

- 83) We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

## Media and reconciliation

The media has a role to play in ensuring that public information both for and about Aboriginal peoples reflects their cultural diversity and provides fair and non-discriminatory reporting on Aboriginal issues. This is consistent with Article 16:2 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which says, “States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity.” Canada’s *Broadcasting Act* (1991) sets out national broadcasting policy for all Canadian broadcasters with regard to Aboriginal peoples. The policy states the need to,

through its programming and employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations of Canadian men, women, and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society, and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society. [S. 3.1.d.iii]

The Act then states a more controversial obligation, that “programming that reflects the aboriginal cultures of Canada should be provided within the Canadian broadcasting system as resources become available for the purpose” (S.3.1.o).<sup>241</sup>

A submission to the federal Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures in 2004 pointed out deficiencies in the *Broadcasting Act* related to these service provisions for Aboriginal peoples. It stated:

The Act did not enshrine Aboriginal language broadcasting as a priority: instead it noted that ... [S. S. 3.1.d.iii] means that Aboriginal language programming is not recognized nor protected to the same extent as English and French programming ... [and that] the phrase “as resources become available for the purpose” [S.3.1.o] has become a stumbling block for many producers and programmers, linking the availability of Aboriginal language broadcasting to the political process.<sup>242</sup>

The report recommended that the *Broadcasting Act* be revised to address these gaps. As of 2014, these provisions of the Act remain unchanged.

As Canada’s national public broadcaster, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC/ Radio-Canada) is responsible for fulfilling national broadcasting policy. For many years, it has been providing a minimum level of Aboriginal radio and television programming and news, in a few specific regions, including some Aboriginal-language programming, especially in northern Canada. In the Commission’s view, the budget cuts to the CBC over the past decade have significantly reduced and further limited its capacity to provide