



held in Quebec City, included a statement outlining the Leaders' perspectives on the importance of cultural diversity. As a result of the Summit's Action Plan, Canada hosted, in 2002, an experts seminar on cultural diversity under the aegis of the Organization of American States (OAS). Thereafter, OAS culture ministers or highest appropriate authorities met in July, in Cartagena, Colombia, the first ever such meeting at the hemispheric level, and adopted a Declaration and Plan of Action stressing the need for in-depth cooperation on cultural diversity within the Americas. In the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations, Canada's objective is to include preambular language recognizing the importance of countries maintaining the ability to develop and implement cultural policies for the purpose of strengthening cultural diversity. In addition, pending developments with respect to a NIICD, Canada will follow its established approach of not making any new commitment that would restrict its cultural policy objectives. In this context, Canada is seeking a cultural industries exemption in the FTAA agreement.

Canada has also promoted cultural diversity in the G8, where the Communiqué of the 2000 Okinawa Summit set out the Leaders' perspectives on the issue. In other forums, consideration of cultural diversity and globalization issues has led to specific references to work on the Instrument. For example, in 2001 the UNESCO General Conference passed the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Its Action Plan urged members to deepen "the international debate on questions relating to cultural diversity . . . taking forward notably consideration of the opportunity of an international legal instrument on cultural diversity." La Francophonie culture ministers, meeting in 2001, supported "the principle of a universal international regulatory instrument that supported the promotion of cultural diversity." The International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP), an informal grouping of culture ministers from over 45 countries, is another forum where work on the Instrument has progressed. An INCP Working Group, chaired by Canada, has produced a draft text of the Instrument, which was presented to ministers in Cape Town, South Africa, in October 2002. The International Network for Cultural Diversity, an NGO grouping that meets concurrently with the INCP, is expected to release its own draft Instrument in October 2002. Canada has also promoted development of an Instrument during informal meetings with important trading partners such as France, Sweden, Switzerland and Italy.

It is clear from the above that solid progress is being made toward the development of a New International Instrument on Cultural Diversity. The Government has been, and will continue to be, at the forefront of promoting such development in the context of the Americas and elsewhere.

