

way Canadians live and stressed the importance of a cultural policy. He emphasised the need to support Canadian culture in the context of globalisation, since economic capital – finance, production facilities, or even managerial talent – can increasingly be moved quickly to many parts of the globe. McDowell drew attention to a report of the Cultural Industries Sectoral Advisory Group on International Trade (SAGIT) to the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade emphasising the need for re-crafting Canada's communications and cultural policies at the end of 1990's. The report states:

Canadian books, magazines, songs, films, new media, radio and television programs reflect who we are as a people. Cultural industries shape our society, develop our understanding for one another and give us a sense of pride in who we are as a nation. Canada's cultural industries fulfil an essential and vital role in Canadian society.

The SAGIT report proposed that rather than pursuing the "cultural exemption strategy used in the past, which takes culture off the table in international trade negotiations" a new strategy should be undertaken that would try to negotiate "a new international instrument that would specifically address cultural diversity, and acknowledge the legitimate role of domestic cultural policies in ensuring cultural diversity." The report further argues that a strategy to promote "cultural and linguistic diversity" is appropriate and would reflect a more assertive strategy. Moreover, it would allow Canada to collaborate with other nations.

McDowell also addressed the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, the response by the Canadian Heritage to the Committee's report, and the work of the Canadian Heritage in implementing international cultural initiatives. The overall strategy emphasises partnership or coalition building approaches (particularly evident in the leadership of the Canadian Heritage Department in the International Network on Cultural Policy). McDowell expressed his support for a participatory approach and suggested that if the Canadian diversity instrument is seen as a measure aimed to protect Canadian producers and industries it will be undermined. In conclusion, he posed several questions, including:

- Who would benefit from such a participatory Canadian diversity instrument and who would be involved: large Canadian firms, non-profit organisation or public agencies?
- While diversity may well illustrate the Canadian reality, how does the concept square with the nation-building goals of many other countries?

## **5.2. Comment and Discussion**

Claude Baillargeon (Coordinator for International Cultural Policy, DFAIT) suggested that the concept of cultural diversity has to be clarified. In order to interest potential partners, Canada should develop a common vision of cultural diversity. There have been efforts through the Ministerial Cultural Network to present a perspective on cultural diversity that included human, cultural (i.e., values such as freedom of expression), political (i.e., inclusion, participation in the political process) and commercial dimensions. The eventual cultural diversity instrument cannot