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

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION**

**Seventh session**

**UNESCO Headquarters, Room II**

**4 to 6 June 2018**

**SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY   
UNESCO Headquarters, 30 May to 1 June 2016**

The sixth session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was held at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, from 30 May to 1 June 2016. Representatives of 122 States Parties to the Convention participated in the meeting, as well as representatives of four Member States of UNESCO non-party to the Convention, four Category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO, and twenty six accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The full list of participants is available [online](https://ich.unesco.org/en/list-of-participants-00853).

The session was held in the six working languages of the General Assembly: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The Section of Intangible Cultural Heritage provided the Secretariat for the meeting.

*[Monday 30 May 2016, morning session]*

**ITEM 1 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

**OPENING OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.1*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.1-EN.docx)

1. The sixth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was officially opened by Mr Francesco Bandarin, the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**. On behalf of the Director-General, Mr Bandarin welcomed the delegates to UNESCO Headquarters, adding that a total of 168 States had now ratified the Convention. He extended a warm welcome to the new Members of the Convention, namely, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland, Kuwait, Marshall Islands, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, who had joined since the last session of the General Assembly. He started by specifying that the role of the General Assembly is to reflect on the measures and mechanisms needed to implement the Convention and make decisions that will direct impact in which intangible cultural heritage is safeguarded. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** spoke of the General Assembly taking place following the landmark adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 that would advance the work of the General Assembly so as to be in line with recent developments of the international development policy framework. Indeed, culture was clearly recognized as an enabler of sustained peace and human development. UNESCO’s actions in the field of culture to address the pressing challenges facing humanity today, such as poverty, climate change, natural disasters, social marginalization and economic inequalities, have never been so significant. The task was therefore to reflect on the relevance of intangible cultural heritage in today’s world and to make sure it remains relevant in the context of current and future generations and demonstrate how intangible cultural heritage contributes to inclusive social and economic development and environmental sustainability, as well as peace and security. It was thus timely that the present session of the General Assembly would examine and approve the amendment to the Operational Directives on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.
2. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** explained that the delegates would be addressing other important issues related to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, International Assistance requests, the accreditation of NGOs and so on, and thus the session represented a valuable opportunity to provide concrete responses to these issues. Given the current financial difficulties, he spoke of the contributions and commitment of States Parties that allowed UNESCO to fulfill its mission to help build national capacities and favourable environments for safeguarding intangible heritage in a growing number of countries with the mobilization of partners and actors at both national and international levels. He spoke of the very difficult times for heritage witnessed today in many parts of the world, including the destruction of intangible heritage and their communities, which called for an exceptional response, remarking on the mobilization of the UNESCO community to provide support, raise awareness and plan for the future. He informed the Assembly of the two important events planned by UNESCO in the coming days and weeks in order to address these issues: a conference in Berlin dealing with the safeguarding of Syrian heritage, and a second conference in Brussels on the role of culture in strengthening the resilience of communities.
3. Before closing, **Mr Bandarin** took the opportunity to announce the two new senior appointments within the Culture Sector. He first introduced Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, the new Director of the Division of Creativity that includes the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention. Ms Hosagrahar’s impressive curriculum vitae included her academic post at Columbia University, and her founding of Sustainable Urbanism International in Bangalore, a non-profit organization focused on research, design, planning and policy for the protection and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in historic urban areas. She has worked at the intersection of communities looking at cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and contemporary creative expressions. At the beginning of the year, the 2003 Convention also welcomed its third Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis, following the retirement of Ms Cécile Duvelle. Mr Curtis obtained a PhD in Anthropology from the Australian National University, and started his UNESCO career in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at the time of the launch of the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage programme, while the 2003 Convention was being drafted. He then spent eleven years working for Culture in East Africa in Dar es Salaam, followed by the Asia-Pacific region in the UNESCO Bangkok Office. After declaring the meeting open, Mr Bandarin wished the delegates fruitful deliberations, and concluded by declaring the sixth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage open.
4. The **Secretary of the Convention** welcomed the delegates to the General Assembly and spoke of the great honor of serving as Secretary of the Convention, ten years after the Convention had entered into force. He began by acknowledging the great responsibility towards the States Parties, and towards the communities and people who carry intangible cultural heritage in their lives, who are at the core of UNESCO’s efforts to ensure that future generations will benefit from the rich array of knowledge and practices handed down through time across the world. He noted that over the last ten years, the Convention had flourished and that intangible cultural heritage was now on the agenda of the vast majority of UNESCO Member States with departments of intangible cultural heritage having been created in many ministries, and policies elaborated. Moreover, the term had become widespread in academic contexts, and many practitioner communities themselves had rallied around the concept, awareness of which had grown significantly and widely thanks to the Convention. Mr Curtis spoke of the great achievements of the last ten years in structuring the Convention, fine-tuning the processes, and identifying important issues, which included the implementation of a vast capacity-building programme in more than 70 countries. Mr Curtis took the opportunity to acknowledge the work of his predecessors, Ms Noriko Aikawa, Mr Rieks Smeets and Ms Cécile Duvelle, for their intense efforts and skilled work in bringing the Convention to its present form. Nevertheless, being a young and growing Convention, there was still much to do with many of the issues facing the international community. Mr Curtis emphasized the key role that intangible cultural heritage could play in meeting many of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda; be it concerning the environment and climate change, food security, quality education, health or many others. In addition, heritage was at the heart of the emergencies the world faced, and intangible cultural heritage was critical in helping communities face conflict and displacement, and in preventing the spread of extremism, as well as in preparing and recovering from natural disasters. Mr Curtis believed that the Convention required further operationalization to ensure that all its mechanisms were functioning fully, for example the International Assistance Fund, which had yet to be fully utilized. He acknowledged that the work of the Assembly and the Committee was critical, but that in many ways the Convention took its real shape and life from its implementation at the national level. While the international Lists play an important role in raising awareness, sharing experience and helping safeguarding efforts (in the case of the Urgent Safeguarding List), the international Lists themselves only represented the tip of the iceberg in terms of humanity’s intangible cultural heritage. The work carried out by States Parties in their countries, provinces and communities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage was the real test of the impact of the Convention and thus States Parties needed to think of ways to deepen, reinforce and expand on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage at all levels in the years to come. Mr Curtis reiterated his awareness of the great responsibility bestowed on him in his new position and looked forward to working with all States Parties.
5. The **Secretary** informed the Assembly that language interpretation would be provided in the six official languages of UNESCO, and that all the documents had been available [online](https://ich.unesco.org/en/6.ga) since 29 April 2016. The provisional list of participants was also available [online](https://ich.unesco.org/en/list-of-participants-00853). Finally, Mr Curtis introduced the photo exhibition called ‘Passing it on: inventorying living heritage in Africa’, which had been shown during the Committee meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, and was currently displayed around the Fontenoy building. This time, the exhibition showcased once more the results of UNESCO’s capacity-building projects that had benefitted southern African countries, which were generously financed by the governments of Flanders and Norway. Concretely, the exhibition highlighted the perspective of communities in Sao Tome and Principe, Malawi and Uganda on the importance of safeguarding living heritage and their experience in capacity-building.

**ITEM 2 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

**ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-2-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 2*

1. The **Secretary** recalled Article 3 on the Election of the Bureau and the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly that states, ‘The Assembly shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur’. The Chairperson and Rapporteur are elected in their individual capacity, while States are elected as Vice-Chairpersons. The Bureau of the fifth session of the General Assembly in June 2014 comprised seven members: the Chairperson, His Excellency Mr Awad Ali Saleh from the United Arab Emirates; five Vice-Chairpersons, namely Norway, Czech Republic, Brazil, Malaysia, Congo; and the Rapporteur Ms Panagiota Adrianopoulou from Greece. Although this was not a rule, the custom had always been to ensure that the six electoral groups were included in the Bureau in the Convention’s spirit of equitable geographical representation. Mr Curtis also wished to reassure the Assembly that the duty of the Rapporteur was important but not too burdensome. The Rapporteur would be asked to verify that the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during the day’s deliberations were faithfully recorded by the Secretariat. No oral report was required.
2. **Mr Bandarin** understood that informal consultations had been held among the States Parties concerning possible candidates for election, and he invited the Electoral Groups to consult together to reach a proposal for a Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons and the Rapporteur. He therefore suspended the session for 15 minutes to allow for this consultation.

*[15-minute pause]*

1. **Mr Bandarin** invited the States Parties to pronounce their proposals for the election of the Chairperson.
2. The delegation of **Brazil** began by congratulating Mr Tim Curtis on his appointment as Chief of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, wishing him well in continuing the excellent work carried out by Ms Cécile Duvelle. On behalf of GRULAC[[1]](#footnote-1), the delegation proposed Ambassador José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros from Peru, taking into consideration his broad knowledge of and experience in the Convention.
3. **Mr Bandarin** took note of Brazil’s proposal and, noting that there were no further proposals, proceeded with the election by acclamation of Ambassador Rodríguez Cuadros as Chairperson of the sixth session of the General Assembly, inviting him to join him on the podium.

*[Applause]*

1. The **Chairperson**, Mr José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros, thanked the delegations for electing him, adding that all the delegations shared convictions, desires and a determination for the present and future action by the Assembly and the Committee to be oriented towards achieving the essential objectives of our Convention, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage with its peoples, expressions and manifestations, and the need to safeguard the way its ideas fit into the history and the collective ideas of peoples. The Chairperson spoke of the enormous efforts, both legal and technical, to be made in future tasks of the Assembly and the Committee, working every day in order to ensure the principle of universality – the foundation of the Convention – and to become a standard practice providing reassurance to all that they are on the right road. He therefore believed that the varying degrees of development between States should not bring about different rights of access to safeguarding through inscription on the Lists. Thus, in the immediate future, the Assembly needed to place special emphasis on helping less developed countries enjoy the necessary capacity to access the safeguarding provided by the Convention by strengthening technical cooperation and providing more resources to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. The Chairperson thanked Mr Bandarin for the words spoken on behalf of the Director-General, and expressed his gratitude and congratulations to Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment as Secretary of the Convention and Chief of the Cultural Heritage Section. He added that all the States Parties would benefit from his efforts and knowledge, and the support they deserve from the Secretariat. Finally, the Chairperson thanked the Assembly for its support and consideration of his chairmanship of the present session before turning to the election of the Vice-Chairs.
2. The delegation of **Côte d’Ivoire** began by congratulating the new Secretary, before nominating **Senegal** on behalf of Group V(a).
3. The representative of the delegation of the **United Arab Emirates** echoed the previous speaker in congratulating the Chairperson on his election, adding that it was an honor for him to have personally served as Chairperson during the fifth session of the General Assembly. He congratulated the Secretary for his experience, leadership and efficiency that would enable the Convention to become even stronger. On behalf of Group V(b), **Kuwait** was put forward.
4. The delegation of **Romania** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment as Secretary of the Convention. On behalf of Group II, the delegation proposed **Poland** as Vice-Chairperson.
5. The delegation of **Switzerland** also congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and on behalf of Group I, proposed **Germany**.
6. The delegation of **Pakistan** welcomed the Chairperson’s election, and the appointment of the new Secretary, nominating **Nepal** as Vice-Chairperson on behalf of Group IV.
7. Thanking the delegations, the **Chairperson** noted the consensus regarding the candidates: Senegal, Kuwait, Poland, Germany and Nepal, announcing their election by acclamation.

*[Applause]*

1. The **Chairperson** congratulated the Vice-Chairpersons, and then moved to the election of the Rapporteur.
2. The delegation of **Cyprus** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and proposed **Morocco** as Rapporteur.
3. The **Chairperson** proceeded to the election of Morocco by acclamation, and then called upon Morocco to provide the name of the Rapporteur.
4. The delegation of **Morocco** congratulated the Chairperson and all the Vice-Chairs on their election. It thanked Cyprus for its proposal and confidence, and named the expert, Mr Mustapha Nami.
5. The **Chairperson** congratulated Mr Mustapha Nami on his election as Rapporteur, inviting him to join the podium. Noting that the election procedures had come to an end, the Chairperson invited the Assembly to adopt resolution 6.GA 2 as displayed on the screen. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 2 adopted.** Before moving to the next item, the Chairperson opened the floor for general statements.
6. The delegation of **Togo** spoke of the honor and privilege of being able to personally address all the participants to the Assembly – to which Togo had acceded since 5 February 2009 – to express sincere and profound gratitude to the Secretariat for the tremendous work carried out every day that went beyond different cultural values. Sincere thanks and appreciation were also addressed to the Director-General of UNESCO for her work in assisting States Parties in their different safeguarding policies of intangible cultural heritage. The delegation expressed gratitude to the Secretariat staff for their commitment and unwavering dedication in implementing the Convention, whose progress had opened up possibilities to safeguard and promote Togo’s intangible cultural heritage. First, through the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage established in 2012 that had since registered 75 traditional languages, around one hundred tales and proverbs, rites and ceremonies of Togo, and several elements of intangible cultural heritage that will be safeguarded forever. This was followed by the safeguarding of the Batammariba of Koutammarkou. Koutammarkou was the first World Heritage site inscribed by Togo, and since January 2016 a project had been implemented on inventorying, safeguarding and promoting knowledge of how to manufacture and play Togo's traditional musical instruments.
7. The delegation of **Togo** spoke of how the revision of the Operational Directives in the implementation of the Convention reflected the commitment of States Parties and UNESCO to take into consideration the important issues of our time, namely the concept of sustainable development as a top priority in the Global Agenda, and raising the ceiling of requests for International Assistance that can be examined by the Bureau to US$100 000, which also addressed the problem of the under-utilization of the Fund. The delegation further spoke of sustainable development as being at the heart of the 2003 Convention and global concerns, enabling us to bequeath a sustainable planet to future generations. Moreover, sustainable development was already mentioned in the preamble of the 2003 Convention, and the gradual inclusion of this concept in the Operational Directives therefore reflected efforts by UNESCO to integrate culture into the global agenda for sustainable development. It welcomed UNESCO’s position, which once again affirmed the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a strategic and vital resource for sustainable development. The delegation took the opportunity to renew its commitment and support of the new provisions for inclusive social development, i.e. sustainable food security, quality health care, quality education for all, gender equality and access to drinking water and sanitation services. All these objectives must be based on inclusive governance and the freedom of individuals to choose their own system of values. Moreover, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development required protective measures and sustainable consumption, the reduction of poverty and inequality, economic growth and inclusive economic development. In addition, environmental sustainability and the role of intangible cultural heritage could not be ignored in establishing the sustainability of natural resource management and knowledge-sharing in order to improve the resilience of communities. Intangible cultural heritage could thus potentially play a role in building lasting peace and eradicating extremism and radicalization movements; major challenges facing nations today. It concluded by announcing that it would soon file its periodic report on the Oral heritage of Gelede following its consultation with Benin and Nigeria that share this inscribed element. Finally, the delegation reiterated its thanks to the Bureau, the Chairperson and the Secretariat for its readiness to support Togo in its implementation of funded projects and the capacity-building programme.
8. The delegation of **Egypt** congratulated the Chairperson and Mr Tim Curtis on their appointments and wished them success in their functions, adding that it was particularly pleased to have a Chairperson from a country with a very rich and ancient civilization. The delegation wished to raise an important point concerning the inscription of intangible cultural heritage on the UNESCO Lists in that it should be recognized that unfortunately not all countries had the same level of experience and expertise in implementing the Convention and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Thus, it hoped that the differences in capacity among States Parties would be taken into consideration in the preparation and submission of files. For example, the insistence on the participation of civil society, although an extremely important concept, could be considered a new concept in the political and cultural practices of certain countries. Countries like Finland, Sweden, France or Germany, so-called ‘developed countries’, should not be treated in the same way as countries such as Egypt or other African countries where the concept of civil society participation was not fully present nor part and parcel of their culture and tradition, whereas the concept of civil society was very present and fully respected in North America and in Western Europe. The delegation made reference to the number of accredited NGOs around the world, which were under-represented in certain parts of the world. It therefore deemed it difficult to ensure the participation of civil society in a country where there were 30 tribes or 100 indigenous languages and cultures, and this should therefore be taken into consideration when files were under examination. Moreover, it would be unacceptable to decide not to inscribe a nomination file on the basis of participation by civil society because in some cultures the very concept of civil society was unclear and the organization of civil society was quite different.
9. The **Chairperson** thanked Egypt for its statement. Responding to the remarks, he agreed that the Assembly had a duty to protect the universality of the Convention, meaning that the differences in capacity should not lead to unequal access in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, and that all States Parties could agree on that. In fact, this was borne out by the practices that had always been followed in the work of the Convention. The Chairperson then reminded the Assembly that the Bureau would meet every day prior to the day’s session, and that its meetings were open to all States Parties to the Convention. With no further statements forthcoming, the Chairperson invited the Secretary to introduce the provisional agenda.

**ITEM 3 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:**[*ITH/16/6.GA/3*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-3-EN.docx)

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.3.1 Rev.2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.3.1_Rev.2-EN.docx)

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.3.2 Rev.3*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.3.2_Rev.3-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 3*

1. The **Secretary** began bypresenting the two types of documents prepared for this session. Firstly, the working documents denoted with a common code, starting with ‘ITH/16/6.GA/’ and followed by a number corresponding to the item of the agenda, which were provided in the six working languages. Secondly, the information documents denoted by a common ‘INF’ code and followed by the agenda item number. These were provided in English and French only. An important information document was the [summary records](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.1-EN.docx) of the fifth session of the General Assembly of States Parties, which would help refresh memories of the debates two years ago. There were three documents under item 3, namely, one working document on the [adoption of the agenda](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-3-EN.docx), and two information documents: the [provisional timetable](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.3.1_Rev.2-EN.docx), and the [provisional list of documents](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.3.2_Rev.3-EN.docx). The Secretary explained that there were 12 items on the provisional agenda and all the working documents had been made available online on 29 April 2016, thirty days before the opening of the session, as set by the Rules of Procedure. Out of concern for the environment and as part of cost-saving measures, the States Parties were invited to download the documents from the [website](https://ich.unesco.org/en/6.ga) dedicated to the 6.GA. The Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention in its 2014 edition had already been distributed.
2. The **Secretary** continued by presenting the items on the agenda, together with the provisional timetable of their examination by the General Assembly and their related documents. He explained that the Bureau would be able to adjust this timetable, depending on the working progress of the sessions. The session started with the Openingand continued withthe Election of the Bureau. Upon the adoption of the agenda, under agenda item 3, the Assembly would first be asked to examine the distribution of the seats in the Committee per Electoral Group. This sequence was suggested in order to reflect the debate that took place during the previous session of the Assembly two years ago. Some States Parties had felt that it would be better to have the information about the distribution of seats in the Committee as early as possible in order to allow enough time to consult among themselves and their capitals about a possible candidacy to the Committee. Therefore, for this session, the Secretary proposed examining agenda item 4 at the beginning ([working document 4](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-4-EN.docx)). Agenda item 5 comprised the [Report of the Committee](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-5-EN.docx) to the General Assembly that summarizes the activities of the Committee between June 2014 and June 2016 as foreseen by Article 30.1 of the Convention, requesting that the Committee submit a report to the General Assembly at each of its sessions. The report of the Committee would be presented by the Chairpersons of the ninth and tenth sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee. The Chairperson of the ninth session of the Committee, His Excellency Mr José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros from Peru, was currently serving as the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the tenth session, Her Excellency Ms Trudi Amulungu, was in transit and thus the presentation of the report would be postponed until the afternoon session. Following the examination of item 5, the Secretariat proposed providing the Assembly with some useful information on the current situation of the periodic reporting through a ‘briefing point’. This was not an agenda item and did not require a decision. Agenda item 6, the [Report of the Secretariat](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-6-EN.docx) on its activities, presented the activities carried out by the Secretariat between June 2014 and June 2016. The Secretary then proposed allocating an important part of the timetable to agenda item 7, the Revision of the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention, which would likely take up a full day on Tuesday 31 May. There were three documents under this item: [working document 7](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx), covering a number of amendments recommended to the Assembly by the Committee with regards to International Assistance requests, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, periodic reporting, the referral option, and the schedule of accreditation of non-governmental organizations; and two background documents and the summary records from the [ninth](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-4_EN.docx) and [tenth](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-11.COM-4-EN.docx) sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee. Finally, in the afternoon session, the Assembly would discuss agenda item 8, the Accreditation of non-governmental organizations to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee ([working document 8](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-8-EN.docx)),followed on Wednesday morning with agenda item 9 on the Use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund ([working document 9](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-9-EN.docx), [information document 9.1](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.1-EN.doc) and [information document 9.2](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.2-EN.doc)) and agenda item 10 on the Election of the members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage ([working document 10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-10-EN.docx) and an [information document Rev](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.10_Rev.-EN.docx)). The Secretary added that the election of the 12 new Members of the Committee would likely proceed without a vote since there was a clean slate for all six Electoral Groups. The two remaining items: agenda item 11 on ‘Other business’ and the Closure, under agenda item 12, would round off the meeting. The Secretary also took the opportunity to inform the Assembly that the NGOs would meet every morning prior to the day’s session and at lunchtime.
3. The delegation of **Sweden** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his election. Regarding the agenda, the delegation had two questions for the Secretariat. Firstly, on the External Auditor’s review on UNESCO governance, which had been presented during the last General Conference, and according to 38 C/Resolution 101 adopted, all international and intergovernmental bodies in UNESCO were invited to inscribe an item on the agenda concerning the follow-up to the auditor’s recommendations and to report their proposals to the Chairperson of the open-ended Working Group on Governance. However, this item did not appear on the actual agenda and the delegation wondered why this was so. Secondly, it wanted to know whether the conclusions from the NGO Forum would be presented and if so, when this would occur in the agenda.
4. Concerning the first question, the **Secretary** explained that the issue of governance and the examination of the roles of the two assemblies, which effectively covered all the conventions in the Culture Sector, would be tabled as an agenda item in the next Committee meeting to be held in November 2016. Regarding the NGO Forum, the Secretary confirmed that there was no NGO Forum, as this occurred prior to the Committee meetings and not during the General Assembly. Thus, no presentation was foreseen.
5. The delegation of **Cuba** joined the other delegations to thank the Secretariat for its preparation of the meeting, congratulating the Secretary on his appointment and the Chairperson on his election. The delegation returned to the issue raised by Sweden, adding that it believed the Assembly was a very good forum for the governance debate, and expressing concern over the way the agenda had been drawn up. It felt that the Assembly was an opportunity to discuss the Working Group on Governance, given that all the States Parties were together and that the issue would be subject to certain time constrictions. Thus, the Assembly should take a position on the issue and perhaps hold a brief debate on these items when discussing the Operational Directives, particularly as the Assembly would not meet again for another two years. The delegation noted the disparity between the calendars of the different bodies, but that the Assembly (as the main body) had the power to make such decisions. It was thus favorable to discuss these matters further, as mentioned at the General Conference.
6. The **Chairperson** took note of the point raised by Sweden and supported by Cuba, adding that the Secretariat would look into an opportunity at some point in the agenda to discuss and make decisions on the issue. With no further requests for the floor, the Chairperson turned to draft Resolution 6.GA 3 and the adoption of the agenda, clarifying that the Bureau may decide to change the order of the items depending on the day’s progress.
7. The delegation of the **United Arab Emirates** understood that the Chairperson accepted the proposal by Sweden and seconded by Cuba, emphasizing the importance of the issue. In this regard, it wondered whether the issue could be discussed under ‘Other business’.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked the United Arab Emirates for its efforts to guide the Assembly, and with no objections, the issue would be discussed under item 11 ‘Other business’.
9. The delegation of **Cuba** thanked the Chairperson for taking the issue on board. However, given the importance of the discussion, it sought to have a specific agenda item that would demonstrate the special consideration afforded by the Assembly to the issue.
10. The **Chairperson** suggested that after ‘Other business’ a colon be added, after which the discussion item would be spelled out, thus a formal record would be made of the fact that the item had specifically been requested. Before turning to the draft Resolution 6.GA 3, the Chairperson wished to clarify how the proceedings would be managed. The Secretariat, as was customary, would list the requests for the floor made by delegations, and they would be given an opportunity to speak in the order in which the floor was requested. The speaking time given to the States Parties would be restricted should the meeting appear to be running out of time. Observer States that were not States Parties, as well as intergovernmental organizations and NGOs participating in the Assembly may be given the floor subject to the stipulation that they use their time reasonably. Only States Parties to the Convention had the right to discuss and agree or disagree with the actual texts of the proposed resolutions. The working documents were provided in the six official languages of the Assembly. The Chairperson wished to remind the Assembly that, pursuant to Article 11 of the Rules of Procedure, any modification in substance to the draft resolutions must be submitted to the Secretariat in writing; the translation of amendments in French or in English, although not an obligation, was welcomed. The Chairperson was convinced that, with the assistance of the interpreters, the meeting would be transparent and decisions would be made by consensus in most, if not all, cases. With no further requests from the floor, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 3 adopted**.

**ITEM 4 OF THE AGENDA**

**DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS IN THE COMMITTEE PER ELECTORAL GROUP**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/4*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-4-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 4*

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to present item 4, the Distribution of seats in the Committee.
2. The **Secretary** explained that [working document 4](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-4-EN.docx) resulted from the application of three rules: i) Article 6.1 of the Convention, ‘The elections of States Members of the Committee shall obey the principles of equitable geographic representation and rotation’; ii) Rule 13.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, that seats shall be distributed at each session and ‘in proportion to the number of States Parties from each group, provided that, after such distribution, at least three seats have been attributed to each group’; and iii) Resolution 3.GA 12 of the General Assembly, and ‘the principle of proportionality […], shall be rigorously applied to future elections, strictly on the basis of mathematical calculations’. Thus, paragraph 4 of the document established the distribution of seats using mathematical calculations based on 166 States Parties at the time of the election. This calculation did not include Guinea-Bissau and Saint Kitts and Nevis, which ratified the Convention less than three months ago. The Secretary informed the Assembly that Electoral Group I comprised 21 States Parties, which amounted to 12.65 % of the total number of States Parties, and should therefore have been attributed 3.04 seats; Group II comprised 24 States Parties or 14.46 % of the total number of States Parties and should have been attributed 3.47 seats; Group III comprised 30 States Parties or 18.07 % of the total and should have been attributed 4.34 seats; Group IV 33 comprised States Parties or 19.88 % of the total and should have been attributed 4.77 seats; Group V(a) had 40 States Parties with 24.10 % of the total and should have been attributed 5.78 seats; and Group V(b) had 18 States Parties or 10.84% of the total and should have been attributed 2.6 seats. Since seats cannot be attributed in fractions, he explained that the Secretariat had proceeded with the calculations firstly by attributing the minimum number of three seats to Groups I and V(b). The eighteen remaining seats were apportioned to the four remaining groups, beginning with the group with the highest decimal fraction, i.e. Group V(a) that was allocated six seats. The remaining twelve seats were distributed among Groups II, III, and IV starting from the highest decimal fraction. The Secretary reminded the Assembly that the principle of mathematical calculation was a Resolution of the General Assembly whereas the principle of equitable geographic representation and rotation was an Article of the Convention.
3. The delegation of **Brazil** took the opportunity to congratulate the Chairperson on his election, adding that his competence had already been witnessed during the Committee meeting. The delegation sought clarification on the real distribution of seats once the ratification of the Convention had reached universal status, i.e. whether the situation would remain relatively stable.
4. The **Secretary** confirmed that the current calculation had reached the final distribution that would be used if all Member States of UNESCO ratified the Convention.
5. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil for the important question, remarking that if universal ratification of the Convention were achieved then the Assembly would want to ensure equitable geographical distribution. With no further comments or requests from the floor, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 4 adopted**.

**ITEM 6 OF THE AGENDA**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON ITS ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JUNE 2014 AND JUNE 2016**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/6*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-6-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 6*

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to present item 6.
2. The **Secretary** recalled that the Assembly would begin with the examination of the Report of the Secretariat before the Report of the Committee to allow the Chairperson of the tenth Committee to arrive. He explained that the report of the Secretariat focused on activities carried out since its previous report to the fifth session of the General Assembly in June 2014. Some of the activities were implemented by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at Headquarters, while others were undertaken in cooperation with UNESCO’s Field Offices. The structure of the Section was shown on the screen and comprised two units: i) a Programme Implementation Unit; and ii) a Capacity-Building and Heritage Policy Unit. Regional responsibilities were distributed across the two units with officers for each of the six regional groups. It was noted that the fixed-term positions were indicated in green, while temporary positions funded through extrabudgetary contributions were indicated in yellow [roughly half the staff numbers]. Thus, it was easy to understand that the human resources situation continued to be unstable and, in the long term, unsustainable. In order to maintain or even consider increasing the duties and responsibilities of the Secretariat, it was important to attain a critical mass of staff while staff turnover should be limited in order to retain the institutional memory of the Section. Activities carried out by the Secretariat from June 2014 until June 2016 were presented according to the eight Performance Indicators of Expected Result number 6 within the 37C/5. The Secretary hoped that this new reporting structure would help States Parties better understand [and match] the achievements and challenges against the expected results. Activities also included services provided by the Secretariat through the support of the line ‘other functions of the Committee’ of the Plan for the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund adopted by the Assembly.
3. The **Secretary** proceeded with the main achievements of the Secretariat per performance indicator. Under **Performance Indicator 1**, sound governance, the report presented activities aimed at supporting the sound governance of governing bodies of the 2003 Convention. In particular, this concerned the organization of fifteen physical statutory meetings and four electronic consultations of the Bureau during the reporting period, i.e. one General Assembly, two Committee Meetings, three face-to-face Bureau meetings and four electronic consultations of the Bureau, as well as six meetings of the Evaluation Body, and three expert meetings in Istanbul, Valencia and Paris. It was noted that a large part of the Secretariat’s work comprised the treatment of nominations to the Lists, proposals to the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices, International Assistance requests and periodic reports. Unfortunately, the Secretariat had been unable to meet the deadlines set out in the Operational Directives for the treatment of files in the 2015 cycle. However, the treatment of nominations for the 2016 cycle was on track, as it had managed for the first time to send letters concerning information needed to complete files to submitting States by the deadline of 30 June 2015. The treatment of the nominations for the 2017 cycle was currently ongoing. Under the reporting period, the Secretariat strived to respond to the requests of the governing bodies by helping the international community to address a number of cross-cutting thematic areas. The Secretary reminded the Assembly that this present session would later examine the inclusion of a whole new chapter on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development in the Operational Directives. The Secretary reported that the Secretariat had also organized another expert meeting on the issue of ethics, which elaborated a set of twelve ethical principles, which were translated into six languages and included on a specific page on the Convention website dedicated to [ethics and intangible cultural heritage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866), in response to a Committee decision. Progress had also been made on the development of an overall results framework for the Convention, which first came about as a recommendation in 2013 from UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Service, which highlighted the need to develop an overall results framework against which the Convention’s progress, accomplishments and challenges could be compared. While endorsing the need to develop such a framework, the Committee considered that the process should be led entirely by States Parties. Hence, at the tenth session of the Committee in 2015, the Secretariat proposed that this issue be debated by an open-ended working group of the Committee in 2016, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources. Although no donors came forward in time to permit a meeting to take place in 2016, China generously offered in 2015 to support a meeting of informal experts that could elaborate a preliminary framework. The Secretariat had been involved in the preparation of the expert meeting to be held in Chengdu, China, in July 2016. The idea was to submit a draft framework to be prepared by this expert meeting to a subsequent intergovernmental working group for full discussion in 2017, dependent on securing extrabudgetary funding.
4. The **Secretary** proceeded to outline **Performance Indicator 2**, the capacity-building programme, in which activities had been initiated or implemented in about 70 countries over the last two years, covering all regions of the world. Africa received particular attention with about 25 countries benefitting from the capacity-building programme. These activities resulted from a close collaboration between the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at Headquarters, field offices and the network of [expert facilitators](https://ich.unesco.org/en/facilitator) present in every world region. The Secretary thanked all the donors and partners that supported these efforts and allowed this programme to continue. He also mentioned with regret that the Secretariat was not yet able to respond to all requests for capacity-building from States Parties; however, efforts were being made to mobilize additional resources to this end. Among these capacity-building activities, the Secretary highlighted several initiatives undertaken in the past two years, as requested by the Committee: i) the introduction of an in-depth needs assessment in the project development phase, which had been carried out in about ten countries; ii) the identification of appropriate capacity-building formats and approaches to support beneficiary countries in developing legislation and policy concerning intangible cultural heritage, such as training workshops or advisory services; iii) preparatory work to set up an evaluation mechanism for capacity-building activities to gather data on their effectiveness (a workshop was organized in June 2015 to this end); iv) the strengthening of the expert facilitators’ network with three regional workshops in Sofia, Shenzhen and Constantine, as well as the expansion of this network in Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean and Southern Africa; v) the continuous adaptation of the content and format of the capacity-building programme so that it responds to major implementation challenges at the national level, including the development of thematic training units on policy development for intangible cultural heritage on the development of safeguarding plans or the updating of training units on sustainable development following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and finally vi) the publication of two thematic brochures on intangible cultural heritage and gender, and intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, which had been distributed earlier in the session.
5. The **Secretary** turned to **Performance Indicator 3** on safeguarding plans and measures developed and implemented by Member States. During the reporting period, more than 90 safeguarding plans had been developed and submitted by Member States, including safeguarding plans incorporated into International Assistance requests and into nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List. For the reporting period, the Secretariat intended to respond to the call from the Committee to identify ways to complement the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices by developing alternate, lighter ways of sharing safeguarding experiences. This was reflected in Decision 8.COM 5.c.1. However, due to budgetary constraints and limited human resources, the efforts of the Secretariat in this regard were limited in scope. So instead, a choice was made to focus on cross-cutting thematic areas such as codes of ethics or intellectual property. This is because such an approach was deemed to be an effective preliminary step towards identifying and sharing interesting and innovative safeguarding practices and measures. The section under **Performance Indicator 4** described the work of the Secretariat in the implementation of international cooperation mechanisms established under the 2003 Convention. Since June 2014, a total of 124 files, including nominations to the two Lists, proposals to the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices and International Assistance requests had been submitted by States Parties to the Secretariat. Pursuant to a request from the Committee at its eighth session, the Secretariat provided technical assistance, on an experimental basis, to States Parties wishing to prepare International Assistance requests. To date, the Secretariat had implemented this new mechanism in nine countries, including six in Africa. Overall, the initial results of this technical assistance were positive and encouraging, and the approach being used seemed to produce the desired improvement in the quality and success of the requests and in the likelihood of effective safeguarding. The Secretariat also prepared an *aide-mémoire* to provide guidance to States Parties in the preparation of International Assistance requests, which was made available online in [English](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ICH-04-2017-aide-m%C3%A9moire-EN.doc) and [French](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ICH-04-2017-aide-m%C3%A9moire-FR.doc) in 2015. In addition to the two existing *aides-mémoires* providing information on the preparation of nominations to the two Lists of the Convention and another on periodic reporting developed in 2013, a total of four [*aides-mémoires*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms) were now available in two working languages of the Convention.
6. The **Secretary** turned to **Performance Indicator number 5** on periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention at the national level. Of the total 88 States Parties expected to submit their periodic reports during the 2014, 2015 and 2016 cycles, 57 submitted a final periodic report. The Secretary spoke of his concern, as the Secretariat only received 27 reports out of an expected 56 in the 2014 cycle; 24 reports were received out of an expected 48 in the 2015 cycle; and the situation in the 2016 cycle was worse still with the Secretariat only receiving 6 reports out of the 37 expected. Hence, the ‘briefing’ on periodic reporting would be presented after agenda item 5. In addition to the periodic reports, the Secretariat received a total of 18 reports on elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, as well as – for the first time – a report submitted by a State non-Party to the 2003 Convention on its two elements inscribed on the Representative List (through the mechanism of the Proclamation of Masterpieces programme). The Secretariat also introduced a number of new working methods during this reporting period. Starting from 2014, the overview of the reports included an in-depth study on a specific topic: inventory-making for the 2014 cycle, and transmission and education measures for the 2015 cycle. The Secretariat was also working to provide summaries of all the periodic reports to improve their accessibility, and paid particular attention to questions of gender when analysing the reports: 74% of the reports examined by the Committee in 2014 and 29% of the reports examined in 2015 addressed gender issues and/or described policies promoting equal access to and participation in cultural life.
7. The **Secretary** then turned to **Performance Indicator number 6** on the increasing number of States Parties. Since the fifth session of the General Assembly, seven countries had ratified the Convention, with a current total of 166 States Parties. The Secretary took the opportunity to welcome once again Cabo Verde, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland, Kuwait, Marshall Islands, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Under **Performance Indicator 7**, the report underlined important partnerships in the implementation of the Convention with category 2 centres, United Nations agencies such as WIPO[[2]](#footnote-2) and the World Bank, as well as civil society. Progress had been made in two specific directions in particular. The first direction concerned category 2 centres where the Secretariat has provided support through the organization of annual coordination meetings. The second meeting took place in June 2014 and the third in July 2015. The fourth meeting was held on 3 June 2016, immediately after the General Assembly. The Secretariat also exchanged regularly with the centres and provided advice, particularly in the development of their work plans and through participation in governing board meetings. Another important support by the Secretariat concerned the renewal of the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) and the coordination of the evaluations of the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) in Sakai, Japan, the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia Pacific Region (ICHCAP) in Jeonju, Republic of Korea, and the Regional Heritage Management Training Centre ‘Lucio Costa’ in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The second direction concerned emergency responses, and although action by the Secretariat was currently limited, the Secretary believed that this was an area where the implementation of the Convention was very relevant and that related activities could be expected to expand. Pursuant to two decisions of UNESCO’s Executive Board in 2015, concerning UNESCO’s roles and responsibilities for culture in conflict areas, the Secretariat had developed a small-scale initiative aimed at promoting the integration of capacity-building for the safeguarding of living heritage into emergency responses initiated by the international community with a pilot awareness-raising activity in Syria, a EU-funded project.
8. The **Secretary** then turned to **Performance Indicator number 8** on the Secretariat’s action to improve the Convention’s knowledge management services for effective implementation and information-sharing, and the improvement of the visibility and awareness of living heritage. Managing the large quantity of information associated with the work of the Committee and the General Assembly represented a heavy workload, of which the Convention’s website was only the most visible aspect. The most significant ongoing improvements included the full renovation of the website to improve the browsing experience, create more user-friendly interfaces and improve accessibility of documents and the decisions of statutory meetings, and most recently the launch of a new public interface related to periodic reporting clearly indicating the current status and [reporting deadlines](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/submissions-and-deadlines-00861) for each State Party. The report also covered progress made by the Secretariat to respond to the 24 recommendations of the evaluation of UNESCO’s standard-setting work of the Culture Sector concerning the 2003 Convention as well as the four recommendations of the auditreport of the working methods of all six culture conventions. Overall, the Secretariat had made good progress in response to these recommendations. Relevant actions had been completed to respond to 12 of the 28 recommendations, while among the remaining recommendations, five included revisions to the Operational Directives to be discussed at the present session. The two annexes to [working document 6](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-6-EN.docx) included the completed and planned actions for each recommendation and their associated timeframe. On an administrative note, the Secretariat wished to propose a change in the future reporting period so as to align the reporting period of the Secretariat’s report to the biennium format, as the current report, which covered the period of June to June over two years, did not coincide with the reporting period of the C/5.
9. The **Secretary** returned to the difficult situation of the human resources of the Secretariat given the increasing responsibilities and tasks assigned to it by the Convention, Operational Directives, governing bodies, as well as the Organization itself. Moreover, the situation was expected to become critical if the Assembly approved, under Item 7, the increase in the ceiling of International Assistance requests to be examined by the Bureau of the Committee from US$25,000 to US$100,000. As a result, the human resources of the Secretariat would need to be enhanced and consolidated to be able to absorb the significant increase in workload expected with this change. The Secretary concluded by proposing that the Convention had much to offer to major international debates and that the Secretariat would continue working on those issues, moving forward.
10. The delegation of **Philippines** congratulated the Chairperson and the Members of the Bureau on their election, and welcomed Mr Tim Curtis as the new Secretary, paying tribute once again to Ms Cécile Duvelle for her valuable contributions to the Convention. The delegation also congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent report, adding that the new format allowed for a better analysis, as it closely linked the work of the Secretariat with the UNESCO parameters of the C/4 and C/5. It took note of the progress achieved in a number of fields, especially in capacity-building and the support of governing bodies, despite the severe financial and human resource constraints. The delegation strongly supported the prioritization of capacity-building and suggested a more targeted approach, seeking to ensure that new States Parties and developing countries, which were most in need of assistance, were in fact prioritized in the spirit of universality. It therefore encouraged further streamlining of procedures so that the assistance required could be rendered swiftly. The delegation also suggested that the Secretariat, as well as the Committee, examine how multinational files could be better harnessed as vehicles for capacity-building and international cooperation, as well as promote the objectives of the Convention. Existing elements on the Representative List could in fact hold seeds for enhanced international cooperation in intangible cultural heritage. It therefore recommended that the Secretariat, and possibly the Committee, look into how the nomination of multinational files could be further streamlined and made more user-friendly and cost-effective for the submitting States, the Evaluation Body and the Committee. The delegation welcomed the suggested change in reporting, adding that it was valuable for the Secretariat to have a significant input to the Draft C/5 such that a lot of work on intangible cultural heritage could be further highlighted in the overall framework of UNESCO. Concluding, the delegation wondered how – besides measures on enhancing the capacities of the Secretariat itself and institutional memory –States could render assistance or increase awareness to support its work.
11. The delegation of **Sweden** thanked the Secretariat for its elaborate and excellent report, commending the Secretariat for its effective and hard work generally. It agreed with the Philippines that the new reporting format by performance indicator was indeed an excellent initiative that clearly showed how the work of the Convention was based on the UNESCO programme, the C/5, and it was obvious how much important work was covered by the Convention. The delegation highlighted aspects of the Convention that it valued and prioritized, such as capacity-building, awareness-raising and the safeguarding of intangible heritage. It noted that the elements on the Representative Lists had gained a lot of attention but took almost all of the Committee’s meeting time. It therefore encouraged dedicating greater time and attention to other aspects, such as the important role of the Register of Best Practices. Finally, the delegation noted with satisfaction the upcoming work to lay the foundations for an overall results framework for the Convention. It added that it had followed and supported the work on the overall results framework for the 2005 Convention[[3]](#footnote-3), and it was very content with the outcome there.
12. The delegation of **China** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, convinced that his guidance would be successful and fruitful, and congratulated Mr Tim Curtis on his appointment. It was delighted to note that since the last Assembly, substantial progress had been made with more countries having ratified the Convention, and more elements inscribed on the Lists. In addition, International Assistance programmes had been deployed thanks to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, and the Committee and the Secretariat had broadened and deepened capacity-building efforts with greater cooperation and exchange between countries and NGOs, which was highly appreciated. The delegation spoke of its own efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Convention at all levels, both centrally and locally, adding that it always sought to deploy effective methods to protect and enhance intangible cultural heritage in China and to combine those efforts with efforts to ensure social and economic development. It also spoke of its increased contribution of financial and human resources to the Convention, adding that it sought to exchange with other countries within the framework of this Convention, as it was convinced that, thanks to these joint efforts, it would be possible to effectively promote the Convention to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, and to promote respect for the diversity of humankind.
13. The delegation of **Latvia** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and expressed its encouragement for a rich and constructive debate. It thanked the Secretariat for its professionalism and commitment towards the implementation of the Convention, and congratulated Mr Tim Curtis on his responsibilities in leading the work of the Secretariat. The delegation greatly appreciated the informative report on the various activities implemented and its two annexes that responded in detail to the previously received recommendations, reflecting upon both successful and challenging experiences. The delegation expressed its appreciation for the ample and thoughtful work in implementing the global capacity-building strategy, for its continuous thematic expansion, including on national policy-making and legislation, as well as for its availability online and the initiatives undertaken to monitor the impact and effectiveness at national levels of various capacity-building activities. It also recognized the crucial importance of periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention and the elements inscribed on the international Lists, but regretted that a significant number of reports were still pending, adding that it was the responsibility of States to accomplish this task as a priority. The delegation welcomed the summary reports as well as the thematic in-depth studies prepared by the Secretariat on inventory-making, transmission and education, and the upcoming study on policy-making. These in-depth studies gave valuable insights into the diversity of experiences of States Parties and deserved to be commended within Resolution 6.GA 6. Moreover, it had submitted an amendment in this regard. The delegation also proposed that the Secretariat give greater visibility to these in-depth studies on the Convention website, possibly providing them as separate documents accessible under relevant thematic sub-sections. Lastly, with regard to the cooperation with civil society presented in the report, the delegation encouraged the Secretariat to consider possibilities of cooperation with UNESCO Chairs in the field of intangible cultural heritage, of which there were eleven, as mentioned in the report. Thus, more information on how these Chairs functioned and their activities would be valuable, and the delegation would submit a second amendment in regard to this particular concern. It also believed that the activities of the UNESCO Chairs might be given greater visibility on the Convention website to contribute to achieving more general awareness of the role of education in research institutions. Concluding, the delegation remarked that the issues raised reflected only some observations while the report raised a significantly broader set of issues for consideration, and despite the constant challenges of human resources, the delegation once again expressed its sincere and profound appreciation of the efficient work and commitment shown by the Secretariat.
14. The delegation of the **Czech Republic** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and thanked the Secretariat for its concise and excellent report, which demonstrated the transparency of its activities. It particularly appreciated the emphasis on capacity-building and the effective management of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. It also welcomed the new structure of the Secretariat’s report on the performance indicators that responded to the many questions, despite the difficult situation of human resources under which the Secretariat operated. The delegation remarked that intangible cultural heritage represented a major facet of people’s identity and, given the current situation of certain countries in conflict, it was even more important to safeguard these expressions. The delegation was particularly pleased with the implementation of transversal cooperation among the culture conventions as they work together to protect and promote both tangible and intangible heritage. Nevertheless, States Parties also had work to do, and the delegation was saddened to hear that only 6 out of 37 periodic reports had been submitted in 2016, as it was partly thanks to this fundamental exercise that the diversity of practices in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the different countries could be understood, and thus help inspire others through these best practices. The delegation concluded by wishing Mr Tim Curtis luck and success in his new role as Secretary of the Convention.
15. The delegation of **Denmark** began by thanking the Secretariat for its important activities that clearly reflected UNESCO’s commitment to leading and supporting common efforts in the implementation of the Convention. Despite the limited resources, considerable progress had been made in three areas. Firstly, the efforts of the Secretariat to ensure ongoing improvements in the Convention’s work was important, specifically the systematic and transparent follow-up on recommendations of external evaluations. Annex 1 of the report clearly illustrated this. Secondly, the Secretariat’s ongoing efforts throughout the biennium to support the Convention’s governance mechanism, especially the work related to statutory meetings and periodic reporting, were cited as fundamental for country exchanges and good safeguarding practices. Thirdly, the actions taken by the Secretariat to encourage a greater emphasis on safeguarding measures in our work were highlighted. The delegation fully agreed with the Secretariat that the current focus on listing mechanisms should be shifted to more important and long-term safeguarding mechanisms, as mentioned by Sweden. This did not imply that the Representative List was not a useful tool for the implementation of the Convention, but working differently on the List could be considered. Article 16 of the Convention states that the List is established to ensure not only better visibility but also awareness and to encourage dialogue. The question was how to improve the present way of working to better achieve that goal. Many changes could be envisaged, but one idea could be to use statutory meetings as a true global platform for exchanges on safeguarding practices, with less focus on inscriptions and greater focus on the underlying values, norms and skills that should be promoted to shape the common world into the future in line with the new sustainable development goals. This was essentially the spirit behind the delegation’s work on the Convention at the national level, with the Minister of Culture currently launching a public debate in Denmark on intangible cultural heritage, such as practices, traditions, mind-sets and skills that have contributed to the crafting of Danish society. It was clear from the outset that this exercise, in many cases, would point to heritage with international roots, underlining how heritage was indeed shared across international borders. The delegation looked forward to continued cooperation.
16. The delegation of **Austria** extended its congratulations to the Chairperson on his election and to the Secretariat for its very impressive report. It welcomed Mr Tim Curtis and wished him much success in his endeavors. The delegation remarked that the Convention had set a milestone in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage with the 168 States Parties – after only 13 years – serving as proof of its overall success. The delegation was deeply committed to and supported the values and principles of the Convention, having followed the developments very closely. It noted two pillars of the Secretariat’s work: i) support for the governance of the Convention, including the treatment of nominations; and ii) the expansion of the capacity-building programme. It appreciated the quality of the Secretariat’s work and recognized its huge workload, though work should be focused on the main purpose of the Convention, i.e. safeguarding cultural expressions precious to communities. Over recent years, the considerable number of periodic reports could be used as a great tool for sharing experience and knowledge. Being a reflection of the perception at national and local levels, they could also be used for analysing the challenges of implementation while helping to promote the Convention. The delegation regretted that this potential could not be fully exploited because not all States Parties had submitted their periodic reports on time. Having undertaken the complex experience of recently compiling the report, the delegation confirmed that the Secretariat’s *aide-mémoire* was indeed very helpful, as were the *aide-mémoires* for nominations. Referring to the second pillar of work, the delegation felt that work to enhance capacities worldwide for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage had to continue in order to keep the rich diversity of cultures alive. The global capacity-building strategy had very successfully assisted many countries in developing both inventory methods and effective safeguarding measures, and participating in international cooperation mechanisms. Of course, it was important to also involve civil society and local communities in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. The delegation also noted with great interest the strengthened cooperation with WIPO regarding intellectual property and traditional knowledge, particularly traditional medicine, a domain on which Austria places a particular emphasis in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. It has organized a number of research conferences with a focus on this domain and encourages nominations for inscription on the national inventory, for instance on local healing knowledge. The delegation thus strongly welcomed the strengthening and establishment of international networks aimed at safeguarding traditional knowledge, and it looked forward to hearing more about the development of the overall results framework for the Convention in the coming days.
17. The delegation of **Republic of Korea** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and extended its deep gratitude to the Secretariat for its hard work done in implementing the Convention in cooperation with all States Parties, and for its report on its activities. In particular, the Secretariat had provided the States Parties with a recollection of the Committee with its summary of periodic reports in which the progress of the safeguarding measures of each State could be demonstrated. However, it regretted that many States Parties were encountering difficulties in completing their periodic reports on time. He highlighted that periodic reporting is a critical part of the Convention in monitoring the safeguarding and transmission of intangible cultural heritage to future generations. In this regard, the delegation requested that States Parties show responsibility in submitting periodic reports, and that the Secretariat share the responsibility by assisting States Parties in submitting their periodic reports in cooperation with field offices and Category 2 Centres. Moreover, the delegation was willing to offer financial support to help build mechanisms to encourage the submission of the periodic reports.
18. The delegation of **Uruguay** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and welcomed the new Secretary, thanking the Secretariat for the complete report. It was pleased with the Secretariat’s position on gender and the periodic reports, and with the association with the Category 2 Centre in Latin America. However, the delegation was concerned about the low number of periodic report submissions, as well as the difficult situation brought about by the shortfall in human resources. It wondered what would happen should the number of reports rise, and how the Secretariat would be able to deal with them under the current constraints. The delegation renewed its congratulations to Ms Cécile Duvelle for all her efforts and success with the Convention.
19. The delegation of **Norway** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and thanked the Secretariat for the excellent work and report. It welcomed the new Secretary and looked forward to cooperating with him and the whole team. The delegation expressed special gratitude to the Secretariat for its capacity-building activities, which was at the core of the Convention. It looked with interest at the global capacity-building programme and appreciated the linkages with the 2030 Agenda[[4]](#footnote-4), and it considered it important to evaluate the effectiveness and outcome of the projects and activities. It was therefore happy to read about the plan for an overall results framework of the Convention in the second half of 2016, as the ultimate goal for this Convention was to ensure a real and lasting impact by States Parties and their efforts to establish a favourable framework and conditions for intangible cultural heritage. The delegation echoed the comments by Denmark in encouraging the use of the statutory meetings for exchanges on safeguarding practices. In this regard, it proposed using the periodic reports as one of the tools outlined in paragraph 45 of the document, which read, ‘[…] the potential of the periodic reporting mechanism as a resource of good practices has not been fully explored’, particularly as only a few States Parties had submitted reports. The delegation therefore strongly encouraged States to submit their reports and use them as a basis for the exchange of good practices. Finally, the delegation highlighted the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in conflict and crisis situations, and it encouraged and supported the cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention and the Unit for Emergency Preparedness and Response. It was noted that one of the priorities of the strategy adopted at the General Conference in 2015 – the strategy for the reinforcement of the Organization’s actions for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict – is that culture conventions consider strengthening operational guidelines and procedures to further enhance the protection of cultural heritage in all its different forms in the event of armed conflict. The delegation looked forward to engaging in that work, and was pleased to note that the proposed Operational Directives included provisions for peace and security.
20. The delegation of **Lithuania** congratulated Mr Tim Curtis as the new appointed Chief of the Division and Mr Rodriguez Cuadros as the elected Chairperson. It also congratulated the Secretariat for the very clear presentation of its report and its working documents. The delegation welcomed the new States Parties to the Convention, and especially the Secretariat’s report that elaborated on performance indicators, thus giving a clearer overview of all the activities undertaken. With regard to strengthening safeguarding capacities, it especially welcomed the Secretariat’s efforts to prioritize work with the network of qualified facilitators. In 2015, Lithuania had also benefitted from this network and had invited one facilitator for the capacity-building seminar, which achieved success among the national specialists of intangible cultural heritage. It also welcomed the Secretariat’s attention to indigenous and endangered languages in the development of safeguarding plans, adding that this focus could be developed even further. As regards increasing the visibility of the Convention, the delegation felt that affording the possibility for States to pronounce on the use of the emblem through their National Commissions or other relevant agencies at the national level would better contribute to the dissemination of the Convention in general. This approach had recently been adopted for the 1972 World Heritage Convention and would also assist the Secretariat on the question of human resources.
21. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** thanked the Chairperson, and the Secretary and his team for the complete and well-structured report of its activities, which provided a wealth of information on the actual situation, how the various activities were being deployed, and on the progress achieved during the recent reporting period. The delegation spoke about the clear roles of the Secretariat and States Parties in which the Secretariat had a clear mission with well-defined tasks, but noted that States Parties also had a responsibility. The delegation wondered whether the Secretariat was also undertaking tasks that should really be carried out by States Parties and, moreover, States Parties should be encouraged to assume their responsibilities to a greater extent. There were many observations made about the lateness of the periodic reports, and that some reports were drafted on a regional basis. The delegation therefore wished to know how the periodic reports were evaluated and who carried them out, and whether it was possible for States Parties to undertake certain activities for the promotion of the Convention and if so, what kinds of obstacles would they be confronted with in that regard. For example, which centres or institutions could assist and support them? Could States Parties perform these tasks satisfactorily so they did not require additional assistance? The delegation did not wish to question the efforts made by the different stakeholders in the institutions involved, but stressed that it was important to have a better sense of the level of performance. It added that, thanks to its general overview and experience, the Secretariat was in the best position to inform the Assembly in this regard. It suggested that a small group be established to undertake the evaluation; in fact, such a group exists but there was a proposal to amend it by adding six new members to make its work more effective. The Secretariat’s opinion and experience could determine whether the group was performing well, whether the number of members should be increased, and so on. The delegation concluded that these remarks were not a criticism of the report.
22. The delegation of **Brazil** began by congratulating the Secretariat both on its work and on the excellent report that demonstrated the tremendous work it had put into implementing the Convention. The delegation saluted Ms Cécile Duvelle and her team for their work and extended its best wishes to Mr Tim Curtis in keeping up with the excellent tradition of work; the work on capacity-building was especially praiseworthy. A lot of excellent initiatives had been undertaken, and the delegation highlighted the DVD that had been distributed, which related to the capacity-building initiative in Lusophone Africa. The delegation warmly thanked Norway for its support for the initiative, which was a very good example of how much could be achieved through the Convention. The initiative was concluded on 13 May 2015 in Mozambique and benefitted five countries and more than thirty-five communities with a number of important elements inventoried – a very good example of best practices. The delegation also highlighted the importance of capacity-building in the areas of intellectual property and the protection of traditional knowledge, adding that it was time to reflect on the future implementation of this Convention, especially on what to do with all the elements already inscribed, especially on the Representative List, by looking beyond the periodic reports. The delegation explained that there were no guarantees that cultural expressions would be adequately safeguarded in 20 or 30 years’ time. For instance, what would happen to these communities and practices in the face of demographic, economic or social changes that would most certainly put pressure on these elements? By way of example, the 1972 Convention had two facets: inscribing the elements and observing the state of conservation of the site. The [2003] Convention thus required a control mechanism to ensure safeguarding measures were put in place so that elements would be adequately safeguarded in the future. Nevertheless, the delegation was very pleased with the work of the Secretariat and strongly supported the idea of increasing the human resources available. It was thus necessary to discuss the C/5 as well as the implementation of the resources of the Fund, keeping in mind the need to strengthen the Secretariat and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, i.e. it was unsustainable to have an important Convention grow in number of inscribed elements with a Secretariat that had limited human resources. The delegation therefore strongly supported the call for more resources to the Convention, and hoped that other countries would likewise rally around this call.
23. The **Chairperson** thanked the delegations for their important ideas, noting those remaining to speak: Viet Nam, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Peru, Tunisia, Congo and El Salvador. As the session was about to adjourn, he invited the Secretary to make some announcements.
24. Reminding the delegates to register their participation online, the **Secretary** also informed them of a rolling presentation on the Convention’s global capacity-building programme for which Q&A sessions were organized by the Secretariat on a daily basis from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. A series of ICH/NGO forum meetings open to observers was also taking place during the General Assembly. In addition, as part of the ‘Latin America and Caribbean Week in France’, the Latin American Cinema Cycle launched a series of movies to be aired until 3 June. Furthermore, the Latin American Gastronomy Fair was being launched that day, proposing regional specialties every day of the week, with both events held at HQ. There was also a photo exhibition on UNESCO’s capacity-building projects in southern Africa, as mentioned earlier. In addition, a DVD entitled *This culture that lets you know how to be* on capacity building in PALOP countries, mentioned by Brazil, was being distributed.
25. The **Chairperson** concluded by noting that Turkey, Estonia and Côte d’Ivoire were added to the list of speakers, and the session was duly adjourned.

*[Monday 30 May 2016, afternoon session]*

**ITEM 6 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON ITS ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JUNE 2014 AND JUNE 2016**

1. The **Chairperson** resumed the proceedings by giving the floor to the delegation of Viet Nam.
2. The delegation of **Viet Nam** presented its warmest congratulations to Mr Tim Curtis, the Chairperson and the elected Vice-Chairs and expressed its confidence of the meeting’s success under their leadership. It also congratulated the Secretariat for its efficient work and valuable contributions, and for its concrete and effective actions that strengthen the capacities of States Parties in the field of safeguarding intangible heritage. It also encouraged States Parties to support the Secretariat in finding appropriate solutions to enhance the Secretariat’s role in the implementation of the C/5. The delegation renewed its gratitude to the Secretariat for its valuable assistance in safeguarding the country's intangible heritage, and it looked forward to further cooperation in the coming years.
3. The delegation of **Tanzania** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and Mr Tim Curtis for his well-deserved appointment as Secretary. It acknowledged Mr Curtis’ key role in interacting with culture stakeholders in Tanzania to promote cultural activities and the ratification by Tanzania of two culture conventions, including the 2003 Convention. The delegation also congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent report that was well aligned with the strategic objectives of the approved Programme and Budget of the Culture Sector. It remarked on the usefulness of the reporting format, as well as the substantial progress made in the last two years, requesting that the Secretariat work hard to complete the process of developing the results framework while asking States Parties to contribute extrabudgetary resources to enable the Secretariat to complete its important task. The delegation shared the concern over the low number of periodic reports submitted, which required an in-depth examination to find a solution, and welcomed the proposal from the Republic of Korea to provide financial support to those in need to enable them to complete and submit their reports on time. It also greatly appreciated the very elaborate capacity-building programme and knowledge management system put in place by the Secretariat, which culture experts and Member States should exploit.
4. The delegation of **Zimbabwe** commended the Secretariat for the quality and lucidity of its report and for delivering on the performance indicators. It noted the pertinence of the remarks with regard to the low submission of periodic reports and the issue of capacity-building, both of which were interlinked, as were the actions at the State Party and UNESCO level. The delegation explained that since its ratification of the Convention, Zimbabwe had experienced problems with its periodic reporting. However, thanks to State restructuring, in particular with the establishment of a ministry dedicated to heritage and the culture conventions, there were now strong synergies between the office in Harare and the relevant ministry. The delegation was therefore pleased to announce that it had been able to submit its periodic report after so many years, adding that the creation of synergies, coupled with capacity-building and the State Party’s involvement and participation, was at the core of the implementation of the Convention, which was required to address the current problems.
5. The delegation of **Peru**congratulated the Secretariat and Mr Tim Curtis for the report whose structure and performance indicators made it easier to understand the actual situation in the implementation of the Convention and the pursuit of common objectives. It recognized the importance of the periodic reports and was equally concerned that only a small number of reports had been presented. The delegation remarked on the report’s observation that States Parties and the Secretariat were looking for synergies with other conventions, and that despite having achieved and consolidated many goals there were still new challenges ahead. The delegation agreed with Brazil that it was important to establish follow-up mechanisms in order to better protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the future, adding that the process of evaluation and renovation of the first regional Category 2 Centre in Latin America, CRESPIAL[[5]](#footnote-5), had been achieved.
6. The delegation of **Turkey** congratulated the Chairperson, wishing him and the Assembly success in their important deliberations. It also welcomed the new Secretary, adding that his field experience and very successful work, both regionally and beyond, would further enhance the work of the Convention. The delegation was also very pleased with the organization of work of the Convention, but recognized the restrictions and limitations imposed on the Secretariat that were beyond its control. Nevertheless, it felt assured that the human resource constraints were temporary and would not impede the Convention’s work. The delegation, as one of the first and most committed members to the Convention, was supporting and advancing work in terms of capacity-building and developing national inventories. Other areas of work included the issue of transmission, formal and non-formal education, the development of UNESCO Chairs, reinforcing civil society and NGOs, and expanding and establishing – where absent – new legislation and local regulations to further consolidate and broaden the conservation and safeguarding of intangible culture. The delegation believed in a more progressive and constructive approach and was fully cognizant of the role of intangible cultural heritage communities, artists and actors responsible for interacting and developing cooperation and interaction with other Member States. It sought greater efforts to facilitate the circulation of these actors, whether through regional arrangements, conferences or through bilateral efforts to support those with the necessary capacity and commitment to help other nation States to mobilize them further. The delegation was thus committed to the goals of the Convention and offered its full support to the Secretariat and to States Parties willing and in need of support through its own National Commission, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other specialized agencies.
7. The delegation of **Congo** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, convinced of good results to come under his leadership. It also welcomed Mr Tim Curtis as the new Secretary, adding that the very good report demonstrated his skills. The delegation also thanked Ms Cécile Duvelle and the Secretariat for their good work. It welcomed the new States Parties to the Convention and hoped their contributions would benefit the debates. The delegation gave special thanks to the Republic of Korea for its generous offer to help countries experiencing difficulties in preparing their periodic reports, as was the case for Congo, adding that it would approach the Republic of Korea to pursue practical arrangements for cooperation between the two countries. For this reason, it supported the overall capacity-building programme for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and for the preparation of periodic reports and projects that were at the heart of the Convention.
8. The delegation of **Côte d’Ivoire** remarked on the many activities described in the report with regard to the implementation of the Convention, noting the priority given to capacity building that had benefited Côte d'Ivoire. The report’s methodical approach linked to performance indicators reflected the desire to achieve their anticipated results, and the delegation warmly congratulated Mr Tim Curtis and the Secretariat for their successful work.
9. The delegation of **Estonia** paid tribute to the quality of the report, adding that it really showed how much work it took to operationalize conventions both by the Secretariat and by States Parties. The work by the Secretariat in the implementation of the ambitious global capacity-building strategy was clearly an achievement with activities initiated or implemented in about 70 countries over the last two years covering all regions of the world. The delegation joined others who had highlighted the importance of the network of expert facilitators, civil society involvement, and making full use of the periodic reporting exercise in this context. It also noted that the funds available under the budget line for providing International Assistance to States Parties to supplement national efforts to safeguard intangible heritage had so far been widely under-utilized. It therefore welcomed the proactive technical assistance provided by the Secretariat to States Parties, although it was also fully aware of the workload that this entailed for the Secretariat. The delegation was glad to note that the initial results of this exercise seemed positive and encouraging.
10. The delegation of **Tunisia** congratulated the Chairperson and Mr Tim Curtis, adding that it hoped this new appointment would give new impetus to the work carried out under the Convention. It welcomed the new format and structure of the report, as well as the information contained therein. The delegation also stressed the importance of the capacity-building programme, adding that it was itself a beneficiary of the programme, and extended its thanks to the Secretariat in this regard. As a result, Tunisia was able to train a whole team of specialists in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage who were now operational and very active, working with various stakeholders, including local communities, to raise the general awareness of and interest in intangible cultural heritage in the country. The delegation wished to see a general evaluation carried out so as to ascertain the existing obstacles, so that they could overcome them in the future.
11. The delegation of **Greece** thanked the Chairperson for his dedication and congratulated Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment as the new Secretary, wishing him a fruitful time in office. It also extended its warmest welcome to the new States Parties, adding that it hoped this would further strengthen the Convention to address the challenges intangible cultural heritage is facing in the current world situation. With the refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East in mind, the delegation wished to recall the fifth ethical principle for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage endorsed [at the Committee meeting] in Namibia in December 2015: ‘Access of communities, groups and individuals to the instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage should be ensured, including in situations of armed conflict’. It added that as the Convention was getting stronger there was reason to start tackling these issues, as it firmly believed that although intangible cultural heritage was endangered in situations of armed conflict it also had a great potential to overcome the direct results of conflict. The strength of intangible cultural heritage lay in the community identities and the sense of belonging formed. It supported enhancing the value of intangible cultural heritage in peaceful times and highlighting its inherent and invaluable potential for reconciliation post-conflict. The delegation therefore called upon the Assembly to further deliberate on the value of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage during armed conflict and its role in reconciliation.
12. The delegation of the **Netherlands** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and welcomed and congratulated Mr Tim Curtis on his appointment. It also thanked the Secretariat for its extensive and informative report on its achievements. Highlighting two points in particular, the delegation spoke first about the global capacity-building programme that was at the core of the Convention and needed to be continued and extended, adding that collaborative planning with national counterparts had been very fruitful and it hoped more donors would continue to participate in its implementation. Secondly, it welcomed the ongoing work on the development of an evaluation mechanism for capacity-building activities so as to construct an overall results framework. The delegation also supported UNESCO’s activities in the protection of culture in conflict areas, stressing its importance and welcoming the development to integrate capacity-building for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergency responses.
13. The delegation of **Italy** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, confident that under his leadership the work of the Assembly would be conducted effectively in the spirit of dialogue and mutual respect. It also welcomed Mr Tim Curtis, wishing him every success in his new role. Special thanks also went to Ms Cécile Duvelle who for many years had worked with dedication on the implementation and strengthening of the Convention. The delegation also thanked the Secretariat for the very good report on its activities. It added that the Convention was the most innovative instrument in the promotion and protection of culture, and that the protection and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage was fundamental to the maintenance and progress of society. Having its roots at the community level, it was an important factor in cultural diversity faced with growing globalization. The delegation also wished to emphasize the importance of positioning the value of intangible cultural heritage in the context of sustainable development, adding that placing the culture and intangible heritage upon which our identity is built at the core of development policies represented a conscious investment for the future.
14. The delegation of **Egypt** remarked that it had a special interest in a number of items contained in the report and would be looking into finding solutions to the problems encountered. It recalled that it had been amongst the first 18 countries to ratify the Convention, which went on to 24 then 50 States Parties and now there were 167 States Parties. However, despite the progress made there was unfortunately a lack of resources, human resources in particular, to deal with the growing nominations. It was obvious that greater financial resources were needed, as well as specialists and experts who could evaluate the nomination files. If the situation did not change, the treatment of nominations would have to decrease, with countries only permitted to submit one application, which would be detrimental to intangible cultural heritage, taking hundreds of years to preserve. The situation was therefore urgent, and the will to safeguard intangible cultural heritage had to be matched by an increase in the resources available to the Secretariat, as there were simply not enough experts or specialists. The delegation explained that tackling these problems would perhaps require meeting more than once a year. It wished to thank a number of States that had made generous financial contributions to the Fund and were fully convinced of the importance of intangible cultural heritage, such as the Republic of Korea and Japan, as well as many other countries, without which it would have been very difficult to inscribe new nominations. The delegation encouraged States Parties to enhance their interest in intangible cultural heritage and request the inscription of their intangible cultural heritage. There was also a need to launch an appeal to other countries with financial resources to increase their contribution to the Fund in carefully calculated proportions so that it remained relatively equitable. The delegation concluded by noting that intangible cultural heritage was a common heritage, i.e. not multinational, as it had nothing to do with nationality but rather with humanity and identity.
15. The delegation of **El Salvador** joined the other countries in congratulating the Chairperson on his election and Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment as the new Secretary to the Convention, wishing him success in his new role. It supported the proposed change in the presentation of the report and thanked the Secretariat for its substantial report and activities, noting the critical situation faced by the Convention as a result of financial and human constraints. The delegation also regretted the considerable delay in the presentation of periodic reports by some States, which highlighted the complexity of the reporting, and it sought a solution from the Secretariat that would facilitate the submission of reports. It welcomed with satisfaction the growing number of States joining the Convention, even though this presented a higher workload for the Secretariat, and thus required a set of solutions to avoid a worsening of the situation. The delegation concluded by thanking the Secretariat for its capacity-building activities, adding that the amendment to International Assistance was indispensable.
16. The delegation of **Morocco** fully supported the remarks by Egypt, particularly with regard to the worrying situation of the Convention, for example Morocco had to wait two years for an evaluation of its nomination file and this could drag on for another two years until 2018. The situation was thus untenable and a solution had to be found. On the one hand, the inscription of an element could not wait for years. On the other hand, however, the number of experts carrying out the evaluation needed to be increased in order to provide good working conditions. The financial situation was equally worrying, and the delegation appealed to those States Parties that could help strengthen the implementation of the Convention.
17. The delegation of **Indonesia** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment as the new Secretary of the Convention. It spoke of the positive impacts enjoyed by Indonesia since it ratified the Convention in 2007 with [eight](https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists?display=default&text=&inscription=0&country=00104&multinational=3&type=0&domain=0&display1=inscriptionID#tabs)[[6]](#footnote-6) elements inscribed, all of which were now safeguarded. The delegation also wished to inform the Assembly that it would be holding the Second [World Culture Forum](https://en.unesco.org/events/world-culture-forum-2016) from 10 to 14 October 2016 in Bali, which would deal with issues covered by the 2003 Convention and the 2005 Convention of UNESCO.
18. With no further speakers, the **Chairperson** opened the floor to Observers.
19. The delegation of **Saint Kitts and Nevis** spoke of its sense of honour and privilege in representing the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis at the present Assembly at its first meeting since ratifying the 2003 Convention and the 2005 Convention in April 2016. The delegation extended greetings on behalf of: the Honourable Prime Minister, Dr Timothy Harris; the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture, Honourable Shawn Richards; and the Minister for Nevis Island Administration, the Honourable Mark Brantley; the Secretary-General for the Saint Kitts and Nevis National Commission for UNESCO, Mr Antonio Maynard; Mr Keith Scarborough, the CEO for the Nevis Cultural Foundation; Mr Stanley Knight, the Permanent Secretary for the Saint Kitts’ Department of Culture; and Mr Troy Mills, the Director of Saint Kitts’ Department of Culture. They are all key stakeholders in preserving and stimulating future development in the creative and cultural industries in Saint Kitts and Nevis. It also extended its congratulations to the newly elected Chairperson, the Rapporteur and the Vice-Chairs, as well as the Secretary of the Convention. The delegation spoke of the long journey undertaken for the country to reach this stage, but it was not without great joy that the government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis were joining the States Parties in preserving intangible cultural heritage that was in dire need of protection, and thus retaining, understanding, respecting and further learning from such vibrant cultural identities. The delegation commended the Secretariat for its work in communicating its activities and the easy accessibility of the documents. It looked forward to becoming an active participant by working with global partners and States to continue to preserve and safeguard initiatives of both intangible and tangible cultural heritage.
20. The **representative of the NGO ‘Traditions for Tomorrow’** spoke of its 30 years of work in about a dozen countries in South and Central America on the cultural revitalization of indigenous villages that were populated by descendants from Africa. As an NGO, it operated at the root level alongside the bearers of intangible cultural heritage on a daily basis. In general, these groups and communities are not passionate about the Lists of the Convention, as these were not designed for them. However, the bearers are considered the beating heart of cultural heritage. The implementation of the Convention was crucial in awakening their conscience and often their pride as bearers. Together with NGOs, these communities expected to learn about what is being done – whether at a distance or closer to home – to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. He noted that the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices was not often discussed, adding that this was unfortunate as lighter ways were increasingly identified to further disseminate best practices. He reiterated that this transmission of knowledge was a mission of the Convention, if not the most important one. He hoped that States Parties would increasingly give it more attention. He spoke of the work of the NGO on the ground in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict, considering it crucial that the Assembly help to also advance the integration of its mission in situations of armed conflict, as highlighted in particular by Greece, Norway, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic.
21. With no further requests for the floor, the **Chairperson** closed the general debate, noting that all the interventions had expressed an appreciation of the quality and methodology of the Secretariat’s report. A few areas of consensus emerged, including: i) continuing to work on the basis of performance indicators; ii) placing more emphasis on efforts to enhance capacity-building activities; and iii) using the Convention and the work of the Committee as an instrument to protect cultural diversity. The Assembly had remarked on certain major initiatives such as the Representative List, and had asked how this List was to be managed in the future. The Chairperson also stressed the importance of focusing on the need to work more intensely on the role of the Convention and the Committee with respect to protecting intangible heritage in the event of armed conflict, i.e. before, during and in post-conflict situations. The Assembly also took note of the concerns expressed over the insufficient number of periodic reports submitted and the need to solve the situation. The issue of financing was raised, as well as the need to strengthen the staff of the Secretariat. These were the general comments, but the Chairperson gave the floor to the Secretary for more specific comments.
22. The **Secretary** thanked the delegations for their comments and for their appreciation of the report and the new format. He also thanked those that had encouraged him in his new position, while pointing out that the report covered a period of activities carried out by Ms Cécile Duvelle, and she thus deserved full credit for those. The Secretary then turned to the questions raised. The Philippines had asked about making multinational files less costly and complicated to submit, and the Secretary agreed that it was more complicated to organize a joint activity across multiple countries as there was a need to deal with multiple administrations, and so on. The Secretariat could look into ways of streamlining processes and discussing them with the Committee, but ultimately the complication of working with multiple countries would not disappear. Uruguay and others had asked how the Secretariat would deal with the human resource situation as the number of periodic reports increased, and the Secretary agreed that this should send alarm bells ringing, adding that a decision about increasing the use of the Fund to help the situation within the Secretariat would require reflection. The Secretary remarked on the hardworking spirit of the team, and that this was required to fulfil the statutory requirements as well as to run the capacity-building programme, but it was not possible to do more, as much as the Secretariat would like, given the current situation. Brazil and others mentioned the possible issues that might occur post-inscription, which could be a topic of discussion in the framework of the open-ended [working] group on the monitoring and evaluation framework for the Convention. This was clearly an important aspect in the life of the Convention and, ten years in, it was the time to start asking those questions. The Secretary responded to a question by the United Arab Emirates about the evaluation of periodic reports by clarifying that they were not evaluated *per se*. In fact they were predominantly a means of communication between States Parties, as well as being the principle window from which to understand the effects of the Convention at the national level where it mattered, within countries and within communities. The Secretary also took note of the various suggestions regarding the work on intangible cultural heritage in emergency situations of conflict and natural disasters, adding that the Secretariat had started some preliminary explorations in this area. In this regard, it understood the importance of working with colleagues in the Culture Sector on the broad area of culture and emergency. However, the Secretariat still required the capacity to carry out this work, although it would certainly keep working with other colleagues on how to better integrate intangible cultural heritage both in terms of safeguarding and in emergencies situations, but also in understanding the role of intangible cultural heritage in helping people deal with and overcome emergencies. The Secretary was very pleased with the offer from the Republic of Korea to assist with the periodic reporting, and he looked forward to working on that, reminding the Assembly that there would be a briefing point about periodic reporting later in the session.
23. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for responding to the questions raised and added that the debate on the report had given strength to both the Assembly and the Committee for present and future actions. He noted the very broad consensus regarding both the Secretariat’s work and its future lines of action. He stressed that this was very important in that the Assembly could see the immediate future with hope, since its capacity to act would be strengthened by these two areas of consensus. The Chairperson hoped that countries that had presented projects could see them worked into draft decisions for presentation at the next Committee meeting. He then turned to the adoption of draft Resolution 6 GA.6 on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, which was projected onto the screen. With no objections or comments to paragraphs 1 to 7, they were duly adopted. With no objections to paragraph 8 and the amendment by Latvia[[7]](#footnote-7), nor to paragraph 9, they were duly adopted. The **Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 6 adopted**.

**ITEM 5 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/5*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-5-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 5*

1. The **Chairperson** then turned to item 5 of the agenda and the Report of the Committee to the General Assembly, inviting Her Excellency Ms Trudie Amulungu, Chairperson of the tenth session of the Committee, to join the podium to present the Committee’s report. TheChairperson congratulated Ms Amulungu for the important management and very positive results achieved during her chairmanship of the tenth session of the Committee. Before her presentation, the Chairperson – in his capacity as Chairperson of the ninth session of the Committee – presented his corresponding report.
2. The **Chairperson** (as Chair of the ninth session of the Committee) recalled that in 2014 the Bureau had held four meetings: one physical and three electronic meetings, as well as the daily morning sessions held during the ninth session of the Committee held from 24 to 28 November 2014 at UNESCO HQ. The Chairperson did not wish to deliver an exhaustive account of all the activities, as the complete version of the report was available [online](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-4_EN.docx). He pointed out that the ninth session of the Committee presented an opportunity to assess the progress achieved in implementing the many decisions taken at its eighth session based on the recommendations made in two substantial projects carried out by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) in 2013, which opened up the perspectives for broader reflection. This corresponded to the first evaluation of the standard-setting work of UNESCO with respect to the 2003 Convention and the audit of the working methods of the six culture conventions. The Chairperson outlined the most important decisions or actions in the ninth session of the Committee, which the General Assembly should examine, which could lead to some changes in the Operational Directives. Firstly, there was the question of the periodic reports, as contained in [working document 7](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx). The Chairperson explained that, based on the conclusion of the IOS Report, the Committee had proposed amending the Operational Directives so as to include important issues in the reports, namely the elaboration and promotion of policies concerning intangible cultural heritage, questions related to gender equality and the role of non-governmental organizations. Secondly, with regard to the question of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and its relation to sustainable development, the Chairperson further explained that, on the basis of the results of the expert meetings held in Istanbul in September 2014 (thanks to the generous support of the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO), the reflection carried out by the Committee had led to the drafting of a new chapter of the Operational Directives, also found in working document 7, which would be submitted for the Assembly’s approval in the course of this session. Thirdly, the Committee had – for the first time – established an Evaluation Body to evaluate nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List, the Representative List, the Register of Best Practices, and the requests for International Assistance greater than US$25,000 examined during the tenth session of the Committee.
3. The **Chairperson** reported that in the framework of its normal functions, in 2014 the Committee had examined the reports submitted by 27 States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List. The Committee had also had the opportunity to examine eight reports on the current status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. All these reports were now being brought to the attention of the Assembly along with the general summary in which special attention was given to the inventories drawn up by these States Parties. In the course of 2014, only two requests for International Assistance greater than US$25,000 had been submitted to the Committee. Unfortunately, these had not been approved because they did not meet the established criteria. However, the Committee had delegated to the Bureau the possible approval of the request it considered most capable of complying with the criteria. The State Party in question duly revised its nomination such that the Bureau of the tenth session of the Committee eventually approved the request for International Assistance. The Bureau of the ninth session of the Committee approved two requests for International Assistance for an amount less than US$25,000, and another for financial assistance to develop a nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List. The Committee and the Bureau were aware of the difficulties faced by those States Parties to prepare requests for International Assistance to meet the administrative and financial criteria of UNESCO. Thus, the Chairperson was very pleased that the Assembly would be examining measures to correct this situation. In 2014, the Committee examined nominations for inscription on the Convention’s Lists and inscribed three new elements to the Urgent Safeguarding List and 34 to the Representative List. Moreover, the Committee selected a programme for inclusion on the Registry of Best Safeguarding Practices. Finally, the Bureau approved the proposal by the Secretariat for the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund that were attributed by the fifth General Assembly to the so-called ‘other functions of the Committee’, i.e. those that promote the objectives of the Convention and monitor its implementation via capacity building for institutions and communities by raising awareness of the importance of intangible cultural heritage and the dissemination of information on good safeguarding practices. In this respect, many of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat mentioned in [working document 6](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-6-EN.docx) had been carried out thanks to those funds. He concluded by once again thanking all the members of the Committee for their valuable cooperation throughout 2014. In particular, he noted the support received from the Members of the Bureau from Belgium, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia and Namibia, and from the Rapporteur, Ms Anita Vaivade, from Latvia. He expressed gratitude and appreciation to all the delegations for the work they had carried out over many years, as well as to Ms Cécile Duvelle and the Secretariat. The Chairperson then invited Ms Amulungu to present the report of the tenth session of the Committee.
4. The Chairperson of the tenth session of the Committee, **Ms Trudie Amulungu**, began by congratulating the Chairperson for his election as Chairperson of the General Assembly, and thanked the Assembly for having taken her travelling schedule into consideration. She spoke of Namibia’s pride in having hosted the tenth session of the Committee in December 2015 and was pleased that so many delegates had travelled from afar to Windhoek. The Government and the national organizing committee wished to thank the Committee once again for having entrusted Namibia with hosting the Committee. Presenting her report on the activities and decisions taken by the Committee and its Bureau during 2015, Ms Amulungu reminded the Assembly that, in addition to the Committee meeting in Windhoek, the Bureau of the Committee had met once at UNESCO HQ and once in Windhoek, as well as in one electronic consultation. The Bureau had also met every morning during the tenth session of the Committee. Like the Chairperson, Ms Amulungu refrained from providing a complete list of all the activities and decisions as more detailed information could be found in [working document 5](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-5-EN.docx). She instead focused on some of the major accomplishments of the Committee under her chairmanship. During the tenth session, the Committee examined a draft plan for the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, which would be submitted for approval by the General Assembly at this session. During the examination of this item, the Committee also discussed the enlarged interpretation of Article 21 of the Convention regarding the forms of International Assistance that would allow States to benefit from other forms of assistance in addition to the provision of financial resources. The Committee was confident that this enlarged interpretation, together with an amendment to the Operational Directives, would significantly improve the implementation rate of the funds allocated to States Parties in supplement of their national efforts in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. In this way, the Committee intended to pave the way for States Parties to benefit more from the resources available. Furthermore, it also examined 28 periodic reports, demonstrating a continuous commitment to the implementation of the Convention, which included 24 reports by States Parties on the implementation of the Convention at the national level and the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List. There were also three reports on the status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, and one report submitted by the Russian Federation (non-Party to the Convention) on two elements originally proclaimed as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity and then incorporated onto the Representative List in 2008. At the same time, the Committee regretted the high number of outstanding periodic reports, and invited those States Parties, particularly those more than a year overdue, to submit these at their earliest convenience. The Committee further encouraged States Parties to fulfil their reporting requirements before submitting new nominations.
5. **Ms Trudie Amulungu** further reported that the Committee had examined a number of substantive amendments to the Operational Directives, which were to be presented for approval at the present session. Some of the proposed amendments had come about after long deliberations in a number of Committee meetings and previous sessions of the General Assembly. Ms Amulungu recalled that the amount for International Assistance requests that the Bureau could approve was fixed at US$25,000. However, at its tenth session the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve amendments to all relevant paragraphs of the Operational Directives to increase the amount that could be approved by the Bureau of the Committee from US$25,000 to US$100,000. Building on the results of a Category VI expert meeting and the deliberations of the ninth session of the Committee, the tenth session of the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it include a whole new chapter on ‘Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level’ in the Operational Directives. The Committee was confident that the proposed chapter would enhance the Convention’s potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by providing States Parties with guidance on measures linking intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development, which was timely given the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Moreover, the Committee was moving forward with aligning the evaluation process and ensuring coherence. In this regard, it was proposing to the General Assembly that amendments be approved to extend the ‘referral option’ to all four mechanisms of the Convention, and that the four-year waiting period in the case of a decision not to inscribe an element on the Representative List be eliminated. The Committee considered this alignment particularly important since one single Evaluation Body, established two years ago, was now evaluating all nominations, requests and proposals. The Committee also proposed amending the Operational Directives to only examine requests for accreditation from NGOs at ordinary Committee sessions in odd-numbered years. On the subject of NGOs, Ms Amulungu reminded the Assembly that at its tenth session the Committee had examined 54 requests for the accreditation of NGOs and would recommend that the Assembly accredit 24 of these.
6. **Ms Amulungu** recalled that at its tenth session the Committee had endorsed a set of [12 ethical principles](https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866) for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, which had been developed during an expert meeting and were founded on the fundamental principles embodied in the Convention and key normative instruments in the field of human rights. These principles were centred on the role of communities as bearers of intangible cultural heritage, while recognizing the key role of communities in maintaining and safeguarding their culture and heritage. They had already been translated into the six working languages of the General Assembly. On behalf of the Committee, Ms Amulungu encouraged each State to make full use of these principles, while emphasizing that ethical codes can be implemented and respected only if adapted to the political, economic, social and legal context of a country and/or sector, and if widely accepted by those concerned. The tenth session benefited from the advisory services of the first Evaluation Body, which was established by the Committee during its ninth session. In 2015 the Committee had examined 43 files for inscription, and following fruitful deliberations, inscribed five elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List and 23 on the Representative List. It had also approved one International Assistance request, and six more had been approved by the Bureau for a total amount of US$530,344. These included two emergency assistance requests, one of which was for post-conflict and the other for post-disaster. These emergency requests showcase the important role that intangible cultural heritage can play in creating harmony within and between communities, permitting reconciliation, as well as in laying a foundation for recovering from both natural and manmade disasters.
7. Concluding, **Ms Amulungu** expressed her gratitude to the Bureau of the eleventh session of the Committee that had already started working under the leadership of Mr Yonas Desta from Ethiopia, primarily to respond to two decisions that the Committee had delegated to it at its tenth session. Moreover, they had approved the final version of the report currently under examination, and revised the ‘Overview and summaries of the 2015 reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List’. In addition, they had approved three International Assistance requests for a total amount of US$73,387. Finally, Ms Amulungu expressed her gratitude to the twelve outgoing Members of the Committee and the remaining twelve Members who would continue in office for the next two years. She expressed her personal thanks to the Vice‑Chairs of the tenth session, namely Belgium, Brazil, Hungary, India and Tunisia for their wonderful teamwork throughout 2015, as well as the Members of its Evaluation Body for their support during the tenth session. Last but not the least, Ms Amulungu thanked the States Parties and Observers and the Secretariat for their dedication to the Convention.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked Ms Amulungufor her report, taking the opportunity to thank the Government of Namibia for having hosted the tenth Committee meeting. The Chairperson then turned to the adoption of Resolution 6.GA 5 on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. With no comments or objections, paragraphs 1–2 were adopted. Paragraph 3 contained an incorrect number of States Parties owing to the additional State Party joining the Convention, which was duly adopted. Paragraph 4 had a proposed amendment from Turkey[[8]](#footnote-8).
9. Congratulating the Chairperson on his election, the delegation of the **Islamic Republic of** **Iran** fully agreed with Turkey’s proposal but in its experience thought that paragraph 4 would be better placed as the final paragraph, as paragraphs 5 and 6 were still ‘congratulating’ and ‘taking note’, while Turkey’s proposal was instead a decision.
10. The **Chairperson** thought that this was a reasonable suggestion, and with no objections paragraph 4 was adopted as the last paragraph in the decision.
11. The delegation of **Latvia** understood the concern of the issue of ratifications, but sought clarification as to the meaning of the ending, namely the ‘creation of the General Assembly’.
12. The delegation of **Turkey** suggested replacing ‘creation’ with ‘construction’, clarifying that it referred to the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention.
13. The **Chairperson** remarked that the reference was to the tenth anniversary of the Convention’s existenceand it was not creating anything new. He asked the Secretariat to indicate how the text would read so as to be clear to all the delegations.
14. In order to assuage the reference to the ‘creation’ of a General Assembly, as commented on by Latvia, the **Secretary** suggested ending the paragraph just after ‘entry into force of the Convention’.
15. The delegation of **France** felt that it would be more correct to also reverse 'Requests the Director-General, on the occasion of […]’ ‘to encourage States’ in the text, i.e. the Assembly would not encourage them to ratify on this occasion, but on this occasion they were encouraged to ratify the Convention.
16. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretary whether the word order could be changed, as proposed by France.
17. The **Secretary** believed that it worked as it was.
18. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson** pronounced the paragraph adopted. The Chairperson had to leave and invited Kuwait, as a Vice-Chairperson, to take over.
19. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the Assembly for electing Kuwait as Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair turned to paragraphs 4–8 of the draft Resolution, and with no objections, they were duly adopted. He then turned to the Resolution as a whole, and with no further comments or objections, the **Vice-Chair declared Resolution 6.GA 5 adopted.** He then invited the Secretary to present the next item, item 7.

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/7*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 7*

1. The **Secretary** recalled that that a ‘briefing point’ on the periodic reports was scheduled in the session to draw attention to the current situation, although it was clear from the comments and reactions so far that this was well understood. The Secretary explained that the reports were important because, first of all, they were a core obligation of the Convention, but they were also the main tool to understand the achievements and challenges of implementing the Convention at the national level. They were thus the main window through which the international community could see the activities taking place at the country level to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, and were therefore a central function of the Convention. Moreover, there are a number of articles referring to them: Articles 7, 29 and 30, and Chapter 5 of the Operational Directives. Article 29 provides that States Parties “…shall submit to the Committee, observing the forms of periodicity to be defined by the Committee, reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of the Convention”. Article 7(f) provides that the Committee’s duties shall include “to examine … the reports submitted by States Parties, and to summarize them for the General Assembly”. And, according to Article 30, based in part on those reports, the Committee then submits its own report to the General Assembly, as reported in agenda item 5 of this session. The Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention, in paragraphs 151 to 159, lay out the relevant guidelines for the submission of reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List. Paragraphs 160 to 164 provide guidance on the submission of periodic reports, and paragraphs 165 to 167 describe the receipt and processing of the reports.
2. The **Secretary** clarified that the States were expected to submit the reporting forms in either English or French: the working languages of the Committee. Form ICH 10 is for reports on the implementation of the Convention and the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List, and form ICH 11 is for the current status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List: both forms are available on the Convention [website](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms). The periodic reports are due on 15 December of the sixth year following ratification and every sixth year thereafter, and on 15 December of the fourth year following inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List. A general periodic report on the implementation of the Convention is therefore expected every six years upon ratification, and every four years upon inscription of an element on the Urgent Safeguarding List. The Secretary further clarified that it was the six-year cycle that was important because the Convention was entering a phase where States Parties would be expected to submit their second periodic report. As was expressed by the Chairperson of the tenth session, the Committee had invited those States Parties that had not submitted their reports, and particularly those more than a year overdue, to duly submit them and to “encourage States Parties to fulfil their reporting requirements before submitting new nominations”.
3. Displaying the graph on the screen, the **Secretary** showed that only six reports of the 37 expected had been received. This was followed by a graph depicting how this related to the original cycles when they were due, which showed that reports dating back to 2013 were still pending. Another observation was that this problem was increasing. Measures that had been taken included the upgrading of the website, now with a dedicated [webpage](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/submissions-and-deadlines-00861) in which all the periodic reports are available online, which can be filtered for specified searches. There was also a dedicated webpage for each State Party. In addition, the Secretariat had sent 36 reminder letters and had asked UNESCO regional offices to call and follow-up. This ‘briefing point’ was thus an opportunity to remind States Parties of this key part of the Convention that seemed to be slipping in priority, and the situation seemed to be getting worse. The Secretariat expected 60 reports by 15 December 2016 and an increasing number of reports due every year, particularly as the Convention was entering its second cycle of reporting. Thus, States Parties that were due to submit six years after ratification in 2003 and 2004 and so on, would now have submitted a first report. And as they were now entering their twelfth year, they would be expected to submit their second report. The Secretary noted that some suggestions had been made during the morning session on various ways of unblocking the situation. Noting the multiple bottlenecks in submission, including in relation to the capacity of the country, the Secretary wondered how States Parties were able to put together nomination forms and complete other work but not come forward with reports. It was thus evident that choices were being made. Measures had also been explored to enhance the attractiveness of reporting. Nevertheless, the rationale of this ‘briefing point’ was to raise the alarm.
4. Thanking the Secretary, the delegation of **Islamic Republic of Iran** asked whether the Secretariat had figures showing the relationship between States Parties that had not yet submitted their periodic reports but had submitted new nomination files to the Lists.
5. The delegation of **Argentina** congratulated the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons on their election, as well as the new Secretary. It sought to know how the reporting cycle was determined, and the reasons behind the 4-year and 6-year cycles, adding that this might enlighten the Assembly.
6. The delegation of **Senegal** remarked that it did not wish to prolong the debate on the issue of periodic reports, especially after the intervention of Brazil that alluded to the 1972 Convention periodic report. It understood that the reports were the only way to assess how the Convention was being implemented, as well as the state of the elements inscribed on the Representative List and Urgent Safeguarding List.. The delegation was not convinced that this was solely a human resource problem, not least because the Secretariat had made available a checklist, forms, guidelines, as well as a number of elements that helped States Parties submit their periodic reports. The delegation added that the majority of countries had local expertise; people working and preparing the nomination files who would be able to complete a report. It thanked the Republic of Korea and the other States Parties that were willing to help to find ways to build capacities, adding that capacity-building touched upon many other global issues, while the periodic report itself was a normative instrument and an obligation. It was a tool for measuring and evaluating the situation of the State Party to participate in and contribute towards the implementation of this Convention. Thus, States Parties had to deal with this issue responsibly, as it was an obligation to do so.
7. The delegation of **China** thanked the Secretary for the report, as well as the Chairpersons of the Committee for theirs. It noted that the Committee had evaluated a number of periodic reports but that many States Parties had not submitted their reports, which showed that there was much to be done to strengthen capacities in the area of intangible cultural heritage. The delegation informed the Assembly that it had already submitted reports on the seven elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List, and towards the end of 2016 it would submit a periodic report on the nationwide implementation of the Convention. For China, this work was a substantial challenge, as it did not perceive periodic reporting as just a form-filling exercise. It believed that the implementation of the Convention was important and that periodic reporting was a very valuable opportunity to gain a better understanding of the Convention at both the central and local levels, while strengthening its capacity to do so. The reporting also stressed the role of NGOs. China had organized seminars, study trips and training courses in order to strengthen the capacities of the relevant specialized institutions and NGOs that contribute to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, and it did whatever it could to ensure greater participation of stakeholders. The delegation also wished to take advantage of reports submitted by other States Parties, thereby promoting and strengthening capacities that allowed for a greater exchange of information. It was prepared to cooperate with other countries and be inspired by their experience and best practices, while exchanging Chinese expertise and experience to help improve capacities in safeguarding structures in Southeast Asia.
8. The **Secretary** appreciated the feedback and addressed some of the points raised. Starting with China, the Secretary agreed that the act of reporting was much more than filling in a form or ticking a box, which explained why it was an important mechanism. If the format did not respond to what was being sought then it could always be further elaborated. But at this stage it was important to ensure that the State Party reported back on what was happening at the national level. Regarding the question by Argentina on why the periodic report was on a 6-year cycle and the Urgent Safeguarding List on a 4-year cycle, the Secretary recalled that the General Assembly and the Committee adopted these decisions in the early days of the Convention. He did not know why this was so, other than that this was the same time period of reporting that was expected for periodic reports in the 1972 Convention and the 2005 Convention. It was also the cycle period used in UNESCO’s medium-term strategy, though this had now increased to eight years. Thus, the genesis lay somewhere in the idea of a 6‑year cycle. The four years required for the Urgent Safeguarding List was specifically related to the notion of urgent safeguarding itself. At the time of its elaboration. it was felt four years was a sufficiently long time – but not too long – to report on the implementation of the urgent safeguarding action plan. Finally, in response to the question by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Secretary explained that the Secretariat had not calculated the exact association between States Parties and their relation to periodic reports, but he reminded the Assembly of its Decision 10.COM 6.a, “encourages States Parties to fulfil their reporting requirements before submitting new nominations”.
9. The **Vice-Chairperson** reminded the Assembly that the Bureau would meet at 9.30 a.m. the following morning and asked the Vice-Chairs from Germany, Poland, Nepal, Senegal and Kuwait and the Rapporteur to arrive on time. The meeting was also open to observers.
10. The **Secretary** reminded delegates to register online, if they had not already done so, and informed the Assembly that UNESCO-trained facilitators of the capacity-building programme were invited for a meeting with the Secretariat the following morning. The ICH NGO Forum would also meet the following day.
11. The **Vice-Chairperson** therefore declared the day’s session closed.

*[Tuesday 31 May 2016, morning session]*

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**Document:**[*ITH/16/6.GA/7*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx)

**Document:** [*ITH/15/10.COM/4*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-4_EN.docx)

**Document:** [*ITH/16/11.COM/4*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-11.COM-4-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 7*

1. Declaring the session open, the **Chairperson** informed the Assembly that the Bureau had met in the morning to discuss the day’s timetable. The Bureau took some decisions regarding a change in the agenda to include under item 11, ‘Other business’, a sub-item, ‘Follow-up to the Auditor’s report on UNESCO’s governance’, as proposed by Sweden and supported by Cuba and other countries. The day would thus proceed with item 7 on the Revision of the Operational Directives. The Chairperson understood that item 7 would take up a considerable amount of time and, in the spirit of transparency, the Assembly should devote the time necessary to deliberations and to adopt the decisions. This would be followed by item 8 on the accreditation of NGOs. The Chairperson hoped to move quickly, appealing to the delegations to be as concise as possible. Finally, he reminded the Assembly to present any amendments to the specific paragraphs of decisions to the Secretariat in written form or via email. The Chairperson noted that working document 7 included five Annexes. He explained that one of the permanent tasks of the General Assembly was to revise the Operational Directives in a dynamic approach. Thus, every opportunity should be taken to modify or to perfect the Operational Directives when appropriate. He was convinced that the Assembly would make the right decisions that would help pursue their common goal, i.e. to make the implementation of the Convention as efficient as possible in order to keep the Convention universal and efficient in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
2. The **Secretary** informed the Assembly that the Timetable and the List of Documents had been slightly revised to include the documents of the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, relating directly to questions put to the sixth session of the General Assembly on governance. The Secretary remarked that the Assembly was called upon to examine proposed revisions covering five topics, which included amendments to existing chapters and a new chapter to the Operational Directives for approval. These were contained in the Annex to [document 7](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx). The Secretary began with the **first amendment on International Assistance requests**, examined by the Bureau of the Committee, found in Part I of the Annex to document 7. It proposed increasing the requests that could be approved by the Bureau from US$25,000 to US$100,000. This item followed up on observations by the Consultative and Evaluation Bodies and the IOS of UNESCO in 2013, which had repeatedly regretted the under-utilization of the International Assistance mechanism. Two factors might explain the situation: i) States prioritizing the Representative List rather than International Assistance when deciding on their submitted file given the ceiling of files that can be treated in a single year; and ii) the lack of human and financial resources in many States to develop International Assistance requests that adequately meet the eligibility criteria, as observed in the IOS report. Given these concerns, a new measure was proposed by the Committee at its tenth session in 2015 in Decision 10.COM 15.c, ‘to increase from US$25,000 to US$100,000 the requests for International Assistance that can be approved by the Bureau of the Committee’. This change was also in line with the trend, i.e. among the 14 requests greater than US$25,000 that had been approved so far, half were in fact approved by the Bureau (five requests were approved after delegation of authority by the Committee to the Bureau and three emergency requests were approved). Therefore, the raised budget ceiling did not really represent a radical change in working methods, yet it would increase the number of beneficiary countries and the scope of supported projects. Since requests to be examined by the Bureau can be submitted at any time and the Bureau may meet several times a year, examination and approval opportunities for a greater number of larger scale projects should be considerably increased, while the length of the overall process should be reduced. Moreover, States wishing to use the Fund to supplement their national safeguarding efforts will be able to consider submitting a request for International Assistance up to US$100,000 without having to choose between the latter and a nomination to the Convention’s List or a proposal for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices.
3. The **Chairperson** reminded the Assembly that this text had already been discussed at length in the Committee. Nevertheless, he opened the floor for comments or clarifications.
4. The delegation of **Brazil** noted that there were many amendments to the Operational Directives, and it had just received some amendments from its capital regarding the topic of sustainable development at the national level. It therefore requested that the Chairperson proceed carefully so that States Parties wishing to propose amendments would have the time to submit their amendments to the plenary.
5. The **Chairperson** agreed with the process of tackling each amendment separately. He turned to the present amendment to change the ceiling from US$25,000 to US$100,000. He turned first to the amendments to paragraphs 27 to 32 of the Operational Directives. With no comments or objections, the paragraphs were adopted. He then turned to paragraphs 33 to 46, adding that these paragraphs form a coherent whole. With no comments, these were adopted. He then turned to paragraphs 47 to 54, which were duly adopted.
6. The **Chairperson** then turned to the second amendment in part II of the Annexes on safeguarding intangible culture heritage and sustainable development at the national level, adding that this constituted a new chapter that did not previously exist in the Operational Directives.
7. The **Secretary** explained that this **second amendment aimed at introducing a new Chapter VI in the Operational Directives focusing on the linkage between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level.** This item followed up on the eighth session of the Committee during which the Committee discussed potential amendments to the Operational Directives pertaining to safeguarding, commercialization and sustainable development, and considered that it was preferable to gather all the considerations concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and its linkage with sustainable development at the national level in one single chapter, resulting in Decision 8.COM 13.a. Pursuant to the request of the Committee, the Secretariat organized a meeting of category VI experts in Istanbul, Turkey, from 29 September to 1 October 2014. This meeting was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO. The outcomes of the expert meeting, which gathered 12 experts from the six regional groups, served as a basis of the debates of the Committee at its ninth and tenth sessions. The draft Chapter VI of the Operational Directives therefore reflected: i) earlier discussions of the Committee, notably the relationship between safeguarding, commercialization and sustainable development; ii) a number of specific remarks and suggestions made by Members of the Committee at its ninth and tenth sessions; iii) previous work undertaken by the Secretariat on the subject; iv) discussions that took place at the above-mentioned category VI expert meeting in Turkey; and v) recent developments in intergovernmental negotiations on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Indeed, the draft Chapter VI of the Operational Directives was based on *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*[[9]](#footnote-9).
8. The **Secretary** drew the Assembly’s attention to several important aspects regarding the draft Chapter VI in that it followed the sequence of the 2030 Agenda and thus acknowledged the multidimensional contribution of living traditions to peace and security, environmental sustainability and inclusive social and economic development. The Chapter underlined the need for cooperation with NGOs, experts in sustainable development and cultural brokers for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and its integration into development policies beyond the culture sector. It highlighted the importance of ethical considerations in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, in paragraph 171. It introduced the notion of equitable development, thereby taking into consideration similar work carried out within the framework of the 1972 Convention, in paragraph 194. It also demonstrated how the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is conducive to the improvement of the social and cultural well-being of communities and to the mobilization of innovative and culturally appropriate responses to the various development challenges, complementing the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Finally, the draft Chapter VI responded to the recommendations of the 2015 evaluation of the IOS on UNESCO’s Work on Culture and Sustainable Development by expanding considerations relating to gender equality, in paragraph 181, and the role of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in both sustainable urban and rural development, in paragraph 170.
9. Projecting the text onto the screen, the **Chairperson** remarked that this was a significant and important amendment that involved a conceptual and operational extension of the concept of intangible cultural heritage and its link to sustainable development, adding that it benefitted from a broad consensus.
10. The delegation of the **Czech Republic** thanked the Secretariat and the Committee for all the work undertaken on the extremely important topic of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development. It acknowledged that the amendments presented were the result of a long debate and reflection on the relationship between the Convention and sustainable development from an ecological, economical, social and cultural perspective, and thus it did not doubt the relevance of these reflections. Nevertheless, in its country, and probably in other States Parties, responsibility for the implementation of the Convention is mandated to the Ministry of Culture for which it would probably be difficult to ensure the implementation of the new paragraphs that included food security, health care, access to clean water or sustainable water use. Thus, States would have to develop a national model for new cooperation between the various sectors and departments to ensure correct implementation. The delegation asked the Secretariat whether it would consider a guide of good practice from countries that had already established such inter-sectoral cooperation, or a workshop to exchange experiences to guide States on how to actually make these new chapters operational at the national level.
11. The **Secretary** thanked the Czech Republic for its question. Indeed, the Secretariat understood that there would be different contexts at the national level within which these Directives would be implemented. One of the things foreseen as part of the capacity-building programme was to have a series of modules focusing on this specific issue so that the provisions of this Chapter could be integrated into a new area of capacity building. The Secretariat was also open to exploring other ways of sharing knowledge, which could perhaps also be part of the periodic reporting, and already intended to develop training and explanatory workshops.
12. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that it had given its minor amendments to the Secretariat, which it had received from its capital, as delegates were currently in negotiations in New York and therefore wished to see an alignment between the topics discussed and approved there. The delegation explained that it had minor modifications to paragraphs 170, 177 and 188, and that it would raise the amendments as the Chairperson proceeded carefully through the text.
13. The delegation of **Austria** warmly welcomed the proposed Chapter VI of the Operational Directives and thanked the Committee for its dedicated and valuable work. It believed that the concept of sustainable development was inextricably linked with the 2003 Convention and thus its core principles should be adequately reflected in the Operational Directives. It highlighted two aspects that deserved special attention. Firstly, it was convinced that the Convention could serve as the starting point for sustainable urban development. Building resilient and inclusive cities meant taking into consideration urban culture and heritage, which included safeguarding traditional cultural practices and promoting cultural diversity. Secondly, regarding crafts, the IOS evaluation stated that the role of crafts had not been adequately acknowledged by the Convention. In the final report, crafts were considered to be particularly relevant because of their potential contribution to inclusive social and economic sustainable development, as well as their linkage with the use of natural resources. The delegation thus welcomed the fact that the importance of traditional knowledge and skills in the context of sustainable development was now reflected in the Operational Directives. The lavender sachet on the delegates’ desk highlighted the role of crafts from a cultural, environmental, economic and social perspective. In addition to engaging with knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, not only did lavender smell good but the flowering plant also erased stress naturally, which could benefit everyone.
14. The delegation of **Slovakia** congratulated the Bureau on its election and its efforts during the Assembly. It also thanked Ms Cécile Duvelle for her work as Secretary in previous years, and commended the new Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis, wishing him success and fruitful work. The delegation wished to support the suggestion by the Czech Republic to organize a workshop or expert meeting that would allow for the sharing of information or best practices related to intersectional cooperation at the national level. It highly appreciated the incredible work carried out concerning the revision of the Operational Directives related to sustainable development, especially paragraph 174 that stated, ‘States Parties shall endeavour to ensure that their safeguarding plans and programmes are fully inclusive of all sectors and strata of society, including indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities and members of vulnerable groups in conformity with Article 11 of the Convention.’ It suggested reflecting this fact in the periodic reports, adding that there was a focus on the role of gender, but not much on the other social groups mentioned in paragraph 174. The delegation concluded by saying that the periodic reports could present a brilliant example of good practices of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level.
15. The delegation of **Egypt** congratulated the Secretariat for this new text, which would contribute towards the successful implementation of the Convention to safeguard intangible cultural heritage in many countries, particularly developing countries. The delegation explained that culture at the national level was often in the hands of just one ministry and the link betweenculture and sustainable development would thus allow for more inter-sectoral and interagency cooperation.
16. The delegation of the **United Arab Emirates** was very pleased to see the introduction of the new Chapter VI in the Operational Directives as this link between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development was very positive and of vital importance. The delegation spoke of how in the past culture had been perceived as a burden, a way of spending taxpayers’ money with no real return on the investment. Of course, this way of thinking was wrong and culture is not a burden for States, governments or communities; it is the image of humankind and life. It believed that the new strategy adopted by the United Nations, with the new agenda ensuring sustainable development, did in fact recognize the importance of culture with nine areas identified in which culture plays an important role. Today, it is understood that intangible heritage is probably the most widely disseminated cultural heritage around the planet, involving all aspects of our daily lives. The delegation therefore agreed with the previous speakers, in particular Austria, about the close and important link between culture and sustainable development that is particularly true of intangible cultural heritage, but also of culture as a whole. There was thus a need to develop partnerships in order for culture to become one of the underpinnings of international exchange. As an example, traditions relating to the production of books and musical instruments are cultural industries that generate economic development quite independently of their importance as cultural crafts and have an impact on our daily lives. Thus, culture can be economically profitable in many different ways, and countries needed to take that into consideration as a function of their own specific circumstances and contexts.
17. The delegation of **Bolivia** congratulated the Ambassador of Peru on his election and welcomed the new Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis, wishing him success. It remarked that the measures proposed in the new Chapter were in keeping with the actions and philosophy of its Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which had been pursuing several actions to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, for example through the inscription of elements on the Representative List. It explained that those guidelines had in fact come from the Constitution of Bolivia, which in Chapter IV recognized the rights of indigenous nations and peoples of peasant origin in Articles 30 and 31 and 32, and the right of peoples and communities to their own territoriality culture, spirituality and cosmo-vision. The Bolivian Constitution stated previous and participatory consultation as the main means of inter-sectorial work and the main way of implementing public policy, as expressed in the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention. The delegation thus supported the amendments made to this Chapter.
18. The delegation of **Italy** believed that the proposed revision of the Operational Guidelines in the implementation of the Convention was moving in the right direction, adding that intangible heritage is a symbol of the social and cultural identity of peoples and a driver of sustainable development and economic growth. However, caution should be exercised as the cultural value of intangible heritage is not directly transferable in monetary terms, and the ethical principles at the heart of communities and all stakeholders must be considered. The close links between intangible heritage, sustainable development and food were at the core of the Milan Expo in 2015. The Milan Charter[[10]](#footnote-10) represented a moment of reflection on this issue with analyses, studies and debates that helped increase awareness among States and local communities. Italy has played an important role in this process, including through initiatives to enhance the collective awareness of the relationship between culture, rurality, food security and sustainable development. Italy was also the first country to sign an agricultural technique, ‘Traditional agricultural practice of cultivating the ‘vite ad alberello’ (head-trained bush vines) of the community of Pantelleria’ [in 2014] on the Representative List. The delegation therefore fully supported the new Chapter that was also devoted to food security because it marked an important step in recognizing food heritage, rurality and the system of knowledge in this domain as playing a vital part in its role as a guarantor of development. The delegation recalled that the fundamental role played by intangible heritage, alongside tangible heritage, in UNESCO’s action to protect cultural heritage in situations of crisis and conflict had often been pointed out, especially since the Executive Board in April 2015. The discussions were followed in the #Unite4Heritage[[11]](#footnote-11) group, which reinforced this perception of the importance we accord to this dimension of culture, which is the basis of wealth and cultural diversity that UNESCO must defend and promote.
19. Thanking Italy, the **Chairperson** turned to the adoption of those parts of the Annex.
20. The delegation of **Turkey** also welcomed the new paragraph to the Operational Guidelines, and thanked the experts who had participated in the meeting in Istanbul, renewing its thanks to the Secretariat for its efforts in the proposed text. The delegation noted that at its tenth session the Committee had examined the text proposed by the Secretariat on this very important issue for the future and for the visibility of the Convention, and thus hoped this would lead to more effective Directives on sustainable development that would be acceptable to all.
21. The delegation of **Brazil** noted that the text was not yet projected onto the screen.
22. The delegation of **Croatia** congratulated the Chairperson and Mr Tim Curtis, wishing him well in his work on the extremely important issue of intangible heritage. It also commended the Secretariat for its long and hard work, especially on this important linkage between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, adding that the holistic approach that looked for synergies between the other culture Conventions of UNESCO was very important. It wished to reiterate the very important linkages between intangible cultural heritage, sustainable development and raising awareness and youth education with these issues.
23. The **Chairperson** then proceeded to the corresponding paragraphs for consideration.
24. The delegation of **Brazil** presented its minor modification, explaining that in New York when the 2030 Agenda was discussed, there was a discussion as to whether ‘peace and security’ would be a fourth pillar of sustainable development but the Member States decided not to consider it as such. The Assembly must therefore tread carefully on the issue of peace and security as this was very complex and involved both internal security in the country and situations of conflict, so as not to disrupt the debate on sustainable development, especially considering that the Operational Directives sought to harmonize the Convention and the application of its mechanisms to the agenda itself. The delegation explained that the Convention could not solve all the problems of the world and thus proposed deleting the terms ‘peace and security’ and instead concentrating on recognizing the interdependence between safeguarding intangible culture practice and sustainable development.
25. The **Chairperson** noted Brazil’s amendment to delete the reference to ‘peace and security’.
26. With regard to Brazil’s proposal, the delegation of **Latvia** wished to point out that ‘peace and security’ was mentioned in the fourth sub-chapter of Chapter VI, and believed that this had been thought out in this way as an introduction to the entire Chapter. This followed on from the three pillars of sustainable development, namely the economic, social and environmental aspects that deal with the first three sub-chapters of the Chapter. The delegation thus believed that ‘peace and security’ had been mentioned to cover the whole structure of the Chapter as proposed.
27. The delegation of **Namibia** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and welcomed Mr Tim Curtis on his appointment. It also welcomed the new Chapter, which linked culture with the new development goals to ensure sustainable development. Indeed, Namibia was finalizing its cultural policy, which took sustainable development into consideration and called on cross-sectoral partnerships to safeguard intangible cultural heritage as well as to create economic wealth for communities engaging in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
28. The delegation of **Norway** supported the remarks by Latvia to keep ‘peace and security’, adding that it was not interpreted as part of sustainable development *per se* but as a separate chapter.
29. The delegation of **Morocco** believed that the reference to peace and security was very important and, even though it was not retained in New York, peace and security were the objectives of UNESCO. Moreover, one cannot have sustainable development without peace and security.
30. The delegation of **Italy** also supported retaining the reference to peace and security, as it believed that all UNESCO's actions have the ultimate goal of achieving peace and security.
31. Having carefully listened to the comments, the delegation of **Brazil** insisted that it could not approve something at UNESCO that was different from the statements approved in New York, adding that [the UN] in New York was the forum to discuss the three pillars and the idea of peace and security, while the issue and debate should not be re-opened within the 2003 Convention. The delegation reiterated that this text was not in harmony with the text approved in New York and, as such, it would not move further on the issue, insisting that this paragraph should not deal with peace and security. The delegation further insisted that the Operational Directives for the 2003 Convention should not try to solve the problems of the world, adding that it was excessive and irrational to try and solve all the problems of peace and security, education for all, healthcare and other such issues through the Convention. The delegation did not seek to change the whole text but only certain aspects of the language that were not in line with the text approved in New York, i.e. it could not accept changes that would disrupt the whole process within the UN system.
32. With all due respect to Brazil and the rationale put forward, the delegation of **Greece** explained that the matter of peace and security could not be considered as irrelevant to sustainable development. The notion of peace and security for people was at the core of sustainability, and thus it was in favor of keeping this reference in the preamble of Chapter VI and the rest of the Operational Directives.
33. The delegation of **Mauritius** congratulated the Bureau; it believed that one of the main objectives of intangible cultural heritage is to maintain peace and harmony, and therefore sought to keep ‘peace and security’ in the Convention.
34. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** disagreed with Brazil’s insistence that work on peace and security did not sit within the framework of the 2003 Convention. It believed that the Convention worked towards peace and security, and agreed with the other delegations that it was absolutely necessary to keep this reference. Moreover, this was the essence of the Convention and the objective of the Assembly’s work. The delegation suggested a different wording, for example, ‘in order to achieve peace and security’ or ‘in order to move toward’ or ‘to achieve peace and security’.
35. The delegation of **Senegal** believed that evoking the question of peace and security in the preamble was important, adding that all the principles of the various UNESCO conventions contributed towards social cohesion and the resolution of internal conflict and injustice, as the ideal of UNESCO. It recalled how UNESCO had worked towards the adoption of Agenda 2030 at the Hangzhou Congress[[12]](#footnote-12) on the theme of culture and development. The delegation therefore felt that it was important to recall UNESCO’s ideal of peace and security among peoples, and that this ideal must be maintained in this preamble. The formulation might be altered slightly, but the notion of peace and security in relation to social cohesion remained important.
36. The delegation of **Sweden** also believed peace and security to be an essential part of the Convention and supported the statements from Latvia and Greece, among others.
37. The delegation of **Portugal** congratulated the Chairperson on the exemplary way he was conducting the meeting, which was customary given his work in the past. It understood the concerns expressed by the delegations, adding that it also supported the notion of sustainable development, including stability, peace and security, and its importance to the 2003 Convention. It was equally sensitive that the text should be consistent with discussions at the UN level, which had led to Agenda 2030, as highlighted by Brazil. The delegation remarked that it had debated the relationship of sustainable development at the General Assembly of States Parties to the 1972 Convention in November, during which a solution had been found to ensure the structure of the document was consistent with the debate in New York on three pillars. In fact, ‘peace and security’ was not considered a pillar but it was obviously an essential element to which the 2003 Convention also needed to contribute, along with UNESCO, if appropriate. The delegation was thus convinced that through collective effort, a solution would be found that was consistent with the structure presented in New York, while remaining consistent with the values of the Convention, of which the promotion of peace and security played an integral part.
38. The delegation of **Turkey** supported keeping ‘peace and security’ in the preamble, as proposed by the Committee, and backed the view shared by previous delegations.
39. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that there were a number of countries wishing to maintain ‘peace and security’ and it would thus propose something to accommodate all the points of view. It reiterated that during discussions on Agenda [2030] in New York, peace and security had not been included as a fourth pillar as it had been considered as something to bear in mind. In this instance, ‘peace and security’ was being considered at the same level as sustainable development itself, which would enlarge the whole concept of the Agenda and place it higher than the three pillars. Thus, peace and security needed to be moved from paragraph [170] to another place. The delegation suggested, ‘While recognizing the interdependence between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development’, which would be kept, ‘[…] States Parties shall strive to maintain a balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development (the economic, social and environmental)’, and include, ‘while also bearing in mind the issues of peace and security’. Ideally, the delegation did not wish to include ‘security’, if possible. Nevertheless, this was its compromise amendment, and it reiterated that the terms should be separated from the title and the main idea, and not included with the three pillars, even if they were important issues. Thus, States could ‘bear in mind’ the issues of peace and security when, for instance, preparing an inventory or safeguarding a traditional cultural expression, though it would not solve issues of peace and security *per se*. In this way, the change in language would incorporate the idea without disrupting the harmonization of the Convention with the sustainable development agenda.
40. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil for helping to bring about a consensus, and drew the Assembly’s attention to the key difference in opinion wherein Brazil was not against there being a reference to peace and security, while the great majority of delegations were in favor of keeping ‘peace and security’. As remarked on by the United Arab Emirates, the problem could be resolved through a felicitous drafting of the text. Returning to the paragraph, which read, “States Parties shall strive to maintain a balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development”, and considering the proposal by Brazil, the Chairperson suggested adding the following after ‘environmental’: “as well as their inter-relations with peace and security”. The Chairperson insisted on ‘inter-relations’ and not just ‘relations’, as this would incorporate the notion of ‘peace and security’ in the preamble without being one of the pillars of sustainable development as such.
41. The delegation of **Egypt** spoke of its honor in having taken part in drafting the Convention, and was certainly one of the most senior participants in the Assembly. Recalling the last paragraph in the preamble of the Convention, which states, “in view of the essential role of intangible cultural heritage in the rapprochement and exchanges and mutual understanding between or amongst peoples”, the delegation explained that this embodied the Convention’s aim, which also underpinned UNESCO’s founding philosophy, before reading the same paragraph in Spanish. Thus, all these concepts, embodied in the whole paragraph, were advocating for peace and security through the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Sustainable development also aimed at achieving peace and security and mutual comprehension between peoples. The text therefore revolved around peace and security, and thus it could support Brazil’s amendment.
42. Thanking Egypt, the **Chairperson** believed its remarks to be compatible with his amendment, adding that nobody questioned the relationship between the Convention and peace and security and it was an objective reality accepted by all, including Brazil. Thus, before giving the floor to other delegations, the Chairperson sought to hear whether Brazil would agree with his proposal.
43. The delegation of **Brazil** agreed and thanked the Chairperson for his efforts to find a formula that harmonized the different positions expressed.
44. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil and opened the floor for any comments or objections.
45. The delegation of **Belgium** appreciated the proposal by the Chairperson but, on the other hand, it could consider keeping the original text because of the word ‘interdependence’, which was a crucial fact. The delegation drew attention to the preamble of the 2030 Agenda where it is stated there that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development, which rendered the notion of interdependence important. In addition, in remark 35 of the Agenda, it stated that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security, and peace and security would be at risk without sustainable development. Thus, the Agenda was very compatible with the original text, and sustainable development Goal 16 actually referred to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. The delegation was concerned that the new phrasing would be a challenge for countries wishing to make safeguarding plans that already had to strike a balance between the three pillars of sustainable development and would then have to factor in ‘peace and security’. Thus, for the sake of clarity, the delegation preferred the original text, but would comply with the amendment and go along if the majority agreed. Nevertheless, it wished to focus on the word ‘interdependence’, adding that this was quite crucial.
46. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** felt that the disagreement over the initial texts and amendment had to do with the fact that peace and security is the ultimate goal and therefore the aim of linking intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development was to achieve peace and security, at the end of the day. Thus, saying that peace and security were important did not necessarily imply that it needed to constitute a fourth pillar. In other words, linking the protection and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage with sustainable development helped to achieve peace and security. It therefore supported the Chairperson’s amendment.
47. The **Chairperson** thanked the United Arab Emirates, adding that despite its own perceptions it had expressed its willingness to accept the compromise proposal for the sake of flexibility. The Chairperson gave the floor to Greece and Ecuador, after which he would close the list of speakers.
48. Noting the step towards a consensus, the delegation of **Greece** nonetheless believed that paragraph 170 of the preamble should be very clear on this point. As explained by Belgium, there was a strong interdependence between the notions of sustainability, peace and security, which were inextricably linked. It was thus not favorable to the amendment proposed by the Chairperson, although this was well meaning. The delegation suggested suspending the discussion on paragraph 170, going through the rest of the new Directives, and should the Assembly decide to maintain or modify paragraphs 192 to 197 (which were dedicated to peace and security), paragraph 170 could be adapted accordingly.
49. The delegation of **Ecuador** was pleased with the Chairperson’s leadership and hoped that he would continue presiding over important debates in the future. Having followed the debate and the comments by Brazil, as well as the proposals for the new Operational Directives, the delegation remarked that they were rather ambitious and covered a lot of ground on issues related to food, security, and the environment, adding that it was comparable to the 2030 Agenda, which was a very good and progressive proposal. The delegation felt that that ‘peace and security’ should not to be removed from the Operational Directives. Nevertheless, as explained by Brazil, ‘peace and security’ could be maintained, but not as the aim of the Convention, as this should be limited to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, which was the real focus. The Assembly should therefore not confuse the objective of the Convention with the objectives of UNESCO, even if they had a bearing on each other. The delegation therefore proposed closing the debate on the basis of the Chairperson’s proposal, which brought together the two positions expressed.
50. The delegation of **Italy** supported the proposal by Greece to move forward with the analysis of the following paragraphs dealing with peace and security, and then take a decision on the general wording of the preamble thereafter.
51. The delegation of **Morocco** also agreed with Greece and the Chairperson’s balanced proposal, but it had concerns with regard to paragraph 192 on peace and security; it did not want this paragraph to become devoid of meaning as it believed sustainable development to be closely linked with peace and security. Thus, it could accept the Chairperson’s proposal, but stressed that it should not have an impact on paragraph 192.
52. The delegation of **Brazil** felt that the Assembly could already approve the paragraph based on the Chairperson’s compromise amendment, adding that the Agenda was on sustainable development, and not on sustainable development, peace and security. Thus, peace and security could not be placed at the same level as the title of the Agenda itself. The delegation recalled that the Assembly sought to harmonize the Operational Directives of 2003 Convention with the Sustainable Development Agenda, and that although peace and security were important issues this was not one of the three pillars. The delegation agreed that peace and security had a strong inter-relation and interdependence with the rest of the issues, and noted that the Chairperson’s amendment dealt precisely with that notion. It could therefore accommodate that amendment and approve the paragraph. The delegation understood that other delegations might wish to refer to certain parts of the text of the Agenda itself, i.e. insert quoted text that had been approved in New York. However, it was not possible to change the title or merge sustainable development and peace and security as one issue, even though they were inter-related or interdependent. The delegation reiterated that it could approve the paragraph as amended by the Chairperson, and on the insistence of the delegations, change ‘inter-relations’ for ‘interdependence’ as this was the term used in the Agenda itself, which still kept the same idea. It thus sought to move forward, while exercising caution not to accord greater importance to peace and security than other issues discussed in New York, which contemplated more than 150 targets.
53. The delegation of **Argentina** considered Brazil’s amendment and reasoning, the Chairperson’s amendment, and the arguments raised by the other delegations, before finally agreeing with Ecuador and Brazil in support of the Chairperson’s amendment that was balanced and pragmatic, and reached in a spirit of consensus. In this way, peace and security would not be deleted from the list of concepts or criteria to bear in mind when linking sustainable development to intangible cultural heritage in the Operational Directives.
54. The delegation of **Cyprus** held the same opinion as Greece, Italy and Morocco.
55. The **Chairperson** interrupted on a point of order raised by Palestine.
56. The delegation of **Palestine** wished to congratulate the Chairperson first, before requesting that all the interventions by the delegations be reflected on the screen so as to accurately follow the proposals, i.e. Brazil’s proposed change of term from ‘inter-relations’ to ‘interdependence’.
57. The delegation of **Cyprus** reiterated that it agreed with Greece, Italy and Morocco, and proposed going through the rest of the chapter up to paragraph 192 first before coming back to paragraph 170 after further reflection.
58. Noting the lengthy debate, the **Chairperson** wished to summarize, but first apologized to the delegations that had asked for the floor, adding that the situation was rather clear and did not require further elaboration. Firstly, the inter-relation or interdependence between ICH and peace and security was unquestionable. Secondly, the proposal was an attempt to reach a consensus on the idea that peace and security would be placed further down in the text with respect to where those words were currently placed, which the majority of delegations agreed with. Thirdly, along with Brazil’s last amendment, the proposal was to replace ‘inter-relations’ with ‘interdependence’, on which there was agreement. The Chairperson noted that at least four delegations wished to express these concepts by first going to paragraphs 192–197. Thus, there was a basic consensus around the Chairperson’s proposal concerning the change to ‘interdependence’. The Chairperson thus proposed waiting until the discussion on paragraphs 192 and 194 in order to express this consensus on the basis of the decision taken on the latter two paragraphs. If agreed, the Assembly could then move to the third amendment. With no further comments from the Secretariat, the Chairperson moved to the next amendments on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. It was noted that Lithuania had an amendment in paragraph 171 [sub-paragraph (a)], which sought to include ‘the elaboration and implementation of’, and with no objections, it was duly adopted. He then moved to paragraphs 171–176, which were duly adopted with no objections. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 177 on ‘Inclusive social development’, as amended by Brazil.
59. The delegation of **Brazil** explained that its amendment sought to adopt an appropriate language, adding that the Convention and its mechanisms were not going to solve the problems of food security, quality healthcare, quality education for all, gender equality and access to safe water and sanitation. The Assembly should ‘bear in mind’ the importance of those issues and try to harmonize national policies with safeguarding practices. However, the language proposed in the original text was too heavy and assertive in suggesting that inclusive social development could not be achieved without these issues. Thus, it proposed a more flexible and diplomatic form of language in keeping with the Operational Directives by replacing ‘must’ with ‘should’. The delegation reiterated that the purpose was not to solve very difficult and complex issues through the Convention but rather to adapt and harmonize the Convention with the concerns highlighted in Agenda 2030.
60. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil for its amendment, adding that this assertion of cause and effect did not really correspond to reality. With no comments or objections, paragraph 177 was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 178 and sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c), which were duly adopted without objection. Paragraph 179 with sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) had an amendment as a matter of form rather than content in the English, French and Spanish versions, which was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 180 and an amendment tabled by Lithuania that sought to clarify the concept expressed in the paragraph [on quality education].
61. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that its amendment under sub-paragraph (d) was not on the screen, adding that it sought to harmonize the language employed in international conventions on biodiversity in which the expressions ‘conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity’ are used.
62. The **Chairperson** remarked that both the Brazil and Lithuania amendments made a conceptual contribution to the paragraph, and with no objections paragraph 180 was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 181 and its five sub-paragraphs, and with no comments or objections pronounced it adopted. He then turned to paragraph 182.
63. The delegation of **Belgium** raised a point of order, requesting that the Chairperson move more slowly so that delegations would have time study the amendments, particularly those that were presented on the spot. Regarding paragraph 183, the delegation had a clear preference for the original formulation, adding that the proposed language was beyond the scope of the Convention. In this regard, it invited the Secretariat to provide accurate headings or employ the language used in a similar context, for example in discussions on Agenda 2030 in New York. It felt that the proposed changes were not completely innocuous and could in fact weaken the original text, and thus advised caution in this regard.
64. The **Chairperson** agreed that the Assembly should not be overhasty, but it did wish to make progress. He returned to paragraph 182, which was duly adopted, and then turned to the comments made by Belgium on paragraph 183.
65. The delegation of **Morocco** concurred with Belgium, preferring the original title to Brazil’s amendment.
66. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that it had made two very different types of amendments to paragraph 183. The first one related to the nature of the paragraph, noting that the paragraph *recommended* and was not intended to be prescriptive. In other words, the Assembly could not tell Member States what they had to do, i.e. it was solely a recommendation. Thus, the delegation suggested that ‘benefits from’ replace ‘depends upon’, and ‘may also benefit from’ replace ‘requires’. With regard to the final part of the sentence, “decent employment, low-carbon, as well as resource-efficient economic growth and welfare protection”, the delegation felt that these concepts were still under consideration internationally, at COP 21 for example. Thus, it was not ready to accept this type of language, especially in a culture convention, as this was not the place to move forward with these concepts and ideas, despite the obvious good intentions. The other two amendments by Brazil sought to make the language more adequate.
67. The delegation of **Denmark** thanked the Chairperson for proceeding at a slower pace so that delegations could read and learn the content of the amendments by Brazil. It supported the intervention by Belgium and Morocco on this paragraph in that it also wished to keep the original text as proposed by the Secretariat.
68. The **Chairperson** wished to proceed with the amendments one by one.
69. The delegation of **Cyprus** agreed with the first two amendments by Brazil, but wished to maintain the last sentence.
70. The **Chairperson** asked whether the Assembly could agree to Brazil’s first amendment.
71. The delegation of **Belgium** asked the Secretariat to present the original text from which it had been inspired to produce its proposed paragraph. It agreed that it was not possible to cover every issue, and the debate had illustrated this. Nevertheless, the issues discussed were linked to many others and it would thus be a pity to diminish or weaken the language of the current texts that had already been approved by all the delegations.
72. The **Secretary** explained that the reference text arose specifically from the language of the [sustainable development goals](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld), in particular Goals 7, 8 and 9 (Goals 7 and 8 relate to COP and emissions). The Secretary read out: Goal 7, “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”; and Goal 8, “promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all”. In addition, Goal 7.1 “By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services”, 7.2 “increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix” (there is a reference to renewable energy), 7.3 “double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency”, 7.a “By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology”, and 7.b “By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States, and land-locked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support”. Thus, Goal 7 indicators made reference to cleaner fossil fuel technology. As for Goal 8, it promotes, “inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all”. It was noted that the reference to ‘decent work’ was mentioned several times in the indicators.
73. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary, noting that the texts could be used as references and precedents in order to guide the Assembly through the texts.
74. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that the first thing was to decide whether to approve the first two amendments that pertained to language. With regard to the latter part of the paragraph, it appealed to the delegations to use the same language that was approved in New York with no *new* expressions, interpretations or paraphrases, while possibly adding footnotes to indicate the specific goal. The delegation added that it was not the mandate of UNESCO or the Convention to move forward with concepts of renewable energy and environmental protection.
75. The delegation of **Greece** was in favor of keeping the initial wording of paragraph 183 in all three cases and felt that there should not be any softening of the wording, as it was completely compatible with the Convention and with the views expressed in the room. Moreover, it wished to comment on one issue repeatedly raised by Brazil: that this Convention was about culture and that it could not interfere with other issues. The delegation maintained that intangible cultural heritage concerned the livelihoods of people with the issues of sustainable development at its core.
76. Having carefully listened to the debate, the delegation of **Portugal** understood that it should not shy away from its serious responsibility as a State Party, and that it was very committed to move forward with the Convention. With regard to the first part of the amendments proposed by Brazil, the delegation felt that the purpose was not to lower the ambition but to employ the diplomatic language normally used in this kind of form. For the latter part of the paragraph, and having recalled the Goals of the 2030 Agenda by the Secretariat, the delegation was of the view that while the Assembly was ambitious, it had to be precise. It thus suggested including either a footnote, as Brazil suggested, or adding ‘according to the relevant provisions in Agenda 2030’ after the mention of ‘decent employment’.
77. The delegation of **Senegal** hoped that the Assembly would come to an intelligent synthesis without having to revert back to the debate of the COP 21. It shared the same view as Portugal that the Convention and its General Assembly must contribute to extremely important issues, particularly this one. The delegation added that it was often the case that one could not be sure of interpreting the precise content of Agenda 2030. In this case, it agreed with Brazil that this interpretation might create confusion. For this reason, the inclusion of a footnote or mention of the provisions of Agenda 2030 would not be considered excessive. Nevertheless, these issues were matters of importance and the text should therefore not be devoid of that sense whose meaning would be diminished.
78. The delegation of **China** was pleased to welcome and support the addition of a new Chapter to the Operational Directives, and thanked the Secretariat and the experts for their efforts in drafting this new text. This addition combined the protection of intangible cultural heritage with sustainable development as set out in the 2030 Agenda, and this would no doubt promote and strengthen the protection of intangible cultural heritage, as there were many interlinkages between these efforts. It had carefully studied the Chapter and listened to the views expressed and it believed that the Convention and the very definition of intangible cultural heritage very clearly indicated that international human rights conventions must be taken into consideration, but it had to be a consistent with the needs of communities. Thus, when talking about safeguarding intangible heritage and its link to sustainable development, the definition in the Convention and the principles and values of UNESCO must be considered. There was an interdependence between sustainable development and intangible cultural heritage and this must therefore be underscored and brought to the fore. The Operational Directives promoted and facilitated the implementation of the Convention, and thus sustainable development in all its economic and environmental dimensions must be highlighted. In this regard, the delegation agreed with Brazil that the Convention could not be used to solve all the issues.
79. The delegation of **Morocco** reiterated its request to keep the paragraph as it was, because despite the remarks by Brazil, UNESCO was closely mandated to protect the environment to which both intangible and tangible heritage were closely linked. The delegation reminded the Assembly that Morocco was organizing the COP22 in November 2016 in Marrakech and – in consultation with UNESCO – an intangible cultural heritage village would be presented. The delegation thus believed that it was very important to discuss and evoke the close relationship between the environment and intangible heritage, as well as everything that concerned local communities with respect to poverty reduction, inequality and jobs. Thus, the delegation felt that the last sentence was very important and that the paragraph should be maintained, as presented by the Secretariat.
80. Congratulating the Chairperson on guiding the work of the Assembly, the delegation of **Algeria** shared the view put forward by Portugal and therefore supported the first and second amendments by Brazil. In the case of the third amendment, it agreed with the consensus proposal of Brazil with the footnote, or the solution proposed by Portugal.
81. The delegation of **Brazil** thanked Portugal for its proposal, as well as the remarks by Senegal and Algeria. The delegation remarked that Goal number 7 of the 2030 Agenda had the following sentence, “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”, and it would agree to include this expression if the delegations so wished. Moreover, it could also agree to other expressions used in the targets and the indicators, which referred to “affordable, reliable and modern energy, renewable energy efficient energy, clean energy, research and technology, modern and sustainable energy services”. However, the text could not use new expressions such as ‘low-carbon’ or ‘resource-efficient economic growth’, as this did not reflect the text approved in New York. Thus, it suggested either keeping the amendment by Portugal, Senegal and Algeria, which referred broadly to the Agenda, or referring specifically to Goal 7 and using exactly the same language as had been approved.
82. The delegation of **Uruguay** supported Portugal’s useful suggestion, as seconded by Senegal and Algeria.
83. Congratulating the Chairperson for his excellent work, the delegation of **Mexico** wished to make the paragraph clearer, noting that there were two different dimensions. First there was the issue of intangible cultural heritage (the subject of the Convention), and second was the part on Agenda 2030 and sustainable development. In the second line, the delegation thus proposed inserting ‘in this context’ after ‘to recognize’, i.e. “recognize in this context”. This would thus clarify that the first part, meaning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, was linked with the remainder of the paragraph, which would not change the substance of the text, as approved in New York.
84. The delegation of **Kuwait** recalled that twenty years ago it had participated in World Bank and IMF meetings during which discussions were held on many issues raised in paragraph 183, and whose institutions had the financial and human resources to accomplish those goals. However, the 2003 Convention did not really have the financial and human resources to accomplish all of these objectives. The delegation agreed with China that there was a clear relationship between intangible cultural heritage and economic development and without economic development intangible cultural heritage would diminish with many countries having faced those sorts of problems in the past. In this sense, it agreed with Algeria and Brazil that the text should not try to solve the economic problems of the world but rather focus on its mandate given its financial and human resources.
85. The delegation of **Belgium** thanked all the delegations that had spoken, adding that the proposal by Mexico was entirely appropriate in addressing the concerns expressed by Brazil. It understood that the question was not to address the other issues but rather to emphasize their interconnection with the issues concerning the Convention. The delegation did not have a problem with the proposal by Portugal and the other delegations, but only insofar as the text of the Operational Directives might appear a little dated in 15 years’ time with regard to the objectives of sustainable development in 2030, which may take another form beyond 2030. However, this was not an insurmountable problem, as the exact language contained in Goal 8 on sustainable development in particular could be used, as suggested by Brazil. The delegation thus quoted target 8.4 of Goal 8, which read, “Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation in according with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead". The delegation did not wish to include an exhaustive text, but was of the opinion that the original text, as proposed by the Secretariat, did not add anything new and did not go beyond what had been agreed with regard to sustainable development goals. It could also go along with the proposal by Portugal, although it may pose a problem in 15 years. The delegation reiterated that the Assembly would not be able to resolve all the issues advanced by the sustainable development goals, but that it must avoid weakening them in any way, comparable with the engagement of the COP 21. The delegation felt that there was absolute consensus on this point, and that the solution lay in the formulation.
86. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium for having traced a road to consensus, adding that the Assembly of course did not intend to, nor could it, produce the kind of weakness that was implied. In addition, both Belgium’s suggestion, which was to quote the text of Goal 8, and Portugal’s suggestion, as amended by Mexico, could equally lead to an agreement.
87. The delegation of **Brazil** felt that it would be good to consider the proposal of Portugal, Senegal, Algeria, Uruguay and Kuwait and refer to the quoted parts of the Agenda, namely Target 8.4 and parts of Goal 7, by adding “In accordance with the relevant provisions of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, specially Goals 7 and 8”, and then include, “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”, and “promote, sustain inclusive sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. The most important thing, from a diplomatic point of view, was to adhere to text that had already been approved and thus be stringent when approving texts and creating international legislation, and which would allow for changes in the Operational Directives some time in the future.
88. The delegation of **Morocco** thanked Belgium for its statement and supported the amendment by Mexico, which had clarified matters. In a spirit of consensus, the delegation proposed maintaining the last sentence with the added clarification proposed by Portugal.
89. The delegation of **Argentina** remarked that it concurred with Brazil, Cyprus, and Algeria regarding the benefits of inclusive economic development, and that for the sake of consensus it could accept the proposal by Portugal, Senegal, Algeria, Uruguay, Kuwait and Morocco, i.e. the addition of a reference to the relevant provisions of Agenda 2030.
90. The **Chairperson** thanked the delegations that had spoken for the rich and constructive debate. He had the impression that there were now enough elements to achieve a consensus based on the text of Goal 8, or part of that text, as well as perhaps Goal 7, along with the proposal by Portugal and Mexico. As rightly highlighted by Belgium, the Assembly was essentially facing a wording problem, albeit a delicate one. The Chairperson noted the issues of substance, and agreed that the Assembly should not weaken the commitments undertaken, for example with regard to the Millennium Development Goals or COP 21. The wording thus had to reflect a balanced viewpoint based on the opinions expressed during the debate. He thus proposed that the delegations of Portugal, Belgium and Brazil assemble informally, with the participation of any other delegations that wished to attend, to present a consensus-based paragraph for adoption during the afternoon session. With no objections, the Chairperson turned to the next paragraph.

*[The Vice-Chairperson from Senegal replaced the Chairperson who had to attend the inauguration of Latin American Week at UNESCO]*

1. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the Chairperson and hoped that the session would continue in the spirit of wisdom and intelligence. The Vice-Chair turned to paragraph 184, and with no comments or objections it was duly adopted. He then turned to paragraph 185 on income generation and sustainable livelihoods for which China had submitted an amendment to paragraph 185 (b) [the amendment saw the following insertions (in italics) to the original text “promote opportunities for communities, groups and individuals to generate income and sustain their livelihood *so that* the sustainable practice, transmission and safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage *can be ensured*”]. With no comments or objections, paragraph 185 was adopted. Paragraphs 186 and 187 were also presented and adopted. The Vice-Chair noted an amendment by Brazil to paragraph 188 on environmental sustainability.
2. The delegation of **Brazil** explained that its amendment concerned the mention of a ‘stable climate’ in the text, as nobody was capable of ensuring a stable climate. It therefore proposed changing the paragraph to ‘States Parties are encouraged to acknowledge the contribution of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to environment sustainability and also are encouraged to recognize that environmental sustainability, sustainably managed natural resources and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity […]’, as this reflected international language. In addition, a slight modification was suggested, which would read as ‘would’ or ‘could gain from improved scientific understanding and knowledge-sharing about’.
3. The delegation of **Philippines** wished to make a general remark about the entire section, noting the very expansive nature of all the amendments and the substantive discussion that had taken place, which reflected the great importance of and interest in these amendments shown by all the delegations. Nevertheless, the delegation remarked on the recommendatory nature of the paragraphs that *encouraged* States Parties, and thus wished to know how these would be operationalized once they had been adopted in the Operational Directives. Would States Parties be expected to take all of these into account when submitting nominations to any of the Lists? Would they be expected to take them into account when producing periodic reports? The delegation felt that this clarification would be helpful and would also help assuage some of the questions in the minds of States Parties. From a first reading, the section did not really appear operational, as Operational Guidelines or Directives tended to concern deadlines, formats of applications and so on. Was this then pertinent in the Operational Guidelines? Or could it perhaps be included as a supplementary text? The delegation felt that reflecting on these questions before proceeding would help facilitate the debate, though it had no final position and was open to discussing this matter further with all delegations.
4. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the Philippines for its pertinent remarks and invited the Secretariat to offer some clarification before continuing with the amendment by Brazil.
5. The **Secretary**recalled that the Chapter had been discussed twice in the Intergovernmental Committees and that it had been the subject of an expert meeting. The Convention itself referred to sustainable development in its text, and was not part of an annex; it was an integral part of the Operational Directives. This did not however imply that the 2003 Convention was responsible for resolving the issues of climate change, but rather that in integrating intangible cultural heritage policies (though not necessarily linked to nominations) into intangible cultural heritage work at the country level, the broader understanding of the relationship of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development becomes part of that policy. The Secretary reiterated that the text had been discussed twice by the Committee and that it had been the subject of an expert meeting and was something that new Member States had been requesting for some time.
6. The **Vice-Chairperson** found these clarifications to be important, adding that since the last Committee session these texts had evolved and had taken into account the majority of the concerns on the issue of sustainable development. However, as remarked upon by the Philippines, there was indeed a need for clarification between the Operational Guidelines and recommendations as to what was required. The Vice-Chair opened the floor for further comments, and if none, would return to paragraph 188.
7. The delegation of **Brazil** wished to support the remarks by the Philippines. It understood that a group of experts had proposed the text and the Committee had considered the text; however, the General Assembly was sovereign to discuss the issue and decide whether or not to approve it. The delegation found the proposed text in the Operational Directives to be rather excessive for a culture convention, as it made little sense to attempt to solve all the problems of education, environment, health and employment when preparing a file on capoeira for example. The delegation explained that this was the reason behind its detailed and careful examination of the formulation, so as to not adopt recommendations and language that were beyond the scope of the Convention. It sought a more flexible language to avoid creating more problems than solutions.
8. The delegation of **Morocco** was not convinced of the position expressed by Brazil. It did not agree with the first amendment by Brazil to delete ‘stable climate’, but could accept it. However, the delegation could not accept the second amendment on the protection of biodiversity, adding that the original sentence was better before Brazil’s amendment.
9. The delegation of **Brazil** clarified that it had proposed language that was internationally approved in biodiversity conventions on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, adding that it was employing the technical term, and this was thus not a matter of being better or worse but rather an attempt to align with approved language on biodiversity.
10. In response to the proposal by Brazil, the **Secretary** noted that “conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity” had already been approved in paragraph 180 (d), and thus it would be consistent to employ the same terms.
11. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the clarification, and turned to paragraph 188. With no further comments or objections, it was adopted. The following paragraphs 189–191 were also adopted without objection. There was an amendment to paragraph 193, but the Vice-Chair suggested adjourning the session for lunch, and gave the floor to the Secretary for some announcements.
12. The **Secretary** reminded the Assembly that there would be a daily Q&A session on the global capacity-building programme during the lunch break. The ICH/NGO Working Group was also meeting during lunch. Also, as part of the Week of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Latin American Gastronomy Fair had been launched, proposing regional specialties at the Fontenoy restaurant every day until Friday.

*[31 May 2016, afternoon session]*

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

*[The Chairperson reprised his role]*

1. The **Chairperson** returned to a new paragraph 183, which was proposed based on informal consultations between Belgium, Brazil and Portugal, as well as other interested delegations that reflected the consensus from the debate. The Chairperson projected the very positive amendment on the screen and thanked all the delegations involved in its drafting. With no comments or objections, paragraph 183 was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraphs 192 and 193, recalling that the preamble paragraph on ‘peace and security’ would be conditioned by the decisions made on these paragraphs. The Chairperson gave the floor to Brazil for its amendment to paragraph 192.
2. The delegation of **Brazil** explained that in line with its earlier remarks, it would propose some amendments to soften the language so that the Operational Directives would not be the place to discuss the very delicate issues that were normally debated at the United Nations Security Council and other places on the issue of peace and security. The delegation acknowledged its importance, its strong inter-relations with the issues of sustainable development, and recognized the terms within the 2030 Agenda. However, it was not one of the pillars of the Agenda. Thus, the amendments proposed would soften the language and avoid mentioning certain complicated issues such as “conflict, discrimination and all forms of violence”. The delegation sought a more direct paragraph ‘inviting’ the States Parties to acknowledge the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage to the issue of peace and security, and recognizing that they are inter-related and contributed to sustainable development. In addition, the delegation did not think that ‘Peace and security’ was an appropriate sub-title to these paragraphs, and suggested ‘Inter-relations’ or ‘The relevance of peace and security for sustainable development’, as proposed by Palestine. The delegation reminded the Assembly that the 1972 Convention, when incorporating the provisions of the 2030 Agenda, did not include them in the Operational Guidelines. Instead, a separate concept paper was approved by the General Assembly, offering some guidelines. In this case, the present Assembly was introducing directives to the Convention that were legally binding for all States, which could represent a burden to some States in the future or could present problems associated with the submission of nominations.
3. The delegation of **Italy** felt that the proposals by Brazil only weakened the meaning of the paragraph, adding that the texts were the result of work by experts in a long process that had taken place over the past two Committee meetings. This debate had also taken place at the last Executive Board and in the context of the #[Unite4Heritage](http://www.unite4heritage.org/en/unite4heritage-celebrating-safeguarding-cultural-heritage) group. The issue of intangible cultural heritage within the context of peace and security and in policies to enlarge peace and security at the global level had been widely discussed. Intangible cultural heritage was accepted today as being part of overall security policies, especially at the request of several Member States at the beginning of the debate, about 18 months ago. Moreover, this decision had been confirmed several times at the level of the Executive Board and the General Conference [of UNESCO]. The delegation recalled Resolution 48, which had been approved in November [by the General Conference] and which considered intangible heritage as an integral part of global security policies. Thus, it was very important to keep the paragraph as proposed. The delegation also raised a point of procedure, citing Rule 11.2, “As a general rule, no draft resolution or amendment shall be discussed or put to the vote unless It has been circulated reasonably in advance to all participants in the working languages of the Assembly", adding that there was a doubt as to whether this discussion could even take place.
4. The delegation of **Morocco** supported the remarks by Italy, adding that these substantial amendments only served to weaken the text, noting that the amendments had been hastily put together, which made it difficult to reflect and make decisions. Nevertheless, it wished to maintain paragraph 192 in its original form before Brazil’s amendment, as the right to live free of conflict, not to be subjected to discrimination or violence, has a direct relationship with intangible cultural heritage, as do discrimination due to gender, of women and girls.
5. The delegation of **Greece** agreed wholeheartedly with Italy and Morocco, and was in favor of keeping all the original paragraphs because the new directives had been thoroughly discussed in at least two intergovernmental committees and one expert meeting, amounting to two years’ work, thus giving ample time to reflect upon them. With regard to the point raised as to why these Directives were being included here and not in other culture conventions, such as the 1972 Convention, the delegation explained that the difference lay in the fact that the 2003 Convention dealt with living culture and heritage, and thus ‘sustainability’ was key. The delegation felt that it was important to elaborate on the meaning of sustainability in several issues that included peace and security, tourism and energy, and thus the 20 or more directives presented to the Assembly were amply justified. In addition, they had been reflected upon on many occasions at the various Committee meetings, Evaluation Bodies and so on. More importantly, these directives could be helpful to communities, helping them to maintain the sustainability of their practices in their lives. Thus, these directives helped communities understand the notion behind sustainability, and they also helped the Committees and Evaluation Bodies to evaluate certain files by making their work clearer with regard to the Convention.
6. The delegation of **Belgium** joined Italy, Morocco and Greece in wishing to keep the original wording, especially the words “discrimination and all forms of violence”, because they were specifically referred to in Agenda 2030 in relation to discrimination and violence against women and girls; gender issues that the delegation found very important.
7. The delegation of **Venezuela** reiterated its commitment to peace and the framework of UNESCO. However, it believed that UNESCO was not the competent body to take up the sensitive issues of security, as clearly explained by Brazil, which was the mandate of United Nations bodies such as the Security Council. Thus, it was not a good idea to risk politicization of the Convention with issues that were inconsistent with its mandate, and which in fact detracted from the original text of the Convention. The delegation explained that the political and legal implications might create a risk for the Convention if the Assembly strayed beyond its competence, and thus it supported Brazil’s amendments.
8. The delegation of **Ecuador** agreed with the analysis presented by Brazil. In general, it opposed the term ‘security’ when it appeared in the Convention, as historically ‘security’ had links to more serious concepts such as foreign interference, and thus it was against this security-based vision of the Convention. It was not as if States were going to develop security measures. The delegation felt that UNESCO should focus on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, which was its mandate, where it could intervene more positively in building peace. Additionally, UNESCO’s effectiveness was linked to it not taking up subjects that were not those of other bodies.
9. The delegation of **Algeria** supported the amendment by Brazil, adding that it was clearly and concisely presented. It also welcomed the work carried out in drafting the text, and recognized the efforts made. However, the role of the Assembly was to discuss the texts in a precise manner, as it was not a body of endorsement.
10. In terms of substance, the delegation of **Philippines** wished to put on record that it was open to discussing the amendments by Brazil and could even accept them. Nevertheless, it reiterated its view that there should probably have been more consultation on all these amendments and on the entire section, as this caused some discomfort to some delegations. Even though the delegation understood that the text had been widely discussed at an expert meeting and by the Committee itself, the fact that the General Assembly comprised all States Parties meant that there could have been a wider consultation process. It further reiterated that the Operational Directives dealt with very specific issues, such as nominations, the Fund, reporting, participation and, as stated earlier, they were recommendatory with higher policy language. It therefore questioned the inclusion of such issues within the Operational Directives. Nevertheless, it also supported delegations that stated it was the prerogative of the General Assembly to discuss these texts, as it was applicable to all States, which ultimately had to implement the provisions. The delegation sought some clarification on the expectations from States Parties upon the adoption of the Operational Directives, and how they would be expected to implement these paragraphs, i.e. would it be through the reporting process, or through the submission of nominations? Some clarification would thus help in deciding how best to deal with these very valuable amendments. Concluding, the delegation was not against any of the amendments in substance, as they were all very valuable and offered good guidance not only to States Parties but also to communities themselves; it was just a matter of process.
11. The delegation of **Cyprus** wished to keep the original text, especially the reference to ‘peace and security’ and the term ‘conflict’. It spoke of the Bureau meeting of the Second Protocol that had taken place the previous week in which synergies between the 1954 Convention[[13]](#footnote-13), the Second Protocol and the 2003 Convention had been discussed.
12. The delegation of **Zimbabwe** made reference to the UNESCO Constitution, which stated, “since wars [begin] in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that [the defences of] peace [must be constructed]”. In that respect, the delegation believed that the issue was not one of ‘peace’, because it is a given, but rather the interpretation of ‘security’. It therefore proposed maintaining ‘peace’ but removing the reference to security in line with Brazil’s proposal to remove the inter-connection between peace and security.
13. The delegation of **Brazil** insisted that it could not accept the adoption of paragraph 192 with its original language in the Operational Directives, as they were legally binding. It also remarked that there was no statement in the 2030 Agenda in which the following was stated: “recognize that peace and security – including freedom from conflict, discrimination and all forms of violence – are prerequisites and catalysts for sustainable development”. This new concept had thus been introduced into the Convention with little regard for the issue of peace and security, particularly as this was not the 1954 Convention or the Second Protocol nor even the 1972 Convention. In the case of the 1972 Convention, where conflict has caused heavy damage, these concepts had not been introduced into the Operational Guidelines. Thus, the delegation was not ready to accept this paragraph, and even if other Member States approved it, Brazil would not recognize that paragraph as valid. The delegation was amenable to trying to reach a compromise, but it would not accept creative language in the area of peace and security introduced in a culture convention of UNESCO.
14. The delegation of **Norway** noted the desire to harmonize the outcomes of New York with the 2030 Agenda, quoting the preamble of *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*[[14]](#footnote-14) on peace, which read, “We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence.” The delegation understood by this that societies that were free from fear and violence meant societies that were secure, such that ‘peace and security’ was very logical. It therefore strongly recommended maintaining the original text.
15. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and welcomed Mr Curtis as Secretary of the Convention. It agreed with the Philippines that this paragraph should have been considered with more consultation. The delegation also agreed with the amendments by Brazil and with the arguments presented by Brazil, Venezuela and Ecuador. The delegation felt there had been a misinterpretation of the word ‘security’, as was clearly explained by Zimbabwe, adding that the Convention aimed to ensure social cohesion, equity and lasting peace, but that security was not part of that mandate, which was the remit of the Security Council. Thus, it accepted the amendments by Brazil, with the arguments put forward by the Philippines.
16. The delegation of **France** joined the other delegations, notably Morocco, Greece, Italy, Belgium and Cyprus in wishing to maintain the text. As noted in the document *Transforming Our World* dedicated to the adoption of the [sustainable] development programme post-2015, the delegation believed that there could be no sustainable development without peace and security, and thus these were important paragraphs to maintain.
17. The delegation of **Italy** clarified that the aim was not to define policies for peace and security at UNESCO, which it obviously could not do, but that the text was simply stating that peace and security were essential to protect and promote intangible cultural heritage. The delegation briefly read the first article of the UNESCO Constitution, “The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security [...]”.
18. The delegation of **Tunisia** believed that the very nature of intangible cultural heritage was such that one had to deal with the context in which it was present, which included peace, security and equality, without which such heritage would not exist or have any value. Thus, it understood the sensitivity surrounding the concept of security, as it could obviously be interpreted in many different ways, even negatively, and yet the reference can be found elsewhere in other texts. The delegation thus echoed the remarks by those delegations wishing to keep the original draft because it believed that the proposed amendments weakened the text and the paragraph as a whole.
19. The delegation of **Turkey** wished to follow the spirit of the founding of UNESCO, namely that lasting peace was an essential goal. With regard to security, it was necessary so that intangible cultural heritage could be passed on from generation to generation in a safe society. It believed that peace and security would help the transmission of intangible cultural heritage and the participation of communities. Moreover, the Convention encouraged multinational files for a rapprochement between cultures, for which peace and security was a prerequisite. For these reasons, it supported the original text proposed and discussed by the Committee.
20. The delegation of **Cuba** congratulated the Chairperson and was pleased that he was chairing the proceedings. Having closely followed this debate, it decided to follow the Chairperson’s proposal with regard to the preamble, and to go along with Brazil’s amendments together with Ecuador, Algeria, Venezuela, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The delegation explained that standard-setting instruments were not set in stone and could be revised on the basis of changes in the United Nations system, adding that the adoption of the Development Agenda was an important time for reflecting on all these issues. It acknowledged that questions of culture in the case of armed conflict and relations of peace and security were becoming increasingly prominent in debates in the United Nations. In any case, the delegation agreed entirely with the amendments to paragraph 192, adding that it could not accept the paragraph as it was currently worded.
21. The delegation of **Peru** recognized the validity of the opinions both for and against the amendments proposed by Brazil, whose purpose was to set the spirit of the Convention, while ensuring that it remained within its limits. It was clear that nobody doubted the importance of peace and security or its relevance for the Convention. However, it chose to agree with those that supported the amendments tabled by Brazil, adding that the original paragraph raised some ‘peace and security’ issues in that it broadened the field to include subjects that were not relevant to the Convention.
22. The delegation of **El Salvador** congratulated the Chairperson on his chairmanship, and the able way he was conducting the debates. It echoed its support for Venezuela, Ecuador, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Cuba, Brazil and Peru, adding that ‘peace and security’ were inappropriate concepts to be taken up in this paragraph of the Operational Directives, which amounted to an unnecessary politicization of the Convention. The delegation thus agreed to the deletion of the reference to peace and security.
23. The delegation of **Belgium** had difficulty understanding the positions expressed and that the terms of the debate.
24. The **Chairperson** interrupted the delegation for a point of order.
25. The delegation of **Norway** apologized for having interrupted Belgium, but as a question of procedure, noted that only the names of countries that supported the amendments were listed on the screen and it also wished to see the names of those countries that sought to keep the original text.
26. The **Chairperson** noted another point of order raised by Cuba.
27. The delegation of **Cuba** explained that the countries in support of the amendments projected onto the screen were recorded, as was their entitlement. Conversely, there was no reason to list the names of those delegations that were for the un-amended paragraphs unless they proposed an amendment, and then of course their name would be recorded.
28. The **Chairperson** concurred that the list on the screen included the countries that had tabled amendments, not supported one or other of the positions. However, it was clear, having listened to the debate, that there was more or less an equivalent number of countries in favor of keeping the original text and those in favor of amending it. At the same time, there were countries that had stated it would be very difficult for them to accept the original text while others had expressed the opposite; that it would be difficult to accept the amendments. The Chairperson would continue with the debate, but called upon the delegations to trust the wisdom of the Assembly to find the ways and means of making the right decisions that were satisfactory to all the delegations.
29. The delegation of **Belgium** felt that the discussions had been somewhat dramatized, which had not helped the debate. It was obvious that UNESCO did not encroach on the prerogatives of the Security Council, the idea of which was quite absurd. However, it was an objective fact that the life and work of UNESCO with regard to tangible or intangible cultural heritage has – unfortunately for some years now – been faced with dramatic consequences specifically as a result of security due to problems of crisis and conflict. For years now, UNESCO had observed a link between the destruction of tangible and intangible heritage and the destruction of cultural pluralism in crisis situations; the two were invariably linked. Intangible heritage had suffered immense, inconceivable damage in recent years, precisely because of conflict and worsening security. This was thus a real challenge for UNESCO, both upstream in places of potential crisis and downstream in post-conflict situations. It was also a real challenge to maintain the intangible heritage of uprooted populations such as internally displaced refugees. It was obvious that UNESCO had no vocation to directly address these conflict situations, much less under the Operational Directives, yet at the same time it could not ignore intangible cultural heritage within its context, time and history. It was thus important to consider the conditions in which intangible cultural heritage developed in order to safeguard it, and it was this state of affairs that was being reflected in the draft Operational Directives. Moreover, this text had not appeared from nowhere; many experts had been working on it for months and years, and the delegations had had ample time to reflect on its substance. The delegation explained that the two minor paragraphs in the draft Operational Directives were miniscule compared to the entirety of the Operational Directives, and that its purpose was to incorporate the contextual dimension of intangible cultural heritage as it was experienced on the ground. It was from this angle that the Assembly should consider the text, and thus avoid any unnecessary dramatization and pretence of UNESCO’s mandate vis-à-vis security.
30. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium for helping to clarify the nature of the paragraph, adding that the inter-relation between ‘peace and security’ on the one hand, and ‘the protection and safeguarding of intangible heritage’ on the other was a possible way out of the situation.
31. As previously stated, the delegation of **China** believed in the very strong link between the protection of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, adding that one could not talk about sustainable development without the 2003 Convention. Recalling the origins of the 2003 Convention, the delegation explained that sustainable development could contribute towards the promotion of intangible cultural heritage when inscribing an element, and that the Operational Directives provided guidance in the implementation of the Convention in this regard. Thus, the Assembly should be vigilant and concentrate on the essential content and objective of the Convention, which is the protection of intangible cultural heritage. For all of these reasons, the delegation supported Brazil’s amendment.
32. The delegation of **Algeria** wished to clarify a couple of points. Firstly, that nobody was against peace and security, and it would be nonsense to say otherwise given that the States Parties presence was proof, if any were needed, of their intent to preserve peace and security in their societies. The delegation felt that the debate had crystallized into a misunderstanding of each other’s positions, which was divisive. For example, "and recognizes that peace and security contribute to sustainable development" and so on, as explained by Brazil, were considerations and concepts that were not yet mature and were being discussed in other fora. The delegation therefore counted on the Chairperson’s wisdom to find a solution.
33. The delegation of **Latvia** supported the position held by Italy, Belgium, France, Greece and many other States Parties in favor of maintaining the original language of the paragraph.
34. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** understood the concerns underpinning both proposals, and even though it was in favor of Brazil’s amendments, and supported those countries that took the same line, the two amendments did not appear to be linked or along the same lines. The delegation thus proposed, after “peace and security”, adding ‘within the framework or the competence of UNESCO and the provisions of the Convention on the Intangible Cultural Heritage’.
35. The delegation of **Argentina** reiterated that the proposal and explanation by Brazil called into question neither the importance of peace and security nor the need to safeguard intangible cultural heritage from violence, especially from armed conflict. Moreover, the draft amendment by Brazil did not delete ‘peace and security’ from the text, notwithstanding the comments made on ‘security’, which were nonetheless rather reasonable and logical. Following on from the remarks by Belgium, the delegation concurred that the Assembly should not have a divisive discussion around the two amendments, even though it felt that Brazil’s amendments, as worded, were quite reasonable.
36. The delegation of **Egypt** agreed with the remarks made by Brazil, Venezuela, Algeria, El Salvador and a number of other delegations, and it thus supported Brazil’s amendment, whose clarifications were very convincing and satisfactory.
37. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that there were two distinct positions in the room and, having carefully listened to Zimbabwe’s reasonable proposal and also some Member States that referred to texts in the preamble of *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, suggested using the beginning of its paragraph verbatim. In this way, the Assembly was not creating new language or introducing new concepts, and it would repeat text that had been approved by Heads of State in New York, which also mentioned peace. The delegation quoted from the document, which read, “foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence”, and “There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development”. In revising its proposal, the delegation explained that it sought to reach a consensus, and thus proposed the following, “States Parties are encouraged to acknowledge the contribution of safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to foster”, followed by the language approved in New York, which read, “to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.” In this way, the text would refer to the document, as well as concepts approved in New York, which would be integrated into the language of the Convention. The delegation further explained that it was simply cautious about using creative language and moving faster than in New York in trying to introduce new concepts that were not consensual between the Heads of States and between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. In addition, it suggested changing the title of the sub-chapter to ‘Peace’ and not ‘Peace and security’ in line with the document approved in New York, and as proposed by Zimbabwe. The delegation believed that the revised amendment was very reasonable in that it employed the same language to integrate the idea of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as approved in New York, adding that this was the consensual approach adopted earlier together with Belgium in reaching a consensus [refer to paragraph 238].
38. Thanking Brazil, the **Chairperson** believed that its proposal took into consideration the consensual open-mindedness shown by Belgium, as well as by Zimbabwe and the United Arab Emirates in their proposals. The revised amendment was projected onto the screen, and the Chairperson asked the delegations left to speak not to make specific reference to the revised amendment until all the delegations had been given an opportunity to state their positions. In this way, the Assembly would move forward in finding a solution.
39. The delegation of **Ecuador** remarked that some proposals had not been noted down, for example its own proposal to delete the word ‘security’, though it could accept the rest. It reiterated that UNESCO should not broach the question of security, and that it should be left out of discussions and decisions in the Operational Directives and should focus on peace instead. The delegation conceded that references to ‘security’ appeared in some UNESCO conventions, but that UNESCO was not the competent body to deal with security or universal justice or human rights, and was thus against its use. The delegation also spoke of certain historical problems that were brought about by foreign interference and for this reason, it supported Brazil’s proposal.
40. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** spoke of having listened carefully to the debate in order to reach a mature position vis-à-vis the different proposals on peace and security, for which it was grateful to Brazil. The delegation agreed that the notion of peace and security was very dear to all, but that the Assembly’s role was to adopt Operational Directives and that meant producing guidelines for the implementation of the Convention. The original text was thus not helpful from an operational point of view, and in an effort to move forward, it believed the use of the word ‘security’ was not appropriate in the context of UNESCO. It shared the same concerns as other delegations, and the Philippines in particular, and thus agreed with the last proposal by Brazil, supported by Ecuador.
41. The delegation of **Cyprus** had wanted to speak prior to the new proposal by Brazil in order to propose a 15-minute break, adding that the revised proposal would likely spark a further round of discussion for a couple of hours.
42. The **Chairperson** reiterated that after the speakers’ list he would make a procedural suggestion in order to help reach a solution.
43. The delegation of **Senegal** felt that the Assembly had reached an impasse and, moving forward, it was important to recall the aim of the exercise, which was to align the Operational Guidelines with the sustainable development Agenda adopted by the Heads of States and governments. The delegation recognized the outstanding job carried out by the experts in formulating the text, but the Assembly was nevertheless the sovereign and supreme body of the Convention and could thus decide on the text presented by the experts. Moreover, the text presented concepts that were not fully developed and that were superfluous in a discussion of the Operational Directives. The delegation did not think that maintaining its preference for the original text would move the debate forward, particularly as Brazil’s compromise proposal was drafted in the right spirit, and it was important to adopt a text that was consensual. It therefore encouraged the Assembly to adopt a spirit of compromise on the basis of Brazil’s proposal, which was aligned with the Agenda 2030, and thus offered a solution. In addition, as the Operational Directives demanded precision, not least because the concepts required implementation in Member States, the idea of referencing text already adopted in New York appeared to be the right thing to do. If delegations were not convinced, then the Assembly could continue to work towards a solution, but the delegation encouraged the Assembly to move forward.
44. The delegation of **Bangladesh** congratulated the Chairperson on his able leadership and wisdom. It also appreciated the role played by the Secretariat and Ms Cécile Duvelle in perfectly carrying out the activities of the Convention, and it welcomed the new Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis. The delegation believed that efforts, within or outside of UNESCO, should promote sustainable development, the spirit of which should be considered in activities concerning the promotion and protection of intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the Assembly should exercise caution in that it should not in any way impose unnecessary limitations on developing countries or on their ability to submit nominations to the Lists. The delegation noted that the word ‘security’ had divided the Assembly and thus – in the spirit of flexibility – suggested deleting the word, as proposed by some delegations, and replacing it with ‘promotion of peace’.
45. The delegation of **Italy** thanked Brazil for its new proposal, which was moving in the right direction though there was still some work to do. Nevertheless, it agreed with Brazil that the wording should be aligned with the approved wording in other multilateral fora where Member States were also represented. The delegation wished to propose a new formulation in the new version of paragraph 192, adding that even though it was true that ‘there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development’, paragraph 35 of the 2030 Agenda stated in a more precise way that “Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development”.
46. The delegation of **India** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and welcomed Mr Tim Curtis as the Secretary of the Convention. Having carefully followed the debate, it was of the opinion that the Convention was more celebratory and unified communities, and that the Operational Directives enabled States Parties to implement the Convention and thus caution should be exercised in adopting any additions. In this regard, it supported the remarks by the Philippines in suggesting that more consultation was required ahead of the Assembly to achieve consensus. Alternatively, the Assembly could consider adopting the text under a different format, i.e. an Annex to the Operational Directives. The delegation also agreed with Algeria that the General Assembly is the highest body and therefore has the authority to make changes to the text proposed by experts or the Committee. It also felt uncomfortable about the concept of peace and security in the Operational Directives, and was of the view that the original text was slightly removed from the initial theme of the discussions, i.e. intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development. It therefore supported the amendment by Brazil to this particular paragraph, and was also open to the new proposal by Brazil to achieve consensus.
47. The delegation of **Morocco** was not so much concerned with aligning the text of the 2030 Agenda to the Operational Guidelines as with reaching a consensus, though it fully supported the amendment by Italy, which was taken from paragraph 35 of the 2030 Agenda. It noted that several delegations had spoken of ‘peace and security’ with a negative connotation, while others considered it more positively, adding that UNESCO had been created to build peace through education, culture and science such that it could not see ‘peace and security’ as something negative when it aspired to the proper implementation of the Convention. Moreover, it was contained in paragraph 35 of the 2030 Agenda, and the Assembly should therefore be coherent and consistent in its work.
48. The delegation of **Uruguay** thanked and supported Brazil’s consensus-based proposal.
49. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** joined in the remarks made by the Islamic Republic of Iran and India, adding that the Assembly was adopting the Operational Directives with the word ‘operational’ implying flexibility in the implementation of the Convention. From the outset, it had supported the proposal by Zimbabwe to delete the word ‘security’, recalling that together with the Philippines it sought to know how it was expected to implement this Operational Directive. The delegation spoke of a number of countries currently experiencing conflict in some regions, and in this case, would this prevent the country from submitting an element to a list of intangible cultural heritage, i.e. if a government failed to provide security in a region that suffered from a conflict situation, would this affect the inclusion of an item on the list of intangible heritage?
50. The delegation of **Greece** remarked on the situation towards consensus and supported the rephrasing of the paragraph, as proposed by Brazil and according to Italy’s amendment, adding that the discussion had brought about wisdom regarding the value of intangible cultural heritage and all its interconnected issues.
51. Thanking Greece, the **Chairperson** called upon the Secretariat to respond to the operational implications of these concepts.
52. The **Secretary** understood that there were two distinct questions: one concerning the operationalization of the Operational Directives, and the second concerning its effect on the Lists. The Secretary took the opportunity to remind the Assembly that the Operational Directives were not solely about the Lists. The Lists come under Chapter I of the Operational Directives, which is concerned with safeguarding at the international level. The proposed new Chapter VI is concerned with sustainable development at the national level, so there was no direct relevance [between the two chapters]. However, the spirit of the Convention needed to be maintained in any nomination, which included community participation and so on. With regard to the specific question – and the interpretation of the Operational Directives in relation to Chapter I – would a country in a conflict situation be ineligible for Listing? The answer was ‘no’ because Chapter I dealt with Listing at the international level, and it was not foreseen or interpreted in that regard. It was understood to refer to the implementation of intangible cultural heritage policies and sustainable development policies at the national level, which was the rationale behind Chapter VI.
53. The delegation of **Cyprus** supported Brazil’s new proposal to paragraph 192 with the amendment by Italy.
54. The delegation of **Denmark** noted that the amended paragraph, improved by Italy and others, was missing one concept from paragraph 35 related to the respect for human rights. It therefore suggested the following: ‘to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are based on respect for human rights and are free from fear and violence’.
55. The delegation of **Nepal** wished to associate with the previous speakers in congratulating the Chairperson on his election. With regard to the discussion on ‘peace and security’ and sustainable development, the delegation was of the view that the Operational Guidelines served the main objectives of the Convention, rendering it operational while keeping in mind its universalization and the listing of intangible cultural heritage. However, including concepts of a political nature that refer to conflict at the country level, and which might hinder the implementation of the Convention at the national level, would defeat the overall purpose of the universalization of the Convention itself. The Assembly should therefore very carefully consider the reality on the ground with all its ramifications and different meanings and its reflection of the characteristics of society. Nevertheless, the delegation acknowledged that there were two connotations, as explained by the Secretary: the part of the Operational Guidelines that related only to sustainable development, and the other part that encouraged communities to list their intangible cultural heritage. In that regard, the delegation supported the proposal and the amendment put forward by Brazil and supported by other delegations.
56. The delegation of **Tunisia** understood that peace and security did not have the same connotation, but in the spirit of consensus supported the amendment by Italy.
57. The **Chairperson** thanked the delegations for the lengthy and intense debate, and for expressing their positions on the original paragraph and its amendments. Despite the various viewpoints, the Chairperson remarked on a common thread and a consensus that appeared to unite the delegations. For example, it was universally agreed that armed conflict and violence affected the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and that a climate of peace is the best environment for protecting, safeguarding and developing intangible cultural heritage. Another common element that emerged and that drew upon the differing points was that the Assembly should work on the basis of a pre-existing text, with consensus on the basis of the second amendment by Brazil, along with the amendment by Italy. He then turned to Brazil to ask whether it could agree to his consensus proposal.
58. The delegation of **Brazil** thanked the Chairperson for his excellent efforts in helping to achieve a consensus. Following the debate, and on the basis of the Chairperson’s proposal on to how to proceed in adopting certain language, the delegation agreed to follow his recommendation to add Italy’s amendment to its own second amendment.
59. Before the adoption of the proposal, the delegation of **Cyprus** wished to know whether Brazil could accept the amendment by Denmark.
60. For reasons of procedure and clarity, the **Chairperson** requestedthat the Secretariat revise paragraph 192 by projecting onto the screen the second amendment by Brazil, as amended in turn by Italy, and including Denmark’s proposal.
61. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** thanked the Chairperson for the manner in which he was chairing the meeting. The delegation reminded the Assembly that the text proposed by Brazil was exactly the same as that adopted by the Heads of State in New York and thus no additional text could be inserted.
62. The **Chairperson** recalled that following the intense debate there were a series of proposals that were whittled down to two: Brazil’s amendment and Italy’s amendment, which focused on the nature of the issue. He appealed to the delegations to make an effort to approve the texts on the basis of the two amendments. The Chairperson understood that the text did not fully satisfy many of the delegations present, and that some delegations might have preferred different texts. However, consensus demanded that the Assembly remain realistic and work towards achieving the best Operational Directives in the spirit of consensus, which was so important in a Conference of States Parties.
63. Congratulating the Chairperson on his leadership, the delegation of **Ecuador** returned to the text of the 2030 Agenda and, having noted Denmark’s proposal to include human rights, to which it agreed, wished to include in parentheses, ‘including the right to development’. The delegation felt that this was very important because the Convention was committed to implementing the Agenda 2030 and its sustainable development goals, as expressed by other delegations. In other words, the additional text, ‘including the right to development’ had its place in the sentence because without development there can be no peace, nor can there be security. The delegation was thus willing to approve the text with the additional words so as to be precise in the way the texts were cited and approved by the Heads of State – a point made by Brazil.
64. The delegation of **Brazil** thanked the Assembly for all its efforts, adding that in principle it accepted the text as long as the proposed language came from the document approved in New York. It was thus willing to accept Italy’s amendment, which came from paragraph 35, even though its own proposal came from the preamble. In the same vein, it would accept the amendments proposed by Denmark and Ecuador, which also came from paragraph 35, adding that the amendment by Ecuador really balanced the text.
65. The **Chairperson** wished to know whether there was a consensus based around the two additional amendments from Denmark and Ecuador, which came from the same source, or whether the Assembly wished to revert back to the original text of Brazil and Italy, noting that they changed the focus of the text to a certain extent. With no further comments or objections, paragraph 192 was adopted with the additional amendments [Applause]. TheChairperson thanked the Assembly for its cooperation and commendable attitude, which reflected the heritage of UNESCO and the United Nations. He then turned to paragraphs 193 and 194, noting the same amendment by Brazil to the paragraphs [to replace ‘shall’ with ‘should’], both of which were adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 195, [also with the amendment ‘should’ and the use of ‘promote’ in sub-paragraph (b)].
66. The delegation of **Italy** sought clarification on the use of **‘**promote’, as this signified that measures were promoted to someone or to something, adding that ‘adopt’ was more appropriate.
67. The **Chairperson** explained that in such texts (Spanish, French or English) the idea of ‘promote’ without any specific object was referring to the *erga omnes* in Latin, i.e. it is directed to all such that they promote within the decision-making process before the entire international community in the broadest sense of the term.
68. The delegation of **Belgium** remarked that the amendment was not negligible to the extent that words implied something and would otherwise be devoid of meaning, adding that there was a difference between, ‘the State decides to adopt measures that will support such expressions, practices, representations’, and ‘the state will promote, as appropriate’. The use of ‘promote’ in this case suggested an optional act, left completely to the discretion of the State Party. In fact, completely deleting the paragraph would result in the same state of affairs. The delegation appealed to the Assembly to reflect on what it really wanted to achieve, whether States Parties should be encouraged to adopt measures to actually implement the Convention in a very concrete way, or if not then the paragraph might just as well be deleted.
69. The delegation of **Brazil** explained that the proposal behind the use of ‘promote’ lay in the idea that there were certain measures that the government would adopt, measures that it would incentivize the private sector or NGOs or others in society to adopt. However, it would accept ‘adopt’ if Member States so insisted, but together with the expression ‘adopt as appropriate’.
70. The **Chairperson** noted a consensus around the two concepts expressed by Brazil, i.e. to revert to the original text but to add ‘where appropriate’. With no further comments, it was adopted. The Chairperson noted a point of order.
71. The delegation of **Denmark** remarked that it had raised its nameplate before the adoption, adding that it would go with the consensus. However, it echoed the remarks by Belgium on the rationale behind the proposal by Brazil and as such ‘as appropriate’ was superfluous in this context. The delegation thus wished to revert to the original text.
72. The **Chairperson** assumed that Denmark wished to maintain the original text, but was not calling into question the consensus.
73. The delegation of **Mauritius** made reference to the last line before paragraph (a), which emphasized the duty of States Parties, suggesting it be changed to, ‘States Parties are expected to foster scientific studies […]’ instead of ‘invited to’, as they should ‘endeavour to recognize’, and thus have a duty to promote and so on.
74. The delegation of **Morocco** remarked that ‘where appropriate’ considerably weakened the meaning, however it would not go against the consensus. Nevertheless, it wondered why States Parties ratified the Convention if it was not to implement the Convention, having been convinced of the benefits for its communities. The question therefore was why States Parties would want to weaken the Operational Directives when they ought to strengthen the Convention by reinforcing the Operational Directives, otherwise intangible cultural heritage would be reduced to folklore.
75. Noting the broader consensus, the **Chairperson** proposed instead of ‘adopt where appropriate’, to state the following, ‘promote the adoption’, which implied deeper commitment while taking on board Brazil’s original concern. The Chairperson remarked that ‘promote the adoption’ did not indicate an imperative, but it did make clear that States should adopt the measures in order to fulfil their commitments.
76. The delegation of **Norway** accepted the Chairperson’s proposal, but wished to delete ‘where appropriate’ in the first line of paragraph 195.
77. The **Chairperson** wished to first adopt the wording in the first sentence of (b).
78. The delegation of **Morocco** also agreed with the Chairperson’s proposal, but remarked that ‘promote the adoption’ would require the deletion of ‘where appropriate’ because ‘promote the adoption’ was weaker than ‘adopted’.
79. The **Chairperson** agreed that this was indeed the idea, which was accepted by Morocco. He clarified that the proposal sought to delete ‘where appropriate’, and with no further comments, it was adopted.
80. The delegation of **Uruguay** noted a discrepancy in the French and English texts. In English, it read, ‘adopt’ and in French ‘*promouvoir l’adoption’,* which had a different meaning.
81. The **Chairperson** thanked Uruguay for pointing out the inconsistency and requested that the Secretariat change the English accordingly. The Chairperson then turned to the first paragraph of 196, and the tabled amendments.
82. The delegation of **Brazil** thanked the Chairperson for his good compromise solution in paragraph 195(b). Nevertheless, it insisted on the use of ‘as appropriate’ in the *chapeau* of the paragraph. The delegation explained that the 168 Member States had different legal systems and budgetary and legal constraints, institutional arrangements, and so on, and thus the paragraph should be adaptable to the different situations, adding that the practice in multi-lateral fora and UNESCO was to use ‘le cas échéant’ in French and ‘as appropriate’ in English. The delegation also insisted on the use of ‘encourage’, as it was more appropriate for the mechanism to have a certain flexibility so that States Parties could apply the recommendations based on their own concrete situation, level of development, availability of resources, and so on. The delegation added that it was not trying to weaken the text, but rather to have a reasonable text that could be fully applied by all Member States in their different contexts and situations.
83. The delegation of **Belgium** remarked that there were now two weaknesses to the text, which was now rendered insubstantial by the use of ‘endeavor as appropriate’, in addition to the use of the conditional verb form in ‘should’ [in place of ‘shall’], which rendered the measure completely optional. The delegation made clear that this was not its wish or the wish of other delegations. It understood the need for flexibility in order to adapt to different contexts, but considered the use of ‘as appropriate’ and ‘should’ as imbalanced, adding that if ‘as appropriate’ were kept then the original ‘shall’ or ‘endeavor’ should also be maintained [as a compromise].
84. The delegation of **Norway** remarked that in order to remain consistent with all the other previous paragraphs, each paragraph should begin with, ‘States Parties shall endeavour’.
85. The delegation of **France** associated with the remarks made by Norway to maintain the original text so as to remain coherent with previous paragraphs, as well as to avoid weakening the text.
86. The delegation of **Morocco** supported the comments made by Belgium.
87. The **Chairperson** noted that the sentiment appeared to lean towards keeping the original wording, at least for the most part, and he proposed the following: ‘States Parties shall endeavour to’. The Chairperson conceded that the wording was perhaps not as forceful as it could be but was sufficiently forceful in expressing a political will and determination on the part of the States.
88. The delegation of **Brazil** insisted once again on keeping ‘should’ and ‘invited’, adding that it would accept the deletion of ‘as appropriate’, as preferred by France, Belgium and Norway. It repeated the compromise, i.e. to delete ‘as appropriate’, because some delegations felt it to be excessive, and maintain ‘should’, which was the word adopted in the other paragraphs, while ‘invited’ was more diplomatic in terms of recommendations to Member States.
89. The **Chairperson** asked the Assembly whether it was ready to adopt the proposal.
90. The delegation of **Belgium** spoke of its preference for the original wording, and recalled that the new text proposed to the Operational Directives had been discussed by the Committee on two occasions, not only by the independent experts. It was discussed and adopted by all the Committee Members, including Belgium, Brazil, Algeria, Peru, Egypt, India, and the many others that made up the twenty-four Members of the Committee. This of course did not mean the General Assembly, the sovereign body of the Convention, could not change if should it so wish, but it should begin its reflection based on the text put forward by the Committee if there was a large majority and a consensus in the room to move towards a change. For the moment, the delegation was not convinced of the consensus in the room to move from a very conditional wording ‘shall’ to ‘should’.
91. The delegation of **Switzerland** supported Belgium’s comments to maintain the original text.
92. The **Chairperson** reminded the Assembly that a consensus was an unwritten rule when adopting decisions, implying a broad majority without any formal objection. He therefore asked whether there were any formal objections to the original text.
93. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that in at least three other paragraphs, ‘should’ had been adopted in place of ‘shall’, with no apparent objections. Therefore, as a matter of coherence, the Assembly should maintain the same practice. The delegation explained that it had already compromised and accepted some changes to its amendment. Now that the compromise had been accepted, the Assembly appeared to retract from the compromise, which the delegation was unwilling to accept, calling it an unfair and disloyal practice. It spoke of the insistence of Belgium and other delegations to first delete ‘as appropriate’ while accepting ‘should’, only to later extend the deletion to ‘should’ once the compromise had been accepted, adding that this was not the way to proceed in diplomatic negotiations.
94. The **Chairperson** asked that Belgium and Brazil informally consult with one another to try and come up with a text, as time was flying and the Assembly had to make progress. The Chairperson believed that on the basis of the same spirit of understanding, wisdom, open-mindedness and political will the delegations could come up with a brief paragraph around which there would be a consensus on the entire paragraph 196, including part (b), which had almost exactly the same problem [of ‘promote’ versus ‘adopt’].
95. In the spirit of its earlier remarks, the delegation of **Belgium** did not believe there was consensus for the two conditional forms in this text, and that it preferred the original text, as adopted by the various Committees. If there was broad consensus to weaken the text or make it more flexible, it could adopt the wording ‘shall, as appropriate’, but not both, as this rendered the paragraph devoid of any content, thereby strongly limiting any practical application. Moreover, the delegation did not think there was a consensus to that effect.
96. The **Chairperson** suggested deleting one of the amendments in order to strike a balance.
97. The delegation of **Cyprus** fully agreed with Belgium that the two terms completely weakened the text. In addition, the first term ‘adopted’ had been deleted. It therefore wished to return to the original text, as it would not accept these amendments.
98. The delegation of **Morocco** believed that the Chairperson’s earlier suggestion, ‘States Parties shall endeavor’, was a very good proposal for consensus.
99. The delegation of **Portugal** associated with the remarks by Morocco, noting that three successive paragraphs had the same problem and yet a compromise solution had been found for one paragraph, which employed the compromise solution from the preceding paragraphs. The delegation remarked that there was a procedure to follow, and that was not to change ‘adoption’ to ‘promotion’ but instead to ‘promote the adoption’. The same situation arose in the use of ‘should or ‘shall, as appropriate’. The delegation understood that the Assembly should not weaken the text’s meaning, but at the same time States Parties should be offered some flexibility. It believed that the solutions found for the preceding paragraphs could very well apply in this paragraph, and that the States Parties strongly engaged in the discussion would certainly agree.
100. The delegation of **Algeria** associated with the remarks made by Portugal, adding that the Assembly’s role was to promote intangible cultural heritage. Far be it to weaken the text, but there should be some leeway nonetheless, depending on the various legal provisions of each country. Thus, by keeping the conditional tense, the reference to ‘as appropriate’ could be deleted. Conversely, if the conditional tense were removed, then it would be better to retain ‘as appropriate’. The delegation reminded the Assembly that everyone should be satisfied with the final text so that all States could promote their intangible cultural heritage as they conceived of it.
101. The delegation of **Uruguay** also wished to go along with Morocco and suggested taking the Chairperson’s proposal, ‘we shall endeavour’, in order to rein in the debate, and to ask Belgium and Brazil if they could agree.
102. The delegation of **Italy** supported the proposal by Morocco and Uruguay.
103. The delegation of **Turkey** supported the remarks by Belgium.
104. Referring to the situation mentioned by Belgium, i.e. having two conditionals in the same sentence, the delegation of **Brazil** explained that it would prefer to keep ‘should’ and delete ‘as appropriate’, as this would be coherent with the previous paragraphs. It remarked that in many UNESCO or UN documents, the term ‘should’ is almost always used because ‘shall’ was too strong a language in recommendations such as these. There had to be some leeway for Member States to adopt in accordance with their capacities. The delegation reiterated Brazil’s commitment to the implementation of the Convention, adding that it had been a member of the Committee from the beginning and had exercised two terms. Moreover, it had a very advanced legislation for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, but the Assembly had to be careful, as responsible diplomats, not to adopt the kind of language that could create problems in the future, hence why it proposed a more cautious and diplomatic language represented by the conditional form ‘should’.
105. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil, noting that substantial progress had been made. He remarked on the two conditional expressions referred to by Belgium and noted that Brazil sought to use the conditional, but eliminate ‘as appropriate’.
106. Noting that paragraph 195 has been adopted, the delegation of **Mauritius** remarked that changes should be made in paragraph 197 to make it coherent with paragraph 195, i.e. it should read, ‘should endeavour’, as well as ‘To that end, States Parties are expected to’.
107. The delegation of **Ecuador** wished to return to the earlier debate on security, adding that it preferred to eliminate ‘security’ in the headings of paragraphs 196 and 197 so as to be coherent with adopted paragraph 192.
108. The delegation of **Venezuela** agreed with Ecuador to delete ‘security’ from the text.
109. The **Chairperson** wished to first tackle the text, followed by the headings. He therefore asked whether the States Parties could agree to maintain ‘should’ and eliminate ‘as appropriate’ in paragraph 197, which took into account the concerns of both Brazil and Belgium. With no further comments or objections, paragraph 197 was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to sub-paragraph (a) and the amendment proposed by Brazil.
110. The delegation of **Norway** confessed to understanding less and less, adding that it was very difficult to adopt a text that was discovered [for the first time]. It regretted that the proposals had not been available beforehand, and sought to keep the original text.
111. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretariat to put the original text in bold and have Brazil’s proposal in brackets, which would make the original text clear.
112. The delegation of **Belgium** sought clarification as to the adopted text in the last sentence of the first paragraph, ‘To that end, States Parties are encouraged to’, as ‘invited’ had been mentioned as well as ‘expected’ by Mauritius, and because it was related to the subsequent sub-paragraphs. For example, the paragraph could imply, ‘encourage to ensure’, or ‘invite to ensure’, or equally ‘expect to ensure’, so they were very much interrelated.
113. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium and asked the Secretariat to clean up the original paragraph 197 so as to be left with the wording on which everyone could agree.
114. The **Secretary** clarified that the original part of the opening sentence, ‘should’, was agreed on instead of ‘shall’, and thus read, “should endeavour to recognize”. The deletion of ‘and security’ had also been agreed on. However, the Secretariat was unsure of the status of the original text, ‘encouraged to’, with Brazil having proposed ‘invited to’ and Mauritius proposing ‘expected to’.
115. The **Chairperson** remarked that in order to keep the balance in the first part of the paragraph, the expression ‘expected to’ could be used, which would solve the problem.
116. The delegation of **Brazil** would accept ‘encouraged’, the original text, and remove ‘invited’ and ‘expected’, as it would simplify this paragraph as well as the previous paragraph. It encouraged the Assembly to carefully read the original, calling it absurd as no single country in the world was able to “fully include and recognize the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities, and members of vulnerable groups”. Its amendment sought to make the paragraph fair and reasonable in that it did not change the lists of vulnerable people or indigenous peoples, but at the same it could not approve a legally binding text of a Convention that was so politically correct that it was impossible to implement. Hence its attempt to promote a reasonable amendment, which sought to say that in its safeguarding efforts it would promote inclusion, as it had been doing and would keep on doing for decades to come. The delegation added that problems and challenges would multiply along the way, but should the Assembly adopt the original text then all Member States would be in breach of the Convention as no State would be able to meet the terms of the Convention.
117. The delegation of **Belgium** remarked that it had a different interpretation, which was why it had mentioned the interconnection between the first and the second part of paragraph 197, which should be read in the conditional form. For example, the paragraph did not imply ‘will ensure’, in the sense ‘we will’; it was instead ‘encouraging to ensure’. The delegation understood the remarks by Brazil but believed that ‘encouraging to’ still left some flexibility. Returning to the question on the title of ‘security’, the delegation was unsure of what was adopted, adding that the amendment put forward by Ecuador, Venezuela and Bolivia had referred to the previous paragraph. It therefore sought some clarification in order to ensure coherence.
118. The **Chairperson** replied that the title would obviously correspond to the content of the paragraphs. He then asked the Secretariat to project paragraph 197 onto the screen, the first paragraph as adopted, otherwise the Assembly would be looking at texts that did not correspond to what was actually being adopted, which would create confusion. The Chairperson thus wished to delete everything that had not been adopted in paragraph 197, not counting the sub-paragraphs. This included deleting the reference to Brazil and only showing the text as adopted. Referring to the paragraph on the screen, the Chairperson asked the Assembly to focus on paragraph 197(a), which showed the original text and Brazil’s version, and to express an opinion on Brazil’s amendment only.
119. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** agreed with Brazil and with the explanation given on this paragraph, adding that the Assembly was not re-writing the Convention but instead working on the Operational Guidelines. Moreover, the paragraph was not really operational in that it should be seen as just a recommendation to be aligned with the 2030 Agenda.
120. The delegation of **Philippines** supported Brazil’s amendment and explanations, and also noted that much of the language was descriptive or prescriptive recommendations, as mentioned by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and in many cases also repetitive, even though it had been agreed that language borrowed from the 2030 Agenda would be used. Nevertheless, it was unclear as to why it was being repeated here. The delegation also wished to underscore that it did not think it was very operational, as it would have to draw upon operational language from the articles of the Convention and other sections of the Operational Directives to be able to give complete guidance to States Parties.
121. The delegation of **Greece** regretted this recurrent problem with the word ‘security’, which appeared to be so alarming to many. Nevertheless, with regard to paragraph 197(a), it preferred the original wording, adding that the wording as written in the original form did not imply any obligation that should alarm States or governments.
122. The delegation of **Netherlands** supported the remarks by Belgium and Greece to keep the original text.
123. The delegation of **Italy** supported the remarks by Belgium, Greece and the Netherlands, adding that the proposed amendments weakened the text rather than making it flexible.
124. The **Chairperson** called upon Brazil, the last country to ask for the floor, in order to come to a solution before the interpreters had to leave.
125. The delegation of **Brazil** made reference to the original text of the Convention, ‘Article 1 – Purposes of the Convention. The purposes of this Convention are: (a) to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage; (b) to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned’, adding that moving further beyond that meant re-writing the Convention, as the adoption of this paragraph would incur. The delegation explained that it was introducing instructions into the Operational Guidelines to move far beyond the Convention, and it challenged States Parties to prove that they had the capacity in the poor neighbourhoods of their capitals to ensure the full inclusion and recognition of the intangible cultural heritage of migrants, minorities, vulnerable groups and so on. The delegation felt that this was not a responsible paragraph, adding that Brazil sought only to bring the text to a level where it was acceptable, i.e. the paragraph could not go beyond the Convention and it would not adopt a recommendation that could not be implemented. The delegation appealed to the Assembly to pay attention to and reflect on the text, and not to approve it on automatic pilot, as it was not respecting the spirit of the Convention. The delegation asked States Parties that were unhappy with Brazil’s constructive proposal to submit a text as a third option with different language that reflected the words of the Convention. It reiterated that the original text, suggesting to ‘fully include and recognize’, was both unreasonable and unacceptable, adding that it was not just a matter of national interest or perspective but that the text was not drafted in diplomatic language and would only create many problems in the future.
126. The delegation of **Belgium** conceded that the word ‘ensure’ – even though it was combined with ‘encourage’ – posed a problem, and suggested an alternative, which read, ‘To that end, States Parties are encouraged to’, followed by ‘fully include and recognize the intangible cultural heritage’, and then finally, ‘in their safeguarding efforts’, i.e. omitting ‘ensure’ from the text.
127. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium for proposing a consensus text and suggested deleting the word ‘fully’ because it was inflexible. The Chairperson noted the following speakers Turkey, Algeria, Lithuania, Portugal and Switzerland but proposed adjourning the session and continuing the debate the following day.
128. The delegation of **Brazil** remarked that Belgium’s proposal did not address its concern in the expression ‘fully include and recognize’, noting that the Convention itself talked about ‘ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned’. It therefore suggested repeating the ‘ensure’ to read, ‘ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage’. In this way, the Assembly would not be creating anything. Thus, it sought to delete ‘fully include and recognize’ and include ‘ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage’, followed by ‘communities, groups and individuals’, adding that it would even accept the ‘indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders’. The delegation reiterated that the Assembly should adhere to the text of the Convention in Article 1, which stated, ‘to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of’, and not create a new text such as ‘fully include and recognize’.
129. Thanking Brazil, the **Chairperson** noted that it was time to adjourn, adding that it was difficult to manage time, which was sometimes an obstacle and sometimes a stimulus in the diplomatic process. In this instance, it had been a creative and positive factor because the Assembly had reached a conceptual basis for a consensus. The Chairperson suggested holding informal consultations prior to the following day’s meeting with Belgium and Brazil to finally come to an agreement that could safeguard the interests of all. He concluded by thanking the interpreters and adjourned the meeting, following an announcement by the Secretary.
130. The **Secretary** informed the Assembly that the last plenary meeting of the ICH/NGO Forum would take place the next day, and that the Bureau Members Germany, Poland, Nepal, Senegal, Kuwait and the Rapporteur, Mr Mustapha Nami, would meet before the session.

*[Wednesday 1 June 2016, morning session]*

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

*[The Chairperson reprised his role]*

1. Resuming the proceedings, the **Chairperson** spoke of the hard work on agenda item 7, reminding the Assembly that it had approved the first part of the Annex, but still had to adopt the last paragraphs of Part II and Part III of the Annex. He recalled the discussion on paragraph 197, as well as the amendments around which it had not yet come to an agreement given the wide differences of opinion. Nevertheless, thanks to informal consultations, the Chairperson believed that an agreement had been reached in principle, and he asked Belgium to present the text.
2. The delegation of **Belgium** remarked that the text, based on the text of the Convention, was now projected onto the screen.
3. Noting that there were no comments or objections, the **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 197 adopted. He then turned to the title of section VI.4 [paragraphs 192 and 193] and – on the basis of the previous day’s discussion – proposed, ‘Intangible cultural heritage and peace’, which took on board the concerns expressed by many delegations. With no comments or objections, it was adopted. The Chairperson then turned to the *chapeau* of paragraph 195, noting that the Assembly had reached a form of words around which there was a consensus but had not formally adopted it.
4. The delegation of **Brazil** recalled that despite the agreement there still remained the question of whether to use ‘encouraged’, ‘invited’ or ‘expected’ in the *chapeau*, and it suggested maintaining the original text, i.e. ‘encouraged’.
5. Noting that there were no comments or objections, the **Chairperson** adopted the *chapeau* to paragraph 195. He then turned to paragraph 195(a), which had no amendments, and was thus adopted. It was recalled that paragraph 195(b) had been adopted earlier. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 196, which was duly adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraph 196(a), and with no amendments, it was duly adopted. He then turned to paragraph 196(b), which was duly adopted with the amendment to replace ‘adopt’ with ‘promote’. Finally, the Chairperson returned to paragraph 170, recalling the long debate and the close consensus, but noting that the text had yet to be formally adopted.
6. The **Secretary** recalled that the Assembly had not reached a final outcome; there was a proposal by Brazil and a proposal by the Chairperson.
7. The **Chairperson** suggested deleting the text that had already been agreed in order to display a clean version of the text for adoption,[[15]](#footnote-15) and with no further comments, it was duly adopted. The Chairperson noted that all the paragraphs of Annex II had been adopted, and thus declared the entire section adopted. He then turned to the third set of amendments in Part III of the Annex.
8. The **Secretary** recalled that the **third set of amendments for examination was aimed at revising Chapter V of the Operational Directives on periodic reporting**, the need for which first arose from the evaluation by the IOS of UNESCO in 2013. Its main recommendations were endorsed that same year by the Committee at its eighth session and were included in three specific decisions: Decisions 8.COM 5.c.1, 8.COM 6.a and 8.COM 14.b. The Committee agreed that it was important to revise the Operational Directives so that reports by States Parties could be more oriented toward results and impacts, and give greater prominence to questions of policy and legislation. In addition, it was deemed important to encourage States to complement their reports with information provided by relevant NGOs and to add references to the role of gender, where appropriate. The revisions proposed to Chapter V of the Operational Directives included in the Annex III to [document 7](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-7-EN.docx) therefore drew upon the specific language of the Convention and the Committee’s decision, and served to clarify several existing Directives that were somewhat vague. The Committee also recommended some minor revisions in paragraphs 152, 161 and 169 to ensure they echoed and were brought into line with the language used elsewhere in the Directives concerning forms on nominations and NGO accreditation. In the same vein, a revision had been recommended by the Committee to paragraph 166 to conform to the existing practice for the Committee’s working documents.
9. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for his useful comments, opening the floor to general comments. With no requests for the floor, the Chairperson proceeded to the adoption on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, beginning with paragraph 151. With no comments or objections concerning paragraphs 151–154, they were all duly adopted. There was a slight wording change to paragraph 155, but only in the French version, otherwise it was adopted. There were no changes to paragraph 156, which was duly adopted. The Chairperson then turned to paragraphs 157, 160–162, 166 and 169, and with no comments or objections, they were all adopted. Finally, the Chairperson formally adopted Annex III as a whole.
10. The **Secretary** then turned to present the **fourth amendment to the Assembly in Annex VI on the referral option** that sought to align the evaluation procedures of the four mechanisms of the Convention. The Secretary recalled that these amendments had come about after long deliberations during previous sessions of the General Assembly and the Intergovernmental Committee. The issue was first discussed by the General Assembly at its fourth session in June 2012 when the Assembly requested that the Committee begin a process of reflection on the experience gained in implementing the referral option. The Committee launched this reflection at its seventh session, which continued through to its eighth, ninth and tenth sessions. At its ninth session, the Committee decided that given that the nominations to both Lists were now evaluated by a single Evaluation Body, it was appropriate for the procedures to be aligned, and therefore the referral option should be extended to the Urgent Safeguarding List, while retaining the possibility not to inscribe an element when the nomination file provided evidence that clearly demonstrated that the criterion was not satisfied, and that the four-year waiting period when an element is not inscribed on the Representative List should be deleted. Going one step further, at its tenth session the Committee decided that, in the interests of coherency and simplicity, the referral option should be also extended to proposals to the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices as well as to requests for International Assistance. As a result, the Committee proposed that the Assembly approve these amendments to paragraphs 30–37 of the Operational Directives.
11. The delegation of **Spain** congratulated the Chairperson on his able management and also Mr Tim Curtis for his appointment. It obviously agreed to the amendments, recalling its opposition to the proposal in the Committee to delete the referral option on the basis that the communities would suffer the most as a result. The delegation was therefore very pleased with the introduction of the referral option to all the Lists, particularly for International Assistance. Moreover, it was the duty of States Parties to modify the Operational Directives in light of the decisions in the Committees. Therefore, it wished to raise a situation before the General Assembly that it considered inconsistent and which had been repeated in recent Committees when it came to the decision-making on elements to be inscribed on the Lists. The delegation explained that this had given rise to contradictory situations in which elements that had received an equal number of votes in favour of inscription had been inscribed whereas other elements with the same number of votes in favour had not been inscribed. The delegation further explained that the anomalous situation and its irregularities should be taken into account, and that in due course it would propose a basic principle of transparency in the procedure at a time deemed appropriate by the Secretariat. It added that UNESCO was subject to transparency procedures, with a working group being created on governance, and as such it proposed that the Committee, at its next session in Addis Ababa, devote some time to the issue. Thus, it requested that the Secretariat add a very clear item on to the agenda of the Committee for debate on the procedure of inscription of new elements on the List, including requests for International Assistance.
12. The **Chairperson** thanked Spain for its remarks, adding that he was sure an item could be included in the Committee’s agenda on this important issue, to which the Secretary agreed. He then opened the floor to comments on paragraph 30, noting that these texts were subject to successful and intense negotiations, and with no comments or objections, it was duly adopted. He then turned to paragraphs 35–37, which were also adopted without objection. The Chairperson then moved to the adoption of the entire section, which was adopted. Before asking the Secretariat to present the fifth and final amendment, as regards part V of the Annex, the Chairperson opened the floor for general comments.
13. The delegation of **Viet Nam** had no objection to the revision of the text on the referral option, but took the opportunity to recall the decision by the Committee at its tenth session in Namibia on the procedures to remove an element from a List and to transfer it from one List to another. It understood that there would be an open-ended intergovernmental working group for the drafting of text in this regard. Based on its experience in transferring an element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List, it wished to reiterate its proposal of having detailed guidelines on the matter, as it believed that these procedures would create favourable conditions for other States Parties in similar cases.
14. The **Chairperson** thanked Viet Nam, noting that it had referred to a real situation that should be of interest to all States Parties. Nevertheless, the correct procedure was for the Committee to take up the issue at its next meeting.
15. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** requested a fifteen-minute period of consultation before the adoption of Resolution 6.GA 7.
16. The **Chairperson** agreed to an adjournment.

*[Pause for 15 minutes]*

1. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretary to clarify the current situation.
2. The **Secretary** reminded the Assembly that it had yet to adopt the entire Resolution 6.GA 7, and that it was currently looking at part V of the Annex, concerning the accreditation of NGOs.
3. The **Chairperson** requested that the Secretary present the text in question.
4. The **Secretary** presented the fifth and last amendment to the Operational Directive in part V of the Annex that aimed to adjust the schedule of accreditation of NGOs. He explained that Article 9 of the Convention requested that the Committee propose to the General Assembly the accreditation of NGOs with recognized competence in the field of ICH to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee. In accordance with the current procedure, at its session every year, the Committee receives and examines the recommendations submitted by the Secretariat. The Committee then submits its recommendations to the General Assembly when it meets every two years. In recent years, the Committee had been faced with an ever-increasing agenda and expressed the necessity to prioritize the workload of the Secretariat. For example, in 2014, due to limited capacities, the Secretariat was unable to treat 31 submitted requests for accreditation and therefore these requests did not reach the Committee for its ninth session. By its Decision 9.COM 14 in 2014, the Committee decided to postpone the examination of the accreditation of NGOs to its tenth session in 2015. In fact, examining the accreditation of NGOs in odd-numbered years, if made regular, could reduce the duration and agenda of the Committee meetings in even years, in line with the recommendations of the External Auditor on the governance of UNESCO and dependent funds, programmes and entities. Furthermore, such a change would not affect the accreditation process because NGOs would in any case have to wait for accreditation by the General Assembly, which only convened in even-numbered years. Consequently, and in conformity with the decision taken at its ninth session (Decision 9.COM 14), the Committee invited the Secretariat to submit amendments to the Operational Directives to reflect this change in schedule. At its tenth session in Windhoek in 2015, the Committee requested that these amendments be submitted to the present session for examination.
5. The **Chairperson** noted that there was a consensus on paragraph 98, and with no objections, it was duly adopted. He then turned to the remaining decisions, the adoption of all the Annexes and the adoption of Resolution 6.GA 7. The Chairperson remarked that given that all the individual Annexes had been adopted, the adoption of the Annexes as a whole was a formality, and he turned to the adoption of the draft Resolution 6.GA 7.
6. The delegation of **India** had a question about the section in the Operational Directives on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, adding that it was unsure whether it should be contained in the Operational Directives, as they were largely guidelines on procedures and processes, and should perhaps be made available as a separate policy or recommendations document; a similar document was being considered for the World Heritage Convention. Thus, before adopting the resolution, the delegation sought clarification from the Secretariat or from the Legal Advisor on whether this document had its rightful place in the Operational Directives.
7. The delegation of **Philippines** seconded the intervention by India. As it had previously mentioned, it also had questions regarding the section on sustainable development, adding that much of the language was descriptive, not operational, and quite far-reaching. So it too sought clarification as to why the section had to be in the Operational Directives. Moreover, was there a difference between the Operational Directives and a separate document, such as a policy document or guidelines? Would the same intention be achieved through another type of format or complementary document to the Operational Guidelines?
8. The delegation of **Cyrpus** failed to understand why this question was now being raised, i.e. whether or not to adopt this text as an annex or as a chapter of the Operational Guidelines, particularly as the Assembly was being asked to revise the Operational Guidelines of which this chapter was a part. Moreover, work on this chapter by both experts and the Secretariat had been ongoing since 2014.
9. The delegation of **Serbia** understood that this was an ongoing process that had begun in 2014, and that there was a desire to link up with sustainable development. Nevertheless, it joined the delegations that expressed concern about how to proceed with the adoption given that work on ICH at the national level involved other authorities, as stated in the document itself. Thus, it wondered how this work, although it was very appreciated and could act as a base for sustainable development, could actually be correctly applied in the future, adding that the Secretariat had not really clarified all the questions raised by the previous delegation.
10. The delegation of **Palestine** raised the point about the actual purpose of the Operational Directives, which was to facilitate and clarify the implementation of the Convention. Thus, anything that contributed to this should be included in the Operational Directives, otherwise it should be contained elsewhere. In this regard, it agreed with India and the Philippines. The delegation spoke about the sought-after synergy between conventions, culture conventions, and UNESCO, in which – increasingly – everyone was expected to contribute and pursue harmonization between conventions. With this in mind, the delegation referred to the document adopted at the World Heritage Convention, as mentioned by India, which could be considered in this case, thereby maintaining consistency, even if the wording was different and as long as the structure was the same, while keeping in mind the purpose of the issue at hand.
11. The delegation of **Morocco** disagreed with the previous speakers, despite agreeing with Cyprus, explaining that the Assembly had been working on the Operational Directives now for two days. In addition, it believed that anything related to environmental protection and peace and security had an impact on ICH and was thus beneficial for the implementation of the Convention. With regard to the procedure, it spoke of the time and effort that had gone into this text and now it appeared that it might not be included in the Operational Directives. The delegation asked the Secretariat whether there was a rule about last-minute changes, given that the Assembly had already adopted the text and that there were now doubts as to whether it should be part of an Annex or cancelled altogether.
12. The delegation of **Sweden** spoke of its confusion regarding the new question raised by some delegations, explaining that the Assembly had followed the long process and that the Assembly had adopted the text on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis on the understanding that this would be a new chapter in the Operational Directives. Moreover, a consensus had been reached on the text. However, a new question was now being raised to ascertain whether this was legal and the delegation sought to hear the legal advice from the Secretariat, though it did not believe it to be a problem given that this was the result of a two-year process and it was important to have this chapter in the Operational Directives.
13. The delegation of **Turkey** remarked on the length of time spent on the revisions, noting that the Assembly was close to reaching the end in the spirit of consensus despite difficulties with some issues. It wished to remind the Assembly that the draft text of the new chapter to the Operational Directives had been distributed after the meeting of category 6 experts in Istanbul in 2014, following the decision of the Committee meeting in Baku. The Committee had twice examined the text proposed by the Secretariat during its ninth session in Paris and its tenth session in Windhoek.. The Committee had accepted the text presented as part of the Operational Directives, examining it paragraph by paragraph. Thus, the text under examination was not a proposal by the Secretariat but a proposal and decision from the Intergovernmental Committee. The delegation called upon the Legal Advisor to recall the history of the proposed Operational Directives and the decisions of the Committee.
14. The delegation of **Belgium** appreciated that it did not have to convince anyone of the importance of sustainable development, which was at the heart of the Convention, where it was referenced in several places. Speaking of the process, the delegation associated with the question put forward by Turkey, adding that there might also be some confusion about the procedures and the history of this issue, which went back even further than two years. The delegation recalled that there had been an evaluation of the standard-setting work in the Culture Sector conducted in 2013, with some recommendations to integrate the issue into the Convention text. In addition, there had been several Committee decisions and an expert meeting in Istanbul on this topic. Thus, it also sought a clear overview of the timeline of events from the Secretariat.
15. The delegation of **Brazil** spoke about Resolution 13, adopted during the twentieth session of the General Assembly of the World Heritage Convention, in which a revised policy document had been put forward as a first step towards the integration of sustainable development into the implementation process of the Convention. The delegation recalled that it had also proposed many amendments during that particular session, which had resulted in a very good text; this was very similar to the one being discussed in the present session. The question was why one Convention was incorporating the ideas of the 2030 Agenda as a policy document, while another Convention was drafting extensive Operational Guidelines that were not in harmony with the spirit of other Operational Guidelines. Before adopting the resolution, the delegation suggested reflecting on having a more balanced perspective, for instance, by adopting paragraphs 170–176 as Operational Guidelines, and then the rest of the text as a policy document, as in the case of the World Heritage Convention. The delegation further explained that issues such as food security, healthcare, quality education, gender equality, income generation, sustainable livelihoods and so on, did not belong in the Operational Directives, even though the issues were important. The delegation referred to the concerns raised by some delegations as to whether this was the right procedure, i.e. should the issues around sustainable development be included in the Operational Directives, or should they be contained in a policy document, as was the case for the 1972 Convention? There could, for instance, be a compromise that involved adopting the introduction to the Operational Guidelines itself, while the details and considerations about the many aspects of sustainable development could become a very important and relevant policy document that could even be further discussed, improved and adapted in the future in an ongoing process that offered flexibility rather than just being contained within the Operational Directives.
16. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** remarked that the debate during the present session discussed the link between the 2003 Convention and sustainable development, as elaborated in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, as well as the link between safeguarding ICH, peace and sustainable development. The delegation believed that laying out all the details in the Operational Directives might result in confusion and misunderstandings, as mentioned by a number of delegations. As expressed by Brazil, it was obvious and important to stress the link between the Convention and sustainable development, but that it could not be applied across the board to all areas. The aim in the Operational Directives was simply to introduce the idea and the close ties between the Convention and sustainable development, and possibly introduce a summary to outline the link between peace, sustainable development and the Convention. Moreover, the delegation sought clarification on how the Operational Directives would be applied in practice, as well as the implication for the Operational Directives.
17. The delegation of **Greece** remarked that the Assembly was facing two different problems, one of which was procedural, i.e. how to proceed after a broad consultation had already taken place in previous Committees meetings and in the current Assembly regarding the issues on sustainable development. While awaiting clarification from the Legal Advisor and the Secretariat, the delegation was of the view that these issues had their place in the Operational Directives. Reference was made to the second point raised, i.e. why should this Convention go to so much trouble when other conventions had not done so, for example, the World Heritage Convention did not include its ideas about sustainable development in its Operational Guidelines. The delegation explained that the answer lay in the nature of the 2003 Convention because it involved people and processes and not finished objects such as monuments and artefacts, as in the World Heritage Convention. The 2003 Convention dealt with peoples’ lives and thus sought to enhance sustainable practices, which was why an extensive chapter on sustainability was included in the Operational Directives. The Convention was not about finished objects of culture, as with other conventions, but rather dealt with processes and cultural practices. For these reasons, the delegation believed that the Operational Directives should be as detailed as possible on the issue of sustainability. Much had been said about sustainability, and thus the Operational Directives was an opportunity to explain to those implementing the Convention about associated issues such as food security, clean water, and peace and security, so that their practices could contribute to sustainability. The delegation further explained that it should be very clear to communities that their practices should be enhanced and valued first by themselves. The purpose of the Convention was for people to be cognizant of the fact that cultural practices contribute towards peace and security in the world, to food security and clean water. This is why the delegation believed that all these lengthy texts belonged in the Operational Directives, unlike in other conventions.
18. The delegation of **Latvia** fully supported the comments made by Greece and previously by Belgium, Turkey, Cyprus, Sweden and Morocco, adding that the text as presented was the result of a long process, examined several times by the Committee. Moreover, the chapter on sustainable development was a very important part of the revisions, and the delegation did not fully understand the association with the 1972 Convention for the reasons clearly explained by Greece, when in fact sustainable development was already part of the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention.
19. The delegation of **Netherlands** wished to maintain the text in the Operational Directives, adding that it had been a long process in which consensus on the text had been reached. It believed that sustainable development, peace and security were at the core of the Convention.
20. The delegation of **Cyprus** wished to comment on the remark by Palestine regarding the synergy and harmony between conventions, noting that Brazil had also pointed out that Operational Guidelines of other conventions, like those of the 1972 Convention, were not the same as those of the 2003 Convention. The delegation fully supported the idea of synergy between conventions, but that not all conventions fitted the same mould. It spoke of the many hours of work it had taken to assign rules and criteria to each Convention, and that a single set of Operational Guidelines could not be developed for the [seven] culture conventions of UNESCO. The delegation thus insisted that the text remain as Chapter VI of the Operational Guidelines, not least because it condensed four years of work and had already been adopted by the Committee in 2015. Moreover, it had been adopted by the present General Assembly as text such that if it were moved to the Annex it would essentially cancel out and weaken the text that it had taken the Assembly two days to adopt. The delegation sought the opinion of the Legal Advisor on whether such a decision could indeed be overturned overnight.
21. The delegation of **Portugal** understood that this had been the fruit of a very lengthy and thorough process that had started some time ago, and it valued the role of UNESCO’s intergovernmental structures. The delegation recognized that the entire Assembly agreed that sustainable development was at the core of the Convention and it wished to underline its full respect for all the work that had been done over the years and for the decisions taken by the Committee. Speaking of the example raised on the 1972 Convention, the delegation recalled that during a similar exercise at the [20th session of the General Assembly] in November 2015, at which the policy document had been adopted, it had also been decided that a broader consultation process was needed. In addition, the Assembly had arrived at that document in a different way from in the 2003 Convention, such that the broader consultative process would result in the main principles of the policy document being translated into the Operative Guidelines. So there was a decision that not only would there be a policy document, but it was also agreed that the principles of that policy document would find their way into the Operative Guidelines, particularly for such an important issue as sustainable development. Thus, there was a similarity among the conventions on how they wished to achieve their results.
22. The delegation of **Norway** could accept some of the concerns and rationale of having the text in the Operational Directives; however, it had a big problem with the process. It explained that the Assembly had spent the entire day discussing amendments that were projected onto the screen but had not been circulated to the Assembly a reasonable time in advance. In this way, the Assembly did not follow Rule 11.2 in the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, but accepted it on the understanding that the text would be incorporated into the Operational Directives. The delegation remarked that it was very keen on governance and noted that the rules of the game had changed, adding that it was unacceptable at this late juncture to change the rules.
23. The delegation of **Germany** wished to make two short remarks. Firstly, it associated with the delegations that had expressed their will to adopt the Operational Guidelines in the form in which they were very carefully examined during the present session of the Assembly, and to make sure that Resolution 6.GA 7 paid tribute to all those who had actively contributed to the process. Secondly, it went without saying that the issue of sustainable development was of enormous importance and the delegation wished to recall that this had been part of UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy for a long time, even before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. It therefore wished to alert the Assembly that it had already been decided that this Assembly would work on an important framework of objectives (starting this July), which would continue into the following year when there would be an opportunity to see specifically how safeguarding ICH would further contribute towards achieving those very important objectives. Hence, the debate did not end with adoption, as the work was just beginning and was already structured in a very adequate way.
24. The **Chairperson** noted eight countries left on the speakers’ list, adding that the issue had already been discussed in detail. In addition, there was a legal issue that needed to be resolved and therefore it was important to hear from the Legal Advisor. The Chairperson therefore asked the delegations not to ask for the floor if they had not already done so in order to make progress. The Chairperson gave the floor to Egypt, interrupted by a point of order.
25. The delegation of **Cyprus** remarked that the Chairperson had said he would first give the floor to the Legal Advisor, followed by the delegations.
26. The **Chairperson** clarified that he would first give the floor to the delegations that appeared on the speakers’ list before asking the Legal Advisor to give her opinion on the legal matter.
27. The delegation of **Egypt** spoke of its honour in having taken part in the drafting of the two major Conventions: the 2003 Convention and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The delegation recalled that at the outset of work on the Convention texts, the main goal was to safeguard all aspects of ICH for the benefit of communities and groups who were the both bearers and beneficiaries of their heritage in cultural, social and also political terms, helping them preserve their sense of cultural identity. This process of safeguarding was aimed at enriching humanity as a whole, and the aim of the Convention was to make sure that the bearers would benefit from the respect of having their heritage, and their contribution to humanity’s culture, recognized and promoted. It was believed that this was the only way to ensure that ICH was put on a sustainable footing. After all, safeguarding was more than just pride and media coverage; it helped the social, economic and cultural development of societies. The safeguarding of ICH thus has many dimensions. The delegation spoke about linking the process of safeguarding ICH with sustainable development, adding that the Assembly had introduced some aspects that were not salient or particularly pertinent to the Convention, which resulted in some confusion vis-à-vis the objectives set out by the Convention and the Operational Directives. Thus, there was a need to underscore the Convention’s objectives, while introducing some flexibility so that all of the varied elements of ICH could be encompassed.
28. The delegation of **Peru** understood the valid concerns expressed by certain delegations on how these directives would be approached. Nonetheless, it was clear that consensus had been reached in that the content debated the previous day should appear in the Operational Directives. The delegation added that for practical purposes the legal doubts should be cleared up and dealt with.
29. The delegation of **Switzerland** agreed that it would be useful to hear the opinion of the Legal Advisor, adding that it wished to align itself with delegations that emphasized the hard work that had been carried out on this issue over the past years but also during the present session in a spirit of consensus and on the understanding of its integration into the Operational Directives. It thus wished to retain Chapter VI.
30. The delegation of **Italy** also welcomed the work that had been carried out and admitted feeling a little lost in light of these discussions. It understood the procedural issues, the time it took to negotiate, and the work already done, but it felt that the work was being done in a compartmentalized way that neglected the heart of UNESCO’s mandate to safeguard both tangible (stones and monuments) and intangible cultural heritage (the identity of peoples, traditions and the life of communities), which was increasingly threatened in an international context for which there were three key notions: sustainable development, peace and security. The delegation appealed to the Assembly not to waste time and to work towards a decision in the spirit of consensus. For this reason, it approved the Operational Directives, knowing that a new Committee would revise and improve elements that were still unclear.
31. The delegation of **Colombia** noted that the discussion had given rise to a great deal of confusion. After two days of debate, the Assembly had analysed a number of amendments that it did not have sufficient time to reflect over, the substance of which was not understood by everyone and in fact led to a sharp division of positions. The delegation wondered why this had caused such an apparent division around issues that had everything to do with safeguarding ICH, raising awareness in societies, and issues of education and culture, all of which were actually part and parcel of UNESCO’s mandate. It was incomprehensible that sustainable development, inclusion, peace and security for communities led to such sharp opinions. The delegation remarked that two days had been spent debating the text with delegations proposing amendments, the efforts of which would be relegated to an Annex, which would render it powerless. Although sustainable development and peace would be expressed in the Annex, there were also some very concrete issues such as the referral option to consider. The delegation appealed to the Assembly to consider what was truly being discussed, and to those delegations expressing concern that they explain more clearly what their real concern is.
32. The delegation of **France** wholly supported the full integration of the text into the Operational Directives, especially as experience had shown that the Convention text worked for communities although it was in need of clarification with regard to sustainable development, while meeting the current concerns in the world, and in France in particular. Communities therefore needed these Operational Directives on sustainable development in the files they submitted to UNESCO.
33. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** wished to make it clear that there was no intention to cancel the Operational Directives or not to adopt them. It described the text as very good, as mentioned by Brazil, adding that it is the General Assembly, as the sovereign body, that takes decisions on Operational Directives, and this was the first time the General Assembly had discussed these guidelines. The delegation referred to the remarks made by Portugal, Palestine and other delegations on the definition of policy and Operational Directives, adding that in the spirit of harmony and synergies between conventions the difference between the implementation of a policy document and of Operational Directives should be made clear, based on which it would make a decision.
34. The delegation of **Morocco** supported the remarks by Italy, France and other delegations to maintain the Operational Directives as they were adopted. With regard to the wish by certain delegations to remove or place the text in an Annex, the delegation did not understand the purpose of this operation, adding that the text served to strengthen the implementation of the Convention for the well-being of local communities.
35. The **Chairperson** recognized that the Assembly was facing a legal issue, quite apart from the arguments presented, in that it had taken decisions and approved five amendments, including all the paragraphs of which they were composed. From the legal point of view, the Assembly acted with a certain legal capacity and thus it was important to know in what capacity it had approved the paragraphs and amendments. If it had approved amendments to the Operational Directives then the Assembly would have to accept the fact that it adopted such amendments. Otherwise, the discussion could be opened to make a final decision. The Chairperson gave the floor to the Legal Advisor.
36. Having listened carefully to the concerns, the **Legal Advisor** noted the three main issues that had arisen, namely: i) the adoption of amendments to the Operational Guidelines that had already been adopted for recommendation by the Committee; ii) whether the inclusion of the Chapter, i.e. on sustainable development, in the Operational Directives, was the appropriate place; and finally iii) the distinction between the Operational Directives and a policy document. The Legal Advisor would address these concerns and remain at the disposal of delegations for any additional questions. With regard to the first question, the adoption of amendments to the Operational Guidelines, the Legal Advisor explained that in accordance with Article 7(e) of the Convention, the General Assembly, as the sovereign Body, had the task of approving the Operational Guidelines based on recommendations by the Committee (within the scope of the Committee’s functions) that prepared and submitted to the General Assembly the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the Convention. Therefore, the General Assembly, as the main Body of the Convention, could reopen discussions on the content of the Operational Directives – the only sovereign Body able to do this. It is also a Body that should consider ongoing work, as well as discussions within the Committee itself. The Legal Advisor reminded the Assembly that the Committee was also able to discuss the content of the Operational Directives, which the Assembly should also take into consideration, particularly as discussions on these issues in question had been ongoing since 2012. Nevertheless, this did not diminish the authority of the General Assembly to reopen or amend the Operational Directives.
37. Regarding the second question, the inclusion of an additional chapter on sustainable development in the Operational Directives, the **Legal Advisor** further explained that there was no legal impediment to do so in the Operational Directives because the Convention provided that the Operational Directives are an instrument for the implementation of the Convention which, in practice (as was the purpose and spirit of the adoption of the Operational Directives in 2008), are meant to contain the essential mechanisms and conditions to allow the Convention to become operational as a whole. This is why they are allowed to evolve over time and in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly. Moreover, part of the Convention in Article 2.1 already required that, for the purposes of the Convention, consideration be given to ICH, which, among other things, should consider the requirements of sustainable development. In accordance with this Article, it was up to the Member States to decide how they wished to achieve the implementation of this provision in the Operational Directives, and whether or not they wished to include it in the Operational Directives. Thus, the General Assembly, an independent body from other bodies of other conventions, could take into account the practices of the 2005 Convention, the 1970 Convention or the 1972 Convention with regard to whether or not to include this Chapter in the Operational Directives, but this was a decision that remained solely within the sovereign capacities of the General Assembly.
38. The **Chairperson** notedthat the Assembly, as the supreme Body, was clearly empowered to adopt all forms of decisions. It was also clear that the decisions that had been adopted were amendments to or modifications of the Operational Directives. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to respond to the question raised on the background of the different terms of reference that had been applied and that, therefore, could lead to confirm that the text adopted in the last two days indeed constituted amendments to the Operational Directives.
39. In response to the question on the history of the new chapter in the Operational Directives, the **Secretary** explained that before it was discussed in substance, the idea was first raised at the seventh session of the Committee chaired by Grenada in 2012. This was followed, at the eighth session of the Committee in Baku in 2013, by a specific decision being taken that specifically recommended a new chapter. Thus in 2013, the Committee requested that the Secretariat work on a new chapter at the expert meeting and two further Committee sessions. The Secretary reiterated that the Committee specifically requested a new chapter for its inclusion in the Operational Directives. He also reminded the Assembly that there is a chapter on culture and development in the Operational Directives in the 2005 Convention.
40. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** remarked that it was still awaiting the answer to the third question on policy and the Operational Directives.
41. The **Legal Advisor** returned to the third question on the distinction between the Operational Directives and a policy document, adding that she had already explained about the Operational Directives at length, but the policy document did not have the same purpose at all. The Operational Directives concern the operation and implementation of the Convention, while a policy document is an open-ended generalized document of the Operational Directives and is not intended for the implementation of the Convention. Its purpose was to prescribe methods or behaviours that explain the way things are done or should be done with regard to the Convention, and thus did not have the same purpose or impact as the Operational Directives.
42. The **Chairperson** took note of the clear difference in legal nature between a policy document and the Operational Directives.
43. Having listened to the Legal Advisor, the delegation of **United Arab Emirates** confirmed two things. Firstly, it had taken part in the very rich discussions during the present debate, making suggestions to change the wording of the text on a number of occasions and it was thus convinced of the necessity of the exercise. It understood the insistence of some delegations on including this text in the Operational Directives, while earlier in the debate it had understood those that had expressed reservations. The delegation remarked that a lot of effort had gone into the text and that it would like the discussion to further the interests of the Convention. However, it also sought some reassurance that the Convention was being respected and that the Assembly was working for the benefit of the Convention, i.e. did the Convention incorporate these important issues? The delegation had mentioned this in previous versions of the Operational Directives and it sought to have a form of appropriate framework to work with. It believed that there was no apparent contradiction in adding the text to the Operational Directives and would thus not oppose it. Regarding the second point, the delegation noted that there was a lot of detail in the text and thus proposed summarizing the text in the Operational Directives, but taking out much of the detail, which could be more useful and better placed elsewhere. The delegation concluded by reiterating that if there was no contradiction between the addition of the text and the Convention, it would supported the text.
44. The **Chairperson** thanked the United Arab Emirates for its very constructive proposal, which reflected a broad consensus, adding that the Operational Directives could never be interpreted in such a way that would contradict the Convention because their very legal nature was different. If there were any contradictions or misgivings in interpretation then, as an international convention, the Convention was supreme. The Chairperson turned to the Assembly to ask whether it was ready to proceed with Resolution 6.GA 7 on the assumption that the five amendments adopted would become part of the Operational Directives, while keeping in mind that in any interpretation of the Operational Directives that might run counter to the terms of the Convention, the Convention would prevail.
45. In light of the explanation by the Legal Advisor, the delegation of **Morocco** proposed proceeding with the Assembly’s work, as the text had already been adopted into the Operational Directives.
46. The delegation of **Palestine** didnot wish to complicate matters, and it would agree to include the Chapter in the Operational Directivies. However, it noted that the Legal Advisor had been very clear and had repeated several times that the General Assembly was sovereign and thus able to open any question and that a recommendation by the Committee was not binding on the General Assembly, the main body of the Convention. The delegation was ready to join the consensus but still favoured coherence and harmony with other conventions. In this regard, it wished to propose an amendment (that would not affect paragraph 2 [of Resolution 6.GA 7]) with a simple request that the Secretariat report at the next General Assembly the results of consultations with the secretariats of the other conventions in an effort to remain consistent. This was particularly pertinent given that the World Heritage Convention was still open about the issue and that it would look at it again, as mentioned by Portugal, with the possible aim of including it in their Operational Guidelines. The delegation believed that the Assembly could agree, but that delegations should cease to imply that the rules of the game had changed as the General Assembly was sovereign, not the Committee, and although its 24 Members might agree it could not do so on behalf of all States Parties.
47. The **Chairperson** thanked Palestine for its constructive proposal and particularly for going along with a consensus around the format of the amendments to the Operational Directives. He acknowledged that the Assembly was of course sovereign in making decisions and no subsidiary body could predetermine the Assembly’s decisions. However, it was the Assembly itself that had approved the amendments and enacted modifications to the Operational Directives. Nevertheless, it appreciated Palestine’s proposal, and the Chairperson turned to the adoption of the draft Resolution 6.GA 7 and the amendment tabled by Palestine, inviting the delegation to explain its proposal.
48. The delegation of **Palestine** remarked that the Philippines wished to present something beforehand, with his permission.
49. The delegation of **Philippines** wished to lay down its position after the lengthy discussions, thanking the Legal Advisor for her interpretations, with which it fully concurred, especially when it was stated that Operational Directives should include essential mechanisms as a whole for the implementation of the Convention. Based on that description, the delegation did not completely agree that the chapter on sustainable development comprised an essential mechanism.
50. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order from Italy.
51. The delegation of **Italy** noted that Cyprus had asked for the floor first.
52. The **Chairperson** noted that Cyprus had a point of order, prior to Italy.
53. The delegation of **Italy** was of the understanding that the Assembly was ready to adopt the resolution and then give the floor to other delegations to speak, while the amendment would not affect the initial adoption.
54. The delegation of **Cyprus** remarked that the Chairperson had not given the floor to the two countries that had wished to speak, while Palestine had given the floor to another delegation, which was irregular.
55. The **Chairperson** did not wish to create a situation that would only complicate matters further. Clarifying his remarks, the Chairperson explained that he had proposed considering Resolution 6.GA 7 then gave the floor to Palestine, which in turn was given to the Philippines, and the Philippines took the floor as a result. He then gave the floor back to the Philippines, providing that it concerned the adoption of draft Resolution 6.GA 7.
56. The delegation of **Cyprus** strongly disagreed, adding that there were two countries that wished to speak prior to the intervention by the Philippines, and in any case the Assembly was asked to adopt the text with the amendment of Palestine. However, the delegation felt that the Philippines had taken the floor, not about the adoption of the resolution or the amendment, but for something else.
57. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order from the Philippines.
58. The delegation of the **Philippines** remarked that the Assembly had not yet moved to the adoption of the decision and other countries were respectfully given the floor. It had merely asked to explain its position on the comment of the Legal Advisor, adding that UNESCO was also the house of freedom of expression and it did not want this right to be denied. The delegation resented the comments made by some delegations that refused it the floor, adding that as a sovereign State it was unacceptable, and appealing to the Chairperson for a call to order.
59. The **Chairperson** concurred with the Philippines that it was given the floor and it was used legitimately on the basis of the Rules of Procedure. The Chairperson then turned to the consideration of Resolution 6.GA 7, inviting Palestine to present its amendment.
60. The delegation of **Palestine** explained that the amendment would be a new paragraph, which would read, “Invites the Secretariat…”.
61. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
62. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** was not raising a point of order, but rather suggesting moving on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, as it had a question about the second paragraph.
63. The **Chairperson** agreed to continue with the methodology as previously applied. He then turned to paragraph 1, and with no comments or objections, it was duly adopted. He then turned to paragraph 2.
64. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** agreed with the paragraph but wished to add a reference to the amended paragraphs from 170 to 197 that had been adopted, which read, ‘Approves the amendments to the Operational Directives as annexed to this Resolution, and as revised’. The delegation explained that amendments had been made to certain paragraphs and the Operational Directives based on the revised text.
65. The **Chairperson** believed that the concern was legitimate, but was perhaps already taken on board in paragraph 2, inviting the Secretariat to clarify.
66. The **Secretary** explained that all the revisions had already been adopted and incorporated, and thus there was no need to specify ‘with revisions’ because the Annex to the present Resolution already incorporated the revisions by the Assembly.
67. The delegation of the **Philippines** wished to finish its intervention, which had been curtailed earlier. It explained that, having listened to the discussion and heard the Legal Advisor, and despite the fact that it had some reservations on many of the amendments in the section on sustainable development that were not essential mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention, it would not block the consensus on their adoption as part of the Operational Directives.
68. The **Chairperson** appreciated the constructive, positive attitude by the Philippines, which demonstrated a compromise in the sense of solidarity and shared convictions, noting that the Assembly was reaching a positive result.
69. The delegation of the **Bahamas** remarked on a first concern raised by India and the ensuing discussion on whether or not there was agreement or disagreement on India’s position. It therefore wished to hear from the State Party on whether it had a solution to the problem, as it had raised the objection.
70. The **Chairperson** wished to point out that the Assembly had already decided by consensus to take a decision on Draft Resolution 6.GA 7 and its second paragraph, therefore all comments should focus on that.
71. The delegation of **Brazil** understood the reason behind the amendment by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines because, in general, when adopting decisions or resolutions discussed in the plenary, the expression ‘as amended’ was always employed. Although it sounded odd to approve amendments as amended, the delegation did not think that it would matter to have at the end ‘as annexed to this resolution’ or ‘as amended by Plenary’ or ‘as amended’. This made sure that it was noted as amended and not as the original document.
72. The **Chairperson** also believed that it was a reasonable concern to reflect realities and therefore invited the Secretariat to draft a form of words that reflected the situation, which would not be presented now but upon consideration of the entire draft Resolution.
73. The delegation of **Algeria** remarked that it would have liked to express its position ahead of the Legal Advisor but that it was in a badly positioned part of the room and thus could not participate in the debate like other delegations. Nevertheless, it was pleased that a consensus had been reached and that it was not against the consensus, and it fully supported the comments by the Philippines, India and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. However, it was counting on the Chairperson’s wisdom in ensuring that the ideas and the debates were appropriately reflected and took account of some of the concerns raised.
74. The **Chairperson** thanked Algeria for its words and for going along with the consensus.
75. The delegation of **India** explained that it had sought a clarification from the Legal Advisor and felt satisfied with the explanations provided, as well as by the Secretariat. It supported the position expressed by Palestine that the Assembly should be doing the same as the World Heritage Convention by adopting a policy document, but noting the mood within the Assembly to include the Chapter in the Operational Directives, it would not block the consensus and would go ahead with adopting the new Chapter.
76. The **Chairperson** appreciated its willingness to achieve a consensus.
77. The delegation of **Palestine** returned to its amendment on paragraph 2, which might address the concern of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; it read, ‘Approves the amendments to the Operational Directives included in the amended Annex to this resolution’ or ‘included in the Annex to this resolution as amended’. The delegation also had an amendment for a new paragraph 3, which it would present after the adoption of paragraph 2.
78. The **Chairperson** noted the request for a new paragraph 3 by Palestine, inviting Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to take the floor to address Palestine’s version.
79. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** agreed to the version, or as an alternative, ‘Approves the Operational Directives included in the Annex to this resolution as amended’, noting however that there were two amendments [projected on the screen].
80. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretariat to project the wording proposed by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. He then turned to the adoption of paragraph 2.
81. The delegation of **Germany** did not entirely understand the intentions of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and whether the amendment changed the subject of what the Assembly was doing and sought clarification.
82. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretariat to clean up paragraph 2 and to project a clean version based on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines’ proposal.
83. The delegation of **Portugal** wished to incorporate all the suggestions made, but retain the title of the item, which would read, ‘Approves the revision of the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention as amended’, which would not only cover the purpose of what the Assembly was doing but also the action of what it had done.
84. The **Chairperson** felt that the wording took up all the different concerns expressed and could therefore attain a consensus.
85. The delegation of **Belgium** understood the concerns put forward by some delegations, adding that it had gone through the resolutions taken at the last General Assembly and the original wording was always used, while the revisions made were always reflected. The delegation remarked that the Rapporteur would see to it that the decisions were correct, but it would not object to the slight modification.
86. The **Chairperson** noted that Belgium went along with the consensus, and with no further comments or objections, pronounced paragraph 2 adopted. He then turned to the new paragraph 3, as proposed by Palestine.
87. The delegation of **Palestine** had some reservations to paragraph 2 just adopted, but in the spirit of consensus was prepared to accept it. As a matter of fact, the Assembly did not ‘approve the revision’, as the revision was already approved, i.e. the revision was the idea, and the amendments were approved. Nevertheless, the delegation turned to its proposal in paragraph 3, which would read, ‘Invites the Secretariat, in order to enhance the synergy and harmony between the cultural conventions of UNESCO, to reflect on the inclusion of the new chapter related to sustainable development in the Operational Directives and to report to it at its next session’ or ‘at its seventh session’.
88. The **Chairperson** took note of the new paragraph 3 proposed by Palestine for the Assembly’s consideration.
89. The delegation of **Morocco** asked Palestine for the rationale behind the paragraph, as the purpose was unclear. The delegation wished to know what exactly was being asked of the Secretariat, as well as the aim of reflecting on the inclusion of the new Chapter on sustainable development.
90. The delegation of **Palestine** explained that the paragraph should be read as a whole because the syntax of the sentence differed in English and French. The aim was underscored in the paragraph where it encouraged the Secretariat to consider enhancing the synergy and harmony between the two conventions; a point that was repeatedly raised during the debate, given that the 1972 Convention had introduced a policy document for sustainable development, whereas in the 2003 Convention it was included in the Operational Guidelines.
91. The **Chairperson** clarified that this was a request for the Secretariat to reflect on this.
92. The delegation of **Norway** could support the proposal by Palestine, but wished to open it up and suggested, ‘Invites the Secretariat to enhance synergy and harmony between the cultural conventions of UNESCO, to reflect on the manner and form with which are [...]’, ‘is written’ or equivalent wording, ‘formulated in the Operational Directives’.
93. The **Chairperson** asked Norway to explain the concept, while the Secretariat could help to express that concept in a specific form of words.
94. The delegation of **Norway** wished to expand the paragraph, in addition to the reference to sustainable development, and would come up with a suggestion.
95. The **Chairperson** gave Norway a few minutes to present its idea, adding that it was essential to have a positive and receptive attitude toward Palestine’s amendment after which the Assembly would conclude the draft Resolution, followed by the afternoon session with items 8 on the Accreditation of NGOs and 9 on the Use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.
96. The delegation of **Morocco suggested** a rewording of the amendment by Palestine, to read, ‘Invites the Secretariat to consult with the Secretariats of the other cultural conventions so as to enhance synergy and harmony related to sustainable development’.
97. The delegation of **Palestine** reiterated that it was always in favour of a consensus, noting the open-minded and positive spirit of the Assembly. The delegation repeated Morocco’s amendment that would read [in the French version], ‘*Invite le Secrétariat à se concerter avec les secrétariats des autres conventions culturelles afin de renforcer les synergies et l’harmonie entre elles en ce qui concerne le développement durable’*.
98. The delegation of **Palestine** found the paragraph acceptable but suggested a slight variation, which read [in English], ‘to enhance synergy and harmony with regard to sustainable development’, adding that it was unnecessary to mention ‘entre elles’ (between them) or to be more precise, ‘regarding their action’.
99. The **Chairperson** believed that the Assembly had arrived at a point of resolution.
100. The delegation of **Palestine** remarked that the Assembly was still expecting Norway’s amendment. From the delegation’s side, the paragraph was acceptable, with the slight revision to de-clutter the phrase with the removal of ‘between them’.
101. The **Chairperson** appreciated Palestine’s consensual attitude.
102. The delegation of **Turkey** remarked that ‘sustainable development’ did not exist in the text of the 1972 Convention, though it was used in the Operational Directives of the 2005 Convention. It further remarked on the Committee of the World Heritage Convention’s action in 2015 on sustainable development and that the IOS report spoke of sustainable development, peace and security. Indeed, there were many references in certain conventions. The delegation was therefore rather surprised by the request for the Secretariat to work with other UNESCO conventions, as this implied the adoption of decisions of other conventions at the next General Assembly.
103. Thanking Turkey,the **Chairperson** adjourned the morning session.

*[Wednesday 1 June 2016 afternoon session]*

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

*[The Vice-Chair from Senegal replaced the Chairperson]*

1. The **Vice-Chairperson** recalled the many discussions and relevant exchanges that had taken place in the spirit of UNESCO such that the Assembly had managed to find consensus, and he hoped that the spirit of sharing these challenges would continue under his chairmanship. Before starting the session, the Vice-Chair gave the floor to the Secretariat to make an announcement.
2. The **Secretary** informed the Assembly that the Secretariat had sent out a survey by email on the organization of the 6.GA meeting and would greatly appreciate some feedback.
3. The **Vice-Chairperson** returned to Palestine’s proposal in paragraph 3 of the resolution.
4. The delegation of **Palestine** remarked that a consensus had been reached in the spirit of UNESCO and that *a priori* there were no objections, although some might still have some reservations about the last formulation.
5. The **Vice-Chairperson** noted paragraph 3 on the screen, and with no further comments or objections, it was pronounced adopted. The Vice-Chair then turned to the adoption of Resolution 6.GA 7 as a whole, as this followed the adoption of the preceding amendments. With no comments of objections, the **Vice-Chair declared Resolution 6.GA 7 adopted**. [Applause] The Vice-Chair acknowledged the applause in recognition of all those who had participated in the debate, including the Chairperson, in reaching consensus. He then turned to item 8 on the Accreditation of NGOs.

**ITEM 8 OF THE AGENDA:**

**ACCREDITATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE**

**Document:**[*ITH/16/6.GA/8*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-8-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 8*

1. The **Secretary** explained that this was the fourth time that the Assembly would consider requests for accreditation from NGOs that had been recommended by the Committee, and to date a total of 178 NGOs had been accredited. At its tenth session in 2015, the Committee had recommended 24 additional NGOs for accreditation, which were presented in the Annex to [document 8](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-8-EN.docx), the list of which was projected onto the screen. Clicking on the online link of the Request Number of each NGO would allow access to the corresponding Request Form. The Secretary recalled that the Assembly had just agreed on the revisions to the Operational Directives, concerning changes to the schedule of biennial examination. The Committee would thus examine requests for accreditation at its ordinary sessions in odd-numbered years so that the Assembly could take its final decision on the accreditation when it met in even-numbered years. It was recalled that accreditation was granted for a period of four years, after which the Committee reviewed the contribution and the commitment of the advisory organization and its relation with it. Consequently, the Committed reviewed the first 97 NGOs accredited in 2010 at its tenth session in 2015, applying the revised criteria. After review, 59 out of the 97 NGOs maintained accreditation, having sufficiently demonstrated their contribution and commitment to providing advisory services to the Committee. Based on this review process, the second group of 59 NGOs that were accredited in 2012 would be expected to submit their quadrennial reports in 2017 so that the Committee could review them at its twelfth session. Finally, the Secretary informed the Assembly that there was a typographical error in paragraph 6 of the draft resolution 6.GA 8, which should read, “so that the Committee at its twelfth session can review the contribution and commitment of each advisory organization”, taking out ‘in 2018’.
2. The **Vice-Chairperson** remarked that NGOs were also key stakeholders in the Convention whose work was decisive in some cases and thus, based on the relevance of their activities, deserved accreditation. The Vice-Chair opened the floor for comments.
3. The delegation of **Sweden** welcomed and congratulated all the NGOs from the different parts of the world and within the different fields of ICH. It also wished to underline the importance of the role of NGOs whose knowledge and experience were assets to the Convention. In this context, it returned to its question on the participation of NGOs during the General Assembly, adding that it would be essential to highlight the work and outcomes of NGO meetings in a dialogue with all States Parties. The delegation therefore proposed tabling an item on the agenda at the next General Assembly in 2018 that invited a report from the NGO Forum and its meetings.
4. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked Sweden for the very relevant proposal, adding that it was important to provide a way to further involve NGOs at the General Assembly, though it was up to the States Parties to decide this.
5. The delegation of **Norway** fully supported the proposal by Sweden, not least because the importance of NGOs and civil society as the pillars and bearers of the Convention had often been stated. Having an item on the General Assembly agenda that provided the opportunity to listen to the report of the NGO Forum with the opportunity to comment and ask questions was a very good idea. In addition, it was very important that NGOs continue to meet during the General Assembly, as this allowed for exchange and cooperation, and created links that gave the opportunity to all stakeholders to develop the practical implementation of the Convention.
6. The delegation of **Latvia** thanked the Secretariat for the information provided on the process of examining the new accreditation requests and on the review process of the first reports of accredited NGOs. Regarding the termination of the accreditation of certain NGOs, according to the decision taken at the last Committee session, it recognized that in some cases it had been due to the submitted report not providing sufficient information to satisfy the requirements. In this regard, it recalled Decision 10.COM 16 in which it encouraged such organizations to resubmit their accreditation requests if they so wished. The delegation also expressed its satisfaction with the proposed list of NGOs for accreditation, which included the first accreditation from an NGO from Latvia, adding that it hoped it would be adopted. It looked forward to NGOs from those regions that had less representation and participation becoming more interested in this form of international cooperation. It acknowledged that, to a certain extent, it was also a responsibility of States Parties to inform NGOs about the possibility of joining this framework of cooperation. Finally, the delegation congratulated the growing active input of the international exchanges of the NGO Forum on the implementation of the Convention, and it was committed to the role of NGOs in the process of safeguarding ICH at both local and international level. It was particularly important that the experience of NGOs, including in their cooperation with state institutions, be actively shared at regional and sub-regional levels with respect to common legacies, challenges of engagement, and the level of activity of civil society. The delegation was pleased that such initiatives of regional cooperation among NGOs had been undertaken with particular reference to the implementation of the Convention. It also took the opportunity to inform the Assembly of a very recent publication on the experience of Latvian NGOs active in the field of ICH, which would be available online on the website of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO.
7. The delegation of **Malaysia** supported the initiative and proposals of the accreditation of NGOs to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee for the purposes of safeguarding ICH. This effort was well appreciated in creating a close cooperation with the NGOs that were no less experienced in the field of ICH and that also had related experience that could be shared in helping with the spirit of the Convention. The delegation agreed with the Secretariat’s efforts to closely monitor all the accredited NGOs and agreed that reports were needed as an essential tool for monitoring purposes.
8. The delegation of **Tunisia** expressed its support for the process of strengthening the presence of NGOs in the work of the Convention with a view to ensuring better implementation, adding that it would like to see NGOs from all the world’s regions. It believed that ICH was really in the hands of NGOs with their rich experience in the field, and it was important to take advantage of that experience and get a good sense of the obstacles they faced in their work.
9. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked Tunisia and all the delegations that had spoken, inviting the representative of the NGOs to take the floor.
10. The **Representative of the NGO Forum** thanked the Vice-Chair for giving a voice to the NGO Forum that had prepared a statement, as was the tradition, on the occasion of the present General Assembly. On behalf of the Forum, the representative wished to thank the delegations that had spoken for their encouragement. The NGO Forum thanked the Secretariat for supporting and enabling the participation of NGOs. The Forum welcomed the upcoming accreditation of twenty new NGOs to join the 140 already accredited and invited newcomers to participate in its activities. The Forum welcomed the decisions of the last Committee and the Assembly, which reflected the concerns of NGOs in relation to safeguarding. Notably, this concerned the revised Operational Directives for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, which was a major advance hoped for by the Forum, which would hold its symposium around this theme during the Committee’s tenth session in Addis Ababa, on the adoption of the twelve ethical principles and a dedicated online platform. The Forum welcomed the Committee's invitation to share the experiences and reflections of NGOs in this area and encouraged NGOs to actively contribute. The Forum also welcomed the first formal mention of safeguarding intangible heritage in armed conflict at the last Committee session and wished to be involved in the development of synergies between the UNESCO Conventions on culture.The representative spoke of the continuing evolution of the NGO Forum. In 2015, it had established a steering committee of representatives from various regions of the world to contribute to current developments, and three new working groups were created on capacity-building programmes, on the cooperation between NGOs and researchers in the field of intangible heritage, and on ethical issues. To help spread the spirit of the Convention and promote safeguarding, the NGO Forum developed capacity-building programmes and created networks at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. These networks required the mediation experience of communities, NGOs, researchers and other key stakeholders. Concrete projects were under development in the Asia-Pacific region, America-Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. The Forum has an online journal, [#*HeritageAlive*](http://www.ichngoforum.org/category/heritage-alive/)*,* which discusses safeguarding methods. Given the willingness of the Assembly to set up an easy mechanism to share safeguarding practices, the Forum proposed developing a pilot project based on the work already underway to provide a concrete answer to this request. In this regard, the Forum hoped to count on the support of the International Fund for safeguarding ICH. Finally, during the sessions of the Committee and the General Assembly, a growing number of NGOs met daily, though it regretted the diminished participation of Francophone NGOs, particularly from developing countries, due to the absence of interpretation. The Forum therefore urgently sought financial support from States Parties through voluntary contributions or the use of Fund resources to enable simultaneous interpretation in two languages during these meetings. The Forum encouraged the engagement of the largest possible number of NGOs in these activities. [This statement would soon be made available at <http://www.ichngoforum.org>]
11. The **Vice-Chairperson** congratulated the NGO Forum for its work, but especially for the willingness shown by NGOs to work with the Assembly and its provisions with projects that would contribute towards the better implementation of the Convention. States Parties would be able to rely on NGOs in an intelligent and operational manner, working at the local level on the implementation of the Convention. With regard to the periodic reports, the Vice-Chair spoke about how involving civil society and NGOs would enable a critical mass of expertise to develop that would help States Parties to better solve these problems of periodic reports. The Vice-Chair congratulated the NGOs once again, adding that all the interventions would be taken into account. He then turned to the adoption of draft Resolution 6.GA 8.
12. The delegation of **Sweden** wished to propose anew paragraph 7, but would come to it once the preceding paragraphs had been adopted.
13. Inviting Sweden to submit the paragraph in writing, the **Vice-Chairperson** continued with the adoption of the resolution on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis.With no comments or objections paragraphs 1–6 were duly adopted. The Vice-Chair then turned to the new paragraph 7.
14. The delegation of **Sweden** explained that the NGO Forum presented its conclusions during Committee meetings and felt that it was important to also allow for a presentation during the General Assembly when all the States Parties were present.
15. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** stressed its great interest in the work of NGOs as invaluable partners in achieving the objectives of the Convention, but sought clarification on the remarks by Norway on periodic reports and whether NGOs would also present periodic reports either during the General Assembly or on other occasions.
16. The delegation of **Turkey** wished to add ‘the seventh session of the General Assembly’ to the proposal by Sweden. The complete paragraph would read, ‘Decides to inscribe an item on the agenda of the seventh session of the General Assembly with a report from the non-governmental organizations forum and its meetings’.
17. The **Vice-Chair** noted that Turkey wished to indicate the seventh session of the General Assembly precisely instead of saying ‘its session’. With no comments or objections, paragraph 7 was adopted. Turning to the adoption as a whole, the **Vice-Chair declared Resolution 6.GA 8 adopted**.

**ITEM 9 OF THE AGENDA:**

**USE OF THE RESOURCES OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND**

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/9*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-9-EN.docx)

**Document:**[*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.9.1*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.1-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.9.2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.2-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 9*

1. The **Secretary** presented [Document 9](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-9-EN.docx), which comprised four parts: i) an introduction; ii) an explanation of each budget line; iii) the allocation recommended by the Committee in its draft plan for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017, as well as 1 January to 30 June 2018; and iv) the prospects for future budget cycles and the Draft plan for the use of the resources of the Fund with the percentages per budget line as recommended by the Committee and the indicative amounts based on the balance of the Fund as of 31 December 2015. The Assembly had to decide on a plan for the use of the resources of the Fund covering a 24-month period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017, as well as a provisional budget for the first semester of the next financial period, i.e. from 1 January to 30 June 2018, until, of course, the General Assembly meets again at its seventh session. The provisional budget then for the first half of 2016, as adopted by the fifth General Assembly, would be replaced by the Plan adopted in the day’s session. The total budget submitted to the General Assembly was US$7,977,920, consisting of assessed contributions, and did not include any earmarked contributions or the Reserve Fund that had been set aside for emergency International Assistance. Compared to the current Plan for the use of the resources of the Fund, the budget lines remained essentially identical in scope. In three cases, the percentages recommended by Committee lines had been proposed for a reduction or increase. Percentages were applied to the balance of the Fund as of 31 December 2015 *subtracting*, of course, the amount that the Committee proposed to transfer to the Reserve Fund, in this case US$24,190 in order to set its total amount at US$1 million. Considering therefore that the initial balance, which served as the basis for the Plan, had increased with respect to that of 31 December 2015, the constant allocations of all budget lines would be increased, with one exception in budget line 4, which is the participation in statutory meetings by experts representing developing States Parties that are Members of the Committee, and of course, it was not a cost but pre-determinable. In addition, the Committee proposed increasing International Assistance from 54% to 59%.
2. The **Secretary** further explained that the Committee again proposed that the majority of resources be allocated to provide International Assistance to States Parties to supplement their national efforts in safeguarding ICH. Although so far funds available under this line had been widely under-utilized, possibilities had just been opened up by this Assembly underagenda item 7 that might give hope that the trend of under-utilization for International Assistance might cease or be reversed in the current biennium. The Committee proposed maintaining 5.5% for preparatory assistance for nomination files for the Urgent Safeguarding List, as well as for proposals to the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices and International Assistance requests. In addition to preparatory assistance for nomination files, this budget line was used to provide technical assistance to States Parties for preparing International Assistance requests. The Committee proposed maintaining the line ‘Other functions of the Committee’ at 20 per cent, which the Secretariat makes use of, to assist the Committee in performing its functions under Article 7 of the Convention, and in responding to the several recommendations of the IOS evaluation that were endorsed by the Committee. As in preceding Plans, the Committee once again delegated to its Bureau the authority to decide upon the utilization of the funds allocated under line 3 on the basis of specific proposals to be prepared by the Secretariat. Following the General Assembly’s decision on this item, the Bureau of the eleventh session of the Committee would consider the proposal that the Secretariat shall present to its Members the following day. The ‘Participation in the sessions of the Committee, its Bureau and its subsidiary bodies of experts in intangible cultural heritage representing developing States Members of the Committee’, and in this case the Committee, proposed decreasing it slightly from 2.75 per cent to 2.25 per cent, thus it was the only line that experienced a slight reduction in terms of absolute values. Nevertheless, the funds foreseen should be largely sufficient to cover the participation of experts from developing States Members of the Committee in the sessions of the Committee and the Bureau because there was a fixed number of eligible States Members of the Committee.
3. The **Secretary** then turned to line number 5, ‘Participation in the sessions of the Committee and its consultative bodies of experts in intangible cultural heritage representing developing States that are Parties to the Convention but not Members of the Committee’; the Committee proposed maintaining it at 2.75 per cent. Line number 6 concerned ‘Participation in the sessions of the Committee, its Bureau and its subsidiary and consultative bodies of public or private bodies, private persons, members of communities and groups, that have been invited by the Committee to be consulted on specific matters as well as experts of intangible cultural heritage representing accredited NGOs from developing countries’; the Committee had proposed maintaining it at 4.5 per cent. Under line number 7, the ‘Cost of advisory services provided at the request of the Committee, including support to developing States whose representatives have been appointed to the Evaluation Body’, the Committee had proposed increasing this from 5.5 per cent to 6 per cent. The increase of half a percentage is not linked to an increase in the cost of evaluation services but to a difficulty encountered at the beginning of each biennium. The Secretary explained that early in even years, the total amount of the contracts of members eligible for financial compensation from the Evaluation Body needed to be available, even though payments were made throughout the year. However, in even years, funds available at the beginning of the year corresponded to a quarter of the amount allocated for the previous biennium, pending the session of the General Assembly in June, which decided on the allocation of the whole biennium. Therefore, a higher percentage was necessary to ensure that a quarter of the total allocation was sufficient to cover *all* contracts in those even years for the sessions of the Evaluation Bodies. Under line number 8, the ‘Reserve Fund to meet requests for assistance in cases of extreme urgency’, the Committee proposed transferring to the Reserve Fund only the amount needed to reach US$1 million. In this case, US$24,190 was needed to reach US$1 million and thus no longer needed to be a fixed percentage. Considering that this reserve would be tapped for emergency assistance *only,* when funds were no longer available under budget line 1, the Committee felt that a reserve of US$1 million was a reasonable safety margin.
4. Turning to the section on ‘Prospects for future budget cycles’, the **Secretary** further explained that this was an overview of the draft plan as proposed by the Committee per budget line. In order to see what the plan might mean in a larger context, the Secretary remarked that in every previous biennium, the income to the Fund had exceeded expenditures and the balance at the end of the biennium had grown steadily. However, the implementation capacity of the Secretariat was stable so that the increase in the balance of the Fund did not grow from one biennium to another. Moreover, there were two factors that largely explain this situation: i) States Parties had been contributing to the Fund since the Convention entered into force in 2006, while the International Assistance mechanism had only been established in 2008. The first requests for assistance were thus presented to the Committee in 2009 and implementation began in 2010. As a result, there had been a steady accumulation of income for four years before expenditures got underway in earnest. In accordance with the Operational Directives, the resources of the Fund “shall be used primarily for granting international assistance”. The rate of utilization of such funds *depends* in the first place on the number of requests submitted by States Parties and approved by the Committee or its Bureau. The Secretariat was naturally concerned about the paradox of having available funding, which was not being used, when the needs for assistance were great. The Secretariat was also somewhat confident that the paths opened by the Committee and the General Assembly would significantly improve this situation. On the one hand, the Committee agreed that a more complete interpretation of Article 21 and better use of the different forms of assistance should improve the States’ capacity to benefit from International Assistance. Indeed, although so far assistance from the Fund had only taken the form of ‘grants’, States could prefer to request services to be provided by UNESCO; in most cases, this would be financed by the ‘international assistance’ budget line of the ICH Fund without the amount granted by the Committee or the Bureau being automatically transferred in full to the beneficiary State. In those cases, States would be free from the burden of having to cost their needs and priorities by presenting to the Governing Bodies requests that result from a close cooperation between the requesting State and the Secretariat. On the other hand, the General Assembly had just endorsed, under *item 7,* an important proactive measure proposed by the Committee to increase the maximum amount of requests that can be examined by the Bureau from US$25,000 to US$100,000. This would ensure that States would have the chance to see both a request of up to US$100,000 and a nomination considered in the same year. Nevertheless, both these perspectives would entail a significant increase in the workload of the Secretariat.
5. Turning to ‘Voluntary supplementary contributions’, the **Secretary** further remarked that all these considerations concerned the part of the Fund that consisted of the assessed contributions of States Parties, and whose utilization was decided by the General Assembly according to the Plan under consideration. However, there were other contributions to the ICH Fund, known as ‘voluntary supplementary contributions’ that were *not* governed by the Plan and whose implementation was reflected in the Annexes of [document INF 9.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.1-EN.doc). These charts were prepared by the ICH Section and not by the Bureau of Financial Management. They were based on the budget allocations reported in the biennium of the execution of projects for the 35 C/5, 36 C/5 and 37 C/5. It was worth mentioning that voluntary support to the Convention through the ICH Fund was experiencing a clear and worrying decline in both earmarked contributions for the capacity-building programme and contributions to the sub-fund for enhancing the human resources of the Secretariat. The financial report for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015 in document INF.9.1 included three annexes that only concern voluntary contributions, as did [document INF.9.2.](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.9.2-EN.doc)
6. Finally, turning to Annex 1, the **Secretary** noted that it had provided the list of voluntary contributions received under earmarked activities for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015, while document INF.9.2 provided the list of such contributions received since the fifth session of the General Assembly. Annex 2 showed the implementation of specific projects and activities as approved by the Committee. It indicated a funding gap of US$248,465 corresponding to outstanding voluntary contributions already approved by the Committee, for which either donors had informed the Secretariat about their inability to pay or for which the Secretariat was still awaiting contributions. Annex 3 showed a forecast based on the Secretariat’s estimates for the future use of available allocations of ongoing projects. Projects affected by a payment default were marked with asterisk. So in conclusion, there was essentially no major change between the draft plan proposed by the Committee for the current biennium and that approved by the General Assembly at its previous session for 2014–2015. The challenge remained to ensure that a growing number of States could access some US$4.5 million available to support their safeguarding efforts. The Secretariat would exert every effort to implement the paths opened up by both the Committee and the General Assembly, but the Secretary wished to stress that an increasing number of requests expected to be received would be accompanied by a significant burden on the Secretariat in terms of processing and monitoring implementation. It was very clear that, given Resolution 6.GA 7, to increase the limit for requests to the Bureau, the Secretariat woulld be faced with a significant increase [in workload]; it was not sure that it was yet equipped to absorb the extra work, but would report back in any event. Nevertheless, it was clear that this issue would have to be an absolute priority in the coming years.
7. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the presentation of the extremely important contextual information, as well as the Secretariat for the preparation of the report. The Vice-Chair also wished to thank the eleven States Parties that, beyond their mandatory contributions, had provided voluntary contributions listed in the financial report for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 January 2015. Eight generous donors, including two NGOs, had also contributed to the sub-fund for enhancing the human capacity of the Secretariat. The Vice-Chair appealed to all States Parties to support the functioning of the Convention through these voluntary contributions, adding that the Secretariat was under great pressure due to the volume of work and limited human and financial resources. These contributions were anticipated and the Vice-Chair invited all States Parties that were in a position to do so to continue this momentum of solidarity and support for the Convention. Before adopting the resolution, the Vice-Chair opened the floor for a general debate in relation to the important issue of financial resources.
8. The delegation of **Burkina Faso** began by congratulating the Chairperson, adding that it welcomed the growing number of States Parties to the Convention, and the amount proposed to support International Assistance demonstrated the commitment to the safeguarding and promotion of ICH, especially towards developing countries. Burkina Faso was one of the countries that had benefited from International Assistance, which helped implement an inventory programme and the promotion of ICH among all its communities. This inventory had achieved satisfactory results, but was especially significant in the way it had altered the perception of safeguarding and the promotion of ICH as a whole. Other activities had been implemented, including the creation of a research and documentation programme based on the elements of the inventoried cultural heritage, some of which were nominated on different lists. Research has also begun on the extension of the element [‘Practices and expressions of] joking relationships in Niger’ on the Representative List], following the inscription of the ‘practices and knowledge linked to the Imzad of the Tuareg communities of Algeria, Mali and Niger’. The end of the inventory project was scheduled for June 2016 and the delegation wished to once again thank the Secretariat for its support, reaffirming its readiness to work towards results and any guidelines proposed by the Secretariat.
9. The delegation of **Yemen** thanked the Secretariat for its support and for its very clear presentation, which explained in depth how the Fund and the budget of the Convention were used. Nonetheless, the delegation remarked on the great disparity between countries that had already added their intangible heritage to the Lists and those that unfortunately had thus far been unable to inscribe any or very few elements. It recognized that this was not the fault of the Secretariat, and that it was perhaps the fault of the countries themselves. Nevertheless, the Secretariat should take the initiative to encourage countries that – for one reason or another – had not been able to submit nomination files, and to help them put together their nomination files in line with the criteria laid out by the Convention. A number of countries, especially developing countries in the Arab region, Latin America, Asia and especially in Africa, required some form of emergency assistance. The delegation asked the Secretariat to provide an explanation of the initiatives it planned to create greater balance and less disparity between countries. It wished to know the percentage of resources deployed by the Secretariat devoted to the lesser-developed countries to help them inscribe their heritage.
10. The **Secretary** thanked Yemen for its question, noting that there were two distinct questions. One was related to disproportional representation on the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List, and the other referred to access to Funds. The Secretary wished to make clear that there was no prerequisite to be listed to access the ICH Fund, i.e. the fund was not solely reserved for elements that are listed. A country may benefit from the ICH Fund for any activities or element (listed or not) that involve safeguarding activities or carrying out work at the national level that is unrelated to the Lists. The Secretary reiterated that the Fund was not only for those listed elements but also for general work on safeguarding ICH at the national level. As for addressing the issue of imbalance, the Secretariat’s plans fell primarily within the capacity-building programme where, as presented earlier, it directed most of its efforts at developing countries, with a large emphasis on Africa. This included capacity-building programmes, modules and units on how to put together nomination files. The Secretariat also worked with UNESCO Field Offices in this regard.
11. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** thanked the Secretariat for the very detailed report and for its efforts. It recalled its earlier intervention that noted the tremendous pressures faced by the Secretariat, suggesting that should the workload become too great then perhaps the Assembly could find an alternative mechanism to come to the Secretariat’s aid. The delegation sympathized with the Secretariat’s situation and expressed its solidarity and support, noting that many delegations had asked whether additional human resources were needed in order for the Secretariat to carry out its tasks. In the past, countries had encountered problems in that they were unable to complete their applications for urgent assistance given the various technical difficulties involved. The question now, however, was not so much how to submit the request, but how to actually deal with the increased number of requests, and how the Secretariat could respond to these demands for urgent assistance. The delegation remarked that the Secretariat could not really be expected to do everything and that perhaps the answer would be to create some sort of additional mechanism to deal with this increased workload. Or maybe it was a question of establishing priorities among countries that had made requests for emergency assistance, perhaps in some form of ranking, or maybe the necessary human resources would be found. The delegation stressed the importance of being inscribed on the Lists – an important mechanism – but noted that there were still countries that had yet to draw up an inventory of their ICH such that this should be seen as a priority above all else in terms of safeguarding ICH. It drew the Secretariat’s attention to this perspective, inviting them to verify which countries, in terms of human or financial resources, had not yet been able to draw up an inventory so that these countries could be prioritized. The delegation also wished to know the timetable for the implementation of the urgent assistance mechanism, adding that it occasionally took a long time within the Secretariat such that perhaps another mechanism could better implement this assistance more rapidly.
12. The **Vice-Chairperson** thanked the United Arab Emirates for its contribution, reflection and proposals made to the Secretariat, which it would likely pursue despite its heavy workload.
13. The delegation of **Zambia** congratulated the Vice-Chair on his election, as well as on the efficient way he was chairing the discussion with the support of the Secretariat, headed by Mr Tim Curtis. The delegation supported the proposal to increase the allocation of International Assistance requests, as well as the allocation towards meeting the travel costs of experts in ICH from developing Member States so that they could participate in the sessions of the Committee, its Bureau and its subsidiary bodies. It stressed the need for the Secretariat to continue to pay attention to the introduction of activities that might reduce some of the challenges faced by States Parties in their attempt to list elements of ICH, which it viewed as critically important, as it enhanced the ability of the Convention.
14. The delegation of **Portugal** also thanked the Secretariat for the very detailed report on a subject that was essential for the successful implementation of the Convention. It was also very attentive to the pressure on human resources experienced by the Secretariat, which affected its ability to respond to requests within a reasonable time period. The delegation appreciated the fact that the decision to increase the maximum amount for International Assistance would actually result in additional work for the Secretariat, but felt that it was the correct decision and a very positive element. However, it was also attentive to the Secretariat’s appeal, particularly under the very strong financial pressure of recent years experienced by UNESCO and the secretariats of the different cultural conventions. The delegation spoke of Portugal’s support to these secretariats, such as the 1972 Convention and the 2003 Convention, so that the human resources of the respective secretariats could respond within the difficult environment and under different demands, especially with respect to International Assistance requests. It believed that this support was a way of sharing solidarity and responsibility with other States Parties. It was also a way to assure this shared responsibility, which was a value and principle at the heart of UNESCO. Thus, it encouraged States to contribute and acknowledge the needs of the Secretariat in terms of human resources so that it might respond to the mounting requests. It was good that the requests increased, but complete teams were required to obtain concrete results.
15. The delegation of **Saudi Arabia** thanked the Secretariat for the efforts made at the service of the Convention. It wished to propose a time limit for each statement, adding that speakers should be limited to no more than two minutes so as to move more swiftly. The delegation concurred with the remarks made by the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, regarding fairness in the inscription of elements on the Lists by providing financial resources to countries that needed it. However, the need for financial resources was not the whole story; they required moral support as well. In addition, the Assembly should not put in place conditions that could represent a handicap to States Parties or that might favour one geographic region to the detriment of another. The delegation remarked that after each session of the Committee or General Assembly, new conditions were put in place for listing such that there was thus a need to study them carefully so that they did not favour one region over another. In this way, there would be fairness and equality in the potential [for States Parties] to list elements, particularly as the Lists represented the world’s cultural diversity and thus were very important, enabling every country to inscribe its elements.
16. The **Vice-Chairperson** remarked that there was a desire to move faster, but that it should be done under the best conditions, and even though there was no time-keeping, speakers should take into consideration the remarks by Saudi Arabia. Referring to the general points raised, the Vice-Chair noted two problems: i) the volume of work at the Secretariat level and the lack of human and financial resources; and ii) the problem with the imbalance of inscriptions to the Lists. The Vice-Chair felt that it was essentially a problem of financial resources and human capacity, and efforts had to be made so as to have the most balanced and credible representation possible in the diversity of cultural expressions so that countries could express themselves on the Lists. The Vice-Chair then turned to the adoption of draft Resolution 6.GA 9, proceeding on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. With no comments or objections, paragraph 1 was adopted. Paragraph 2, recalling Article 7(c) of the Convention and the relevant paragraphs of the Operational Guidelines, was also adopted. Paragraph 3, approving the Plan and annexed to the Resolution, was adopted by first adopting the Annex and then returning later to the paragraph for adoption. The Vice-Chair then moved to paragraphs 4–8, which were all pronounced adopted with no objections. Finally, the **Vice-Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 9 adopted**.

**ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA:**

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

**Document:**[*ITH/16/6.GA/10*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-10-EN.docx)

**Document:** [*ITH/16/6.GA/INF.10 Rev*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.10_Rev.-EN.docx)

**Resolution:** *6.GA 10*

1. The **Vice-Chairperson** invited Poland as the Vice-Chair to preside over the Assembly, as item 10 directly involved Senegal and the sitting Vice-Chair.
2. **The Vice-Chairperson (Poland)** took the opportunity to express her gratitude to the Chairperson, Mr Rodríguez Cuadros, for the atmosphere of consensus after two days of fraught discussions, and to the Vice-Chair from Senegal for his extremely efficient and smooth work. She also expressed sincere thanks to the extraordinary commitment of the former Secretary, Ms Cécile Duvelle, and best wishes to the new Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis, in the coming years. The Vice-Chair was also happy to note the gender equality in chairing the Assembly, inviting the Secretary to introduce item 10.
3. The **Secretary** remarked that, in conformity with Article 6 of the Convention, every two years the General Assembly shall renew half of the States Members of the Committee. Pursuant to Article 14.1 of the Rules of Procedure for the election, three months before the opening of the present session, the Secretariat requested that all States Parties indicate whether they intended to stand for election to the Committee. The provisional list of candidate States Parties was then published four weeks before the opening of the Assembly in [document INF.10Rev](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-6.GA-INF.10_Rev.-EN.docx). Since this document had been published, the Secretariat had received the dues and payments from Colombia. In this document, the Secretariat also provided information on all compulsory and voluntary contributions to the Fund made by each of the candidates. All the candidates at this election had satisfied their obligations to the Fund, as required by Rule 14.2 of the Rules of Procedure and were therefore eligible to stand for election.
4. The **Vice-Chairperson** explained that the number of vacant seats in each Electoral Group was equal to the number of States Parties presenting their candidacies for election, which meant a clean slate situation where all candidates would become Committee Members automatically, without election.
5. The **Secretary** read out the names of the candidates for election: for **Group I,** **Austria and Cyprus** were candidates for two vacant seats; for **Group II, Armenia** was a candidate for a single vacant seat; for **Group III, Colombia, Cuba and Guatemala** were candidates for three vacant seats; for **Group IV,** **the Philippines** was a candidate for a single vacant seat; for **Group V(a),** **Mauritius, Senegal and Zambia** were candidates for three vacant seats; and for **Group V(b), Lebanon and Palestine** were candidates for two vacant seats.
6. Noting that the list was definitive, and with no comments or objections, the **Vice-Chairperson** **declared Resolution 6.GA 10 adopted**. The Vice-Chair opened the floor for comments.
7. The delegation of **Palestine** wished to thank the Secretariat for its excellent work, in particular in the preparation of the present Assembly, while also congratulating the Bureau Members for this session for their excellent work. The delegation was happy to inform the Assembly of Palestine’s engagement following the ratification of the Convention. A draft law for the protection and promotion of ICH had recently been finalized in Palestine with the support of the UNESCO Office in Ramallah. Similar draft laws were in progress and would be placed in conformity with national legislation and the provisions of the other cultural conventions that Palestine had ratified. Many other actions and activities related to the Convention had also been implemented with the support of the UNESCO Office in Ramallah, such as awareness-raising projects and the development of the inventory of ICH, as well as many other technical workshops. It also wished to thank all the donor countries that had supported cultural activities in Palestine. Finally, the delegation, together with its expert Prof. Sharif Kanaaneh, was committed to enriching the Committee's work within a spirit of openness and consensus.
8. The delegation of **Mauritius,** represented by the Minister of Arts and Culture of Mauritius and the Head of the Mauritian Delegation, spoke of the great honour for Mauritius to be elected as Member of the Committee. He thanked all the Member States that supported its candidature, particularly the African Group. The Minister remarked that Mauritius was one of the first countries that had ratified the Convention and that it had learned and achieved a lot since then in terms of safeguarding its ICH, despite its meagre resources, with one element ‘the Traditional Mauritian Sega’ having been inscribed on the Representative List. As a multi-ethnic and multicultural country, Mauritius is rich in terms of cultural heritage; however, there is still a lot to be done to safeguard cultural heritage. As a new Member of the Committee, the delegation pledged to uphold the values and principles of the Convention and that it would abide by its principles and do its utmost to work towards the preservation of ICH in promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual respect for the peaceful and sustainable development of the African States. It would also share its experience and knowledge in the implementation of the Convention.
9. The delegation of **Armenia** thanked the Assembly and all the Member States for the trust afforded to it, and to all the countries elected by acclamation. It wished to highlight the important common sense that prevailed within its Electoral Group in coming up with a united candidate without any competition. Armenia had always been active in the framework of the Convention with four inscriptions on the Representative List and it had been very actively engaged in all the deliberations connected with the Convention outside of the Committee. The delegation was confident that, within the Committee, it would double or triple its efforts and work hand in hand to make things better. Finally, it once again thanked the Assembly and the Secretariat.
10. The delegation of **Senegal** thanked the States Parties for their confidence that had allowed for its election to the Committee, especially the Africa Group, which, in perfect consensus, had designated the three countries elected to the Committee. Senegal had ratified the Convention in 5 January 2005 and had already been a member of the Committee from 2008 to 2012. The delegation extended special congratulations to the Secretariat and in particular to Ms Cécile Duvelle for their support for the development of an inventory in the field. The delegation spoke of Senegal’s firm commitment and the two-year projects structured around intangible heritage that would continue until 2017. Senegal’s return to the Committee would therefore be well received by its authorities, and was a further way to support the local level. The delegation assured the Assembly that it would defend and promote the principles of the Convention.
11. The delegation of **Morocco** welcomed the Vice-Chair, adding that it was a pleasure to have a woman in the Chair for once. It congratulated all the States that had been elected to the Committee, and in particular the Arab States, Lebanon and Palestine, wishing them every possible success. The delegation was convinced that Lebanon and Palestine would play a very significant and constructive role in the Committee.
12. As an outgoing Committee Member, the delegation of **Belgium** presented its warmest congratulations to the twelve newly elected Committee Members, conveying its trust and encouragement for the important responsibility that lay ahead.
13. The delegation of **Colombia** thanked the Assembly for its vote of confidence. It had ratified the Convention in 2006, and it had been incorporated into national legislation in 2008 with ninety-nine elements inscribed on the representative list of Colombia and nine elements on the Representative List of the Convention. The delegation remarked that the country was going through a peace process and was on the verge of signing a peace agreement. Thus, the role of the Convention would be an important tool to involve a number of communities that had been on the margins of development, though very much part of the ICH of the country, which also involved social development in which Colombians were engaged to build a better country.
14. The delegation of **Kyrgyzstan** thanked the Bureau Members, led by Mr Rodríguez Cuadros, for the successful conduct of the present session and congratulated Mr Tim Curtis on his appointment as Secretary of the Convention, wishing him patience and success. As a member of the Committee, the delegation placed all its efforts in promoting the purposes of the Convention. In this regard, it expressed sincere gratitude to those with whom it had worked over the past four years, adding that it had been a very valuable experience. The delegation then congratulated all the new Members of the Committee and expressed its best wishes to all the others who would continue to follow the Convention’s mission.
15. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** congratulated the Vice-Chair on her election, adding that in Arabic one always says that the best things come at the end. It also wished to congratulate the newly elected Members of the Committee and was convinced that Lebanon and Palestine would very ably represent the Arab Group. The delegation also noted that new Committee Members had been chosen by consensus, without a vote, which was a very good thing that reflected how important culture was in understanding co-existence.
16. The delegation of **Egypt** was pleased with the discussions and decisions during the session, which were very important both in terms of form and substance. The Vice-Chairs had displayed great skill and know-how, which had contributed to the smoothness of the proceedings. The delegation congratulated the newly elected countries to the Committee, adding that its own mandate had drawn to an end, while those who remained or were outgoing had contributed a great deal. The delegation spoke of the very fulfilling experience for Egypt. It was happy to note Austria, Cyprus, Armenia, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, the Philippines, Mauritius, Senegal, Zambia, Lebanon and Palestine becoming Members of the Committee and it wished them every success alongside those remaining on the Committee. The delegation was convinced that they would continue to enrich the culture and co-existence between cultures.
17. The delegation of **Cyprus** congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent work, as well as the Legal Advisor for her very clear answers that had enabled the Assembly to reach a consensus. It also wished to thank the Member States, and particularly Group I, adding that it had been a very active Member of the Committee, with the participation of the National Commission of Cyprus, and would always continue to be so.
18. The delegation of **Saint Lucia** congratulated the new Members, extending its best wishes to them, and thanked the Vice-Chair and those responsible for the conduct of the present Assembly. It also thanked the outgoing Members who had been so welcoming in the last year (the first for the delegate), adding that it had been an invaluable process despite its brevity and that it was wonderful to be part of a group that worked through differences for the common good. Saint Lucia would continue to remain committed to the Convention.
19. The delegation of **Seychelles** thanked the Vice-Chairs and the Chair for their good work and congratulated the Secretary, Mr Tim Curtis, on his appointment, wishing him all the best. It also congratulated the twelve new Members of the Committee, and in particular the Members from the Africa Group, noting that there were quite a few island members with whom it had special affinities and it wished them all good work as it looked forward to working with the Secretariat and the Committee.
20. Thanking the Assembly, the delegation of **Cuba** was very happy to be elected to the Committee once again, having been on the Committee between 2008 and 2011.
21. The delegation of **Austria** thanked the outgoing Members for their dedicated work and congratulated all the new Members of the Committee. It added that it was honoured and proud to be a Member of the Committee for the first time and that it was firmly determined to promote and strengthen ICH by cooperating in a spirit of dialogue and consensus by working actively with the other Members at the service of all States Parties. It also saw the function of the Committee as one of great responsibility, especially with the view to sharing experience and good practice, learning from and supporting each other in efforts to safeguard ICH.
22. The delegation of **Tunisia** remarked that it was now leaving the Committee after its four-year mandate and it was very grateful for the experience acquired during its time through the work accomplished in a number of the subsidiary bodies. The delegation would nevertheless continue to work with the same spirit and enthusiasm and it believed that Lebanon and Palestine would be excellent replacements for Tunisia and Egypt, as Group V(b) representatives. The delegation expressed its thanks for the spirit of cooperation that had prevailed throughout the session.
23. The **Vice-Chairperson** also took the opportunity to congratulate the new Members of the Committee, wishing them good luck with the tasks ahead.

**ITEM 11 OF THE AGENDA:**

**OTHER BUSINESS: FOLLOW-UP TO THE AUDIT OF THE GOVERNANCE OF UNESCO AND DEPENDENT FUNDS, PROGRAMMES AND ENTITIES**

**Resolution:** *6.GA 11*

*[The Chairperson reprised his role]*

1. The **Secretary** returned to the question raised at the start of the meeting concerning the governance mechanisms and the Resolution of the 37C/96 of the 37th session of the General Conference. As requested, a self-assessment questionnaire was circulated to the chairpersons of the governing entities of the 2003 Convention, the Chairperson of the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Chairperson of the fifth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties so as to coordinate the comments by Committee Members and States Parties. It was noted that all UNESCO governing bodies had carried out the same exercise. In April 2015, the 196th session of the Executive Board had discussed the interim report on the findings and main recommendations of the governance review by the External Auditor. As a result, the 38th session of the General Conference had established an open-ended working group on the governance, procedures and working methods of the UNESCO governing bodies. It decided to request that the Director-General start with the implementation of recommendations 1, 11 and 13 of the External Auditor’s report. These recommendations were mainly directed to the General Conference and the Executive Board of UNESCO. However, in the same resolution, the General Conference had invited all intergovernmental programmes, committees and organs of the Conventions to inscribe, in 2016 if feasible, an item on their agenda concerning the follow-up to the recommendations of the External Auditor’s report contained in document 38 C/23 so as to improve their governance through concrete measures and to report on their proposals to the Chairperson of the open-ended working group. Even though a specific item had not been inscribed on the agenda of this current session, the Report of the Secretariat included an Annex on the follow-up on audits and evaluations, and the Committee’s report presented to the Assembly the previous day indicated actions taken by the Secretariat and the Committee to improve the governance procedures and working of the governing bodies of the 2003 Convention. A set of examples concerned, in particular, Recommendation number 3 of the said report: the use of electronic consultations for the Bureau of the Committee, for which the Assembly approved amendments to the Operational Directives that increased the delegation of authority to the Bureau, shorter sessions of the General Assembly and the Committee, and the online dissemination of documents, decisions and resolutions. The Secretariat planned to prepare a working document on this issue to be discussed and examined during the eleventh session of the Committee. Moreover, similar exercises were being carried out by the other culture conventions of the Culture Sector.
2. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretariat for the detailed, clear and precise report, opening the floor for discussion.
3. The delegation of **Philippines** appreciated that the item was included in the agenda, and took note that the President of the General Conference, as the Chairperson of the working group on governance, had written to the chairpersons of all the intergovernmental bodies and conventions asking them to place this item on their agendas. Having attended the session of the General Assembly, the delegation suggested that perhaps in future sessions governance be considered that would see greater intergovernmental preparation on substantive items on the agenda, precisely to avoid the situation in which there was a major focus on one particular part of the agenda, in this case the amendments to the Operational Directives. This could be avoided in the future by perhaps requesting that the Committee Members or Members of the Bureau consult widely with members of their regional groups so as to have a consultation mechanism before entering the General Assembly. Another issue raised during earlier discussions was that other culture conventions had Operational Guidelines or Directives that might warrant discussion on the harmonization of procedures in adopting changes or amendments.
4. The delegation of **Sweden** thanked Cuba for taking the initiative to inscribe this item in this session, and thanked the Secretariat for its useful report on the ongoing work on governance. As stated by the Secretariat, the General Assembly took a resolution in the General Conference that all intergovernmental bodies should report to the working group on governance and since this [Assembly] was such an intergovernmental body, the delegation wished to know how – if this report was foreseen –it was going to work. With regard to the governance of UNESCO related to this Assembly, the delegation wished to highlight the need for harmonization between all intergovernmental bodies, especially in the Culture Sector. Common Rules of Procedure and working methods would facilitate decision-making and a common reporting format of the intergovernmental bodies would also be useful. The delegation recognized that the example by the Secretariat of linking its report so clearly to the C/5 was an excellent method for enabling follow-up. Generally, in UNESCO and in the Culture Sector specifically, there was a need for the States Parties of conventions to take decisions on the prioritization of activities and to decide where the focus should be, given the limited financial and human resources of the Secretariat.
5. The delegation of **Palestine** noted that both the Philippines and Sweden had insisted on the harmonization between the different culture conventions in terms of their Operational Directives and other instruments, with Sweden mentioning a common Rules of Procedure for the different assemblies of the conventions, although the delegation would not go so far. This was why Palestine proposed a new paragraph on this item, which had been given to the Secretariat. Explaining the scope behind this proposal, the delegation referred to the earlier interventions that spoke of creating a form of harmonization. Presenting some practical examples with regard to simplifying the procedure and the participation of delegates in the different organs, the delegation explained that when this Assembly moved to a procedural motion, i.e. the adjournment of the debate, then the motion needed to be seconded, whereas in other assemblies there was no seconded requirement for the same motion of procedure. Another example was the working document distribution to the Assembly in which in some instances a deadline was given, while in other cases it was not. Hence the rationale behind delegation’s simple proposal that was purely technical with the aim of simplifying the work of the delegations, and which had been done in other assemblies, i.e. in the 1972 Convention and the 1954 Convention.
6. The **Chairperson** thanked Palestine for its remarks, noting that Cuba had asked for the floor after which the Assembly would return to the amendment submitted by Palestine.
7. The delegation of **Cuba** recalled that at the 38th General Conference in November 2015, Member States had approved a follow-up by intergovernmental committees to the Auditor’s report, as was presently the case. This had to be done at the General Conference and at the intergovernmental committees of the different cultural conventions, and as such, it should closely respect the relevant resolution. The delegation highlighted the importance of improving the governance system at UNESCO in order to deal with the challenges facing the Organization, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked Cuba for its remarks. Before giving the floor to the delegations, the Chairperson informed the Assembly that there would not be an evening session.
9. The delegation of **Greece** remarked that since the Assembly was discussing governance issues among several conventions, it should also join forces with other culture conventions dealing with the protection of cultural properties in armed conflicts. The delegation explained that although ICH was not a property it could still be very critically affected in armed conflict. It therefore sought a discussion on the possibility of working with The Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict to find a way to work together for the safeguarding of ICH during armed conflict, and most importantly, to use the great potential of ICH to overcome the impact of armed conflict on communities, groups and individuals, as this could potentially restore their sense of identity and continuity. The delegation thus invited the Secretariat and the Committee to facilitate further deliberation and elaboration on the value of ICH, its safeguarding in cases of armed conflict, and on its role in reconciliation, using any method deemed appropriate, e.g. calling an expert meeting on the subject or any other such method.
10. The **Chairperson** now turned to the draft Resolution by Palestine, which was projected onto the screen.
11. The delegation of **Germany** had a comment on the second paragraph, proposing ‘improvement of coherence’ as this was more logical than ‘harmony’.
12. The **Chairperson** felt that it was a reasonable proposal to replace ‘harmony’ with ‘coherence’.
13. The delegation of **Greece** concurred.
14. The delegation of **Palestine** fully agreed with Germany, adding that some colleagues were wondering whether the date proposed, 13 November 2017, might be too late. It asked the Secretariat whether from a practical standpoint the date ought to be changed.
15. The **Secretary** thanked Palestine for its question. In terms of receiving proposals, it would probably be more useful for the Secretariat to receive them this year, adding that the Sector, and not just under the 2003 Convention, was expected to report back to the next sessions of the Executive Board and the General Conference. Thus, it would suit the Secretariat to receive suggestions or proposals earlier, which would give the team more time to work on them. The date was acceptable for the next General Assembly if it was the sole issue, but in order to harmonize the work going on house-wide, it would be easier to receive the proposals towards the end of 2016, and possibly even before the Committee, as it would be interesting information to share.
16. The delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** thanked Palestine for presenting this draft Resolution and sought an explanation to paragraph 3, which read, ‘Invites States Parties to communicate to the Secretariat proposals for the modification of its Rules of Procedure’. The delegation wondered whether it referred to the Rules of Procedure of the Convention, adding that there were Basic Texts in the 2003 Convention, Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, and Rules of Procedure of the Committee.
17. The **Chairperson** believed that Palestine’s proposal referred to the initiatives seeking to harmonize the Rules of Procedure.
18. The delegation of **Palestine** noted that the Philippines had an earlier request to speak.
19. The delegation of **Philippines** concurred with the Secretariat on the question of the deadline, adding that sooner would be better for the receipt of proposals and also because of the process of the open-ended working group on governance, which would take two years to conclude its work, submitting its recommendations to the next General Conference in 2017. It suggested moving the deadline to 30 November 2016, so that the sub-group of the working group could also look at the proposals, but also additional proposals on other governance issues could be welcomed that might improve the functioning of the General Assembly and not just on the Rules of Procedure.
20. The delegation of **Palestine** clarified that the last paragraph 3 requested suggestions on the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the 2003 Convention so that they be modified in conformity, or in coherence, with the other Rules of Procedure so as to simplify the work of the different assemblies by making them more similar. It noted that Sweden had spoken about a common Rules of Procedure, adding that this would be the ideal if it could be accomplished. The delegation recognized the many items included in the Rules of Procedure, for example the deadline for proposals and working documents, the official languages, the motions of procedures, and the vote by two-thirds majority, and so on, which differed from other assemblies, clarifying that modifications were purely technical and did not affect the content of any Convention. In addition, work on the Rules of Procedure might become an example to other conventions that were also modifying their Rules of Procedure. Thus, harmonization did not [specifically] concern the content, i.e. issues of sustainable development or the aims of the Conventions or safeguarding ICH.
21. The **Chairperson** felt satisfied that the object of the proposal was crystal clear, requesting the future speakers – Lebanon, Cuba and Egypt – to keep their remarks short.
22. The delegation of **Lebanon** spoke of its honor in becoming a Member of the Committee for the first time and thanked all the delegations at the present session. It congratulated the twelve newly elected Members, as well as the outgoing Members, for supporting Lebanon’s candidacy. The delegation would work within the Committee closely with all groups to improve the performance of the Convention in order to safeguard the world’s heritage. Lebanon was committed to the implementation of the Convention and had managed to inscribe its first element ‘Al-Zajal, recited or sung poetry’, which was evidence of wanting to live together and sharing.
23. With regard to the question on governance, the delegation of **Cuba** felt that it was a rather limited approach to deal only with the Rules of Procedure, adding that when it came to governing bodies, the Committee and the Assembly should also be part of the consultation. The delegation sought to have a modern Convention in terms of its regulation, operation and implementation. However, it seemed to be going further down the line and was not really in line with the General Conference Resolution, adding that the first paragraph should read, ‘Recalling the General Conference Resolution from the 38th Conference’. The delegation also believed that the Assembly should not limit itself to the difficulties existing within and between the different Rules of Procedures of the culture conventions, even though the Assembly would not have a mandate to take a position on the other conventions and had to focus on the 2003 Convention. The Assembly should also exercise caution during the debate on the Auditor’s report and not accept the recommendation to unify or to create only one Rules of Procedure or one session, as this issue required greater depth and analysis. Concluding, the Assembly should limit itself to the Rules of Procedures of the 2003 Convention and not the others, as its sole jurisdiction.
24. The **Chairperson** agreed that there was a need for a forum to discuss all these topics, and that the Assembly of the 2003 Convention could of course harmonize the Convention, but it did not have the mandate or jurisdiction to amend other conventions.
25. The delegation of **Egypt** agreed with the Chairperson and Palestine’s proposal.
26. The delegation of **Netherlands** supported the suggestion by Greece to give more attention to ICH in armed conflict and to see how it could be linked with The Hague Convention.
27. The **Chairperson** thanked the Netherlands for its remark, which would be taken into consideration in the summary report of the Assembly. The Chairperson then turned to the draft Resolution 6.GA 11, which had been amended from 2017 to 2016.
28. Following the explanation by Palestine and Cuba, the delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** had a question for the Legal Advisor in paragraph 3 as to what was implied by inviting the Secretariat of the ICH Section to harmonize the Rules of Procedures of all conventions, when the General Assembly could also change the Rules of Procedure.
29. The **Chairperson** agreed that this required a legal opinion, adding that it was clear that the Assembly could not take decisions regarding the Rules of Procedure of other conventions or other assemblies. Each Assembly adopted decisions with respect to its own area of jurisdiction, and so could not approve a document referring to the Rules of Procedures and bodies of other conventions.
30. The **Secretary** concurred that some of the questions raised mirrored processes that were already ongoing and which were beyond the purview of the Assembly of the Convention. Thus, a request to the general Culture Sector would be difficult [o implement given that it concerned all six of the culture conventions, and the issue was up for discussion in the Executive Board and in the open-ended working group. The Secretary understood that the text proposed by Palestine was related to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the 2003 Convention, reminding the Assembly that the Committee adopted its own Rules of Procedure and it was not adopted by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, whether purely on procedural or other governance issues, the Assembly had to move the discussions through the Committee and then back to the General Assembly.
31. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the clear answer and moved to the adoption of the draft Resolution 6.GA11, and with no objections or comments, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 6.GA 11 adopted**.
32. The delegation of **Germany** wished to share some views on the Convention, noting that it was increasingly finding resonance and relevance in other specialized agencies within the United Nations system, in particular the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The delegation thus wished to learn from other delegations and experts, as there appeared to be more work being carried out on the subject than mentioned by the two Organizations by including an agenda item at the next Committee meeting to explore this dimension further as gaining good feedback about the pertinence of the work being done in the 2003 Convention might also broaden the understanding of why the Convention was appreciated on a different level as well.

**ITEM 12 OF THE AGENDA:**

**CLOSURE**

1. The **Chairperson** noted that the Assembly had come to the end of its deliberations and had managed to take important decisions. Thirteen years after the coming into force of the Convention and ten years after its implementation in practice, the Convention had become an international normative instrument with 168 States having ratified it and part of efforts to promote and preserve ICH. The Chairperson remarked that the time passed should give the Assembly confidence to confront the present and future challenges. Recalling the decisions taken during the present Assembly, the Chairperson spoke of having worked together through consensus, often exerting intense efforts, to show once again that when delegations were pointed in the same direction, a solution could be found. When it came to the Operational Directives and the amendments, the Assembly was on the right path to strengthen the Convention. It had also increased the budget amount that could be examined by the Bureau for International Assistance, which was deemed to be of paramount importance. It had also been able to incorporate important questions around legislation, gender and the involvement of NGOs into the periodic reporting mechanism. It had been able to broaden the basis of civil society’s participation in intangible heritage, an essential role. It had accredited 24 NGOs, thus increasing their numbers to 174.. It also had the pleasure of electing twelve new Members to the Committee with twelve outgoing colleagues. The Chairperson referred to the shared spirit among all delegations to gather together the collective will in the interests of the Convention to create new instruments, but also the will and awareness that consensus is the best way forward to imprint initiatives with ever-greater legitimacy. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and the Secretariat for their work. He warmly thanked the interpreters for carrying out their work with responsibility, and also the administrative and technical staff. He thanked the different delegations of States Parties, Observers and NGOs that, through their commitment, proposals and ongoing willingness to discuss and exchange, had enabled the Assembly to carry out its work with success. The Chairperson then thanked his Vice-Chairs who had had occasion to replace him, carrying out their work with talent, efficiency and eloquence. Thanks went to the delegations for their contributions, UNESCO staff, the Director of the Division for Creativity, and also the Director-General for her ongoing support. Before declaring the General Assembly closed, he wished to give the floor to the delegations and to the Director of the Division for Creativity who had a few words to close the General Assembly.
2. The **Director of the Division for Creativity,** Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, spoke of the fact that this was her first time attending a session of the General Assembly of the States Parties for the 2003 Convention in her new role, adding that she was extremely impressed by the scope and depth of the debates and by the interest and commitment shown by all. Ms Hosagrahartook the opportunity to congratulate the Chairperson for his excellent leadership in guiding the debates, which at times had been intense, in a very efficient and cordial manner. She also thanked and congratulated the Vice-Chairs who replaced him. Having followed the work over the past days and noting some of the key achievements, Ms Hosagrahar felt greatly encouraged by the major commitment made by all to better acknowledge and strengthen the role of heritage in sustainable development. She added that the 2003 Convention could undoubtedly play a vital role in implementing and achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable development that integrates cultural heritage is critical for the safeguarding of heritage itself, and the Convention must take full advantage of the potential of ICH to improve lives and livelihoods, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Living traditions are indeed at the centre of the most pressing challenges faced by humanity today: climate change, loss of biodiversity, conflicts and disasters, unequal access to food and safe water, education, health, migration, urbanization, social modernization and economic inequalities and so on. Ms Hosagrahar spoke of the new Chapter of the Operational Directives on ICH and sustainable development at the national level that had been adopted, which was precisely what was needed today to guide the efforts of all States Parties in the integration in national policies of culture as a driver of sustainability. With regard to the need for harmonization, Ms Hosagrahar remarked on the complementarity of the 2003 Convention with other standard-setting instruments of UNESCO, describing it as an important aspect and, as the Director of the Creativity Division, reinforcing this complementary between the 2003 Convention and the 2005 Convention, along with UNESCO’s other culture conventions, was one of her key priorities. Each convention of UNESCO has, of course, its own scope and specificities, its own committees and jurisdiction. However, there were numerous links between the built heritage, national heritage, intangible heritage, immovable cultural objects, and expressions of creativity, and she firmly believed that a holistic approach to culture was necessary to successfully place culture at the heart of development at the global and national levels. Ms Hosagrahar thanked everyone once again for their participation and cooperation, thanking again the Chairperson, and also the Secretariat, whose hard work was much appreciated. She added that it was very heartening to hear the solidarity and support for the work of the Secretariat, which was under tremendous pressure, and she looked forward to continued support and work in the near future.
3. On behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group and the Presidency of the GRULAC Group, the delegation of **Ecuador** wished to personally thank the Chairperson, congratulating him for his leadership that enabled the completion of work through consensus. The delegation congratulated the new Members of the Committee and the Secretariat for their efforts. Finally, it invited everyone to take a look at the displays for the Latin American Caribbean Week currently at UNESCO.
4. The delegation of **Brazil** joined Ecuador in thanking the Chairperson, congratulating him on his excellent chairmanship and adding that the General Assembly was actually a crowning achievement for the work done by Peru on intangible heritage. Peru had played a leadership role around the Convention in Latin America, and Brazil had worked side by side with Peru and the Chairperson personally. The delegation thanked the Chairperson for helping the Assembly reach the necessary consensus and for ensuring that the General Assembly took place harmoniously. It thanked the Secretariat and Mr Curtis in particular, and all his team who helped advance the implementation of this very important Convention. Finally, it congratulated the newly elected colleagues to the Committee.
5. The delegation of **Palestine** thanked and congratulated the Chairperson for having kindly agreed to chair the meeting and for his skill and expertise, adding that it was delighted with the results. It reiterated its thanks to all the States Parties that had supported its candidature, in particular, the Arab Group for its unflagging support and continuous efforts in the work of UNESCO, especially in safeguarding tangible and intangible heritage. The delegation also thanked the Bureau and the Vice-Chairs, as well as the Rapporteur. It gave thanks to Mr Tim Curtis and the Secretariat for its great work, without whom the Assembly could not move forward, and which was always successful and very well organized. It also thanked the Legal Advisor and spoke of how, in reality, there was a need for the Legal Advisor to be continuously present during meetings, both the General Assembly and the Committee, so as to answer questions at any time. The delegation concluded by thanking the Chairperson once again and congratulating all on the success of the session.
6. The delegation of **United Arab Emirates** spoke of the extremely able Chairperson and his Vice-Chairs in guiding the Assembly through to a positive conclusion, and hoping that he would chair future meetings at the service of the Convention as well as other conventions. The delegation also thanked the Secretariat, reiterating its support at this very difficult time, and the Secretary, Mr Curtis. It also thanked colleagues from the other delegations for having contributed to the success of this session in the spirit of reconciliation.
7. The delegation of **Nepal** joined the previous speakers in expressing congratulations and appreciation of the Chairperson’s leadership and the excellent way he had conducted the meeting. On behalf of the Group of Asian-Pacific countries, it extended its sincere appreciation to the Secretariat and to all the delegations that had contributed to the success of the Assembly, having made some progress through this Assembly in the implementation of the Convention, adding that it was dedicated to achieving the objectives of the Convention.
8. The **Secretary** reminded the delegations of the survey email for which their feedback on the organization of the General Assembly would be much appreciated. The Secretary further reminded Bureau members of the Committee that it would meet tomorrow, though Observers were also welcome. Finally, the delegations were all invited to the Latin American and Caribbean party that same evening with a Cuban music group, which was organized by the GRULAC Group within the framework of the Latin American and the Caribbean Week.
9. The **Chairperson** declared the sixth General Assembly of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage closed.

*[Applause]*

1. . Latin American and Caribbean Group [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . World Intellectual Property Organization [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. . The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. . Regional Centre of the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Latin America [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. . Five elements on the Representative List, two elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List, and one Best Safeguarding Practice. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. . The insertion of “and encourages the Secretariat to strengthen the cooperation with UNESCO Chairs in the field of intangible cultural heritage.” [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. . The addition of paragraph 9, which, after adoption, read, “Requests the Director-General, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, to write a letter to States non party to the Convention to encourage them to ratify”. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. . Available online at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. . For more information: <http://carta.milano.it/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. . For more information: <http://www.unite4heritage.org/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. . International Congress ‘Culture: Key to Sustainable Development’ held in Hangzhou (China) from 15 May to 17 May 2013. For more information: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/culture-and-development/hangzhou-congress/> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. . Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict 1999 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. . For more information: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. . The first reference to ‘peace and security’ was deleted and inserted later in the paragraph, to read “[…] three dimensions of sustainable development (the economic, social and environmental), as well as their interdependence with peace and security […]”. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)