IASMUN
Background Guide

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 3

LETTER FROM THE DIAS

Dear Delegates,

We're excited to welcome you to the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee) at IAS MUN 2026! This year, our committee will challenge you to rethink how the international community can protect cultural identity in an era of rapid globalization and increasing digital homogenization. You will explore not only the threats facing cultural diversity today, but also imagine bold, sustainable solutions for safeguarding heritage in the digital age.

We're here to help, but we also want you to lead the discussion, use diplomacy, and think outside the box. Get ready, research your country's views, and have a good time. We value taking part over being perfect, so we'll keep the committee active, interesting, and supportive all during the conference. Wishing you the very best for an enriching and memorable experience!

Warm regards,
The Executive Board of GA3

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The Third Committee of the General Assembly (GA3) addresses a wide range of human rights, humanitarian, and cultural issues that affect the international community. In today's era of globalization and digital expansion, local cultures, languages, and traditions face growing threats from homogenizing forces, risking the erosion of cultural identity worldwide. GA3 provides a forum for member states to debate, negotiate, and implement policies that promote cultural preservation, protect intangible heritage, and support the responsible use of technology to maintain diversity. By collaborating with UNESCO, regional organizations, and civil society, the committee encourages initiatives that safeguard both tangible and intangible cultural assets, fostering dialogue and cooperation among nations. Despite the complexities of coordinating international efforts in a digital and interconnected world, GA3 remains a vital platform for diplomacy, advocacy, and the protection of humanity's shared cultural heritage.

AGENDA 1

"Preserving Cultural Identity Amid Globalization and Digital Homogenization"

Globalization has really changed how people talk to each other do business and experience cultures. It makes people feel like we are all part of one world where we can share our thoughts with anyone no matter where they are from. Globalization has helped our economy grow. Has brought in new technology.. It has also created some problems. Now some cultures are becoming more popular than others, which's a threat to the smaller cultures, languages and traditions.

The internet, television and movies are everywhere which means that many cultures are starting to seem the same. This is news, for minority cultures and the way of life of indigenous people because they might not survive if everyone starts doing things the same way. Globalization is making it harder for these smaller cultures to keep their unique ways of life. This is causing the ways of doing things to disappear, like the stories that are passed down and the special ways that people express themselves. The traditional rituals are fading away. So are the oral histories and the special aesthetic forms of expression.

There are some practices that are disappearing really fast. This is happening a lot in places where people do not have a lot of resources and are having a time keeping their cultural heritage alive. The problem of losing these things is very serious especially in these places that do not have a lot of resources. So people are trying to do something about it.

AGENDA 1

For example UNESCOs Intangible Cultural Heritage is helping to save languages and traditions by putting them on computers storing them in archives and starting programs to help people keep their cultural practices. Cultural practices, like these need to be preserved. That is why cultural practices are so important.

These kinds of projects have a lot of problems. They do not have money people in the community do not get involved and technology changes very quickly. People in charge, like governments and international agencies should find ways to use tools to help keep cultural identities alive. This is important for the world to come together. We also need to make sure local communities can still be different. The main thing is that we need to save our heritage because it is being lost as the world becomes more modern. Cultural identity is what makes us who we are. It helps us remember where we come from. A balanced approach has to be struck so that modernity is embraced without the loss of the essence of cultural roots.

AGENDA 2

"Cultural Survival in a Globalized World — Safeguarding Heritage in the Digital Age"

It's hard to keep cultures going strong when everything is becoming more digital. Social platforms change the way people see culture. This can cause languages, rituals, and old knowledge to be forgotten by younger people who are always using technology.

We need to do more than just document culture. We need to teach people about it and show them how valuable it is, even online. If we do this, people can keep learning about their culture. Cultural survival matters. We have to keep our cultural heritage alive, even with all the digital influence around.

Programs like UNESCO's Memory of the World help protect cultural heritage by creating online archives, museums, and learning programs. However, some communities have trouble getting the tech and money for these projects.

To protect our heritage, local groups need to be in charge and decide what happens with their culture. See how tech can help us protect our heritage without changing its value. Cultural heritage is important, and it is our responsibility to preserve cultural heritage for the future using technology.

Finding the right balance between a global world and cultural protection is important. A global world can be useful, but it can threaten different cultures if you aren't careful.

AGENDA 2

Global teamwork and policies are key to creating a future where we protect cultural identities alongside progress. Solving these issues ensures that cultures can grow with technology and keep heritage and change in balance.

KEY TERMS

CULTURAL IDENTITY:

VALUES, TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS, LANGUAGE, BELIEFS, AND ART THAT DEFINE A GROUP. IT GIVES PEOPLE A SENSE OF BELONGING THAT LASTS THROUGH GENERATIONS. GLOBALIZATION: COUNTRIES BECOME MORE CONNECTED THROUGH TRADE, COMMUNICATION, TECH, AND SHARING CULTURE. IT CAN CREATE CHANCES BUT ALSO MAKE CULTURES ALIKE.

DIGITAL HOMOGENIZATION:

DIGITAL MEDIA MAKES CULTURES THE SAME. GLOBAL PLATFORMS AND STUFF ONLINE TEND TO FAVOR POPULAR CULTURES OVER LOCAL ONES.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH):

THE NON-PHYSICAL PARTS OF CULTURE, LIKE STORIES, PERFORMANCES, SOCIAL HABITS, RITUALS, AND KNOWLEDGE PASSED DOWN. THEY'RE SEEN AS IMPORTANT FOR KEEPING CULTURES DIVERSE.

CULTURAL PRESERVATION:

PROTECTING AND PASSING ON CULTURAL HERITAGE, BOTH THINGS LIKE ARTIFACTS AND TRADITIONS AND LANGUAGES, FOR FUTURE PEOPLE.

UNESCO: THIS IS THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION THAT HELPS COUNTRIES WORK TOGETHER ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE, AND PROTECTING HERITAGE.

ENDANGERED LANGUAGES:

THESE ARE LANGUAGES THAT MIGHT DISAPPEAR, OFTEN BECAUSE OF GLOBALIZATION, MOVING, OR KIDS NOT LEARNING THEM. PROTECTING THEM HELPS KEEP CULTURAL DIVERSITY ALIVE.

HERITAGE DIGITIZATION:

USING TECHNOLOGY TO RECORD AND SHARE CULTURAL STUFF ONLINE. IT HELPS PROTECT AND TEACH ABOUT IT.

MAJOR PARTIES

UNESCO:

This main UN group protects cultural heritage, champions diversity, and backs programs that record and keep both physical and non-physical cultural items. UNESCO gives advice, money, and help to countries for keeping culture safe.

Member States:

National governments are key in protecting cultural identity. They do this through laws, funds, school programs, and rules for keeping heritage safe. Countries that have tribes or unique cultural ways often push hard for global help and protection.

NGOs:

Groups like the World Monuments Fund and Cultural Survival give know-how, support, and resources to protect cultures at risk and languages that could disappear.

Tech Companies:

Social media, streaming sites, and online archives shape how culture is shared, used, and kept safe worldwide. These companies can help digitize heritage, but if they aren't watched, they can make cultures all the same.

Local and Indigenous Groups:

The people who live and breathe cultural traditions, rituals, and knowledge are very important to keeping them safe. Their say and involvement in choices is needed for real protection.

Schools and Research Centers:

Colleges, cultural centers, and research groups record, study, and spread info about different cultures, backing global plans and tech for keeping them safe.

PREVIOUS EFFORTS

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (2003)
This convention aims to safeguard traditions, rituals, languages, and other non-physical cultural practices. It encourages member states to document and protect their heritage through education, policy, and international collaboration.

Memory of the World Programme (1992)
UNESCO's initiative focuses on preserving valuable documentary heritage, such as manuscripts, archives, and oral histories, making them accessible for future generations.

National Cultural Preservation Programs
Many countries have launched initiatives to protect languages, indigenous practices, and local traditions, including digital archiving and community-led cultural projects.

NGO and Community-Led Efforts
Organizations like Cultural Survival and the World Monuments Fund provide technical assistance, funding, and advocacy to empower local communities in preserving their heritage.

Digital Archiving and Virtual Museums
Technological projects have digitized artifacts, rituals, and languages, providing global access and raising awareness, though participation is often limited by resources and connectivity

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

- How can countries and groups around the world keep cultural stuff and traditions safe?

- What rules can help keep local ways of life alive while also dealing with today's connected world?

- How can tech, like online stuff and archives, help protect different cultures without leaving anyone out?

- What can be done so that native people and locals can really help protect what's important to them?

- How can everyone work better together, with money and plans, to make sure old cultural ways are around for a long time?

Possible Solutions

DIGITAL PRESERVATION INITIATIVES:
Develop global and national programs to digitize artifacts, languages, rituals, and oral histories while ensuring community participation.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS: Promote cultural heritage through school curricula, public programs, and online platforms to engage younger generations.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION: Strengthen collaboration between UNESCO, regional organizations, NGOs, and member states to coordinate preservation strategies and funding.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT: we need to make laws that help protect languages. These languages are really important to the people who speak them. We also need to protect traditions that have been around for a time.. Then there are heritage sites that are special to many people.

FINDING BALANCE BETWEEN MODERNIZATION AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION: We want to make sure that we do not lose the things that make each culture unique when we are trying to move with modernization. Policy Development should focus on creating laws and regulations that protect endangered languages, traditions and heritage sites.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: Support local and indigenous communities with resources, training, and decision-making authority to lead preservation efforts.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY: Encourage social media platforms and digital companies to highlight cultural diversity rather than promoting homogenized content.

Possible Solutions

UNESCO. Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003. https://ich.unesco.org

UNESCO. Memory of the World Programme, 1992. https://en.unesco.org/programme/mow

United Nations. United Nations Charter — Articles on Culture and Human Rights. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter

UNESCO. World Heritage Convention. https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention

UN General Assembly Document A/C.2/80/L.19/Rev.1: Official UNGA text affirming culture's role in development and intercultural dialogue, relevant to cultural identity debates. UN A/C.2/80/L.19/Rev.1 Culture and Development