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

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

**Tenth session**

**Windhoek, Namibia**

**30 November to 4 December 2015**

**Item 7.a of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Report by the Committee to the General Assembly  
on its activities (June 2014 to June 2016)**

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| **Summary**  Article 30.1 of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage states that ‘on the basis of its activities [...] the Committee shall submit a report to the General Assembly at each of its sessions.’ This document contains a draft report on the Committee activities from June 2014 to June 2016 that the Committee may wish to present to the sixth session of the General Assembly.  **Decision required:** paragraph 4 |

1. Article 30.1 of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage states that ‘on the basis of its activities [...] the Committee shall submit a report to the General Assembly at each of its sessions.’ Article 30.2 continues that ‘The report shall be brought to the attention of the General Conference of UNESCO.’ A draft report is presented below in the annex to the draft decision.
2. This report will require updating with additional information about results of the tenth session of the Committee. After the present session of the Committee, but before the next session of the General Assembly in 2016, the Evaluation Body will have begun their evaluation of files received for the 2016 cycle. It is also likely that the Bureau of the Committee will evaluate requests for international assistance. The draft report annexed below should, therefore, be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly.
3. This report should be read in conjunction with the reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List ([document ITH/15/10.COM/6.a](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-6.a_EN.docx)), the reports of States Parties on the current status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List ([document ITH/15/10.COM/6.b](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-6.b_EN.docx)), the Report of the Secretariat on its activities ([document ITH/15/10.COM/7.b](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-7.b_EN.docx)), the financial report of the Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (as an annex to the [document ITH/15/10.COM/8](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-8_EN.docx)) and the follow‑up on the audits and evaluations ([document ITH/15/10.COM/15.c](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-15.c_EN.docx)).
4. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

**DRAFT DECISION** **10.COM 7.a**

The Committee,

* 1. Having examined document ITH/15/10.COM/7.a,
  2. Recalling Article 30 of the Convention,
  3. Welcomes the two States that have ratified the Convention since the fifth session of the General Assembly;
  4. Adopts the provisional report on its activities between the fifth and sixth sessions of the General Assembly as annexed to this decision;
  5. Delegates to the Bureau the authority to approve the final report to be updated before the next session of the General Assembly.

**ANNEX**

**Draft report by the Committee to the General Assembly on its activities**

1. The functions of the Committee are set out in the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in particular in Article 7. This report follows the order of functions set out in Article 7 of the Convention.
2. In 2014, the General Assembly renewed half of the 24 members of the Committee, by electing 12 States Parties to serve a term of four years. The 24 members of the Committee, during the period June 2014 to June 2016, were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Hungary, India, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Mongolia, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda and Uruguay.
3. Since its election by the General Assembly in June 2014, the Committee has met twice: at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, from 24 to 28 November 2014 for its ninth session (9.COM) and in Windhoek, Namibia, from 30 November to 4 December 2015 for its tenth session (10.COM).
4. The Bureau of the ninth session was elected by the eighth session in December 2013 in Baku, Azerbaijan and was composed of H.E. Mr José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros (Peru) as Chairperson; Belgium, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan, Namibia and Egypt as Vice-Chairs; and  
   Ms Anita Vaivade (Latvia) as Rapporteur.
5. The Bureau of the tenth session was elected by the ninth session in November 2014 at UNESCO Headquarters and was composed of H.E. Ms Trudie Amulungu (Namibia) as Chairperson; Belgium, Hungary, Brazil, India and Tunisia as Vice-Chairs; and   
   Mr Ahmed Aly Morsi (Egypt) as Rapporteur.
6. The Bureau of the eleventh session of the Committee was elected at the end of the tenth session in December 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia and is composed of…  
   *[to be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly].*
7. The Bureau met daily during the sessions of the Committee. Since the fifth session of the General Assembly, it has also met twice at UNESCO Headquarters: on 13 October 2014 (9.COM 3.BUR) and 6 October 2015 (10.COM 2.BUR). In addition, electronic consultations were held in June 2014 (9.COM 2.BUR), November 2014 (9.COM 4.BUR) and June 2015 (10.COM 1.BUR). *[To be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly].*
8. During the reporting period, the Committee and its Bureau examined a total of 61 items inscribed on their agendas, which were accompanied by 65 working documents or information documents and 212 nominations, requests for international assistance, reports submitted by States Parties or requests for accreditation of non-governmental organizations. *[to be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly]*
9. **Promoting the objectives of the Convention, encouraging and monitoring its implementation** (Article 7[a])
10. **Ratification**
11. Two States ratified the Convention between June 2014 and June 2016. At the time of the sixth session of the General Assembly, 163 States were party to the Convention. *[to be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly]*
12. **Strengthening capacities**
13. The Committee continues to consider capacity-building as a priority , convinced that effective implementation depends on a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Convention and its concepts, measures and mechanisms. The General Assembly at its fifth session authorized the use of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund to continue the overall strategy of capacity-building using the budget line ‘Other functions of the Committee’. In its Decision 8.COM 11, the Committee delegated to its Bureau the authority to decide upon the utilization of the funds allocated under this line of the Plan, on the basis of specific proposals to be prepared by the Secretariat. To inform donors of the funding requirements of the global capacity-building programme, the Secretariat developed a [Concept Note](http://en.unesco.org/system/files/Strengthening%20capacities%20to%20safeguard%20intangible%20cultural%20heritage%20for%20sustainable%20development_0.pdf) for the 2014–2017 Complementary Additional Programme entitled Strengthening capacities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage for sustainable development, available for consultation on UNESCO’s global partnership web page. The Concept Note was approved by the Committee at its ninth session in November 2014 (Decision 9.COM 7) as the framework within which it can accept voluntary supplementary contributions without express approval.
14. Activities approved by the Bureau were for a total of US$785,097 for the period January 2014 to December 2015 and US$196,772 for the period January to June 2016, aimed at supporting a number of transversal needs, in particular: (i) developing training content and materials; (ii) strengthening the network of expert facilitators; and (iii) monitoring, evaluating and adapting the strategy accordingly[[1]](#footnote-1). Detailed information on results of the activities up to October 2015 concerning these issues is included in the report of the Secretariat to the Committee ([document ITH/15/10.COM/7.b](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-7.b_EN.docx)). That report also looks at the situation as regards the implementation of capacity-building programmes at country level, which has been made possible through earmarked contributions to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund and Funds-in-Trust arrangements.
15. **Knowledge management services**
16. Knowledge management has become increasingly indispensable as the Convention continues to develop and the network of stakeholders expands. It is only steady improvement in management of knowledge and information that allows the Secretariat to deliver services to States Parties and governing bodies of the Convention, as well as to the international community at large in as timely and accurate manner as possible. Activities for improving accessibility, usability and functionalities of the Convention’s knowledge management system were approved by the Bureau for a total of US$304,000 for the period January 2014 – December 2015 and US$80,000 for the period January 2016 – June 2016. Once again, the above-mentioned report of the Secretariat provides details on the improvements achieved and still envisaged in the field of knowledge management services.
17. **Guidance on best practices and recommendations on safeguarding measures**(Article 7[b])
18. The Committee called upon all stakeholders to develop alternate, lighter ways of sharing safeguarding experiences than exclusively the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices (Decision 8.COM 5.c.1). It is in this context that the Bureau allocated a total of US$133,000 for the period January 2014 – December 2015 and US$43,000 for the period January 2016 – June 2016 to help the Secretariat identify and share interesting and innovative examples, in particular concerning codes of ethics and other themes. It also requested to strengthen cooperation with WIPO concerning traditional knowledge and cultural expressions. The above-mentioned report of the Secretariat and follow-up on the audits and evaluations provide details on the improvements achieved.
19. The Bureau also allocated a total of US$129,000 for the period January 2014 – December 2015 and US$18,000 for the period January 2016 – June 2016 to publish a number of communication materials: the 2014 version of the Basic Text in six languages, both in print and in digital form; digital brochures of elements inscribed in 2012 and 2013 on the Urgent Safeguarding List, as well as the programmes selected for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices; a leaflet on gender and intangible cultural heritage and another on intangible cultural heritage for sustainable development in English, French and Spanish to complement the Kit on intangible cultural heritage, which was also reprinted on this occasion in English and French; and the multilingual availability of the website of the Convention in English, French and Spanish.
20. **Preparation of a draft plan for the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund and increasing the Fund’s resources** (Articles 7[c] and 7[d])
21. The Committee shall submit to the sixth session of the General Assembly a plan for the use of the resources of the Fund for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017, that is substantially similar to that proposed and adopted for the period 2014‑15, with the majority of the resources allocated, as before, to international assistance.
22. Since the last General Assembly in June 2014, the Fund received supplementary voluntary contributions from Azerbaijan, the Netherlands and Norway in support of seven capacity-building projects. The Sub-Fund of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, devoted exclusively to enhancing the human capacities of the Secretariat, has also received contributions of US$393,350during the reporting period. *[to be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly]*
23. Document ITH/15/10.COM/8 includes in Annex II (a) a list of such contributions for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 August 2015 as well as a statement of income and expenditures in Annex I. [Document ITH/15/10.COM/9](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-9_EN.docx) includes in Annex II a list of voluntary contributions received in the Fund and the Sub-Funds since the ninth session of the Committee, for the period October 2014 to October 2015.
24. **Preparation of the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention** (Article 7[e])
25. During the reporting period, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly to approve new directives or amendments to the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention on the following questions:

* periodic reporting
* safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development
* referral option
* non-governmental organizations evaluation schedule

1. **Examination of periodic reports** (Article 7[f])
2. The [Convention](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00022) provides in Article 29 that States Parties shall submit to the Committee reports on legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of the Convention, and in Article 30 that ‘On the basis of its activities and the reports by States Parties […] the Committee shall report to the General Assembly.’ The Committee examined 51 of these periodic reports and 11 reports related to intangible cultural heritage inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. [to be annexed before the sixth session of the General Assembly].The Committee continues to be confronted with a high number of States Parties whose reports are overdue; for example for the 2015 cycles, 24 out of 48 expected reports were not submitted. The examination by the Committee of reports by States Parties is provided in the annexes of [documents ITH/15/10.COM/6.a](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-6.a_EN.docx) as well as [ITH/15/10.COM/6.b](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-6.b_EN.docx).
3. **Inscriptions on the Lists of the Convention, selection of best safeguarding practices and granting of international assistance** (Article 7[g])
4. The Committee inscribed during the reporting period a total of 37 elements on the Lists of the Convention: 3 elements on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and 34 elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. During the reporting period, the Committee also selected one best safeguarding practice. *[To be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly]*
5. Following the approval by the General Assembly in 2014 of the amendments to the Operational Directives for the creation of a single 'Evaluation Body' (numbering six experts representing States Parties to the Convention non-members of the Committee and six accredited non-governmental organizations), the Committee established the first Evaluation Body during its ninth session and renewed three seats during its tenth session. *[To be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly].*
6. The Committee (for requests greater than US$25,000) or the Bureau (for requests up to US$25,000 and emergency requests) approved a total of eight requests for international assistance for a total amount of US$611,260 (see also [document ITH/15/10.COM/6.c](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-15-10.COM-6.c_EN.docx) for the report on the use of international assistance by States Parties). A total of eight countries received financial assistance from the ICH Fund during the period. *[To be updated before the sixth session of the General Assembly]*
7. The knowledge management served, in particular, as an online collaboration space for various lists and mechanisms of the Convention. All nominations for treatment for 2014, 2015 and 2016, as well as those in the backlog, were made accessible online. The system was adapted in June 2014 to take into account Committee Decision 8.COM 10 to be able to deal with files that can be treated in 2015 and 2016 following the order of priority set out in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. It proved to be indispensable for explaining to submitting States about their individual cases.

1. . For further details on outputs and indicators refer to document [ITH/14/9.COM 2.BUR/1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM_2.BUR-1_EN.docx). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)