

**Statement by Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Culture and Development, on the Declaration of the Post 2015 Development Agenda**

**New York, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2015**

Mr. Co-Facilitator,

I am honoured to read this statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of Culture and Development, comprising 29 countries from all regions<sup>1</sup>.

The Group wishes to recall that the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/223, has emphasized the importance of the contribution of culture to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Moreover, it has highlighted its role as an enabler and its potential as a driver of sustainable development.

The international community has thus recognized the important contribution of culture to the achievement of national development objectives and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, it has acknowledged the contribution of culture to inclusive economic development and its role in promoting sustainable patterns of production and consumption and inclusive societies through the dissemination of information and education. Moreover, the international community supports all initiatives aiming at the creation of a universal culture of peace, as culture is also considered as a vehicle to foster tolerance.

The referred resolution consequently encouraged the international community to give due consideration to culture and sustainable development in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. That was in 2013. In December 2014, in its resolution 69/230 the General Assembly noted the contribution of culture to sustainable development as contained in the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, and encouraged all relevant stakeholders to continue to give due consideration to culture and sustainable development in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

Following up on such mandate, our Group of Friends of Culture and Development welcomes that the Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, reflects in several targets the crosscutting contribution of culture to sustainable development. In this regard, we look forward for fully integrating culture in the post 2015 development agenda.

Consistent with the Rio+20 Outcome Document, the OWG report acknowledged the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognized that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development. Building up on such language and on other relevant instruments adopted on a consensual manner, the Group of Friends of Culture and Development proposes to further reflect in the Declaration of the post 2015 development agenda the value of culture as an enabler and its potential as a driver of sustainable development.

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Argentina, Barbados, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Mongolia, Nepal, Peru, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Qatar, Tunisia, Turkey and Vietnam.

We therefore acknowledge the key contribution of culture to poverty reduction, job creation, economic resilience and social inclusion, as well as its role to ensure ownership of development policies. We also acknowledge the power of culture to contribute to quality education, creative industries, sustainable urban development and greater environmental sustainability through local and traditional knowledge. We further acknowledge the diversity of the world and recognize that cultural diversity is a force of innovation and creativity for all.

We have before us an opportunity to build up a global culture of sustainable development through the promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production. Hence, we must mobilize the power of culture to catalyse the transformative change we seek across the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Thank you.