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

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

**Thirteenth session
Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius
26 November to 1 December 2018**

**Item 12 of the Provisional Agenda:
Multiple submissions of International Assistance requests**

Summary

The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee has been examining an increasing number of International Assistance requests up to US\$100,000 submitted by a single country. Recognizing the possible implications of this trend, particularly for the overall implementation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, the Bureau requested that the Committee discuss this topic at the present session. This document proposes that consideration be given to revising the Operational Directives to limit the amount of International Assistance that a single country can be granted by the Bureau ([Decision 13.COM 2.BUR 7](#)).

Decision required: paragraph 13

1. In accordance with paragraph 47 of the Operational Directives, International Assistance requests up to US\$100,000 (except requests for preparatory assistance) can be submitted at any time. Paragraph 49 further provides that these requests be examined and approved by the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter, 'the Bureau').
2. During its session on 22 March 2018, the Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Committee discussed the issues related to an increasing number of International Assistance requests being submitted to the Bureau by a single country, either at the same time or in quick succession. This discussion was triggered by the fact that the Bureau was asked to examine four International Assistance requests, during one sitting, submitted by a single State Party (see document [ITH/18/13.COM 1.BUR/3](#)). The Bureau 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 and present it at its next session ([Decision 13.COM 1.BUR 4](#)).
3. The question was discussed from two related points of view: the number of requests submitted to the Bureau, by a single country during a period of time; and the amount of assistance requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund by a single country through the Bureau. Recognizing that the issue will have an overall impact on the implementation of the Fund for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (document [ITH/18/13.COM 2.BUR/7](#)), the Bureau, during its session on 7 June 2018, requested that an item concerning this topic be inscribed on the agenda of the present session of the Committee. The intention is that consideration be given to limiting the amount of International Assistance that a single country could be granted through the Bureau ([Decision 13.COM 2.BUR 7](#)), with a view to examining revisions to the Operational Directives at the fourteenth session of the Committee, if deemed necessary. When doing so, the Bureau suggested limiting the total amount that can be requested by a single country through it, either by year (US\$100,000) or by biennium (US\$200,000), regardless of the number of requests submitted. The Secretariat considers that it is more appropriate to limit the amount to US\$200,000 by biennium as this would give more flexibility to States Parties to benefit from the International Assistance mechanism; the draft decision is proposed in this sense.
4. To discuss the issue at hand, it is however first necessary to consider the general context in which multiple International Assistance requests are submitted to the attention of the Bureau. Since 2008, when the International Assistance mechanisms became operational, a total of 173 requests from 73 States Parties have been received by the Secretariat with the objective of being processed to the Bureau. They concern the following three main categories of assistance:
 - a. International Assistance requests up to US\$100,000¹ (Form ICH-04);
 - b. International Assistance requests in cases of emergency, up to any amount;
 - c. Preparatory assistance for the inclusion of an element on the Urgent Safeguarding List (Form ICH-05) or in the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Form ICH-06).
5. The number of requests that States submitted to the Secretariat does not equal the number of requests finally examined by the Bureau. Of the above-mentioned 173 requests, this body examined only 97 requests submitted by 52 States Parties; 13 files are currently under process by the Secretariat. This is because those 63 requests which were not presented to the Bureau were: (i) considered by the Secretariat as 'inappropriate' – not submitted through an official government authority and therefore not processed (20 requests); (ii) still 'incomplete' and therefore sent back as such to the submitting States (8 requests); or (iii) withdrawn before their examination by the Bureau, often following the request by the Secretariat for additional information on the project (35 requests).

1. Since the Resolution of the General Assembly in June 2016 to increase the ceiling of International Assistance requests examined by the Bureau from US\$25,000 to US\$100,000 ([Resolution 6.GA 7](#)).

6. The Secretariat has planned to make information on International Assistance requests submitted, together with their status, available through the website of the Convention. This proposal forms part of the spending plan presented to this session of the Bureau (see document [ITH/18/13.COM 2.BUR/3](#)) concerning the use of 20 per cent of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019. Pending the completion of this work, the annex to this document provides a list of International Assistance requests received for the attention of the Bureau between 1 January 2008 and 30 June 2018.

Number of requests submitted to the Bureau by a single country

7. Over the past ten years, thirty-five States submitted only one request to the Bureau while six States requested assistance at least five times. It is worth noting that three States requested assistance more than ten times each, representing nearly one fourth of all the requests received with the objective of being processed by the Bureau. Another example of multiple submissions concerns seven States that submitted three or more requests simultaneously or in quick succession within a period of less than one year. While multiple requests by States have been submitted regularly and throughout the entire period under consideration, the trend has somewhat accelerated since 2016, with seven States submitting to the Bureau at least two requests in the same calendar year. The four requests from a single country examined by the Bureau in March 2018 confirmed this trend.

Amount of assistance requested to the Bureau by a single country

8. Since the Resolution of the General Assembly in June 2016 to increase the ceiling of International Assistance requests examined by the Bureau from US\$25,000 to US\$100,000 ([Resolution 6.GA 7](#)), the average amount of assistance requested through the Bureau has increased by 152 per cent, from US\$33,985 to US\$85,766, leading to an increase in the total amount granted per year. Similarly, the total amount approved by the Bureau from January 2016 to October 2018 (US\$2,382,215) is already 26 per cent higher than the cumulated amount approved from 2008 to 2015 (US\$1,894,868). The higher amount that the Bureau can grant means that the impact on the Fund is correspondingly higher when there are multiple requests.

Implications and possible measures

9. 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. On a few occasions so far, the Secretariat has considered that multiple requests submitted together or with an overlapping implementation period may be processed if they concern different implementing agencies. This approach has been taken on the understanding that different agencies within the country should be able to benefit from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, as they may have different mandates and scopes of activities. This was also for an administrative reason, as the Secretariat is regularly faced with challenges in closing projects due to delays in their implementation at the national level; one 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 with criterion A.7 for new submissions could be questioned ([paragraph 12](#) of the Operational Directives). Taking into account the financial risk for the implementation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, the importance of compliance with criterion A.7 as a risk mitigation measure is of utmost importance.
10. Multiple submissions to the Bureau by a single country at same time or in quick succession could also present a concern for the sound governance of the Convention. In accordance with paragraph 51 of the Operational Directives of the Convention, International Assistance requests over US\$100,000 shall be evaluated by the Evaluation Body and examined and approved by the Committee. However, multiple submissions up to US\$100,000 may be used as a way to divide a single large request into several smaller ones presented to the Bureau, thus bypassing the authority of the Committee. Considering the level of authority bestowed

upon the Bureau by the Committee, at the present session, the Committee might wish to propose limiting the amount requested by a single a country channelled through the Bureau, either by year or by biennium.

11. The implications of multiple requests will become even more significant following the approval by the General Assembly, in June 2018, of the new team that will be fully dedicated to better implementing the International Assistance mechanisms ([Resolution 7.GA 8](#)). It is expected that the recruitment of this team will allow for an ever more accelerated increase in the volume of requests processed for the attention of the governing bodies by the Secretariat. Such an increase will be in addition to the one already noted (see document [ITH/18/13.COM/INF.5.2](#)) thanks to the efforts deployed by the Secretariat during recent years.
12. 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 Committee may consider it appropriate, following the recommendation of the Bureau, to introduce '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' ([Decision 13.COM 2.BUR 7](#)). As 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, if necessary, could be continued at its fourteenth session. Given the nature of these requests and the relatively small amount of such requests received, the Committee may also consider it appropriate to exclude International Assistance requests in cases of emergency from this limitation.
13. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 13.COM 12

The Committee,

1. Having examined document ITH/18/13.COM/12,
2. Recalling Decisions [13.COM 1.BUR 4](#) and [13.COM 2.BUR 7](#),
3. Takes note of the analysis prepared by the Secretariat regarding the emerging trends concerning multiple submissions of International Assistance requests by a single country through the Bureau;
4. Expresses concerns regarding the possible implications related to the administration of the International Assistance portfolio under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund as well as the governance of the 2003 Convention, caused by multiple submissions of International Assistance requests by a single country through the Bureau;
5. Emphasizes the importance of compliance with criterion A.7 for new submissions of International Assistance requests, as a way to mitigate the administrative risks entailed by multiple submissions;
6. Requests that the Secretariat propose, for examination at the fourteenth session of the Committee, revisions to the Operational Directives reflecting its debates during the present session with a view to limiting the amount requested by a single country through the Bureau (excluding emergency requests) to US\$200,000 by biennium.

ANNEX

**International Assistance requests received for the attention of the Bureau
between 1 January 2008 and 30 June 2018**

Year	Status of requests	Number of requests	Total amount in US\$
Albania		3	59,100
2010	Approved	1	24,500
2013	Rejected	1	24,800
2018	Approved	1	9,800
Argentina		2	49,100
2012	Rejected	1	24,100
	Withdrawn	1	25,000
Benin		1	
2012	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)		1	7,500
2008	Approved	1	7,500
Botswana		2	93,261
2015	Approved	1	68,261
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	25,000
Burkina Faso		1	24,925
2013	Referred	1	24,925
Burundi		1	89,467
2017	Withdrawn	1	89,467
Cambodia		4	100,000
2011	Incomplete	2	50,000
	Withdrawn	1	25,000
2012	Withdrawn	1	25,000
Cameroon		1	98,200
2018	Under Process	1	98,200
Chad		1	84,709
2017	Referred	1	84,709
Colombia		3	224,350
2015	Approved	1	25,000
2018	Approved	2	199,350
Cook Islands		1	100,000
2018	Under Process	1	100,000
Cote D'Ivoire		4	335,805
2008	Approved	1	6,000
	Withdrawn	1	5,000
2014	Approved	1	299,972
	Withdrawn	1	24,833
Croatia		1	99,500
2018	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	99,500
Cuba		1	65,744
2015	Approved	1	65,744
Djibouti		2	121,900
2010	Withdrawn	1	25,000

2018	Under Process	1	96,900
Dominican Republic		2	31,848
2008	Withdrawn	1	7,500
2010	Incomplete	1	24,348
Democratic People's Republic of Korea		1	98,000
2018	Approved	1	98,000
Democratic Republic of Congo		2	103,000
2010	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	13,000
2017	Withdrawn	1	90,000
Ecuador		2	62,300
2008	Approved	1	6,000
2017	Withdrawn	1	56,300
Egypt		2	30,000
2009	Withdrawn	1	5,000
2013	Withdrawn	1	25,000
El Salvador		1	24,995
2016	Approved	1	24,995
Eritrea		1	25,600
2013	Withdrawn	1	25,600
Eswatini		1	54,028
2018	Under Process	1	54,028
Ethiopia		1	5,000
2008	Approved	1	5,000
Fiji		2	49,997
2010	Withdrawn	1	24,997
2014	Approved	1	25,000
France		1	
2011	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	
Gabon		1	24,560
2013	Approved	1	24,560
Georgia		1	18,210
2014	Withdrawn	1	18,210
Grenada		1	25,000
2016	Withdrawn	1	25,000
Guatemala		3	56,957
2009	Approved	1	8,000
2014	Withdrawn	1	24,000
2015	Referred	1	24,957
Guinea		2	105,000
2010	Withdrawn	1	5,000
2018	Under Process	1	100,000
Haiti		1	98,970
2018	Approved	1	98,970
Honduras		3	30,000
2011	Approved	1	10,000
	Withdrawn	2	20,000

India		1	
2015	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	
Jordan		1	10,000
2018	Withdrawn	1	10,000
Kenya		11	379,455
2008	Approved	1	6,000
2011	Approved	1	17,668
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	
	Under Process	1	15,214
	Withdrawn	1	23,707
2013	Approved	3	191,866
2014	Inappropriate / Not considered	2	25,000
2018	Referred	1	100,000
Kyrgyzstan		1	99,950
2017	Approved	1	99,950
Lao People's Democratic Republic		1	99,899
2018	Under Process	1	99,899
Latvia		1	6,000
2008	Approved	1	6,000
Lesotho		2	49,998
2011	Withdrawn	1	25,000
2014	Approved	1	24,998
Malawi		3	149,732
2011	Approved	1	24,947
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	25,000
2018	Under Process	1	99,785
Mali		3	339,807
2009	Approved	2	32,500
2013	Approved	1	307,307
Mauritania		4	140,704
2009	Approved	2	19,600
2017	Approved	1	94,300
2018	Under Process	1	26,804
Micronesia (Federated States of)		1	23,117
2016	Referred	1	23,117
Mongolia		8	366,846
2008	Approved	2	12,500
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	
2009	Approved	1	24,000
2011	Approved	1	107,000
2013	Approved	1	24,900
2018	Approved	2	198,446
Morocco		2	84,540
2014	Approved	1	14,100
2016	Approved	1	70,440
Mozambique		2	125,610
2017	Referred	1	30,000

2018	Under Process	1	95,610
Namibia		3	135,000
2011	Incomplete	1	25,000
2017	Approved	1	10,000
	Referred	1	100,000
Nicaragua		1	9,695
2009	Approved	1	9,695
Niger		2	535,724
2017	Approved	1	257,829
2018	Withdrawn	1	277,895
Nigeria		4	204,800
2011	Withdrawn	1	24,800
2014	Rejected	1	95,000
2018	Inappropriate / Not considered	2	85,000
Papua New Guinea		2	38,850
2010	Incomplete	1	15,000
2015	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	23,850
Peru		1	72,200
2018	Under Process	1	72,200
Philippines		1	7,393
2015	Approved	1	7,393
Poland		1	
2016	Withdrawn	1	
Saint Kitts And Nevis		1	99,443
2017	Approved	1	99,443
Senegal		2	121,903
2012	Incomplete	1	22,014
2017	Approved	1	99,889
Seychelles		2	99,862
2009	Approved	1	9,862
2015	Approved	1	90,000
Sudan		2	186,647
2009	Approved	1	12,167
2014	Approved	1	174,480
Syrian Arab Republic		3	51,175
2010	Withdrawn	1	25,000
2011	Approved	2	26,175
Tajikistan		1	44,500
2017	Referred	1	44,500
Togo		3	149,610
2009	Approved	1	24,770
2012	Approved	1	24,950
2017	Approved	1	99,890
Tonga		1	85,912
2017	Approved	1	85,912

Uganda		9	617,089
2010	Incomplete	1	46,617
2011	Approved	2	224,570
2012	Approved	1	10,000
2013	Approved	1	24,990
2016	Approved	1	97,582
2017	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	65,000
2018	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	83,580
	Referred	1	64,750
Ukraine		2	33,500
2008	Rejected	1	5,000
2017	Approved	1	28,500
United Republic of Tanzania		1	25,000
2014	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	25,000
Uruguay		2	211,875
2010	Withdrawn	1	25,000
2011	Approved	1	186,875
Vanuatu		1	23,908
2015	Approved	1	23,908
Viet Nam		5	85,981
2008	Approved	1	6,000
2009	Approved	1	6,000
2010	Approved	3	73,981
Yemen		1	77,760
2017	Withdrawn	1	77,760
Zambia		12	446,748
2011	Withdrawn	1	25,000
2012	Withdrawn	1	24,000
2015	Approved	2	49,927
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	25,000
	Withdrawn	4	99,925
2017	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	98,050
	Under Process	1	25,000
2018	Under Process	1	99,846
Zimbabwe		12	861,033
2010	Approved	2	37,000
	Incomplete	1	25,000
2011	Withdrawn	1	22,622
2015	Withdrawn	1	94,725
2016	Approved	1	98,927
	Referred	1	99,052
	Rejected	2	199,714
2017	Approved	1	93,242
	Inappropriate / Not considered	1	91,901
	Withdrawn	1	98,850
Total		173	8,498,292