

Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of Québec concerning the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

5 May 2006
Québec, Québec

THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF QUÉBEC,

RECOGNIZING that in Canada, the specificity of Québec, based among other things on the use of the French language and a unique culture, leads it to play a special role internationally;

RECOGNIZING that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereafter UNESCO) is especially active in areas of particular interest to Québec, given its specificity and jurisdiction;

RECOGNIZING that it is appropriate, in light of this specificity, to ensure the participation of the Government of Québec in the work of UNESCO, in harmony with the general orientations of Canadian foreign policy;

RECOGNIZING having worked together actively in promoting the adoption of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions by the General Conference of UNESCO, and wishing to continue this work in promoting the ratification and implementation of this international instrument;

DESIRING to further benefit from the union of their efforts in the context of UNESCO;

DESIRING to set out provisions to establish the role of Québec in the context of UNESCO, in the spirit of a federalism of openness, which is asymmetric in its application, and which recognizes differences among provinces and territories, and notably the unique personality of Québec;

AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS:

1. Québec presence within the Permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO in Paris

1.1 A Québec permanent representative will be welcomed into the Permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO in Paris.

1.2 The Québec permanent representative will be considered a member of the Permanent Delegation of Canada and will have the diplomatic designation of Counsellor. He or she may present him- or herself as Representative of the Government of Québec, Permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO.

1.3 Canada will seek accreditation at UNESCO for the Québec permanent representative as per the diplomatic designation identified in 1.2.

1.4 The Québec permanent representative will report to Quebec's Ministry of International Relations. He or she will work in close collaboration with the officers of the Permanent Delegation, recognizing that the Ambassador and Canadian permanent representative to UNESCO assures general direction of the Canadian mission as a whole.

1.5 The Government of Canada will make immediately available to the Government of Québec permanent representative all official documents received from UNESCO, and will provide Québec continuous information on its activities with the Organization. In turn, the Government of Québec will provide continuous information on its activities in regard to UNESCO.

1.6 This agreement will be completed by an administrative arrangement to be concluded as soon as possible in relation to the administrative modalities of costs, reimbursement of services and other similar considerations.

2. Participation at UNESCO proceedings, meetings, and conferences

2.1 The Government of Québec will be represented, when it so wishes, as a full member of all Canadian Delegations to UNESCO proceedings, meetings, and conferences.

2.2 At these UNESCO proceedings, meetings and conferences, the Québec representative(s) will work under the general direction of the Head of the Canadian Delegation.

2.3 At these UNESCO proceedings, meetings and conferences, a representative of the Government of Québec will have the right to address the sessions, to complete the Canadian position, and give expression to the voice of Québec.

3. General collaboration

3.1 The Governments of Canada and Québec will work in concert on all votes, resolutions, negotiations and proposed international instruments at UNESCO. In the absence of consensus between the Governments of Canada and Québec, and at the request of the latter, the Government of Canada will provide a note explaining its decision to the Government of Québec. Québec alone will decide if it proceeds with implementation in areas of its responsibility.

3.2 The Government of Québec will establish a mechanism for consulting Québec experts, both in government and civil society, on the programming and work of UNESCO. It will submit the results of these consultations to the Government of Canada and to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, who will assure that Québec specificity is reflected in reports submitted to UNESCO.

3.3 The Government of Canada commits to obtaining membership on the Executive Committee of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO for a representative to be designated by the Government of Québec.

3.4 The Government of Canada and the Government of Québec agree to explore, in relation to the work of UNESCO, innovative ways and possible mechanisms by which the Organization might better take advantage of the contribution of federated states in meeting its objectives.

4. General provisions

4.1 The present agreement may not be modified or terminated without the consent of the signatories.

4.2 The application of this agreement may be suspended in case of non respect of its provisions by the forwarding of a written explanatory note to this effect by either signatory. In such a case, the signatories will seek to resolve any difficulties resulting from the interpretation or the application of this agreement.