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**FORUM ON ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION**

Havana, 30-31 August 2003

Programme of action

1. Promote the production and publication of literary works related to desertification, drought and poverty and to the protection of water, forests and other natural resources.
2. Produce photographic, film and visual materials that could be used to publicize the aims of the Forum.
3. Encourage painters, sculptors and others working in the plastic arts to create works and hold exhibitions dealing with the relationship between human beings and nature, particularly with regard to water, earth and forests, as part of efforts to preserve these three elements, which are essential for life on Earth.
4. Call on sculptors to create a monument to water or to the Earth in their respective countries.
5. Encourage the organization of music festivals or concerts dedicated to combating desertification, drought and poverty, and the promotion of a culture of nature conservation.
6. Produce compact discs containing music related to the themes of the Forum.
7. Promote the creation of songs with themes dealing with the importance of protecting the earth and the water and of improving the quality of life of people, especially the poorest.

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8. Produce designs for use in the publication of postcards, posters, postage stamps, calendars and other publicity materials.
9. Organize competitions to test people's knowledge of international efforts to combat the evils of desertification and drought.
10. Promote the creation of choreographies for dance, ballet and/or folk groups that relate to the dramatic international situation caused by these phenomena.
11. Promote a culture of conservation, protection and non-exploitation of the environment: peace not war, love not hate, understanding, solidarity and unity.
12. Support the establishment of a prize to be awarded by an independent jury to the individuals, organizations and institutions at the forefront of the fight against desertification, drought and environmental degradation.
13. Call on writers to produce scripts for radio, television, the cinema and the theatre that deal with the causes and negative consequences of the crisis, which affects many parts of the world in this respect.
14. Make efforts to ensure that the importance of combating desertification and drought and of protecting our natural resources is addressed at national and international cultural events.
15. Organize exhibitions of posters that could be distributed in the various countries in each geographical region.
16. Promote the setting up of a web site for these purposes.
17. Organize a first cultural workshop on desertification.
18. Provide advisory services and expert cooperation for the regions most affected by desertification and drought.

19. Have a schedule drawn up of the major international cultural events and try to ensure that a representative of the Forum attends them in order to publicize the true situation in the area of concern to us and the ongoing efforts to deal with it.
20. Liaise with the media, journalists and social communicators to ensure that its work covers the issue of desertification and other issues related to the Convention.
21. Ensure that in every country the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought includes cultural activities aimed at raising awareness and stressing the importance of combating desertification.
22. Establish contacts with unions and organizations of artists and writers all over the world so that they can help find a solution to the current problems in countries suffering from desertification.
23. Encourage the publication and distribution of a guide on desertification for the general public, as well as local and regional guides in the local languages for the areas most affected by this problem.
24. Encourage painters around the world to each donate a painting on the subject so that a major international exhibition of these paintings can be organized.
25. Launch a major international campaign for the establishment of a nature-friendly culture.
26. Coordinate the creation of centers and committees in national ministries or departments of culture for the implementation of all matters related to the Forum's action plan.
27. Keep a close link with scientists and create inter-disciplinary groups to coordinate and support through non-governmental organizations pursuing the aims of the Convention in different countries.
28. Promote the development for educational curricula at all levels, from pre-school and childcare programmes onwards, of an information module on the subject of desertification.

29. Reach agreement with ministries and departments of education on the inclusion of a module on desertification in the curriculum.
30. Stress the involvement of women's organizations, in the light of women's role in the daily use of water and natural resources.
31. Involve religious organizations of all kinds in combating desertification.
32. Mobilize those working in sectors related to agriculture who are in a position to raise support for the fight against desertification (non-governmental organizations, global social movements, universities, local leaders).
33. Recognize the role of older people as the depositaries of traditions and bearers of culture, and as advisers on the promotion of the protection of water.
34. Promote the establishment of this group as the First Intellectuals' and Artists' Forum on Desertification.
35. Propose to the parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that this Forum should meet on an annual or biannual basis.
36. Suggest the call that on 21 March, 2004, designated as World Poetry Day, a poetry action be celebrated to sensitize people and world institutions about the importance and preservation of water in the planet.
37. Given that neither the countries of the North and the G-8 nor countries like China that have done a good deal of work in dealing with this kind of problem are properly represented in this Forum, suggest that it should be emphasized that environmental disasters have been shown to be global problems that can only be resolved at the global level.

38. Coordinate current UNESCO programmes with the objectives of the efforts to combat desertification and with the new alliances proposed in this programme of action.
39. Promote the creation of a Latin-America-Africa Forum whose first meeting would be held in Venezuela.
