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

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

**Sixth session**

**UNESCO Headquarters, Room II**

**30 May to 1 June 2016**

**SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
UNESCO Headquarters, 2 to 4 June 2014**

The fifth 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 2 to 4 June 2014. Representatives of 102 States Parties to the Convention participated in the meeting, as well as representatives of 4 Member States of UNESCO non-party to the Convention,
2 intergovernmental organizations, 6 category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO, and
50 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). 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 2 June 2014, morning session]*

**ITEM 1 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

**OPENING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.1*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.1-EN_.doc)

1. The fifth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was officially opened and presided by Mr Francesco Bandarin, the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**. After welcoming the delegates to UNESCO Headquarters, Mr Bandarin began by apologizing for the impractical configuration of the meeting room, while informing participants that the debates would be interpreted in the six official languages of the meeting and all debates webcast in English, French and Spanish. He recalled that the General Assembly was taking place more than a decade after the adoption of the Convention in October 2003, following the very successful celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Convention in 2013 – an event that highlighted the great achievements and vision that inspired the Convention. The Convention had
161 ratifying States or 85 per cent of the total membership of UNESCO, proof that it had attracted tremendous public interest and delivered tangible results for the safeguarding of the world’s living heritage. The Convention had changed the way people thought about cultural heritage, the importance attached to living heritage and significantly, perception of its communities as legitimate bearers. The Convention’s preamble recalled that intangible cultural heritage was a guarantee of sustainable development, and that it played an essential role in countless areas of human life. Moreover, safeguarding living heritage was about helping people to continue benefitting from the wealth of knowledge, skills and values that were fundamental to their well-being. Mr Bandarin quoted the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who had once said that there was no ‘one size fits all’ development model and that we needed to adapt to each context. In this way, the Convention was an important tool in the process of adaptation of development models to the different local and regional situations.
2. **Mr Bandarin** informed the delegates that in the last month, the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova, together with the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations, had organized a thematic debate on culture and development in order to mobilize support from the international community on the importance of culture for development. Mr Bandarin added that the Convention, in its second decade, could present opportunities and avenues worth pursuing, which would ensure that it became a true instrument of sustainable development. The coming days would present such an opportunity, as the delegations would address these issues and provide concrete and ambitious responses, which would also take into account the limits within which it operated. Mr Bandarin took the opportunity to thank all those who had helped UNESCO fulfil its mission in this regard and in particular the donors whose support strengthened national capacity in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage for a growing number of countries. He acknowledged, in particular, States that had provided much needed support to the Secretariat. Mr Bandarin concluded his opening statement by declaring the fifth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage open, wishing participants an excellent meeting.
3. The **Secretary of the Convention**, Ms Cécile Duvelle, welcomed the delegates, assuring the Assembly that the problem of lack of space would soon be resolved, and informed the Assembly that the meeting would benefit from interpretation in the six official languages of UNESCO and, for environmental and cost saving reasons no documents would be distributed in the room. All documentation in the six working languages was available online facilitated by Wi-Fi access. With regard to the list of participants, the Secretary understood that there had been problems encountered in the registration process but that a register had become available at the entrance to the meeting room, which delegates were urged to sign, as the attendance record was useful for the future. Finally, the Secretary noted that there were 475 people registered to attend the session, comprising 102 States Parties, 4 observer States non-party to the Convention, and 50 accredited NGOs.
4. **Mr Bandarin** thanked the Secretary for the useful practical information, noting that the huge representation of delegates confirmed once again the interest of Member States in the life of the Convention. Mr Bandarin proposed that the floor for general statements be opened following the election of the Bureau.

**ITEM 2 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

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

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/2 Rev.*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-2_Rev._-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 2*

1. The **Secretary** made reference to Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly that defines the election of a Chairperson, one or more Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur. The Chairperson and the Rapporteur are elected in their individual capacity, whereas States are elected as Vice-Chairpersons. Although not required, the custom had always been to ensure that each of the six electoral groups be included in the Bureau in the spirit of equitable geographical representation. However, the Secretary recalled that the Bureau of the fourth session of the General Assembly in 2012 was comprised of seven members, with Belgium from Group I acting as both Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur, which did not oppose the Rules of Procedure. It was noted that the duty of the Rapporteur was to verify the accuracy of the decisions taken by the General Assembly and not to deliver a final global report.
2. Mr **Bandarin** understood that informal consultations had taken place among Member States in the selection of the candidates. He then invited the electoral groups to quickly consult together to propose a Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur.
3. The delegation of **Hungary** wished to make an open statement on behalf of many of the delegations about their concerns regarding the working conditions, owing to the relatively small size of the meeting room. The delegation explained that the General Assembly was considered by Member States as one of the most important events in UNESCO and that it was thus unfair that seats had been limited to one expert when several delegations were represented by a number of experts. It urged the Secretariat to quickly resolve the situation.
4. The delegation of **Yemen** supported the statement by Hungary.
5. **Mr Bandarin** fully agreed with the remarks, adding that UNESCO colleagues were striving to resolve the situation in order to provide better working conditions in the coming days.

*[A 15-minute pause in the session for consultations]*

1. **Mr Bandarin** invited the Assembly to nominate its candidate to serve as Chairperson.
2. The delegation of **Yemen** thanked Mr Bandarin for his earlier intervention regarding the meeting room, and on behalf of Group V(b) proposed H.E. Mr Awad Ali Saleh from the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, which was seconded by **Palestine**.
3. Noting there were no further nominations, **Mr Bandarin** invited H.E Mr Awad Ali Saleh to the podium to take up his function as Chairperson of the General Assembly.
4. The **Chairperson**, H.E Mr Awad Ali Saleh, spoke of his great sense of honour to be nominated for such an important task and, in Arabic, said that he was proud and honoured to have won the confidence of the Arab Group, as well as support from all the electoral groups. Having chaired the Intergovernmental Committee during its fourth session in Abu Dhabi he understood the great responsibility that was bestowed on him. He was nonetheless surprised by the nomination, but was happy to accept the responsibility even though he was not entirely prepared, and would thus rely on the support of the Arab Group and the delegations. He concluded with sincere thanks, assuring the Assembly that he would do his utmost to ensure the meeting’s success.
5. The **Chairperson** invited nominations for a Rapporteur.
6. The delegation of **Sweden** proposed Ms Panagiota Andrianopoulou from Greece.
7. The delegation of **Turkey** expressed its profound satisfaction with the Chairperson’s election, and also seconded Greece’s candidature to the post of Rapporteur.
8. The **Chairperson** congratulated Ms Andrianopoulou from Greece as the next Rapporteur, and he moved to the election of the Vice-Chairpersons, whose role it was to assist and replace the Chairperson as required, and serve on the Bureau.
9. The delegation of **Argentina** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and on behalf of electoral Group III proposed **Brazil** as Vice-Chairperson.
10. On behalf of Group II, the delegation of **Lithuania** proposed the **Czech Republic**.
11. On behalf of Group IV, the delegation of the **Philippines** nominated **Malaysia**.
12. On behalf of Group V(a), the delegation of the **Democratic Republic of Congo** nominated **Congo** as Vice-Chairperson.
13. On behalf of Group I, the delegation of **Sweden** nominated **Norway** as Vice-Chairperson.
14. Noting the election procedures had come to an end, the **Chairperson** invited the Assembly to adopt resolution 5. GA 2 as displayed on the screen. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 2 adopted.** Before moving to the next item, the Chairperson opened the floor for general statements.
15. With no statements forthcoming, the **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to introduce the provisional agenda.

**ITEM 3 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:**

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

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/3*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-3-EN_.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.3.1 Rev.2*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.3.1_Rev.2-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.3.2 Rev.6*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.3.2_Rev.6-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 3*

1. The **Secretary** explained that two kinds of documents had been prepared for the session with the customary attribution of document references. The first type comprised the working documents, provided in the six official languages, and the second comprised information (.INF) documents. Working documents were linked to the corresponding draft resolutions, whereas information documents (in English and French only) were for consultation purposes. The Secretary drew attention to the first information document ([INF.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.1-EN_.doc)), which contained the summary records of the fourth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties. Item 3 (on the adoption of the agenda) comprised three documents: i) the agenda; ii) the provisional timetable of the Assembly’s work; and iii) the provisional list of documents which had been revised four times in the course of updating other documents. The Secretary reiterated that all the final documents had been made available online. There were 12 items included in the agenda for the session, of which the working documents had been made available on 3 May (or 30 days before the opening of the session), as per the deadline set up by the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly.
2. The **Secretary** continued with the sub-items related to the different reports in agenda item 4: i) the report of the Committee to the General Assembly on its activities between
June 2012 and June 2014 ([*ITH/15/5.GA/4.1*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.1-EN.doc)) and ii) the report of the Committee on the implementation of the Convention and the current status of all elements inscribed on the Representative List ([4.2](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.2-EN.doc)). The Secretary informed the Assembly that both reports had been examined by the Committee beforehand and iii) the report ([4.3](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.3-EN.doc)) of the Secretariat on its activities between June 2012 and June 2014. Item 4 also included an information document reporting on the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Convention ([INF.4.3](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.4.3-EN.doc)). Agenda item 5 had two sub-items: i) relating to the substantive revision of the Operational Directives ([5.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.1-EN.doc)) which covered a number of amendments that had been recommended by the Committee and ii) the terminological revisions and alignment of the different linguistic versions of the Operational Directives ([5.2](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.2-EN.doc)) which proposed amendments across the six linguistic versions of the Operational Directives for the sake of harmonizing terminology and the use of correct vocabulary. It was noted that the six linguistic versions would be treated individually as by definition they had encountered problems that were specific to each language. The Secretary requested delegations from each linguistic group to prepare any amendments by the close of the day. This work would be followed by agenda item 6, related to the accreditation of NGOs to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee ([working document 6](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-6-EN.doc)). This was followed by agenda item 7 on the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund with three documents: i) one [working document 7](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-7-EN.doc); ii) the financial statement for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2013 ([information document 7.1);](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.1-EN.doc) and iii) the list of donors having provided voluntary supplementary contributions to the Fund ([information document 7.2 Rev.).](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.2_Rev.-EN.doc) Agenda item 8 concerned revision of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly with a proposed amendment to Rule 2 to include associate members to UNESCO as observers which had been overlooked in the first version, and to Rule 14 concerning the timing of the presentation of candidatures to the Committee. Finally, on the last day of the session the Assembly would examine the remaining four important agenda items: i) agenda item 9 – the distribution of seats in the Committee per electoral group ([document 9.Rev](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-9_Rev._-EN.doc)); ii) agenda item 10 – the election of the members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage ([working document 10](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-10-EN_.doc) and an [information document Rev.4](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.10_Rev.4-EN.doc)); iii) agenda item 11 covered other business; and iv) agenda item 12 referred to the meeting’s closure. The Secretary took the opportunity to inform the Assembly that the NGOs would meet every morning from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. and during lunchtime from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for her excellent presentation, remarking on the very useful and interesting agenda. With no requests from the floor, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 3 adopted**. He also took the opportunity to explain how the debates would be conducted, noting that the Convention had 161 States Parties with three more States Parties – Bahrain, Bahamas and Myanmar soon to submit their instruments of ratification to UNESCO’s Director-General. It was noted that 102 States Parties had registered to attend the present session, and with the significant number of States possibly wishing to comment on particular items, the floor would be given to States in the order in which they raised their nameplates, with priority given to those who had not previously spoken. The Chairperson also had the option to introduce time limits if deemed necessary. Invited observers, States non-parties to the Convention, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs were able to request the floor during general discussion time permitting, however, they would be unable to speak on specific resolutions. Delegations were free to speak in one of the six available languages, but the large screen (used for the adoption of the resolutions) would only project texts in English and French. The Secretariat would publish the resolutions in the six languages. The Chairperson reminded the Assembly that under Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure any significant change proposed was advised to be provided to the Secretariat in writing. It was noted that all the debates were able to be followed live online.

**ITEM 4.1 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON ITS ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JUNE 2012 AND JUNE 2014**

**Document:** [*ITH/15/5.GA/4.1*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.1-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 4.1*

1. In the absence of the Chairperson of the eighth session of the Committee Mr Abulfaz Garayev and the Chairperson of the next Committee Mr José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros, the **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to introduce item 4.
2. The **Secretary** presented the important work accomplished by the Committee since the last time the General Assembly met, which would be accompanied by a presentation, as well as the corresponding reports, as previously mentioned. The Secretary wished to point out that the report of the Committee to the General Assembly, the report on the current status of elements inscribed on the Representative List (the periodic reports) and the Secretariat’s report on its activities were all interrelated and relevant including the financial report of the Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage ([INF.7.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.1-EN.doc)). The Secretary recalled that the functions of the Committee were set out in the Convention in Article 7, which comprised *inter-alia* the promotion of the Convention, guidance on Best Safeguarding Practices, the preparation of Operational Directives, the examination of the periodic reports from States Parties, inscriptions on the Lists, and granting of international assistance. As mentioned in [document 4.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.1-EN.doc), the ratification of the Convention was proceeding at a rapid pace demonstrating sustained interest of States in the Convention. Since the last General Assembly in June 2012, 17 States ratified the Convention, though only a month ago the number was 14, with Bahrain, Myanmar and the Bahamas set to become States Parties in the coming weeks. It was recalled that the Committee’s report would be submitted to the next General Conference of UNESCO. Concerning inscriptions on the Lists of the Conventions, the selection of Best Safeguarding Practices and the granting of international assistance, 60 elements had been inscribed of which eight were on the Urgent Safeguarding List. In the same period, the Committee had selected three Best Safeguarding Practices and approved 15 requests for international assistance for a total amount of US$1.3 million during the same two years.
3. During its eighth session, the Committee also examined the evaluation of the Culture Sector’s standard setting work, as well as the audit of the working methods of all six cultural conventions carried out by UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Service (IOS). Consequently, it took a number of important decisions that would set the course of the Convention for the coming years. In this regard, the **Secretary** explained that the decisions taken by the Committee on the evaluation (Decision 8.COM 5.c.1) and the audit (Decision 8.COM 5.c.2) provided different recommendations that addressed different actors; on occasion States Parties, the Secretariat and NGOs, and sometimes all of them together. Many of the decisions taken by the Committee, particularly those related to the Operational Directives, would be brought to the Assembly’s attention later in the agenda. The Committee called upon States Parties, the General Assembly and other stakeholders to promote the Urgent Safeguarding List by repositioning it as an expression of States Parties in their commitment to safeguard intangible cultural heritage and implement the Convention. Notwithstanding the eight elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, the evaluation found that more prominence should be given to heritage in need of urgent safeguarding, and the Committee’s wish that every effort be made to promote the list. The second appeal from the Committee sought to promote international assistance as a tool for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as well as the implementation of the Convention albeit to better promote the financial provisions of the assistance. The Committee also called for the respect, promotion and better use of the Representative List, which was occasionally used in place of the Urgent Safeguarding List, as well as the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices that was included in the overall ceiling of nominations each year. The Committee thus called for developing alternate ways of sharing safeguarding experiences, such as dedicated websites, e-newsletters, online forums, and so on, which would complement the current mechanisms in place with additional ways to more broadly share best safeguarding practices. Finally, the Committee wished to strengthen informal sharing of innovative examples of working, requesting that Member States continue to share their experiences in working with the Convention and to help others.
4. The **Secretary** further explained that the Committee had also decided to ensure that the inscription of elements to all the Lists closely reflected the criteria and procedures in the Convention’s Operational Directives. Both the evaluation and the Committee gave great attention to sustainable development, calling for enhanced cooperation with sustainable development experts when supporting States Parties to integrate intangible cultural heritage in legislation and policies both within the culture area and other fields related to development and work related to intangible cultural heritage, and sustainable development. Civil society was also an important focus of the Committee. The Committee encouraged States Parties to promote the involvement of NGOs and communities in policy development, legislation and sustainable development. With regard to its own working methods, the Committee decided to encourage greater participation by NGOs in its meetings and include the outcomes of the NGO forums in the Committee's agenda so that findings by the NGOs become part of the agenda and not simply an intervention on an ad hoc basis. The Committee also encouraged a debate on the role of the private sector and of public-private partnerships in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Still, in response to the evaluation, which contained many recommendations, the Committee requested the Secretariat to revise documents and forms to include gender-specific guidance and questions in the forms (the evaluation found that there were no specific provisions in the forms or documents in this regard). The Committee also requested the Secretariat to support States Parties with the development of legislation and policies, and to design appropriate capacity-building formats to achieve this. The Secretary would report later on the capacity-building strategy, but it was true that this aspect of work could be strengthened. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to adapt the content and format of the capacity-building strategy to ensure that it responded to major implementation challenges at the national level. In addition, the Secretariat was advised to establish a follow-up mechanism for capacity-building activities with the full involvement of UNESCO field offices and in cooperation with UNESCO National Commissions. Although the evaluation praised the Secretariat’s work on its capacity-building strategy, it was also true that a strong assessment framework was not in place to assess the impact of the strategy on a systematic basis. The Committee also invited the Secretariat to promote international assistance as a capacity‑building mechanism, not only as a way to support the State for safeguarding activities but also for the State to learn how to match financial needs with safeguarding plans. The Committee also asked the Secretariat to strengthen UNESCO's long-standing cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) over traditional knowledge and culture. The Secretariat acknowledged that although some work was carried out with the WIPO, a common joint thinking on certain aspects around intangible heritage had not been organized in the past few years.
5. The **Secretary** further explained that the Committee also invited the intergovernmental committees of the 1972 and 2005 conventions to ‘create opportunities for joint thinking, exchanges of experiences, cooperation and synergies between UNESCO's culture Conventions of 1972 and 2003 and 2005 and establish appropriate mechanisms for this and requested the secretariat to facilitate such cooperation’. Furthermore, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly several amendments to the Operational Directives concerning the process of evaluation of nominations, requests and proposals, and the accreditation criteria for NGOs.
6. Regarding the audit, reflected in the Committee’s Decision 8.COM 5.c.2 the Committee acknowledged the necessity to prioritize the workload of the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention. It welcomed the suggestion to reduce the duration and agenda of the General Assembly and the Committee sessions. The duration of the fifth session of the General Assembly had for the first time been reduced from five to four days. It requested that the Secretariat, in close consultation with Member States, study the pros and cons of synchronizing the meetings of the States Parties of the different conventions which could introduce savings from travel expenses, for example. However, many States had asked that the different meetings be staggered to enable delegates to rest and prepare for the following sessions. The Committee also welcomed the establishment by the Culture Sector in 2014 of a services team that would provide logistics and communications services for all the conventions, thus pooling available resources. Following the evaluation by the IOS, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve new amendments to the Operational Directives on procedures for inscription on an enlarged or reduced basis of an element already inscribed. In addition, the Committee proposed to include the definition of ‘emergency’ for international assistance requests, as well as a slight revision of criterion U.3 for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List. The Secretary thus concluded the summary of the Committee's work, and suggested that the delegations refer to the reports for a more detailed examination.
7. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the excellent overview of the Committee’s decisions and activities, and which also showed the extent of the Secretariat’s support to the Committee. He then turned to Resolution 5.GA 4.1 on a point-by-point basis.
8. Mr Ranjit Biswas, the Secretary from the Ministry of Culture of **Bangladesh** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and expressed the delegation’s satisfaction that 14 States had ratified the Convention in the past two years. However, he felt that greater emphasis needed to be given to capacity-building to boost its budgetary allocation.
9. The delegation of **Indonesia** congratulated the Chairperson on his appointment, recalling fondly the Committee meeting hosted in the United Arab Emirates. The delegation suggested that before approving the draft resolution reference be made to the annex mentioned in the main document, as per the normal procedure.
10. The **Secretary** clarified that the annex was in fact the six-page report by the Committee to the Assembly, and that by adopting the report it was essentially adopting the annex.
11. With no further comments, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 4.1 adopted**.

**ITEM 4.2 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE 2012 AND 2013 REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF ALL ELEMENTS INSCRIBED ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST**

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/4.2*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.2-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/12/7.COM/6*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-12-7.COM-6-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/13/8.COM/6.a*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-6.a-EN_.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 4.2*

1. The **Chairperson** proceeded to the next item and the report of the Committee on the 2012‑2013 reports of States Parties on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the report.
2. **The Secretariat** recalled that in accordance with Article 29 of the Convention, States Parties were required to periodically submit reports to the Committee, which were summarized by the Committee in a report submitted to the General Assembly, as foreseen in Article 7 and Article 30. Out of the 63 States Parties expected to submit reports for the 2012 and 2013 cycle, 26 had submitted complete reports that were examined by the Committee in either its seventh or eighth session. These 26 reports covered 78 elements inscribed on the Representative List and 8 on the Urgent Safeguarding List, as well as
3 Best Safeguarding Practices. It was noted that the Committee’s reports were available separately as documents [7.COM 6](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-12-7.COM-6-EN.doc) (for 2012) and document [8.COM 6a](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-6.a-EN_.doc) (for 2013), while the periodic reports were able to be consulted online on the dedicated web pages for [2012](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=485) and [2013](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=615). Almost half of the 68 States Parties needed to have submitted their periodic reports, but only 20 per cent (or 31 States Parties) had managed to do so, while 16 States had neither submitted their reports nor responded to reminders sent by the Secretariat. The Committee expressed in its decisions its concerns, with the Secretariat trying to figure out how best to assist States Parties in completing the reports. Based on experience garnered from reports submitted by States Parties in previous cycles, the Secretariat drew up an *aide-memoire* which offered additional guidance to States in preparing their reports for future cycles, outlining the most frequent challenges encountered by States in the reporting exercise. Some of the interesting points raised and discussed by the Committee in these two years included firstly, the growing importance attributed by States to the role of intangible cultural heritage in fostering sustainable development and its integration into national development planning and strategy demonstrating that States Parties clearly perceived intangible heritage as a driver of development. Many States also noted that intangible heritage had been integrated into rural development strategies but also into urban development strategies. Secondly, the cross-cutting character of intangible cultural heritage recognized in the reports required cross-sectoral cooperation within government, and collaboration between the different stakeholders. As previously mentioned by the Secretary, it was not simply a matter of working with primary counterparts at the ministries of culture but also working with ministries of agriculture, health, and other social and economic development ministries to ensure that intangible heritage was fully reflected in every aspect of legislation and policy. The periodic reports brought to attention the role of NGOs and point that where NGOs were active, they would be considered as a repository of knowledge and resources for training, acting as a bridge between communities and the authorities. The contribution of NGOs, as well as the private sector could, therefore, be better reflected. The Committee thus requested that States make increasing efforts to reflect the contributions and perspectives of NGOs in the actual process of preparing their periodic reports. The IOS evaluation also mentioned the need for greater attention to the gender aspects of intangible cultural heritage, its safeguarding, and contributions of youth to the practice and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. Gender, youth and community participation would become particularly important when addressing elements inscribed on the Representative List.
3. **The Secretariat** further reported that States commonly viewed handicrafts and tourism as resources for local economic development. Many of them also raised the issue of potentially maximizing the interactions between the 2003 Convention and the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It was noted among the States that there were a number of initiatives underway concerning intellectual property protection and other forms of legal protection for intangible cultural heritage in order to provide advantageous treatment, i.e. tax exemptions or certificates of origin or other legal or economic schemes that could be beneficial. However, in some cases these measures had a negative impact on intangible cultural heritage and its bearers. Finally, the Committee brought attention to the importance of developing a wide diversity of formal and non-formal educational measures and training programmes. Although some were already reflected in the reports, the Committee sought richer, more useful information on integrating intangible cultural heritage aspects into education. In terms of the periodic reporting process, the Committee discussed means of improving the process, partly in response to its own experience and partly in response to observations of the IOS. Consequently, the Committee decided first to revise the periodic reporting forms to include specific questions on policy and legislation (in addition to gender), and to encourage States to focus on results, outcomes and impacts rather than simply listing activities. The Committee also encouraged States Parties to complement the data gathered on implementation of the Convention in their periodic reports by including information provided by relevant NGOs. This was already mentioned in the Operational Directives, but the Committee once again highlighted the importance of involving NGOs in the reporting process. The Secretariat concluded by adding that upon the requests of the Committee, the Secretariat would propose some draft Operational Directives on the procedure, and to improve the actual performance of the periodic reporting that would be examined by the Committee at its ninth session in Paris at the end of November 2014. The draft resolution presented, therefore, requested the Assembly to take note of the Committee's decisions and to convey its report to the General Conference.
4. The **Chairperson** remarked that the report presented useful information on the status of the elements inscribed on the Representative List, as well as the method of implementation of the Convention.
5. The delegation of **Switzerland** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for its clear and succinct presentation of the reports and working documents, and for the quality of its work, particularly in light of the current budgetary constraints. Moreover, the excellence of the Secretariat’s work was underscored in the IOS evaluation. Nevertheless, it was essential to prioritize the Secretariat’s work and international assistance and preparatory assistance were particularly important, to ensure that work was focused on the main purpose of the Convention, i.e. the safeguarding of cultural expressions precious to communities and threatened by processes of globalization and cultural homogenization. It was thus important to bear in mind that the proposals provided by the audit on the working methods of cultural conventions would not bring about an increase in staff, but would streamline processes for greater cost efficiency. The delegation recognized that the common platform of services for the six culture conventions could strategically redirect existing resources, and it awaited its implementation in mid-2014 with interest. At the same time, it supported a differentiated approach on certain issues, such as the fundraising strategy, as each convention had its own specificities in the eyes of potential donors. With regard to the periodic reports on implementation of the Convention by States Parties, the delegation was of the opinion that the reports were an important tool for sharing experiences and knowledge, and had the potential for analysing challenges and achieving results. It understood that the preparation of periodic reports presented a challenge to, and a significant commitment by, the State Party – an exercise that Switzerland was currently undertaking. The periodic reporting was, therefore, an opportunity, albeit an obligation, because it helped assess the work carried out to effectively implement the Convention at all levels and by all stakeholders. The report also presented an opportunity to understand how intangible cultural heritage and the purpose of the Convention were perceived at national and local levels. Finally, the reports demonstrated that the expressions and practices of intangible cultural heritage were present and alive, and far from being a reason for withdrawal or exclusion.
6. The **Chairperson** thanked Switzerland for its remarks on how the periodic reports could be used in implementation of the Convention within different perspectives, while revealing the extent of cooperation with other conventions. The initiative was highly anticipated and it was, therefore, important that it took place that year. The Chairperson remarked that he had been working on all three conventions but had started with the 2003 Convention, adding that the Assembly could use this mechanism of working with all other conventions since they were all working in the interest of human cultural heritage albeit with different approaches and principles.
7. The delegation of **Republic of Korea** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and spoke of its appreciation of the Secretariat's efforts and excellent report on this item. It supported the draft resolutions and wished to emphasize the importance of the periodic reports on implementation of the Convention as it played a key role in preserving intangible cultural heritage by facilitating shared experiences and the exchange of safeguarding measures and strategies among States and communities. In this regard, the timely submission of reports was important not only for the States submitting the reports but also for other countries that would benefit from them. Nevertheless, if the late submission of some reports was owed to the lack of capacity or infrastructure, then there was a need to consider ways to offer support, perhaps with the development of a specific manual. The Secretariat could also support these activities as part of its capacity-building programme. The delegation planned to expand its support in this regard through Funds-in-Trust projects.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked the Republic of Korea for its help in making progress in implementation of the Convention.
9. The delegation of **Mauritania** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his election, as well as the Vice-Chairpersons and the Rapporteur, and the Secretariat and welcomed all Members of the Assembly. Mauritania very quickly understood the importance of the Convention as a contributor towards sustainable development. In this regard, it thanked the generous support of the Norwegian government, which had enabled the training of human resources that were crucial to implementation of the Convention in Mauritania. It assured the Assembly that its periodic report would soon be submitted, adding that the protection of cultural values was important for human development. It hoped to make concrete contributions to that effect, adding that its presence in the Committee (if elected) would allow it to provide its expert contribution to implementation of the Convention, which was important for the stability of the continent and inter-community understanding.
10. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson** declared **Resolution 5.GA 4.2 adopted**.

*[Monday 2 June 2014, afternoon session]*

**ITEM 4.3 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON ITS ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JUNE 2012 AND JUNE 2014**

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/4.3*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-4.3-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.4.3*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.4.3-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *4.GA 5*

1. The **Chairperson** began the session by congratulating the Rapporteur and Vice-Chairpersons from Norway, Czech Republic, Brazil, Malaysia and Congo adding that he would be happy to receive their assistance when it was needed. He also welcomed the new Member States that had recently ratified the Convention, namely Denmark, Bahamas and Bahrain bringing the total number of States Parties to 161 – proof of the Convention’s appeal to Member States, as well as the progress made in recent years.
2. With regard to the meeting room, the **Secretary** informed the Assembly that a bigger meeting room had become available though it would take a day to set up the microphones, seating arrangements and so on should the Assembly wish to switch rooms for the duration of the rest of the session of the General Assembly.
3. The **Chairperson** noted the general agreement, and moved to the next item and the Secretariat’s report to the General Assembly.
4. The **Secretary** explained that the report summarized the two reports presented by the Secretariat to the Committee in 2012 and 2013, as well as a report on the tenth anniversary of the Convention. **Part I of the report** (Duties, structure and composition of the Secretariat) also included information on restructuring of the Intangible Culture Heritage Section and, since its publication a month ago, the Director-General had issued an Ivory Note on these changes, as indicated in paragraph 6, with progress made. Of the four former units only two units remained: the Programme Implementation Unit and the Capacity-Building and Heritage Policy Unit. The services formerly provided by the Information and Communications Unit, and many formerly provided by the Governing Bodies and Processing unit would be carried out by the Conventions Common Services Unit; a recommendation emanating from the audit of the conventions, as previously mentioned. Thus, the Common Services Unit would deal mainly with all logistical aspects of the organization of meetings together with all communication and publications, beginning with the new publication of the Convention’s Basic Texts for 2014. The Secretary reminded the Assembly that the Secretariat relied heavily on extrabudgetary personnel: Italy had seconded an expert from 2011 to 2013; Azerbaijan had seconded an expert for four years; China made available another recent secondment for three years; Japan also provided an expert from 2011 to 2014; and Spain financed an associate expert from 2011 to 2014. In addition, the Secretariat was able to fund another position thanks to State contributions to the sub-fund and also thanks to knowledge management support from the Fund the Secretariat was able to benefit from staff especially dedicated to a knowledge management system. The Secretary further informed the Assembly that Abu Dhabi Tourism and Cultural Authority had just agreed to finance a regional officer for the Arab States thanks to a generous contribution by the United Arab Emirates. **Part II of the report** (Main activities of the Secretariat in 2012 and 2013) was organized according to the main lines set out in the Convention, starting with **a)** **Ensuring the implementation of the decisions of the General Assembly and the Committee while enhancing the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage**. The first part is linked to i) Implementation of international assistance, which in the report explains past decisions in good detail and that once approved, a contract is established with beneficiary States, followed by implementation of activities that occasionally took three years. Part ii) Awareness-raising and communication comprised the publication of brochures presenting the inscriptions in 2010–2011, with updates for those in 2012–2013, which will soon be available online. It was noted that the brochures covered inscriptions over two years in order to save resources and time. The tenth anniversary of the Convention was also a landmark in terms of promotion, and the [information document 4.3](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.4.3-EN.doc) provides information on the 166 international and national events that were registered worldwide by States Parties and civil society for the anniversary. The Secretariat was particularly involved in two big events: the Chengdu conference, and the ICH and sustainable development exhibition, with information displayed at UNESCO HQ during the General Conference, as well as leaflets, made possible thanks to the support of Monaco and Turkey. In addition, since the last General Assembly 27 requests for patronage of the Convention had been received with 23 meeting the criteria for approval of which
10 concerned events linked to the tenth anniversary. The Secretary was also happy to inform the Assembly of the success of the video uploads of inscriptions on the [UNESCO YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkD7gm3Am3M3k156lk46t3A), which were consistently among the top 10 UNESCO videos viewed every month.
5. The **Secretary** continued with part iii) Providing guidance on best safeguarding practices and making recommendations on measures for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage which sought to promote the best safeguarding practices once selected by the Committee. The first two user-friendly booklets (e-publications) were produced as a brief manual to promote the best safeguarding practices of the Fandango Living Museum of Brazil, and the Education and Training in Indonesian Batik project. Part iv) Coordination with category 2 centres is considered important work. With the last category 2 centre from Algeria approved by the General Conference in November 2013 (covering intangible cultural heritage in Africa) the total number of centres had reached seven. UNESCO had been investing a lot of effort in building cooperation with the centres to ensure their work complemented the work of the Secretariat in supporting the Convention and UNESCO in their respective domains and regions. Annual meetings of all the centres had since been organized to collectively share knowledge and experiences. An annual [meeting](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/21248-EN.ppt) was held at the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe in Sozopol, Bulgaria last July with the second meeting to be held in Paris on the Friday after the end of the General Assembly. It was expected that the category 2 centre coordination meeting would be held in Paris according to General Assembly years and that one of the centres would host the next global meeting the year after.
6. The **Secretary** then introduced the second part of the Secretariat’s work –
**b) Strengthening national safeguarding capacities** – which had four components:
i) Developing training content and material; ii) Developing and strengthening a network of expert facilitators; iii) Delivering capacity-building activities to beneficiary countries; and iv) Monitoring and evaluation. The Secretary explained that *all* capacity-building activities had been made possible thanks to extrabudgetary support. The few funds available in the Regular Programme were, for the most part, to ensure that the statutory meetings took place. For part i) Developing training content and material, the Secretariat had developed materials that covered ratification, implementation of the Convention at the national level, community-based inventorying, and safeguarding in general. Other material was also being developed on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development in the broader sense that not only included environmental aspects but also health, social welfare, food security, disaster risk prevention and so on. In addition, the Secretariat was developing practical guidance on how to integrate gender perspectives in inventorying and safeguarding, as well as testing a participatory simulation game aimed at strengthening skills needed to elaborate safeguarding plans. The Secretariat was also continually updating existing material, for example any changes in the Operational Directives adopted by the Assembly would be reflected in the material used to train trainers. Interestingly, feedback given by the trainees and trainers would be used to improve the user-friendliness and adaptability of the material so that it could be adapted to specific country contexts. Continuing with part ii) Developing and strengthening a network of expert facilitators, the Secretary explained that there were currently 79 trainers throughout the world all experts in the field of intangible heritage but also specifically trained in using the developed material and fully aware of decisions by the Committee and General Assembly in terms of guidance. Of the 79 trainers, 43 were from Africa and 40 per cent women. African trainers accounted for a large share because Africa was a UNESCO priority and given priority in the number of activities undertaken, which was why more trainers were needed. The Secretariat provided continuous liaison, backstopping, and upgrading and updating of skills and knowledge to all trainers. A recent example occurred in the Arab region where, with support from the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and hosted by the Government of Kuwait, a meeting was held with all regional facilitators where they were kept abreast of the latest issues. The same meeting also took place in Latin America in September 2013, hosted by the category 2 centre CRESPIAL, to assess and upgrade information, skills and knowledge of trainers in Latin America. The network was also strategically expanding through the training of trainers at regional and national levels. In this way, countries that had already benefited from a first phase of training could enter phase 2, which involved training of trainers within their own country, thereby decentralizing knowledge nationally. The Secretariat also organized specific training activities. A recent example involved two training sessions for L’Ecole du Patrimoine Africain in Porto Novo, Benin. One session covered general implementation of the Convention, while the other focused on inventory-making with community based participation. It was interesting to note that L’Ecole du Patrimoine Africain was a school that trained on *tangible* heritage, though it had a broad network of intervention so was important to have them onboard. Other examples included a similar session in Mozambique and a mentoring activity in the Pacific and Namibia on training of trainers. This form of training expansion was effective because it decentralized and targeted the knowledge base, as the goal was not to have 200 trainers at the international level, which would have been unmanageable for the Secretariat.
7. The **Secretary** then introduced part iii) Delivering capacity-building activities to beneficiary countries. She explained that the Secretariat was more involved with the mobilization of funds and the planning phase, whereas the actual implementation of these projects were followed up by colleagues in UNESCO’s regional offices. Thus, all funds allocated to support this capacity-building were decentralized to field offices for the implementation of projects. To date, 62 countries already benefitted from this capacity-building, of which
20 were in Africa, 19 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 15 in Asia and the Pacific, and
8 in the Arab States. Furthermore, other regions such as Europe had also benefited from self-funded activities where, for example UNESCO provided support to organize training in Norway and soon in Monaco. This was seen as a good sign as this proved that both the system and the materials were efficient and appreciated by all, and not only for developing countries. The Secretary made reference to Figure 2 (page 8) in the report that mapped out the beneficiary regions and countries. The Secretary further explained that the typical training sequence started with a needs assessment. The Secretariat could not enter into a phase of capacity-building without first understanding the situation of the country, especially as capacity-building activities were not ready-made to fit all contexts. Thus, a two, three or four-month needs assessment would be carried out so that the right programme of workshops could be put together to provide the necessary technical and ongoing support, usually beginning with a five-day workshop on implementation of the Convention. It was important to note that capacity-building activities were conducted at the specific country or nationallevel as needs varied enormously from one country to another. Attendees included a number of stakeholders, culture ministry representatives, NGOs, the media, representatives from other ministries, community representatives and so on; all of whom understood the implications of the Convention and its obligations and rights. This would be followed by the revision and integration of policies, legislation and institutional infrastructure, if required, which would be a more consultancy-based activity taking between 20 to 30 months followed by a workshop on community-based inventorying a few months later (usually 9 to 10 days) that involved field practice capacity-building. Attendees would include those in charge of the inventory at the national level together with community members, as community-level participation was required for inventorying. With funds permitting, the Secretariat would undertake a 6 to 12‑month project on inventorying so that the country could put the learning into practice. Once the inventorying was understood, the Secretariat – if requested to do so – would then conduct a workshop on how to elaborate nomination files to the Lists. It was important to note that work on an inventory – in line with the Convention – would be established first as this was a prerequisite to the submission of a nomination. This final phase was the overall evaluation of the project. The average length of training was between 18 months to 36 months. The Secretary was happy to inform the Assembly that the United Arab Emirates had just approved, in addition to a secondment of personnel, a needs assessment in four countries in Africa: Comoros, Djibouti, Madagascar and South Sudan, and four in the Arab Region: Egypt, Palestine, Sudan and Yemen. Thus, 8 countries would soon enter the first phase of a full programme of capacity-building. The Secretary further explained that, as requested by the IOS evaluation, greater attention would be given to policy aspects of the Convention with a more prominent place in workshops given to individual policy consultation. Referring to Figure 4 (page 10) in the report, the Secretary reported on the evolution of themes treated (ratification, implementation, inventorying and nominations) from 2011 to 2013. It was noted that in the early years, the majority of capacity-building activities concerned implementation of the Convention with a small demand for inventorying and ratification. In 2012, there was a lesser need for ratification but still a lot of implementation at the national level and some inventorying coupled with the start of nominations. In 2013, many countries had already benefitted from the implementation workshop and were, therefore, in need of support in inventorying, and increasingly on nominations. The Secretary expressed hope that in 2014 or 2015 there would be an increasing demand for policy advice from all States Parties.
8. With regard to point iv) Monitoring and evaluation, the **Secretary** recalled that the IOS evaluation had requested the Secretariat to strengthen this aspect as there was an absence of a real assessment framework and indicators to help measure the impacts of training on the ground, even in the longer term, i.e. the situation two or three years after the capacity‑building training. Thus, the task for the current biennium would be to put in place a results-oriented system of monitoring and follow-up evaluation to gather data about the effectiveness and impact of the capacity-building strategy. The Secretariat was also involved in point v) Mobilizing resources for the implementation of the capacity-building strategy. Moreover, [document 7.2 Rev](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.2_Rev.-EN.doc) provided the names of the States Parties that had voluntarily contributed to the Fund since the last General Assembly, which were contributions in addition to the mandatory contributions to the Fund, as well as other States Parties that signed bilateral Funds-in-Trust. The Secretary took the opportunity to thank the contributing States Parties for their contributions, without which none of these activities would be possible. It was noted that the Fund was also supporting capacity-building in the line ‘other functions of the Committee’ (under item 7 Use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund), which covered global or regional activities, such as the elaboration of material, translation into different languages, and so on.
9. Moving on to part **c) Preparing the documentation of the General Assembly and of the Committee and ensuring the effective organization of their statutory meetings,** the **Secretary** explained that the ongoing work was not only about organizing meetings but also ensuring that all decisions of the General Assembly and Committee were implemented. It followed the overlapping cycles of nominations from submission to treatment, evaluation to examination and inscription to dissemination – a process that covered several years. Moreover, documentation for the General Assembly was made available in six languages, and the Committee in two languages, with the Secretariat treating nominations, reports and requests. It was noted that the Secretariat had more than 370 active files under treatment that included not only nominations but also backlog files, accreditation requests, periodic reports, financial assistance requests, and so on. Despite the large numbers of active files, the Secretariat managed to overcome difficulties largely thanks to the knowledge management system supported entirely though extrabudgetary funds and primary through the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. The Secretariat would continue to provide improved functionalities, i.e. personalized online access that allowed States Parties to closely follow the progress of their ongoing files, better visibility of international assistance granted and even the possibility of submitting international assistance requests online. This work was in addition to the logistical organization of around 16 statutory meetings per biennium that included the General Assembly, the two Committee meetings, the Bureau meetings, the Subsidiary Body and Consultative Body meetings, the working groups, and so on.
10. Finally, the **Secretary** introduced **Part III: Conclusion and prospects,** noting that the IOS evaluation had considered the partnership of the Secretariat with members of the Committee, States Parties and the many stakeholders concerned to be at the core of the standard-setting work of the Convention. The Secretariat’s work was considered to be of high quality and its services much appreciated by States Parties. Nevertheless, the responsibilities conferred to the Secretariat exceeded the financial and human resources at its disposal, which was well known, such that expectations had to be recalibrated to capacities, even if it meant having to make difficult choices. It was interesting to note that 83 per cent of the resources available through regular or extrabudgetary funds were allocated to capacity-building with only 17 per cent of resources invested in the organization of the statutory work of the Convention. The Secretary concluded by saying that she hoped the capacity-building strategy, of which many people were involved, would help every State and every stakeholder to implement the Convention and, therefore, safeguard intangible cultural heritage.
11. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for her work and her comprehensive overview of the many responsibilities and achievements of the Secretariat. He recognized the commitment and dedication of her staff who were being called upon to do more and more, and hoped that in discussions over the following days, the Assembly would keep in mind resources available for implementation of the Convention and the need to adapt expectations. Indeed, even though the number of extrabudgetary donors had stepped forward to support, in particular, the capacity-building programme, UNESCO’s Regular Programme budget had declined. The IOS audit was also a reminder that the current situation was unsustainable as support from the Regular Programme was decreasing, yet the workload of the Secretariat was increasing. This was far from being an ideal situation, least of all for the Secretariat. The Chairperson acknowledged the fine work, as summarized in the report, adding that year-after-year the Secretariat continued to show its wholehearted commitment to the goals and values of the Convention and the needs of States Parties and communities around the world. The Assembly, therefore, needed to be proud of the progress made so far of the capacity-building programme and the financial assistance afforded to countries in need. He concluded that great work had been done but that there was still more to do in the future.
12. The delegation of the **Republic of Korea** appreciated the excellent work by the Secretariat in promoting and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. It especially noted the efforts taken by the Secretariat to enhance national safeguarding capacities such as developing training materials and strengthening the network of facilitators. It hoped that the table of regions presented earlier would be taken into account in identifying experts.
13. The delegation of **Norway** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and expressed its satisfaction with the evaluation report by the IOS presented in 2013. The report had confirmed its impressions of the work developed during the short history of the Convention. Its major achievement was the significant broadening of the international discourse on the definition and meaning of cultural heritage. Furthermore, the work of the Secretariat had been of high quality, and transparent regarding processes related to the different constituent tasks of the Convention. The delegation took note of the observations by the IOS that the relative importance of the Representative List was overrated, representing a huge workload on the Committee and the Secretariat. Conversely, the other mechanisms such as the Urgent Safeguarding List, the Register of Best Practices and international assistance were underutilized. It, therefore, strongly supported the IOS recommendation for a better balance between the different mechanisms of the Convention. It also took note with satisfaction the positive evaluation of the global capacity-building programme and the network of qualified experts, adding that the capacity-building programme constituted the most successful achievement in the 10-year history of the Convention. The lessons learned being that when implementing international normative instruments such as conventions, strengthening the capacity of States Parties needed to be at the core of its activity. However, the IOS report underlined an important but neglected task, that there was no systematic monitoring mechanism in place that allowed UNESCO to follow participants months after their attendance at a workshop. The delegation thus supported the recommendation for a robust results-oriented system of monitoring, follow up and evaluation in order to obtain data on the effectiveness and impacts of the strategy, and to identify opportunities for improvement. The ultimate goal of the Convention was to ensure a real and lasting impact by States Parties in their efforts to establish a favourable framework and conditions for intangible cultural heritage.
14. Congratulating the Chairperson on his election, the delegation of **Namibia** also highly appreciated the Secretariat’s effort to strengthen the capacity of States Parties, particularly developing countries, to enable them to effectively implement the Convention at the national level. Much had been achieved but more needed to be done as many countries were being faced with enormous challenges to implement the Convention though it trusted the Secretariat to step up its efforts to reach out to all States in need of capacity-building. The delegation was glad to note the four areas of focus of the capacity-building:
i) ratification; ii) implementation of the Convention at the national level; iii) preparation of inventories; and iv) elaboration of nominations. Nevertheless, all three reports presented to the General Assembly pointed to a number of challenges, with the periodic reports and international assistance requests appearing to top the list. It was noted that only
20 per cent of periodic reports were admissible, and only 15 out of the 37 international assistance requests submitted had been approved. The question was whether some of these challenges were covered by the capacity-building exercise. If not, could they be made part of capacity-building? With regard to the network of 79 expert facilitators, the delegation agreed that they were doing a great job but clearly there were not enough facilitators to face the challenges encountered by States Parties. Experience showed that the expert facilitators were sometimes unable to respond in a timely manner to the capacity-building needs of States. Referring to paragraphs 28 and 29 of the report, the delegation noted efforts to decentralize capacity-building at national level but was uncertain about the number of States ready for the next phase when they still needed the services of their expert facilitators. It, therefore, asked whether there would be a possibility of increasing the number of expert facilitators in the foreseeable future.
15. The delegation of **Bulgaria** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, as well as the members of the Bureau and the Rapporteur. It recognized that the growing number of ratifications was proof of the Convention’s relevance, as well as the positive effects implementation brought to the communities, not only in terms of safeguarding but also by increasing possibilities for sustainable development. The delegation supported the comments made by Norway in reference to the IOS report of 2013 on the need for a better balance between the three mechanisms, namely the Representative List, the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Best Safeguarding Practices. While there had been some progress in the submission of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List, there appeared to be a decline in nominations to the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. In its view, sharing best practises increased the capacity of countries to better implement the Convention. Nevertheless, after four years of capacity-building activities by the Secretariat, the Assembly should be satisfied with the results achieved made possible thanks to the hard work and commitment of the Secretariat. In this regard, the delegation offered its wholehearted thanks to the Secretariat for its dedication and hard work citing the IOS report – ‘the work of the Secretariat is considered to be of high quality’. States Parties rightly considered the Secretariat to be professional, efficient and responsive, despite its lack of resources which limited the number of nominations and proposals that could be processed, as well as other activities. The delegation noted that the network of experts had been put in place to help States Parties improve their safeguarding performance, and it was satisfied that the Secretariat was broadening support by developing material in the areas of sustainable development and gender. At the same time, support for policy and legislative development should not be underestimated, and it was encouraged that the Secretariat was also working in that direction. Finally, the delegation believed that category 2 regional centres had a crucial role to play in capacity-building through regional cooperation and information-sharing. Thus, the decision to convene global meetings organized by these centres was a step in the right direction. The delegation spoke of the commitment of its government to support the capacity-building efforts and to engage in the process of safeguarding, including support for the Secretariat.
16. The delegation of **Austria** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for the preparation of the informative documents and for its very comprehensive presentation. It welcomed the Secretariat’s efforts to put in place its global capacity-building strategy to assist States Parties in creating a favourable environment for the sustainable safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. It was impressed to hear that 83 per cent of the very limited resources were allocated to capacity-building, and it appreciated the immense effort to develop training materials and the network of 79 expert facilitators, which although possibly not enough could address specific regional and country needs. Nevertheless, the delegation wondered whether there was an intention to extend the network by training more expert facilitators, though it appreciated the very difficult financial situation, adding that it would be a great stimulus for many States Parties to have an expert trained nationally in order to spread the word further.
17. The delegation of **Bangladesh** commended the Secretariat for its efforts to advance the objectives of the Convention despite the fact that it had to meet its diverse responsibilities with limited human resources. It felt that all aspects of the work currently carried out by the Secretariat were important and that there was hardly any flexibility in granting one priority at the cost of another. In particular, the delegation did not wish to see the emphasis on capacity-building diminish. Given the financial constraints facing UNESCO, there was a need to support the Secretariat through increased extrabudgetary resources to secure and, if possible, enhance human resources. In this regard, it expressed sincere thanks to the States that had made significant extrabudgetary contributions to support the Secretariat.
18. The delegation of **Guinea** congratulated the Chairperson and the members of the Bureau, as well as the Secretariat for its substantial work done in preparing for the session. Regarding training, it appreciated the efforts made by UNESCO in this regard, but sought more emphasis on training in the differences between the various conventions, particularly as these tools formed the foundation of their work. Moreover, as long as legal instruments were not fundamentally understood by economic and cultural stakeholders in the public and private spheres then difficulties in providing reports would continue. The delegation was of the opinion that such fundamental work should be carried out by trainers in the field, adding that although 79 trainers was a good start it was still inadequate.
19. The delegation of **China** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and thanked the Secretariat for its work including the very comprehensive report adding that despite its limited resources it had accomplished a great deal to facilitate implementation of the Convention. Moreover, the Secretariat had played an important role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, particularly in its cooperation with category 2 centres. The delegation wished to see the category 2 centres develop and flourish throughout the world so that a greater number of countries could benefit from them.
20. The delegation of **Czech Republic** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and thanked the Secretariat for its excellent and detailed report. It drew particular attention to the information accessible on the Convention website on two of the Best Safeguarding Practices, adding that this was an excellent initiative for the promotion of the Register of Best Practices, which – in its opinion – should be at the heart of the Convention. In this regard, it wondered whether the NGOs would be able to participate in the online initiative, as they would appear to be the ideal partner for such a task.
21. The delegation of **Congo** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, as well as the Bureau members. Having read the Secretariat’s report on its activities, the delegation spoke of its admiration for the excellent work carried out by the Secretariat despite the very limited resources. It suggested, however, that in addition to its work at the regional level the Secretariat plan its activities at the level of the State Party, adding that it regretted that capacity-building did not reach all countries, including the Congo even though it was in great need.
22. The delegation of **France** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his election, as well as the Secretariat for the outstanding summary of its activities conducted in the last two years under difficult circumstances. The delegation fully supported the remarks, analysis and observations made by Norway.
23. The delegation of **Hungary** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and for the considerable work he had done so far for the Convention. It also congratulated the Secretariat for its fair, supportive, transparent and professional work and goodwill in the last two years, and supported and praised the report. The delegation especially supported and valued the work in capacity-building, adding that it had been part of the capacity-building work and process in the past and intended to strengthen its support to the work worldwide. The delegation felt that fair representation and visibility of the wealth of intangible cultural heritage of all countries offered real protection that would eventually make the Convention a useful instrument for all.
24. The delegation of **Oman** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and the Secretariat for its excellent and comprehensive report with regard to capacity-building, category 2 centres, and so on. It spoke of the number of workshops that had been organized in the Arab States dedicated to training and capacity-building, with the Secretary notably attending the workshops in Doha and Kuwait, as well as in other Arab States. The delegation hoped that together with ALECSO in Muscat there would be other capacity‑building workshops and training sessions organized in addition to the one in the Sultanate of Oman in September 2014. It hoped that this would develop not only in the Gulf cooperation area but also within other States and at the local level, as funding often came from individual countries. It suggested setting up a capacity-building programme that could be adopted by regional organizations, which could then be used by any interested country within the region, while taking into account the needs and context of each region. This could be implemented with regard to the various articles of the Convention but also in the sharing of best practices.
25. The delegation of **Kyrgyzstan** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and also the Secretariat for its report on its multidimensional activities. Kyrgyzstan in particular, and Central Asia as a region had benefitted a lot from the capacity-building programme and was beginning to see results. It suggested the Secretariat consider the next level of capacity‑building for regions such as Central Asia. With respect to the previous reports, which were interlinked, the delegation wished to know whether the new priority areas such as gender equality and the connection between intangible cultural heritage and education and youth had been incorporated in the activities between June 2012 and June 2014.
26. The delegation of **Mexico** also wished to congratulate the Chairperson on his election, as well as the Secretariat for its excellent work, including its report. With regard to regional cooperation, the delegation understood that capacity-building had to take the specific characteristics of each country into account but that it would also be interesting to further explore the dimension of regional cooperation as some regions shared certain challenges.
27. The delegation of **Uruguay** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for the quality of its work in general and presentation of the report on its activities. It stressed the important role of the facilitators’ network, the capacity-building programme and the Secretariat’s collaboration with countries in preparing nominations and periodic reports and emphasized the benefit of gaining experience from other States Parties regarding application and visibility of the Convention. The delegation also considered important the participation of civil society in different aspects related to the Convention, as well as the responsibility of government authorities.
28. The delegation of **Latvia** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and expressed its full support of the Secretariat for prioritizing its workload and assuring quality work while remaining attentive to the process of implementation of the Convention. It also welcomed implementation of the capacity-building strategy, which adapted to the local needs of States and communities, that was a major focus of funding. It believed that the capacity-building strategy had an impact on the activities of States in elaborating national policies for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Recently, the evaluation of UNESCO’s standard‑setting instruments, including the 2003 Convention, had been widely debated and it believed that the same interest should be applied to legislative decisions taken at the national level. It explained that a comparative examination of the existing and developing legislative practices at national level should receive greater attention in the future. The role of capacity-building at regional level should also be highlighted, particularly with a view to the development of multinational nominations, which was an important tool for fostering cooperation among States Parties. Finally, it expressed hope that a growing number of multinational nominations would be received in the future, thus playing witness to the spirit of the Convention and the importance of international cooperation in its implementation.
29. The delegation of **Syria** congratulated the Chairperson and the members of the Bureau on their election, as well as the Secretariat for its excellent work especially on the very substantial report. The delegation spoke of UNESCO’s decision to make intangible cultural heritage one of its priorities, and gave the example of the recent conference on Syrian intangible cultural heritage that took place on 21 May 2014 in cooperation with the EU with a focus on protecting Syrian heritage under the current crisis. As had been said many times, intangible cultural heritage in Syria might well be a factor in reconciliation among the peoples of Syria. Despite the crisis, the Director-General for Antiquities and Museums of Syria was involved in the international day of intangible Syrian heritage where a number of workshops had been organized, and which called upon and urged civil society to protect intangible cultural heritage, inviting a number of influential individuals to work with the government. Moreover, the delegation had in fact already started working on a project that would lead to inventorying intangible heritage in Syria, and it thanked the Secretariat and the Committee for extending support to the project.
30. The delegation of **Italy** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for the quality of its work and completeness, synthesis and clarity of its documents. With respect to awareness-raising and communication, the delegation believed that this area of work was of the utmost importance, particularly with regard to the sensibilization of communities on the importance of the Convention and the activities related to safeguarding and capacity-building in the field. It also believed that the network of expert facilitators was an extraordinary tool that deserved to be supported as it involved local communities – the primary actors and bearers of the heritage the Convention sought to protect and promote. The delegation hoped that the Secretariat would find the necessary resources to do this and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts in this regard.
31. The delegation of **Netherlands** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for its excellent work. It also saw the capacity-building programme as a very important achievement and fully supported the remarks of Norway. As recommended in the evaluation of IOS it agreed that it was very important to develop a monitoring system to determine whether all the efforts of the capacity-building programme led to structural results in implementation of the Convention and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. It, therefore, welcomed the development of a robust results-oriented system of monitoring. It also believed that sharing good and best methodologies of safeguarding was very important, with best practices fully accessible to all States Parties.
32. The delegation of **Morocco** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and chairmanship and the Secretariat for its significant and highly detailed report on its activities over the past two years, particularly with regard to capacity-building to enable States Parties to implement the Convention as effectively as possible and under the best possible conditions. The capacity-building programme, as implemented by the Secretariat, was indeed important and significant with positive implications, as previously mentioned. It hoped that other UNESCO conventions such as the 1970 and 1972 Convention might enjoy benefits of the programme and draw inspiration from it. The delegation added that bearer communities had to be put in a position to contribute even more actively towards promoting and safeguarding their heritage, both tangible and intangible.
33. The delegation of **Algeria** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, as well as Bureau members. Having listened to the report with interest, the delegation spoke highly of the Secretariat’s active, consistent and focused work towards implementation of the Convention. It spoke of the category 2 centre in Algiers dedicated to Africa for all people of Africans, adding that the centre was ready to contribute actions in favour of the Convention, including contributing to capacity-building activities in 2015 and 2016. The centre was also at the disposal of the Convention for activities related to the inventorying of African intangible heritage and all other activities tasked by UNESCO.
34. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** congratulated the Chairperson and Bureau members on their election. It also thanked the Secretariat for its active work, fully aware of the efforts deployed. The delegation asked if videos of meetings and workshops organized by category 2 centres and others could become available for stakeholder benefit and if workshops could be online so experts could conduct training in their own countries to reduce costs and increase capacity.
35. The delegation of **Turkey** congratulated the Secretariat for its very detailed report, which was an important step in the next stage of the Convention. It wished to draw attention to the value of national inventories for developing countries as the first step in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage on a broad level inviting the Committee to encourage developing countries to prepare or complete their inventories.
36. The delegation of **Colombia** also congratulated the Chairperson and Bureau members, as well as the Secretariat on its great work. With reference to the remarks by Norway and the Netherlands, it also recommended that there be a second advisory stage with regard to capacity-building, adding that the first phase was akin to sowing seeds in the different countries. Now it was time to fertilize and water the seeds for which some countries would need greater support. Hence Colombia’s suggestion to develop an advisory service for capacity-building as this would have a multiplier effect, reaching out to the various regions with their wide diversity of heritage, and which called for specific activities in implementation of the Convention. The second advisory phase would also help overcome difficulties identified in the evaluation, notably the imbalance between the various Lists.
37. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to respond to the observations, remarks and suggestions.
38. Given the remarks, questions and expectations, the **Secretary** noted that it was clear that delegations had carefully read all the documents. The first major issue had been expressed by Namibia, and supported by many delegations, regarding the wish for more trainers, which would facilitate their mobilization to service States. The Secretary conceded that facilitators tended to have full agendas and it was often difficult to find a suitable date. She explained that steps were being taken to remedy the situation, beginning in China at the end of August at a meeting with all current and new facilitators. However, she cautioned against the desire to expand the network to unmanageable numbers, adding that it was important to have the right balance as all the facilitators had to be regularly updated, which meant keeping them informed about new updates but also being available for their feedback. A thousand facilitators, for example, would be untenable. Nevertheless, she underlined that the questions had been heard and were being addressed. The Secretary also made the distinction between trainers – those that could be considered ‘international’ and ‘national’ experts. International experts trained trainers in their country but also in their region or outside their region. Interestingly, it had been observed that trainers were often less respected and appreciated at home than abroad, and that training outside their country proved to be very effective. The national experts were also heavily relied upon. During their training sessions, international trainers were asked to identify those particularly enthusiastic and dynamic to undertake national trainers’ tasks. The Secretary made clear that national trainers were not at all considered as second-level experts. The distinction was made simply as a result of their geographic field of action. Both had the same knowledge and skills but national experts were not required to master several languages for example, and their primary focus would be training at the national level, as was the case in Namibia for instance. Nevertheless, some experts might be mobilized at the sub-regional level. Moreover, needs at national level were very diverse as training at the ministerial level was not the same as training in cities and regions, hence the difficulty in understanding needs at national level. At regional level, one might find common needs but they could also be very different. In previous meetings in Kuwait and Qatar, for example, the regional level was found to be very useful and important as it helped to create networks of people who in the future might establish cooperative relationships without UNESCO, much in the same way as intergovernmental meetings added value in the process of cooperation, which was instilled as delegates met and discussed issues. Thus, the *regional* or sub-regional nature of capacity-building was different from the *national* level, with the regional level addressing the main principles, while national capacity-building could be more tailored to local needs. In addition, there were seven category 2 centres that had regional mandates, performing the function of facilitating regional cooperation. Notwithstanding the different levels, capacity-building was not generic and was carefully adapted to specific national and sub‑national needs. For example, among the 25 to 30 people trained as national leaders, capacity-building activities would concentrate on specific regions and their local stakeholders. Thus, the number of facilitators would eventually expand both nationally and internationally.
39. With regard to Namibia’s question of capacity-building on periodic reporting, the **Secretary** explained the Secretariat provided individualized support by sending a letter to the State concerned with advice and a checklist to explain what had to be done based on the submitted report. The Secretary understood that a State Party might feel awkward not knowing how to begin writing a periodic report, which was why the Secretariat sent the letter a year in advance to help States with the process. Moreover, the reports submitted every year were translated in two languages, which should help those with reports to complete. The Secretary suggested that in these early cycles, the Assembly could consider training, much in the same way as the 1972 Convention, but that the real problem was that State Parties were concerned they had not achieved all that they set out to do. The Secretary explained that it was highly unlikely that a State Party would be able to carry out policy legislation changes, finish its inventory, create numerous NGOs, and so on, within the space of six years. Occasionally, a State Party was reluctant to write the report because it did not have good news to report. However, this was not the spirit of the report, it was a *monitoring* report to enable the State to check its progress over the past six years since ratification. Moreover, ratification essentially pushed the majority of States to consider nominations, but over time, the majority of States would realize – probably through capacity-building – that there were many more aspects involved in implementation of the Convention other than submitting nomination files.
40. With regard to regional distribution of activities posed by the Republic of Korea, the **Secretary** explained that the Secretariat was as fair and balanced as possible in the activities it conducted. She reminded the Assembly that the activities depended on donors that often had regional preferences, and that the Secretariat adapted to the conditions, to balance needs in the regions and the priorities of the donor in terms of the proportion of beneficiary regions.
41. In response to Guinea’s question regarding training on the different conventions, the **Secretary** explained that training addressed both the differences and specificities between the three main culture conventions with overlapping themes, while other important conventions did not. Indeed, the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the 1972 World Heritage Convention have overlapping areas, but also their own specificities and areas of specialization. The Secretary was well aware that there were requests from States and field colleagues for a specific capacity-building programme that combined all the conventions. To this end, the Secretariat was in the final stages of preparing an extrabudgetary project for an educational tool on cultural heritage that would take into account all aspects of heritage dealt by all Conventions. It was hoped that a donor would come forward to support this initiative.
42. Regarding the question by the Czech Republic on how to better involve NGOs in the exercise of best safeguarding practices, the **Secretary** conceded that both the Committee’s report and the Secretariat’s report had noted that this mechanism had not yet found its proper place among the other mechanisms of the Convention. This was attributed to the fact that there was selective competition among the mechanisms due to the limit of nominations a State was permitted every year. Unfortunately, States tended to select the Lists rather than propose a Best Safeguarding Practice. As a result, and encouraged by the evaluation advisory service, the Secretariat was looking into developing alternative routes. This did not imply that the mechanism would be replaced but rather that it would be complemented with a more flexible methodology that would bypass the system of evaluation; submission, deadline, validation and so on. An option could involve peer reviews or NGOs (accredited or not) to help in sharing best practices as key partners. In this regard, the Secretariat underlined that it was very willing to bring about any training that might be beneficial, particularly as the best practices mechanism was considered by many to be an extremely important safeguarding tool, from which States could draw inspiration.
43. The **Secretary** understood the concerns expressed by Congo in which it was happy for the success of the capacity-building programme but was anxious to be a beneficiary of the training sessions. She explained that many States found themselves in a similar situation: of the 200 countries in the world, 69 countries had not yet benefited, let alone from phase 2 or phase 3 of training. She reassured Congo that a list of all priority countries that had yet to receive training had been compiled. At the same time, she appealed to donors to provide the additional support needed to continue the work. The newly established category 2 centre in Algeria would certainly play a major facilitating role in Africa in the coming years, but there were never enough resources.
44. Kyrgyzstan asked about gender equality and sustainable development, and the **Secretary** explained that work was already being launched in that regard. The Secretariat would soon publish two small pamphlets on gender equality and intangible cultural heritage, and on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, which would be added to the information kit that accompanied various themes under the Convention.
45. The **Secretary** also appreciated the intervention by the Islamic Republic of Iran on finding creative ways to make available the training materials to the largest possible number of users. Nevertheless, developing online education and training tools was a long-term plan for the future, as establishing the entire system in place, exams, and so on, would be time‑consuming. The idea was nonetheless interesting as a mechanism to cover a number of areas, perhaps accompanied by videos. Certainly it was a tool that could be especially useful for the younger generation who were more image-sensitive and interactive in their learning. Moreover, the online courses would allow students/trainees to interact with the teacher and other trainees around the world, and was therefore worth exploring.
46. The **Secretary** agreed with Turkey that inventories were one of the most important topics for training, with much progress made in this regard. She also agreed with Colombia that proposed a phase 2, particularly following the meeting in Cusco in September 2013 where there was an obvious need for the first activities in these countries to be followed by other more targeted activities. Indeed, capacity-building was a never-ending programme as there would never be enough training. Moreover, another important area of development was higher education where more specialized courses on intangible cultural heritage could be offered. Other groups interested in the Convention could also be targeted with respect to sustainable development, for instance health officials or agriculture representatives. Thus, there were large swathes of the population that probably still needed convincing. Again, the longevity of the programme depended a lot on long-term support, and the Secretary hoped that donors would consider investing funds in the Convention.
47. Thanking the Secretary, the **Chairperson** noted from the debate that the Assembly clearly appreciated the positive relations between States and the Secretariat, especially as partners working towards the same mission: to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. He thanked the Secretariat for its excellent report that looked at mechanisms to secure future work, and the Secretary for her responses to the issues raised. Turning to draft resolution **5.GA 4.3** shown on the screen, he pronounced paragraphs 1–4 **adopted**.
48. The delegation of **Namibia** remarked that the delegations had clearly underscored the importance of enhancing capacity-building, and suggested an amendment to paragraph 5, which read ‘Encourages the Secretariat and States Parties to enhance the strengthening of capacities with a view to respond timely to the capacity-building needs of Member States’. The delegation added that it had initially thought of splitting paragraph 5 into two to read ‘further welcomes the expanded reach and continued effectiveness of the global capacity‑building strategy and encourages the Secretariat and States Parties to enhance the strengthening […]’, followed by ‘thanks the States Parties […]’ in a new paragraph.
49. The **Chairperson** thanked Namibia, and asked if there was support for the amendment.
50. The delegation of **Congo** thanked Namibia but did not understand the amendment ‘Encourages the Secretariat and the States Parties to enhance […]’. Was it suggesting that the Secretariat or the States Parties that would ‘enhance’, or both? The delegation suggested ‘Encourages the Secretariat to improve the capacity to respond in a timely manner’, thereby removing ‘States Parties’. The remaining sentence was acceptable.
51. The delegation of **Cote d’Ivoire** did not see the benefit of the amendment, especially as
83 per cent of the budget was already allocated to capacity-building, and thus it was difficult to see how this could be improved further. In its opinion, the amendment was not appropriate.
52. The delegation of **Togo** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, adding that it appreciated the amendment proposed by Namibia, even if it sought to make some minor amendments. The delegation proposed to maintain the same paragraph and add ‘Further welcomes the expanded reach and continued effectiveness of the global capacity-building strategy and thanks the donor States and encourages the Secretariat to enhance the capacity-building programme to respond to the needs’ as the amendment affected all States Parties many of whom had spoken during the debate.
53. Reflecting on the amendment by Congo, the delegation of **Albania** wondered whether ‘States Parties’ should be deleted, as it was its understanding that the Secretariat should be encouraged to strengthen capacities. In addition, ‘to enhance the strengthening of capacities with a view to respond timely […]’ could be deleted. The delegation explained that Member States should be encouraged to make financial contributions to that effect, and the Secretariat to strengthen its capacities. Thus, there were two different requests: one addressed to the Secretariat and the other to Member States.
54. The **Chairperson** remarked that the Assembly was encouraging the Members States.
55. The delegation of **Albania** suggested, ‘call upon Member States to make further financial contributions’.
56. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** agreed with the amendment by Albania, and suggested including the amendment to paragraph 7, which already thanked States Parties for their financial contributions.
57. The **Secretary** suggested deleting the reference to ‘Member States’, as extrabudgetary support was already mentioned in paragraph 7, so the paragraph would read, ‘Further welcomes the expanded reach and continued effectiveness of the global capacity-building strategy and encourages the Secretariat to enhance it in view to respond timely to the capacity-building needs of Member States’.
58. The delegation of **Namibia** thanked the Secretary for her proposal to the amendment.
59. With no further comments, the **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 5 **adopted**.
60. The delegation of **Indonesia** noted that the reference to ‘it’ in the new paragraph 6 was unclear, and suggested replacing it with ‘such global capacity-building’.
61. The **Secretary** read aloud the revised paragraph 6 ‘Thanks the States Parties that have generously provided extrabudgetary support to make such global capacity-building possible’. She also suggested ‘calling upon Member States to make further contributions’.
62. With no further comments, the **Chairperson** pronounced new paragraph 6 **adopted**.
63. The **Secretary** read out the new paragraph 7, which read ‘further thanks the States Parties that have generously provided extrabudgetary support to the other statutory functions of the Secretariat and to the celebration of the Convention’s tenth anniversary’.
64. With no further comments, the **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 7 and the new paragraph 8 **adopted** and **declared Resolution 5.GA 4.3 adopted.**

**ITEM 5.1 OF THE AGENDA:**

**SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES**

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/5.1*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.1-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/9.COM/4*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM-4-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 5.1*

1. The **Chairperson** turned to the next item concerning a number of substantive revisions to the Operational Directives, which the General Assembly was tasked to approve or adapt as needed. Based on the lessons learned through experience it was understood that the first set of Directives adopted by the General Assembly in its second session in 2008 could be amended at a later date in light of the experience. This had indeed occurred at the third and fourth sessions and again the present year, which was a sign of the dynamic context in which the Convention operated. The Chairperson recalled that amendments might come about either because the Committee had been tasked by the General Assembly to address certain questions or because the Committee judged that certain amendments were required. The Chairperson proposed to debate and adopt each set of amendments in turn, inviting the Secretariat to present the amendments.
2. **The Secretariat** explained that the Assembly would be examining five sets of amendments, which would be considered one-by-one with a debate for each set of revisions prior to adoption. The Assembly had asked the Committee to reflect upon a sixth topic but the Committee deemed that it was not opportune to propose amendments at that time. Extracts of the [summary records](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM-4-EN.doc) from the Committee’s eighth session recording its debates leading to the recommendations could be consulted online. The first set of amendments in **Part I: Criteria for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List** aimed to resolve a small but important inconsistency in provisions concerning inscriptions on the Urgent Safeguarding List. During its eighth session, the Committee observed that criterion U.3 called upon the submitting State Party to demonstrate ‘…that safeguarding measures are elaborated that may enable the community group or, if applicable, individuals concerned to continue the practice and transmission of the element’, and then paragraph 27 referred to the feasibility and sufficiency of the safeguarding plan. The reference in one place to safeguarding *measures* and in another to safeguarding *plan* could possibly give rise to confusion. The proposed amendment to paragraph 1, shown on the screen, would see the deletion of ‘safeguarding measures are’ replaced with ‘a safeguarding plan is elaborated that may enable the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned to continue the practice and transmission…’. All of the other sub-paragraphs of paragraph 1 and all of the other criteria would remain unchanged. This small revision would remove the contradiction with respect to the reference in paragraph 27 while at the same time helping to distinguish the safeguarding *plan* expected for the Urgent Safeguarding List from the set of safeguarding *measures* expected for the Representative List.
3. The **Chairperson** remarked that the simple clarification requested by the Committee would refer consistently to the safeguarding plan in both criterion U.3 and paragraph 27. This amendment simply confirmed what had already been in practice since the first cycle of nominations. With no voiced objections or comments the **Chairperson pronounced** **Part I of the amendments adopted**. The Chairperson noted that Part II concerned several changes related to the possibility for one or more State Parties to propose inscriptions on an extended or reduced basis of an element already inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Representative List.
4. The **Secretary** explained that there had been extensive work on **Part II: Inscription of an element on an extended or reduced basis**, that was already inscribed, with the idea of being able to reduce the element as well as extend it, which had not been foreseen in the Directive. The current paragraph 14 of the Operational Directives adopted in 2010 provided for an extension of a multinational file through the addition of one or more submitting States so as to broaden the nomination. The proposed change would also broaden an inscription but would only apply to a single State within an inscribed element. Thus, an element that comprised a single community could in fact be extended to several communities, all of whom shared the same element, but still on a national basis. The amendment could also reduce the scope of an existing element from several States to less States (down to only one State) or it could apply to an element that was shared among several communities at the national level, which could be reduced because a community no longer considered the element as part of its intangible cultural heritage. The document provided under this item referred to the history of these changes. The Secretary further explained that the Subsidiary Body had suggested the current rewording in 2011. It was welcomed by the previous General Assembly in June 2012 and the Committee was asked to prepare specific amendments following the suggestion of the Subsidiary Body. In October 2012, an open‑ended [working group](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-12-7.COM-13.b-EN.doc) of the Committee was held to specifically reflect on this issue, which studied the right scale or scope of an element and endorsed the principle (of the Operational Directives addressing both reduction or extension). This was supported, in principle, by the seventh session of the Committee, and the wording by the eighth session of the Committee. It was thus clear that these proposed amendments enjoyed a large and unanimous consensus from several constituencies. When the Committee debated in 2012 and 2013, it anticipated the need to reduce as well as extend an element. As explained, certain communities might no longer practice an element, or they might wish to diminish the unintended consequences of inscription, such as greatly increased attendance, possibly conflicting with the practice. To complete the change, the Committee at its eighth session adopted the texts that were put forward in Part II of the Annex. It was noted that there was no change to the title of the Operational Directive. There would be no change to paragraph 13, but it proposed to completely delete paragraph 14 (since the different parts of the paragraph would be separated out so as to deal with the component parts in the proper manner). As a result, the following numbering of paragraphs would be changed, with no change in their text, and a new chapter 1.6 ‘Inscription on an extended or reduced basis’ would be introduced. Paragraph 16 would thus cover the extension, and paragraph 17 would cover reduction, while paragraphs 18 and 19 would borrow from the existing wording in paragraph 14. For clarity, the Secretary read out paragraphs 16 (on extension) and 17 (on reduction). Paragraphs 18 and 19 would then use the same wording taken from paragraph 14, applying it to both an extension and a reduction. Paragraph 18 was the first part of the current paragraph 14, but without the notion of ‘reduced’. The second part of paragraph 14 would then comprise paragraph 19 meaning that an attempt to reduce or extend a nomination would bear no consequences for the original nomination, unless it was successful. So there was no risk to the State Party concerned of not receiving the extension and losing its already inscribed element. There were no changes to paragraphs 20 and 21. The purpose of paragraph 22 was simply to combine the existing paragraphs in order to maintain the numbering of the subsequent paragraphs, but the texts remained unchanged.
5. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for her presentation and opened the floor for comments.
6. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** suggested going through the amendment on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis.
7. The **Chairperson** agreed that this was the intention. However, given the time, he suggested starting first thing in the morning adjourning the session.

*[Tuesday 3 June 2014, morning session]*

**ITEM 5.1 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES**

1. The **Chairperson** began by apologizing for the delay, which was due to the delay during the first Bureau meeting. He noted the good progress made so far, and that the Secretary had concluded the last session with the amendment in Part II concerning the inscription of an element on an extended or reduced basis. Proceeding paragraph-by-paragraph, the Chairperson noted that there were no comments or objections to adopting Chapter 1.5 shown, deleting paragraph 14 and renumbering the following two paragraphs, which was duly **adopted**. The Chairperson then moved to the substance of the amendment, paragraph-by-paragraph.
2. Congratulating the Chairperson on his election, the delegation of **Belgium** recalled that there had been a long debate at the previous Committee on the Operational Directives in which it was concluded that more time was needed to reflect on the relationship between the Convention and sustainable development from ecological, economic, social and cultural perspectives. It added that this should be kept in mind so as to invite the Committee to continue with the debate. The delegation referred to the change in criterion U.3 on the safeguarding plan, adding that one of the characteristics of a good safeguarding plan was that it achieved a result at a given time so that an element might be considered to no longer be ‘urgent’, which the Committee could reflect upon in the future. With regard to paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 the delegation noted that the expression ‘inscription on an extended or reduced basis’ appeared in paragraphs 16 and 17 but in 18 it referred to ‘an element as extended or reduced’ which caused confusion. It, therefore, proposed to change the word ‘element’ in paragraph 18 by which States Parties should submit new nomination files showing that the extended or reduced inscription of the element satisfied all of the required criteria. The delegation proposed to delete ‘element’ (as ‘nomination’ had been used in the earlier paragraphs) and introduce ‘extended and reduced inscription of the element satisfies all the criteria’, which would use the words ‘extended or reduced’ in a consistent way in connection to the word ‘inscription’.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium, adding that adoption of the amendments on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis would allow the Assembly to clearly look at the proposed changes. The Chairperson, therefore, turned to paragraph 17.
4. The delegation of **China** wished to propose an amendment to paragraph 17, which had been submitted in writing to the Secretariat. The **Chairperson** asked China to explain its proposal to the Assembly.
5. The delegation of **China** remarked that paragraph 16 on an extension or reduction at the national and international level had already been adopted, and that it should be reflected at both national and international levels in paragraph 17.
6. The **Chairperson** noted that the Assembly agreed with the proposal, which was duly **adopted**.
7. The delegation of **Belgium** returned to the issue of the use of the word ‘element’ proposing to delete ‘nomination’ and adjusting it to read ‘that the extended or reduced inscription of the element satisfies all the required criteria’ with the words ‘inscription of an element’ connected to reduced or extended.
8. The **Secretary** suggested that the use of ‘inscription’ was premature because the element was not yet inscribed and was still at the nomination stage, and would only become so following the Committee’s decision.
9. The delegation of **Belgium** understood the point made, adding that the change was to avoid the use of ‘nomination’ twice. For the sake of consistency and clarity it suggested replacing the first ‘nomination’ by ‘nomination file’ and the second ‘element’ by ‘nomination’.
10. The **Chairperson** understood the concern and with no further comments pronounced paragraphs 18 and 19 **adopted**. It was noted that for Chapter I.7 only the paragraph numbers were changed, and the four paragraphs were merged into two in order to maintain the sequence of numbers. With no objections paragraphs 20–25 were duly **adopted**. The **Chairperson pronounced Part II adopted,** inviting the Secretary to continue with Part III.
11. The **Secretary** presented **Part III: Evaluation of files**, adding that this set of amendments was also the result of recurrent debate within the Committee and the General Assembly, with the amendments proposed representing the unanimous recommendation of the eighth session of the Committee held in Baku. It had indeed been a challenge for the Committee to find the most suitable mechanism to evaluate nominations, which had been discussed from the outset of the Convention’s work. The first set of Operational Directives in 2008 established a framework that was intended to approve inscriptions as soon as possible, even when other parts of the Convention were still very much evolving. After five cycles of inscriptions, the Committee accepted that it had been a process of learning and evolution from which it had drawn lessons. The Secretary recalled that the Committee’s report and the audit from the IOS had called for States Parties to better calibrate workloads and available resources. The Committee, therefore, proposed to consolidate all evaluations into a single body, which would save time and human resources. Moreover, two bodies (currently in place) working in parallel on identical criteria and processes occasionally led to minor issues of different interpretations on similar facts and circumstances, which would be avoided with a single body. The Committee wished to emphasize the experimental basis of its proposal, which could be fine-tuned if difficulties arose in implementation. The new Evaluation Body would be composed of six experts, representatives of States Parties but not members of the Committee, and six representatives of accredited NGOs. Other specific criteria for membership included: i) equitable geographical representation; ii) expertise in the various domains of intangible cultural heritage; iii) each electoral group had to be represented among the 12 members; and iv) the members exercised a four-year term, with three members changed every year to ensure continuity and rotating membership of the body. The Secretary made clear that all members of the Evaluation Body would be appointed by the Committee, acting impartially and in the interests of all States Parties and the Convention. All the appointed members would be nominated by each of the six electoral groups, depending on which seats were to be filled (in the first sitting of this body all electoral groups would nominate). In future elections, only the concerned electoral group would be consulted to provide nominees (among NGOs or experts) for the outgoing seats, with the Committee making the final selection in appointments to the body. Each electoral group might put before the Committee up to three candidates for each seat, but at least one candidate should be proposed. The chairperson of the electoral group would inform the Secretariat of the candidate(s) at least six weeks before the Committee session for publication of candidate(s) names in the working document. In addition, to ensure that experts representing developing countries could be included among those appointed to the body, the Committee also proposed that experts from eligible countries receive financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund (which was not the case for members of the Subsidiary Body who only received travel expenses). As these experts (even governmental experts) would be appointed for consultative purposes, those from developing countries would also receive fees (in the same way as the experts from NGOs) for their work, provided by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. The Secretary concluded by saying that the Committee had unanimously recommended these provisions. On adoption of the Evaluation Body by the Assembly, the next Committee would appoint the first 12 serving members who would then evaluate the 2015 cycle. The Secretariat would then inform all States Parties in early July of the possibility to put forward the names of experts or NGOs within their electoral group, with the chairs expected to send their proposals in time for the Committee’s next session.
12. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the clear explanation on such an important issue, opening the floor for comments.
13. The delegation of **Norway** remarked that it had been following the issue since the very beginning and was pleased that the Committee had reached consensus on such a delicate issue. It, therefore, wholeheartedly supported the amendment.
14. The delegation of **Indonesia** remarked that it had also followed the prolonged debates on the issue, concurring with the comments by Norway. It felt that the proposed hybrid body represented the will of the States Parties and particularly the Committee, and fully supported the draft amendments to the Operational Directives in this regard. The delegation also sought clarification regarding membership to the body. If members of the Evaluation Body were appointed for a four-year term and came from States Parties not members of the Committee, what would happen if after two years the State Party (of which the Evaluation Body member was a national) became a Committee member? Would the serving member of that State have to retire from the Evaluation Body and be replaced?
15. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretariat to respond.
16. The **Secretary** replied that the question had in fact two different answers. Firstly, of the
12 members, not all of the six experts would have a four-year mandate from scratch because of the rotational system. The Committee, when it composed the 12 members for the first time, would probably have to draw lots to select those members that would have a one-year mandate, those with a two-year mandate, and so on. Otherwise, the rotation could not begin. Secondly, after the initial setting-up phase, the members – once elected – would commence a four-year mandate, which logically would provide the body with continuity in its work (a new member coming on board mid-term would disrupt the proceedings). Thus, a State intending to run for election in the next General Assembly should abstain from proposing an expert to sit in the body pending the result of the election. Therefore, only States committed to abstaining from sitting in the Committee in the next four years should propose experts to the Evaluation Body.
17. The delegation of **Benin** considered the explanation to be extremely important, as it was the first time that it had heard about the criteria for selecting members to the Evaluation Body. In the future, States should be sufficiently informed, as it was often difficult to explain to decision makers who tended to be hostile when they didn’t understand how things were managed within the Convention. The delegation added that this was why even official letters should be sent because emails were meaningless to them, considering them to be addressed only to the specialists and not the State. Thus, if the form of rotation within the Evaluation Committee was not known, it would have the effect of marginalizing States that had difficulties explaining the merits of participation in such meetings to State policymakers. The delegation hoped that in the future the State be informed by UNESCO of any changes in the formulation or criteria for participation in such a committee.
18. The delegation of **Cyprus** supported the Committee's decision on paragraph 27 on the Evaluation Body, and was happy to note the question by Indonesia. However, with regard to paragraph 28, ‘the Secretariat shall inform the States Parties within each Electoral Group’, it felt that the correct procedure should be first informing the States Parties, that in turn would inform the chairperson of the electoral group.
19. The delegation of the **Republic of Korea** supported the remarks by the two previous delegations and agreed on the need to establish a single Evaluation Body to enhance efficiency. In addition, there should be greater discussion in regard to the composition and management of the body, and the Secretariat should, therefore, pay strict attention to ensure a fair and clear selection procedure for new members of the Evaluation Body.
20. The delegation of **Austria** welcomed the creation of a single Evaluation Body for the examination of all files, which would ensure a higher degree of consistency between the Lists. It concurred with the statements by Norway, Indonesia and others, and after intense discussion on the topic for several years, considered the new structure as having enjoyed a very good consensus, accommodating the expertise of NGOs and national experts in a proper manner. In addition, there would no longer be a restriction in the discussion among Committee members, with each file finally being decided upon equally by all 24 Committee members. It was confident that the new structure would continue to enhance the spirit of the Convention.
21. The delegation of **Brazil** subscribed to the comments by Norway that these amendments represented a delicate balance, which was achieved with consensus, and thus favoured not making any modifications to the text, only if it was absolutely necessary to make a clarification or adapt an expression to avoid any misunderstanding. With regard to the question by Indonesia, it suggested adding two footnotes to paragraphs 27 and 28. That for paragraph 27 would explain it would be expected the State presenting the expert would not run for election during its term in the Evaluation Body and for paragraph 28 transitional measures would be clarified for the rotation of experts during the first four years. In any case, any additional text should not change the substance of what was agreed but only make a clarification.
22. The delegation of **Georgia** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for its very impressive report. It supported the proposal of a single Evaluation Body as this would help in the evaluation of nomination files and ensure effective work of the Committee. However, it felt that the issues of equitable geographic representation should be further elaborated, as well as the question on whether the States Parties, members of the Evaluation Body and the Committee, would be expected to also abstain from submitting nominations during their term.
23. The delegation of **Egypt** was pleased to see that both the Chairperson and the Secretariat were very precise in the explanations provided. However, it wished to know about the criteria adopted for selecting the experts of the new Evaluation Body, and how to ensure that the experts selected would be truly competent. The delegation added that the files were very diverse and covered a broad range of cultural specificities and subjects that required highly specialized experts.
24. The delegation of **Jordan** supported the proposal by the Committee to establish a new body for the purposes of evaluation as this would guarantee objectivity. However, it also wondered about the selection criteria of the experts. Moreover, certain electoral groups were not sufficiently represented in terms of accredited NGOs under the Convention and would require assistance to put forward nominations for the second group of experts representing NGOs.
25. The delegation of **France** remarked that it had attentively followed the debates in Baku, and that the text marked an important and positive development in the Convention’s history.
26. The delegation of **Colombia** was happy to note the proposal by the Committee, but it also shared Egypt’s concern regarding the selection criteria. It suggested that the Committee draw up a series of clearly defined criteria that could be sent to States Parties stipulating that both the experts and the NGOs would have to have in-depth knowledge of the Convention and its Operational Directives, but also of implementation in the field. It was the implementation at field level that provided States Parties with considerable knowledge, developing their understanding of the local management of intangible cultural heritage, which was important for bearers and communities. The experts, therefore, needed field expertise in addition to academic knowledge.
27. As a member of the Committee, the delegation of **Namibia** also participated in the debates in Baku that led to the consensus and, therefore, supported the establishment of a single Evaluation Body. It understood that the six national experts would come from States non‑members of the Committee but wondered whether this criterion also applied to the NGOs.
28. The delegation of **Hungary** expressed its strong belief in advantages of the new procedure, adding that it sought clarity on how the decision on the length of the first membership would be taken with regard to rotation.
29. The delegation of **Netherlands** strongly supported the proposal by the Committee for a single independent Evaluation Body. It also felt that it was very important that the experts were aware of the discussions taking place during the NGO forum.
30. The delegation of **Peru** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and excellent chairmanship. It also thanked the Secretariat for its enormous work and clarity of its explanations. It welcomed the amendment but also recognized the exemplary work carried out by the subsidiary and consultative bodies in previous cycles. In this respect, many of the State experts who participated in the bodies had a great deal of experience in evaluating files as a result; the bodies providing an excellent capacity-building structure for States. Thus, the delegation suggested that these States having participated in the two bodies could recommend experts. It supported Colombia’s proposal that criteria to select experts be directly related to work conducted with the communities. It wished to see experts being recommended on the basis of consensus among the States and the Secretariat.
31. The delegation of **Estonia** supported the decision and consensus reached in Baku. It spoke of Estonia’s long-term experience in working with the bodies and the Committee, and that the proposal was in line with its experience on the type of consensus required to serve the spirit of the Convention. It also supported the proposal by Netherlands that the expertise from NGOs should come about in close consultation with the NGO Forum, which had extended an important service to the Convention.
32. The delegation of **Côte d’Ivoire** endorsed all remarks with regard to the Evaluation Body, however, wondered if membership rotation would be better every two and four years instead of every year, to allow for consistency and members to gain experience.
33. The delegation of **Turkey** had followed the Committee discussions and expert meetings, and consulted the proposed amendment formulated in Baku not seeing any impediment to its application, though there were two minor grammatical and technical errors. It also congratulated the two consultative bodies for their historic work.
34. The **Chairperson** agreed with Turkey and was equally appreciative of the excellent work undertaken by the consultative bodies, especially at the beginning of implementation of the Convention. The amendment was not in any way disapproving of the standard of their work but was simply exercising a need to improve the mechanism.
35. The delegation of **Greece** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and the Secretariat for its customary excellent work in preparing the background documents. It was well aware of the long process that led to the amendment, which was achieved through consensus among electoral groups and all its members, boding well for the body’s effective work in the spirit of the Convention. Regarding the crucial remarks made by the Secretary on the initial changes for the first Evaluation Body, which it assumed could not be covered in the Operational Directives, the delegation proposed that the text should be subject to a decision in the present session so that the Assembly fully understood all clarifications that were absolutely crucial for the good working of the body.
36. The delegation of **Spain** repeated its wish to maintain the former system, adding that the mixed Evaluation Body was envisaged as a provisional body. A participant in the Subsidiary Body for two years, the delegation acknowledged the excellent work carried out by previous advisory bodies whose work had been recognized by the Committee in its meetings. It supported the comments made by Colombia endorsed by Peru that members of the Evaluation Body would function in a provisional manner and require in-depth knowledge of the Convention and the Operational Directives, not just academic knowledge, unlike previously.
37. The delegation of **Guatemala** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and the Secretariat for its excellent work. Regarding financial problems currently facing UNESCO, the delegation wished to know about specific costs involved in setting-up and managing meetings and experts of the Evaluation Body.
38. The delegation of **Tunisia** congratulated the previous bodies for their excellent work and whose accumulated experience the Assembly could draw upon. The consensus reached was also very important and should be celebrated. It was also useful to mention that States Parties appointing an expert should not stand for election in the Committee.
39. The delegation of **Morocco** joined the delegations in welcoming the important consensus reached in Baku, which would ensure better implementation of the Convention in the coming years. It was equally important to recall the valuable work carried out by the advisory bodies, which – as Spain recalled – served the subsidiary bodies as impartially as possible, even though they were also part of the Committee. That said, the solution in its opinion would lead to better implementation of the Convention. Nevertheless, there were matters that still needed to be discussed, as highlighted by a number of delegations. For example, would this be a homogeneous body? The delegation returned to the issue raised by Namibia on the status of experts and NGOs; one half of the experts – the NGOs – were accredited, but what about the experts? Would they also be accredited? Does the fact that the Committee proposing and appointing experts through electoral groups be considered a form of accreditation?
40. The delegation of **Italy** was in favour of the proposal and welcomed the consensus. It spoke of the excellent experience and quality of the consultative bodies that led the Committee to reflect on improving the evaluation work and eventually to reach consensus, which it supported. It welcomed the mention of ‘qualified experts’ as highlighted by Morocco. The delegation would, therefore, not oppose the mechanism and was certain of the quality of the experts that would be called upon, in the same way as the experts who had previously worked in the subsidiary bodies had been recognized.
41. The delegation of **Ecuador** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, adding that it welcomed the proposal to have a single Evaluation Body to evaluate all the nomination files from 2015. It also stressed the importance of fair geographical representation of the body’s members, both in terms of the governmental and non-governmental representatives. The delegation wished to retain the Assembly’s right to conduct a review of the Evaluation Body and its functions after a certain period of time.
42. The delegation of **Mauritania** felt that the proposal from Morocco supported by Italy was fundamental, as well as the proposal from Ecuador, as both ideas converged ensured the competency of experts in evaluating files, which could only be assured with accreditation; a principle that it always defended. It also sought clarity with regard to the principle of rotation even within geographical groups, as requested by Ecuador.
43. The delegation of **Senegal** was in favour of the Evaluation Body because it would improve the quality of the evaluation of files. Returning to the question posed earlier by Morocco and Namibia, it sought clarity on the selection process of NGOs serving on the Evaluation Body. What mechanism was in place to ensure that the NGOs would be selected on an equitable geographical basis? Which criteria would be applied to select the NGOs? The delegation added that these important details would help to better understand the work of the new body. With regard to the experts representing the electoral groups, the delegation wished to know whether the Chairperson of the group was limited to three candidates.
44. The **Chairperson** thanked the delegations for their very useful contributions and noted that there was an overwhelming agreement on the proposal, however, there were also some important questions and the answers should help to find the mechanism of implementation. He invited the Secretary to respond.
45. The **Secretary** remarked that the questions should really be addressed to the Committee, as it was the Committee that proposed this mechanism. Nevertheless, she would try to respond, though the Assembly might wish to include additional text for clarification in the adopted resolution to the Directive – as suggested by Greece. With regard to the question raised by the Republic of Korea, the Secretary reiterated that the Secretariat was not in any way involved in the selection process of experts. It was only responsible for sending letters to States Parties at the beginning of July informing them of the need to propose experts – should they wish – to serve in the new body. The States Parties would, therefore, be tasked to ensure that the chosen experts had both the availability and requisite expertise – to answer the question by Colombia and Peru. The proposals would not be received by the Secretariat but instead would be sent to the chairpersons of each electoral group concerned. The electoral groups would then conduct consultations to select the best candidates (three experts and three NGOs) among the potentially large number of proposals to represent their electoral group. The Secretary explained that a maximum of three candidates among the experts and three NGOs (and at least one candidate of each) could be put forward. The maximum number of three candidates was decided in order to simplify the selection by the Committee in its final decision. The Secretary also allayed concerns regarding equitable geographical representation, as each electoral group would have one expert and one NGO representing their group, so no single group would be more represented than another. It was true, however, that some electoral groups had more accredited NGOs than others, but the Assembly would likely accredit another 22 NGOs in the current session with many coming from Group V(b). This ensured that the number of accredited NGOs available from each group would be sufficient to rotate every four years.
46. Regarding the status of an NGO whose headquarters was in the country of a Committee member, the **Secretary** clarified that an NGO by definition neither represented its country nor its host country. Thus, the rule that an expert should not come from the same country as a member of the Committee did not apply to NGOs. With regard to the system of rotation (Brazil suggested a footnote and Hungary sought clarification), the Secretary explained that this had already occurred with the Consultative Body in its first selection of 12 members. In this case, the rotation was initiated by deciding for the first time which of the 12 members would serve a one-year term, a two-year term, and so on. The choice was made on the basis of consensus through consultations. However, it could also be decided by drawing lots. The Secretary recommended that the Assembly leave it to the Committee to decide on how to proceed, adding that it was probably unnecessary to mention the process in the base texts, as it would be conducted only once, or should the body expire.
47. Regarding the question by Georgia, the **Secretary** replied that the issue was not treated in the proposal. Concerning advisory bodies, the Secretary explained appointing a member of an NGO whose headquarters was in the same country as a Committee member was acceptable but that it was customary for a member, whether they were a government expert or representing an NGO, to refrain from evaluating nominations from their country. For example, if a nomination was under evaluation, of which a member of the Subsidiary Body was a national, the member would leave the room and not take part in any of the debates or assessment of the nomination. Yet as the Evaluation Body could not anticipate in advance which of the four types of nominations would be submitted, placing restrictions on experts was difficult to apply.
48. With regard to paragraph 27 on the criteria of competence governing the appointment of experts, the **Secretary** reiterated that the experts must have expertise in one of the various domains of intangible cultural heritage. They would be tasked with the evaluation of *all* nomination files, not just those of which they were specialists, and would be expected to formulate opinions and operate in the other domains. Experience had shown that there had never been a problem of an expert failing to understand the presentation of a file. On the contrary, experts from the different geographical regions were able to enlighten the group about cultural sensitivities particular to his or her region, as well as the local and regional context of a nominated element. The one competence that was non-negotiable, which would be mentioned in the letters, was that nominated experts must be proficient in either French or English, as interpretation was only available in these working languages. Regarding the proposal that NGOs be selected in consultation with the NGO Forum, it would depend on the electoral group responsible to ensure that consultation took place – the Secretariat would not intervene in the selection process. The letters by the Secretariat would be sent to all States Parties in early July, and the Secretariat would expect to receive proposals from each electoral group in mid-October, which would allow the electoral groups to reflect on the candidates and meet in early October to agree on the CVs. In addition, the proposal by Greece could help clarify – in the letter concerning the candidates – that States intending to stand for election to the Committee refrain from proposing their experts.
49. Finally, the **Secretary** explained that the costs of the advisory bodies were twofold and included the fixed costs of the consultative body in general (logistics, interpretation, translation, meeting room clerks and so on), which was partly covered by UNESCO Regular Programme, and the travel and subsistence costs for Subsidiary Body participants from developing countries, plus the travel costs of all 12 participants of the Consultative Body, as well as their fees for the evaluation of nominations. Therefore, in the calculation of the Evaluation Body, a five-day meeting halved the fixed costs compared to two five-day meetings of the Consultative Body and the Subsidiary Body. There would only be
12 members in the Evaluation Body to fund instead of 18 for both consultative bodies, though this would include consulting fees for a number of participants or at least from the State experts requiring assistance from developing countries. The final cost savings compared to the current set-up was calculated at around 11 per cent.
50. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for having responded to the questions raised.
51. The delegation of **Albania** remarked that as a member of the Committee it took part actively in negotiations for the new Evaluation Body and was happy about the overwhelming consensus. On limiting the number of experts, the delegation felt a limit of three was rather artificial and did not see a problem with having more proposed experts per electoral group since the Committee would actually vote and select the experts. With regard to the NGOs, it fully agreed that the country of headquarters should not be an eliminatory criterion, in contrary to experts that represent their governments. The delegation wondered, however, about the status of international NGOs, and whether experts could be re-elected after serving four years. It also sought clarification on the proposed fees to the experts, as it believed the Fund only covered travel expenses.
52. With regard to the question on international NGOs, the **Secretary** explained that by definition they were not linked to an electoral group and that several discussions had taken place to possibly include a seventh group under ‘international’. Unfortunately, the discussions never concluded, so for the time being international NGOs were considered as belonging to the electoral group in which they had their headquarters, though some NGOs were known to rotate their headquarters. The Secretary suggested that the Assembly reflect on this issue for the future. The second question concerned the limit of three experts proposed by the Committee in Article 28 of the draft proposal. The Secretary surmised that it was to facilitate the work of the Committee as in reality the number of candidates proposed to the electoral group was non-restricted, and ultimately it was the electoral group that chose its candidates during the Committee session. Moreover, consultations among the electoral groups could be done in advance so that only three candidates were brought to the attention of the Committee instead of say 100. This would facilitate translations of CVs and the number of documents, which in reality essentially concerned the electoral group in question. With regard to the issue of re-election, the Secretary explained that it was not dealt with in the actual Directives. On the question of fees, the Secretary drew attention to agenda item 7 on the use of the Fund and the proposed amendment that provided the possibility to provide fees to State experts sitting in the Evaluation Body. This came about because a State expert serving in the Subsidiary Body had asked whether government experts were also entitled to fees for their work, as the expert (from a developing country) had a limited budget from the Ministry of Culture and had to appoint colleagues to constitute an evaluation team to help in the heavy workload of evaluating
50 files. At the time, there were no provisions to financially assist State experts. However, the Committee deemed that it was indeed difficult for some developing States that did not have the financial capacity to form a small team, as the government experts did not work alone. The Committee, therefore, proposed that the Secretariat check with Legal Affairs and the associated financial rules to see whether experts from developing countries, carrying out consultative functions, could receive fees (this would not apply to experts from developed countries). As a result, an amendment was proposed in Item 7 that they should receive fees, which had been calculated at the very modest sum of US$200 per nomination evaluated to be paid from the Fund, which had ample money to pay for all experts concerned by the provision, or about eight or nine experts in the new body.
53. The **Chairperson** remarked that if there were any details that had not been included then it could be added – as suggested by Brazil – so the Directives could be clear and help the Committee in its future work.
54. The delegation of **Afghanistan** congratulated the Chairperson on his election, and also the Secretary for her detailed explanations that provided more thoughtful perspectives on the issues. The delegation was unfortunately not in Baku to follow the process and was taken aback to hear the use of ‘provisional’ in relation to the proposal, as mentioned by Spain. As a lawyer, this ‘temporary’ action had connotations akin to an experiment of which the duration was not known, which in the delegation’s opinion already weakened the framework because the outcome was uncertain. It would have preferred a more stable and final solution even though it welcomed the very democratic process. However, the delegation expressed concern that the procedure had complicated matters for States Parties that had not yet inscribed an element, and wondered whether the new formula provided these countries with an opportunity to be present among UNESCO’s governing bodies; otherwise it would discourage countries that had no elements inscribed on the Lists. The delegation felt that the period of globalization, which UNESCO had entered, created complications that ultimately discouraged those countries with fewer resources and means.
55. The **Chairperson** understood its concern but believed that there was a misunderstanding regarding countries being able to present files if they were members of the Committee. The Chairperson explained that the discussion concerned the new mechanism for the Evaluation Body, adding that the Assembly worked for the interests of every Member State.
56. The delegation of **Romania** sought clarification on whether the selection of experts was made by the Committee or by the electoral group, and if the electoral group decided on the funding source for the expert. It also sought to know the support costs for the States Parties in the final evaluation process.
57. The **delegation of Congo** also regretted that it was unable to attend the Committee meeting in Baku but it had nevertheless followed all the debates. It sought clarification on the selection procedure of experts as it did not understand why the electoral groups were asked to propose three candidates when ultimately it would retain only one. In which case, why not just nominate one candidate from the outset. The delegation was told that it was the Committee that made the final selection and subsequently withdrew its question.
58. The delegation of **Azerbaijan** welcomed and supported the compromise solution reached in Baku, adding that the establishment of the Evaluation Body was indeed cost-effective.
59. In response to the question by Romania on costs for the State, the **Secretary** explained that a State Party supporting an expert who was not eligible for support from the Fund would need to consider travel and subsistence costs for the duration of the meeting (about a week) in which the evaluation took place. The second consideration was the time spent working for UNESCO in evaluating the 50 nomination files prior to the meeting, i.e. work that was spent away from other normal duties. It was important to note that some ‘government experts’ were not necessarily civil servants and a government might offer a fee as compensation for the work so the costs incurred would depend on the arrangements proposed by the proposing government. The Secretary suggested that Romania approach past members of the Subsidiary Body for an idea of how much it might potentially cost.
60. The **Chairperson** hoped that the Assembly was clearer on the issues, reminding the Assembly that the Committee was responsible for the implementation of the procedure. The Chairperson then moved to the draft resolution paragraph-by-paragraph. Paragraph 27 was the first revision that defined the mechanism and membership of the Evaluation Body. With no objections, paragraph 27 was **adopted**. Paragraph 28 pertained to the terms of office and the procedures by which each electoral group put forward the name of one or more candidates for the vacant seats available.
61. The delegation of **Cyprus** sought to change the paragraph ‘At least three months prior to the opening of the session of the Committee, the Secretariat shall inform the States Parties’ by deleting ‘within each Electoral Group with a vacancy to be filled’. The delegation explained that the Secretariat should inform the States Parties, and it was the States Parties that should then send their proposals to the chairperson of the electoral group, who in turn determined the candidates put forward to the Secretariat.
62. The **Secretary** understood the intervention by Cyprus but explained that only States Parties within electoral groups that had vacant seats would receive letters requesting them to consider potential candidates. In the first year, all States Parties would receive the letters (as all electoral seats would be vacant), but only three electoral groups would have vacant seats in the second year (owing to the rotation), so only those States Parties would receive invitations to propose candidates, and so on in year three.
63. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 28 **adopted**. The Chairperson turned to paragraph 30 and the recommendation that the Evaluation Body would submit a report to the Committee. With no objections, paragraph 30 was **adopted**. Old paragraphs 29 and 30 had become obsolete with the amended paragraph 27 and new paragraph 30, which was duly **adopted** and deleted. In addition, the order of paragraph numbers was maintained to the extent possible, which was also **adopted**. Finally, there were some changes in paragraphs 54 and 55 concerning the timetable and procedures, which the Secretary was invited to explain.
64. The **Secretary** explained that the changes reflected the amendments that the Assembly had just adopted, and clarified the procedures already in use by the Secretariat. Since the time the Directives were first adopted, the Convention’s work had moved from a ‘low paper’ to a ‘no paper’ approach to working documents. Short updates referred to the description of how information was made available during the evaluation process. Also, in its Decision 7.COM.15 the Committee adopted ‘Guidelines for the treatment of correspondence from the public or other concerned parties with regard to nominations’ that described when and how files and supporting materials were available online on the Convention’s website. The revised paragraph 54 clarified that on 31 March (Year 1) the Secretariat posted files as received in their original language on the Convention’s website. Revised files received by 30 September (Year 1) by States, following the Secretariat’s request for additional information, were posted online and replaced the original files received. Translations into English or French were also posted online as they became available. Paragraph 55 changed the name of the body just adopted.
65. The **Chairperson** suggested adopting the changes as a whole.
66. Regarding the amendment to paragraph 54, the delegation of **China** remarked that in accordance with paragraph 12 of document 5.1, the Assembly had taken a decision on a proposal by the Committee at its seventh session on the public’s reaction to the treatment of nominations, which specifically referred to the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List. China believed that online posting of nomination files would only concern these two Lists and exclude Best Practices plans or projects, or international assistance requests. It felt that there was a problem of consistency and that it would be useful to make available online the nominations of all four mechanisms.
67. The **Secretary** explained that the paragraph cited ‘file’ and not ‘nomination’, as ‘nomination’ referred specifically to the two Lists, while ‘files’ was used to describe all four mechanisms. In addition, the purpose of making the files available online was not only to gauge public reaction but was also to enable States to follow the nomination process, as was decided by the Committee. The paragraph was thus drafted in the spirit of the Committee’s decision to initiate debate, and not necessarily criticism, on issues that might raise concern by interested parties. In this way, the Committee could anticipate any potential problems across all the mechanisms, including Best Practices and international assistance.
68. With no further comments, the **Chairperson pronounced Part III adopted**, and thanked the Assembly for enriching the debate and its cooperation in concluding the new mechanism of evaluation. The Chairperson repeated his appreciation of the work carried out by the previous subsidiary and consultative bodies, adding that a new era was dawning in the interests of implementation of the Convention.
69. The **Secretary** turned to **Part IV: Definition of ‘emergency’ for the purposes of international assistance,** which proposed to integrate a previous decision taken by the Committee into paragraph 50 of the Operational Directives. The Secretary recalled that Article 22 of the Convention and paragraphs 47 and 50 of the Operational Directives explained the possibility for a State to request international assistance on an emergency basis, and to have that request examined on an expeditious basis. In its Decision 5.COM 10.2, the Committee adopted in 2010 a decision to describe the circumstances that constituted such an emergency, justifying expeditious examination based on the definition by UNESCO for emergency requests under the Participation Programme. It was recalled that the Bureau awarded the first emergency assistance in 2013 to support inventory efforts in Mali in the wake of recent conflicts. At that time, the Bureau suggested that the definition of ‘emergency’ in Decision 5.COM 10.2 would have greater visibility if integrated into the Operational Directives. The Committee agreed and adopted a decision in this regard, which was being sought for integration in paragraph 50 of the Operational Directives.
70. The **Chairperson** noted that the Secretariat had included paragraphs 47–53, even if most of the paragraphs remain unchanged. Moreover, paragraph 51 had been updated with references to the Evaluation Body. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson pronounced Part IV adopted**.
71. The **Secretary** introduced the final set of amendments, **Part V: Criteria and procedures for accreditation of non-governmental organizations** explaining that it responded to a request from the General Assembly at its fourth session asking the Committee to reflect on the criteria and modalities for the accreditation of NGOs based on the Committee’s experience thus far, which called upon the services of accredited NGOs to act in an advisory capacity. The Committee undertook this reflection at its seventh and eighth sessions, requesting the Secretariat to carry out a desk study of the 156 NGOs currently accredited. The findings, together with observations from the IOS evaluation, were presented to the Committee at its eighth session. The Committee emphasized the important role of NGOs in implementing the Convention at national level, which was reinforced by IOS recommendations that States Parties should involve NGOs even more in their national safeguarding efforts. The Committee decided to encourage States Parties to involve relevant NGOs when preparing their periodic reports in order to complement their data, and that it would examine draft Operational Directives on that question at its ninth session. The Committee also found it advisable to revise the accreditation criteria to ensure that all accredited NGOs had the requisite experience and capacity to act in an advisory capacity, which linked to the concerns raised by Colombia, Peru and others on the profiles of experts within the new Evaluation Body. The Committee requested the Secretariat to draft revisions based upon its debates, and the provisions presented were the results of that process.
72. The **Secretary** further explained that NGOs had already played an important role in evaluating nominations as members of the Consultative Body, and that for their future advisory role in the Evaluation Body they would be requested to have additional operational capacities. Thus, the Committee did not propose to delete any of the existing accreditation criteria, but rather include additional criteria in paragraph 91, and recall part of the procedure for accreditation in paragraph 97, including: i) experience in the various fields of intangible cultural heritage; ii) experience in working at the international level or the capacity to extrapolate from local experience to apply it within an international context; iii) experience in evaluating and analysing documents, as nominations involve paperwork; iv) possess a very good command of either English or French, the working languages; and v) experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French. Finally, if adopted by the General Assembly, the new criteria of the Operational Directives would be applied to new requests entering the ninth and tenth sessions of the Committee, and would apply to the quadrennial review by NGOs of their advisory contributions, corresponding to paragraph 94 of the Operational Directives beginning in 2015. Thus, these criteria would be applied to new requests for accreditation as of 2015, and to the review process of former accredited NGOs that would also be undertaken as of 2015.
73. The **Chairperson** remarked that this was another example where the Committee had drawn lessons from its first periods of applying the criteria originally adopted in 2008. Later in the day, the Assembly would be asked to accredit 22 additional NGOs, joining the 156 already accredited. The Chairperson was happy to see active engagement from civil society in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage around the world. The Committee, therefore, recommended to better support the criteria to meet real needs, as they had become known. The Chairperson also understood that NGOs without the necessary language capacities in English or French could not assume the responsibilities for providing advisory services and could, therefore, not be accredited.
74. The delegation of **Indonesia** thanked the Secretary for the outline of the proposed amendments regarding accreditation, which it fully supported. However, in order to take an informed and inclusive decision on this issue, the delegation proposed that a representative of the NGO Forum be given the opportunity to present a short response to the proposed amended criteria, as these amendments would directly affect both the presently accredited NGOs and any future accredited NGOs.
75. The **Chairperson** agreed that this was a very important suggestion because NGOs were the real partners of the Convention, having served intangible cultural heritage for many years before the Convention, and was proud of this partnership. NGOs would, therefore, be given a chance later to express their view.
76. The delegation of **Republic of Korea** appreciated the explanations on the new accreditation criteria, and understood the need to possess the technical aptitude for language fluency and the ability to draft documents, but that the priority should be given to experiences of community based activities in line with the spirit of the Convention rather than language efficacy.
77. The delegation of **Belgium** remarked that the Committee in Baku did not discuss the future involvement of NGOs at length, and that the thorough evaluation of the work by the NGOs had to still be performed. Thus, it was premature to already change the rules before conducting a general review. The delegation noted that the main changes proposed dealt with how NGOs function within the Evaluation Body, which concerned a very limited number of NGOs, and that their linguistic capacity would have been tested and checked thoroughly prior to any membership to the Evaluation Body. Moreover, paragraph 91(a) stated that these NGOs should ‘have proven competence, expertise and experience in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage belonging, *inter alia*, to one or more specific domains’, yet this specific criterion was not really tested nor was evidence of the fact requested. The delegation, therefore, felt that 91(a) of the Operational Directives should be more seriously investigated before making new amendments. Furthermore, paragraph 96 in the Operational Directives expressly invited accredited NGOs, *inter alia*, ‘to provide assistance in the examination of nomination files’; the ‘*inter alia*’ being very important as it alluded to more than one function of which 96(d) would probably become important as it asked for reports on the effects of safeguarding plans for elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Moreover, with the change in criterion U.3, and by making paragraph 39 really effective and operational, NGOs would likely be needed to evaluate the outcome of the safeguarding plans and possibly the removal of elements from the Urgent Safeguarding List. Thus, the delegation called for further reflection on the criteria while fully endorsing the statement by Indonesia to invite the NGO Forum to express its views.
78. The delegation of **Peru** felt that there was a need at some stage to promote the NGOs in countries or groups that did not yet have a large number of accredited NGOs, as well as to recommend in the Operational Directives that NGOs working to safeguard intangible cultural heritage establish a relationship both with the communities and States Parties, given that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage was of universal benefit. Therefore, one of the functions of the Convention was to promote dialogue between the various participating stakeholders.
79. The **Chairperson** thanked Peru, and suggested returning to the issue after lunchtime.
80. The **Chairperson** adjourned the morning session.

*[Tuesday 3 June 2014, afternoon session]*

**ITEM 5.1 OF THE AGENDA (cont.):**

**SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES**

1. The **Chairperson** returned to the discussion, inviting States Parties to take the floor.
2. The delegation of **Latvia** expressed its commitment to the importance of the issue and significant role that NGOs played in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and their cooperation both at the international, national and local levels. It congratulated the NGO Forum within the international debate on the implementation of the Convention and on the role of communities and NGOs within the process of safeguarding heritage. In this respect, it also looked forward to the intervention of the NGO Forum representative. As for the proposed amendments, the delegation remarked that the involvement of NGOs in an advisory capacity might also be carried out collectively, for instance, through the NGO Forum whose activities and international impact were growing. The expectation for NGOs to have advisory capacities was already expressed in paragraph 91(a) of the Operational Directives, which stated the need for competences, expertise and experience in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage belonging *inter alia* to one or more specific domains. Referring to the same paragraph, as well as paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives, and also recalling Article 9 of the Convention that mentions the advisory capacity to the Committee in general terms, the delegation believed that the advisory services on nominations, proposals and requests was a sphere, *inter alia*, among other possible areas where the advisory function might be fulfilled. Thus, it was of the opinion that the criteria for setting advisory capacities specifically on the evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests should not be an exclusive criterion for the accreditation of an NGO. Nevertheless, it might be important for the Committee to know whether the NGO in question possessed such capacities in order to be invited to give advice. Moreover, the relevant information would be welcomed for inclusion in the accreditation form. It, therefore, proposed deleting the proposed amendment from paragraph 91, though it had a proposal in paragraph 97, which it would later present. Nevertheless, it believed that the issues could be made more explicit once the accreditation form had been revised, and when the questions raised concerning the criteria with respect to expertise for membership to the Evaluation Body were agreed upon, as such criteria would apply to all experts including those from NGOs.
3. Concurring with the remarks made by Latvia, the delegation of **Estonia** spoke of its appreciation of the work carried out in Baku by the Committee to reach a solution and achieve a consensus. It also wished to congratulate the Secretariat on the good work trying to pull together all the different positions that had been voiced. With regard to the criteria set out in paragraph 91(f), the delegation was of the opinion that they were necessary, as the skills required for conducting the evaluation exercise concerned only those NGOs for whom it was particularly pertinent. On the other hand, it believed that the role of NGOs and their accreditation should be much wider and inclusive, and not limited to these particular criteria. This was due to the fact that the cooperation of Member States with NGOs could be quite fertile on the ground in their home countries, so the role of national NGOs might be much wider than engaging them in this type of evaluation exercise. The delegation felt that any amendments should be brought about after results of the reports on the NGO’s experience during these past cycles was known, i.e. hearing about their experiences would benefit the Assembly. In this regard, it also supported the idea that these reports were important in order to make decisions on the kind of role that could potentially be assigned to NGOs. It concurred with the position that the points should be deleted from the Operational Directives, and was looking forward to the intervention by the NGO representative.
4. The **Representative of the NGO Forum** thanked the Chairperson for giving the ICH NGO Forum the opportunity to express its view on the proposed substantive revisions of the Operational Directives. The ICH NGO Forum earlier already acknowledged and appreciated the Decision of the Committee 8.COM 13.b to strengthen NGO participation in the implementation of the Convention at all levels, and to encourage States Parties to promote increased NGO and community involvement in the development of policy, legislation, safeguarding, and sustainable development plans. This decision implied that acting in an advisory capacity to the Committee went far beyond the service of NGOs in the present Consultative Body and future Evaluation Body. The ICH NGO Forum was, therefore, surprised to note the proposed revision of criteria and procedures for accreditation of NGOs, believing that the proposed revision could be inconsistent with Decision [8.COM 14.b](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-Decisions-EN.doc), as had been mentioned already by several States Parties in the debate. In order to ensure that the various advisory services of NGOs to the Committee continue to be recognized through the current accreditation process on the one hand, but also understanding the need to ensure requisite advisory capacities for participation in the Evaluation Body on the other hand, the ICH NGO Forum suggested that the proposed amendments 91(f) and 97(i) of the Operational Directives could specifically address NGO services in the Evaluation Body. The Forum further strongly acknowledged the important efforts the Secretariat made in processing accreditation files and was open to bring support within its capacity. It was emphasized how accreditation had been essential to NGOs’ contribution to implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, the ICH NGO Forum had noticed a discrepancy between Article 91(a) and proposed Article 91(f)(i) and 97(i) of the Operational Directives. On the one hand, NGOs were meant to operate in one or more specific domains of ICH – in 91(a) – and on the other hand, they would have to possess experience in the various fields of intangible cultural heritage – 91(f), 91(i) and 97(i). It was of the view that the wording in 91(a) on one or more specific domains should also apply.
5. The delegation of **Norway** suggested that the problem with the 91(f) paragraph (pertaining to advisory capacities for evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests) was that as it stood, it read as a continuation of (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e), but could be interpreted as a new sub-paragraph that overruled the former sub-paragraphs. It believed that it could be wise to include the (f) formulations in the directives in another form, either included as a new paragraph stating that it referred only to NGOs in their capacity as advisory bodies for the Committee or included in (f) in paragraph 96 under ‘Advisory functions’. However, owing to its importance, the delegation was inclined to postpone the amendments because of the confusion, adding that the General Assembly and the States Parties could reflect further on the issue and return in two years with a new formulation.
6. The delegation of **Belgium** supported the opinion by Norway and Estonia to delete the proposed amendments and postpone the decision for two years to reflect on the proposal by the NGO Forum.
7. The delegation of **France** felt that the proposal by Norway and others was a good solution and that a clearly redacted, stand-alone paragraph could be included which would solve the problems that had arisen in the present wording. The delegation wished to add another minor amendment in f(i) so that it referred to ‘experience in one or more of the various fields of intangible cultural heritage’ so as to remove any ambiguity, as NGOs did not necessarily have skills in all areas but rather in one or more domains of intangible cultural heritage.
8. The **Chairperson** noted that there were two suggestions by Norway and France, with Belgium going along with the NGOs. He asked the Assembly whether it agreed to postpone the amendments and not change the Operational Directives at that stage.
9. The delegation of **Colombia** remarked that there were two different proposals put forward: to delete the amendment 91(f) or to insert this amendment into paragraph 96. It concurred with the general debate and the NGO Forum that these were important criteria for consultative work but not for the general accreditation of NGOs. It proposed that the criteria also be applied and considered by the electoral groups in their selection of State experts.
10. The delegation of **France** suggested that the amendments be projected onto the screen so that the Assembly could clearly refer to the proposals put forward by Norway.
11. The **Secretary** clarified that two opinions had been expressed, which were not necessarily contradictory, but that generally speaking delegations did not support the amendments as proposed. Some wished to see the amendment in paragraph 91(f) moved to paragraph 96 as these criteria should only apply to advisory services, while others preferred to postpone refining the criteria until evaluation of the first reports of the NGOs that had already served on the Consultative Body.
12. The delegation of **Norway** wished to clarify that it did not propose a concrete amendment, but rather it had suggested possible solutions. It also said that it would go along with the Assembly should it wish to postpone a decision on such an important and delicate matter, adding that it was unfair to start drafting amendments in the plenary session. The delegation suggested that the issue be put to the Committee for further reflection so that a correct formulation in the right place in the Operational Directives could be proposed in two years’ time.
13. Thanking Norway for the clarification, the **Chairperson** was of the understanding that Colombia was suggesting that experts from NGOs could be nominated as long as they had accreditation. In addition, the electoral group would carry out evaluation of the experts, followed by the Committee. The Chairperson, therefore, asked the Assembly whether they supported the idea to maintain the Operational Directives without the amendments, which seemed to be a better solution at that stage. With no objections, the Chairperson pronounced **adopted** the decision to maintain the Operational Directives with no changes with respect to the issue.
14. The delegation of **Peru** agreed with the position of the amendment but that in the future an analysis be made to differentiate requirements for accreditation of NGOs and selection to participate in the Evaluation Body as experts. It, therefore, recommended returning to the issue in another General Assembly when the two sets of requirements had been well differentiated.
15. The **Chairperson** thanked Peru, adding that every proposal had its own procedures and criteria. With the item nearing its conclusion, the Chairperson invited the Secretary to conclude with the final issue under item 5.1.
16. The **Secretary** remarked that the Assembly had concluded the adoption of the proposed amendments but needed to pronounce on the topic of the referral option. The Secretary recalled that at its fourth session, the General Assembly requested the Committee to reflect on the experience gained implementing the referral option of the Representative List and to report on it at the present session. With reference to [working document 5.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.1-EN.doc) the Committee had debated the question at its seventh and eighth sessions, and ultimately decided that it did not wish to propose draft Operational Directives at the time, preferring to continue its reflection. Thus, no amendments in the Operational Directives would be proposed.
17. Having adopted the specific issues, the **Chairperson** turned to the draft resolution.
18. The delegation of **Belgium** wished to recall Decision 8.COM. 13.a (point 4) in which the Committee in Baku recommended to the General Assembly that a new chapter of the Operational Directives on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level be drawn up for examination by the Assembly at its sixth session. It therefore proposed that the Assembly welcome and agree Decision 8.COM. 13.a.
19. The **Chairperson** thanked Belgium for its good suggestion, which was in line with the spirit of the proposal. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 5.1 adopted.**

**ITEM 5.2 OF THE AGENDA:**

**TERMINOLOGICAL REVISIONS AND ALIGNING THE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES**

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/5.2*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.2-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 5.2*

1. The **Chairperson** moved to item 5.2 on the terminological revisions of the Operational Directives.
2. The **Secretary** recalled that the Operational Directives were adopted and published in six equally authoritative languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. During that process, occasional inconsistencies had arisen in the terminology used from one linguistic version to another, and from one paragraph to another within the same language. During its eighth session, the Committee requested the Secretariat to propose minor terminological revisions to align the terminology across all linguistic versions and within each version. The primary reference for the Directives in each language was the respective language text of the Convention. As the working languages of the Committee were English and French, the Operational Directives in those languages were aligned first so that they could serve as additional references for the Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish versions. The Secretary explained that most of the proposed terminological linguistic changes were unique to a single language, while other language versions were not affected. Thus, the present document had six different annexes, which were specific to each language. Only those paragraphs that required revision were included in the respective annex of that language. Referring to [document 5.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-5.1-EN.doc), the Secretary explained that both the substantive revisions and the terminological revisions approved in the present session would be reflected in the final version of the Basic Texts at the time of publishing. Moreover, the Secretariat had updated the documents in line with the passages that had just been adopted as part of Resolution 5.GA 5.1. It also corrected the revisions in the different linguistic versions as per the written proposals, where appropriate, including those received by China. With no forthcoming additional revisions, the Secretary concluded that the proposed changes did not need to be complemented by any other additions.
3. The **Chairperson** reiterated that there were different changes in each language version and thus suggested to proceed by going through the annex for each language, adding that any additional corrections communicated in writing to the Secretariat would be integrated into the relevant text later in the day by the Rapporteur. The Chairperson turned to the annexes. With no comments or amendments to any of the linguistic versions, they were adopted. The **Chairperson thus declared Resolution 5.GA 5.2 adopted**.

**ITEM 6 OF THE AGENDA:**

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

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/6*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-6-EN.doc)

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

1. The **Chairperson** proceeded with the topic of accreditation of NGOs, inviting the Secretariat to introduce the item.
2. **The Secretariat** explained that the Convention laid out the division of labour between the General Assembly and the Committee with regard to NGO accreditation: the Committee recommended NGOs to the General Assembly when the criteria for accreditation were met, as per the Operational Directives, and the General Assembly took the final decision to accredit or not those recommended NGOs. Accredited NGOs might be invited by the Committee to provide advisory services in the future. The Secretariat reminded the Assembly that it was the third time it would consider requests for accreditation from NGOs. To date, a total of [156 NGOs](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00331) had been accredited. At its seventh session in 2012, the Committee recommended 10 additional NGOs and at its eighth session in 2013 another
12 NGOs. The Assembly, therefore, had a total 22 requests (annex to [document 6](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-6-EN.doc)) to consider in the present session. It was recalled that accreditation was granted for a period of four years, after which the Committee would review the contribution and commitment of the advisory organization and the Committee’s relations with it. The Committee would, therefore, review in 2015 the first 92 NGOs that were accredited in 2012.
3. The **Chairperson** remarked that the Assembly had already discussed how the Committee called upon NGOs to provide advisory services, adding that the 22 additional NGOs would help increase the pool of accredited NGOs. Noting that there was general satisfaction to accept the Committee’s recommendation, the Chairperson turned to the draft resolution. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 6 adopted**.
4. The delegation of **Guatemala** remarked that it had presented an amendment at the end of paragraph 5 of the Resolution ‘especially those from countries and regions that have less representation and participation’.
5. The amendment by Guatemala was projected onto the screen and was duly **adopted**. The **Chairperson** congratulated the 22 NGOs and wished them success in their work in the interests of the Convention presently and in the future. The Chairperson opened the floor to observers, but with no comments forthcoming, moved to the following agenda item.

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA:**

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

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/7*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-7-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.7.1*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.1-EN.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.7.2 Rev*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.2_Rev.-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 7*

1. The **Chairperson** then turned to item 7 and the adoption of the plan for the use of the resources of the Fund on the basis of a proposal submitted by the Committee ([document 7](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-7-EN.doc)), which could be read alongside the two information documents that presented the [financial report](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.1-EN.doc), and the [list of donors](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.2_Rev.-EN.doc) having made voluntary supplementary contributions to the Fund. It was noted that the revised version of the list of donors included the latest contribution, and that the most recent amounts could not be reflected in the final statement of 31 December 2013. The Chairperson warmly thanked the eight States that had made voluntary contributions to the Fund since the last General Assembly. Four had contributed to the sub-fund for enhancing the human capacity of the Secretariat. The Chairperson appealed to States Parties to support the sub-fund in any amount, and thanked those States Parties that had done so, as well as those providing support to the Secretariat through the secondment of staff or the Associate Experts programme. The Chairperson invited the Secretary to provide background information on the item.
2. The **Secretary** turned to document 7 and the approval of the plan for the use of the Fund, which was one of the central functions of the General Assembly, along with the amendments to the Operational Directives and the election of Committee members. This important document consisted of four parts: i) a general introduction that provided the context of work; ii) an explanation of budget lines and allocations 2014-2015; iii) prospects for future budget cycles; and iv) the proposed draft plan for use of the Fund with percentages recommended by the Committee and their indicative amounts based on the balance of the Fund at 31 December 2013. The Secretary asked that the document be read in conjunction with the financial report that reflected how the expenses approved two years ago had actually been spent. The financial report of receipts and expenditures of the previous biennium and the annex offered a spending proposal for the biennium that began on 1 January 2014. The present General Assembly, therefore, had to decide on the draft plan for use of the Fund for a period of 24 months, which began on 1 January 2014 and would end on 31 December 2015. However, as the Secretariat did not cease its work between 1 January 2014 and the present time, the Assembly was invited to approve
24 months – from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015 – but also the six months of 2016 to be granted provisionally, as had been the case in the previous General Assembly so as not to interrupt operations, which would then be reabsorbed at the next General Assembly.
3. The **Secretary** explained that compared to the plan 2012–2013, which had been approved at the last General Assembly, the budget lines remained the same, though with some minor changes. **Line 1** remained unchanged with 54 per cent of the Fund's resources allocated to international assistance that included the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, inventory preparation, and support to other safeguarding programmes, projects or activities. **Line 2** was almost the same wording ‘preparatory assistance’, but there was a minor change regarding requests for international assistance. The Secretary recalled that the evaluation had recommended considering international assistance as an opportunity for capacity-building, with the Committee endorsing the principle that the Secretariat provide technical assistance to countries requesting it in order to develop more satisfactory files so a greater number might be approved by the Committee. The principle of technical assistance to countries to develop stronger requests for assistance was thus deemed necessary. Lines 3, 4, 5 and 6 remained identical to those of the previous plan. **Line 3** under ‘other functions of the Committee’ encompassed a range of activities including capacity building, sharing best practices, and information management. **Line 4** supported the travel and subsistence costs of Committee members from developing countries to attend meetings of the Committee if they did not have the means to cover all costs associated with their participation. This was a line that existed since the beginning of the Fund. **Line 5** provided financial assistance to States Parties to the Convention non‑members of the Committee from developing countries to participate at the meetings of the Committee, as many more States Parties wished to participate in the Committee’s proceedings in addition to the Committee’s 24 members. **Line 6** provided the same thing but for those that were non-members of the Committee or State Party, and included members of the advisory bodies, accredited NGOs, and experts called upon to give advice to the Committee from developing countries wishing to attend the Committee. It was noted that no budget line was attributed to help attend the General Assembly. **Line 7** provided for developing States whose representatives were appointed to serve in the Evaluation Body. At its session in Baku, the Committee introduced a special provision to support experts serving in the Evaluation Body from developing countries by compensating them for their work. This was an addition to remuneration provided to representatives of accredited NGOs. Finally, **Line 8** remained unchanged, which was the Reserve Fund, as provided in Article 6 of the Financial Regulations of the Fund, that might be released in case of urgent need. To date, the Reserve Fund had not been tapped into, as Line 1 provided for international assistance, which had been used to provide emergency assistance to Mali, and thus the Reserve Fund had yet to be utilized.
4. The **Secretary** continued by explaining the small difference in percentages applied to the balance at 31 December 2013, adding that the percentages were not exactly the same in some cases because the original balance was greater in the current biennium than in the previous one. Thus, the percentages had been adjusted to compensate for the higher balance, whose effect did not diminish the absolute amounts, meaning they either remained the same or increased. Applying the same percentage to international assistance would be acceptable, but applying it to support the travel of members of the Committee, whose number had actually decreased, would serve no purpose as the allocated funds would not be used [the projected spending was less for this biennium]. Thus, reducing certain percentages had the effect of maintaining the same value in absolute terms. Referring to the draft plan, the first column indicated the balance at the beginning of the year that had just ended (2012–2013), while the column (in grey) indicated the proposed budget for 2014–2015. In the case of international assistance, maintaining the percentage at
54 per cent had increased the budget from US$3.3 million (in the last biennium) to
US$3.6 million currently, though actual spending on international assistance in 2012–2013 amounted to US$1.2 million, which explained the balance increase in the Fund. With regard to preparatory assistance, US$369,000 was allocated in 2012–2013 but only US$44,300 was spent, with the amount in the current biennium set at US$371,000. Thus, even with the drop in percentages, the amount allocated was still large so that there was no danger of a country being unable to receive preparatory assistance. Under line 3 ‘other functions of the Committee’, it was noted that US$1.1 million had been attributed in the previous biennium and US$1.3 million in the current biennium. Under line 4, US$184,000 had been made available for travel costs for Committee members, with US$185,000 available in the present biennium. Thus, in terms of absolute numbers, the amounts maintained the same scale of expenditure. The only decrease, equal to US$5,000, was for the participation of invited members to the Committee sessions, which was expected to receive fewer requests given that the Evaluation Body would have fewer members. So again, the figure would more than cover all their needs.
5. Regarding future prospects, the **Secretary** understood why many were wondering how, in such an austere situation currently faced by UNESCO, the Fund was extremely abundant and remained unspent. She explained that in line 1 under international assistance, accounting for 54% of the Fund, funds could only be spent if the requests made to the Committee by States were successful. Requests could not be artificially created and the Committee could not be forced to grant requests that in its opinion were unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the good news was that there was an improvement in expenditures, i.e. this biennium had seen expenditures for international assistance increase. So, progress was being made since the first year, which had US$1.8 million (when obviously there were fewer States Parties and thus fewer contributions to the Fund). In 2010–2011 this increased to US$4.4 million, in 2012–2013 to US$5.8 million, and was currently standing at US$6.75 million, so although there was an increase in the Fund, the incremental difference was beginning to diminish. Eventually, the Fund would stop increasing and funds be dispensed. The Secretary reminded the Assembly that contributions to the Fund began in April 2006 with the entry into force of the Convention, but the first real requests for funding were submitted in 2009 following adoption of the Operational Directives in 2008. Thus, three years of contributions, without the concrete possibility of requesting assistance, had resulted in accumulated capital. This was in addition to the increasing number of States Parties whose contributions had further increased the Fund. It was hoped that the reserves would be balanced out by the next biennium, and eventually, the plan would solely be based on contributions from the previous biennium.
6. With regard to mandatory contributions under ‘General Fund’ the **Secretary** explained that they referred to mandatory contributions under Article 26 of the Convention, but also non‑mandatory contributions provided by States Parties that did not want to be related to Article 26 but wished to make an equivalent contribution called ‘assessed contributions’. Other contributions to the Fund included voluntary contributions made for specific purposes that were not governed by a decision taken by the General Assembly. The Assembly’s decision only applied to mandatory contributions under Article 26, as well as assessed voluntary contributions. Nevertheless, it was important to note the additional voluntary contributions by certain States Parties of varying amounts to support specific activities had been accepted by the Committee. Contributions from Japan assisted the working group on the scope and scale of an element; Spain, Netherlands and Norway contributed to supporting capacity-building projects in a number of regions; and Monaco and Turkey contributed for the tenth anniversary exhibition. In addition, a second smaller proportion of contributions were made to the sub-fund created by the General Assembly in 2010 to enable the Secretariat to strengthen its human resources capacity. Contributions were made from Bulgaria, China, Japan, Spain, Hungary and Indonesia, which secured a person for two years in the Secretariat in addition to other forms of occasional assistance that enabled the Secretariat to carry out its essential duties. The Secretary also referred to [document INF.7.2.Rev](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.2_Rev.-EN.doc), requested by the General Assembly and the Committee, of the list of donors having provided voluntary supplementary contributions and for what purpose, though the exact amounts were unspecified.
7. Referring to the financial reports, and with a view to improve transparency, the **Secretary** drew the Assembly’s attention to [document INF.7.1](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.7.1-EN.doc) and the table on page 11, which listed the beneficiary countries for capacity building, the specific projects, the timetable for implementation and the amounts allocated to the projects. The first column in the table showed the countries that had benefitted from capacity-building for example; in the second column, the session in which the Committee decided to accept the donor’s generous offer was indicated, as well as the start date of the project, the budget approved by the Committee per project, and the expenses spread over the biennia, depending on the start of the project, and so on. It was important to note however that some donors occasionally chose to stagger payments, especially for longer-term projects that covered several years. Thus, not all funds for a particular project had been received, with a deficit of US$ 869,000 that was pending for further implementation. The Secretary then referred to the second report on page 12, which again indicated the proposed spending plan project-by-project in relation to the extra-budgetary contributions in 2014 and the following years. It was noted that 2014 was a big spending year, while spending fell in 2015, and even more so in 2016. The Secretary concluded that donors should continue to propose projects to improve the projections for 2015 and 2016, as capacity-building activities and projects relied entirely on extra-budgetary contributions and should at least partially be reflected in these reports. Concluding the financial reporting, the Secretary understood that this might seem a bit intimidating, but on the other hand it was useful for the Assembly to gain another perspective of the work carried out by the Committee, as well as the Secretariat in implementing both requests for international assistance, support for travel, and the implementation of capacity-building projects. The biggest challenge, however, was to increase access to the US$4 million available for international assistance to the greatest number of States, which at the time was unexploited. The Secretariat was trying its best to implement measures to accompany States, but that limited human resources did not allow it to simultaneously support all the States. In any case, its priority was to ensure that there were no longer any reserves in the 54 per cent allocated to international assistance in the coming years.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the useful explanation of the draft plan, agreeing that there should not be any resources in the Fund when there were States in need, but that it was also understandable given the limited human resources of the Secretariat. Nevertheless, States in need should be given assistance, especially when the Convention had celebrated its tenth anniversary and some States had yet to establish their inventories. The Chairperson was happy that that the plan had been clearly examined and explained, and opened the floor for comments.
9. The delegation of **Zimbabwe** congratulated the Chairperson on his election and his chairmanship, and sought an explanation on the effect the Convention Common Services Unit was likely to have on the capacity of the Secretariat to facilitate access to international assistance.
10. The **Secretary** replied that the Common Services Unit only managed communication and the logistics in the organization of meetings, and thus it did not have any substantive role. Although the Common Services Unit would support the Secretariat’s work, it was also unfortunately accompanied by the suppression of three positions in the section. This reshuffle of human resources also affected other convention secretariats. Nevertheless, the Secretariat was looking into alternate ways of outreach, such as using the networks of trainers to support States on international assistance linked to safeguarding plans, much in the same way as for capacity-building projects with specialized trainers having skills like how to build a budget and correctly complete request forms. The Secretariat had even devised pre-filled forms that would automatically calculate budgets, as the Committee occasionally had to reject requests because of mistakes in calculation. In this way, a team of dedicated experts could be sent to offer assistance to States in place of Secretariat staff, so that States would not be affected by the lack of staff. The Secretariat would thus propose an activity to train trainers to provide support for international assistance to the Bureau of the Committee, meeting immediately after the session.
11. With no requests for the floor, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.GA 7 adopted**. He wished to add his voice to the message by the Director-General in March in her letter in which sounded alarm regarding the increasing workload on the Secretariat and its continuing challenge to face those demands without additional support from Member States. It was noted that the General Assembly was a pioneer in this field by establishing the sub-fund in 2010. Yet, the sub-fund had received only a quarter of the total needs identified for the period. The Chairperson understood that not all States Parties found themselves in a position to contribute funds to the sub-fund or to provide staff on secondment but was grateful to those who had done so. At the same time, there was also a shared responsibility by all States Parties, whether or not they were in a position to donate resources, to realistically consider the capacities of the Secretariat, particularly in light of the budgetary austerity that was unlikely to end soon. Thus, it was essential to find ways to help the Secretariat, while ensuring that the Fund reached countries in need as quickly as possible. Due to an important commitment, the Chairperson excused himself from the podium and the Vice-Chairperson from Brazil took over his role to lead the debates in his absence.

**ITEM 8 OF THE AGENDA:**

**REVISION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/8*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-8-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 8*

1. The **Vice-Chairperson** proposed to move to the examination of item 8 and the revision of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, inviting the Secretariat to provide the background information.
2. **The Secretariat** explained that the proposed amendments presented to the General Assembly concerned Rule 2 and Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure. Rule 2 determined who might participate as observer in the work of the Assembly. At the present time, the text did not mention Associate Members of UNESCO and, therefore, the draft amendment rectified the omission. Rule 14 concerned the procedures and timetable for the presentation of candidatures to the Committee. It was recalled that at the last session, the General Assembly was obliged to suspend Rule 14.1 requiring States Parties to send to the Secretariat their candidature for election to the Committee at least six weeks prior to the opening of the General Assembly. In 2012, the number of candidates in several electoral groups was insufficient at the deadline of six weeks and the Assembly chose to suspend its rules. The General Assembly in 2012 then asked that the Rules of Procedure be amended to recognize that the six-week deadline was impractical. There were also two further problems associated with Rule 14.1. The first point concerns the matter of timing. The Secretariat was obliged to ask States Parties of their interest in being candidates three months prior to the opening date of the General Assembly. Yet, at the time of the election the Secretariat would still not know all the possible States Parties. In 2013, for example, a country was not a State Party on the first day of the Assembly but became a State Party two days later because their ratification occurred at a particular time in the calendar. As elections usually took place on the third, fourth or fifth day of the Assembly, when the letter had to be sent, the Secretariat did not really know the number of States Parties, and therefore the information provided on the number of seats available to electoral groups or the number of vacant seats was unreliable. Thus, deferring the deadline by a couple of days would clear the confusion and the letter would be more accurate and informative at the time Member States would be invited to present their candidacies. The second points concerns, the exact number of vacant seats could not be known at that six-week period. The Secretariat recalled Article 26.5 of the Convention, mentioning that for any State Party of the Committee, which at the term of office was in arrears with its compulsory or voluntary contributions for the current and preceding year, its membership would come to an end at the time of the elections. In other words, new candidates would have to pay their dues, while current Committee members risked losing their seat if payment was overdue. Rule 14.3 thus stated that payments of compulsory and voluntary contributions to the Funds could not be accepted in the week before the opening of the General Assembly. This had been a hypothetical case until the present year when one Member State came within a very few days of losing its seat because of technical reasons delaying the payment. This gave rise to a number of interesting debates within the Secretariat about the practical problems faced with late payments. Unanticipated vacancies might arise until just before the election but the current Rule 14.1 required that candidatures present six weeks prior; this means States Parties were not permitted to present candidatures for last-minute vacancies.
3. Outlining the revisions, **the Secretariat** reiterated that Rule 2 would add the Associate Members as a category of observer participants automatically admitted to the General Assembly proceedings. Rule 14.1 asked that the Secretariat’s letter be sent out three months before the date of the election rather than the date of the opening session, which would give a more accurate idea of the numbers of States Parties, vacancies, and seats allocated to each of the six electoral groups. Another problem that arose in the past related to the language in which it stated that States Parties’ candidatures *shall* be sent, which created an obligation that the States should submit the candidatures six weeks prior. The Secretariat proposed instead that States Parties are *requested* to send their candidature. In this way, the Secretariat could compile the preliminary list, but on the understanding that it was preliminary, which helped other States understand the current but not final context. Rules 14.2 and 14.3 remained unchanged, while new Rule 14.4 provided that, ‘The list of candidatures shall be finalized three working days prior to the opening of the General Assembly’, so that if a candidate State had not submitted its obligatory contributions prior to that seven-day period set out in Rule 14.3, they would not appear in the final list of candidatures. New Rule 14.4 read, ‘No candidature will be accepted in the three working days preceding the opening of the Assembly’, thus ensuring the presentation of a definite final list for the Assembly’s consideration.
4. The **Vice-Chairperson** felt that it was important that the Assembly take stock of the accumulated experience during its past four sessions and adapt its rules to make its work more efficient and effective.
5. The delegation of **Zambia** congratulated the Vice-Chairperson for his able chairmanship and expressed its gratitude to the hosts for its hospitality. The delegation wished to know what would happen on the unlikely but possible event that a State Party withdrew its candidacy within the last three days prior to the election.
6. With no additional comments, the **Vice-Chairperson** turned to the amendments of the Rules of Procedure as proposed by the Secretariat on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. There was no change in Rule 2, and the addition of Associate Members in Rule 2.1 was duly **adopted**. Rule 14.1 contained a modification in which ‘at least’ had been deleted, which was **adopted**. The Vice-Chairperson then turned to Rule 14.4, and asked Zambia whether it had a specific proposal with regard to its earlier intervention.
7. The delegation of **Zambia** surmised that in the event of a withdrawal three days preceding the elections, it might be necessary to suspend a particular clause so as to allow for candidates or submissions to be taken from the floor.
8. The delegation of **Albania** understood that the amendment by Zambia asked whether there could be new candidatures presented after the deadline in the case of withdrawals.
9. The **Vice-Chairperson** explained that it would consult on whether specific language would be needed in the case of withdrawals, as suggested by Zambia, adding that the General Assembly could in any case decide to suspend its rules in extraordinary cases, as in the case of a withdrawal. Following consultation, it was deemed unnecessary to introduce an amendment in this regard.
10. The **Vice-Chairperson** asked Zambia if it would withdraw its amendment following consultation with the Legal Adviser who confirmed that any State had the right to withdraw its candidacy at any time if it so wished. In which case, the General Assembly could suspend its rule, and that a specific rule was not required.
11. The delegation of **Zambia** withdrew its amendment.
12. With no further comments the **Vice-Chairperson** **declared Resolution 5.GA 8 adopted.**
13. The **Vice-Chairperson** remarked that agenda item 9 concerned the distribution of seats in the Committee per electoral group, and agenda item 10 the election of its members, and suggested postponing the election until the following day and, therefore,duly adjourned the session.

*[Wednesday 4 June 2014, morning session]*

**ITEM 9 OF THE AGENDA:**

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

**Document:**[*ITH/14/5.GA/9 Rev*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-9_Rev._-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 9*

*[The Chairperson reprised his role]*

1. The **Chairperson** welcomed the Assembly to the new meeting room and thanked the Vice‑Chairperson for his chairmanship, noting the good progress made so far, which would see the likelihood of completing the proceedings one day ahead. The Chairperson then turned to the two substantive and important items on the agenda: item 9 concerning the distribution of seats on the Committee for electoral groups, and item 10 concerning the election of members of the Committee, as well as item 11 and other business. The Chairperson informed the Assembly that it would share the discussion of the Bureau on the UNESCO audit, which was requested in 37 C/Resolution 96 of the General Conference under item 11. The Chairperson gave the floor to the Secretariat to give background information on item 9.
2. The **Secretary** referred to[document 9 Rev](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-9_Rev._-EN.doc), as well as the application of three rules. The first rule was that Article 6.1 of the Convention provided that the election of States Members of the Committee would obey the principles of equitable geographic representation and rotation. The second rule was that Rule 13.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly provided that seats would be distributed at each session of the General Assembly ‘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’. Finally, the third rule was Resolution 3.GA 12 of the General Assembly that stated, ‘The principle of proportionality shall be rigorously applied to future elections strictly on the basis of mathematical calculation’. Thus, paragraph 4 of document 9 Rev. established the distribution of seats on a mathematical calculation based on 158 States Parties at the time of the present election, with a minimum number of three seats first attributed to electoral Group I and Group V(b). The 18 remaining seats were then apportioned to the four remaining groups, beginning with the group with the highest decimal fraction, which was Group V(a), to which six seats were assigned. The remaining 12 seats were distributed among the other three groups, beginning with the group with the second highest decimal fraction, which was Group IV, to which five seats were assigned, leaving four seats for Group III and three for Group II. The Secretary recalled that the General Assembly was called upon at each of its sessions to determine the distribution of seats, adding that it was free to adopt a different seat allocation than the one proposed in the document, providing it respected the principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation, and its own Rules of Procedure. The Secretary further explained that the proposed distribution of seats would be exactly equal to those presented in the case of universal ratification of the Convention. However, until universal ratification the proportion could change and as a result the distribution of seats among the electoral groups.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for her presentation, adding that the election always raised questions among States Parties as ratifications increased with every Assembly and small adjustments to realign distribution were thus necessary. Of course, the closer the Assembly came to universal ratification, the more stable seat distribution would become.
4. The delegation of **Slovakia** remarked that the decision on the distribution of seats was one thing, but that the number of seats to be decided minutes before the vote was another. The delegation was troubled by a voting system in which candidates were known only
10 minutes before the election underlining that nominations for the Committee was a serious matter often decided by governments after lengthy consultations.
5. Further to the remarks by Slovakia, the delegation of **Bulgaria** added that a future rethink of the announcement of new distribution of seats would avoid immense difficulties for governments in the future when deciding to present their candidacies to the Committee.
6. The delegation of **Lithuania** supported colleagues from Group II, and although it understood that the decision to assign a minimum of three seats per electoral group was not decided at the present General Assembly, it wondered whether the rules might be reviewed in the future. It explained that Group II with 24 countries had three assigned seats and Group I with 20 countries also had three assigned seats, while Group III with
29 countries had four seats. Thus, with just one ratified country in Group III an additional seat was assigned, while there were eight more countries in Group II compared to Group V(b) with the same number of seats.
7. The delegation of **Congo** understood that the Secretariat was providing information on how the seat distribution had been calculated and not to open debate on what had been decided in previous sessions of the General Assembly. Thus, if States Parties disagreed with the allocation, they could request the issue be tabled for discussion at the next General Assembly but that seat allocation was fixed in the present session and could not be questioned.
8. The delegation of **Afghanistan** agreed that the remarks by Congo had confirmed the timeline of the election and legal perspective, and that the General Assembly was not competent to discuss the issue. Item 9 was simply to provide information, and the delegation proposed to end the debate.
9. The delegation of **Côte d’Ivoire** supported the intervention by Congo.
10. The **Chairperson** was of the understanding that the concern was based on the timing of the election and that there was no suggestion of changing the agenda. The Chairperson hoped the Assembly agreed, and proposed to proceed with the next point.
11. The **Secretary** fully understood and acknowledged the difficulty with regard to the timing, and proposed that in future the Secretariat place the agenda item on the number of seats at the beginning of the General Assembly with the election placed at the end. It could not, however, fix the number of seats before the Assembly’s decision because it was linked to the membership of States Parties, which could not, by definition, be decided two years prior to the General Assembly. The Secretary thus suggested placing this item immediately after the adoption of the agenda at the next General Assembly.
12. With the general agreement, the **Chairperson** remarked that the intervention had been considered and that the matter was heading in a positive direction.
13. The Chairperson repeated the allocation of the 24 seats for the following Committee: Group I – 3 seats; Group II – 3 seats; Group III – 4 seats; Group IV – 5 seats; Group V(a) – 6; and Group V(b) – 3 seats. With no further comments, the **Chairperson declared Resolution 5.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/14/5.GA/10*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-10-EN_.doc)

**Document:** [*ITH/14/5.GA/INF.10 Rev.4*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.10_Rev.4-EN.doc)

**Resolution:** *5.GA 10*

1. The **Secretary** introduced the next item on the election of members to the Committee. Pursuant to Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat had requested
(three months before the opening of the present session) that all States Parties indicate whether they intended to stand for election to the Committee; the provisional list of candidates was then published six weeks before the opening of the General Assembly. The list of candidates had since been revised several times (owing to withdrawals and the updates on contributions from Bureau of Financial Management) and the current version was provided in [document INF.10 Rev.4](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.10_Rev.4-EN.doc). The Secretary informed the Assembly that all the candidates in the election had satisfied their obligations for 2013 and were, therefore, eligible to stand. To proceed with the election, the Secretary asked for two volunteers to act as tellers.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** and **Malaysia** had volunteered as tellers. With no objections, the delegations were invited to join the podium.
3. Referring to [document 10 Rev.4](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-5.GA-INF.10_Rev.4-EN.doc), the **Secretary** read out the names of the candidates for election: Group I – France, Italy and Turkey (candidates for a single vacant seat); Group II – Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovakia (candidates for two vacant seats); Group III – Guatemala and Saint Lucia (candidates for a single vacant seat); Group IV – Afghanistan, India, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and Samoa (candidates for four vacant seats); Group V(a) – Botswana, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire and Ethiopia (candidates for three vacant seats); and Group V(b) – Algeria and Mauritania (candidates for a single vacant seat).
4. The **Chairperson** asked the Assembly whether it considered the list definitive.
5. The delegation of **Slovakia** noted that the Assembly had adopted a decision on the redistribution of seats on the Committee, Electoral Group II, to which Slovakia belonged, with only three seats instead of four. The delegation cautioned against the use of international systems that based decisions solely on mathematical calculations, adding that this was akin to a powerful computer replacing the Assembly, which would then be a law onto itself. The role of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur would be defunct, like a computer, simply giving results. In the spirit of cooperation, Slovakia took the decision to withdraw its candidacy. It thanked States Parties that had intended to give it their vote, adding that the logic of cooperation prevailed over competition, thus opening the way to consensus in Group II.
6. The **Chairperson** congratulated Slovakia on its decision [Applause]. Returning to the election, the Chairperson explained that the Secretariat would distribute five ballots to each State Party – one for each electoral group. Each State Party should vote for all electoral groups, not only for the group of which it was a member. The candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes up to the number of seats available in each electoral group would be elected. Each ballot contained the number of all the candidates in the group, with an indication of the number of vacant seats. States Parties were invited to encircle the names of the States for which they wished to vote. The Rules of Procedure required that the name of the State Party be encircled, with the tellers disqualifying any ballot that was incorrectly marked. In the same way, States Parties should not encircle more names than the number of vacant seats per electoral group or the ballot would be considered void. Ballots should be placed and sealed in the envelope provided. The absence of a ballot in the envelope for one or more electoral groups would be considered an abstention in that electoral group. States Parties were given 10 minutes to complete their ballots and a voting booth was made available.
7. The delegation of **Palestine** remarked that it had not received the bulletin for Group II.
8. The **Secretary** explained that there was no ballot for Group II as a result of Slovakia’s withdrawal. Thus, there were only five electoral groups to vote for.

*[The session was suspended for 10 minutes for voting]*

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to conduct a roll call to collect the ballots from each delegation, which was carried out in the French alphabetical order of States. On hearing their name, delegations would be invited to the podium to deposit the sealed envelope in the ballot box.
2. The **Secretary** invited the States Parties to vote. The following **States Parties voted**: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Cyprus, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ecuador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kirghizstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan,
Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela,
Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
3. The following **States Parties were absent**: Antigua and Barbuda, Chad, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Gambia, Iraq, Jamaica, Malawi, Micronesia, Nauru, Sao Tome and Principe, Syrian Arab Republic, Swaziland, Tajikistan and Tonga.
4. The **Chairperson** announced the end of the voting process and suspended the session to count the ballots.
5. The **Secretary** announced that the Secretariat was conducting an online satisfaction survey on the General Assembly meetings, which she hoped delegations would complete during the break, as it would allow the Secretariat to measure their satisfaction with a view to improving its services to the governing bodies.
6. The **Chairperson** declared the session adjourned for one hour.

*[The session was suspended for an hour]*

1. Despite the break, the **Chairperson** announced that there was not enough time to count the ballots, and adjourned the session for lunch.

*[Wednesday 4 June 2014, afternoon session]*

1. The **Chairperson** and the tellers from **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** and **Malaysia** joined the podium. Announcing the results of the election, the **Chairperson** noted that 142 States Parties had voted, with 16 absentees. The results were as follows: in Group I **Turkey** was elected with 72 votes, France received 44 votes, and Italy 25 votes; in Group II **Bulgaria** and **Hungary** were elected with a clean slate; in Group III **Saint Lucia** was elected with 102 votes, with Guatemala receiving 39 votes; in Group IV **India** was elected with 135 votes, **Republic of Korea** was elected with 126 votes, **Mongolia** was elected with 102 votes and **Afghanistan** was elected with 97 votes, with Samoa receiving 88 votes; in Group V(a) **Ethiopia** was elected with 119 votes, **Côte d’Ivoire** was elected with 118 votes and **Congo** was elected with 105 votes, with Botswana receiving 59 votes; and in Group IV(b) **Algeria** was elected with 101 votes, with Mauritania receiving 38 votes. Thanking the two tellers and with no objections to the resolution the **Chairperson declared adopted Resolution 5.GA 10**. [Applause]
2. The delegation of **France** congratulated the newly elected Committee members and confirmed Italy’s commitment and support to the implementation of the Convention.
3. The delegation of **Italy** thanked the States Parties having voted in its favour, congratulating the newly elected members of the Committee.
4. The delegation of the **Côte d’Ivoire** welcomed its election to the Committee and assured the States Parties that it would work in the interests of all.
5. The delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** recalled its commitment to and respect for cultural diversity and the promotion of intercultural dialogue, adding that this was the raison d’être in the creation of the Convention combined with the universal declaration of cultural diversity and the goals outlined in the preamble of UNESCO’s Constitution.
6. The **Chairperson** thanked the Ambassador for his wise words and contribution, adding that the Assembly shared in his ideals and principles, and would work towards achieving them.
7. The delegation of **India** thanked the delegations having voted for India, adding that friendship was India’s forte and that it would work with and for all the States Parties in friendship. It echoed the sentiments expressed by Iran, taking the opportunity to thank the Chairperson and the Bureau for its excellent work. As a member of the Committee, India looked forward to working towards the most optimal outcomes with all Member States.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked India – one of the founders of the Convention.
9. The delegation of **Algeria** warmly thanked the States Parties that supported its candidacy to the Committee, assuring the Assembly that it was committed and determined in its work to successfully implement the Convention.
10. The **Chairperson** thanked the Ambassador, acknowledging him as one of the fathers of the Convention.
11. The delegation of **Guatemala** began by congratulating the Chairperson on his excellent chairmanship, as well as the Secretariat for the excellent job done. It also congratulated all participants, candidates and the recently elected States Parties, adding that it was convinced their involvement would contribute towards the success of the Convention. More specifically, it congratulated Saint Lucia on its election from its own region, adding that it would continue working hand-in-hand for the success of UNESCO and the Convention. The delegation underlined the importance of the Convention and the need to strengthen the Secretariat’s technical capacities, acknowledging the excellent work they did, which benefitted all the States Parties of the Convention.
12. The delegation of **Mauritania** thanked the States Parties for having supported its candidature, congratulating Algeria on its election and adding that it sought to spread the Convention more broadly so as to improve its implementation and success. The delegation also thanked the Secretariat for its praiseworthy efforts during the session.
13. The delegation of **Turkey** congratulated the States Parties that had participated and those that had been elected to the Committee. It thanked the States Parties from its own Group I and those that had voted in its favour, adding that the election further invigorated its commitment to multiregionalism, solidarity and cooperation. The delegation spoke of its commitment to the goals of UNESCO in the field of intangible culture, adding that its experts and institutions would work in consultation and cooperation with the Secretariat and all Member States. It would also speak with a loud voice to ensure that the foremost goals of UNESCO in culture and education bridged civilizations, religions and communities across the different geographic regions and cultures. It would work with reinforced commitment to combat divisiveness and prove that culture overcame political differences and difficulties.
14. The delegation of **Congo** thanked and congratulated the Bureau and the Secretariat for their good work during the session, and thanked the States Parties that had supported its election to the Committee. It spoke not only of its honour but also of its duty and responsibility to be able to contribute to the visibility of UNESCO in the field of intangible cultural heritage, and as such it would spare no effort to fulfil all its responsibilities.
15. The delegation of **Bulgaria** began by congratulating all the States Parties that had participated in the vote, especially those that had been elected, and thanked those that had supported its candidacy. It was happy to have been elected to the Committee, and it understood that it was a role of great responsibility rather than prestige. The delegation thanked Slovakia in particular for its gesture in the noble spirit and tradition of UNESCO that sought consensus. It concluded with thanks to the Chairperson for the exemplary manner in which he conducted his work, and also the Secretariat for the excellent organization of the session.
16. The delegation of **Indonesia** congratulated the Chairperson on successfully guiding the meeting that resulted in an early completion of the agenda. It also thanked the Secretariat for its considerable work, which was essential for the successful running of the meetings, and in particular Ms Cécile Duvelle and Mr Frank Proschan and their staff who worked constantly and tirelessly throughout the year. On terminating its membership to the Committee after four years of service, the delegation spoke of its honour and pleasure in having hosted the sixth session of the Committee in Bali. It also took the opportunity to express regret to the Assembly and Secretariat for any untoward remarks made during its four-year tenure. It also congratulated the new members of the Committee on their election, advising them to familiarize themselves with the Basic Texts of the Convention, as well as the decisions taken during previous committees, assemblies and advisory bodies, which would ensure success in their upcoming work. In this way, they would have a good understanding of the running of the Convention. Having attended almost all the meetings of the Convention since 2006, the delegation spoke of its belief that the work carried out was in no way a bureaucratic, academic or political activity, but rather that it had in its heart the communities and the desire to safeguard intangible cultural heritage all over the world in the spirit of furthering the noble goals of UNESCO.
17. The **Chairperson** thanked Indonesia for its kind words and for its trust and belief in the work of the Convention.
18. The delegation of **Botswana** congratulated the Chairperson on his able stewardship, while recognizing the efforts of the Secretariat in its effective organization of the meeting. It also wished to congratulate the elected States Parties, particularly the colleagues in Group V(a) to whom it pledged its support. The delegation thanked the States Parties that had supported its candidacy, adding that it would continue to serve and contribute towards implementing the Convention. It remained committed to the principles and objectives of the Convention and would continue to play its part in this important exercise.
19. The delegation of **Afghanistan** thanked the Chairperson for his guidance, and the Secretary for her patience and hard work in organizing the session, as well as the Secretariat for its work in dealing with inscriptions. It also thanked the members of the Committee for their work and for the great responsibility they assumed. It also thanked the delegations that voted for Afghanistan, a country in distress and instability, but which was very committed to the values of UNESCO since its accession in 1948, recalling the Director-General’s courage in 2013 on her visit to Afghanistan. Afghanistan was about to become a member of the Committee for the first time but still did not yet have an inscription. The delegation sympathized with all the other delegations that had yet to accede to membership of the Committee or to have their culture inscribed on the Lists under the 2003 Convention. It hoped that there would be a kind of revolution in the approach in which UNESCO worked that would ensure that membership to the Committee in the future was not the sole privilege of those that could afford it, and that every Member State had the opportunity to join the Committee and have at least one element inscribed. It was hoped that in line with the concept of universality not a single member of UNESCO would be without an element of its intangible cultural heritage inscribed. The delegation suggested that an entire year of normal procedures be halted in order to allow every State Party to inscribe an element, and so that every Member State could feel like a fully-fledged member of UNESCO.
20. The **Chairperson** was pleased that Afghanistan had eventually joined the Committee, assuring the delegation that priority was granted to countries that did not yet have any elements inscribed, thereby presenting an opportunity for Afghanistan. The Chairperson spoke of his appreciation of the work of the Afghan government to safeguard its cultural heritage under difficult circumstances.
21. The delegation of **Hungary** congratulated and thanked the Chairperson and the Secretariat for its hard work. It spoke of how proud, happy and thankful it was to all the countries that had shown its overwhelming support, especially Slovakia from its own Group II for having withdrawn, which was a good example of the great ideology of consensus-building. It was of course committed to the Committee, but also to the campaign to work together to save the globe’s intangible cultural heritage. The delegation was very happy that the Convention was growing in interest in all parts of the world, which would eventually lead to a more fair and representative picture of intangible cultural heritage. It concluded by congratulating all the other candidates, adding that the experience allowed States Parties to move closer together and to learn from each other, which was probably the strongest message of all.
22. The delegation of **Republic of Korea** expressed its sincere gratitude for the valuable support of States Parties. It strongly believed in the role of culture as an enabler and driver for sustainable development. The delegation spoke of intangible cultural heritage as an essential element of cultural identity, and that it was not only about respecting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, but also about transmitting social and economic values of community. As a Committee member, it reaffirmed its commitment towards continuing its contribution to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
23. The delegation of **Papua and New Guinea** congratulated the Chairperson for his excellent work in leading the discussions, as well as the Secretariat, adding that it looked forward to contributing more to the work of the Convention. The delegation thanked the newly elected members, who would bring with them the requisite experience, talent and commitment to the Committee. With one cultural World Heritage property, Kuk Early Agricultural Site, Papua New Guinea hoped to list two more. It was also committed to the work of the 2003 Convention, and looked forward to the support and commitment of those newly elected, and the Group IV countries in particular.
24. The delegation of **Samoa** commended the Chairperson and the Secretariat for the successful conduct of the session. It also congratulated the successful candidates, wishing them the very best of luck and a successful term. It also wished to wholeheartedly thank the 88 States Parties that had voted for Samoa, adding that it was a lightweight country trying to punch above its weight, consisting of small islands in big oceans. The delegation also wished to inform the Assembly that Samoa was organizing a parallel event on intangible cultural heritage in the upcoming [SIDS conference](http://www.sids2014.org) in Apia, Samoa.
25. The delegation of **Zambia** added to the many voices that praised the success of the Assembly and the professional conduct that characterized the elections. It congratulated the newly elected States Parties and acknowledged the finite number of seats, but that at the end of the day, everybody was a winner. The delegation appealed to the Committee members that had been entrusted with great responsibility, that they consider the interests of the regions, especially for the Africa region, over and above any micro-interests that might exist from time to time.
26. The delegation of **Saint Lucia** congratulated the way the Chairperson had conducted the meeting, and thanked all the States Parties for their commitment to the Convention and for their valuable support. The delegation was truly overwhelmed by the support it had received, and thanked Guatemala for its very elegant campaign, as well as the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC) colleagues for their support, adding that it would be at the service of all States Parties, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Committee.
27. The delegation of **Mongolia** congratulated all the elected States Parties, thanking those that had extended their valuable support. It was extremely happy and proud since it was the first time that Mongolia had been elected to the Committee, adding that it would work actively with other members of the Committee in the years to come. The delegation concluded by thanking the Chairperson, Bureau and the Secretariat for their excellent work.
28. The delegation of **Egypt** congratulated the newly elected States Parties to the Committee, adding that they would clearly contribute very positively to the work of the Committee. It also thanked the outgoing States Parties that had already served on the Committee, and that despite their departure the shifting rotation was in keeping with tradition – an important element of the work of the Committee and in achieving the aims of the Convention. The delegation clarified that the members of the Committee did not represent their individual countries, but *all* States Parties to the Convention in order to increase the importance of the Convention and to achieve tangible results. It was proud to have been among the very first countries to participate in the actual drafting stages of the Convention, as well as the proceedings of the Committee at each of its working sessions in which the spirit of cooperation prevailed so as to achieve the goals of the Convention. Moreover, Egypt was one of the first 18 countries to ratify the Convention, and it was proud that a very high number of countries had also ratified the Convention, which clearly showed how important intangible cultural heritage was to all. The delegation underscored the role of culture and the links between the different cultures, which contributed to understanding and cooperation between people, making human civilization all the richer. It also highlighted the important role of UNESCO and the Convention, and their major achievements in the field of intangible cultural heritage. The delegation hoped that UNESCO would be able to successfully navigate through the current financial crisis so that it might deliver on its message of cooperation between cultures, which brought people closer together. It, therefore, hoped that the Committee succeed in its work, and that the Culture Sector of UNESCO would be able to identify the means of progressing even further in its achievements. The delegation acknowledged the excellent work of the Secretariat, and in particular Ms Cécile Duvelle for her patience and ability to manage such complex and delicate situations, adding that success depended very much on the important and often difficult work she, together with the Secretariat, had accomplished. This was evidenced from the numerous exchanges and different documents during the meetings, which was also acknowledged by all the States Parties. The delegation also recognized the Chairperson as among the very first to also function as Chairperson of the Committee, thanking him for his wisdom and able leadership.
29. The **Chairperson** thanked Egypt and recognized that it was one of the leading countries in the Convention; a role that was very much appreciated, particularly in its contribution in the Arab region as a leading expert.
30. The delegation of **Syria** congratulated the newly elected States Parties, adding that despite its considerable lobbying engaging with candidates for their election, a major impediment prevented it from participating in the morning’s election. Nevertheless, it wished good luck to States Parties that had not been elected, despite their real values and commitment, in continuing their good work. The delegation spoke of Syria as a place enriched with practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and know-how for which it was called the ‘cradle of civilization’, adding that it adhered to the foundation, soul and spirit of the Convention for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, which it signed in 2005. The delegation appealed to States Parties to work together to strengthen support for the Convention based on mutual respect for cultural diversity and mutual appreciation towards a better world.
31. Thanking Syria, the **Chairperson** shared its concern and hope that Syria, as well as all other countries going through crises, would recover soon, adding that UNESCO was always at hand to help in certain circumstances.
32. The delegation of **China** congratulated the elected States Parties to the Committee, adding that it was delighted to note that many countries had shown to be enthusiastic to the cause, with the will to work for the good of the Committee and provide their expertise and sense of innovation to more fully contribute towards the success of the Convention. As an outgoing member of the Committee, China believed that the work done over the last six years was very important and significant. It highly appreciated the opportunity given to work together with other members of the Committee, and through this cooperation, States Parties had strengthened their understanding of intangible cultural heritage, and especially the role that intangible cultural heritage played in contemporary civilizations and in future sustainable development. It was confident in being able to say that China had contributed to all aspects of the implementation of the Convention, albeit it still had much to learn. Consequently, as a former member of the Committee, but still a State Party to the Convention, it would continue to support the Convention and work hard to implement it with a view towards contributing to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage of humanity as a whole. The delegation concluded by congratulating the Chairperson and the Secretariat for their effective management in the organization of the meeting.
33. The **Chairperson** thanked China for its kind words, adding that it had counted on China in the past, in the present, and would do so in the future. The Chairperson spoke of his pleasure in listening to the statements and shared thoughts and ideas on the mandate to safeguard intangible cultural heritage and the role of the Committee.

**ITEM 11 OF THE AGENDA:**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. The **Chairperson** was happy to note that the Assembly had efficiently tackled all the specific items on its agenda. However, before closing the meeting, he wished to discuss an important matter that had been discussed in the morning session of the Bureau. The Chairperson explained that just after his election as Chairperson, he received a message from the external auditor explaining that by its 37 C/Resolution 96, the General Conference requested the External Auditor to audit the governance of UNESCO, its dependent funds and intergovernmental programmes or entities, which included the General Assembly of the 2003 Convention. The work involved a self-assessment of the overall relevance of the Assembly’s work in relation to its specific terms of reference, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of its meetings, including the impact and utility of experts’ time. The message from the auditor contained two questionnaires composing the self-assessment framework, the terms of reference of the audit, and the model letter that was sent to all chairpersons of the governing bodies of those different entities. The deadline for responding to these questionnaires was
2 September 2014. The Bureau had concluded that the General Assembly be informed of the procedure so as to be able to respond to the request, especially as the Chairperson was unable to complete the questionnaire without contributions from the Assembly. The Secretariat would help facilitate the process, but the answers to the substantive questions could only be given by the General Assembly, the conclusions of which would eventually lead to recommendations on the functioning of UNESCO’s governing bodies. The Bureau, therefore, proposed that the questionnaires be sent to all States Parties by the Secretariat on the Chairperson’s behalf, asking them to complete the self-assessment and send their answers to the Chairperson of their respective electoral group. Factual information, such as the number of meetings and so on, would be completed by the Secretariat. The Chairperson of the electoral groups would then synthesize the answers into one consolidated document. The Chairperson would consolidate these answers and return the questionnaires to the auditor.
2. The delegation of **Sweden** congratulated the Chairperson and the Secretariat for the successful session of the General Assembly. It supported the proposal presented, while underlining the importance of implementing the decision on governance reform. The delegation remarked that one of the major challenges identified by the independent external evaluation was the need to strengthen UNESCO’s governance, with all its governing bodies and their associated programmes, committees and conventions, being asked to get involved in the governance reform for which all States Parties had to take responsibility. It added that it was neither the time nor place to discuss the governance audit and self‑assessment framework in detail, but that it fully supported the Chairperson and his proposal that States Parties take responsibility to complete the questionnaires because it was not possible for one Chairperson to do so alone.
3. Thanking Sweden, the **Chairperson** added that States Parties had time to communicate with the Secretariat and their respective electoral groups to complete the questionnaire by
2 September 2014.
4. The delegation of **Grenada** congratulated the Chairperson on his chairmanship, as well as the new elected members of the Committee. As an outgoing member of the Committee, the delegation assured the Assembly of its commitment to the work for the benefit of the Convention. The delegation subscribed to the proposed assessment process, echoing the remarks by Sweden that it was an important exercise that should involve the majority of States Parties. With regard to the information on number of meetings, expenses of the statutory meetings and so on, the delegation wondered whether it would be possible to have the Secretariat pre-fill that part of the questionnaire before sending them out to the States Parties, adding that it would be helpful as they didn’t necessarily have that kind of information at hand, and it would assist States Parties with responding to the questions or it would at least provide a clearer idea about the governance mechanism.
5. Before turning to the Secretariat for an answer, the **Chairperson** thanked Grenada and reiterated the process of this self-evaluation: i) the Secretariat sends the questionnaire to all States Parties on his behalf; ii) the States Parties complete the questionnaire to the extent possible and return it to the chairperson of the State Party’s respective electoral group;
iii) the chairperson of the electoral group then submits the consolidated answers to him (the Chairperson of the Assembly) who synthesizes these views and submits the consolidated questionnaire to the auditor.
6. The **Secretary** agreed that the kind of information would only be very basic, as the questionnaire was addressed specifically to the States Parties and not the Secretariat. The Secretary also informed the States Parties that the Resolutions adopted during the session would be made available online from the following day, subject to linguistic revision, while the final version in the six languages would be published before the end of June.

**ITEM 12 OF THE AGENDA:**

**CLOSURE**

1. The **Chairperson** thanked the Assembly for its cooperation and support, adding that
10 years might seem a short lifetime, but for the Convention, it had been long enough to witness many constructive transformations of ambitious plans from the initial drafters of the Convention in response to the needs and aspirations of communities. Despite the challenging realities of limited resources and human capacities, the General Assembly had the opportunity to confront some of these challenges. It had made substantive revisions of the Operational Directives that would orient future work, both as States Parties and at the international level. It had successfully established a new Evaluation Body, which would streamline and facilitate the work of the Committee. It had adopted a budget that would make available more than US$4 million to support safeguarding efforts, for which the capacity-building programme had garnered wholehearted satisfaction and recognised that enormous needs still remained. The Chairperson called upon States Parties once again to continue providing support to this programme. It had accredited 22 NGOs resulting in
178 NGOs ready to advise the Committee on diverse issues. The Chairperson congratulated the NGOs once again for their interest in the Convention. The Assembly had elected 12 new members of the Committee and, therefore, the mandate of 12 of the current members had come to an end. The Chairperson congratulated the Committee members for their excellent work, and he wished the new members every success. He also thanked the Assembly for the successful work accomplished, and for its enthusiasm and willingness to work together in the spirit of consensus and cooperation. He also paid tribute to the members of the Bureau for their support and trust. The Chairperson thanked the interpreters, translators, the room clerks and the technicians responsible for the smooth functioning of the meeting. Finally, he thanked the Secretary and her team for their assistance, efficiency and commitment despite the demands placed on them throughout the meeting. The Chairperson concluded by remarking on the exceptional achievement of the session, while acknowledging the efforts of the Secretariat for which he extended his gratitude. He recalled that he had been working on the Convention since 2006, adding that the commitment by all to work together and exercise ideas and common beliefs was a positive sign. He spoke of his privilege and pleasure to be nominated to the role of Chairperson by the Arab group, even though it was an unexpected decision. The Chairperson hoped that he had met their expectations while thanking all the States Parties, and was looking forward to future sessions, as well as bilateral and regional level consultations.

[Applause]

1. The **Chairperson** declared the fifth session of the General Assembly closed.