of cities. This is all reflected in Malmö's Culture Strategy, which sees culture as an opportunity and has led to more participatory governance, more transversal approaches, improved monitoring mechanisms, and the connection between culture and the SDGs.

THE IMPORTANCE FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES TO 'ENABLE A SPACE' FOR OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO ACT, WHICH REQUIRES A LONG-TERM EFFORT AND MANY SPECIFIC ACTIONS. LUCIANA BLASCO

Mexican researcher **Cristina Faesler** presented a set of observations based on her experience in the government of the state of Morelos, which was inspired by the premise that culture is a key to generate the conditions for peace. In this context, Morelos worked to rebuild symbolic and material spaces, to reactive communities' creative spirit, to foster children's participation in cultural activities, to promote local languages, to protect tangible and intangible heritage, to promote new cultural spaces that enabled personal encounters, etc. Understanding culture as the fundamental 'binding agent' for many processes in social life, the aim was to foster spaces for interaction, gathering, and networking, among others.

Finally, **Luciana Blasco**, the Deputy Secretary for Cultural Policy and New Audiences in the City of Buenos Aires, opened her contribution by stressing the importance for public authorities to 'enable a space' for other stakeholders to act, which requires a long-term



effort and many specific actions. Drawing on the examples of the Biennale of Young Art and the Recoleta Cultural Centre, she argued that in recent years Buenos Aires has aimed to build trust with cultural stakeholders with which it had not worked previously, and to recognise the coexistence of several cultural systems (public, commercial, independent, etc.). This requires transforming the modes of functioning of public organisations, through enhanced dialogue and more inclusive procedures which can foster participation. This way of building public policies results from the vision of a participatory, conscious, sustainable city, as well as from the necessary role of the public sector in fostering public, common spaces where all diversity may meet. This is, at the end of the day, a fundamentally political work: all our efforts should be geared towards generating the space where it is possible to build together.

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ROUNDTABLE 3 | IDENTITY, MIGRATION AND CULTURE OF PEACE

This session was moderated by **María Cortina Icaza**, the Institutional Coordinator of the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico, who started by referring to recent events in which approximately 8000 migrants from Central America had been blocked at the border of Guatemala and Mexico. She argued that such examples helped to illustrate the urgency of addressing the role of culture in the building of peace.

The first presentation was made by **Gisela Previtalli**, the Coordinator of the Film and Audiovisual Management and Promotion Unit at the Department of Culture of Montevideo, who underlined her organisation's aim to foster the enjoyment of culture, the development of community culture, and the recognition of diversity. In a context in which the number of migrants is increasing, the Department of Culture works to foster their integration, through, among others, the Museum of Migrations, which carries out educational and awareness-raising projects, as well as by collaborating with the Secretariat for Ethnic and Race




El Departamento de Cultura es uno de los tres con mayor presupuesto y funcionamiento de la Intendencia de Montevideo, ciudad capital del Uruguay.

Su gobierno sitúa a la cultura en el centro de sus procesos de desarrollo.

Orientado hacia la cultura artística, las infraestructuras culturales tradicionales (teatros, museos, bibliotecas) y en el fomento de la actividad artística de la ciudad, evoluciona en el siglo XXI hacia cometidos vinculados a:

- goce y disfrute democrático e inclusivo de los derechos culturales de la ciudadanía;
- la conquista del espacio público;
- la convivencia;
- el desarrollo de identidad comunitaria.

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Equality and Migrant Population. More broadly, the City of Montevideo aims to recognise the contribution made by migrants to the building of the city and its culture throughout history. She recalled that Uruguay had turned from being a country that mainly sent migrants abroad to one that welcomed them, and expressed her absolute belief that it was important to be an open-door country, and one that contributes to the culture of peace.

Byung Hoon Jeong, a lecturer at the University of Jinju, described how this South Korean city, with strong cultural traditions, has in recent years become an innovative hub, which also aims to maintain the main traits of its cultural identity. Jinju has the potential to become a 'creative city' that builds on its cultural heritage and natural landscape, but this requires strengthening the presence of cultural tradition in education and public awareness-raising, better integrating culture in Jinju's new neighbourhoods and its rural areas, etc. In this respect, a city vision has been adopted, which recognises the need to balance tradition and the cultural industries, to promote citizens' active participation, to create a cultural ecosystem, etc. A Creative City Plan that should further develop these ideas is foreseen.

OUR ABSOLUTE BELIEF IS THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE AN OPEN-DOOR COUNTRY, AND ONE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE CULTURE OF PEACE. GISELLA PREVITALLI

Finally, **Déborah Chenillo**, the Coordinator of Community Cultural Collaboration in the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico, presented the approach to community cultural development that the City had implemented over the previous four years. Aiming to turn the discourse of cultural rights into specific activities and to give priority to community cultural development, a reflection process helped to understand the important role of communities in fostering binding processes and enhancing visibility, and to assume that, rather than leading processes and placing them in an institutional context, public authorities should more often accompany and enable them, in order to such processes to effectively belong to communities. To this end, policies focused on three levels: strengthening community development (participatory agendas, promotion of networking, etc.), cross-institutional collaboration (involving other departments of local government in actions towards cultural development) and data collection, research and training (recognising artistic development and practices as research processes, 'systematising' community cultural practices, writing analyses on public cultural policies, etc.).

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Several videos were presented before the lunch break. First of all, **Michel Vallée**, the Director for Leisure and Culture in Vaudreuil-Dorion, presented a video on the Je Suis... project, an initiative of Vaudreuil-Dorion which obtained the 2nd International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21. This cultural mediation project, first designed as a response to the increased linguistic and cultural diversity resulting from cross-border migration arriving in the city, aims to foster personal encounters and mutual knowledge – Michel Vallée argued that it is not possible to respect that which is not known, and therefore respect is being fostered through collective activities, involving people from all origins.

Secondly, **Enrique Avogadro**, the Minister of Culture of Buenos Aires, presented two videos as an invitation to visit Buenos Aires, which will host the third UCLG Culture Summit in April 2019. The first video, focusing on the Youth Olympic Games, explained how this event has contributed to developing Buenos Aires' southern part, whereas the second one ('*Somos porteños*'), highlighted the city's diversity, its contrasts and citizens' customs.

ROUNDTABLE 4 | HERITAGE, CITIZENSHIP AND CULTURE OF PEACE

This session was chaired by **Gabriela López**, the Coordinator of Historic, Artistic and Cultural Heritage at the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico. Introducing the discussion, she highlighted the collective nature of heritage, and its being defined as a 'space of negotiation' to build a culture of peace.

Speaking next was **Manuel Veiga**, the Director for Culture in Lisbon, who presented a set of activities implemented in Marvila, a disadvantaged neighbourhood in the city. Developed through consultations with the community, public programmes have included the opening of one of Lisbon's most modern public libraries, which has turned into a true, multi-purpose cultural centre. Combined with this, several other initiatives are worth mentioning, including a local heritage interpretation centre, the reuse of abandoned spaces in the ground floor of social housing buildings for participatory social and cultural activities, play areas, a game lab to train local young people in the gaming sector, and a festival the programming and organisation of which involves the



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local population. These initiatives served to demonstrate that culture can contribute to empowerment, a sense of belonging, human dignity and peace.


The Director of the City Museum in Novosibirsk, **Elena Shchukina**, took the floor next to present the context of this city and the project 'Novosibirsk: the city turning into a museum', which aims to make inhabitants familiar with the city's history by turning the city streets into museum halls. First established in 2012, the project has involved four elements: thematic photography exhibitions in the streets, squares and the city metro; 'virtual history maps' which provide access to relevant heritage items; city tours that help citizens change their perceptions through the discovery of lesser-known or new aspects of the city; and public historical projects, including events that, through music, performance and technology, invite citizens to discover interesting items of local history. Over six years, more than 70,000 people have taken part in these activities.

CULTURE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO EMPOWERMENT, A SENSE OF BELONGING, HUMAN DIGNITY AND PEACE. MANUEL VEIGA

Mehmet Duman, the Secretary-General of UCLG's Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), argued that urban identity needs to be cultivated and that heritage is a significant aspect in this respect. The MEWA region contains extensive tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which contributes to local identity and can enhance sustainable development. To this end, local councils can protect heritage and foster a sense of belonging and cohesion. UCLG-MEWA's project 'Culture of Living Together' promotes the cultural inclusion of refugees and serves to illustrate how culture can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UCLG-MEWA has a Committee on Culture that fosters the place of culture in the promotion of peace and aims to work more closely with the UCLG Committee on Culture.

CULTURAL HERITAGE COULD PLAY A ROLE IN FOSTERING COHESION, OFFERING WAYS IN WHICH TO FOSTER SPACES WHERE CONFLICT CAN BE PLAYED OUT WITHOUT LEADING TO DISRUPTION. BOLFI COTTOM

Finally, **Bolfi Cottom**, a lecturer and researcher at the History Directorate of Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), argued that the value and meaning of cultural heritage are ever-changing, because they derive from the relation between past and present. Depending on the context, cultural heritage may be mainly relevant in



cultural identity-building or play additional roles in areas like the economy and education. In Mexico, public policies have tended to assume that heritage can be an answer to many social problems, but the effects of the economic context should not be underestimated – for the neoliberal system threatens the cultural, educational and social roles of heritage. As regards the culture of peace, in his view cultural heritage could play a role in fostering cohesion, offering ways in which to foster spaces where conflict can be played out without leading to disruption. Because of this, it is important to prevent heritage from being dominated by an economic logic. In Mexico, this also involves ensuring the preservation of biocultural heritage.

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ROUNDTABLE 5 | THE RIGHT TO THE CITY, CULTURE AND PEACE

This session was moderated by **Jainite Rueda**, the Deputy Director for Evaluation and Monitoring at the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Mexico, who introduced the themes to be addressed and invited all speakers and participants to actively engage in the discussion.

The first presentation was made by **Enrique Ortiz**, from the Habitat International Coalition, who addressed the relation between the right to the city and culture. Urban areas have increasingly experienced segmentation and fragmentation, and this ultimately affects the core meaning of cities, since these should provide a shared space, where citizens can participate and contribute to the building of urban spaces. Facing these challenges, social movements in Latin America work to promote the defence of territories, the right to the





city, the participatory management of the city and the social production of the city. Work on the right to the city has proven the need to work in an interrelated way, in order to build a democratic, inclusive, sustainable, productive, educating, and liveable city, which involves, among others, the right to a city where cultures and ways of living are diverse. The democratic management of a city is fundamental in order to build a culture of peace, and the cultural enjoyment of a city is necessary in order to enable democratic and equal participation in it.

OVER A GENERATION, TERRITORIES ARE TRANSFORMED, AND THEREFORE IN THE COURSE OF THEIR LIFETIME PEOPLE HAVE THE POSSIBILITY, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY, TO INTERVENE ON THE WAY IN WHICH THEIR CITIES ARE MADE UP IN CULTURAL TERMS. MARC VILLARUBIAS

Marc Villarubias, the Director for Cultural Cooperation of the City of Lyon addressed the relation between cities' common traits and multiple diversities, which overlap with culture's own complexity. Over a generation, territories are transformed, and therefore in the course of their lifetime people have the possibility, and the responsibility, to intervene on the way in which their cities are made up in cultural terms. Within cities lie many potential divides – tools such as the Agenda 21 for culture provide resources to address them: recognising diverse heritages, dealing with socioeconomic imbalances, health, environment, gender equality, accessibility, etc. Unless they are addressed, these issues make it impossible to build a city which manages its tensions and enables peaceful coexistence. He exemplified this with several projects implemented in Lyon: artistic projects for urban renewal, citizen gardening projects to make public spaces more liveable, citizen engagement in heritage preservation, social theatre based on local stories, etc. The city can be progressively transformed through simple actions which bring together stakeholders from different sectors, embodying the right to the city – this was the inspiration for Lyon's Charter of Cultural Cooperation, one of the winning projects of the 3rd edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21.

The next speaker was **Liliana López Borbón**, a consultant in citizenship building and cultural policy, who presented Territorios Culturales, a platform established following the 2017 earthquake in Mexico, which aims to foster a political conversation from the perspective of cultural management. Territorios Culturales aims to address capitalism's 'no future' as well as the potential 'other futures' which are filled with imagination and which cultural management should aim to achieve. Several new initiatives emerged after the earthquake,

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with the common aim of building together a place where life can unfold and to design a new consensus and the meaning of living together. This involves promoting true cultural and creative freedom, away from domination, because creative capacities are central to develop the skills for a full life. In this context, cultural managers should contribute to the building of cultural circuits, opening options, enabling autonomous spaces, recognising shared responsibility and promoting social innovation. With this aim in mind, Territorios Culturales operates as a fluid collective, which promotes a reflection process and fosters encounters with groups from different fields and sectors.

Finally, **Javier Delgado**, the Director of the Urban Studies Programme at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), recalled the definitions of the right to the city made by Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey, as a capacity to build a socially fair city. Some reflections have also identified culture and cultural diversity as some of the conditions essential for peace-building. In this respect, he stressed the 'sanctuary cities' initiative which, in a context of global migration, welcome migrants and ensure security. The right to the city has thus moved from academia to the legal context, whereas peace-building has moved from being a postwar imperative to increasingly criminalising the dispossessed, in the context of globalisation. Here, culture achieves an increasing space as a condition for peace-building. It is necessary to explore this set of interrelated concepts in depth, giving priority to the respect for diversity and the promotion of interculturalism, cross-disciplinarity, the combination of geographic levels, etc.



ROUNDTABLE 6 | CULTURA Y PAZ, CONCLUSIONES FINALES

This final plenary session was moderated by **Martín Levenson**, an advisor to the Secretary for Culture of the City of Mexico, who started by summarising some of the issues which, throughout the day, had served to address the relation between cultural rights and peace. The closing session was to have a different structure, as speakers were invited to present a set of personal conclusions and observations and other attendees could contribute to the conversation as well.

First of all, **Johanne Bouchard**, Human Rights Specialist at the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, recalled that the UN Charter establishes a connection between the exercise of human rights and peace-building. Respecting human dignity regardless of the origin of individuals implies recognising cultural diversity. In this respect,



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cultural rights, which enable the ability for people to define their identities, are particularly well-placed to enable human dignity. And how are culture and peace related? Cultural capacities open the door to connecting to others, recognising that which unites us in spite of our diversity. Likewise, having access to a diversity of resources pacifies us, as it pre-empts the risk of being limited by specific circumstances. Furthermore, culture holds the potential to imagine other possibilities as well as the need to listen to others, understanding that which they aim to bring forward: this involves, among other things, ensuring the conditions for accessing culture.

TOLERANCE OF INTOLERANCE DOES NOT PRODUCE TOLERANCE, BUT INCREASED INTOLERANCE, AND STRESSED THAT SOME FORMS OF IDEOLOGY SHOULD BE CHALLENGED, BECAUSE IDEAS CAN BE PROBLEMATIC. KARIMA BENNOUNE

Speaking next, **Raquel Martínez**, Communication Coordinator at the Union of Iberoamerican Capital Cities (UCCI), recalled some of the statements made by Basma EL-Husseiny at the previous day's award ceremony of the 3rd International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21, as regards the importance of cultural work with teenagers, and connected this with other contributions on the need to involve young people in decision-making made throughout the day. She then listed several sentences and ideas presented at the seminar, including that of culture as a 'universe of universes', as being exposed to diversity, as something that contributes to health and wellbeing and to alleviating inequality. She also stressed that some contributions had alluded to the need to enable a space for everyone, to transform public organisations, to the important place of participation to foster peace and culture, and to recognise conflict as something that enables coexistence. She finally highlighted the gap existing between existing discourses on the culture of peace and actual developments in everyday life.

Lucina Jiménez, the General Director of the International Consortium Art and School – ConArte, stressed the urgency of addressing the relation between culture and peace. She argued that peace is an ambiguous concept, which may have different meanings and needs to be connected to other concepts, including justice and memory. The root of conflict lies not in diversity, but in intolerance: the diversity of diversities is in fact an opportunity for cities to develop as spaces of coexistence, provided that inequality does not prevail. City cultural policies increasingly become 'ecosystem policies', which aim to foster the exercise of cultural rights and the respect for human dignity. Several examples of places where the meaning of public action is being discussed and where the right to the city is effectively



exercised has been presented throughout the seminar. However, it is worth recalling that culture cannot be expected to resolve problems which other policy fields are not solving (e.g. safety, labour rights, urban planning, etc.). Divergence should today be recognised as a fundamental element to march together.

CULTURE CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS WHICH OTHER POLICY FIELDS ARE NOT SOLVING (E.G. SAFETY, LABOUR RIGHTS, URBAN PLANNING, ETC.). DIVERGENCE SHOULD TODAY BE RECOGNISED AS A FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENT TO MARCH TOGETHER. LUCINA JIMÉNEZ

The next speaker was writer and activist **Javier Sicilia**, who introduced a set of critical reflections on the concepts addressed throughout the day, arguing that, when so many different aspects are included in the definition of culture, culture becomes everything, and thus nothing. Where do then 'crime culture' and 'narco culture' stand? At which point are the limits of our tolerance towards other forms of culture set? Cities are also highly destructive of the environment and social connections. We are experiencing a deep crisis of our civilisation, which makes it necessary to rethink that which we thought we knew, and this requires reconsidering the limits of culture and tolerance. He stated that, when hearing others speak of culture nowadays, he was scared, because culture had provided legitimacy for the worst things – and, indeed, often the governments that promote cultural development are also collusive with destruction. He closed by recalling that culture exists everywhere and should not be tolerated.

CULTURAL CAPACITIES OPEN THE DOOR TO CONNECTING TO OTHERS, RECOGNISING THAT WHICH UNITES US IN SPITE OF OUR DIVERSITY. JOHANNE BOUCHARD

Invited by Martín Levenson, the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, **Karima Bennoune**, who was attending the discussion, took the floor to express her gratitude for the chance of discovering many good examples, within an international context of 'political and cultural depression'. She expressed her concern at having to confront 21st century problems with 20th century tools, but also called for help and collaboration in order to transmit the local messages to the global table, involve more youth voices, avoid platitudes and talk about difficult things. We don't need to avoid conflict, but to find ways to manage it. She also argued that tolerance of intolerance does not produce tolerance, but increased intolerance, and stressed that some forms of ideology should be challenged, because ideas can be problematic, indicating that these are some of the issues she was currently trying to address.

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Finally, **Eduardo Vázquez**, the Secretary for Culture of the City of Mexico, stated that, in order to make Mexico a more liveable country, working towards peace was the most urgent task. Mexico finds itself in a national emergency which should not be ignored. It is not acceptable to live in a country where the figures of deaths and disappearances are not known and where the state's disdain of victims is evident. A relevant part of the foundation of culture over centuries has been the honouring of the dead – when their names are not known, we find ourselves at the end of a phase of civilisation. In this context, this international seminar was launched in order to listen to many voices and be nourished by their ideas, so as to design a peace project for Mexico. This humanitarian crisis was also a cultural crisis, which needs to be addressed – indeed, in contemporary TV series and songs, villains had become the heroes. In this structurally-violent, deeply-unequal world, the team that designed the City of Mexico's cultural policies in recent years had privileged the human rights framework and the belief that recognising diversity was not detrimental to coexistence, and that the narrative of cultural rights could provide tools for peace. Whilst admitting that peace will not be achieved through cultural policy only, there are solid grounds to argue that cultural policies should not be only for the few, nor focus on disseminating an elitist, limited cultural perspective. It is necessary to recognise everyone's memories, the capacity to build and develop oneself and to respect others', with new forms of governance to build peace. In this respect, he argued that it was necessary to foster a mobilisation against structural, generalised violence and that culture had to play a role here. As a result, he presented the **City of Mexico Declaration on 'Culture and Peace'**, drafted in the context of the seminar, which aimed to reaffirm the role of cultural institutions in peace-building. He also recalled that the seminar had been held as part of the Zócalo Book Fair, which this year addressed the promotion of liberties and commemorated the 1968 killing of students.

IT IS NECESSARY TO FOSTER A MOBILISATION AGAINST STRUCTURAL, GENERALISED VIOLENCE AND THAT CULTURE HAD TO PLAY A ROLE HERE. EDUARDO VÁZQUEZ MARTÍN

The seminar closed with several contributions from participants, who celebrated the new **City of Mexico Declaration** and stressed the need to address the relation between culture and peace and the important contribution made by Mexico City's policies and reflections to this end.

The next day, several activities related to the themes of the seminar took place in the context of the Zócalo Book Fair. Finally, the City of Mexico Declaration was read in public by several of the seminar participants.





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Seminario Internacional sobre los Derechos Culturales y la Ciudadanía Ciudad de México 19-20 de Octubre

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