

Comments of the Ethiopian Government on the implementation of the 2003 Convention

Operational Directives

Decision 1.COM 5

Working document ITH/06/1 COM/CONF.204/5

Ethiopia supports the proposal of the UNESCO Secretariat to integrate as many as possible of the texts to be prepared by the Committee in a coherent way in one set of Operational Directives. We believe that the Secretariat will change its original proposal in accordance with the opinions expressed by the States members of the Committee in Algiers. For the time being, a new discussion on this subject does not seem necessary. Ethiopia would like to suggest to the Committee to start as soon as possible best practices in the field of inventory making and other safeguarding measures, and to distribute such information both on UNESCO's website and through other conventional means.

Advisory organizations

Decision 1.COM 6

Working document ITH/06/1.COM/CONF.204/6

Ethiopia regrets that the Committee is not yet being assisted by competent NGO's. We consider that therefore – at least for the time being - the members of the Committee should implement literally Article 6.7 of the Convention. Furthermore, we think that for the sake of transparency it is important that all proposals for inscriptions on Lists should be evaluated and judged along the same lines.

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



Criteria of inscriptions

Decision 1.COM 7

Working document ITH/06/1.COM/CONF.204/7

(1) Ethiopia would like to emphasize for close readings of Articles 16 and 17 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible heritage, which indicate different purposes for the two Lists established by the Convention.

The Representative List (Article 16.1) is created **to ensure (better) visibility** of the intangible heritage, and awareness of its significance. This means that it serves the second and the third of the four purposes of the Convention mentioned in Article 1 of the Convention.

The second List, the one for ICH in need of urgent safeguarding, is created with a view **to take appropriate safeguarding measures**. That means it serves the first and most important goal of the Convention, which is mentioned in Article 1(a). Since the Convention is about safeguarding in the first place (as also indicated by the very title of the Convention), this List must be considered as the most important one. The Fund of the Convention is to be used for heritage inscribed on this second List (see Article 20 (a)).

All this should mean that elements that run no risk of disappearance, or that are already adequately safeguarded might be inscribed on the Representative List (Article 16). Such elements may not be funded by the Convention. Elements that need funding must be inscribed on the List for urgent safeguarding.

(2) As far as the criteria are concerned, Ethiopia is still studying different aspects of this question and we will only make preliminary remarks here. We think that all elements inscribed on both Lists should meet the definition of ICH as given in

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Article 2.1 of the Convention, and belong to one or more of the domains mentioned in Article 2.2. We don't think that the elements inscribed on the Representative List themselves need to be representative; their variety must lead to the list being representative. Ethiopia considers that one should think of seven generations before an element can be considered as traditional, or as rooted in a community.

(3) We do not think that elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List should automatically be incorporated in the Representative List once they are no longer endangered. They may be submitted as a new submission.

(4) According to Article 31, Masterpieces must be incorporated in the Representative List only, and in that list only. This means that the Fund of the Convention should not be used for actions related to the Masterpieces, which seems logical since the Masterpieces already were provided with action plans that are now being implemented.

(5) The character of the Representative List needs more reflection: Ethiopia does understand that the List should not become too long. However, there is some injustice in the fact that States that already have one or more Masterpieces will be in a privileged position as compared to States such as, Ethiopia, which have no Masterpieces (one proposal was rejected for reasons we failed to understand). We think that States Parties without Masterpieces should be given priority when it comes to incorporating new elements on the Representative List. Ethiopia, which can boast more than 80 Ethno-linguistic communities, is a big country with diverse culture; large population and long history should not be under represented on the Representative List.

(6) Finally, we think that it should be left to the States Parties to determine whether an element should remain on the Representative List for a shorter or a longer time, or even forever. To keep the Representative List controllable, the

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Committee might wish to discuss a system in which all States Parties would have the right to a number of places on the Representative List. That number might be the same for all States Parties. However, there are objective differences in the wealth of ICH elements between States Parties. It will be difficult to take these into account. The Committee might wish to discuss the following distribution among States Parties:

- A maximum of 10 elements on that List (including Masterpieces) for States Parties with diverse culture, large population and area (over a 500,000,000 inhabitants and/or over 2,000,000 square kilometres),
- A maximum of 7 elements for States Parties over 100,000,000 inhabitants, and/or more than 1,000,000 square kilometres,
- A maximum of 2 elements for States Parties less than 10,000,000 inhabitants, and less than 25,000 square kilometres, and
- 5 elements for all other States Parties (including Ethiopia).

Ethiopia would like also to suggest that, States Parties wishing to show the variety of their ICH may rotate elements while keeping to the maximum established under such a system. In addition, there should be no restriction for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List and priority for funding should be given to the least and less developed States Parties.



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