



## IFLA Response to the Zero-Draft of the UN Plan for the Future

9 February 2024

### Chapeau

#### General Comments:

We strongly welcome the positive message already in the second paragraph, highlighting how advances in knowledge represent an opportunity which, with the right management, can significantly contribute to the achievement to the goals of the United Nations. This is a point which, we believe, should filter throughout the Pact. As a global infrastructure focused on managing and guaranteeing access to knowledge in order to improve lives, libraries are already active in delivering on this principle.

Beyond this, we believe that the Chapeau would be strengthened by echoing the emphasis in the 2030 Agenda on people-centred development. The UN system, by bringing together all countries, and all policy areas, is uniquely placed to drive this agenda. Within this context, we also believe that the chapeau would be a good place to underline a commitment to supporting policy approaches actions that are culturally relevant and responsive.

#### Language Proposals:

Paragraph 4: *We recognize that challenges such as these, **and the human-centred development paradigm that we seek**, can only be addressed through strong and sustained international cooperation. To enhance our cooperation, we need a multilateral system that is fit for the future, ready to address the political, economic, environmental, **cultural** and technological changes in the world, and with the agility to adapt to an uncertain future **and to deliver solutions that work with people's values, behaviours and cultures**. We know that multilateral institutions – especially the Security Council and the international financial architecture – have struggled to address the scale of the challenges they face and live up to the world's expectations of them. Too often, international commitments that are made, remain unfulfilled.*

### Chapter I Sustainable Development and Financing for Development

#### General Comments:

We believe that one of the most significant contributions that the Pact for the Future can make to accelerating delivery of the 2030 Agenda and transforming the way that the UN impacts on society would be through making clear the need to make culture an integral part of both policy planning and delivery. Such a move would build on commitments already made by governments in recent years, and could be particularly powerful in driving the behaviour change needed to deliver on climate action.

Similarly, and in line with the focus on making the most of knowledge to achieve change, we believe that the Pact should underline importance of a concerted, dynamic

approach to using reporting and measurement to understand drivers of development, and to building everyone's ability to be active in delivering sustainable development.

**Language Proposals:**

Paragraph 23: *We remain resolved, between now and 2030, to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions and hunger, everywhere, as a priority. We recognize our responsibility to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural **and cultural** resources and that we may be the last generation to have a chance of saving the planet.*

Paragraph 25: *We welcome the call by the Secretary-General for a rescue plan for people and planet, centred around strengthening governance and institutions for sustainable and inclusive transformation, prioritizing policies and investments that have multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals and securing a surge in financing for the Sustainable Development Goals and an enabling global environment for developing countries to invest in a sustainable future for their people and the betterment of our common humanity. **Similarly, we reaffirm the importance of efforts to measure progress against the SDG targets, as well as on other relevant indicators, and to gather and disseminate information about the goals widely.***

Paragraph 26: *We commit to following up on recent high-level meetings of the United Nations related to sustainable development and financing for development, including the United Nations Food Systems Summit (2021), the Transforming Education Summit (2022), **the MONDIACULT Conference (2022)**, the United Nations Water Conference (2023), the Sustainable Development Goals Summit (2023), the high-level meeting on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (2023), the high-level meeting on universal health coverage (2023), and the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis (2023).*

Paragraph 30: *We commit to achieving a world in which humanity lives in harmony with nature, to conserving and sustainably using our planet's marine and terrestrial resources, including through sustainable lifestyles, and sustainable consumption and production, to reversing the trends of environmental degradation, to promoting resilience, to reducing disaster risk, and to halting ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss, **while recognising the socio-cultural enabling conditions for imagining and realising transformative climate action.** We will conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and drylands and protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife.*

New paragraph 45a: ***In the context of our work to build our ability to overcome barriers to development and maximise the effectiveness of sustainable development policies and measures, we reaffirm the need to integrate culture into our work at all levels. We recognise that cultural factors can have a determining impact on policy success and development outcomes from the global to the local, and that cultural actors, institutions and heritage represent key actors and resources in our wider efforts.***

## Chapter II International Peace and Security

### General Comments:

We strongly appreciate the references to the importance of developing a culture of peace, as well as to the importance of upholding cultural rights as part of wider obligations to protect human rights. The impact of the Pact would be strengthened by making clearer references to safeguarding and promoting cultural diversity, and protecting artists and cultural rights defenders from threats and attacks. Similarly, we underline the need to maintain focus on the protection of cultural heritage in the face of insecurity. This would make an essential – and too often neglected connection.

This section would also benefit from a paragraph on promoting information integrity as part of a holistic approach to building more peaceful, cohesive societies.

### Language Proposals

Paragraph 54: *We recognize the devastating impact of armed conflict on civilians and civilian infrastructure, **as well as culture and heritage**, and we reaffirm our commitment to the full respect of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and to granting humanitarian access, in line with resolution 46/182 and humanitarian principles.*

Paragraph 64: *We request that the Secretary-General take concrete steps to strengthen the United Nations approach to preventive diplomacy in the current geopolitical context, building on the principles set out in the New Agenda for Peace. **In particular, we commit to protecting artists and cultural rights defenders, and to promoting cultural diversity and exchange as a means of building social cohesion at all levels.***

New Paragraph 69a: **We welcome the Code of Conduct on Information Integrity prepared by the UN Secretary General, and call for concerted efforts to develop a positive and holistic plan to ensure that everyone has access to accurate, reliable and verifiable information, alongside efforts to restrict flows of mis/disinformation and hate speech that undermine cohesion and drive insecurity. In these, we underline the importance of a user-centred approach, drawing on community institutions such as libraries.**

## Chapter III Science, Technology and innovation and Digital Cooperation

### General Comments:

We believe that the increased focus on drawing on science and research to support policy-making at all levels is a very welcome step, as is the allusion to the role of science communication and citizen science. We see libraries as being a key linking institution in this space, which should be highlighted in order to ensure that their potential is realised everywhere. We would also recommend reconsideration of the frequency of Global Sustainable Development Reports, for example through a special rapporteur on the SDGs.

We would recommend including provisions recognising the importance of all ways of knowing, including indigenous ones, and the importance of the humanities and

culture in helping to build understanding of behaviours, as well as to identify solutions.

We are particularly positive about the inclusion of reference to open science as a means of promoting impact and inclusivity in research. We would even strengthen this by referring to the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, and urging steps internationally to overcome barriers to it. Elsewhere, we would be careful to ensure that no language implies that developing countries are imply beneficiaries of innovation elsewhere.

Finally, we believe that there is a lot of potential in the UN 2.0 initiative, and strongly welcome its focus on improved knowledge management within the UN system. We strongly hope not only that this work is carried forwards, but that it can serve to inspire the development of strong knowledge management within governments everywhere, built around strong libraries.

#### **Language Proposals:**

Paragraph 92: *We undertake to increase the use of science and scientific evidence in policymaking, **drawing on insights from all of the sciences and humanities, as well as the insights offered by culture and indigenous ways of knowing.** We recognize that solutions to complex global challenges call for cross- and trans-disciplinary collaboration and a strong science-policy-society interface in order to build trust in science. We encourage the United Nations system to take an active role in forging closer links with national and multilateral science advisory bodies to optimally leverage science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, **as well as universally accessible information infrastructures such as libraries.** We welcome the establishment of the Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board.*

Paragraph 97: *We resolve to take action to enhance the ability of developing countries to benefit from science, technology and innovation. We commit to addressing the major structural impediments to accessing new and emerging technologies, including by scaling up the use of open science **in line with the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science**, affordable and open-source technology, **acting to remove barriers to cross-border research collaboration**, research and development.*

Paragraph 101: *We call upon the United Nations system to support the efforts of developing countries to develop and strengthen their national science, technology and innovation ecosystems. To facilitate these efforts, we welcome the Secretary-General's vision to work towards a UN 2.0 to increase the effectiveness of the Organization through enhancing capabilities in data analytics, digital transformation, strategic foresight, **knowledge management ad library services**, and results orientation.*

## **Chapter IV Youth and Future Generations**

#### **General Comments:**

We are very happy to see references to the role of youth in advancing culture, and see this as providing a welcome endorsement of efforts to mobilise young creators to contribute to building a better world. This provides a good start, but we believe that the section as a whole will be strengthened by references to ensuring access of young

people to basic services such as libraries (as well as social protection). We recognise that content around future generations in general will come in the context of the Declaration on Future Generations, but underline our belief that any effort to imagine a inclusive, sustainable, desirable future is only possible with the creativity and ideas that come from the cultural sector, as well as the core literacies and access to information necessary for empowerment.

#### **Language Proposals:**

Paragraph 105: *We underline the importance of establishing in the national context robust social security systems **and basic public service infrastructures** as well as social protection floors that respond to the needs and rights of young persons and children, including all girls and young women. We also recognize that the wellbeing of young people is closely intertwined with the enjoyment of their right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, **and access to and participation in cultural life.***

## **Chapter V Transforming Global Governance**

#### **General Comments:**

We welcome the emphasis on building stronger and more effective structures at the international level to deliver on the commitments set out above, and in particular the reference to strengthening the UN human rights system to ensure enjoyment of cultural rights.

We do believe that reference to effective knowledge management, in the context of UN 2.0 and beyond, would also be powerful here, given how necessary information is for resilience in the event of disaster.

#### **Language Proposals:**

Paragraph 133: *We emphasize that the decision to convene an Emergency Platform in response to a complex global shock and the work of an Emergency Platform must fully respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States. We also emphasize that the decision to convene an Emergency Platform would support and complement the response of United Nations principal organs mandated to respond to crises, and that the convening of an Emergency Platform would not affect the mandated role of any intergovernmental body. **We will complement the work of the Platform, as well as the work of other national and intergovernmental bodies, through investing in knowledge management and dissemination throughout the UN system and beyond.***

Paragraph 134: *We welcome the development of measures of progress on sustainable development that complement and thus go beyond gross domestic product, **highlighting key cross-cutting drivers of success such as the integration of culture into policy planning and delivery.** These measures should recognize what matters to people, the planet and the future. We recognize this as a critical step in deepening and making effective our commitment to sustainability in all its dimensions, fighting inequality and promoting resilience **and wellbeing** in an era defined by more frequent and intense shocks.*