



Regional Meeting for Arab States 'Implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: Inventory-making'

Recommendations

Abu Dhabi: 31 March – 3 April 2007

Under the patronage of H.E. Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al-Nahyan, the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), and in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development (UAE) and the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Section, and the invitation of ADACH, the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi, has hosted the Regional Meeting for Arab States on 'Implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: Inventory-making' and the Exhibition of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, from 31 March to 3 April 2007.

Representatives and experts from the Arab Region and other countries have taken part in the meeting, in addition to UNESCO representatives, and regional organizations: ALECSO (Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization) and ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).

The experts participant to the Meeting,

- Expressing their gratitude to the United Arab Emirates and UNESCO for holding the meeting to discuss issues relating to inventories of intangible heritage in the Arab region,
- Further expressing their gratitude to the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development for their excellent organization of this meeting which allowed for an exchange of opinions and enriching the reservoir of knowledge and experiences,
- Expressing their satisfaction with the plans and activities pursued by Arab States in the field of intangible cultural heritage, and this is clearly reflected in the number of Arab countries that ratified the 2003 Convention,
- Being aware that one of the major obligations of State Parties to the 2003 Convention, according to Articles 11 and 12, is the identification and definition of the intangible cultural heritage by means of elaborating one or more of the national inventories as a safeguarding measure to ensure the viability of this heritage,
- Being conscious of the importance of fostering cultural diversity and to ensure the full involvement of the communities, groups and traditions bearers in the process of safeguarding and identifying their intangible cultural heritage,
- Expressing their appreciation of the Algerian initiative of creating a regional center for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage under the auspices of UNESCO.



1- Call upon UNESCO to:

- a) Continue its efforts to support the development of the activities and programs of training, research, promotion information and awareness-raising in order to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage in the Arab region.
- b) Double efforts to provide technical and financial assistance to Arab member states to support the projects of inventory-making according to the provisions of the 2003 Convention.
- c) Support the initiative of the Arab states to create a chair for intangible heritage to be hosted in an Arab country.

2- Further call upon the Arab States to:

- a) Establish multidisciplinary institutions to be responsible for intangible cultural heritage.
- b) Establish legal, administrative and financial mechanism for both central and decentralized administrations with the aim of developing inventories, including coordination mechanism.
- c) Set academic and technical approaches suitable to inventory-making in Arab countries.
- d) Elaborate one or more inventory/ies of intangible cultural heritage with the aim of safeguarding it/them and in accordance with the procedural guide set by the Intergovernmental Committee and the principles contained in the 2003 Convention.
- e) Relying on experiences achieved in the Arab region in collecting, recording and safeguarding.
- f) Take concrete measures to raise the awareness about the importance of safeguarding the intangible culture heritage in the society, especially through training and formal and non-formal education, particularly among young people.
- g) Establish dissemination mechanism to facilitate access not only for practitioners or creators, but also for the public.
- h) Ensure that proper tools are developed to create a database that reflects the nature of the intangible cultural heritage, including audio and audio-visual materials.
- i) Create communication networks among the institutions devoted to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the Arab region.



- j) Support civil societies and NGOs to further develop activities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, and ensure the participation of the local communities concerned.
- k) Request the contribution of ALESCO, ISESCO and other relevant organizations in order to implement activities in the field of intangible cultural heritage.
- l) Call on the rest of the Arab countries that have not ratified the UNESCO 2003 Convention to do so.

3- Participants also call upon the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) to:

- a) Found an Arab center for studies, or a 'research unit', to disseminate Arab experiences and be responsible for coordinating and organizing training courses and providing scholarships for those working in the field of intangible heritage in the Arab countries.
- b) Issue a magazine in the field of intangible heritage.
- c) Organize a workshop of experts to examine the possible methodologies that will be useful for the elaboration of inventories of the intangible cultural heritage in the Arab countries.

After releasing these recommendations, participants in the meeting would like to express their gratitude to H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President of the United Arab Emirates, and H.H. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince, may Allah bless them both.
