



**United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization**

# **FINAL REPORT**

**International Symposium on the Role of Women in the  
Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

**Tehran, 27-30 September 1999**

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The present Symposium was organised to implement the Draft Resolution approved by the 29th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 1997. That Resolution was presented by the Iranian authorities in response to their concern that the significance of women's role in the transmission of intangible heritage has not been adequately recognised, and that it is necessary to bring the matter to the attention of the international community.

This Symposium was the first of its kind and provided a pioneering forum in which to conduct meaningful discussions, forge new networks and develop purposeful directions. Its goals were twofold; to enhance recognition of the significance of women's role in relation to this heritage, and, to find a means of facilitating and encouraging women in preserving and developing this role. Participants were asked to present a paper and to discuss their research, activities and experiences relating to the transmission of intangible cultural heritage. They were then asked to suggest activities to be undertaken in the near future, such as an assessment of research already carried out in the field and the creation of a network amongst institutions and experts.

The Symposium provided a forum whereby further steps to be taken in the preservation, revitalisation and greater recognition of women's significant role in relation to intangible cultural heritage could be constructively examined. As women are so often the principal transmitters of much intangible heritage in cultures worldwide, it is imperative that their role in reaching these objectives is a meaningful and central one.

Fourteen participants from twelve countries and eight participants from Iran attended the conference. The participants included practitioners, researchers and government officials. Several observers were also present. Documents distributed to each participant on arrival were an Annotated Agenda, a Provisional Agenda, abstracts of papers and a welcome pack.

2. The meeting was jointly organised and funded by UNESCO and the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO.

## **II. Agenda Item 1: Opening Session**

3. The meeting was opened by Dr Jalil Shahi, Secretary General for the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO who welcomed all participants and expressed his honour and gratitude that distinguished cultural figures both from Iran and overseas attended the Symposium. He welcomed also Dr Shamsol Alam of the UNESCO Office in Tehran, Mrs Noriko Aikawa, Director of the Intangible Heritage Division of UNESCO and Dr Zehra Rahnavard, Chancellor of the University of Al-Zahra in Tehran. He expressed an apology on behalf of Dr Moine, Minister of Culture and Higher Education, who was scheduled to attend the opening session, yet unfortunately could not be present. He then thanked Mrs Farahani and his other colleagues in the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO for their great efforts and dedication in preparing the Symposium.

Referring to the Iranian Resolution presented to the 29th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, Dr Shahi noted that an international Symposium on the role of women in the transmission of intangible culture was unprecedented in the field of the cultural heritage, and that recognition has been given so far to women's role in relation to tangible cultural heritage. He then referred to Iran's Draft Resolution to be presented to the 30th session of the General

Conference proposing a feasibility study of a new interdisciplinary project: 'Women, Intangible Heritage and Development'. This Symposium, he suggested, could provide basic concepts and mechanisms for achieving this goal, and an opportunity to establish pioneering work in this field.

4. Dr Zehra Rahnavard then addressed the Symposium, expressing her pleasure at being present in view of the emphasis being given to the role of women and the fact that such an important meeting should take place in Iran. She noted that the Symposium would address a lack of awareness among governments and other bodies of the significance of women in general and, in particular, in relation to intangible cultural heritage. Dr Rahnavard pointed out that women have played a significant role in transmitting culture throughout history, and drew attention to the growing awareness of its significance. Women, she stated, have central roles to play as mothers, producers of artistic and folkloric works, as well as in the public domain, in areas such as policy making.

Placing special emphasis on the place of nostalgia as a key word in spiritual perception and in relation to the role of women in transmitting intangible cultural heritage, Dr Rahnavard added that artistic creations, culture, religion and myths embody symbols of our search for spirituality, noting that this notion is expressed in Platonic theory of forms. She discussed the primary role of women in this search for spirituality and in the transmission of intangible heritage. Dr Rahnavard then linked these observations with historical mythology, noting by way of example that the myth of the Mother Goddess is emblematic of women as spiritual representations, as illustrated in different cultures by the Elamite goddesses, such as Anahita in Iran and Aphrodite and Athena in Greece. Women throughout history, she said, are also present in artistic creations as artists and as the inspiration of creations.

5. Mrs Noriko Aikawa then spoke on behalf of Mr Federico Mayor, the Director General of UNESCO. She thanked the previous speakers and congratulated Dr Shahi, Mrs Farahani and the staff of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO for their initiative in developing Draft Resolution 111 which reinforces the place of women in relation to intangible cultural heritage. Calling for a re-examination and re-evaluation of the role of women in the transmission of this heritage, she stated that primary objectives of the Symposium were to encourage cross-cultural dialogue and to consider future measures through which to promote recognition and awareness of women's role in this domain. She reiterated that the Symposium would be the first of its kind, and as such, was of particular significance in addressing a realm of heritage that has for too long been neglected.

Drawing attention to UNESCO's constitution, Mrs Aikawa reviewed the link between the Symposium and the Organisation's mandate to promote international peace and common welfare through intellectual and moral collaboration among nations. Implicit in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage is the maintenance of cultural diversity and peaceful co-existence. She pointed out that in addressing these issues, the Organisation seeks also to counter adverse effects of economic globalisation. UNESCO's commitment to women is demonstrated by its activities since its inception and it has endeavoured to promote women's programmes as one of its four priority groups. Further to this, Mrs Aikawa elaborated on UNESCO's longstanding encouragement of the role and active participation of women in diverse fields of activity. She then highlighted that a guiding principle of the Organisation is to integrate women's priorities, perspectives, competencies, experience and potential in its activities and programmes.

Mrs Aikawa noted the timely nature of the Symposium in following the conference held by UNESCO and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington in June 1999 during which the implementation by Member States of the 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Cultures and Folklore was evaluated. This conference also provided a global assessment of major contemporary issues relating to intangible cultural heritage. Further to this, the role of women in relation to intangible cultural heritage drew particular attention. The current Symposium, she added, would provide a unique opportunity to explore ways in which the development of such programmes and other objectives relating to women and intangible heritage can be achieved. Mrs Aikawa concluded her speech by citing the topics to be addressed in the Symposium and by outlining and welcoming the Iranian National Commission's Draft Resolution.

### **III. Agenda Item 2: Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur.**

6. Dr Shahi conducted the election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur who were elected as follows:

Chairperson:	Dr Zahra Rahnavard (Iran)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV (Ghana) Professor Pirrko Moisala (Finland) Professor Mihaly Hopal (Hungary) Professor Edi Sedyawati (Indonesia)
Rapporteur:	Dr Janet Blake (UK)

Following this, Dr Rahnavard officially took the chair.

### **IV. Agenda Item 3: Adoption of Agenda and tentative Schedule**

7. The agenda and tentative schedule were formally adopted by participants of the Symposium.

### **V. Agenda Item 4: Presentation of Papers**

**Item 4 (i)** *The diversity and commonality of women's roles in transmission of intangible cultural heritage worldwide*

(a) *The role of women in the intergenerational transmission of intangible cultural heritage.*

8. The first paper was presented by Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV, representing the First Lady of Ghana. Her paper was entitled *Puberty Rights and Adulthood: The Role of Women in Transmitting Cultural Value*, and addressed historical contexts and contemporary issues surrounding rites of passage for pubescent girls in Ghana. These rights, she noted, are very important in African culture, not just to individuals directly involved, but also for the wider society. The expression of rights differ between ethnic groups, and in this paper, the Dipo rites of passage were described. The paper was divided into four parts providing i) a review of the ritual elements ii) the role of women in transmitting intangible values and the moral purposes

which they embody iii) a review of the effects of modernisation, and iv) the question of how to transmit intangible heritage in modern times, taking into account women's social roles.

The preparedness of women to fulfil their ritual role is very important to the continued practice of intangible cultural heritage. The significance of the ritual, which also embodies sacred aspects, relates to the further elaboration and recognition of women's social and cultural identity. Through the ceremony, musical and dance traditions are also preserved. Girls are educated through these rituals to become trainers of future generations. The paper then addressed modernisation and the impact that it is having by way of reducing puberty rights and influencing rituals ritual changes. For example, while previously a pubescent girl may be ritually confined for nine to twelve months, such practices are not longer viable, nor necessarily desirable in the modern world. On another level, the rituals have also become a tourist attraction, and this commodification of culture often undermines their cultural significance. Mama Adokuwa-Asigible IV stated that there is a need to find new ways of transmitting the cultural values of the rituals, while modifying them to accommodate contemporary contexts, perspectives and aspirations of women. She then put forward the possibility of moving towards national rites of passage, with youth trained locally.

9. The second paper, entitled: *The Love Emotion, a Culturally Specific Feature Transmitted by Women* was prepared by Dr Kadalina Matovu's (Uganda), who was unable to attend. It was read on her behalf by Ms Susan Kiguli (Uganda). The transmission of the emotion of love is central to intangible cultural heritage, and is achieved through lullabies, sayings and proverbs. The notion of love presented in this paper was described as a 'paradoxical' love, in that it stresses commitment and sacrifice. In order to prepare a woman for the birth of her child, she is placed under restrictions and undergoes unpleasant rituals so as to inculcate a self-sacrificing love for her unborn child. The mother-in-law, paternal aunt and other women in the community have specific roles concerning the birth of a child which is viewed as a communal event.

The mother uses particular terms to address her child and to illustrate her love. Songs and lullabies play an important role in the transmission of the notion of love. Grandparents also play an important role in raising children and teaching of appropriate behaviour. The female child is educated to expect a 'paradoxical love', whereby love is desirable, yet difficult, requiring personal sacrifice. This education is important for preparation of girls for marriage, and in particular, for traditional arranged marriages. Respect, considered to be a measurable quality in Ugandan society, is attributed greater significance than so called 'modern love'. The central role maternal aunt's in the instruction of young girls and women this aspect of life was then described.

Dr Matovu recommended that a study of the concept of love in African traditional culture would be valuable and that in African society, the notion of love is more stable than that conveyed by foreign cultures through the media and other channels. Concern was expressed that traditional African notions of love are currently being undermined by foreign values and behaviours which are not necessarily compatible, nor understood in African contexts. In concluding, she noted that love and its associated values, which improve the quality of everyday life, should exist and be understood within the environmental and cultural experiences of peoples.

10. The third presentation was made by Mrs Zinat Emami (Iran), the sole practitioner of the traditional Iranian art of Sukht. Her paper, entitled *The Art and Craft of Sukht*, described the

art of preparing the decorative leather originally used for the cover of the Holy Qur'an. Mrs Emami described how she learnt the art of sukht primarily from her father, the late Master Emami (Haj Mirza Agha Emami), from the age of eight years. She later continued her training with her father's student and other 'ustads' or masters in the art. She described the complex and time-consuming process of making sukht, which requires a deeply inspired love of the art and great patience. Following this description, a film of Mrs Emami and her work was shown.

11. The fourth paper, presented by Mr Seyed Ahmad Vakilian (Iran) and entitled *The Role of Tales in Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, addressed the importance of the role of the mother in transmitting values through lullabies and tales. Mr Vakilian stressed the vulnerability of such oral traditions in the face of the contemporary influences of mass media and other forms of international technical communications. Mothers, he said, are seen as the true story-tellers in Iran, and familiarise children with the outside world through this tradition, which is one of the oldest expressions of culture transmitted from ancient times to the present day. Mr Vakilian reported that the opportunity for children to experience such tales and lullabies is increasingly challenged, and this situation is contributing to the disintegration of family relations and wider society.

Such tales, he added, are the common experience, or the cultural inheritance, of a nation, expressing its sufferings and other major historical events. Mr Vakilian cited Plato in *The Republic*, where the philosopher asserts that the education of children begins with the telling of stories in order to improve their morality, and continued with a reference to Hindu traditions, including the use of tales as a form of psychological teaching. Women, he said, tend to concentrate on the moral message of the tales they tell, and in this way, are significant transmitters of values and intangible cultural heritage.

Mr Vakilian noted that in the modern world of communications, a question to be posed is whether various forms of media can substitute the role of the mother in transmitting values through song and tales. While the media has potentially destructive influences on these traditions, it can also be used positively as a means of disseminating the significance of the role of mothers in transmitting intangible cultural heritage. Mr Vakilian concluded his paper giving examples of traditional tales told by mothers to their children in Iran.

12. Dr Mahmoud Roohol Amini (Iran) presented the fifth paper, entitled *In Congruence Fire and Cotton*, but spoke only of the first part of the paper, due to the short time available. Introducing his topic, he noted that it is difficult to illustrate the socio-cultural role of either men or women without reference to the other, and continued to describe classical scientific thinking concerning the gender distribution of tasks since prehistory. The paper dealt with two essential human inventions - fire and cotton - stating that the maintenance, utilisation, development and dissemination of these phenomena have been undertaken throughout history by women. Dr Amini then addressed the role of women in relation to fire.

He stated that women's rites associated with the use of fire bear witness to their perseverance and innovation in traditional society. In illustrating this point, he cited an Iranian folktale in which an old woman finds fire from lightning and loses it, only to rediscover it by rubbing two stones together. According to Dr Amini, women invented the fireplace (and oven), which has played a central role in the identity and solidarity of the family, and maintains a significant place in nomadic societies. Apart from its functional uses such as cooking and warmth, the fireplace was traditionally also the centre around which family reunions took place, and one where social and cultural values would be passed on through the giving of advice, narration of

tales and exchanging of experiences. He concluded his paper by raising the question as to whether the effects of modern technology and lifestyle and the consequent reduction in the the importance of the fireplace has altered the role women play in the transmission of this intangible cultural heritage.

Dr Rahnavard then interjected, introducing Mrs Leila Taghipoor to the Symposium. The first illustrator of children's books in Iran, Mrs Taghipoor was also one of the first Iranian artists to employ oil rather than watercolour paints in Iran in the 1930's.

13. A discussion session was then held in which questions were put to Mrs Emami, Ms Kiguli and Mama Adikowu-Asigble IV.

Mrs Emami was asked how the knowledge of sukht is transmitted given the secrecy surrounding this art. She replied that it is transmitted directly to students. This requires great patience given the difficulty of the form. Asked if the knowledge can be written down, she replied definitely not.

Another question posed to Mrs Emami was whether she intended to pass on her knowledge as the only remaining practitioner, to students, and in particular, through her own family. She replied that she has two female students and would like to pass on her knowledge to her grandchildren when they are old enough.

Asked if she receives government support, Mrs Emani replied that she works for herself. It was then mentioned that the Iranian government has awarded Mrs Emami a special prize in view of the excellence of her art and that there is a government scheme in Iran to record and publish traditional know-how and skills.

A question posed to Ms Kiguli enquired as to what the Ugandan government is doing for children who lose their mothers at birth and are vulnerable to various consequences, such as the loss of maternal love. In response, Ms Kiguli explained that there are provisions for foster mothers and that children are viewed as belonging in a bRaoder cultural sense, to the mother's extended family and to society at large. However, scant resources and the spread of AIDS has led to significant problems with homeless children for which the government lacks the resources manage adequately.

Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV was asked her views as to the future situation in Ghana in relation to intangible cultural heritage, and of the Government of Ghana's plans in this domain. She replied that aspects of modernisation are becoming increasingly influential on traditional culture, and that puberty rites remain strong only in rural areas, while in urban areas, the modern education system and formal religion undermine these practices. The National Commission on Culture in Ghana has a major programme to educate children in the maintenance of their culture. Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV stated that thinking and planning in the field of education should occur within the cultural context of the community concerned.

When asked to what extent leaders educate children in the knowledge of their own culture, Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV replied that leaders such as herself should be spiritual protectors of their people and seek to save and revitalise those aspects of their culture that are worth preserving. As such, they have done their best to remove aspects of their cultural traditions



viewed as obsolete and damaging. In addition, women's groups in Ghana have taken up this issue. In answer to the question as to how to discern those cultural tradition to maintain, and those to discard, a question posed with reference to the Living Human Treasures system of UNESCO, she referred to an Act of Parliament has been passed in Ghana whereby any acts which degrades women are illegal. This Act is applied by local councils in order to change obsolete ritual practices.

(b) *Women's social organisation and domains in which intangible cultural heritage is expressed and transmitted.*

14. Ms Shahbanu Tajbakhsh, a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative with extensive experience in the Caucasus and Central Asia region, presented a summary of the paper written by Ms Nodira Azimova (Uzbekistan) and Ms Deniz Kandyoti (Turkey), who were unable to attend. Entitled *The Women's World and the Transmission of Culture in Uzbekistan*, this paper analyses the changing nature of women's ritual life in Uzbekistan through the Soviet and currently unfolding Soviet period. The discussion presented in the paper raised various issues relating to the impact of cultural change that contradicts local cultures, and in particular, how such changes affect the role of women in relation to ritual and religious heritage. The paper was intended as a research proposal for a case-study to be carried out under the joint auspices of UNDP and UNESCO.

The Soviet attempt to create a socialist culture in Central Asia and the resulting homogenisation of a public culture occurred with the continuation of traditional cultural practices in private domains. Women were the primary repositories and transmitters of these traditions, religious and secular. Soviet-era ethnographers noted that women preserved cultural practices such as saint worship and the *mahalle* system of neighbourhood social organisations. Since the end of the Soviet system, the ritual and other traditional practices that were restricted to the private domain have shifted into the public spheres. Religious practices, for example, have now become integral to public expressions of orthodox Islam, dominated by men, with women's role in carrying out certain rituals increasingly viewed as heterodoxy. Thus the private/public dichotomy has experienced significant changes, which have in turn affected gender roles, with particular consequences for women's ritual practices and socio-religious status.

Ms Tajbakhsh suggested that it would be worthwhile for a study to be undertaken on the impact of development and globalisation in Central Asia, taking into account the arrival of 'NGO culture' and the establishment of many women's organisations which are mostly socio-economic in interest. Only one such organisation, she noted, has a defined cultural agenda. Needs have now changed and the relevant question to ask is, what sort of social organisation will develop amongst women? These events and issues, she added, make the Iranian Draft Resolution proposal for a cross regional feasibility study particularly interesting.

15. Mr Behrooz Vojdani (Iran) presented the second paper, entitled *Iranian Lullabies*. He explained that there is a diversity of ethnic groups throughout Iran, each with their own oral cultural traditions in communities many of which also share common values. The lullaby is viewed as a significant aspect of culture as it can give insight to the wider culture of a region and its people. By way of example, he discussed how the themes and messages in lullabies may reflect the social and climactic conditions of the place from which they come.

It was explained that the gender and age of the child are not important in the transmission of this oral heritage, and that of greater significance is the closeness of the mother to the child, the transmission of love and the expression of her aspirations for the child. The lullaby may also serve as a way for the mother to express her own aspirations, feelings, intellectual and spiritual ideas. The consonance between the rhythm and harmony of the lullaby and the importance of music as a means of expressing emotions were emphasised. The lullaby, Dr Vojdani noted, may also be described as a primitive form of poetry.

Examples of lullabies from different regions and peoples of Iran were cited, including a nomadic lullaby which provided insight into women's fear of floods and the symbolic safety of white tents. An example was given from Dameghan, referring to local flowers and agricultural products, followed by a reading of a lullaby from Kurdistan, which contained social and political perspectives related to the region.

16. Ms Adrienne Kaeppler (USA) presented a third paper entitled *Cultural Domains of Women in the Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Polynesia*. This paper dealt with the transmission of music and dance in Hawaii and the transmission of material culture in Tonga. Ms Kaeppler explained that in Hawaii, dance and its related music tells the history of the country and culture and has served to preserve this knowledge in an oral form. Traditionally, music and dance was performed in open-air temples exclusively by men. However, during the nineteenth century these rituals went underground, a consequence being that roles altered, whereby women began to perform music and dance. With regard to the preservation and dissemination of these traditions, Ms Kaeppler discussed the importance of preparing biographies on women who are transmitters of intangible cultural heritage. An existing example given was the biography of a woman in Hawaii who transmitted traditional knowledge to her three daughters, one of whom passed it on to her daughter, who today is in her twenties and has transmitted it to own eight year old daughter.

Ms Kaeppler then discussed the transmission of material culture and related know-how in Tongan society, noting that men and women have traditional roles in this domain. She then drew attention to the situation whereby when women create such culture, it is perceived as valuable art whereas when men do the same, theirs is viewed as less valuable craft. An example provided of material culture produced by Tongan women was the huge cloths made from the bark of the mulberry plant, on which designs carry significant information concerning the history, social organisation and culture of the people. These require much time, energy and know-how to produce. Pleated mats made long ago and passed on through the female line in families are a further example whereby historical knowledge is being passed on through material culture. These mats are regarded as an essential and living presence during certain ceremonies. Examples of traditional arts were then illustrated by a series of slides.

17. The fourth paper was presented by Professor Pirkko Moisala (Finland) and entitled, *The Role of women in the Oral Transmission of Music: examples from Nepal and Finland*. The following theoretical premises were set out in her introduction; i) that the genders form a system in which it is necessary to consider the role of men when looking at women's roles, ii) that within a gender system, power is negotiated between the genders, and iii) the roles that the different genders have in transmission depends on the cultural system in question. Professor Moisala explained that in the performance of gender roles, factors such as social status, age and context are important. Drawing on case studies from Finland and Nepal, Professor Moisala then described ways in which the transmission of intangible cultural heritage teaches

gender roles to the next generation. Music, she noted, has an amazing role to play in transmitting values, and is a modelling system that governs our perceptions of the world. Added to this, it is subject to public control when publicly performed.

The role of women in the preservation and renewal of the Gurung culture of Nepal was described, accompanied by recorded examples of Ghatu and Rodi music. Professor Moisala explained that music is a means through which gender roles are taught. In her discussion of the Gurung, she pointed out that music made by girls is considered background music. In this sense, they play a supportive role. Boys and girls are taught gender - balanced co-operative roles through music making. Professor Moisala related this point to the view of women in Gurung society as being mediators between the old and the new. Following the discussion of Gurung music, Professor Moisala described contemporary Finnish folk music, citing an example of the exclusively oral appRaoch to teaching at the Department of Folk Music at Sibelius National Academy. An example of a contemporary Finnish folk group, Värttinä, composed of young women that combine influences from the traditional Kalevala singing, Eastern European cultures and Euro-American folk songs styles. This new folk music, she noted, has its roots in established oral traditions, whilst incorporating international musical influences, and at times directly reflecting and addressing women's issues and concerns.

In concluding, Professor Moisala noted that women inventively incorporate innovation and traditional musical forms, adjusting to changing socio-cultural circumstances, while also maintaining their role as transmitters. Further to this, she noted that women mediate between traditional and new influences, recreating music combining their own personal styles.

18. A discussion session was then held with questions addressed to Ms Tajbakhsh, Ms Kaeppler and Professor Moisala.

Ms Tajbakhsh was asked what is being done in light of the bRaoder changes that have occurred in Uzbekistan and the shifting of traditional religious and other practices from the private to the public domain. In response, she stated that a study is needed on this topic, since too little is known of the effects of this transformation. She noted however, that women's roles as ritual performers and leaders has lessened since the transformation to an independent State, and called for an assessment of the nature and impacts of these changes in relation to women's roles and wider socio-cultural and political contexts.

When asked as to whether the proposed study project could be extended to cover all the former Soviet states, including for example Hungary and Vietnam, Ms Tajbakhsh replied that this was theoretically possible. She suggested that a cross-cultural study would be relevant and feasible, as would a cross-regional study encompassing Central Asia and Iran.

Ms Kaeppler was then asked to elaborate on the nature of stories conveyed in Hawaiian dances, and of their social significance. She explained that they relate to, among other topics, the beginning of time, cosmology, the evolution of plants and animals, the genealogy of kings and love. One participant suggested that these stories constituted a body of information telling the nation's history, rather like a book, a description with which Ms Kaeppler agreed.

Asked to what degree oral traditions are being recorded in Polynesia by the community and whether the preparation of biographies is a successful recording mechanism, Ms Kaeppler

replied that this heritage is mostly undocumented, and that this situation requires urgent attention. She then suggested that a cross-cultural programme based on documenting women's biographies would be possible.

Professor Moisala was queried on the basis of the theoretical premises posited at the start of her paper as to how men's role in relation to women's lullabies may be defined. She replied that it would be interesting rather to pose the question as to why men are not there.

#### **V. Agenda Item 4 (ii): The interrelationship between women's roles in the transmission of intangible cultural heritage and other spheres of culture and society.**

19. The chair was taken by Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV (Ghana).

20. The first paper was presented by Ms Susan Kiguli (Uganda). Entitled *Ugandan Women Poets as Emissaries of Cultural Identity*, this paper addressed the nature and role of song and poetry, in oral and written forms, as a means of transmitting intangible culture in contemporary contexts. The importance of stories, plays and songs in Uganda was explained with regard to women being the primary custodians of such cultural expressions. Ms Kiguli stated that while in contemporary society, cultural expressions are not limited to oral traditions, women remain the 'anchor' for such cultural heritage in a context where they are increasingly challenged by outside global forces.

Poetry is a central discourse in Uganda and popular music is becoming an important medium for the transmission of poetic expression. Ms Kiguli explained that while women use song and poetry to transmit values to children in the private domain, female singers also disseminate a sense of pride and cultural dignity to public audiences. An analysis of popular music was presented, focussing on one song in which the singer assumes two different identities in order to convey her views and understanding of marriage, within a cultural framework. In the first role, she addresses her husband, telling him her of expectations and understanding of their marriage. The singer then assumes a different narrative role. She becomes the traditionally influential paternal aunt, using a technique described by Ms Kiguli as a 'discursive twist'. As the paternal aunt, a powerful figure in Ugandan society, the singer becomes an agent of change, telling the husband of how to conduct himself within the marriage relationship. She explained that issue of cultural identity becomes a crucial literary and oral tool for women's expression in this way.

Ms Kiguli continued to explain that African poetry and written literature has been a male dominated tradition. Only more recently have African women entered and become recognised in this domain. She then described the establishment in 1990 of a women writers association which has been significant in disseminating and promoting women's literature, which has since become more visible in Uganda and internationally. Ms Kiguli referred to a contemporary woman poet who employs references to traditional Ugandan cultural practices, while writing about contemporary issues such as war and the difficulties of modern life. She concluded by reading extracts of Ugandan poems, including her own, and illustrated the way in which modern women poets in Uganda incorporate references to cultural traditions.

21. Professor Mihaly Hoppal (Hungary) presented the second paper entitled *The Role of Women in the Transmission of Folklore - Local Cultures in a Global World*. By way of

introduction, he referred to a woman folk healer in the Tokat region of Hungary employing incantations that were both poetic and healing. He then described a visit to female healer in Siberia who gave a blessing upon his departure in the form of a folk song. Each of these examples, he noted, illustrated women as custodians of traditional knowledge and cultural identity.

Professor Hoppal stated that it was through material culture as symbolic of cultural identity that anthropologists first came to understand the role of women in transmitting intangible cultural heritage to their children. He then addressed the need to preserve local traditions in the face of the globalisation, and explained that this situation has given rise to conflicting tendencies, which manifest in certain dichotomies. He described these dichotomies as follows; i) women's work is valued locally but exploited on a global level, ii), women are the main custodians and transmitters of intangible cultural heritage on a local level but in an urban setting have less time for this, and iii) local, family-oriented stories are female-dominated while global advertising and media influences are male dominated. In conclusion, he called for a 'slowing down' of the globalisation process that degrades and impoverishes human values and proposed the greater valuing of local cultures as a progressive approach.

22. Mr Mohammad Mirshokraei (Iran) presented a third paper entitled *Women, Old Beliefs and Water*. In introducing his discussion, he made reference to the Haram Daghi mountain in Azerbaijan, an area that only 'pure woman' are allowed to access. Men and pregnant women are allowed in this area. He then referred to another sacred water source with similar restrictions, the Mashad of the Mother of Suleiman at Passagardae.

Mr Mirshokraei was asked during his presentation as to why in Iranian culture water is provided by women. He explained that the classical view is that it relates to issues of physical strength and traditional gender roles. Differing from this, he elaborated his view that it is due more to sacred and historical factors. Pastoral nomadic women, he noted, carry up to thirty litres of water tied to their waist for long distances, and often in mountainous regions, while women in the Bandar Abbas region carry water vessels on their heads. He noted that while men may escort their wives to wells in some villages, it remains the women who provide and carry the water. Mr Mirshokraei concluded that there remains in Iran the respect for water sources, which is believed to belong to a goddess and a realm forbidden to men. He posited this as the possible reason as to why women in Iranian culture have always been the providers of water for the family. The ancient worship of Nahid, the water spirit, he said, can also be seen as symbolic of the hidden power of women in Iranian society. This presentation was followed by a series of slide depicting these sites and women.

23. The fourth paper was presented by Ms Fuzieh Hariri (UNHCR) and was entitled, *The Role of Women in Presenting and Transferring the Cultural Nuncupative Heritage*. Focussing on Afghanistan, Ms Hariri stated that women have always managed to preserve the authenticity of their cultures with a strength and perseverance, and collectively represent the cornerstone of life in its different aspects. She then noted that despite this, women in Afghanistan continue to face many problems in comparison with women in other parts of the world. In her paper she focussed on the problems of forced marriage and women's lack of power in society.

Referring to the *Vidas* books, regarded by many as the beginning of the establishment of a civil society in Afghanistan, Ms Hariri explained that these books reveal that in ancient times, boys and girls were equal in society. She stated that historical factors have caused this to change to the disadvantage of women. Following the books' publication, various actions have been

taken to improve women's position in society. In 1919, for example, the first school for girls was established and a magazine, *Ershad Al-Naswan*, was the first published by women. It was forbidden for girls under 14 to marry and women were freed from slavery. In 1965, a women's institute was established with the aim of helping poor women overcome illiteracy and poverty and to assist in developing their handicrafts, and in 1992, a hospital was established for women and children.

Despite these advances, Ms Hariri observed that on a fundamental level, negative aspects of Afghani culture continue to affect women. An example given was the trafficking of girls into forced marriages, a practice which derives from the traditional culture, and occurs even within the Afghani diaspora. She added that forced marriage has been a major source of suffering to women in Afghanistan, and often involve marriages between girls and young women and much older men. Ms Hariri explained that this practice is exacerbated by poverty, which places increased pressure on fathers to force daughters into a marriage. Other social problems affecting women are an illiteracy rate of fifteen times that of men, the obligation to obey their husbands, and the devastating effects which divorce can have on women. In conclusion, Ms Hariri mentioned that despite these problems, Afghani women continue to preserve and perpetuate cultural traditions in areas such as food, dress, the weaving of kilims and the making of leather garments.

24. Ms Patricia Rosoazanamalala (Madagascar) presented the fifth paper entitled *La femme et le patrimoine culturel* ('Women and Cultural Heritage'). By way of introduction, she stated that women have been viewed as secondary to men in Madagascan society. Women's roles, she said, have been confined to tasks such as childcare and cooking. She then expressed her concern that Madagascar is a country in which such views continue to have a strong influence, particularly in rural areas, whereas women have improved their comparative position in urban society. Women in Madagascar are responsible for the continuing survival of the family, and the limiting view that women should not venture beyond the role of child-bearing remains dominant.

Ms Rosoazanamalala noted that Madagascan society maintains a strong attachment to its cultural traditions and that despite negative aspects of these traditions, this has enabled women to improve their positions and to gain a higher degree of choice within the cultural sphere. Women in Madagascar preserve the culture of the family and of the society through, among other traditions, the creation of handicrafts, the preservation of language and the teaching of customs and cultural values to children. Feast days, she noted, are significant in Madagascan society and women participate in the associated music and dance, as well as having very important roles to play in various rituals such as gift-giving.

Ms Rosoazanamalala explained that women are present at rituals, and some are exclusive to women, with older women accompanying and instructing younger girls. She also described the manifold significance of women's roles in creating handicrafts in agricultural areas. As well as maintaining the traditional knowledge associated with these creations, women are of particular significance where agriculture alone does not provide a sufficient income. Handicrafts, including baskets and weaving, may be sold. Women who do not possess the skills and knowledge to produce these handicrafts are poorly regarded in rural society.

Women also have a role to play in the survival of the national language, which has evolved from Malay with elements of Bantu, Arabic and European languages. In this way, Madagascan women protect cultural expressions and knowledge through the preservation of

oral traditions and in the creation of written literary traditions. Oral 'literature', she noted, is specific tradition that employs certain proverbs and idioms.

25. The sixth paper was presented by Dr Amir Hossein Zekrgoo (Iran) and entitled *Manifestation of pre-existing Women in the Mythical and Religious Arts*. He expressed his view of women as being givers of life whose power derives from their fertility and motherhood. He then referred to the power of women as aesthetic inspirations, and noted that this is not a recent phenomenon, but has always been the case. Added to this, he explained his view that women have always been symbolic of the preservation of values such as the power of light, the passing of time and the rotation of the ages, while also preserving cultural traditions and values.

Dr Zekrgoo referred to prehistoric representations of the 'Mother Goddess', dating back to 16,000 years ago and depicting female archetypes that have no individual identity. These objects, he said, symbolise women as grounded and close to the earth, while being also symbolic of fertility. Slides of paintings depicting of women, from various ages, cultures and including contemporary Iranian artists were shown, largely representing woman in maternal roles.

26. A discussion session was then held in which the important issue of the gender division of labour was put to the floor for consideration by participants.

Ms Rao (India) suggested that she would find it useful to incorporate historical perspectives in order to avoid the danger of talking about roles such as mother, carer and breadwinner in ways which are static and lack recognition of the negotiations and evolutions that occur in society.

On being asked about the position taken in human rights law to the division of labour, Dr Blake answered that, on the basis of the principle of equality, these laws do not promote any gender defined division of labour, but rather, a form of co-responsibility.

Mr Mirshokraei suggested that gender roles were less apparent in urban than in rural societies, as is the case in modern Iran.

In response to a question as to why the Symposium was thematically organised rather than based around country-by-country discussions of the speakers' own experiences, Mrs Farahani replied that participants had been given the brief to speak about their own country and experiences and many had done so. When questioned as to whether the Symposium was seeking to change traditions and cultures through its resolutions, she explained that a purpose of the Symposium was to present to Member States of UNESCO a series of recommendations for their consideration. The Chair affirmed that this was primarily a forum for the sharing and discussion of different cultural experiences.

Professor Hoppal was asked the question as to how the desire to preserve local cultures in the face of globalisation can be achieved. He responded that this was a very complex phenomenon, and that he had simply wished to raise subject as such. He reiterated his view that it would be desirable to 'slow down' the process of globalisation. Another participant then expressed the view that notion of time as a linear process whereby the slower is "backwards" is

a Western one, and that the traditional Islamic approach is more cyclical - one in which all points away from the centre are seen as equal.

The issue of forced marriage in Afghanistan was raised in relation to displaced persons. In response, Ms Hariri noted that under refugee conditions, financial difficulties force fathers more often to sell their daughters in marriage.

Ms Kiguli then posed the question that if poverty cannot be addressed in the short term, what should be done? In response, Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV expressed her view that education and training were fundamental actions in achieving the alleviation of poverty.

The issue of gender roles in relation to the division of labour was raised. In response, Professor Moisala noted that when looking at gender roles in any culture, it is necessary to consider a variety of factors. She referred to poverty as a factor that can effect the division of labour. It was then stated that gender specific roles are not due to natural states of being. Mrs Aikawa added that training is a crucial aspect, noting that traditional domains of labour, as defined by gender, are not static. By way of example, she noted that men can be trained to share traditionally 'female' tasks and that sensitisation and raising of awareness on this issue should be an important recommendation of the Symposium to governments and NGOs. Ms Hariri noted that the experience of UNHCR confirms that training should be a starting point for future measures.

#### **VI. Agenda Item 4 (iii): Methods and means of preserving and revitalizing intangible cultural heritage and enhancing women's role in its promotion and transmission.**

27. Dr Janet Blake (UK) delivered the first paper of this session, entitled *The Development of International Law Relating to Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Referring to the many stimulating theoretical approaches to this subject and practical examples given so far in this Symposium, she stated that the purpose of her paper was to place this topic in the context of existing international law. She also wished conclude by setting out a few specific recommendations and measures that could be considered by the participants.

Dr Blake then referred to the aforementioned Washington Conference (June 1999) and underlined the opportunity that this Symposium gives to intervene directly in a major topic for discussion of that conference; the question of women's role in transmission of intangible heritage was placed in the context of globalisation and the affects. The problem of identifying and defining intangible cultural heritage was then addressed, with reference to the definition given in the 1989 Recommendation and the identification of tangible cultural heritage in international law.

In relation to international law relevant to the issue of the role of women in the transmission of intangible heritage, Dr Blake noted that this question is not addressed in existing cultural heritage instruments. She referred to various international human rights instruments and drew out those provisions that could be applied to this area of cultural heritage, noting that the Symposium could make reference to them in its recommendations. She then concluded her paper citing select recommendations from the Washington conference that may be of relevance to the current Symposium, as well as other possible measures and recommendations.



28. The second paper was presented by Ms Aisha Matar (Bahrain) and entitled *The Modern Craft Industrial Project in Bahrain*. Ms Matar provided an introductory note on traditional roles of women in Bahrain in relation to the creation of handicrafts, and continued then to describe the foundation of the Modern Craft Industries Company. This organisation forges new paths for young people in Bahrain by providing training and facilities for the creation of traditional crafts. Ms Aisha noted that people in Bahrain have traditionally created and used crafts as part of their daily life. Since the economic and lifestyle changes in Bahrain over the last fifty years, however, she noted that there has been a significant lack of appreciation for handicrafts, which are poorly regarded. As a result, the practice and survival of traditional crafts is severely threatened.

In response to this, the Ministry of Oil and Industry established a project in 1990 with the aims of up-grading the quality of crafts produced, providing a stable income to those practicing them and encouraging the ongoing transmission of knowledge and skills to youth. Advertised through women's groups, youth clubs and newspapers, a craft centre was established with workshops offered free of charge to artisans producing traditional crafts. The scheme began with seven projects and now has nearly thirty with most of the run by women. Ms Matar noted that girls tend to be more committed to the projects, whereas boys have a tendency to leave when offered better remuneration. The initial intention of the project had not been to offer subsidies. However, trainees and practitioners expected some form of payment and are now paid. There is a requirement that all crafts produced within this project are of a high quality and the possibility of exhibiting and export are also offered to the artisans. Women may also produce their handicrafts at home and bring them to the Centre for distribution.

An example given of the type of craft now being produced by this project is of Al-Naqda embroidery which was traditionally used on large wedding gowns that are now prohibitively expensive. In order to create a craft product more appropriate to modern needs, the Company now produce smaller items using Al-Naqda embroidery, that are more commercially viable such as pillowcases. This approach of innovation and evolution of traditional craft forms is a demonstration of a central aim of the Company. Ms Matar concluded in noting that the Company has also created the only database of Bahraini crafts in the Arab States of the Persian Gulf region, and has called for the legislative protection of crafts in Bahrain.

29. The third paper was presented by Professor Edi Sedyawati (Indonesia) and entitled *The Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Indonesia: an Overview*. By way of introduction, she described how after Indonesia's colonisation, an Indonesian nation was developed with a common language and the promotion of shared values. There is now of national education, health and communications system, all of which contribute to the national unity of Indonesia. The culture is at the same time multifarious in character, and the national culture incorporates foreign cultural influences alongside the local cultural heritage of the many different ethnic groups of the country.

There has been increasing exchange between the different ethnic cultures in Indonesia. These encounters between different cultural traditions may result in borrowings as well as collaboration. The art of Batik, for example, originated in Japan and was adopted by different ethnic groups who have adapted it by using different patterns. On another level, some aspects of local traditional cultures, such as languages, are threatened by the increasing exchanges, one manifestation of which is the growing dependence on the national Bahasa Indonesia language, rather than local languages, to communicate.

The role of women in relation to local cultural traditions varies according to cultural differences. The nation wide educational system, according to Professor Sedyawati, has generated a common set of values related to the role of women in the enculturation process of the child. She noted by way of example that women are regarded as primarily responsible for child-rearing, and observed that the rapid spread of popular and mass culture in Indonesian society has had adverse impacts on the preservation and dissemination of transmitting intangible cultural heritage. She concluded by noting that it is becoming increasingly difficult for parents to carry out this task, and called for greater media exposure of the significance of intangible cultural heritage.

30. Ms Maya Rao (India) made the fourth presentation, preferring to talk without a paper, and expressing her wish to begin by sharing her experiences as a mother, and as an artist trained in of the Indian performance art of Kathakali. Ms Rao described how this art, traditionally a male art form that developed in 17<sup>th</sup> century Kerala, combines traditions in storytelling, dance and theatre. Kathakali traditionally involves mythological stories performed over the duration of a night, as the action takes place in real time, or at a pace slower than real time. The plays are full of tension and the stories are mythological in subject, with gods represented in secular form as ordinary people. The costumes, Ms Rao noted, transform the actors who become completely unrecognisable.

Women started to practise Kathakali in the 1940's and 1950's but have to go to gurus to train as the art is not taught otherwise. The characters in Kathakali move from man to woman to creature and back again throughout the performances and characters do not assume a fixed gender. This aspect of the art relates to the notion that all humans combine both male and female aspects and thus it is possible for a woman to train in and take part in it although traditionally a male art form.

Little is written about kathakali except for its poetry, and none of the choreography or other performance skills are documented. Kathakali can only be transmitted through a guru or other teacher. Ms Rao explained that this art, in particular its intangible nature, has fulfilled her as a woman, mother and person more than any other education she has received. Although hesitant to talk about Kathakali through concern that this would undermine its significance and compromise its intangible nature, she was willing to shared her experiences as a performance artist, combining her traditional training with her own and other contemporary European theatrical influences. Ms Rao has produced five one-woman shows in which she draws on her kathakali skills and training, improvising and innovating during performances. She concluded with a short, improvised performance from her seat.

## **VII. Agenda Item 4 (IV): Necessary and urgent actions to be taken by UNESCO and Member States.**

31. Mrs Farahani of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO made a presentation on the work of the Commission in relation to the role of women in the transmission of intangible cultural heritage. She expressed her pleasure that, after much hard work, it was possible to hold the Symposium on this significant subject, which she hoped would yield concrete results and prove a catalyst for further activities. Subjects discussed during the Symposium had included cultural diversity, globalisation, and the homogenisation of cultures. The latter, she stated, is the greatest threat to many cultures today, adding Member States should mobilise to counter such effects.

The goal of the Iranian National Commission in 1997 on presenting their Resolution to the 29<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO was to address the lack of attention to the role of women in relation to intangible cultural heritage. This Symposium, she explained, was an initiative by Iran inspired by a feasibility study that revealed a lack of awareness amongst women themselves of their important role in relation to intangible cultural heritage, and a lack of familiarity with cultural concepts amongst children under twelve. Ms Farahani stated that the challenges to be faced in addressing these are great and that the Symposium should be viewed as a first step towards this goal.

It was decided during the Symposium that the Iranian national Commission would draft a Resolution outlining more concrete measures relating to women and intangible cultural heritage, for presentation to the 30<sup>th</sup> General Conference in November 1999. Amendments to the 2000-2001 programme of UNESCO concerning the intangible cultural heritage and emphasising the role of women were put forward. A significant aspect of the Resolution is a proposed international feasibility study to be conducted over five regions and entitled 'Women, Intangible Cultural Heritage and Development'. This project would take place in five steps:

- 1) Familiarisation with research in different countries;
- 2) Identification of researchers in the field of women in relation to the intangible cultural heritage;
- 3) Identification of organisations and institutions working in this field;
- 4) Establishment of regional and interregional networks;
- 5) Conducting a detailed questionnaire concerning women and intangible cultural heritage and evaluating the responses that will inform the main study on women and intangible cultural heritage.

The project does not simply fall under the Culture (programme. 3) of UNESCO, but also the programmes on Education (programme. 2) and Communications (programme. 5).

Major problems that the previous study revealed were the lack of awareness amongst women of the significance of their role in relation to transmission of intangible cultural heritage and the alienation of youth from traditional culture. For example, the 'Nowruz' (New Year) celebrations in Iran have an important cultural significance. However, families today tend to pay less attention to the traditions associated with Nowruz. In the face increasing cultural homogenisation and the threat that this phenomenon poses to the continuity of local traditions and diversity, Mrs Farahani stated that the following areas were important for future consideration and action: pre-school education and training i) women's workshops focussing on aspects of intangible cultural heritage ii) the establishment of UNESCO university Chairs with an emphasis on cultural heritage, and iii) the constructive of media as a tool for promoting greater awareness of intangible cultural heritage, and assisting in its dissemination.

32. Mrs Aikawa then spoke on the background of the work of the Iranian National Commission to UNESCO in the area of intangible cultural heritage. She paid tribute to Mrs Farahani for her long contribution to work in this field and her work in presenting the Resolution requesting the current Symposium to the General Conference in 1997.

Mrs Aikawa then referred to the Iranian National Commission's new Draft Resolution on "Women, Cultural Heritage and Development" to be submitted in 1999 to General Conference at its 30<sup>th</sup> session. This ambitious international project, she noted, encompasses the new

dimension of development, and marks the first time in history that UNESCO has been presented a project on linking these subjects. She again expressed her thanks Mrs Farahani and the Iranian National Commission, and concluded by asking all participants to contact their own authorities and national commissions to request their endorsement of the Iranian Resolution at General Conference in November 1999.

33. Dr Maroufi, of the Organisation for Environment (Iran) then spoke, welcoming both foreign and Iranian delegates and expressing her great pleasure at being present in such an important Symposium. She explained that she has worked with rural women for many years and is familiar with their problems and how skilfully they work with and transmit their cultural heritage. She drew attention to the need for further actions to support women in this domain, and noted that many relevant considerations were raised during the Symposium.

Calling on the support of UNESCO, Dr Maroufi emphasised that measures must be taken to ensure the empowerment of women who carry the responsibility of disseminating and perpetuating intangible cultural heritage. She continued by stating that women require self-reliance to better transmit their cultural traditions to their children and community, adding that positive steps have more recently been taken in this regard in Iran and other places worldwide. Significant actions listed as necessary to achieve the empowerment of women in this domain included i) education in both formal and informal contexts, ii) the use of the media iii) suitable employment opportunities iv) access to training v) health and fitness, and vi) the guarantee of social, economic and political rights. These measures should then lead to the development of new means for its preservation. Without empowerment, Dr Maroufi asserted, women are obstructed in the transmission of intangible cultural heritage. In concluding, she recommended that participants formulate measures to support women's self-reliance and awareness of their significance as transmitters of intangible cultural heritage.

34. A discussion session was then held which dealt with issues related to the above presentations.

A question asked was whether intangible cultural heritage impinges upon or is affected by basic and important aspects of life such as the access to clean drinking water. Ms Rao noted that this is a major problem in India today and it is linked to cultural practices. By way of example, she said that it is relevant to question to what extent women make decisions concerning utilisation of sacred water sources, which, she added, relates to women's social, political and cultural empowerment.

The point was then made that this issue introduces an interrelationship between what have hitherto been seen as discrete areas of international law; environment, human rights, cultural heritage, and development. One participant suggested that an approach which considers each of these factors is appropriate in view of the multifarious and varied roles that women play.

It was also noted that there are many intangible values attached to the preservation of the environment, such as the use of traditional agricultural methods and ways of preserving water. The connection here between the tangible, intangible and economic was raised as important to highlight in this context.

One participant stated that discussion about ‘empowerment’ is not positive enough, and that it should encompass discussion of the achievements of women and girls in the modern world who are likely to lead men and boys in the future. It was also noted that education and qualifications are necessary for progress to be made.

Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV then proposed the possibility that an international meeting be held in Ghana next year to follow up on the discussions and future directions developed in the current Symposium, and to foster further progress in the field of women and intangible cultural heritage. She stated her intention to seek approval and support to host this meeting from the relevant authorities in Ghana.

The final point in the discussion highlighted the need to reflect upon productive paths towards changing attitudes toward the environment, natural, social and cultural, and consider patience and good guidance as significant factors.

### **VIII. Agenda Item 5: Presentation of Draft Action Plan**

35. A Drafting Committee was established in to draft an action plan. The following participants took part in the Committee:

Mama Adokuwa-Asigble IV  
Ms Adrienne Kaeppler  
Ms Aisha Matar  
Professor Edi Sedyawati  
Dr Pirkko Moisala  
Mr Mihaly Hoppal

The Draft Action Plan was presented to the Symposium by the Rapporteur of the drafting committee, Ms Adrienne Kaeppler. Following some discussion, and proposed amendments, the Draft Action Plan was formally approved by participants.

### **IX. Agenda Item 6: Adoption of Final Report**

36. The Final Report was presented to the Symposium by the Rapporteur, Dr Janet Blake and was formally approved by participants.

### **X. Agenda Item 7: Closing Ceremony**

38. Closing addresses were given by Dr Shahi, Mrs Aikawa and Dr Rahnavard. Thanks were expressed to all the participants for their stimulating discussion and final recommendations, to Mrs Farahani and all the staff of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO for their work in organising the Symposium and to the Iranian authorities for sponsoring a Symposium on such a significant subject.