

SUMMARY



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2004

Cultural liberty
in today's
diverse world



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Foreword

At a time when the notion of a global “clash of cultures” is resonating so powerfully—and worryingly—around the world, finding answers to the old questions of how best to manage and mitigate conflict over language, religion, culture and ethnicity has taken on renewed importance. For development practitioners this is not an abstract question. If the world is to reach the Millennium Development Goals and ultimately eradicate poverty, it must first successfully confront the challenge of how to build inclusive, culturally diverse societies. Not just because doing so successfully is a precondition for countries to focus properly on other priorities of economic growth, health and education for all citizens. But because allowing people full cultural expression is an important development end in itself.

Human development is first and foremost about allowing people to lead the kind of life they choose—and providing them with the tools and opportunities to make those choices. In recent years *Human Development Report* has argued strongly that this is as much a question of politics as economics—from protecting human rights to deepening democracy. Unless people who are poor and marginalized—who more often than not are members of religious or ethnic minorities or migrants—can influence political action at local and national levels, they are unlikely to get equitable access to jobs, schools, hospitals, justice, security and other basic services.

This year’s Report builds on that analysis, by carefully examining—and rejecting—claims that cultural differences necessarily lead to social, economic and political conflict or that inherent cultural rights should supersede political and economic ones. Instead, it provides a powerful argument for finding ways to “delight in our differences”, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu has put it. It also offers some concrete ideas on what it means in practice to build and manage

the politics of identity and culture in a manner consistent with the bedrock principles of human development.

Sometimes, that is relatively easy—for example, a girl’s right to an education will always trump her father’s claim to a cultural right to forbid her schooling for religious or other reasons. But the question can get much more complicated. Take education in the mother tongue. There is persuasive evidence that young children are more successful learning in their own language. However, what is an advantage at one point in life—and indeed may remain an indispensable bedrock of identity throughout life—can turn into a disadvantage in other ways when lack of proficiency in more widely used national or international languages can severely handicap employment opportunities. As the Report makes clear, from affirmative action to the role of the media, there are no easy—or one size fits all—rules for how best to build working multicultural societies.

Even so, one overarching lesson is clear: succeeding is not simply a question of legislative and policy changes, necessary though they be. Constitutions and legislation that provide protections and guarantees for minorities, indigenous people and other groups are a critical foundation for broader freedoms. But unless the political culture also changes—unless citizens come to think, feel and act in ways that genuinely accommodate the needs and aspirations of others—real change will not happen.

When the political culture does not change, the consequences are disturbingly clear. From disaffected indigenous groups across Latin America, to unhappy minorities in Africa and Asia, to new immigrants across the developed world, failing to address the grievances of marginalized groups does not just create injustice. It builds real problems for the future: unemployed, disaffected

youth, angry with the status quo and demanding change, often violently.

That is the challenge. But there are also real opportunities. The overarching message of the Report is to highlight the vast potential of building a more peaceful, prosperous world by bringing issues of culture to the mainstream of development thinking and practice. Not to substitute for more traditional priorities that will remain our bread and butter—but to complement and strengthen them. The flip side of the development divide is that developing countries are often able to draw on richer, more diverse cultural traditions—whether captured in language, art, music or other forms—than their wealthier counterparts in the North. The globalization of mass culture—from books to films to television—clearly poses some significant threats to these traditional cultures. But it also opens up opportunities, from the narrow sense of disadvantaged groups like Australian Aborigines or Arctic Inuit tapping

global art markets, to the broader one of creating more vibrant, creative, exciting societies.

Like all *Human Development Reports*, this is an independent study intended to stimulate debate and discussion around an important issue, not a statement of United Nations or UNDP policy. However, by taking up an issue often neglected by development economists and putting it firmly within the spectrum of priorities in building better, more fulfilled lives, it presents important arguments for UNDP and its partners to consider and act on in their broader work. This year, I would also like to pay particular tribute to Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, who is stepping down after 10 successful years leading our Human Development Report Office. I would also like to extend special thanks to Amartya Sen, one of the godfathers of human development, who has not only contributed the first chapter but been an enormous influence in shaping our thinking on this important issue.



Mark Malloch Brown
Administrator, UNDP

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Cultural liberty in today's diverse world

Cultural liberty is a vital part of human development because being able to choose one's identity is important in leading a full life

How will the new constitution of Iraq satisfy demands for fair representation for Shiites and Kurds? Which—and how many—of the languages spoken in Afghanistan should the new constitution recognize as the official language of the state? How will the Nigerian federal court deal with a Sharia law ruling to punish adultery by death? Will the French legislature approve the proposal to ban headscarves and other religious symbols in public schools? Do Hispanics in the United States resist assimilation into the mainstream American culture? Will there be a peace accord to end fighting in Côte d'Ivoire? Will the President of Bolivia resign after mounting protests by indigenous people? Will the peace talks to end the Tamil-Sinhala conflict in Sri Lanka ever conclude? These are just some headlines from the past few months. Managing cultural diversity is one of the central challenges of our time.

Long thought to be divisive threats to social harmony, choices like these—about recognizing and accommodating diverse ethnicities, religions, languages and values—are an inescapable feature of the landscape of politics in the 21st century. Political leaders and political theorists of all persuasions have argued against explicit recognition of cultural identities—ethnic, religious, linguistic, racial. The result, more often than not, has been that cultural identities have been suppressed, sometimes brutally, as state policy—through religious persecutions and ethnic cleansings, but also through everyday exclusion and economic, social and political discrimination.

New today is the rise of identity politics. In vastly different contexts and in different ways—from indigenous people in Latin America to religious minorities in South Asia to ethnic minorities in the Balkans and Africa to immigrants in Western Europe—people are mobilizing anew around old grievances along ethnic,

religious, racial and cultural lines, demanding that their identities be acknowledged, appreciated and accommodated by wider society. Suffering discrimination and marginalization from social, economic and political opportunities, they are also demanding social justice. Also new today is the rise of coercive movements that threaten cultural liberty. And, in this era of globalization, a new class of political claims and demands has emerged from individuals, communities and countries feeling that their local cultures are being swept away. They want to keep their diversity in a globalized world.

Why these movements today? They are not isolated. They are part of a historic process of social change, of struggles for cultural freedom, of new frontiers in the advance of human freedoms and democracy. They are propelled and shaped by the spread of democracy, which is giving movements more political space for protest, and the advance of globalization, which is creating new networks of alliances and presenting new challenges.

Cultural liberty is a vital part of human development because being able to choose one's identity—who one is—without losing the respect of others or being excluded from other choices is important in leading a full life. People want the freedom to practice their religion openly, to speak their language, to celebrate their ethnic or religious heritage without fear of ridicule or punishment or diminished opportunity. People want the freedom to participate in society without having to slip off their chosen cultural moorings. It is a simple idea, but profoundly unsettling.

States face an urgent challenge in responding to these demands. If handled well, greater recognition of identities will bring greater cultural diversity in society, enriching people's lives. But there is also a great risk.

These struggles over cultural identity, if left unmanaged or managed poorly, can quickly

become one of the greatest sources of instability within states and between them—and in so doing trigger conflict that takes development backwards. Identity politics that polarize people and groups are creating fault lines between “us” and “them”. Growing distrust and hatred threaten peace, development and human freedoms. Just in the last year ethnic violence destroyed hundreds of homes and mosques in Kosovo and Serbia. Terrorist train bombings in Spain killed nearly 200. Sectarian violence killed thousands of Muslims and drove thousands more from their homes in Gujarat and elsewhere in India, a champion of cultural accommodation. A spate of hate crimes against immigrants shattered Norwegians’ belief in their unshakable commitment to tolerance.

Struggles over identity can also lead to regressive and xenophobic policies that retard human development. They can encourage a retreat to conservatism and a rejection of change, closing off the infusion of ideas and of people who bring cosmopolitan values and the knowledge and skills that advance development.

Managing diversity and respecting cultural identities are not just challenges for a few “multi-ethnic states”. Almost no country is entirely homogeneous. The world’s nearly 200 countries contain some 5,000 ethnic groups. Two-thirds have at least one substantial minority—an

ethnic or religious group that makes up at least 10% of the population.

At the same time the pace of international migration has quickened, with startling effects on some countries and cities. Nearly half the population of Toronto was born outside of Canada. And many more foreign-born people maintain close ties with their countries of origin than did immigrants of the last century. One way or another every country is a multicultural society today, containing ethnic, religious or linguistic groups that have common bonds to their own heritage, culture, values and way of life.

Cultural diversity is here to stay—and to grow. States need to find ways of forging national unity amid this diversity. The world, ever more interdependent economically, cannot function unless people respect diversity and build unity through common bonds of humanity. In this age of globalization the demands for cultural recognition can no longer be ignored by any state or by the international community. And confrontations over culture and identity are likely to grow—the ease of communications and travel have shrunk the world and changed the landscape of cultural diversity, and the spread of democracy, human rights and new global networks have given people greater means to mobilize around a cause, insist on a response and get it.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Human rights embody the fundamental values of human civilizations

People are different, and so are their cultures.
 People live in different ways, and civilizations also differ.
 People speak in a variety of languages.
 People are guided by different religions.
 People are born different colours, and many traditions influence their lives with varying colours and shades.
 People dress differently and adapt to their environment in different ways.
 People express themselves differently. Music, literature and art reflect different styles as well.
 But despite these differences, all people have one single common attribute: they are all human beings—nothing more, nothing less.

And however different they may be, all cultures embrace certain common principles:
 No culture tolerates the exploitation of human beings.
 No religion allows the killing of the innocent.
 No civilization accepts violence or terror.
 Torture is abhorrent to the human conscience.
 Brutality and cruelty are appalling in every tradition.

In short, these common principles, which are shared by all civilizations, reflect our fundamental human rights. These rights are treasured and cherished by everyone, everywhere.

So cultural relativity should never be used as a pretext to violate human rights, since these

rights embody the most fundamental values of human civilizations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is needed universally, applicable to both East and West. It is compatible with every faith and religion. Failing to respect our human rights only undermines our humanity.

Let us not destroy this fundamental truth; if we do, the weak will have nowhere to turn.

Shirin Ebadi

2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner

The Report makes a case for respecting diversity and building more inclusive societies by adopting policies that explicitly recognize cultural differences—multicultural policies

Five myths debunked. Policies recognizing cultural identities and encouraging diversity to flourish do not result in fragmentation, conflict, weak development or authoritarian rule. Such policies are both viable, and necessary, for it is often the suppression of culturally identified groups that leads to tensions.

The Report makes a case for respecting diversity and building more inclusive societies by adopting policies that explicitly recognize cultural differences—multicultural policies. But why have many cultural identities been suppressed or ignored for so long? One reason is that many people believe that allowing diversity to flourish may be desirable in the abstract but in practice can weaken the state, lead to conflict and retard development. The best approach to diversity, in this view, is assimilation around a single national standard, which can lead to the suppression of cultural identities. However, the Report argues that these are not premises—they are myths. Indeed, it argues that a multicultural policy approach is not just desirable but also viable and necessary. Without such an approach the imagined problems of diversity can become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Myth 1. People's ethnic identities compete with their attachment to the state, so there is a trade-off between recognizing diversity and unifying the state.

Not so. Individuals can and do have multiple identities that are complementary—ethnicity, language, religion and race as well as citizenship. Nor is identity a zero sum game. There is no inevitable need to choose between state unity and recognition of cultural differences.

A sense of identity and belonging to a group with shared values and other bonds of culture is important for individuals. But each individual can identify with many different groups. Individuals have identity of citizenship (for example, being French), gender (being a woman), race (being of West African origin), language (being fluent in Thai, Chinese and English), politics (having left-wing views) and religion (being Buddhist).

Identity also has an element of choice: within these memberships individuals can choose what priority to give to one membership over another in different contexts. Mexican Americans may cheer for the Mexican soccer team but serve in the U.S. Army. Many white South Africans chose to fight apartheid as South Africans. Sociologists tell us that people have boundaries of identity that separate “us” from “them”, but these boundaries shift and blur to incorporate broader groups of people.

“Nation building” has been a dominant objective of the 20th century, and most states have aimed to build culturally homogeneous states with singular identities. Sometimes they succeeded but at the cost of repression and persecution. If the history of the 20th century showed anything, it is that the attempt either to exterminate cultural groups or to wish them away elicits a stubborn resilience. By contrast, recognizing cultural identities has resolved never-ending tensions. For both practical and moral reasons, then, it is far better to accommodate cultural groups than to try to eliminate them or to pretend that they do not exist.

Countries do not have to choose between national unity and cultural diversity. Surveys show that the two can and often do coexist. In Belgium citizens overwhelmingly replied when asked that they felt both Belgian and Flemish or Walloon and in Spain, that they felt Spanish as well as Catalan or Basque.

These countries and others have worked hard to accommodate diverse cultures. They have also worked hard to build unity by fostering respect for identities and trust in state institutions. The states have held together. Immigrants need not deny their commitment to their families in their countries of origin when they develop loyalties to their new countries. Fears that if immigrants do not “assimilate”, they will fragment the country are unfounded. Assimilation without choice is no longer a viable—or a necessary—model of integration.

There is no trade-off between diversity and state unity. Multicultural policies are a way to build diverse and unified states.

Myth 2. Ethnic groups are prone to violent conflict with each other in clashes of values,

so there is a trade-off between respecting diversity and sustaining peace.

No. There is little empirical evidence that cultural differences and clashes over values are in themselves a cause of violent conflict.

It is true, particularly since the end of the cold war, that violent conflicts have arisen not so much between states but within them between ethnic groups. But on their causes, there is wide agreement in recent research by scholars that cultural differences by themselves are not the relevant factor. Some even argue that cultural diversity reduces the risk of conflict by making group mobilization more difficult.

Studies offer several explanations for these wars: economic inequalities between the groups as well as struggles over political power, land and other economic assets. In Fiji indigenous Fijians initiated a coup against the Indian-dominated government because they feared that land might be confiscated. In Sri Lanka the Sinhalese majority gained political power, but the Tamil minority had access to more economic resources,

triggering decades of civil conflict. In Burundi and Rwanda, at different points in time, Tutsis and Hutus were each excluded from economic opportunities and political participation.

Cultural identity does have a role in these conflicts—not as a cause but as a driver for political mobilization. Leaders invoke a single identity, its symbols and its history of grievances, to “rally the troops”. And a lack of cultural recognition can trigger violent mobilization. Underlying inequalities in South Africa were at the root of the Soweto riots in 1976, but they were triggered by attempts to impose Afrikaans on black schools.

While the coexistence of culturally distinct groups is not, in itself, a cause of violent conflict, it is dangerous to allow economic and political inequality to deepen between these groups or to suppress cultural differences, because cultural groups are easily mobilized to contest these disparities as injustice.

There is no trade-off between peace and respect for diversity, but identity politics need to be managed so that they do not turn violent.

A sense of identity and belonging to a group with shared values and other bonds of culture is important for all individuals. But each individual can identify with many different groups

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Difference is not a threat but a source of strength

Most societies in the world today include more than one culture, one community or one tradition. All too often in such a situation one element may seek to dominate the society as a whole. That approach can generate tension and conflict. It is in the interests of all to work together to build a society beneficial to all its members.

Northern Ireland and the European Union are particularly strong examples of how the existence of more than one culture can prove to be positive in the building and development of society through a process of conflict resolution.

It is now almost four decades since the beginnings of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland, which has sought by peaceful means the same rights and opportunities for all the people living in Northern Ireland, irrespective of their background or religion. Throughout those years I have maintained that, when you have a divided people, violence has absolutely no role to play in healing the division or in solving the problems—it only deepens the division. The problem can be resolved only through peace, stability, agreement, consensus and partnership. There cannot be victory for one side or the other.

So long as the legitimate rights of each community in Northern Ireland were not accommodated together in a new political framework acceptable to all, the situation would continue to give rise to conflict and instability. There needed to be agreement.

That is the purpose of the 1998 Belfast Agreement. It represents an accommodation that protects and promotes the identities and rights of all political traditions, groups and individuals. No one is asked to yield cherished convictions or beliefs. Everyone is asked to respect the views and rights of others as equal to his or her own.

I also believe that the European Union is the best example of conflict prevention and conflict resolution in international history. It is important that we maintain and build on that record. European visionaries demonstrated that difference—whether of race, religion or nationality—is not a threat, but is natural, positive and a source of strength. It should never be the source of hatred or conflict. A fundamental principle of peace is respect for diversity.

I entered the European Parliament in 1979 on the occasion of the first direct election to the

parliament by the voters of its then nine member states. I will soon be stepping down from elected public life, delighted in the knowledge that in those 25 years the European Union has progressed to the point that it will by then have expanded to include 25 member states. This will end the artificial division of our continent created after the Second World War and reunite our European family.

The European Parliament's location is in Strasbourg, on the River Rhine, on the border between France and Germany. When I first visited Strasbourg I walked across the bridge from Strasbourg in France to Kehl in Germany and reflected on the tens of millions of people who had been killed in the numerous wars waged for control of territory. The European Union has replaced those conflicts with co-operation between its people. It has transformed its wide range of traditions from a source of conflict into a source of unifying strength.



John Hume, MP MEP
1998 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

Cultural liberty is the capability of people to live and be what they choose

Myth 3. Cultural liberty requires defending traditional practices, so there could be a trade-off between recognizing cultural diversity and other human development priorities such as progress in development, democracy and human rights.

No. Cultural liberty is about expanding individual choices, not about preserving values and practices as an end in itself with blind allegiance to tradition.

Culture is not a frozen set of values and practices. It is constantly recreated as people question, adapt and redefine their values and practices to changing realities and exchanges of ideas.

Some argue that multiculturalism is a policy of conserving cultures, even practices that violate human rights, and that movements for cultural recognition are not governed democratically. But neither cultural freedom nor respect for diversity should be confused with the defence of tradition. Cultural liberty is the capability of people to live and be what they choose, with adequate opportunity to consider other options.

“Culture”, “tradition”, and “authenticity” are not the same as “cultural liberty”. They are not acceptable reasons for allowing practices that deny individuals equality of opportunity and violate their human rights—such as denying women equal rights to education.

Interest groups led by self-appointed leaders may not reflect the views of the membership at large. It is not rare for groups to be dominated by people who have an interest in maintaining the status quo under the justification of “tradition” and who act as gatekeepers of traditionalism to freeze their cultures. Those making demands for cultural accommodation should also abide by democratic principles and the objectives of human freedom and human rights. One good model is the Sami people in Finland, who enjoy autonomy in a parliament that has democratic structures and follows democratic procedures but is part of the Finnish state.

There does not need to be any trade-off between respect for cultural difference and human rights and development. But the process of development involves active participation of people in fighting for human rights and shifts in values.

Myth 4. Ethnically diverse countries are less able to develop, so there is a trade-off between respecting diversity and promoting development.

No. There is no evidence of a clear relationship, good or bad, between cultural diversity and development.

Some argue, however, that diversity has been an obstacle to development. But while it is undeniably true that many diverse societies have low levels of income and human development, there is no evidence that this is related to cultural diversity. One study argues that diversity has been a source of poor economic performance in Africa—but this is related to political decision-making that follows ethnic rather than national interests, not to diversity itself. Just as there are multi-ethnic countries that have stagnated, there are others that were spectacularly successful. Malaysia, with 62% of its people Malays and other indigenous groups, 30% Chinese and 8% Indian, was the world’s 10th fastest growing economy during 1970–90, years when it also implemented affirmative action policies. Mauritius ranks 64 in the human development index, the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has a diverse population of African, Indian, Chinese and European origin—with 50% Hindu, 30% Christian and 17% Muslim.

Myth 5. Some cultures are more likely to make developmental progress than others, and some cultures have inherent democratic values while others do not, so there is a trade-off between accommodating certain cultures and promoting development and democracy.

Again, no. There is no evidence from statistical analysis or historical studies of a causal relationship between culture and economic progress or democracy.

Cultural determinism—the idea that a group’s culture explains economic performance and the advance of democracy—as an obstacle or a facilitator, has enormous intuitive appeal. But these theories are not supported by econometric analysis or history.

Many theories of cultural determinism have been advanced, starting with Max Weber’s

explanation of the Protestant ethic as a key factor behind successful growth in capitalist economies. Persuasive in explaining the past, these theories have been repeatedly proven wrong in predicting the future. When Weber's theory of the Protestant ethic was being touted, Catholic countries (France and Italy) were growing faster than Protestant Britain and Germany, so the theory was expanded to mean Christian or Western. When Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and other East Asian countries achieved record growth rates, the notion that Confucian values retard growth had to be jettisoned.

Understanding cultural traditions can offer insights to human behaviour and social dynamics that influence development outcomes. But these insights do not offer a grand theory of culture and development. In explaining economic growth rates, for example, economic policy, geography and the burden of disease are found to be highly relevant factors. But culture, such as whether a society is Hindu or Muslim, is found to be insignificant.

The same is true with reference to democracy. A new wave of cultural determinism is starting to hold sway in some policy debates, attributing the failures of democratization in the non-Western world to inherent cultural traits of intolerance and "authoritarian values". At the global level some theorists have argued that the 21st century will see a "clash of civilizations", that the future of democratic and tolerant Western states is threatened by non-Western states with more authoritarian values. There are reasons to be sceptical. For one thing, the theory exaggerates the differences between "civilization" groups and ignores the similarities among them.

Moreover, the West has no monopoly on democracy or tolerance, and there is no unique line of historical division between a tolerant and democratic West and a despotic East. Plato and Augustine were no less authoritarian in their thinking than were Confucius and Kautilya. There were champions of democracy not just in Europe but elsewhere as well. Take Akbar, who preached religious tolerance in 16th century India, or Prince Shotoku who in 7th century Japan introduced the constitution (*kenpo*) that insisted that "decisions on important matters

should not be made by one person alone. They should be discussed by many". Notions of participatory decision-making on important public issues have been a central part of many traditions in Africa and elsewhere. And more recent findings of the World Values survey show that people in Muslim countries have as much support for democratic values as do people in non-Muslim countries.

A basic problem with these theories is the underlying assumption that culture is largely fixed and unchanging, allowing the world to be neatly divided into "civilizations" or "cultures". This ignores the fact that while there can be great continuity in values and traditions in societies, cultures also change and are rarely homogeneous. Nearly all societies have undergone shifts in values—for example, shifts in values about the role of women and gender equality over the last century. And radical changes in social practices have occurred everywhere, from Catholics in Chile to Muslims in Bangladesh to Buddhists in Thailand. Such changes and tensions within societies drive politics and historical change, so that the way power relationships affect those dynamics now dominates research in anthropology. Paradoxically, just as anthropologists have discarded the concept of culture as a bounded and fixed social phenomenon, mainstream political interest in finding core values and traits of "a people and their culture" is growing.

Theories of cultural determinism deserve critical assessment since they have dangerous policy implications. They can fuel support for nationalistic policies that denigrate or oppress "inferior" cultures argued to stand in the way of national unity, democracy and development. Such attacks on cultural values would then fuel violent reactions that could feed tensions both within and between nations.

Human development requires more than health, education, a decent standard of living and political freedom. People's cultural identities must be recognized and accommodated by the state, and people must be free to express these identities without being discriminated against in other aspects of their lives. In

Theories of cultural determinism deserve critical assessment since they have dangerous policy implications and could feed tensions both within and between nations

short: cultural liberty is a human right and an important aspect of human development—and thus worthy of state action and attention.

Human development is the process of widening choices for people to do and be what they value in life. Previous *Human Development Reports* have focused on expanding social, political and economic opportunities to expand these choices. They have explored ways that policies of equitable growth, expansion of social opportunities and deepening of democracy can enhance those choices for all people.

A further dimension of human development, difficult to measure and even to define, is vitally important: cultural liberty is central to the capability of people to live as they would like. The advance of cultural liberty must be a central aspect of human development, and this requires going beyond social, political and economic opportunities since they do not guarantee cultural liberty.

Cultural liberty is about allowing people the freedom to choose their identities—and to lead the lives they value—without being excluded from other choices important to them (such as

those for education, health or job opportunities). In practice there are two forms of cultural exclusion. First is living mode exclusion, which denies recognition and accommodation of a lifestyle that a group would choose to have and that insists that individuals must live exactly like all others in society. Examples include religious oppression or the insistence that immigrants drop their cultural practices and language. Second is participation exclusion, when people are discriminated against or suffer disadvantage in social, political and economic opportunities because of their cultural identity.

Both types of exclusion exist on an extensive scale, across every continent, at every level of development, in democracies and authoritarian states. The *Minorities at Risk* data set, a research project including issues relating to cultural exclusion that has reviewed the situation of minority groups worldwide, estimates that about 900 million people belong to groups that are subject to some form of either living mode or participation exclusion not faced by other groups in the state—around one in every seven people around the world.

Cultural liberty allows people to live the lives they value without being excluded from other choices important to them such as education, health or job opportunities

TABLE
Integrating multicultural policies into human development strategies

Three pillars of the human development strategy	Necessary for cultural liberty	But not sufficient for cultural liberty	Additional multicultural policies	Potential contradictions between aims of multiculturalism and three pillars
Democracy	Democracy is the only form of government consistent with all human freedoms and human rights, including cultural freedoms and rights.	Democracy does little to accommodate minority interests. Well developed democracies have neglected claims for cultural recognition from ethnic, linguistic and religious groups, including indigenous groups and immigrants. Democracy also permits the rise of violent extremist groups.	Incorporate accommodation of minority identities and adopt policies of multiculturalism. Consider asymmetric federalism and executive power sharing. Recognize multiple identities and multiple citizenship.	Claims for cultural recognition often made by non-democratic groups. Demands can be antithetical to building democracy, freezing traditional practices that are oppressive in the name of "authenticity", and may not be supported by many members of the relevant group.
Pro-poor growth	Pro-poor growth is necessary to redress socio-economic exclusion (participation exclusion) of cultural groups.	Pro-poor growth is not enough to overcome discrimination and redress past wrongs.	Develop special support programmes for jobs, training and credit. Institute affirmative action programmes.	Affirmative action is contrary to principles of equality. Are special programmes an alternative to affirmative action?
Equitable expansion of social opportunities	Equitable expansion of social opportunities is necessary to redress socio-economic exclusion of cultural groups.	Equitable expansion of social opportunities is not enough to overcome discrimination and redress past wrongs. Also, does not address demand for different opportunities, such as different kinds of education.	Develop special support programmes for excluded groups. Institute affirmative action programmes. Offer separate publicly funded provisions, such as schools.	Affirmative action is contrary to principles of equality. Are special programmes an alternative to affirmative action? May involve "unfair inclusion" and exclusion from many choices and opportunities open to all other citizens.

Source: Human Development Report Office.

Of course, suppressions of cultural liberty fill the spectrum. At one extreme is ethnic cleansing. Then there are formal restrictions on the practice of religion, language and citizenship. But more frequently cultural exclusion comes from a simple lack of recognition or respect for the culture and heritage of people—or from some cultures being considered inferior, primitive or uncivilized. This can be reflected in state policies, as in national calendars that do not observe a minority's religious holiday, school-books that leave out or belittle the achievements of minority leaders and support to literature and other arts that celebrate the achievements of the dominant culture.

Living mode exclusion often overlaps with social, economic and political exclusion through discrimination and disadvantage in employment, housing, schooling and political representation. The occupational castes in Nepal have under-five mortality rates of more than 17%, compared with around 7% for the Newar and Brahmin. In Serbia and Montenegro 30% of Roma children have never attended primary school. Latin Americans of European descent often express pride that they are colour blind and insist that their states are too. But across the continent indigenous groups are poorer and less represented politically than the non-indigenous. In Mexico, for example, 81% of indigenous people are reckoned to have incomes below the poverty line, compared with 18% for the general population.

Living mode and participation exclusion, however, do not always overlap. People of Chinese ancestry in South-East Asia, for example, are economically dominant yet have been culturally excluded, for example, with Chinese language schools restricted, publishing in Chinese prohibited and people of Chinese descent socially pressured to adopt local names. But more often living mode exclusion reinforces exclusion from other opportunities. This is particularly so for language. Many groups, especially large minorities such as the Kurds in Turkey and the indigenous people of Guatemala, are excluded from political participation and economic opportunities because the state does not recognize their language in schools, law courts and other official arenas. This is why groups fight

so hard for their languages to be recognized and used in instruction and in political and legal processes.

None of this is utopian. Incorporating multicultural policies is not always easy. Democracy, equitable development and state cohesion are essential, and many countries are successfully developing multicultural policies to address cultural exclusion.

Cultural liberty will not just happen, any more than health, education and gender equity just happen. Fostering it should be a core concern of governments, even where there are no explicit policies of persecution or discrimination.

Some argue that guaranteeing individuals civil and political rights—such as freedom of worship, speech and association—is enough to give them the ability to practice their religion, speak their language and be free of discrimination in employment, schooling and many other types of exclusion. They argue that cultural exclusion is a by-product of economic and political exclusions and that once these are resolved, the cultural exclusion will disappear of its own accord.

This has not happened. Many rich and democratic countries, for example, profess to treat all citizens equally, but are nonetheless home to minorities who lack proper representation in politics, and for whom harassment and difficulty in accessing public services are their daily fare.

To expand cultural freedoms requires explicit policies to address denials of cultural liberty—multicultural policies. To do this, states need to recognize cultural differences in their constitutions, their laws and their institutions. They also need to formulate policies to ensure that the interests of particular groups—whether minorities or historically marginalized majorities—are not ignored or overridden by the majority or by dominant groups. And they need to do so in ways that do not contradict other goals and strategies of human development, such as consolidating democracy, building a capable state and ensuring equal opportunities to all citizens. This is not easy, but there are many examples of countries around the world adopting innovative

Several emerging models of multicultural democracy provide effective mechanisms for power sharing between culturally diverse groups

Power sharing arrangements have broadly proven to be critical in resolving tensions

approaches for managing cultural diversity. The Report focuses particularly on five central policy areas: political participation, religion, access to justice, language and access to socio-economic opportunities.

Policies for ensuring political participation

Many historically marginalized groups are still excluded from real political power, and so they often feel alienated from the state. In some cases the exclusion is due to a lack of democracy or the denial of political rights. If so, democratization would be an essential first step. However, something more is required, because even when members of minorities have equal political rights in a democracy, they may be consistently underrepresented or outvoted, and so view the central government as alien and oppressive. Not surprisingly, many minorities resist alien or oppressive rule and seek more political power. That is why a “multicultural” conception of democracy is often required.

Several emerging models of multicultural democracy provide effective mechanisms for power sharing between culturally diverse groups. These kinds of power-sharing arrangements are crucial for securing the rights of diverse cultural groups and minorities and for preventing violations—either by majoritarian imposition or by the dominance of the ruling political elite.

Electoral reforms addressed the chronic underrepresentation of Maoris in New Zealand. With the introduction of proportional representation in place of the winner-takes-all formula, Maori representation rose from 3% in 1993 to 16% in the 2002 elections, in line with their share of the population. Reserved seats and quotas have been critical to ensuring that the scheduled tribes and castes had a voice in India and that ethnic minorities were represented in Croatia.

Federal arrangements are an important approach to power sharing. Almost every one of the dozen ethnically diverse countries that are longstanding democracies has asymmetrical federal arrangements in which subunits of the federal state do not all have the same powers. This arrangement responds more flexibly to the needs of different groups. For example, Sabah and Sarawak have a special status in Malaysia, as do

the Basques and 14 other *comunidades autonomas* in Spain, with autonomy in areas such as education, language and culture.

Some indigenous people, such as the Inuits in Canada, have also negotiated self-governing territories. The lesson is that such power sharing arrangements have broadly proven to be critical in resolving tensions in countries historically confronted with secessionist movements, as in Spain. Introduced early enough, when tensions are mounting, they can forestall violent conflict.

Policies for ensuring religious freedom

Many religious minorities suffer various forms of exclusion, sometimes due to explicit suppression of religious freedom or discrimination against that group—a problem particularly common in non-secular countries where the state upholds an established religion.

But in other cases the exclusion may be less direct and often unintended, as when the public calendar does not recognize a minority’s religious holidays. India officially celebrates 5 Hindu holidays but also 4 Muslim, 2 Christian, 1 Buddhist, 1 Jain and 1 Sikh in recognition of a diverse population. France celebrates 11 national holidays, 5 are non-denominational and of the 6 religious holidays all celebrate events in the Christian calendar, though 7% of the population is Muslim and 1% Jewish. Similarly, the dress codes in public institutions may conflict with a minority’s religious dress. Or state rules about marriage and inheritance may differ from those of religious codes. Or zoning regulations may be at odds with a minority’s burial practices.

These sorts of conflicts can arise even in secular states with strong democratic institutions that protect civil and political rights. Given the profound importance of religion to people’s identities, it is not surprising that religious minorities often mobilize to contest these exclusions. Some religious practices are not difficult to accommodate, but often they present difficult choices and trade-offs. France is grappling with whether headscarfs in state schools violate state principles of secularism and democratic values of gender equality that state education aims to impart. Nigeria is struggling with

whether to uphold the ruling of a Sharia court in a case of adultery.

What is important from the human development perspective is to expand human freedoms and human rights—and to recognize equality. Secular and democratic states are most likely to achieve these goals where the state provides reasonable accommodation of religious practices, where all religions have the same relation to the state and where the state protects human rights.

Policies for legal pluralism

In many multicultural societies indigenous people and people from other cultural groups have pressed for recognition of their traditional legal systems to gain access to justice. For example, the Maya in Guatemala suffered centuries of oppression, and the state legal system became part of their oppression. The communities lost faith in the state system of rule of law, because it did not secure justice and because it was not embedded in the society and its values.

Several countries such as Guatemala, India and South Africa are developing approaches to legal pluralism, recognizing the role of the judicial norms and institutions of the communities in different ways. Demands for legal pluralism meet opposition from those who fear that it undermines the principle of a unified legal system or that it would promote traditional practices contrary to democracy and human rights. For sure, conflicts do arise—South Africa, for example, is grappling with the conflict between the rights of women to inheritance under state constitution and the rights denied under customary law. There are real trade-offs societies must face, but legal pluralism does not require wholesale adoption of all traditional practices. Culture does evolve, and cultural liberty is not a knee-jerk defence of tradition.

Language policy

Language is often the most contested issue in multicultural states. Some countries have tried

Multicultural policies that recognize differences between groups are needed to address injustices historically rooted and socially entrenched

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Recognition of linguistic diversity in Afghanistan's Constitution

On 4 January 2004 Afghanistan's new Constitution was adopted by a Loya Jirga (or grand assembly) of 502 representatives from all parts of Afghanistan. While the adoption itself is a significant milestone achieved over the past two years, certain aspects of the new Constitution are particularly noteworthy. For example, in recognizing the linguistic diversity in Afghanistan, the Constitution takes a step that is unprecedented in the history not only of Afghanistan, but of the region as a whole.

Afghanistan has two major official languages, Pashto and Dari, which we have proudly spoken for centuries. The Constitution provides for the equal application of these two languages as the official medium of communication in all state organizations. Many state institutions will need to work to implement this, but some, including my own Office, do this already. It is gratifying to me as an Afghan, and as President, to be able to switch between Dari and Pashto when speaking publicly, as the occasion requires.

In addition to the two major official languages the delegates to the Loya Jirga agreed to give official status to all minority languages in the areas where these languages are spoken.

This is an important step that has precedence, I think, only in societies that are strong and solid. It is a powerful indication that, even though we are a society that has just emerged from war and disorder, we have the courage and broadmindedness to be inclusive and to recognize diversity. It makes us proud that today our Baluch, Nuristani, Pamiri, Pashai, Turkmen and Uzbek fellow Afghans are enjoying the right to use their own languages and to have them recognized as official. I am confident that this step will make Afghanistan a stronger nation, prouder than before, and an exemplary nation in the region.

Having taken the first step, Afghanistan now needs to work to make the words of the Constitution a reality. While we are confident about the feasibility of making regional languages official in their respective regions, it is indeed not a small task to put the infrastructure in place for this purpose. To teach people to read and write in their mother tongue requires incorporating the language into the school curriculum. This will require changes in our mainstream education system. We will need to train more teachers and to print more books.

But above all, we need to proceed carefully to ensure that making regional languages official contributes to national integration, rather than reinforcing the isolation of communities. In the 21st century, people around the world are increasingly searching for commonalities, including commonality in language. Learning a local language should not become a countercurrent. And it should not reduce the quality of education for our children.

The Loya Jirga representatives ensured that our new Constitution represents not only the deep aspirations of the nation but also the diverse preferences of the people of Afghanistan. Turning their vision into reality may indeed be a challenge, but it is a challenge we are confident that we can meet. Recognizing our diversity, while affirming our nationhood, will further solidify the foundations of a democratic Afghanistan.



Hamid Karzai
President

Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan

The maintenance of a liberal society depends on respecting the rule of law, listening to political claims and protecting fundamental human rights—even those of vile people

to suppress people's languages, labelling their use subversive. But the more frequent source of widespread exclusion in even well-established democracies is monolingual policy. The choice of official language—the language of instruction in schools, the language of legislative debates and civic participation, the language of commerce—shapes the barriers and advantages individuals face in life—political, social, economic and cultural. In Malawi the constitution requires all parliamentarians to speak and read English. English and Afrikaans are still the de facto languages used in the courts of South Africa, even though nine other languages are now officially recognized. Recognizing a language means more than just the use of that language. It symbolizes respect for the people who speak it, their culture and their full inclusion in society.

The state can be blind to religion, but it cannot be mute to language. Citizens need to communicate to feel a sense of belonging, and the choice of official language symbolizes the national identity. That is why many states resist recognizing multiple languages even when they champion civil and political freedoms.

Many countries are finding ways to accommodate the twin objectives of unity and diversity by adopting two or three languages, recognizing a unifying national language as well as local languages. In many colonized countries this has meant recognizing the language of administration (such as English or French), the most widely used local language and a mother tongue at local levels. Tanzania has promoted the use of Kiswahili along with English in schools and government. India has practised a three-language formula for decades; children are taught in the official language of their state (Bengali in West Bengal, for example) and are also taught the two official languages of the country, Hindi and English.

Socio-economic policies

Socio-economic injustices and inequalities in income, education and health outcomes have been the defining feature of many multi-ethnic societies with marginal groups—blacks in South Africa and indigenous people in Guatemala and Canada. These exclusions reflect long historical roots of conquest and colonization—as well as entrenched structures of hierarchy, such as caste systems.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Diversity—from divisive to inclusive

On 27 April 1994 the people of South Africa founded a nation on the pledge that we would undo the legacy of our divided past in order to build a better life for all.

It was not a pledge that we made lightly.

For generations, millions had been deliberately reduced to poverty. And to perpetuate itself, the apartheid system that claimed to be ordained from on high was sustained only by brute force, robbing us all of our humanity—oppressed and oppressor alike.

For decades we had fought for a non-racial, non-sexist society, and even before we came into power in the historic elections of 1994, our vision of democracy was defined by the principle, among others, that no person or groups of persons shall be subjected to oppression, domination or discrimination by virtue of race, gender, ethnic origin, colour or creed.

Once we won power, we chose to regard the diversity of colours and languages that had once been used to divide us as a source of strength.

We ensured that the basic law of our land, our Constitution and Bill of Rights, promoted unity and gave unique attention to social and economic rights. Our path of inclusiveness was not new, nor had it been chosen in haste. For decades the African National Congress had promoted national unity, and even at the height of oppression, when racial interaction led to prison and death, we never gave up on our aim to build a society grounded on friendship and common humanity.

Now, although laws no longer enforce the old divisions, they are still visible in social and economic life, in our residential areas, in our workplaces and in the growing inequality between rich and poor.

When we took on the project to transform our society, one of our rallying cries was “freedom from want”. Our goal was to banish hunger, illiteracy and homelessness and ensure that everyone had access to food, education and housing. We saw freedom as inseparable from human dignity and equality. Now the foundation for a

better life has been laid, and construction has begun. We are fully aware that our freedom and our rights will only gain their full meaning as we succeed together in overcoming the divisions and inequalities of our past and in improving the lives of all, especially the poor. Today, we are starting to reap some of the harvest we sowed at the end of a South African famine.

Many in the international community, observing from a distance how our society defied the prophets of doom and their predictions of endless conflict, have spoken of a miracle. Yet those who have been closely involved in the transition will know that it has been the product of human decision.



Nelson Mandela
1993 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

Economic and social policies that promote equity are critical in addressing these inequalities. Redressing biases in public spending as well as targeting basic services to people with lower health and education outcomes would help—but would not be enough. Multicultural policies that recognize differences between groups are needed to address the injustices that are historically rooted and socially entrenched. For example, simply spending more on education for children of indigenous groups would not be enough, for they are disadvantaged if school instruction is in the official language only. Bilingual education would help. Claims over land—such as the claims of indigenous people over land with mineral resources or the land settled by white colonizers in Southern Africa—cannot be resolved with policies that expand socio-economic opportunities.

Experience in India, Malaysia, South Africa and the United States shows that affirmative action can reduce inequalities between groups. In Malaysia the ratio of average income between Chinese and Malay populations declined from 2.3 in 1970 to 1.7 in 1990. In the United States the proportion of black lawyers rose from 1.2% to 5.1% of the total and the proportion of black physicians from 2% to 5.6%. In India the allocation of government jobs, admission to higher education and legislative seats to scheduled castes and tribes has helped members of these groups climb out of poverty and join the middle class.

None of these policies is without its complexities, but the experience of many countries shows that solutions are possible. Bilingual education may be contested as ineffective, but that is because it receives too little support to ensure quality. Affirmative action programmes may be contested as creating permanent sources of inequality or becoming a source of patronage—but they can be better managed. These are ways of responding to demands for cultural inclusion. But we must also recognize that in the world today there are also more movements for cultural domination that seek to suppress diversity.

Movements for cultural domination threaten cultural liberty. Fighting them with illegal and undemocratic measures violates human rights and does not make the problem go away.

Democratic accommodation is more effective in exposing the intolerant agendas of such movements and undermining their appeal.

People leading movements for cultural domination believe in their own cultural superiority and try to impose their ideologies on others, both within and outside their community. Not all such movements are violent. Some coerce others using political campaigns, threats and harassment. In the extreme they use violent means as well—hate attacks, expulsions, ethnic cleansing and genocide. As a political force intolerance is threatening to overwhelm political processes in countries around the world. Movements for cultural domination take different forms: political parties, militias, violent groups, international networks and even the state. It is naïve to assume that democratic societies are immune to intolerance and hatred.

The underlying causes for the rise of movements for cultural domination often include manipulative leadership, poverty and inequality, weak or ineffectual states, outside political interventions and linkages with the diaspora. These factors can also inspire nationalist movements—say, for autonomy or secession. But movements for national autonomy are not the same as movements for cultural domination. For one thing, movements for cultural domination can often arise within the majority group that already dominates the state—such as extreme right parties in many European countries. Conversely, many movements for national autonomy can be quite liberal, recognizing the importance of accommodating diversity within an autonomous territory and seeking only the same respect and recognition as other nations. What distinguishes movements for cultural domination is their assertion of cultural superiority and their intolerance. Their targets are freedom and diversity.

The question is how to deal with them? States have often tried to confront these movements with repressive and undemocratic methods—bans on parties, extrajudicial detentions and trials, legislation that violates fundamental rights and even indiscriminate force and torture. These measures often suppress legitimate political demands and processes, resulting in much more extreme reactions. When

The Report advocates an approach that respects and promotes diversity while keeping countries open to global flows of capital, goods and people

Individuals have to shed rigid identities if they are to become part of diverse societies and uphold cosmopolitan values of tolerance and respect for universal human rights

the Islamist Salvation Front (FIS) won the first round of elections in 1991 in Algeria, the military intervened and banned the party. The result: a civil war that cost more than 100,000 lives and spurred the growth of intolerant and violent groups.

Instead, democratic accommodation works. Allowing extreme right parties to contest in elections can force them to moderate their positions as well, for example, with the Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria or the Justice and Development Party in Morocco. Electoral competition exposes the fringe appeal of other groups (the Progress Party in Denmark). Democratic accommodation also gives states the legitimacy to prosecute hate crimes, reform the curriculum of religious schools (in Indonesia and Malaysia) and experiment with community initiatives to improve relations (Mozambique and Rwanda).

The maintenance of a liberal society depends on respecting the rule of law, listening to political claims and protecting fundamental human rights—even those of vile people. Intolerance is a real challenge for cultural liberty—that is why the means to deal with it must be legitimate.

Globalization can threaten national and local identities. The solution is not to retreat to conservatism and isolationist nationalism—it is to design multicultural policies to promote diversity and pluralism.

So far the focus has been on how states should manage diversity within their borders. But in an era of globalization states also face challenges from outside their borders, in the form of international movements of ideas, capital, goods and people.

Expanding cultural freedom in this age of globalization presents new challenges and dilemmas. Contacts between people, their values, ideas and ways of life have been growing and deepening in unprecedented ways. For many, this new diversity is exciting, even empowering. For others, it is disquieting and disempowering. Many fear that globalization means a loss of their values and ways of life—a threat to local and national identity. An extreme reaction is to

shut out foreign influences, an approach that is not only xenophobic and conservative but also regressive, shrinking rather than expanding freedoms and choice.

The Report advocates an alternative approach that respects and promotes diversity while keeping countries open to global flows of capital, goods and people. That requires policies reflecting the goal of cultural liberty. Policies need to explicitly recognize and respect cultural difference. They also need to address imbalances in economic and political power that lead to loss of cultures and identities.

Such alternatives are being developed and debated in three hotly contested areas:

- Indigenous people are protesting investments in extractive sectors and misappropriations of traditional knowledge that threaten their livelihoods.
- Countries are demanding that cultural goods (mainly cinema and audiovisual products) not be treated as any other goods in international trade since imports of cultural goods can weaken national cultural industries.
- Migrants are demanding accommodation of their way of life and respect for the multiple identities they have in both the local community and their country of origin. But local communities are demanding that immigrants assimilate, or be turned away, for they fear that their societies are becoming divided and that national values and identity are being eroded.

How can these demands be accommodated? How should diversity be respected, and the asymmetries addressed?

Indigenous people, extractive industries and traditional knowledge

Investments that disregard indigenous people's rights to land and its cultural significance as well as its value as an economic resource will inevitably invite opposition. So will patenting traditional knowledge under the same conditions. Three principles are critical: recognizing indigenous people's rights over knowledge and land, ensuring that indigenous groups have voice (seeking their prior informed consent) and developing strategies for sharing benefits.

Some initiatives, though still limited, are being taken by corporations and national governments to work with indigenous communities in developing new investments. In Peru government and corporations have learned the lessons of previous confrontations and have been involving indigenous communities in decision-making in the Antamina zinc and copper mine since 2001. In Papua New Guinea investments in community development projects accompany extraction activities. Collaborative ventures between mining companies and indigenous people in North America and Australia have brought monetary benefits while preserving traditional lifestyles.

Many national governments are taking steps to recognize traditional knowledge. Bangladesh recognizes community-based rights to biological resources and associated traditional knowledge. Lao PDR documents knowledge in its Traditional Medicines Resource Centre. South Africa has promised to share with the San Bushmen the proceeds from drugs developed based on their knowledge. Countries have already found ways of using existing intellectual property rights systems to protect traditional knowledge. Industrial designs are used to protect carpets and headdresses in Kazakhstan. Geographical indications protect liquors and teas in Venezuela and Viet Nam. Copyrights and trademarks are used for traditional art in Australia and Canada.

Recognizing diversity means that different notions of property rights and the cultural significance of knowledge and art forms be accommodated within global regimes. This requires international action. If current intellectual property standards cannot accommodate commonly known traditional knowledge or its attributes of group ownership, the rules will need to be revised. Loans to countries and companies for projects that wrongly acquire property or do not compensate communities should be withdrawn.

Cultural goods

Should cultural goods be protected in international trade to help protect cultural diversity in the world? Are films and audiovisual products cultural goods? Two principles are critical: recognize the role of cultural goods in nurturing creativity and diversity, and recognize the disadvantage of small film and audiovisual industries in global markets.

Diversity in cultural goods has its own value because it increases consumer choice and enriches people's cultural experience. But cultural goods also enjoy economies of scale. So the products of large producers tend to crowd out the products of smaller producers, particularly in poorer countries.

How can diversity be promoted? Mounting barriers to trade is not the answer, since that reduces choice. Support to cultural industries

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Indigenous peoples and development

Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. Economic development in its full flowering is part of a people's culture.

—World Commission on Culture and Development 1995

Indigenous peoples are proponents and representatives of humanity's cultural diversity. Historically, however, indigenous peoples have been marginalized by dominant societies and have often faced assimilation and cultural genocide.

In the multicultural societies growing up around them, indigenous peoples seek an end to such marginalization and fringe dwelling. They

have much to contribute to society, and they bring to both national and international debates valuable advice about the great issues facing humanity in this new millennium.

In May 2003 the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues stressed in its Second Session the importance of recognizing cultural diversity in development processes and the need for all development to be sustainable. Recommendation 8 of the Second Session calls for "instituting a legal framework that makes cultural, environmental and social impact assessment studies mandatory" (E/2003/43). The forum also expressed concern over development practices that do not take into account the characteristics

of indigenous communities as groups, thus significantly undermining meaningful ways of participatory development.

Indigenous peoples have dynamic living cultures and seek their place in the modern world. They are not against development, but for too long they have been victims of development and now demand to be participants in—and to benefit from—a development that is sustainable.



Ole Henrik Magga
Chairman of the UN Permanent
Forum on Indigenous Issues

rather than tariffs would do more for diversity. Argentina, Brazil and France have successfully experimented with production subsidies and tax breaks for cultural industries, without stopping the flows of cultural products from overseas to local markets. Hungary diverts 6% of television receipts to promote domestic films. Egypt uses public-private partnerships to finance the infrastructure for film making.

Immigration

Should immigrants have to assimilate or should their cultures be recognized? Three principles are critical: respect diversity, recognize multiple identities and build common bonds of belonging to the local community. No country has advanced by closing its borders. International migration brings skills, labour and ideas, enriching people's lives. Just as traditionalism and religious practices that violate human rights cannot be defended, forced assimilation cannot be a viable solution.

Identities are not a zero sum game. Consider this, from a Malaysian in Norway: "I am often asked how long I have lived here; '20 years', I say. The next remark often is 'Oh, you are almost Norwegian!' The assumption here is that I have become less Malaysian because it is common to think about identity as a zero sum game; if you have more of one identity, you have less of another. Identity is somehow imagined like a square box with a fixed size."

Two approaches to immigration dominate most countries' policies: differentialism (immigrants keeping their identities but not integrating into the rest of society) and assimilation (without the choice of keeping the old identity). But new approaches of multiculturalism are being introduced that recognize multiple identities. This involves promoting tolerance and cultural understanding, but also specifically accommodating religious practice, dress and other aspects of everyday life. It also involves

acknowledging that immigrants are voiceless and insecure in the face of exploitation and providing support for integration such as language training and job search services.

Countries are expanding the rights of civic participation to non-citizenship—"denizenship" (Belgium, Sweden). And more than 30 countries now accept dual citizenship. To reduce misconceptions and prejudices the Commissioner's Office of the Berlin Senate for Integration and Migration funds immigrant organizations, uses public information campaigns and offers legal consultations in 12 languages to help with jobs and tackle discrimination.

But these policies are contested. Bilingual education in the United States and the wearing of headscarf in France are divisive issues. Some fear that they challenge some of the most fundamental values of society—such as commitment to adopt the American culture, or the French principles of secularism and gender equality.

* * *

Expanding cultural freedoms is an important goal in human development—one that needs urgent attention in the 21st century. All people want to be free to be who they are. All people want to be free to express their identity as members of a group with shared commitments and values—whether it is nationality, ethnicity, language or religion, whether it is family, profession or avocation.

Globalization is driving ever-increasing interactions among the world's people. This world needs both greater respect for diversity and stronger commitment to unity. Individuals have to shed rigid identities if they are to become part of diverse societies and uphold cosmopolitan values of tolerance and respect for universal human rights. The Report provides a basis for discussing how countries can make that happen. If the short history of the 21st century has taught us nothing else, it is that ducking these questions is not an option.