

# Artistic Freedom

“The rights of artists to express themselves freely are under threat worldwide. Art has the extraordinary capacity to express resistance and rebellion, protest and hope. It injects a vital contribution to any flourishing democracy.”

DEEYAH KHAN  
UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for  
Artistic Freedom and Creativity



**Artistic freedom** is the freedom to imagine, create and distribute diverse cultural expressions free of governmental censorship, political interference or the pressures of non-state actors. It includes the right of all citizens to have access to these works and is essential for the wellbeing of societies.

**Artistic freedom** embodies the following bundle of rights protected under international law:

- ... the right to create without censorship or intimidation
- ... the right to have artistic work supported, distributed, remunerated
- ... the right to freedom of movement
- ... the right to freedom of association
- ... the right to protection of social and economic rights
- ... the right to participate in cultural life

The 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions puts forward that

“Cultural diversity can be protected and promoted only if human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression, information and communication, as well as the ability of individuals to have access to diverse cultural expressions, are guaranteed.”