Cultural Diversity, International Organizations and Governance – is there a path toward sustainability?

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After more than a decade since the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals, the world has become more uncertain and yet more diverse. The existing global governance frameworks, originated from the leading discourse of the developed countries, through the work of international organisations, seem to deny social and cultural complexities of local realities. New challenges for sustainability of cultural diversity concern not only the policies and principles of decision making of the global governing structures, but the very language and the concepts related to sustainability. Taking into account the normative component of sustainability and sustainable development in particular, the paper deals critically with the implementation of cultural diversity concept through the instruments of international organizations, such as UNESCO. It is argued that the current international organizations act as promoters of global governance, with a misleading understanding of both the meaning and the role of cultural diversity in sustainable development. Therefore, the question is being raised whether international organizations should redefine their role of "cultural mediator" and be more engaged with the notions of "cultural", especially cultural differences, in setting and implementing their policies in developing countries, and whether it is possible to envisage sustainability of cultural diversity in future.

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