



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **AUSTRALIA BECOMES A PARTY TO UNESCO CONVENTION ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

Australia has become a party to the United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Arts Minister Peter Garrett announced today.

“The Convention is an international treaty that outlines protective measures for cultural goods, services and activities and the importance of access to a rich diversity of cultural expressions from around the world. Importantly, it also aims to strengthen links between culture and economic development,” Mr Garrett said.

“The Convention is open to all United Nations members that may wish to become a party and Australia is the 101st member to do so. Under the provisions of the Convention, it will enter into force for Australia three months after Australia officially became a party on 18 September 2009.

“This is an important step in support of our diverse cultural heritage and a vital artistic life for our citizens and fulfills a key Labor election commitment.”

The Convention emphasises that culture plays an important role in fostering international collaboration. It promotes tolerance and respect for all cultures, and encourages countries to take measures that protect and promote their culture, and allow and encourage a diversity of cultural expressions from around the world.

“Through a comprehensive range of funding programs and policies spread across the full spectrum of cultural, arts and heritage activities, the Australian Government is already taking strong action to protect and encourage cultural diversity within Australia, and to promote international cooperation through dialogue and cultural exchange,” Mr Garrett said.

“An International Fund for Cultural Diversity is administered under the Convention, and parties can apply there for funding for projects and activities that further the Convention’s aims”.

For information about the Convention and its history, see [www.arts.gov.au/culturaldiversity](http://www.arts.gov.au/culturaldiversity) and [www.unesco.org/culture](http://www.unesco.org/culture)