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PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTRE IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION AS A CATEGORY 2 CENTRE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO

SUMMARY

This item has been included in the provisional agenda of the 179th session of the Executive Board at the request of the Republic of Korea.

An explanatory note together with a proposed decision are attached.

Decision proposed: paragraph 39.

Introduction

1. In October 2005, at the 33rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO, the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Korea (the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education) announced that the Government of the Republic of Korea would like to set up an Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific region under the auspices of UNESCO.
2. In September 2006, an institute named the "Establishment Initiative for the Intangible Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific" (hereinafter called EIIHCAP) was established under the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation (hereinafter called CHF), which is funded and supported by the Cultural Heritage Administration (hereinafter called CHA) of the Republic of Korea, to serve as the predecessor of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific region. CHF and EIIHCAP have undertaken a number of bilateral and multilateral projects involving other Asia and the Pacific States in preparation for the establishment of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre.
3. This proposal is submitted by the Republic of Korea to the Executive Board of UNESCO to begin the process of establishing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific region under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2 centre) in the Republic of Korea.

Background

4. Over the past century, the Republic of Korea has taken great strides to preserve its cultural identity through the safeguarding of its intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter ICH). These efforts are in line with UNESCO's endeavours to safeguard ICH, shown especially by the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore (1989), the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (1997), the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). Also recognized in these endeavours is the significant role of UNESCO in preserving and safeguarding the universal cultural heritage of humanity, and in sustaining the viability of humankind.
5. The UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) emphasizes the importance of its cooperation with category 2 centres and institutes in order to successfully achieve joint objectives through the engagement of public and private sectors, civil society, and NGOs at the national and global levels. Taking note of the above-mentioned strategy, the proposed Centre will apply an intersectoral approach to the safeguarding of ICH by collaborating with governmental and non-governmental organizations, community groups, and international organizations.
6. Having successfully surmounted many obstacles, including the challenges of modernization, the Republic of Korea has fully recognized the significance of safeguarding ICH. In 1962 a system of safeguarding ICH was introduced into the Cultural Heritage Protection Act of the Republic of Korea, providing the legal and administrative basis for safeguarding ICH.
7. In 1993, the Republic of Korea proposed the establishment of the Living Human Treasures System to UNESCO at the 142nd session of the Executive Board (142 EX/18 and 142 EX/48) to contribute to the transmission of knowledge and skills of ICH bearers and practitioners. In 2000, the Republic of Korea established the Arirang Prize, which is awarded by UNESCO to those that have contributed to the safeguarding of ICH. From 1998 to 2001, a series of UNESCO international training workshops on the Living Human Treasures System, jointly organized by CHA and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, were held annually, encouraging countries to establish appropriate inventories and systems for safeguarding ICH.

8. With the accumulated knowledge on safeguarding ICH, the Republic of Korea is prepared to enhance the Asia and the Pacific region's capability by furthering cultural cooperation and exchanges, thus protecting ICH against disappearance, discontinuation, fragmentation and standardization. The Government of the Republic of Korea is willing to take the necessary steps to establish the Centre in accordance with the relevant provisions, providing funding and facilities and promoting cooperation with relevant organizations.

Mission and objectives of the Centre

9. The mission of the Centre is to safeguard ICH in the Asia and the Pacific region in accordance with the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage for the promotion of cultural diversity and sustainable development. The term "safeguarding" shall follow the definition laid out in Article 2.3 of the Convention, which defines it as "measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the ICH".

10. The objectives of the Centre are to enhance the regional capacity of Asia and the Pacific's for safeguarding, through:

- (a) promoting the implementation of the Convention;
- (b) raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding ICH;
- (c) reinforcing regional and international cooperation;
- (d) promoting safeguarding activities by utilizing information and communications technology (ICT).

Nature and status of the Centre

11. The Centre will be an autonomous and non-profit organization under Korean Law, and will be a UNESCO category 2 centre to serve the Member States of UNESCO and support the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia and the Pacific region. The Centre will operate by relying on the facilities and expertise of its associated institutes and organizations and other relevant authorities. Specialists in ICH (including UNESCO experts), scholars and relevant ICH organizations will be involved in conducting the safeguarding of ICH. Practitioners and relevant communities and groups will also be encouraged to play an important role in the Centre.

Methods of work

12. The Centre's priorities will be focused on safeguarding ICH, particularly in the Asia and the Pacific region, through implementing international exchange programmes, building networks among specialists in Asia and the Pacific as well as in other regions, providing long-term and short-term training courses and collecting ICH archives for online services. All programmes and activities will be designed, in line with the objectives of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, to respond to the particular needs of the Member States in preserving their ICH.

Functions of the Centre

13. The specific functions of the Centre are as follows:

- (a) Support the identification and documentation of ICH in the region to help countries in Asia and the Pacific recognize the specific elements constitutive of ICH and understand the processes of change of the heritage over time:
 - facilitate documentation of ICH in Member States by disseminating know-how and providing the necessary equipment and infrastructure;

- conserve, restore and digitize fragile multimedia data on ICH;
 - support Member States in the establishment of inventories as required by the Convention and in the preparation of nominations for the Convention's lists;
- (b) Develop and operate educational programmes and resources for the continuing transmission of ICH:
- develop curricula for the transmission of ICH;
 - provide training courses to professionals in safeguarding ICH;
 - develop online educational programmes by utilizing ICT;
- (c) Enhance the dissemination of ICH to raise awareness among the general public, particularly the younger generation, of the importance of ICH:
- encourage the holding of public events such as performances and exhibitions;
 - develop cultural contents that can be used as promotional or commercial items for raising awareness;
 - publish relevant books and audiovisual materials on ICH;
- (d) Encourage Member States to adopt appropriate legal and administrative systems and to develop various policies for the protection of ICH:
- conduct research projects on policies and systems for the implementation of the Convention;
 - promote implementation of the Living Human Treasures System (LHTS);
- (e) Foster international and regional cooperation between relevant ICH organizations for the exchange of information and knowledge concerning the safeguarding of ICH:
- construct an international network among practitioners, experts and officials in the field of ICH;
 - create and operate a pool of ICH specialists for the effective implementation of safeguarding activities;
 - build a portal website that would facilitate the connection among relevant organizations and among ICH archives already in existence.

14. Relevant organizations and institutions will work in close collaboration for the smooth operation of the Centre. The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage will lend its professional expertise on the identification, documentation, and formation of legal and administrative systems and policies for safeguarding ICH; the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage will assist with educational programmes, and the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation will cooperate with the dissemination of ICH.

15. The Centre will pursue and carry out the above-mentioned objectives and functions to the utmost extent, maintaining close relations with international organizations such as UNESCO, its regional offices, Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL), World Heritage Training and Research Institute for Asia and the Pacific Region, national, regional authorities and civil societies. It will cooperate with other ICH organizations that have expertise and skills of their own.

Moreover, it will exchange information with ICH specialists in order to improve the contents of the Centre's programmes so that they incorporate the most current academic research.

Governance of the Centre

16. The framework for the governance of the Centre includes:

- A Governing Board to guide and supervise the overall management and operation of the Centre;
- An Executive Committee appointed by the Governing Board to represent the Board between sessions;
- An Advisory Committee providing technical advice on the Centre's programmes;
- A Secretariat composed of a Director and any other staff required for the effective operation of the Centre.

17. The Governing Board shall:

- (a) approve the constitution of the Centre;
- (b) approve the mid-term and long-term programmes of the Centre;
- (c) select members of the Executive Board;
- (d) approve the annual work plan and budget of the Centre, including staffing provisions, infrastructure requirements, and operating expenses;
- (e) examine the annual reports submitted by the Director of the Centre;
- (f) issue the rules and regulations and determine the financial, administrative and personnel management procedures of the Centre;
- (g) determine the participation of regional intergovernmental organizations and international organizations in the work of the Centre.

18. The Governing Board shall be renewed every four years, meet once every calendar year for an ordinary session, and meet as convened by the Chairperson, either on his/her own initiative or at the request of the Director-General of UNESCO or of two thirds of its Members, for an extraordinary session. For its first meeting, the procedure shall be established by the Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO.

19. The Governing Board, under the direction of its Chairperson, shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) representatives of the Government of the Republic of Korea and the relevant authorities concerned;
- (b) representatives of the Member States of UNESCO making a substantial contribution to the Centre and to the field of ICH;
- (c) a representative of the Director-General of UNESCO;
- (d) representatives from the associated and cooperative organizations of the Republic of Korea;

- (e) representatives of any other intergovernmental organizations or international non-governmental organizations, who can be accorded a seat by the decision of the Governing Board.

20. The Governing Board shall determine the composition of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be composed of members of the Governing Board, as follows:

- (a) the Chairperson of the Governing Board;
- (b) representatives from the associated organizations in the Republic of Korea;
- (c) a representative of the Director-General of UNESCO;
- (d) one to four ad hoc members from the Governing Board to be named by the Board.

21. The Executive Committee appointed by the Governing Board will ensure the smooth operation of the Centre between sessions.

22. The Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Governing Board in order to provide consultation on the Centre's activities and management. The Committee shall be composed of scholars, legal and technical experts of ICH and representatives of UNESCO.

23. The Secretariat shall be composed of one Director and any other required staff and shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Centre and project implementation under the supervision of the Governing Board. The Centre's Director shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Governing Board in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO.

Capabilities of associated organizations in the Republic of Korea for the operation of the Centre

24. The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage was established under CHA to conduct scientific research on cultural heritage. The Institute in particular has an excellent reputation in research on the documentation of ICH and its methodology. The Institute will conduct cooperative programmes and projects with the Centre for the identification and documentation of ICH.

25. The Korean National University of Cultural Heritage is a special institution for higher education established under CHA to train heritage specialists in scientific and professional management of ICH. The University has systematically implemented an educational curriculum for safeguarding ICH. The University, along with the Centre, will manage the education and training of ICH experts and will help build an online learning system for ICH by utilizing ICT.

26. The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation has played a leading role in the popularization, utilization, and dissemination of cultural heritage through holding public events. CHF will implement projects with the Centre to raise awareness of the importance of ICH. CHF will set up plans for exhibitions and performances designed to enhance viability and understanding of ICH.

Financial arrangements

27. The Government of the Republic of Korea is committed to providing all the financial resources needed for the administration and functioning of the Centre. The Government has been funding the operation of EIIHCAP since 2006 to establish the Centre in the Republic of Korea. The Government of the Republic of Korea will take necessary measures to ensure that the Centre receives all the financial resources needed for its operation.

28. The Government of the Republic of Korea will provide spatial arrangements, employee appointments, related facilities and all things necessary for the establishment of the Centre. The

Government will also subsidize regular operating costs, including staff salaries and budget expenditure for the Centre's activities.

Commitment of the Government of the Republic of Korea

29. The Government of the Republic of Korea shall take necessary measures to ensure the creation and development of the Centre.

30. Moreover, the Republic of Korea has the intention of covering the cost of a feasibility study to be carried out by the Director-General of UNESCO, possibly using funds already provided to UNESCO under the UNESCO/ROK Funds-in-Trust agreement for ICH.

Cooperation between the Centre and UNESCO

31. The Centre will build cooperative relations with UNESCO to strengthen national and regional capacity in the safeguarding of ICH and to increase the community involvement in the implementation of the Convention in line with Article 15 of the Convention.

The contribution expected from UNESCO

32. The Centre's cooperation with UNESCO will help ensure the effective safeguarding of ICH and the sustainability of capacity-building programmes carried out by the Centre. UNESCO will contribute its valuable technical expertise to the Centre's task of safeguarding ICH.

33. The forms of cooperation expected from UNESCO include:

- (a) providing advice in the formation of the Centre;
- (b) involving the Centre in various programmes implemented by UNESCO where the participation of the Centre is appropriate;
- (c) promoting capacity-building of the Centre's personnel;
- (d) providing the Centre with relevant materials and disseminating information on its programmes via UNESCO's websites, newsletters and other means at its disposal;
- (e) participating, whenever appropriate, in the technical, scientific and training meetings held by the Centre.

Regional and international impact of the Centre

34. The establishment of the Centre will contribute to strengthening international capacity and solidarity through the observance of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the promotion of its related programmes, thus providing all possible technological and systematic support under the Convention, particularly in developing countries where their cultural heritage is at risk.

35. The Centre will help each country in the Asia and the Pacific region to develop different modes of transmission to ensure the safeguarding of ICH according to each country's cultural, political and economic characteristics.

Conclusion

36. The proposed Centre will enhance the effective safeguarding of ICH in accordance with the objectives and programmes of UNESCO by implementing the Convention, raising awareness, promoting international cooperation and utilizing ICT. The Centre will help strengthen international capacity, encourage community involvement and promote various methods of safeguarding

designed to fit each country's specific circumstances. The activities and programmes of the Centre will be of benefit to UNESCO, to the Member States in the region and to the international community.

37. The establishment of the Centre will ultimately contribute to the achievement of the objectives which UNESCO is pursuing, such as the promotion of cultural diversity and sustainable development, through networking and development of mutual cooperation in Asia and the Pacific. The Government of the Republic of Korea is committed to the establishment of the Centre and to the provision of funds for the long-term operation of the Centre.

38. Moreover, the Cultural Heritage Administration, the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and other relevant organizations all support the proposal and share the intent to establish an Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific region.

PROPOSED DRAFT DECISION

39. In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to adopt the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 of the UNESCO General Conference,
2. Further recalling Article 19.2 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in which States Parties "recognize that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is of general interest to humanity, and to that end undertake to cooperate at the bilateral, subregional, regional and international levels",
3. Having examined document 179 EX/46,
4. Welcoming the proposal by the Government of the Republic of Korea for the establishment of an Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific region, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, in the Republic of Korea,
5. Considering that the establishment of the Centre might enhance capacity-building and safeguarding activities among countries in the region,
6. Taking note that two Member States, namely the Republic of Korea and China, have submitted proposals to the current session of the Executive Board to establish regional category 2 centres for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific,
7. Requests the Director-General to carry out a feasibility study on the proposed category 2 centre in line with the criteria for category 2 institutes adopted by the General Conference at its 33rd session, and to present the results of such a feasibility study, indicating clearly the respective specializations of each centre, to the Executive Board, if possible, at its 180th session for consideration.