**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**

**Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Revision of the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention**

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| **Summary**  At its twelfth session, the Intergovernmental Committee decided to reform the periodic reporting mechanism by moving towards a regional cycle of national reporting and recommended that the General Assembly amend the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention accordingly (Decision [12.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/10)). The present document includes, in its Annex, the proposed text of such amendments.  **Decision required:** paragraph 10 |

1. The open-ended intergovernmental working group for the development of an overall results framework for the Convention (Chengdu, China, from 11 to 13 June 2017) had the opportunity to debate how the process of adopting an overall results framework provided a unique opportunity to review the periodic reporting mechanism (document [ITH/17/12.COM WG/5](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-17-12.COM_WG-5-EN.doc)). It convincingly highlighted the need to reform the periodic reporting process to make it more useful for States Parties and for the Convention as a whole, and made a recommendation in this sense to the Committee, which is included in its report (Document [ITH/17/12.COM WG/7](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-17-12.COM_WG-7-EN.doc)).
2. The Committee, at its twelfth session (Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, from 4 to 9 December 2017), endorsed the recommendation of the open-ended intergovernmental working group and decided to reform the periodic reporting process with the aim of enhancing its quality, usefulness and timeliness. It also decided to amend the periodicity of the submission of national reports on the implementation of the Convention (Article 29) so that States Parties would submit their national report every six years on the basis of a regional rotation (Decision [12.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/10)).
3. The move towards a regional cycle of national reporting was welcomed by the Committee as it will help improve the rate of submission of reports and allow for greater effectiveness in the capacity-building approach thanks to the organization of targeted training sessions at the regional level. The Committee emphasized that this change would make it easier for States Parties in a given region to benefit from collaboration at the regional or sub-regional levels and the capacity-building activities would represent an opportunity to foster dialogue and exchange regarding national experiences. The reform is also intended to significantly contribute to the operationalization of the overall results framework, inasmuch as the national reports submitted would provide a key, reliable source of information to feed into such a framework.
4. Operationally, the move towards the regional cycle of national reporting on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List requires, first of all, the revision of the Operational Directives on periodic reporting as included in the Annex to this document. A transition period would also have to be foreseen before the new calendar could be fully put into place. After the current session of the General Assembly, and should the overall results framework be approved, the Secretariat will be able to start revising periodic reporting Form ICH-10 in order to align it to the overall results framework and begin preparing the related capacity-building foreseen to accompany the reform of the periodic reporting mechanism. This transition period would start in the second half of 2018 and last for all of 2019. This means that the submission of periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention would be suspended for the deadline of 15 December 2018 and 2019, including for overdue reports. The updated Form ICH-10 as well as the new capacity-building approach would then be presented to the Committee at its fourteenth session in 2019. By early 2020, the Secretariat would be ready to roll out the new procedures for periodic reporting on the implementation of the Convention in the first region.
5. The proposed regional cycle of national reporting would last six years. The Committee took note that the calendar for the first such cycle would be established by the Committee at its thirteenth session in 2018, to indicate the order of examination by electoral groups. The decision of the Committee also refers to the transition period that will be followed by the submission of national reports from the first region on 15 December 2020 for examination by the Committee at its sixteenth session in 2021. At the same time, States Parties in the second region would start preparing their periodic reports in 2021 for their submission by 15 December 2021. A similar process would be repeated for the rest of the regions until the Committee had finished examining the reports from all regions in 2026. The second cycle could then start in 2027. For States newly ratifying the Convention in the course of a regional cycle, consideration will have to be given to the amount of time between ratification and their first due report.
6. For the time being, the change will not affect the procedure for reporting on the status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. This is mainly because of the reflections that the Committee has started on the future of the Lists and some important mechanisms related to the Lists, such as the transfer and removal of inscribed elements. Once these reflections have advanced, the Committee will be in a better position to decide whether to harmonize the reporting mechanism related to the Urgent Safeguarding List with the regional calendar or keep it as a separate system as it currently stands, on a quadrennial and inscription year-based schedule. Moreover, no revision is proposed for the procedure for States non party to the Convention reporting on elements inscribed on the Representative List; this currently concerns only one State (the Russian Federation). This will remain a sexennial reporting process, based on the year of incorporation of Masterpieces on the Representative List.
7. The amendments to the Operational Directives recommended by the Committee to the General Assembly presented in the Annex to this document reflect the new approach to periodic reporting as explained in this document and, in more detail, in the document of the twelfth session of the Committee (document [ITH/17/12.COM/10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-17-12.COM-10-EN.docx)).
8. In addition to the above-mentioned revisions to move towards a regional cycle of national reporting, the Committee recommended revising other paragraphs of the Operational Directives to take into account the fact that periodic reports would be submitted online from 2018 onwards (paragraphs 152, 161 and 169). Thanks to the generous contribution of the Republic of Korea to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund to improve the periodic reporting mechanism, the Secretariat has been able to develop an online tool to allow States to complete their reports online. This tool is already available for reports on elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List (Form ICH-11) and will be adapted at a later stage of the reform to the periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention (Form ICH-10).
9. Finally, the Committee recommended revising paragraph 166 in order to conform to the existing practice for the publication of reports and their overview. The Committee also recommended that paragraph 167 be deleted, since its second half would now be better placed under paragraph 166, and that paragraph 162, on reports on the Urgent Safeguarding List, be revised in order to comply with the request of the Committee at its tenth session in 2015 to include the possibility for reporting States to update their safeguarding plans (Decision [10.COM 6.b](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/10.COM/6.b)).
10. The General Assembly may wish to adopt the following resolution:

DRAFT RESOLUTION 7.GA 10

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined document ITH/18/7.GA/10,
2. Welcomes the reform of the periodic reporting process initiated by the Committee and endorses its decision to move towards a regional cycle of national reporting;
3. Approves the amendments to the Operational Directives as annexed to this resolution.

**ANNEX**

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|  | | **Operational Directives** |  | **Proposed amendments** |
| **V.1** | | **Reports by States Parties on the implementation of the Convention** | **V.1** | No change. |
| 151. | | Each State Party to the Convention periodically submits to the Committee reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of the Convention. States Parties are encouraged to complement the data gathered on the implementation of the Convention with information provided by relevant non-governmental organizations. | 151. | No change. |
| 152. | | The State Party submits its periodic report to the Committee by 15 December of the sixth year following the year in which it deposited its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, and every sixth year thereafter. Form ICH-10 is used for such reports, available at [www.unesco.org/culture/ich](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form. | 152. | ~~The State Party submits its periodic report~~ **States Parties submit their national periodic reports** to the Committee by 15 December **every six years on the basis of a rotation region by region. The order of such rotation is established by the Committee at the beginning of the six-year periodic reporting cycle.** ~~of the sixth year following the year in which it deposited its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, and every sixth year thereafter~~.**States Parties use the periodic reporting process to enhance active regional exchange and cooperation.**Form ICH-10~~is used for such reports, available at~~ [~~www.unesco.org/culture/ich~~](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) ~~or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form.~~ **has to be completed online by each State Party (**[**https://ich.unesco.org/**](https://ich.unesco.org/)**) and is revised at appropriate intervals by the Secretariat.** |
| 153. | | The State Party reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for implementation of the Convention at the national level, including:   1. drawing up of inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, as described in Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention; 2. other safeguarding measures as referred to in Articles 11 and 13 of the Convention, including: 3. adopting a general policy aimed at promoting the function of intangible cultural heritage in society and integrating its safeguarding into planning programmes; 4. fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view to effective safeguarding; 5. facilitating, to the extent possible, access to information relating to intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of it. | | 153. | No change. |
| 154. | | The State Party reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken at the national level to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as described in Article 13 of the Convention, including:   1. designating or establishing one or more competent bodies for safeguarding its intangible cultural heritage; 2. strengthening institutions for training in intangible cultural heritage management and transmission of this heritage; 3. establishing documentation institutions for intangible cultural heritage and, to the extent possible, facilitating access to them. | | 154. | No change. |
| 155. | | The State Party reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken at the national level to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of intangible cultural heritage, in particular those referred to in Article 14 of the Convention:   1. educational, awareness-raising and information programmes; 2. educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned; 3. capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage; 4. non-formal means of transmitting knowledge; 5. education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory. | | 155. | No change. |
| 156. | | The State Party reports on the measures taken by it at the bilateral, subregional, regional and international levels for the implementation of the Convention, including measures of international cooperation such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives, as referred to in Article 19 of the Convention. | | 156. | No change. |
| 157. | | The State Party reports on the current status of all elements of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory that have been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups, and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of such reports, which shall address, for each element concerned:   1. the element’s social and cultural functions; 2. an assessment of its viability and the current risks it faces, if any; 3. its contribution to the goals of the List; 4. the efforts to promote or reinforce the element, particularly the implementation of any measures that might have been necessary as a consequence of its inscription; 5. the participation of communities, groups and individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations in safeguarding the element and their continued commitment to its further safeguarding. | | 157. | No change. |
| 158. | | The State Party reports on the institutional context for the element inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, including:   1. the competent body(ies) involved in its management and/or safeguarding; 2. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding. | | 158. | No change. |
| 159. | | States Parties shall respond, in a timely manner, to specific requests addressed to them by the Committee for additional information, if needed between the deadlines set out in paragraph 152 above. | | 159. | States Parties shall respond, in a timely manner, to specific requests addressed to them by the Committee for additional information, if needed **and independently of the regional cycle set out by the Committee,** ~~between the deadlines~~ **in compliance with** paragraph 152 above. |
| **V.2** | | **Reports by States Parties on elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding** | | **V.2** | No change. |
| 160. | | Each State Party shall submit to the Committee reports on the status of elements of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory that have been inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding at its request or, in cases of extreme urgency, after consultation with it. The State Party shall endeavour to involve as broadly as possible the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of such reports. | | 160. | No change. |
| 161. | | Such reports shall normally be submitted to the Committee by 15 December of the fourth year following the year in which the element was inscribed, and every fourth year thereafter. Form ICH-11 is used for such reports, available at [www.unesco.org/culture/ich](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form. At the time of inscription the Committee may on a case-by-case basis establish a specific timetable for reporting that will take precedence over the normal four-year cycle. | | 161. | Such reports shall normally be submitted to the Committee by 15 December of the fourth year following the year in which the element was inscribed, and every fourth year thereafter. Form ICH-11 ~~is used for such reports, available at~~ [~~www.unesco.org/culture/ich~~](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) ~~or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form.~~ **must be completed online by each State Party (**[**https://ich.unesco.org/**](https://ich.unesco.org/)**) and is revised at appropriate intervals by the Secretariat.** At the time of inscription, the Committee may establish a specific timetable for reporting on a case-by-case basis, which will take precedence over the normal four-year cycle. |
| 162. | | The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall report on the current status of the element, including:   1. its social and cultural functions; 2. an assessment of its viability and the current risks it faces; 3. the impacts of the efforts to safeguard the element, particularly the implementation of the safeguarding plan that was submitted at the time of nomination; 4. the participation of communities, groups and individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations in safeguarding the element and their continued commitment to its further safeguarding. | | 162. | The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall report on the current status of the element, including:   1. its social and cultural functions; 2. an assessment of its viability and the current risks it faces; 3. the impacts of the efforts to safeguard the element, particularly the implementation of the safeguarding plan that was submitted at the time of nomination; 4. **an update of the safeguarding plan included in the nomination file or in the previous report;** 5. the participation of communities, groups and individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations in safeguarding the element and their continued commitment to its further safeguarding. |
| 163. | | The State Party shall report on the institutional context for safeguarding the element inscribed on the List, including:   1. the competent body(ies) involved in its safeguarding; 2. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding. | | 163. | No change. |
| 164. | | States Parties shall respond, in a timely manner, to specific requests addressed to them by the Committee for additional information, if needed between the deadlines set out in paragraph 161 above. | | 164. | No change. |
| **V.3** | | **Receipt and processing of reports** | | **V.3** | No change. |
| 165. | | Upon receipt of reports from States Parties, the Secretariat shall register them and acknowledge receipt. If a report is incomplete, the State Party will be advised how to complete it. | | 165. | No change. |
| 166. | | The Secretariat transmits to the Committee an overview of all reports received four weeks prior to its session. The overview and the reports are also made available on-line for consultation. | | 166. | The Secretariat transmits to the Committee an overview of all reports received **in compliance with paragraph 152** four weeks prior to its session. The overview **is** ~~and the reports are~~ also made available online for **public** consultation, **together with the reports received in compliance with paragraphs 152 and 161, in the language in which they were submitted by the States Parties, unless the Committee decides otherwise in exceptional cases**. |
| 167. | | Following the session at which they are examined by the Committee, reports are made available to the public for information, unless decided otherwise by the Committee in exceptional cases. | | ~~167.~~ | ~~Following the session at which they are examined by the Committee, reports are made available to the public for information, unless decided otherwise by the Committee in exceptional cases.~~ |
| **V.4** | | **Reports by States non party to the Convention on elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** | | **V.4** | No change. |
| 168. | | Paragraphs 157–159 and 165–167 of these directives shall apply fully to States non party to the Convention that have in their territories items proclaimed Masterpieces incorporated in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and that have consented to accept the rights and obligations attendant thereon. | | ~~168~~ **167.** | Paragraphs 157–159 and 165–16~~7~~**6** of these directives shall apply fully to States non party to the Convention that have in their territories items proclaimed as Masterpieces incorporated on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and that have consented to accept the rights and obligations attendant thereon. |
| 169. | | Such reports shall be submitted to the Committee by States non party by 15 December 2014, and every sixth year thereafter. Form ICH-10 is used for such reports, available at [www.unesco.org/culture/ich](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form. | | ~~169~~ **168.** | Such reports shall be submitted to the Committee by States non party by 15 December 2014, and every sixth year thereafter. Form ICH-10 ~~is used for such reports, available at~~ [~~www.unesco.org/culture/ich~~](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich) ~~or on request from the Secretariat. The reports shall include only the information requested in the form.~~ **must be completed online by each State Party (**[**https://ich.unesco.org/**](https://ich.unesco.org/)**) and is revised at appropriate intervals by the Secretariat.** |