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FOR A STRATEGY TO SAFEGUARD
THE NON-PHYSICAL HERITAGE
Vision from the African horizon

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I. SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIES

One strategy or several strategies?

Several strategies, certainly, (even if they have certain things in common) which can be applied to different localities in order to reveal the multifarious experiences.

Some African examples will serve to back up our approach.

II. AN ATTEMPT AT DEFINITION

A prerequisite for establishing a safeguarding strategy for the non-physical heritage is a clear definition of it (one which corresponds to the concerns of the populations and which is accepted by them). It need not list the causes of deterioration; neither should it present a hierarchy of the main beneficiaries of this strategy.

In many African cultures the notion, in itself, of non-physical heritage does not exist. It is a notion which is strange to these areas, brought by strangers. It would thus seem dangerous to generalize the currently accepted notions of the dominant cultures; they end up as references for everyone, particularly when promulgated by international organizations. The physical and the non-physical heritage are conceived as a whole, the one complimenting the other, as an expression of changing economic and social realities.

Names given to this heritage vary according to national languages; it has a noun or a local appellation in every national language. For example:

- in Malinké-bamanan-dioula, Fa cièn (heritage of the fathers)
- in Fulbé, Tawagal (what has been found)
- in Zerma-Songhof, Namey (heritage)
- in Fang, N'ga (heritage of the elders)
- in Fon, Gu (heritage)
- in Kiago, N'tsi (heritage)
- in Wolof, N'Doro (heritage)
- in Mienè, Eriga (what has been left).

All of these appellations refer to the heritage as a whole, with no distinction as to nature or kind, with no hierarchy of values or appraisals. This makes it difficult to assimilate these concepts to the term "nonphysical heritage" as understood in the Western world.

"Cultural traditions" would appear more appropriate, as long as the notion of culture is understood as "the ways and means by which each society responds to the problem of its social existence". This notion of culture encompasses everything, reveals the necessity of a heritage for everyone and for every society, and challenges people to reflect on their heritage.

1. Traditional structure

The existence of a fundamental traditional structure for a social type or specific group excludes neither an interpenetration of the structures, nor, at the same time, similarity and diversity of the roles.

2. Pre-established formulae

An informal transmission based on the use of pre-established and, for the most part, unwritten formulae exists in relation to which structures? And is this transmission not already known, used and accepted by the people themselves? It is tradition which is official (the habits and customs) and which also determines the non-official (which becomes in fact the non-public).

3. Collective knowledge

A collective knowledge and participation of the majority in traditions.

However, discrimination linked to sex, age and social conditions plays a part in the knowledge of certain traditions. There are traditions which are unknown to women; others are the monopoly of certain castes, and still others are transmitted according to age groups. Knowledge is mystery, not to be discovered until a certain age. One is as old as his knowledge; one has the knowledge of his age.

Certain traditions are not accessible at every moment; they are "spoken" on the occasion of special ceremonies, or at certain times of day, year, under certain precise conditions.

In each case, the task of preserving implies that of transmitting without alteration. To preserve is to transmit. The traditionist is more guardian than creator; his knowledge is collective; he has, however, the possibility of adding nuances; of organizing, arranging.

4. Socialization

All traditions take root in the social life of the community. They are intended to educate and must first serve the present. To

accomplish this they are given a practical role which covers the material and technical environment, the concerns and expectations of the groups concerned, and the socio-political context. They are necessary for a life of ease and delectation.

III. EFFECTS OF "MODERNIZATION"

The preservation of the non-physical heritage has become an urgent necessity as the process of deterioration accelerates. Many societies appear resigned and look upon this process, which they qualify as progress, modernity, evolution, as something inescapable. They endure, justifying themselves in order to better acquiesce, and raise their hands in surrender.

The causes of this deterioration are numerous. First there is the imposition of a Western model for development conceived essentially in terms of steady growth, of "industrial culture". This type of development has engendered the deterioration of the environment, rural exodus, an increase in unemployment, the acceleration of urbanization, and the disappearance of numerous communities, structured groups and networks of solidarity. It was conceived and propagated by an educational system which is not adapted to our cultures and personal resources, which breaks with our historical past, and which does not prepare our youth for specific tasks. This has not given our societies an autonomous hand over their social projects.

It has caused a drop in the standard of living of more than 80% of the population, thus diminishing their ability to fend for themselves, to create. The village, the ideal cultural "centre" is losing its initiative, its vigour; country dwellers are excluded from economic wealth and political power.

Thus, this type of development is creating an homogenization, due to the global utilization of certain massively diffused technologies by multinational societies; this homogenization will finally impoverish our cultures.

Until recently, attempts at safeguarding only concerned moveable and immoveable property, and, eventually, other aspects of this property. Other types of patrimony were considered insignificant and useless. This situation urgently calls for another policy for safeguarding cultural traditions, the non-physical heritage.

IV. SAFEGUARDING -- ACCORDING TO WHICH MODEL?

There exists today a strong desire to assert one's identity, not to set oneself apart from others, not to flaunt extreme and chauvinistic nationalism, but in order to assume the values of our ancestors which allowed them to adapt to the environment and to form all kinds of relationships. These values were at the core of the struggle for freedom and they must underlie the process of national edification. The old concepts of preservation must be questioned, notably the distinction between physical and non-physical heritage. Till now, safeguarding actions have been reserved for only the physical heritage. Today it is apparent that this heritage, especially moveable objects, is often lifeless, incapable of transmitting hidden meanings. We violate these objects, prostitute them, by imposing our own ideas. They are mutilated, debased, corrupted. They no longer participate in our lives and are often excluded by the "Western school of thought" and monotheistic religions. Those which raise their heads do so secretly, informally, in obscurity.

For a policy to safeguard the heritage to succeed, it is necessary to determine, in each case and region, the social strata which will benefit from it.

Rural populations would appear to be the most concerned. Country folk (especially farmers and cattle breeders) are the main creators of cultures at the village level. Along with them, the artisans and artists participate with equal vigour. They are most often grouped according to skills (blacksmiths, sculptors, musiciens, dansers, etc...).

Shattered, oppressed, the first generations of intellectuals (trained in Western schools) had taken on the task of ensuring a harmonious transition between generations; unfortunately, due to foreign domination and the crumbling-away of the position of the heirs, the evidence had not been correctly handed down.

Amongst the farmers, cattle breeders, artisans and artists are found doctors, philosophers, historiens, priests -- truly "barefoot scholars" in various fields. Trained at the school of tradition, they possess the national cultures of the true nation. To rely on them implies the acceptance of certain ideas: a strategy for safeguarding cultural traditions can only be economically sound if it is viable. This strategy should be based on certain postulates:

V. POSTULATES FOR A STRATEGY

1. Chain of events

To consider the safeguard of the heritage as a chain of events, with each and every generation forming a link with an irreplaceable role to play.

2. Living tradition

Cultural heritage is not only ancient, it lives; it is an "interrupted movement of transmission linking past generations to those present and future in an essentially unrestricted history". To better prepare for the future, one must first engage in present cultural activity.

3. An indivisible whole

A group's culture is an indivisible but flexible whole with a variable content.

4. The enlarged role of the family

To reconsider the basis of traditional society. This society is characterized by the enlarged role of the family which is the first level of socialization; within the family all cultures are elaborated, consolidated, spread. Its first economic foundation is agriculture and cattle breeding. This traditional society always developed within villages which were free and autonomous over a long period of time. It is therefore necessary to determine the centres of attraction of the villages (countrysides) and those of the towns (industrial zones).

5. Ecology

To consider the interaction between the natural and the cultural in an economic relationship.

6. Cultural plurality

To consider the cultural diversity, the cultural plurality. There is no question of favouring majority cultures over so-called minority cultures in the name of national unity and integration; ethnic realities must be accounted for, ethnic groups which are full of vitality and energy. In this way the present artificial boundaries of our states could be exceeded for an inter-African space or spaces.

7. An openness to exchange

To avoid all cultural conservatism which could keep cultures from incorporating new values. Every culture has a "traditional" aspect and a "modern" aspect. Every culture must be open to change.

8. Historical context

To be convinced that every element of the heritage, to remain complete, must be preserved with its history, richness, meaning, evolution.

Finally, every strategy for safeguarding cultural traditions depends on participation, dialogue, distribution of cultural responsibilities -- on a genuine decentralization. This goal cannot be attained without the conception and creation of a specially designed plan of action. What action should be taken, with whom and in which framework?

VI. PARTNERS

The principal, compulsory partner is the State which should have more of a role of reflection, support and evaluation than of management. The action of public authorities should favour dialogue, participation, democratization. It should be pluralistic.

Associations (both national and regional), non-governmental organizations and private institutions should be allowed to participate in safeguarding the non-physical heritage. Associations and other traditional organizations should continue to enjoy wide autonomy and to conserve their former prerogatives. All these organizations should directly receive assistance from international institutions.. Every regional and subregional organization, in addition to having a cultural dimension, should be founded on a cultural basis.

The cultural services of the State should be decentralized and assisted by advisory bodies. This situation would allow local authorities to take greater initiative and to assert more interest and support; this would lead to less bureaucracy and demagogy, and to more efficiency in carrying out the actions.

VII. ACTIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN

1. Inventory

First an inventory must be made. It should permit full control of the patrimony, should allow for complete census taking, for defining and drawing up a safeguarding policy, for determining priorities and the ways and means necessary for a successful exchange policy. The inventory should cover all national property both inside and outside

of each country. It should cover all the ethnic groups of a country and should include the following categories, generally defined by the "folklorist school" as working data:

Non-material culture

Habits and customs, oral traditions, non-written institutions, production techniques of typical and traditional objects.

A. Nonverbal traditions: gestures, nonverbal custom and ritual, nonverbal music (instrument and vocable) traditional dance.

B. Verbal traditions: songs, folk speech and dialect, oral traditional literature, including its narrative (myth, legend, riddles, tale, proverb, joke, ballad texts, folk drama, epic) and non-narrative forms (sayings, charms, chants, blessings, curses, folk poetry, greeting and leavetaking formulae).

C. Cultural assets: folk medicine, folk cookery and recipes, ceremonies, ritual festivals and holidays, folk art and craft. (Document CLT-84/CONF.603, page 13)

Within these categories proper place must be given to borrowings and exchanges.

Before launching such a survey, it is indispensable in each case, to undertake a pilot project which could have the following objectives:

- to determine a theoretical approach, using concrete examples, as to the ultimate use and signification of the general inventory;
- to determine, from estimations, the materials and financial and human resources necessary to implement such an operation;
- to sensitize the populations.

Such a pilot project will make it possible to collect the necessary data (written archives, films and sound recordings, books, theses, dissertations, reports, diverse publications, etc...) in order to: put together the documentation necessary for information and animation programmes, draw up an inventory of material and non-material testimonies (public and private), gain more knowledge of the zones to be surveyed, draw up a plan for the general inventory.

This pilot project, as it is fundamentally a national task, should be carried out only by nationals. The zones to be retained for the pilot project should meet the following criteria:

- zones which are culturally threatened,
- those with available human resources,
- little-known zones,
- those with difficult access.

The pilot project should be followed by a scientific seminar

to decide upon objectives and structures, to determine various methodological aspects, to draw up questionnaires on historical, sociological, museological components, and to designate the team of researchers.

The historical component should be aimed at gathering information on the past of those populations which are the creators of cultural property.

The sociological component should attempt to reconstitute the different important aspects of the social, economic and cultural environment. This should result in the creation of an "identity card" for each locality (indicating administrative status, population, ethnic and social composition, economic, cultural and religious activities, production or systems of production, basic economic activities, domestic activities, production techniques, social organization of production and distribution, rites of production, of passage, techniques of construction and home building.

The museological component should aim at inventorying cultural traditions.

The results of the preparatory seminar should lead to the organization of prospecting missions to choose the sites of intervention, to arrange for accommodations, to make contact with the populations concerned, to gain their confidence, and to enlist their participation in the inventory. Subsequent seminars will serve to train the group and to evaluate, adjust and reinforce its cohesion.

The structural framework of the project should be that of a central unit with several decentralized units on the regional and local levels, and with mobile teams of technicians. This central unit, which at the outset could be a coordinating committee and a scientific documentation centre, would be charged essentially with planning, coordinating, control and evaluation.

The field of enquiry should extend beyond present boundaries to cover homogeneous cultural zones; the zones could also be concentric. National surveys would then deal with the results of surveys of the different cultural zones.

The investment outlay, particularly the material and financial investments, calls for wise management of the resources which should be mobilized from the beginning if the survey is to be successful. These should be national resources, rather than outside assistance.

In choosing localities, certain criteria should be considered:

- historical criteria: age and continuity of the population;
- socio-cultural criteria: the presence of numerous manifestations of culture;
- support of the populations.

The survey should be carried out by the "children of the country" (natives of the cultural zones of the states). To gain the confidence of the populations, the research team should be stable, small, homogeneous and highly qualified (especially in anthropology and in the languages of the populations concerned). To be effective, the team should include some local manpower, and especially, it should be supervised by traditional cultural authorities. The participation of "foreign experts" can be envisaged in technical fields or for an exchange of experiences; but this participation should be limited and should not concern posts of administrative responsibility. Essentially, the working languages should be the national languages.

Attention should be given to the frequency, duration and timing of the visits (which should be scheduled to harmonize with the calendar of activities of the population) so that the programme does not become overly administrative.

2. Collecting

A combination of several means of collecting (note taking, questionnaires, photography, audio and video recordings, films) could produce good results by rendering all the dynamism of the traditions.

In spite of their high cost (price, personnel, maintenance) video recordings offer the greatest possibilities. They witness. They make reconstitution possible. For wide distribution and in order to limit costs, television services could assist by diffusing video programmes.

Questionnaires, which make it possible to obtain data that can be easily classified, are often used, but they cannot transmit the vitality and life of the traditions. They raise a barrier between the research team and persons interviewed. The length of the interview and its impersonal nature are other handicaps. However, questionnaires can be useful for interviewing administrators and intellectuals. All attempts must be made to make the interview seem like an exchange of experiences; thus it is necessary for the interviewers to be highly experienced with a thorough knowledge of their field. The frequency of the interviews is also important.

Photographs fix, petrify and cannot capture sounds and movements. Diverse climatic conditions (heat, dust) make them difficult to conserve.

Whatever the collecting method used, notes should always be taken. However, note taking should not be a separate means, even if it is the easiest one to use, being the most direct and least costly. It should be used to complement, correct and adjust the other means.

3. Publication

Once the survey has been made, the results should be rapidly accessible to the populations concerned; they should be published by, or under the aegis of a national (or regional) body.

A centralized documentation service should be established on the national or regional level. This should constitute a kind of collective memory allowing for constant reference. It would hold all the different forms of data -- sound, audio-visual, written documentation -- which should necessarily be computerized. A large place should be given to scientific publications: atlases, bibliographies, scientific journals and periodicals, documentary films, scientific monographs.

This information should be made available to the populations in their national languages and widely diffused: in popular books, comic strips, magazines and journals, radio and television; results of the surveys should be published in textbooks and books for learning to read. While contributing to a better understanding of the reasons for the inventory, such information could have an educational effect on the populations at the same time as it reasserts the value of the cultural heritage. This could lead to greater participation, solidarity, increased activity or a revival of testimonies.

4. Promotion

We shall consider here only those factors which are essential for promotion in the fields of education, languages, oral traditions, museums, audio-visual means of communication, publishing, cultural exchanges, law.

A. A new pedagogy

It is less a matter of introducing the teaching of cultural traditions into present school programmes than of challenging the entire educational system inherited from colonial administration -- a system which has proved to be an effective Trojan horse of foreign cultures, particularly Western ones, in the "Factory to produce the unemployed and homeless". Schools must be reconverted according to

models which correspond to the African socio-cultural reality, taking account of the traditional structures of initiation and education, making use of the inherent richness of the environment, and utilizing native manpower. A larger part of the community will be called to greater participation.

Above and beyond concerns of ruralization and the introduction of languages, it is the entire structure and content of the institution which are questioned.

a) National languages

They are one of the greater realities of African life; they play an essential role in the diffusion of culture and are an element of stability, a powerful factor in the development of societies and individuals. Above and beyond rhetoric and "scientific" debates of the professional linguist, these languages must be "worked" so they can express abstract thought.

National languages are more than objects of study; they must be functional in order to encourage expression and communication amongst the greatest number of people.

National languages must have a status. Linguistic pluralism must exist in a spirit of complementarity, not one of competition. All national languages should also be proclaimed official languages. They should have the same rights; they should be used in administration and in political, economic and social life. They should be taught by priority at all levels of the existing different branches of education; and, especially, they should be the backbone of the modern school. Foreign languages will thus be used solely for international communication.

All means should be employed towards harmonizing the policies and practical uses of these languages. It is inconceivable for people of the same country to read and write their language differently.

From a strictly technical point of view, all languages should have a system of transcription; the norms for transcribing and spelling should be standardized for a given language. More and more, linguists should be trained by language "professors" on site in all the languages-- for their adoption to be permanent and correspond to the concerns of the populations. The linguists should work within an interdisciplinary frame of reference. Together with the reconsideration of the scholastic system, a literacy campaign should be launched.

It should be based on a genuine policy for publishing books, dictionaries, newspapers, periodicals in national languages, and for promoting traditional cultural events (whose ritual and social context must not be sacrificed in the name of "spectacles").

b) Oral traditions

Our entire social system is based on orality, speech. They are means of social integration; they are the melting pot of all our knowledge, of all disciplines (history, technology, economics, sociology, ecology). They belong to all generations and are handed down from generation to generation. These means of transmission must be preserved, as long as they do not hinder the freedom of individuals. The defence of national languages (and their imposition on the elite) will thus ensure that priority is given to the use and place of oral traditions.

New and powerful vehicles must systematically be used: radio, television, cassette recordings. This will lead to the establishment of special structures based on orality and managed by the communities: structures for conservation and animation, cultural archives, rural audio libraries. However, these structures should not be isolated elements, but should favour a global cultural and educational policy.

A new pedagogy will necessarily result from the programme reform of the new school system, with special place given to indigenous human resources in the posts of professors.

B. Principal vehicles of traditions

a) Museums

Thorough consideration of the traditional cultural structures should make it apparent that the museum is the best institution for the preservation of cultural tradition (material and non-material culture). For the majority of the population, the notion of museum contains elements of freedom, innovation and dynamism.

The communities must take the initiative of deciding which objects to conserve according to their own standards and concerns -- above and beyond historical and sentimental values -- and under which conditions. Only then should other interpretations, those of neighbours and strangers, be taken into consideration. Criteria of evaluation based on esthetics must be abandoned for a concern with bringing out the true signification of the objects. The conservation of an object during its era is important, but to be able to recreate it makes it eternal. Museums must no longer be content to only manage collections

which are limited, no longer in use, meaningless; they should also manage those which, on the whole, still participate in everyday life, in exchanges. Museums will become less static and will become more alive, more dynamic. They will provide the structures or the traditional conservation activities and will help to ensure the communities of usufruct and property rights.

Thus will be created the conditions for a veritable democratization of museums at the following levels:

- concept of the museum,
- means of access (ease of access, diversity of activities and structures),
- means of communication (use of national languages),
- division of responsibilities (elaboration and monitoring of the programmes by the populations).

b) Audio-visual means of communication

Let us consider the three most obvious: television, cinema, radio.

i/ Television

In spite of the cost, the sounds and images of the television have come to act as host in numerous homes; it has become the privileged speaker which we follow attentively. Video has made it possible to "convey" our surroundings, participate in the management of everyday life and the environment, and thus to give wide coverage to cultural traditions. Amongst the most appreciated programmes are those which show artists, storytellers, musiciens, singers and historians, and which broadcast traditional cultural ceremonies and festivals.

It involves, however, great problems of technical ability and maintenance, of the capacity to produce the actual programmes, of autonomous management, of exchanging experiences.

It is evident that "televisual space" should be extended beyond national boundaries so that neighbours can produce and manage programmes together as partners sharing certain cultural interests, in order to fully participate in the mass media revolution (notably the satellite "explosion").

ii/ Cinema

While cinema presents the same problems of technical ability as television, it has the advantage of being omnipresent-- films can be shown everywhere at the same time. Numerous countries develop film theatre services.

We are witnessing a greater participation of nationals in the production of films, in their commercialization and diffusion. This new situation allows for true representation of the country and the concerns of the populations in a language and dialects which are accessible to them because they are their own.

The popularity of cinema (in spite of expensive admission fees, run-down cinema halls and the existence of numerous "flops") has often made it a good introduction to television.

iii/ Radio

Radios are everywhere; they are the best and most widespread means for giving life to oral traditions, and the best "voice" for traditionalists.

State monopoly of the radio would appear to hinder the participation and expression of the populations. National broadcasts, in the name of national integration, contain little variety or regional and ethnic distinctions -- all tremendous cultural riches; they most often use the official and foreign languages rather than national languages, and, because of technical assistance granted by certain foreign stations (in the form of equipment, programme exchange) they are subjected to pressure from those stations.

A network of radio stations covering homogeneous cultural or linguistic zones or "free" radios would ensure intense cultural animation, while favouring the traditions and direct participation of all social levels -- the least expense. This would be the best reply to the "invasion policy" of large foreign stations. Thus, each region and each cultural group would have its own radio station.

C. Other means for preserving traditions

a) Books

At the publishing level, a sizeable place should be given to the publication of works of oral literature in national languages, and to translations. They could also be published in the form of comic strips, with the main characters as the heroes.

b) Festivals

Festivals should be the culmination of a series of manifestations of culture and of creative activities; they should be a time for stock-taking of cultural life. They should not be simply prestigious

celebrations devouring enormous sums of money, where creators are noticeably absent. Such festivals leave no lasting impression, nor are they easily repeated.

The different traditional festivals (at the village, state and regional levels) present the best opportunity for communication, apprenticeship and the flourishing of cultural traditions. These festivals must preserve their autonomy and ability to function according to their own rules. They can receive assistance from the states, but they must have a context of freedom and tolerance. All efforts should be made so that family ceremonies (baptism, circumcision, marriage, engagements, funerals) survive the present social and economic difficulties. They are great moments and the best opportunities for learning of habits, customs and social relations, and for gaining knowledge of the past and of the environment. Certain initiations, even though their purpose has or must inevitably disappear, could be taken up during formal education.

Cultural exchanges should allow for a better understanding of one's self, for better self-discovery and self-respect. They should not be a "one-way street"; they should be based on equality and reciprocity. Priority should be given to people of the same cultural zone or those of neighbouring cultural zones. Music, songs, "spectacles" and folk dramas, should especially be exchanged.

c) Legal measures

In addition, an effective heritage strategy should be based on a solid legal foundation. States should adopt legislation for the organization of research (anthropological and especially historical), the commercialization of cultural goods, the import and export of goods (including the return and restitution of cultural property), the rights of authors and creators, cultural exchanges to preserve the liberties and autonomy of individuals and communities.

All these actions of cultural promotion and animation need a wide frame of reference, rigorous planning and the support of regional and international organizations.

VIII. THE ROLE OF UNESCO

1. International instruments

Unesco could effectively assist in drawing up cultural policies in support of popular traditions, and in coordinating linguistic

policies (for example the standardization of transcriptions and spellings). It could greatly assist in setting up legal instruments for safeguarding, and in creating conditions for their diffusion and application.

2. Creation of centres by cultural zones

Unesco could contribute to the organization of cultural regions that surpass the present states' boundaries; we would witness the creation of veritable cultural territories -- larger, atonomous, united, dynamic.

Regional institutions would be responsible for creating the conditions for regional collaboration. For example, in Africa, the Centre for Bantu Civilization is an example for other centres to follow (Fulbé, Mandingue, Haoussa, Tamasheo, etc...).

3. Register of folklore data

Unesco could contribute to the creation of an international register of cultural folklore data; however, this register should be based on national or regional registers, or those established by cultural zones. It should be the register of all property retained by countries, by cultural zones. No selection should be made of property to be preserved on a national and international scale. This could lead to the creation of a hierarchy of goods at the national level -- to the detriment of certain groups. Neither should certain countries or regions be favoured -- again to the detriment of safeguarding and to a healthy climate of exchange.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

1. Hazardous action?

In adopting an international procedure like the one described above, would there not be a risk of creating a schism of the physical and non-physical heritage? Would there not be a danger, in many cases, of imposing undesirable constraints on the populations concerned (flashy publicity, interventions imposed by the administrative authority, loss of power of decision and management, etc...)?

2. Local initiatives

The creation of rural audio libraries, of multimedia centres (financially independant and managed by the communities), the promotion of editions of oral literature, the production of films and records, the adherence to policies for exchanges and for the training of

techniciens, the encouragement of pilot-projects by country or cultural zones--all these are important promotional activities. We must remain receptive to all initiatives, whether it be those of the State, the creators, the communities, the users; we must be able to respond rapidly to expectations and requests.

The implementation of strategies for safeguarding the non-physical heritage calls for urgent and immediate action in the framework of well-defined, long-term policies -- national policies which recognize local initiatives based on internal, rather than external, means.