**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE   
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Meeting of the Bureau**

**UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room VIII**

**7 June 2018, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Discussion on multiple submissions of International Assistance requests**

**from a single country**

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| **Summary**  At its session on 22 March 2018, the Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage requested that the Secretariat take stock of its experience related to the granting of International Assistance, particularly as regards the number and amount of assistance requests submitted by a single country (13.COM 1.BUR 4). This document presents the results of the analysis carried out by the Secretariat in this regard.  **Decision required:** paragraph 11 |

1. During its session in Paris on 22 March 2018, the Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter ‘the Bureau’) discussed the issues related to an increasing number of International Assistance requests of less than US$100,000 submitted by a single country, either at the same time or in quick succession. By its [Decision 13.COM 1.BUR 4](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-18-13.COM_1.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx), the Bureau requested that the Secretariat help take stock of its experience related to the granting of International Assistance. In particular, the Secretariat was asked to focus its assessment on the number and amount of assistance requests granted to a single country, together with any other pertinent administrative issues. The results of this analysis are intended to be examined by the current session of the Bureau, with a view to proposing appropriate measures to the Committee, if they are deemed necessary.
2. In order to discuss the issue at hand, it is necessary to first consider the general context in which multiple submissions of International Assistance requests take place. Since 2008, when the International Assistance mechanism became operational, a total of 206 requests from 77 States Parties have been received by the Secretariat. They concern the following three main categories of assistance:
   1. International Assistance requests over or under $100,000[[1]](#footnote-1) (Form ICH-04)
   2. Nominations for the inclusion of an element in the Urgent Safeguarding List, with International Assistance (Form ICH-01bis)
   3. Preparatory assistance for the inclusion of an element in the Urgent Safeguarding List (Form ICH-05) or in the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Form ICH-06)
3. The Secretariat has planned to make information available, through the website of the Convention, on the past International Assistance requests submitted, together with the status of the requests under process before they are presented for examination by the governing bodies of the 2003 Convention. This proposal forms part of the spending plan presented to this session of the Bureau (see ITH/18/13.COM 2.BUR/3) concerning the use of 20% of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019. Pending the approval of the Plan and the realisation of the work, the annex to this document provides a list of International Assistance requests received between 2008 and 30 April 2018.
4. The number of requests that States submitted to the Secretariat does not equal the number of requests examined by the governing bodies of the 2003 Convention. Out of the above-mentioned 206 requests, the Bureau or the Committee examined 104 requests submitted by 52 States Parties. This is because once submitted, these requests may either: (i) be considered by the Secretariat as ‘out of scope’ of the 2003 Convention and sent back as such to the submitting States (46 requests so far); or (ii) be withdrawn at any moment before their examination by the Bureau, often following the request by the Secretariat for additional information on the project (48 requests so far).

**Number of requests submitted by a single country**

1. Over the past ten years, thirty-five States submitted one request while eleven States requested assistance more than five times. The geographical distribution of those States that submitted more than one request is as follows: Group I: 0 State; Group II: 3 States; Group III: 9 States; Group IV: 7 States; Group V(a): 18 States; and Group V(b): 5 States. It is worth noting that four States requested assistance more than ten times each, making up almost one fourth of all the submissions received. Another example of multiple submissions concerns four States which submitted five or more requests simultaneously or in quick succession within a period of less than two years. While these multiple requests by States have been submitted regularly and throughout the entire period under consideration, the trend has somewhat accelerated since 2017, with seven States submitting more than two requests in the same calendar year. Another indication of this trend could be seen when, at its session in March 2018, the Bureau was asked for the first time to examine four requests from a single country during a single sitting.

**Amount of assistance requested by a single country**

1. The amount of assistance requested through the submission of 206 requests since 2008 totals US$20,235,447. Of this amount, US$4,954,797 was actually granted to submitting States. Since the Resolution taken by the General Assembly at its sixth session in June 2016, to increase the ceiling of the amount of International Assistance requests examined by the Bureau from US$25,000 to US$100,000 ([Resolution 6.GA 7](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/6.GA/7)), the average amount of assistance requests has increased by 87%, from $61,785 to $115,629. As was expected, this led to an increase in the total amount granted by both the Bureau and the Committee. Similarly, the total amount approved by the two governing bodies ($2,467,754) from 2016 to March 2018 is practically equal to the cumulated amount approved from 2008 to 2015 ($2,487,043)[[2]](#footnote-2). The higher amount that the Bureau can grant means that the impact on the Fund is correspondingly higher when there are multiple requests. The Fund might prove insufficient to respond to all the requests received in the medium term.
2. The number of requests and amount requested are not always directly correlated; while the State requesting the highest amount (US$5 million) did so in one request, the State requesting the second highest amount (US$1,7million) did so through fifteen different requests.

**Implications and possible measures**

1. The implications of multiple submissions could be discussed from different angles. One of the issues concerns States’ ability to absorb the responsibilities of implementing several projects at the country level at the same time. This adds to the reasons already explained in the working document presented to the previous session of the Bureau, as to why the Secretariat has been advising States not to put forward multiple requests, at least for the same implementing agency. Until now, multiple submissions have been accepted if they concerned different implementing agencies. At the same time, the Secretariat is regularly faced with challenges in closing projects due to delays in their implementation at the national level; one severe case of a project that could not be closed for several years concerned a State that continued to submit several other requests to be implemented by different implementing agencies. In such cases, the conformity of A.7 for new submissions could be questioned. Taking into account the financial risk for the implementation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Funds, the Bureau may consider it appropriate to evaluate requests from the same country only once all ongoing requests have been completed.
2. Another consideration is the need to respect the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the sense of paragraph 10 of the Operational Directives concerning the eligibility and selection criteria of International Assistance requests. While the situation is currently not alarming in this regard, multiple submissions of International Assistance requests could hamper this principle in the long run if the tendency for repeated requests continues. In other words, there may come a time when there will not be enough funds to service all the regions to help safeguard their intangible cultural heritage. Similarly, having no limitation on the amount of International Assistance requests that the Committee may be asked to examine means that several requests of a high amount are enough to exhaust the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. Since this kind of request has already been received (see paragraph 7), this possibility is no longer so theoretical.
3. The Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention do not currently include any indications either regarding the number of files to be submitted simultaneously by the same State Party or the cumulative amount of assistance that a country may receive over a determined period. The sovereignty of each State to submit International Assistance notwithstanding, the Bureau may consider it appropriate to recommend that the Committee, at its thirteenth session in November/December 2018, establish a limit on the aggregated amount of International Assistance that a single country could request through the Bureau during a period of one calendar year. Such a change would require revisions to the Operational Directives of the Convention. This item could be presented for examination by the eighth session of the General Assembly in 2020, and in order to prepare for that, the discussions by the Committee could be foreseen at its thirteenth (and if necessary also at its fourteenth) session. Given the nature of these requests and the relatively small amount of such requests received, the Bureau may also consider it appropriate to exclude the International Assistance requests in cases of emergency from this limitation.
4. The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 13.COM 2.BUR 7

The Bureau,

1. Having examined document ITH/18/13.COM 2.BUR/7,
2. Recalling Articles 22 and 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
3. Takes note of the analysis regarding the emerging trends concerning multiple submissions of International Assistance requests by a single country;
4. Requests that the Secretariat inscribe an item on the agenda of the thirteenth session of the Committee to discuss the number and amount of assistance requests to be granted to a single country at a given time, with a view to examine ̶ at its fourteenth session if deemed necessary ̶ revisions to the Operational Directives limiting the amount of International Assistance that a single country could be granted from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund through the Bureau.

**ANNEX**

| **Country** | **Number of Requests** | **Total Amount  in US$** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ALBANIA** | **5** | **430 560** |
| 2010 | 1 | 24 500 |
| 2013 | 1 | 24 800 |
| 2014 | 1 | 158 200 |
| 2018 | 2 | 223 060 |
| **ARGENTINA** | **2** | **49 100** |
| 2012 | 2 | 49 100 |
| **ARMENIA** | **3** | **431 422** |
| 2013 | 2 | 259 150 |
| 2014 | 1 | 172 272 |
| **BELARUS** | **1** | **133 600** |
| 2010 | 1 | 133 600 |
| **BENIN** | **1** |  |
| 2012 | 1 |  |
| **BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)** | **2** | **105 500** |
| 2008 | 1 | 7 500 |
| 2011 | 1 | 98 000 |
| **BOTSWANA** | **2** | **93 261** |
| 2015 | 2 | 93 261 |
| **BURKINA FASO** | **3** | **654 830** |
| 2012 | 1 | 262 080 |
| 2013 | 1 | 24 925 |
| 2019 | 1 | 367 825 |
| **BURUNDI** | **1** | **89 467** |
| 2017 | 1 | 89 467 |
| **CAMBODIA** | **5** | **338 970** |
| 2011 | 3 | 75 000 |
| 2012 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2016 | 1 | 238 970 |
| **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** | **1** | **170 000** |
| 2012 | 1 | 170 000 |
| **CHAD** | **1** | **84 709** |
| 2017 | 1 | 84 709 |
| **COLOMBIA** | **5** | **768 361** |
| 2012 | 1 | 120 000 |
| 2015 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2016 | 1 | 424 011 |
| 2018 | 2 | 199 350 |
| **CÔTE D'IVOIRE** | **4** | **335 805** |
| 2008 | 2 | 11 000 |
| 2014 | 2 | 324 805 |
| **CUBA** | **1** | **65 744** |
| 2015 | 1 | 65 744 |
| **DJIBOUTI** | **1** | **25 000** |
| 2010 | 1 | 25 000 |
| **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** | **3** | **88 443** |
| 2008 | 1 | 7 500 |
| 2010 | 1 | 24 348 |
| 2011 | 1 | 56 595 |
| **DEMOCRATIC PEOPOLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA** | **2** | **237 218** |
| 2015 | 1 | 139 218 |
| 2018 | 1 | 98 000 |
| **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO** | **2** | **103 000** |
| 2010 | 1 | 13 000 |
| 2017 | 1 | 90 000 |
| **ECUADOR** | **2** | **62 300** |
| 2008 | 1 | 6 000 |
| 2017 | 1 | 56 300 |
| **EGYPT** | **3** | **330 000** |
| 2009 | 1 | 5 000 |
| 2013 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2014 | 1 | 300 000 |
| **EL SALVADOR** | **1** | **24 995** |
| 2016 | 1 | 24 995 |
| **ERITREA** | **1** | **25 600** |
| 2013 | 1 | 25 600 |
| **ETHIOPIA** | **1** | **5 000** |
| 2008 | 1 | 5 000 |
| **FIJI** | **2** | **49 997** |
| 2010 | 1 | 24 997 |
| 2014 | 1 | 25 000 |
| **FRANCE** | **1** |  |
| 2011 | 1 |  |
| **GABON** | **1** | **24 560** |
| 2013 | 1 | 24 560 |
| **GEORGIA** | **1** | **18 210** |
| 2014 | 1 | 18 210 |
| **GRENADA** | **1** | **25 000** |
| 2016 | 1 | 25 000 |
| **GUATEMALA** | **4** | **105 785** |
| 2009 | 1 | 8 000 |
| 2012 | 1 | 48 828 |
| 2014 | 1 | 24 000 |
| 2015 | 1 | 24 957 |
| **GUINEA** | **1** | **5 000** |
| 2010 | 1 | 5 000 |
| **HAITI** | **1** | **98 970** |
| 2018 | 1 | 98 970 |
| **HONDURAS** | **3** | **30 000** |
| 2011 | 3 | 30 000 |
| **INDIA** | **1** |  |
| 2015 | 1 |  |
| **JORDAN** | **1** | **10 000** |
| 2018 | 1 | 10 000 |
| **KENYA** | **15** | **1 706 228** |
| 2008 | 1 | 6 000 |
| 2009 | 1 | 126 580 |
| 2011 | 4 | 56 589 |
| 2013 | 4 | 929 515 |
| 2014 | 2 | 25 000 |
| 2015 | 2 | 462 544 |
| 2018 | 1 | 100 000 |
| **KYRGYZSTAN** | **1** | **99 950** |
| 2017 | 1 | 99 950 |
| **LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC** | **1** | **99 899** |
| 2018 | 1 | 99 899 |
| **LATVIA** | **1** | **6 000** |
| 2008 | 1 | 6 000 |
| **LESOTHO** | **2** | **49 998** |
| 2011 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2014 | 1 | 24 998 |
| **MADAGASCAR** | **1** | **198 619** |
| 2012 | 1 | 198 619 |
| **MALAWI** | **6** | **851 364** |
| 2011 | 2 | 49 947 |
| 2012 | 1 | 225 650 |
| 2015 | 2 | 188 533 |
| 2019 | 1 | 387 234 |
| **MALI** | **3** | **339 807** |
| 2009 | 2 | 32 500 |
| 2013 | 1 | 307 307 |
| **MAURITANIA** | **3** | **113 900** |
| 2009 | 2 | 19 600 |
| 2017 | 1 | 94 300 |
| **MAURITIUS** | **2** | **85 468** |
| 2009 | 2 | 85 468 |
| **MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF)** | **1** | **23 117** |
| 2016 | 1 | 23 117 |
| **MONGOLIA** | **9** | **537 401** |
| 2008 | 3 | 12 500 |
| 2009 | 1 | 24 000 |
| 2011 | 1 | 107 000 |
| 2013 | 1 | 24 900 |
| 2018 | 2 | 197 266 |
| 2019 | 1 | 171 735 |
| **MOROCCO** | **2** | **84 540** |
| 2014 | 1 | 14 100 |
| 2016 | 1 | 70 440 |
| **MOZAMBIQUE** | **1** | **30 000** |
| 2017 | 1 | 30 000 |
| **NAMIBIA** | **3** | **135 000** |
| 2011 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2017 | 2 | 110 000 |
| **NICARAGUA** | **1** | **9 695** |
| 2009 | 1 | 9 695 |
| **NIGER** | **2** | **535 724** |
| 2017 | 1 | 257 829 |
| 2018 | 1 | 277 895 |
| **NIGERIA** | **5** | **299 800** |
| 2011 | 1 | 24 800 |
| 2012 | 1 | 95 000 |
| 2014 | 1 | 95 000 |
| 2018 | 2 | 85 000 |
| **PAKISTAN** | **2** | **138 590** |
| 2011 | 2 | 138 590 |
| **PAPUA NEW GUINEA** | **2** | **38 850** |
| 2010 | 1 | 15 000 |
| 2015 | 1 | 23 850 |
| **PERU** | **4** | **368 390** |
| 2013 | 4 | 368 390 |
| **PHILIPPINES** | **1** | **7 393** |
| 2015 | 1 | 7 393 |
| **POLAND** | **1** |  |
| 2016 | 1 |  |
| **SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS** | **1** | **60 500** |
| 2017 | 1 | 60 500 |
| **SENEGAL** | **3** | **202 692** |
| 2011 | 1 | 80 789 |
| 2012 | 1 | 22 014 |
| 2017 | 1 | 99 889 |
| **SEYCHELLES** | **2** | **99 862** |
| 2009 | 1 | 9 862 |
| 2015 | 1 | 90 000 |
| **SRI LANKA** | **1** | **5 258 025** |
| 2013 | 1 | 5 258 025 |
| **SUDAN** | **3** | **386 647** |
| 2009 | 1 | 12 167 |
| 2012 | 1 | 200 000 |
| 2014 | 1 | 174 480 |
| **SWAZILAND** | **1** | **54 028** |
| 2018 | 1 | 54 028 |
| **SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC** | **3** | **51 175** |
| 2010 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2011 | 2 | 26 175 |
| **TAJIKISTAN** | **1** | **44 500** |
| 2017 | 1 | 44 500 |
| **TOGO** | **3** | **149 610** |
| 2009 | 1 | 24 770 |
| 2012 | 1 | 24 950 |
| 2017 | 1 | 99 890 |
| **TONGA** | **1** | **85 912** |
| 2017 | 1 | 85 912 |
| **UGANDA** | **10** | **849 299** |
| 2010 | 1 | 46 617 |
| 2011 | 2 | 224 570 |
| 2012 | 1 | 10 000 |
| 2013 | 1 | 24 990 |
| 2016 | 2 | 329 792 |
| 2017 | 1 | 65 000 |
| 2018 | 2 | 148 330 |
| **UKRAINE** | **2** | **33 500** |
| 2008 | 1 | 5 000 |
| 2017 | 1 | 28 500 |
| **UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA** | **1** | **25 000** |
| 2014 | 1 | 25 000 |
| **URUGUAY** | **3** | **339 153** |
| 2010 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2011 | 1 | 186 875 |
| 2012 | 1 | 127 278 |
| **VANUATU** | **1** | **23 908** |
| 2015 | 1 | 23 908 |
| **VIETNAM** | **5** | **85 981** |
| 2008 | 1 | 6 000 |
| 2009 | 1 | 6 000 |
| 2010 | 3 | 73 981 |
| **YEMEN** | **1** | **77 760** |
| 2017 | 1 | 77 760 |
| **ZAMBIA** | **13** | **766 722** |
| 2011 | 1 | 25 000 |
| 2012 | 1 | 24 000 |
| 2013 | 1 | 110 000 |
| 2015 | 7 | 174 852 |
| 2017 | 3 | 432 870 |
| **ZIMBABWE** | **12** | **861 033** |
| 2010 | 3 | 62 000 |
| 2011 | 1 | 22 622 |
| 2015 | 1 | 94 725 |
| 2016 | 4 | 397 693 |
| 2017 | 3 | 283 993 |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **206** | **20 235 447** |

1. . Including requests in cases of emergency. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . Not taking into account the requests to be approved by the 13.COM 2 BUR. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)