

## DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS OF CULTURE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

22 May 2019 • Buenos Aires, Argentina

We, ministers of culture and their representatives from across the Latin America and Caribbean region:

- Recalling the commitment made by all Member States of the United Nations to the 2030 Agenda, as a roadmap to stronger, fairer and more sustainable development for all;
- Considering the relevance of this agenda to the Latin America and Caribbean region, and the need to continue and intensify work on the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, drawing on the contribution of all actors;
- Stressing the place of access to information both as a universal human right and as a cross-cutting driver of development, both through enabling understanding, innovation and good governance at the national and regional level, and better decision-making and new opportunities at the individual and community;
- Noting that meaningful access is not just about internet connections – although this is an essential part – but also about having the space, skills and rights to find, understand, apply, create and share information;
- Noting that everyone has a right of access to information that can help them improve their lives, regardless of gender, resources or any other factor;
- Noting that the free flow of information across borders is necessary to support research, innovation and access to heritage
- Underlining the contribution that libraries, of all types and in all parts of the region, can make to delivering equitable and meaningful access to information for all;
- Welcoming the work of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and its members in raising awareness of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and promoting its delivery through libraries;

Commit to:

- 1) Recognise the indispensable contribution of libraries across the region to development, including in national development strategies, and ensure that libraries of all types have the resources, support and infrastructure needed to carry out their missions;
- 2) Support the ability of libraries, as motors of change, to reach out to all members of our society, providing opportunities for all to enjoy their fundamental rights and to learn and engage in democratic and civic life, and to provide access to local content;
- 3) Promote cooperation between libraries at the national and regional level in order to help them increase their performance and impact on people's lives, in particular through supporting the cross-border research required to address global challenges;
- 4) Strengthen national library systems by working with library and librarian associations, and national libraries to build skills and capacity, and promote regional networks and exchanges;
- 5) Pass laws that allow libraries to operate in a digital world, notably relevant and balanced national copyright reforms, and to call for progress towards a legal instrument on copyright exceptions and limitations for libraries, archives and museums which provides the only complete means of allowing them to work across borders.
- 6) Stress the need to engage libraries in development debates at the global level, in order to ensure that people everywhere can benefit from effective libraries and access to information.