

# IMC Five Music Rights

A choral endeavour for the sake of music

*By Davide Grosso, IMC Project Manager*

In September 2019, representatives of the global music ecosystem gathered in Paris for the 6<sup>th</sup> IMC World Forum on Music to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the International Music Council (IMC) together. The Forum was based on the theme: “Give me Five! The 5 Music Rights in Action” following the motto of the roadmap adopted by the members of the organisation during the 36<sup>th</sup> General Assembly held in Morocco in 2015. The choice of Paris was not a coincidence as the IMC took its first steps in the *Ville Lumière* in 1949 under the aegis of UNESCO.

Back then, the idea was to create an independent organisation bringing together the entire music industry to develop sustainable music industries worldwide, to create awareness about the value of music, to be a voice for music, to make music matter throughout the fabric of society, and to uphold basic music rights in all countries.

The Five Music Rights are the core values of IMC and they inspire every action the organisation and its members undertake across and for the music industry. At the same time, they inspire thousands of projects and serve as a fundamental basis for advocacy actions all over the world.

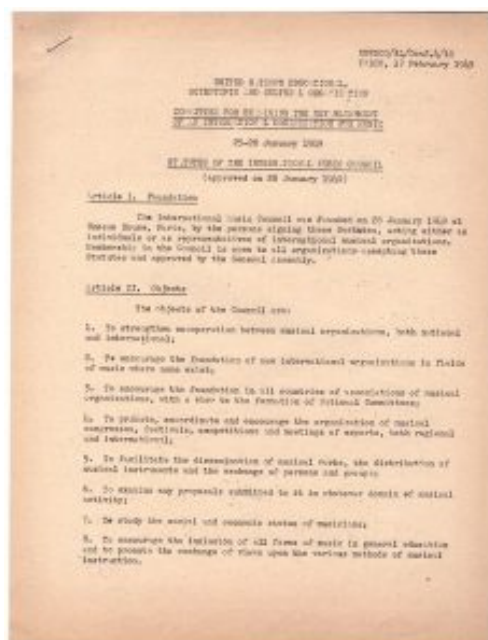
The Five Music Rights are firmly rooted in a series of international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), especially in articles 22, 23 and 27, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) as

these generally state that the ability to express, learn, access, participate in and contribute to cultural life without any discrimination are among the basic human rights.



The current wording was officially adopted by the General Assembly held in Tokyo in 2001, but the message they carry has been present in the DNA of the Council since its foundation. It can actually be found already on the first page of the IMC statutes approved in Paris on January 28, 1949.

Over its long history, IMC and its members have contributed to the advancement of these rights in a large number of ways; be it with projects like the International Rostrum of Composers or the African Music Development Programme; with the creation of specialised networks such as the International Society for Music Education (ISME) or the International Music + Media Centre (IMZ) or by its active contribution to important documents and conventions such as the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist (UNESCO, 1980) or the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005).



## First statutes of the International Music Council

Beyond IMC and its network, there are thousands of projects around the world promoting the Five Music Rights. Therefore, since 2009, the IMC Music Rights Awards have been given every two years, to programmes or projects that support one or more of the Five Music Rights in an exemplary way. The contribution of the choral world was highlighted many times with outstanding projects such as *Hearts in Harmony* (Spain), aimed at including people with various disabilities in choral

music making, or the *Social Projects of the Fayha Choir* (Lebanon), offering a “safe haven” as well as access to music and music education to marginalised populations of refugees, among others.

In 2016, in a bid to scale up the promotion of the Five Music Rights, IMC appointed Arn Chorn-Pond (Cambodia), Dame Evelyn Glennie (United Kingdom), Ramy Essam (Egypt) and Tabu Osusa (Kenya) as Music Rights Champions with the objective of making them known to a larger audience. Since then, these outstanding personalities of the music ecosystem have been raising awareness about the rights by promoting them at concerts, public appearances and interviews. Their presence and contribution at the 6th World Forum on Music in Paris was therefore very important to re-affirm once more their engagement.

In the 71<sup>st</sup> year of IMC’s existence, the music ecosystem needs these rights to be affirmed more than ever. And they are incredibly relevant to the choral world! Think about it: even in so-called advanced countries many people still do not have the freedom to sing, to learn how to do it, or to participate in music activities, and many artists do not have access to the tools they would need to develop their careers and live off their own art...

The choral world is an essential part of the IMC family and it is well represented by local, national, regional and global organisations, which on one hand, bring IMC values closer to their members and on the other, continue to demonstrate what a powerful and relevant tool choral music making is for the music ecosystem.

The International Music Council is today the world’s largest network of organizations and institutions working in the field of music. It counts some 150 direct members representing over 1000 organisations in some 150 countries with a potential outreach of 600 million persons eager to develop and share

knowledge and experience on diverse aspects of musical life.

Something that, in other words, can be easily described as a choral endeavour on a global scale for the sake of music.



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