

**Speech of the Minister for Information,  
Culture and Sports of the United  
Republic of Tanzania.**

**Hon. Muhammed Seif Khatib (MP)**

27 November 2006, Golden Tulip, Dar es Salaam  
*United Republic of Tanzania*

**SPEECH OF THE MINISTER FOR INFORMATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS  
HON. MUHAMMED SEIF KHATIB (MP) AT THE OFFICIAL OPENNING OF  
THE SUB - REGIONAL MEETING ON THE UNESCO 2003 CONVENTION FOR  
THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE -  
TANZANIA DAR ES SALAAM - GOLDEN TULIP HOTEL 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER,  
2006**

**The Director and representative of UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office, Mr.  
Cheick Tidiane Sy,**

**Government representatives from Eastern and Southern African Countries,  
UNESCO programme specialists for culture from Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Dar  
es Salaam, Windhoek, Maputo and Harare,**

**Dear Participants,**

**Invited Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On behalf of my Ministry and the Government of the united Republic of Tanzania, I extend to you, particularly to those of you coming from outside Tanzania, my sincere greetings on the occasion of your visit to Tanzania and, in particular Dar es Salaam. You are welcome - "**karibuni sana**". I believe you have planned your programme in such a way space has been set aside for participants to enjoy the vicinity of our beautiful City.

It is certainly a privilege and a great pleasure for me to open this important meeting on "**the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the intangible Cultural Heritage**", "**Implementation and Inventory Making**".

**Chairperson,**

You are here because culture is an important agenda in your meeting and you, being actors in this meeting, have got to aware of and be involved in the whole process of giving culture, particularly, the intangible cultural heritage, the value it deserves. You are here because you own this culture; you are here because

you care for this culture. You are here because you value this culture. You are here because you are aware that culture is a symbol of identity and humanity.

**Chairperson;**

The holding of this meeting could not have been at a more opportune time. It comes at a time when my Ministry of Information, Culture and Sports is working on a Culture Development Strategic plan and, as I speak right now, a general conference of the national culture sector is afoot in Dodoma deliberating on some of these issues that would help translate the culture policy into concrete activities.

Your UNESCO meeting is being held at a time when the strongest winds of globalization are blowing across our country. The cultures of the strong economies of the west are using every conceivable means to dominate the markets and cultures of the rest of the world. In this situation, the developing nations, like Tanzania, and Africa at large, are at risk for, as the saying goes, **“when elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers”**.

**Chairperson;**

Allow me, at this juncture, to revisit the objectives of your meeting in order to stress the relevance and importance of the meeting. The specific objectives are:-

- a) To raise the awareness among the participants (i.e. government representatives) about intangible cultural heritage and the UNESCO 2003 Convention.
- b) To inform the participants on how they may implement the UNESCO 2003 Convention and develop safeguarding activities.
- c) Exchange and share information and experiences.

These objectives, though of central importance, cannot be achieved without a strategic planning meeting, like this one. It is my hope that, by the time you finish your meeting you will come up with specific aspects which should be put into the plan, as well as a frame for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage implementation and inventory making.

**Chairperson;**

This UNESCO meeting is a unique facility in Tanzania and the entire Eastern and Southern African countries, and needs to be managed in an informed and sustainable way. All the member states should work together to identify ways in which the meeting can raise more awareness about intangible cultural heritage and deliver precise information on how to implement and develop safeguarding activities.

**Chairperson;**

Please allow me to urge all the Government representatives and participants gathering here today and tomorrow to maximize this opportunity to share their varies, rich and country – specific experiences and benefits as much as possible. I am sure that this meeting will be an opportune forum for the participants to exchange and share information and experiences in the field of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

**Chairperson;**

With these few remarks, I now have the pleasure and privilege to join you in officially declaring the meeting open.