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

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

**Twelfth session**

**Jeju Island, Republic of Korea**

**4 to 9 December 2017**

**Item 11.a of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Examination of nominations for inscription on the
List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding**

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| **Summary**The present document includes the recommendations of the Evaluation Body on nominations to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Part A) and a set of draft decisions for the Committee’s consideration (Part B). An overview of the 2017 files and the working methods of the Evaluation Body are included in Document ITH/17/12.COM/11.**Decision required:** paragraph 3 |

1. **Recommendations**
2. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee inscribe the following elements on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Nomination** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [12.COM 11.a.1](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a1) | Botswana | Dikopelo folk music of Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District | [01290](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.1) |
| [12.COM 11.a.4](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a4) | Morocco | Taskiwin, martial dance of the western High Atlas | [01256](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.4) |
| [12.COM 11.a.5](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a5) | Turkey | Whistled language | [00658](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.5) |
| [12.COM 11.a.6](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a6) | United Arab Emirates | Al Azi, art of performing praise, pride and fortitude poetry | [01268](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.6) |

1. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee refer the following nominations to the submitting States:

| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Nomination** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [[1]](#footnote-1)[12.COM 11.a.2](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a2) | Colombia, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | Colombian-Venezuelan llano work songs | [01285](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.2) |
| \*[12.COM.11.a.3](#DRAFT_DECISION_12_COM_11a3) | Mongolia | Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites | [00871](https://ich.unesco.org/en/11a-urgent-safeguarding-list-00938#11.a.3) |

1. **Draft decisions**
2. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decisions:

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.1** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that Botswana has nominated **Dikopelo folk music of Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District** (No. 01290) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

The Dikopelo music practice involves vocal singing and dancing in a patterned choreography without musical instruments in which people from a particular area join together to sing as a choir. The element is practised by men, women and children but is mostly dominated by Elders who, forming an informal Council of Advisors, transmit their skills to the younger generation. Dikopelo is a communal practice involving a shared vision of community life. The element is no longer as widespread as it was in the past. Though Dikopelo originated as a communal event practised on farmlands, due to the decline in people engaged in farming the choirs have moved to villages where modernization makes practising it more difficult. Modern entertainment practices have also reduced the number of knowledgeable practitioners capable of explaining the significance of the element. However, though the viability of Dikopelo is low, the community and practitioners are committed to safeguarding it, as illustrated by their willingness to compete with groups from other districts and efforts to revive Dikopelo as a strategy to protect young people from social ills and promote positive messages among the community.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The element is clearly described in terms of its practice, the bearers involved, its transmission and its cultural relevance for the community, including an explanation of its historical development and contemporary needs. Despite its competitive character, the element contributes to the peaceful resolution of conflicts within communities. The practice provides an avenue for rural communities to forge solidarity and share common values that can be shared by a wider community, including their well-wishers.

U.2: The endangered status of the element is fully substantiated by the threats identified in its social and economic contexts. These include the migration of young people to larger cities, a lack of cultural spaces and opportunities to practise the element and the popularity of various forms of modern music, among others. Some modern individual artists, while being detached from communal practices, often missapropriate this community tradition by utilizing patterns of Dikopelo in instrumental performances. Consequently, the communities have raised concerns about such misuses.

U.3: Developed with the active participation of communities, the safeguarding plan includes measures addressing threats to the element. It incorporates a diversity of safeguarding initiatives, such as research and documentation activities aiming at raising awareness of the public, the development of educational materials and promotional activities through various media, which are expected to increase the visibility of the element at the national and international levels. In addition, an annual festival will be established to strengthen the viability of the element, in particular by encouraging its practice outside of the festive season.

U.4: The active participation of the communities was ensured throughout the nomination process, which is the result of their expressions of concern about the future viability of the element. Associations of bearers, institutions and traditional and formal authorities provided their consent.

U.5: Since 2010, the element has been registered in the intangible cultural heritage inventory in Kgatleng District, which is regularly updated and managed by the Phuthadikobo Museum and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture. Evidence of the participation of the communities concerned is provided.

1. Inscribes **Dikopelo folk music of Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.2** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that Colombia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have nominated **Colombian-Venezuelan llano work songs** (No. 01285) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

Colombian-Venezuelan llano work songs are a practice of vocal communication consisting of tunes sung individually, a capella, on the themes of herding and milking. The practice emerged from the close relationship between human communities and cattle and horses and is in harmony with the environmental conditions and the dynamics of nature, forming part of the traditional animal husbandry system of the Llanos. Transmitted orally from childhood, the songs are repositories of the individual and collective stories of the llaneros. Llano work songs have been gradually affected by economic, political and social processes that, modifying the llanero cultural universe, have significantly weakened the practice. For example, ambitious government plans conceived from a developmental perspective have led to profound changes in the use of the land and in ownership systems, and the modification of the social, cultural and natural sites of the songs have resulted in a loss of interest in the values and techniques of llano work. Llanero work songs thus face various threats to their viability. Efforts to safeguard the element are nonetheless widespread, including a pedagogical strategy involving more than twenty meetings for bearers and young people in the region, training projects for schoolteachers and a proliferation of festivals.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The element is identified in a clear manner, conveying its characteristics. It constitutes a practice of intangible cultural heritage that is important to the identities of the communities concerned; the element unites the will of local communities to perpetuate the knowledge and memories that give meaning to their way of life. Highly expressive songs help to accustom cattle to the presence of humans and to tame them, ensuring that the relationship between humans and animals during the milking process is close and functional.

U.2: A comprehensive analysis of different interrelated factors affecting the practice of the element is provided. These range from changes to traditional agricultural settings to legislation following the government’s new development agenda, leading to instances of environmental destruction and the migration of bearers of the element to urban areas. Threats to the element include: the delimitation of properties through the use of barbed wire; the construction of extensive road networks; ambitious government plans for large-scale irrigation, oil and gas extraction projects; the exploitation of bio-fuels and the large-scale introduction of economic activities diverging from traditional husbandry modes. The use of new media forms and technologies substituting the human voice are also perceived as threats to the element.

U.3: Efforts to ensure the transmission of the element, as well as research, documentation (e.g. cultural mapping) and promotional (e.g. festivals and competitions) activities are duly explained, showing the committment both of the communities and institutions. They also include joint actions between two countries where practitioners can benefit from an exchange of experiences. These efforts are structured around a five-year plan with three strategic lines of action: knowledge, revitalization and transmission. Specific efforts underway include: support from institutions for the production of documentaries and television broadcasts about the llano traditional husbandry, demonstrating the state of emergency of the element; the foundation of the Museum of Llano Cultures in Venezuela, with the goal of safeguarding the llano work songs; the development of relevant pedagogical programmes, publishing activities and the broad dissemination of information on the element in both countries.

U.4: The fruitful synergies between the efforts of communities, associations and the respective institutions are evident. Diverse and numerous expressions of consent encompass creative written testimonies, fingerprints, palm imprints and photographs.

**REFERRAL OPTION**

1. Further decides that the information included in the file is not sufficient to allow the Committee to determine whether the following criterion for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding List is satisfied:

U.5: The element is included in inventories of intangible cultural heritage in both countries. However, the frequency with which the inventory in Colombia is updated is not indicated. Information on community participation in drafting the entry in Colombia is also missing in the file.

1. Decides to refer the nomination of **Colombian-Venezuelan llano work songs** to the submitting States Parties and invites them to resubmit the nomination to the Committee for examination during a following cycle;
2. Commends the States Parties for the otherwise well-conceived and carefully prepared file, notably in relation to the description of the threats to the element.

**INSCRIPTION OPTION** (if the Committee is satisfied that the information considered as missing by the Evaluation Body has been provided by the submitting States at the present session)

1. Takes note that the information included in the file was not sufficient to determine whether criterion U.5 is satisfied, but further decides that, on the basis of the information provided by the submitting States to the Committee at its present session concerning community participation in the inventorying process and the frequency of updating of the inventory in Colombia, the following criterion for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding is satisfied:

U.5: The element is registered in inventories of intangible cultural heritage in both countries. The frequency with which the inventories is updated is clearly indicated and the communities participated in the process of drafting the entries in the inventories concerned.

1. Inscribes **Colombian-Venezuelan llano work songs** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
2. Reiterates to both States Parties the importance of updating inventories on a regular basis with the participation of the communities concerned.

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.3** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that Mongolia has nominated **Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites** (No. 00871) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

Mongolian practices of worshipping sacred sites have developed in the cultural space that is home to the nomadic lifestyle, which is characterized by its close harmony with nature and the environment. According to ancient shamanism, these practices are based on the belief in the existence of invisible deities of the sky, earth, mountains and natural surroundings. Local elders teach young people how to participate in and behave during the ceremony. The worship ceremonies build a sense of community and solidarity and raise awareness about the interdependence of human beings and the environment. During the communist regime in Mongolia, the worship of sacred sites was one of several practices that was banned, severely threatening its viability. Though the government and communities have been actively reviving the tradition, several challenges remain. These include rapid globalization and urbanization and the flow of herdsmen from sacred site areas to cities, a drastic reduction in the number of practitioners and masters with the necessary knowledge, and the operations of a number of mining companies. Locals are nonetheless enthusiastic about reviving the tradition and transmitting related knowledge, and in recent years many temples have been restored and favourable conditions created to conduct worshipping practices in local areas.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The links between intangible and tangible heritage are well explained in the file. There is also a clear description of the link between the element and the natural environment, which is the habitat of the deities that transmit spiritual forces to the bearers, namely the nomadic communities. The element has not only religious but also ecological functions, such as increasing the awareness among the communities concerned of the interdependance of human beings and the environment and respect for nature and the universe. The element also contributes to the preservation of biological and cultural diversity.

U.2: Although the communities and the State Party have demonstrated efforts to revive and safeguard the tradition, it is still threatened by the loss of practitioners, the diminishment of active sacred sites and migrations to urban areas caused by both global and local economic changes. One current threat identified relates to the operations of mining companies across large areas of the State Party which were home to some of the sacred sites, thereby limiting access for the communities. This has led to communities moving away from their traditional lands, thus abandoning the practice and transmission of the element.

U.3: Significant efforts have been made since the end of the communist regime to support and strengthen the remaining practices and their transmission. Temples have been restored. The safeguarding measures adequately respond to the threats identified and include research, documentation, awareness-raising and educational activities. The State Party is planning to establish a legal framework that would require natural and cultural heritage land assessments to be carried out before the issue of mining licences. Other measures include: the inclusion of teaching about the ceremonies in school curricula; dedicated publications; conferences and media productions and the development of a National Action Plan. Although there is a clear commitment to revitalize the ongoing practice and transmission of the element, it is still facing serious threats.

U.4: The nomination describes widespread efforts to revitalize the related ceremonies, involving various stakeholders. It refers to communities, groups and individuals, including religious leaders, who have actively participated in the design and preparation of the nomination at all stages. Evidence of their free, prior and informed consent is provided, including personalized consent letters.

**REFERRAL OPTION**

1. Further decides that the information included in the file is insufficient to allow the Committee to determine whether the following criterion for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List is satisfied:

U.5: The element was included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2010, which is maintained by the Cultural Heritage Center at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The extract includes a listing of elements without any reference to their description or viability. Evidence about the communities’ involvement is also lacking.

1. Decides to refer the nomination of **Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites** to the submitting State Party and invites them to resubmit the nomination to the Committee for examination during a following cycle;
2. Commends the State Party for the strong commitment demonstrated while regretting that the nomination did not fulfil all the requirements stipulated for criterion U.5.

**INSCRIPTION OPTION** (if the Committee is satisfied that the information considered as missing by the Evaluation Body has been provided by the submitting State at the present session)

1. Takes note that the information included in the file was not sufficient to determine whether criterion U.5 is satisfied, but further decides that, on the basis of the information provided by the submitting State to the Committee at its present session concerning the element’s description and viability in the inventory, as well as the evidence of the communities’ involvement in the inventorying process, the following criterion for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List is satisfied:

U.5: The element has been included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding since 2010, maintained by the Cultural Heritage Center at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The extract includes a listing of elements along with links to wider descriptions. The communities are involved in the inclusion and updating of the inventory concerned.

1. Inscribes **Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.4** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that Morocco has nominated **Taskiwin, martial dance of the western High Atlas** (No. 01256) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

Taskiwin is a martial dance specific to the western High Atlas mountain range in Central Morocco. The dance gets its name from the richly decorated horn each dancer carries – the Tiskt – and involves the art of shaking one’s shoulders to the rhythm of tambourines and flutes. The practice fosters social cohesion and harmony and provides a key means of socialization for young people. Transmission to young generations mainly occurs informally through direct learning. Due to several factors, however, the dance is now limited to a small number of villages and is at risk of disappearing. Globalization has driven it closer to oblivion, as reflected by young people’s increasing disdain for traditional heritage in favour of modern artistic practices. The dance is no longer practised by several communities and the remaining enthusiasts and bearers cannot find aspirants to whom they can transmit their know-how. Craftsmanship relating to the instruments and accessories is also in decline. Nonetheless, the last two decades have seen an increased collective awareness of the need to ensure the viability of Taskiwin among some communities. To this end, the first dedicated association in the region was created in 1993, an initiative followed by several other villages, and several local associations are now being created.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The identification is well articulated. The element consists of an artistic dance practised during festive occasions, which serves various social functions. Despite being of martial origin, its social functions have evolved over time and nowadays it serves to accompany celebrations, peacefully resolve tensions within or between communities, and foster community integration. Informal modes of transmission have been maintained.

U.2: The threats identified include the loss of bearers, in particular due to a severe traffic accident that caused the death of most of the practitioners some years ago. The emigration of young people to urban centers and their lack interest in apprenticeship are also reported. The craft of making the related music instruments is vanishing and there is also an undue commercialization of Taskiwin folk dance.

U.3: Efforts to revitalize the element were mainly initiated by young community members and fully supported by elders. They include awareness-raising, research and documentation activities dedicated to the tradition, as well as its promotion through festivals, all with the full inclusion of the communities. The element is integrated into the region’s programmes aimed at sustainable territorial development. Other specific measures include: the organization of Taskiwin associations into a federation; the diversification of sources of funding for activities; direct and informal apprenticeships with elders and the establishment of archives. The safeguarding plan is coherent and feasible. Clear objectives and measures are described and respond to the perceived theats.

U.4: A local association initiated the nomination process, and the file was prepared with the active participation of stakeholders and representatives including elderly persons, youth, women, a variety of bearers and researchers. Wide public consultation was supported by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund within the framework of the preparatory assistance. Written consents and video clips attest to the broad community endorsement.

U.5: The element has been included in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2014, with the participation of the communities concerned. It is administered by the Cultural Heritage Directorate at the Ministry of Culture, which ensures its periodic updating.

1. Inscribes **Taskiwin, martial dance of the western High Atlas** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.5** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that Turkey has nominated **Whistled language** (No. 00658) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

Whistled language is a method of communication that uses whistling to simulate and articulate words. The practice developed as a result of the steep mountains and rugged topography of the region, which required the local population to find an alternative way to communicate across long distances. The practitioners are mainly agricultural communities who spend most of their lives outdoors. The communities concerned consider this practice to be a key reflection of their cultural identity, which reinforces interpersonal communication and solidarity. Although the community is aware of the importance of this practice, technological developments and socioeconomic changes have led to a decline in the number of practitioners and areas where it is spoken. One of the key threats to the practice is the use of mobile phones. The new generation’s interest in whistled language has diminished considerably and there is a risk that the element will be gradually torn from its natural environment, becoming an artificial practice. In spite of such threats, the communities have been actively promoting this linguistic practice both nationally and internationally to ensure its sustainability, and whistled language is still transmitted from generation to generation in the context of parent-child relations through both formal and informal methods.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage and reinforces social bonds among local people living in a rugged environment. It is a cultural means of expression used by all segments of society and reflects human creativity through the capacity to comprehend a potentially unlimited number of messages. It is transmitted through parent-child relations and supported by informal and non-formal education.

U.2: The threats described encompass recent socio-economic changes, more specifically the decline in the number of practitioners, primarily older people, and a lack of interest among young people. Rural-urban migrations and the decrease in locations in which the element is practised worsen the prospects of it being sustained. The influence of the mass media and the increased use of mobile phones are also identified among the threats.

U.3: The four-year safeguarding plan is well elaborated and feasible; it includes measures such as research and fieldwork activities, documentation through the production of films, the identification of and support for tradition bearers, along with their localities, and the promotion of the element through festivals involving the participation of communities. Some specific measures include: a village-based pilot project to teach parents who use the whistled language how to transmit the element to their children; the formation of a civil committee targeting youth in this context; the organization of project-based competitions; whistle language certification programmes and the provision of promotional materials.

U.4: Communities were involved both in the early stages of research into the element and later in the nomination process. Community members voluntarily contributed to the conception of the file, which is the visible outcome of collaboration between researchers, government bodies and associations. Personalized free, prior and informed consent letters from community members and practitioners are provided.

U.5: With the full involvement of its bearers, the element was included in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Turkey in 2010, which is managed and regularly updated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

1. Inscribes **Whistled language** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
2. Reminds the State Party to take particular heed of the impact of tourism and undue commercialization on the safeguarding of the element in order to prevent its decontextualization.

**DRAFT DECISION 12.COM 11.a.6** 

The Committee

1. Takes note that the United Arab Emirates has nominated **Al Azi, art of performing praise, pride and fortitude poetry** (No. 01268) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

Al Azi is a traditional poetry recital performed by a group of individuals without rhythmical or musical instruments. It consists of a full-rhymed poem based on traditional poetry and the lines of poetry are sometimes interposed with sayings and proverbs. Bearers and practitioners include the poet, performer, chorus and audience. The practice strengthens bonds and is connected with knowledge and practices related to nature. Al Azi was performed regularly by communities until the mid-1900s, when performances began to dwindle gradually. Due to development, thousands of inhabitants moved from the desert to urban areas, and the economic boom from 1970 to 1990 led to citizens abandoning employment in traditional sectors and the culture and arts associated with such activities. Another factor has been the enactment of State laws instead of traditional tribal customs. The number of poets has decreased greatly over the past twenty years. Despite these challenges, Al Azi has withstood extinction thanks to the efforts of a number of creative people and traditional art troupes. The practice enjoyed a revival several years ago when it was introduced into national events, with a highly successful theatrical production, and media coverage has helped revive Al Azi, encouraging more poets to compose Al Azi poems.

1. Decides that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: This element is a Bedouin traditional art practised by many groups that served in the past as the reception ceremony for people returning from a mission. The tradition has evolved, with the recitals expanding to cover wider topics, and with the performances taking place on various occasions including ceremonies, festive events and solemn occasions. Three types of poems and four categories of bearers are clearly identified.

U.2: The frequency of the performances has been gradually declining since the 1960s due to the migration of bearers from desert areas to cities, the limitation of public spaces in which to practise the element, the introduction of State laws taking precedence over tribal customary laws, the loss of human resources and their know-how, and the consequent declining spontaneity of performances. However, communities also showed their commitment to maintaining the tradition with the broad support of the media and public authorities.

U.3: Efforts to safeguard the element include the identification of bearers, research, documentation and publishing activities, public performances such as festivals and contests, educational activities at various informal and formal levels and financial support from the authorities. The safeguarding plan includes comprehensive measures and an adequate budget.

U.4: Community and civil society representatives, including performers of Al Azi, actively participated in the preparation of the nomination, along with researchers and administration officials. The promotion of this process by the media was also ensured.

U.5: The element has been included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory of the city of Abu Dhabi since 2016, with the participation of local communities, non-governmental organizations and both female and male bearers. It is managed by the Department of Tourism and Culture Authority and updated every five years.

1. Inscribes **Al Azi, art of performing praise, pride and fortitude poetry** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
2. Recommends that the State Party ensure the full participation of the communities throughout all stages of the implementation of the safeguarding activities;
3. Invites the State Party to take particular heed so as to avoid the possible negative consequences of the inscription of the element, such as its over-commercialization and folklorization.
1. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee refer these nominations to the submitting States unless it is satisfied that the information considered as missing by the Evaluation Body has been provided by the submitting States at the present session. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)