Why arts matter in times of rebellion?

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Why and how do arts and culture matter in times of rebellion, uprisings and transformation? Complex shifts in the overlapping cultural and political fields were discrete precursors to the events which erupted visibly throughout 2011 in the Arab region. A new quality of cooperation with Arab colleagues in countries in transition became possible. "The Arab world is richer than it is developed", stated the 2011 UNDP Arab Development Challenges Report, concluding that "the main mission of the Arab developmental state is to invest in its citizens." The report argues "for a new Arab development model in terms of substantive capabilities to choose a life one has reason to value".

Currently, colleagues and partners in the region are facing a complex mix of situations: These span from new and promising possibilities to construct and develop civic activities, widening local development pathways through mobilizing cultural resources, to fighting for physical and moral survival, including contingency plans in order to continue important work legally.

Envisioning sustainable futures is linked to this broader landscape of cultural diversity and human rights. Knowledge partnerships in a multi-centric world can become drivers and enablers in this respect.

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