

Celebration of the 10th edition of the Pan African music festival in Brazzaville (Republic of Congo) with the International Music Council

A delegation from the Executive Board of the International Music Council took part in the 10th edition of the Pan African music festival in Brazzaville (Republic of Congo) which took place from July 18th to 22nd 2015 on the theme "The dynamics of African music in the diversity of cultural expressions".

The IMC has partnered with FESPAM since its beginnings in 1995 to accompany this African initiative in its development and conquest of international space; because FESPAM - as it was initially designed - met the IMC's goals of promoting cultural exchanges in a respectful and mutually appreciative way.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the festival, the IMC wished to recognise the crucial role that the President of the Republic of Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, never ceased to play in the promotion of culture in general and of music in particular. It is with this perspective in mind that the President of the Republic of Congo was awarded a goal medal by the International Music Council, through its President, Mr. Paul Dujardin. In his address, Mr. Dujardin stressed the unwavering support of the President of the Republic to the development of arts and to the FESPAM, non-only as a tool for strengthening cohesion, regional integration and international cooperation, but also as an ideal setting for supporting the creativity of young talents.

Mr. Dujardin also expressed to the President of the Republic the IMC's gratitude for agreeing to host the headquarters and accompany in its mission the African Music Council (AMC) which constitutes the IMC's regional group for Africa. The AMC's activities as well as those of its members across the African continent – in the field of musical education, teachers-training, research and musical documentation, protection of the rights of musicians and promotion of the diversity in African musical expressions – are coordinated from Brazzaville, the capital of the Republic of Congo.

Besides the FESPAM, Mr. Dujardin and other members of the IMC Delegation participated in a meeting of the AMC Executive Committee, which took place at the Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza Memorial. The meeting addressed inter alia the strategic development of the AMC, its involvement in programme aiming at a greater professionalisation of the musical sector in Africa, the reinforcement of its member network, administrative and legal issues as well as its relations with the IMC and other regional music councils.

Mr. Paul Dujardin again addressed the President of the Republic, the Government and the Congolese people during the opening ceremony of the FESPAM, on July 18th, at the Félix Eboué stadium in Brazzaville. On that

occasion, he underlined the efforts of the FESPAM to illustrate the five music rights which the International Music Council is committed to promote all over the world: the right for all children and adults to express themselves musically in all freedom, to learn musical languages and skills and to have access to musical involvement; and the right for all musical artists to develop their artistry and communicate through all media with proper facilities at their disposal and their right to obtain just recognition and fair remuneration for their work.

The IMC President concluded his speech by reaffirming that the IMC will “always stand by FESPAM to keep the flag of diversity and universal access to music flying.”

During the FESPAM’s opening ceremony, the President of the IMC was appointed commander of the Congolese order of merit by the President of the Republic; the IMC’s Secretary General, Ms Silja Fischer and the President of the African Music Council, Mr Lupwishi Mbuyamba were appointed officers while other personalities of the African Music Council were knighted.

On the eve of the ceremony, an appointment with the Minister of Culture and Arts, Mr Jean-Claude Gakosso, enabled the IMC’s President to assess the cooperation and reassure the Congolese government of IMC’s availability to accompany the FESPAM in its professionalisation.

During his stay in Brazzaville, the IMC President met with the UNESCO Representative in Brazzaville, Mrs Ana Elisa SANTANA DE AFONSO, for an exchange on UNESCO’s activities in Congo regarding especially regarding the promotion of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage. According to the IMC President, the intrinsic bond between the tangible and the intangible could deserve more attention by UNESCO.

The members of the IMC delegation also took part in the deliberations of the FESPAM’s symposium on July 21st.

For more information, please contact Silja Fischer, the IMC’s Secretary General: info@imc-cim.org.

The International Music Council (IMC) is the world’s largest network of organisations and institutions working in the field of music. IMC is dedicated to the promotion of access to music for all and of the value of music in the lives of all peoples.

The IMC network is present in 150 countries on all continents, with national music councils, international, regional and national music organisations as well as specialised organisations in the field of arts and culture, creating together a body of knowledge and expertise that relates to every aspect of music. Through its members, IMC has direct access to over 1000 organisations and 200 million persons eager to develop and share knowledge and experience on diverse aspects of musical life.