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

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

**Tenth session**

**Windhoek, Namibia**

**30 November to 4 December 2015**

**Item 6.b of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Examination of the reports of States Parties on the current status of elements  
inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding**

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| **Summary**  Paragraph 160 of the Operational Directives stipulates that ‘Each State Party shall submit to the Committee reports on the status of elements of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory that have been inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding’. This document covers reporting on one element inscribed in 2010, as well as two extraordinary reports for elements inscribed in 2013. The three reports submitted by the States Parties are available online. The present document includes a set of assessments of the reports and draft decisions for the Committee’s consideration.  **Decisions required:** paragraphs 9, 15, 20 and 25 |

1. Article 7(f) of the Convention provides that the Committee’s duties shall include to ‘examine, in accordance with Article 29, the reports submitted by States Parties, and to summarize them for the General Assembly’. Based in part on those reports, the Committee then submits its report to the General Assembly (Article 30).
2. According to paragraphs 160 to 164 of the Operational Directives, each State Party to the Convention shall submit to the Committee reports on the status of elements of intangible cultural heritage present in its territory that have been inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and paragraphs 165 to 167 describe the receipt and processing of reports. Such reports are submitted four years after inscription and every fourth year thereafter.
3. The present document concerns the second cycle of ordinary reporting, covering the elements inscribed in 2010 for the period from the date of inscription during the fifth session of the Committee until December 2014, as well as two extraordinary reports (see paragraphs 6 and 7 of this document).
4. Out of the four ordinary reports expected for the present cycle, only one was submitted on time. The Committee will therefore examine the ordinary report submitted by Croatia on the status of the ‘Ojkanje singing’ (file number [00320](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00320)) inscribed in 2010 on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Reports for the other three elements inscribed in 2010 were not submitted, despite numerous reminders issued by the Secretariat; in addition, reports on four elements inscribed in 2009 and expected last year have not yet been submitted by the concerned States Parties. Therefore, the reports on the status of the following seven elements cannot be examined by the Committee during the present session:

| **Submitting State** | **Element** | **Year of inscription** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| China | Traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering | 2009 | [00302](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00302) |
| China | Traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges | 2009 | [00303](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00303) |
| China | Qiang New Year festival | 2009 | [00305](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00305) |
| France | Cantu in paghjella, a secular and liturgical oral tradition of Corsica | 2009 | [00315](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00315) |
| China | Meshrep | 2010 | [00304](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00304) |
| China | Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks | 2010 | [00321](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00321) |
| China | Wooden movable-type printing of China | 2010 | [00322](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00322) |

1. The delay in the submission of these reports impedes the Committee to effectively assess the current status and viability of these elements already inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. In other words, the Committee is not in the position to examine those reports and to carry out one of the functions attributed to it by Article 7(f) of the Convention. It may therefore wish to discuss the possibility of abstaining from examining new nominations from States Parties until they fulfil their obligation to submit their periodic report, be it on the status of an element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List or on the implementation of the Convention.
2. As mentioned above, such reports are normally submitted four years after inscription and every fourth year thereafter. At the same time, paragraph 161 stipulates that, ‘At the time of inscription the Committee may on a case-by-case basis establish a specific timetable for reporting that will take precedence over the normal four-year cycle.’
3. At its eighth session in 2013, the Committee, exercising paragraph 161 when inscribing two elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List, invited the concerned submitting States ‘to submit a report on the implementation of the safeguarding measures […] for examination by the Committee at its tenth session’. The elements in question are the ‘Paach ceremony’ (file number [00863](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00863) – Decision 8.COM 7.a.5) nominated by Guatemala, and ‘Empaako tradition of the Batooro, Banyoro, Batuku, Batagwenda and Banyabindi of western Uganda’ (file number [00904](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00904) – Decision 8.COM 7.a.12) nominated by Uganda.
4. After receipt of the three reports, the Secretariat informed the States Parties concerned about missing information and advised them how to complete their reports. The reports are available at: [http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/10.COM/USL reports](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00769&key=918). The present document includes an overview of the reports received and a set of draft decisions for the Committee’s consideration, with one for each report as follows:

| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Element** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [10.COM 6.b.1](#Dec10COM_6b1) | Croatia | Ojkanje singing | [00320](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00320) |
| [10.COM 6.b.2](#Dec10COM_6b2) | Guatemala | Paach ceremony | [00863](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00863) |
| [10.COM 6.b.3](#Dec10COM_6b3) | Uganda | Empaako tradition of the Batooro, Banyoro, Batuku, Batagwenda and Banyabindi of western Uganda | [00904](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&USL=00904) |

1. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 10.COM 6.b

The Committee,

1. Having examined document ITH/15/10.COM/6.b,
2. Recalling Articles 7, 29 and 30 of the Convention concerning reports by the States Parties, and Chapter V of the Operational Directives,
3. Thanks the State Party that submitted its ordinary report on time and invites the States Parties that have not yet submitted their expected reports to duly submit them at the earliest opportunity, and in any case no later than 15 December 2015 in order for the Committee to examine them at its eleventh session in 2016;
4. Commends the two States Parties that have submitted their extraordinary reports as requested at the time of inscription during its eighth session and acknowledges that they have provided adequate responses to the specific concerns raised in the respective decisions;
5. Takes note of the progress made by all the reporting States to effectively implement the safeguarding plans included in the nomination files and/or adopted after inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and invites them to pursue their efforts and to fully involve the communities concerned in the safeguarding of these elements;
6. Decides to submit to the General Assembly a summary of the reports of States Parties on the current status of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding examined in the current session.

Croatia: ‘Ojkanje singing’ *(consult the* [*report*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=36127)*)*

1. Ojkanje singing is a type of traditional vocal music performed by at least two singers and characterized by a distinctive voice-shaking technique achieved ‘from the throat’. Practiced in the Dinaric region of the Dalmatian hinterland, this free beat singing style is a popular practice in the local community and individual tradition bearers are respected members of their communities. Ojkanje owes its survival to organized groups of local tradition bearers who continue to transmit the skills and knowledge, representing their villages at various festivals in Croatia. This musical idiom remains an important factor in shaping the cultural identity of the local communities.
2. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. Under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and with the active participation of cultural associations and bearers, the following safeguarding measures that aim to revitalise and safeguard Ojkanje singing have been implemented: (i) research and documentation of the element in close collaboration between practitioners and other stakeholders; (ii) identification of and support to tradition bearers for the transmission of their knowledge to young people; (iii) enhancement of oral transmission methods with audio and video recordings; (iv) promotion of Ojkanje singing through new regional and local festivals, exhibitions, public meetings, interactive media and public performances by organized music and dance and informal groups; (v) support to Ojkanje singing through state- and local government-led development and cultural programmes; (vi) teaching of Ojkanje singing as an extra-curricular subject in a primary school; (vii) and the preparation of a television documentary on the element. Some local tourism offices have also organized festivals and performances by traditional singers, especially for foreign tourists.
3. The report shows some evidence of a reinvigoration of informal transmission from elders to youth and through organized dance groups in Dalmatian villages. According to the report submitted by the State Party, implementation of the safeguarding measures have led to greater recognition and respect from local communities for the practice of Ojkanje singing and its surviving bearers, whose performances act as teaching models for young people; provision of several different forms of transmission; and increased involvement of all recorded bearers and cultural associations in knowledge transmission. The report notes a significant increase of interest among young people in learning Ojkanje singing and safeguarding the tradition. Quality and range of documentation, particularly with audio and video recordings of the practice, has also improved. Furthermore, a substantial increase in the allocation of public funds has been observed at the local level to subsidise safeguarding activities. It should be noted that, in addition to state funding, promotional events and performances also receive funds from local and regional self-government units, donations, sponsorship and tourism associations.
4. **Community participation**. Bearers, associations and local music and dance groups are central to ensuring the continued practice and transmission of this element. Individual tradition bearers are celebrated in their communities and active in transmitting the element. The key to sustaining this tradition are the activities of the cultural associations which present traditional Ojkanje singing, who are supported by the attribution of adequate financial resources. These associations provide learning opportunities from older, more experienced singers and through various media (audio and video recordings). The enthusiasm of the tradition bearers is a very important factor in safeguarding Ojkanje singing and it is reported that they often use their personal resources to finance activities. Although the present report was compiled by the Conservation Department of the Ministry of Culture in five of the cities, it was prepared with the full support of local communities, administrations and competent institutions. All known bearers (mostly through cultural clubs) helped to compile the data and supply details by email to the aforementioned Department.
5. **Viability and current risks**. In the past, Ojkanje singing was solely learnt through intergenerational oral transmission and constituted a vehicle for communication, narration and transmission of oral history and culture. Nowadays, tradition bearers are mainly elderly and the homogenized lifestyle prevailing in rural regions acts as an impediment to young people learning this form of singing. Furthermore, former functions of this type of singing have been transformed, with presentation and performance becoming the main focus. Formal or semi-formal performances have mostly replaced the traditional improvised genre. As stated in the report, associations and communities continue to safeguard the practice of Ojkanje singing by adapting it to modern lifestyles and providing organised ways of transmission. However, increasing loss of the social function of the element where Ojkanje used to be sung in many contexts regarding family and community life, continues to hinder transmission of the practice to new generations.
6. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 10.COM 6.b.1 [Return to top](#Drafts_decisions)

The Committee,

1. Having examined document ITH/15/10.COM/6.b,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision 5.COM 5.4,
3. Expresses its thanks to Croatia for submitting its report on the status of the element ‘Ojkanje singing’, inscribed in 2010 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the State Party to revitalize and safeguard the element, in particular through encouraging traditional modes of oral transmission, as well as newer approaches taken by cultural associations and through the promotion of the element in festivals, performances and other events in the context of community life;
5. Invites the State Party to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the element, in particular through providing sufficient state funding for this purpose, and appropriate repartition of available funds between the various safeguarding activities and beneficiaries;
6. Encourages the State Party to assess the role of tourism entities in promoting the element and performances of Ojkanje singing in order to avoid commodification or denaturation of the element;
7. Reiterates its encouragement to other States and communities with similar forms of singing to collaborate actively in the opportunities for international exchange that are proposed by the State Party;
8. Requests the Secretariat to inform the State Party twelve months prior to the deadline of 15 December 2018 for the submission of its next report on the status of this element.

Guatemala: ‘Paach ceremony’ *(consult the* [*report*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=36329)*)*

1. Paach ceremony is a corn-veneration ritual celebrated by the Maya-Mam people to thank Mother Nature for good harvests, highlighting the close connection between humans and nature with prayers in the Mam language. It is based on the sacred book *Popol Vuh,* which according to Mayan philosophy, stresses the importance of corn in the creation of the first human beings. All age and gender groups participate, with their own specific roles in the ceremony. The ceremony combines two key elements – the Pregón and the Dance of the Pachitas. While the latter is still transmitted, the Pregón is only maintained by members of the group Mother Corn Pro and has not been transmitted to their children due to the age of the members and the young generation lacking proficiency in the Mam language. Following the inscription of the element on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2013, the State Party submitted an International Assistance request of less than USD25,000 to support educational safeguarding measures, which has benefitted from technical assistance and is still being reviewed by the submitting State. At the time of inscription in 2013, the Committee requested an extraordinary report to be examined at its tenth session.
2. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. It has been reported that most of the planned activities yielded the expected results with the exception of identifying new members for the element, due to an approach that is not highly compatible with the Maya-Mam method of knowledge transmission. It seems that measures conducted so far have encouraged greater participation of representatives from bearer groups in addition to Mother Corn Pro to work together to safeguard the ceremony. A major activity undertaken was the inventorying of the element in 2014, which included information on safeguarding measures implemented by the Maya-Mam people. Unfortunately, regarding transmission-related actions, parents tended to view them as requiring providing financial support to their children. Therefore, a new work strategy needs to be developed. Another challenge identified was conflict over decision-making within Mother Corn Pro, which is being addressed through mediation by the Ministry of Culture and Sports. It has also been noted that pressure to seek external funding can result in irregularities in safeguarding procedures, such as conducting a pilot project using a ritual to promote tree-planting before the ritual has been documented. Implementation of community-funded projects tended to suffer, in particular due to financial and human resources being available on a sporadic basis.
3. **Community participation**. Actions developed have led to the bearers creating ‘work tables’ which give them a leadership role in implementing them. Children, youth, adults and elderly people who participate in the Dance of the Pachitas were involved in the development of the inventory. Bearer groups and local cultural organizations helped to formulate the documentation. Thanks to an open tender, active participation of the communities has been ensured and the principle of considering bearers as the leaders of all associated actions, applied. During October and December 2014, a cycle of meetings was held to review progress and the commitments by the different institutions. Community members had contributed strongly with supporting documents. While it is important to note that funding for the first year of work has come from contributions by bearers and their communities, it may be necessary to establish a permanent fund for safeguarding activities by the Municipal Government of San Pedro Sacatepequez, San Marcos.
4. **Viability and current risks**. Although not explicitly stated, national inscription of the element and its inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List appear to be part of efforts to increase visibility and awareness. Nevertheless, it has been reported that the main threat to the element remains to be the weakness in the mode of transmission using the Mam language. Conditions for survival of the element are also unfavourable due to insubstantial ties with the Ministry of Education. Moreover, over 36 years of internal armed conflict has not only inhibited bearer freedom of expression, with some having to practise the ceremony secretly but also led to migration which has added to safeguarding challenges of the element. Another threat is competition between local cultural organizations which want to adopt the leading role in safeguarding without prior consultation with the bearers. At the same time, the Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of San Pedro struggle to maintain the principle of active participation of the bearers in the decision-making. All of the above is a generator of social conflict. In addition, development projects, which can threaten plant genetic material important to Mayan communities and disputes over the granting of patents for such material, present further challenges.
5. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 10.COM 6.b.2 [Return to top](#Drafts_decisions)

The Committee,

1. Having examined document ITH/15/10.COM/6.b,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision 8.COM 7.a.5,
3. Expresses its thanks to Guatemala for submitting its report on the status of the element ‘Paach ceremony’, inscribed in 2013 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the continued efforts by the State Party to safeguard the element and, in particular, its attempts to involve bearers, communities and cultural associations in inventorying and other safeguarding activities, and to encourage new recruits to the element;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to ensure that bearers are included in the decision-making process and that local promotional activities for the element are not dominated by an external cultural organisation;
6. Invites the State Party to develop new strategies for supporting modes of transmission that are better suited to the Maya-Mam people, including information, training and sensitisation of the bearers to obtain their free, prior and informed consent;
7. Further invites the State Party to provide funding for priority measures in the safeguarding plan such as documentation and recording and to make sure that those activities that are community-funded be carried out efficiently;
8. Further encourages the State Party to consider establishing a permanent fund for safeguarding activities by local authorities;
9. Decides that its next report will follow the normal four-year cycle, in conformity with Paragraph 161 of the Operational Directives, and will therefore be expected on 15 December 2017;
10. Requests the Secretariat to inform the State Party twelve months prior to the deadline of 15 December 2017 for the submission of its next report on the status of this element.

Uganda: ‘Empaako tradition of the Batooro, Banyoro, Batuku, Batagwenda and Banyabindi of western Uganda’ *(consult the* [*report*](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=36152)*)*

1. Empaako tradition is a naming system practised by Batooro, Banyoro, Batuku, Batagwenda and Banyabindi communities of western Uganda, whereby children are given one of twelve names shared across the communities in addition to their given and family names. Addressing a person by her or his Empaako name is a positive affirmation of social ties. It can be used as a greeting or a declaration of affection, respect, honour or love. The practice is associated with rituals and ceremonies whose meaning reinforces identity and belief systems. At the time of its inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2013, the Committee requested an extraordinary report to be examined at its tenth session.
2. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. The main objectives for safeguarding the element were to review the safeguarding plan, increase accessibility of information and knowledge about the element, and enhance the capacity of bearers to transmit knowledge and skills. The main results of the activities undertaken include a participatory review of the existing safeguarding plan; a safeguarding programme and mechanisms established for effective community and stakeholder participation; International Assistance requests elaborated and submitted to UNESCO; the implementation of a three-month pilot Empaako heritage conservation project by Banyoro communities and a fundraising strategy. The safeguarding activities also contributed to an increase in the mobilisation of stakeholders, leaders of rituals and 44 clans from the five communities, to revitalise the element. Public events, press conferences, festivals, workshops, a brochure and activities involving public leaders were reported to be very effective in raising awareness of the element and intangible cultural heritage in general for the specific communities and the Ugandan population. A monthly forum for representatives of the clans, established during the nomination process, has since been strengthened and is very effective in disseminating information and knowledge at the grassroots level. It has also contributed with the involvement of performers and artists for dissemination of safeguarding objectives. For example, regarding the raising of a monument in the main town of Empaako land.
3. **Community participation**. Many safeguarding initiatives have been planned, financed and undertaken by the communities, as well as individuals and groups. Members of the forum and cultural institutions within the five communities, such as chiefdoms, kingdoms and voluntary community associations, are responsible for managing these initiatives. During the reporting exercise, leaders from these institutions provided information on views of the communities regarding what achievements and challenges. The report was also sent to the communities for their comments and discussed at two monthly forum sessions.
4. **Viability and current risks**. The element is facing loss of meaning, social value and knowledge among bearers. A decline in observance of the naming ceremonies, as well as the number of bearers are among the main threats to viability of the element. Moreover, those who still give their children an Empaako name often abandon the associated rituals. In addition, it has been reported that there have been attacks on the practice from some religious groups mainly because of lack of knowledge about its meaning. In parallel, the language of the Empaako tradition, Runyoro-Rutooro, is declining in usage even among traditional bearer communities in favour of other more dominant languages.
5. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 10.COM 6.b.3 [Return to top](#Drafts_decisions)

The Committee,

1. Having examined document ITH/15/10.COM/6.b,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision 8.COM 7.a.12,
3. Expresses its thanks to Uganda for submitting its report on the status of the element ‘Empaako tradition of the Batooro, Banyoro, Batuku, Batagwenda and Banyabindi of western Uganda’, inscribed in 2013 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by Uganda to safeguard the element and, in particular, its proactive approach towards the participatory design of the safeguarding plan and mechanisms for effective participation of the communities and stakeholders concerned in their implementation;
5. Invites the State Party to continue developing its fund-raising strategy to ensure that reliance on external donors does not drive safeguarding priorities, and that community-funded projects have a reliable source of funding and human resources for continuous implementation;
6. Encourages the State Party to continue to address the loss of knowledge among bearers of the rituals and ceremonies, and the decline in observance of the practice by addressing external factors affecting this element, such as the declining use of the Runyoro-Rutooro language;
7. Decides that its next report will follow the normal four-year cycle, in conformity with Paragraph 161 of the Operational Directives, and will therefore be expected on 15 December 2017;
8. Requests the Secretariat to inform the State Party twelve months prior to the deadline of 15 December 2017 for the submission of its next report on the status of the element.