

In the Name of the Almighty God

Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
The President

Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization (ICHTTO)  
The Research Institute

Anthropology Research Center (ARC)  
Languages and Dialects Research Center (LDRC)

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Proposals by the Anthropology Research Center (ARC) and the Languages and Dialects Research Center (LDRC) affiliated to the Research Institute to the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran, concerning the proceedings of the first session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, November 2006, Algiers, Algeria, as reflected in:

- ITH/06/1. COM/CONF.204/7, Paris, 29 September 2006: Criteria vii and viii, also Articles 6-11 below Related Issues,

- ITH/06/1. COM/CONF.204/7, Decisions, Paris, 19 November 2006: Decision 1, COM 6, and Decision 1, COM 7,

and

- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO 203.

## **1. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN ]**

Regarding Article No. 13 to the 2003 Convention, and relying on Paragraph 2 of Article 19 thereof, the following actions on the part of the Government of the Islamic republic of Iran are worth mentioning in relation to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage:

### ***A. National laws and regulations giving rise to a number of organizations, ministries, or other governmental bodies***

A.1) Iranian National Copyright Law of the year 1969, to support authors, composers, and artists

A.2) The Fourth Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Law, for the period 2005-09

A.3) Establishment of the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization Law, 1985

A. 4) Constitution of the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization Law, 1988

**Note:** Naturally enough, the traditional communities scattered within the official borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran respect their unique "traditional laws", parallel to the officially approved national laws and regulations.

Comments solicited by the 1st Intangible Heritage Committee1:  
IRAN (Islamic Republic of)

***B) UNESCO Conventions on Intangible Cultural Heritage to which the Islamic Republic of Iran has Joined***

B.1) Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Elicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970,

B.2) Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972,

B.3) Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO 2003.

**2. NECESSITY OF BEING EQUIPPED WITH EXACT DEFINITIONS FOR BASIC CONCEPTS REGARDING "PARTICIPATION" AND "CONSENT": DISCUSSED IN THE "PARTICIPATION PRINCIPLE" OF Article 15**

Within the framework of intangible cultural heritage, the concepts "owner", "creator", "narrator/executor/transferor", "participation", and "consent" enjoy a basic stance and bear value. It is necessary for them to be exactly defined.

**3. CONTRADICTION BETWEEN Article 15 TO THE 2003 Convention, AND THE DEFINITION PRESENTED IN Article 2 THEREOF OF THE "INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE"**

Article 15 to the 2003 Convention talks of the "creator" of the intangible cultural heritage. This term stands in basic contradiction with the definition of the intangible cultural heritage. The definition, as presented in Article 2, vividly, talks about "re-creation", which is supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The mentioned contradiction shows inacquaintance on the part of the compilers of the 2003 Convention with the nature of the intangible cultural heritage.

In this same relation, "consent" must, logically, be interpreted as "consent on the part of the re-creators of the intangible cultural heritage", which is impossible to be gained, since the community of "re-creators" of the intangible cultural heritage varies from the smallest units of the "individual" and "family" to such larger scales as "group", "community", "area", "nation", and "region (set of more than one country)", based upon the nature of the intangible cultural heritage under consideration.

The national laws and regulations of the Islamic Republic of Iran regard the consent by the related governmentally empowered organization or body as the consent on the part of the individual, being the "narrator", the "executor", or the "transferor".

**4. LIABILITY OF VARIOUS REALIZATIONS OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE TO ENDANGERMENT**

Regarding Paragraph 2 of Article 17 to the 2003 Convention, and based upon the basic differences of the various realizations of the intangible cultural heritage listed as a-e in Paragraph 2 of Article 2, a different set of standards is hereby proposed to be set for the liability to endangerment of each different realization.

**5. "URGENT" AND "REPRESENTATIVE" LISTS**

Regarding the standards of the "Urgent" and "Representative" lists, it is hereby proposed to share the issues with the state members, before the files are received.

**6. "LANGUAGE" AND ITS STANCE AMONG THE REALIZATIONS OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

As provisioned in Paragraph 2 of Article 2 to the 2003 Convention, language has been regarded among "oral expressions and traditions" and only as a "vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage". The following considerations are hereby announced in this relation:

6.1. Regarding its unique "structural" and "functional" aspects, it is necessary for language to be regarded as a base of intangible cultural heritage, in itself and for itself. The values of language in all of its realizations, including the theoretical, descriptive, applied, cultural, and historical, are quite vivid. A number of unknown aspects of the mentioned domains shall be made clear by these values. At the same time, "cultural diversity" by way of "linguistic variation" shall be emphasized, and a spirit of unity at national, regional, and international levels will be encouraged.

6.2. Language has a "written" realization, parallel to the "oral". It is hereby emphasized that the "written" realization is not, only, the piece of writing preserved on stone, wood, metal, hide, cloth, paper, etc. The written material, too, has "conceptual" as well as "structural" features, in addition to this tangible realization, which is of great value on the same domains of theory, description, application, culture, and history. Consequently, it is necessary for the written realization to be included under the title intangible cultural heritage.