



# UNESCO Latvijas Nacionālā komisija

## The Latvian National Commission for UNESCO

Pils laukums 4-206, Rīga, LV-1050, Latvija. Tālrunis 7325109, fakss 7222762, e-pasts: [office@unesco.lv](mailto:office@unesco.lv)  
Pils laukums 4-206, Rīga LV-1050, Latvia. Phone (+371) 7325109, Fax 7222762, e-mail: [office@unesco.lv](mailto:office@unesco.lv)  
<http://www.unesco.lv>

**Riga**

**Intangible Heritage Section of UNESCO**

Ref.: Nr.4.5./

31 January 2007

**Subject: Comments on the first session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Sir / Madam,

Responding to the request to submit to the Secretariat preliminary comments, proposals and observations that refer to the decisions adopted by the first session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and after having consultations with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, I have the honour to communicate to you on the position of Latvia in several issues.

Concerning the decision 1.COM 5 “Preparation of the text required for the implementation of the Convention” taken by the Committee, we would like to pay attention to the chapter 6 that currently is titled “Advisory Organisations”. In the spirit of the Convention not only organisations are of recognised importance for the implementation of the Convention but also local communities and individuals, either intangible cultural heritage (ICH) practitioners or experts. Therefore we would like to point out the importance to clarify whether individual advisors could be incorporated in an umbrella advisory body as organisation or whether the scope of the chapter should be broadened by looking at the “Advisory Assistance”, this way including also into the Operational Directives the procedural regulation for the possibility to have an advisory expertise from individual experts.

The question on the structure of Operational Directives was also raised in the discussions of the Committee, referring to the document ITH/06/1.COM/CONF.204/10. We would like to express our opinion that the content of current chapter 3 of the Outline for Operational Directives should be kept before the chapter 4 as the regulation for inscription on the Representative List should be stated before the regulation of the inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. We also support the “Visibility” as initial version proposed by the Secretariat for the title of chapter 3 for reasons of title clarity with a possibility to incorporate the ideas of awareness-raising and dialogue within the content of chapter 3.

Regarding the decision 1.COM 6 “Advisory assistance to the Committee” we would like to support the possibility for individual experts to assist to the work of the Committee that would, with respect to the spirit of the Convention and referring in particular to the Article 8, permit the Committee to have a broader advisory assistance passing the framework of non-governmental organisations. Considering the possibility to create an umbrella advisory body, the ways to integrate the assistance of individuals, intangible cultural heritage practitioners as well as experts, should be attentively treated. That is an important aspect particularly for the issue of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage that is only partly structured within or linked to certain organisations of advisory capacity.

**Comments solicited by the 1st Intangible Heritage Committee:  
LATVIA**

Regarding the accreditation and representativeness criteria of practitioners of ICH, non-governmental organisations, experts and centres of expertise with recognised competence in the field of ICH and recalling the spirit of Convention that values the local importance of ICH, we consider that concrete recommendations of the States Parties to the Convention on the advisory assistance bodies or individuals should be taken into account with the respect to the responsibility taken by the States Parties to the Convention by naming an advisory body or individual not only with eventually internationally recognised but also of locally valued competence.

Taking this opportunity we would like to submit to the Secretariat for future consideration first proposal for advisory assistance by recommending an expert of internationally and locally recognised competence and of expertise and advisory experience *Dr. phil. Dace Bula*, who is also a member of Culture Programmes' Council of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO and who has during 2006 given an important impact into the elaboration of national policy paper of Ministry of Culture of Latvia for creating a national inventory of the intangible cultural heritage. *Dr. phil. Dace Bula* took part also in the working group that elaborated the final recommendations of the International Forum which was organised in close cooperation with the Intangible Heritage Section of UNESCO "*Transmitting Intangible Cultural Heritage: Youth, Education and Development*" that took place in Riga in 2005. Please see the Annex to have more details in her *curriculum vitae*.

Referring to the decision 1.COM 7 "Criteria for inscription on the Representative List of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity" that is a crucial document to be elaborated by the Committee and recalling in particular the Articles 11 and 15 of the Convention, we would like to stress the importance of local communities and individuals within the process of evaluating the importance and inventorying intangible cultural heritage. It was also pointed out in the document ITH/06/1.COM/CONF.204/6 prepared by the Secretariat where the point 6 pays attention to the importance of "*the involvement of communities, groups and – where appropriate – individuals in the identification and definition of their ICH*". The current experience of Latvia regarding the elaboration of a national inventory is consequently based on a principle where a person is placed in the centre having his ICH skills and knowledge as his cultural capital. This way permits to affirm the importance of the person and local community within the process of identifying, defining and inventorying ICH. The presence of ICH practitioners, their experience, knowledge and opinion, in our view, has to be consequently maintained throughout all the process of inventorying and safeguarding ICH in both national and international level. In this perspective we would like to point out that we strongly support the criteria (vii), (viii) defined by the Secretariat in the document ITH/06/1.COM/CONF.204/7.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognise the importance of the contribution of Committee to the further effective implementation of the Convention and to express my high appreciation to the work of the Secretariat.

Please accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Annex : *Curriculum vitae* of *Dr. phil. Dace Bula*, recommended by the Republic of Latvia as an advisory expert for the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2 pages).

Secretary General

Rolands Ozols

A.Vaivade  
00 371 7325109

**Comments solicited by the 1st Intangible Heritage Committee:  
LATVIA**