

Compliance Report
Okinawa 2000
Cultural Diversity

Commitment

Para. 41: “We shall strive to promote the digitalization of cultural heritage through, for example, fostering international links between national museum systems, with a view to enhancing public access.”

Assessment

Country	Lack of Compliance -1	Work in Progress 0	Full Compliance +1
Britain			+1
Canada			+1
France			+1
Germany			+1
Italy			+1
Japan			+1
Russia		0	
United States	-1		
Overall		0	

Compliance with this commitment is starting with the establishment of the Digital Opportunity Taskforce (DOT Force). The DOT Force is a product of the Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society that was adopted at the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000. Representatives from all of the G8 countries are members of the DOT Force and recently attended a meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, from March 1 to 2. Although the DOT Force has recommended that information technology (IT) be used as an instrument to emphasize local culture and languages, there is little evidence that countries have begun to implement this on any significant scale. Some countries, however, have launched initiatives to promote the digitalization of cultural heritage, and they are listed below. Those countries not listed below receive a score of -1 for lack of compliance.

Britain

The British government has embraced the digitalization of cultural heritage by supporting 11 museums IT projects, which were to be implemented at the end of March 2001. Alan Howarth, Arts Minister, and Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, welcome the strategy to promote partnerships between museums and have indicated that £500,000 over two years will be allocated to enhance access, education, and innovation in museums through the Information and Communication Technology Challenge Fund.

Canada

In an effort to maintain its commitment to foster diversity by facilitating access to Canada's cultural heritage, the Canadian government has created the Virtual Museum of Canada. On March 22, 2001, Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, announced that over the next three years, C\$175 million would be invested to create and broadcast Canadian cultural content on the internet. The Virtual Museum of Canada is a collaborative effort between the Canadian Heritage Information Network, museums, educational institutions, and the private sector.

France

France has been at the forefront of increasing access to culture with its comprehensive Virtual Museum, which offers links to international museums. In the budget for 2001, Catherine Tasca, Minister of Culture and Communication, has indicated that a total of 80 million francs will be utilized to further promote cultural diversity.

Germany

The German effort to comply with the commitment includes the creation of a web-based cultural portal, www.kulturportal-deutschland.de. Michael Naumann, Minister of State for Culture and Federal Government Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs, which has initiated and financed the site, stated that the cultural portal is a comprehensive information and service platform designed to give internet users rapid access to cultural offerings in Germany.

Japan

Japan's efforts to promote and preserve cultural heritage have largely been the result of a strong partnership with UNESCO. Since Okinawa, the Japanese government has indicated that it will

finance the UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowship Programme that will award 20 fellowships of US\$7,500 each for 2001–2002 to post-graduate researchers from developing countries. The areas of research include intercultural dialogue and information and communication technologies. Despite Japan's commitment to UNESCO, the Agency for Cultural Affairs, which is responsible for the promotion of culture and the preservation of cultural property in Japan, must work to increase the presence of Japan's cultural heritage in cyberspace.

Russia

A draft agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Science, Education, Sports, Tourism, and Archives has recently been approved by Mikhail Kasyanov, Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation. Thus, both parties will agree to promote cooperation and exchange in the areas of literature, art, theatre, ballet, cinematography, libraries, and archival institutions, as well as the study of the history, culture, and languages of the peoples of the two states. As this is a new initiative, it will be necessary to monitor the progress of the agreement throughout the year in order to gauge Russia's compliance.

Italy

The latest project created by the Italian Ministry of Culture, in partnership with the private sector, was announced by Minister Giovanna Melandri on March 26, 2001. This innovative multimedia portal, SuperDante.it, is dedicated to enhancing access to the literary, musical, and iconographic patrimony of Italy. Minister Melandri has indicated that one objective of the Italian government for the coming years is to reacquaint people with the joy of literature and to increase literacy.

Sources

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