

**Address by H.E. Mr Jiang Jufeng,
Governor of Sichuan Province, People's Republic of China**

**First Extraordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the
Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
in Chengdu, Sichuan
May 23rd 2007**

The honourable Ms Françoise Rivière, Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO,
Dear delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

Good morning!

At this significant moment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's First Extraordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Chengdu, Sichuan, on behalf of the Sichuan Provincial People's Government, I would like to present our sincere congratulations and warm welcome to all delegates attending this meeting.

Intangible cultural heritage, as the distillation of human civilization, includes forms of expressions of traditional cultures and cultural spaces that have intimate connections with people's lives. Moreover they are the mental treasures that have been created in humans' lives and works. They are also one of the most important components of ethnic cultural heritage. Safeguarding and carrying forward this intangible cultural heritage will harness its important influences to accelerate comprehensive and harmonious development in economy, society and culture and the construction of a harmonious world.

Sichuan is a place with a long and glorious history, rich resources, talented and prosperous people, a place with beautiful scenery, famed as a land of abundance. The ethnic intermingling and cultural synthesis that were characteristic of the ancient Shu civilization have enriched the colours of China's intangible cultural heritage. These unique and rich intangible cultural resources are not only the important cultural treasure of the Chinese people, but also an important component of the world's cultural heritage.

In recent years, according to the principles of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and under the direct leadership of the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage has made great progress in Sichuan, as in many other regions in China. Sichuan has announced a list of 3,300 county level heritage sites and elements, 548 municipal heritage sites and elements, 189 provincial heritage sites, and 27 heritage sites have been listed in the first group of national heritage sites elements. We have established a safeguarding network for intangible cultural heritage and a heritage list system at the provincial, municipal and county levels. A well organized intangible cultural heritage safeguarding system with perfect mechanisms, complete measures and overall coverage is coming into being.

By other's faults, wise men correct their own. The First Extraordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Chengdu, Sichuan, opens a window to acknowledge the abundant intangible cultural heritage of other countries, and to learn from their proven experiences in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This will definitely give us important lessons and improve our safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Sichuan.

By taking into account those advanced theories, methods and experiences domestically and abroad, we believe that Sichuan's safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage could discover its own path and make a positive contribution to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of China and the world.

Finally, I wish all our honourable delegates and guests attending this meeting great success in your work. Have a good time and keep healthy during your visit to Sichuan.

I wish the meeting great success!

Thank you all!