Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and Intellectual Property: Trends, Tasks, and Challenges

The absence of a law applicable to intellectual property for intangible cultural heritage has left ICH vulnerable to unauthorised use, commercialisation and the exploitation of cultural heritage elements. In response to this predicament, UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization have been spearheading an international movement to protect the intellectual property of intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, among UNESCO, WIPO, Member States, experts, and scholars in the field of ICH, the division of opinions in relation to IP and ICH has turned this issue into an insoluble quagmire.

Recognising the gravity of this matter, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre For Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP) organised an international expert meeting titled ‘Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and Intellectual Property: Trends, Tasks, and Challenges’, which took place on 21 October 2010. The goal for holding such a meeting was to first discuss and comprehend the current trends revolving around the debate of ICH and IP; secondly, to identify the major problems regarding the relationships between IP and ICH as well as tasks necessary for promoting IP as a method for safeguarding ICH; and lastly, to provide experts with the opportunity to network with one another for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

Attended by 16 experts from both the cultural heritage field and legal sectors, the meeting was a platform for networking and encouragement for the active exchange of ideas among experts in the ICH field. The expert meeting proceeded in 3 sessions followed by a panel discussion for each session.

To grasp the current international legal debate regarding IP as a measure for safeguarding ICH, Mr Ki Suk Oh, from the Korean Copyright Commission, introduced WIPO’s past and present movements to develop a new set of intellectual property laws concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. As for Korea’s position on this subject matter, Mr Yong Ik Jeong, head of the Intellectual Property Team of the Prime Minister’s office, introduced Korea’s recent movement to establish a new intellectual property law which includes features related to or exclusive to intangible cultural heritage. Additionally, the meeting also included conceptual differences among intangible cultural heritage, traditional cultural expressions, and traditional knowledge which were characterised by Mr. Dae Seung Yang from the Korea Institute for Intellectual Property.

During the second session, major issues and tasks concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and intellectual property were identified, followed by a presentation by US attorney Mr Pil Ho Park, regarding difficulties of instilling legal rights into communities which continue to practice elements of intangible cultural heritage. He emphasised how a community’s active participation and effort can overcome these difficulties and secure their rights for safeguarding their cultural heritage from exploitation. Mr Gaura Mancacaratadipura, from the Indonesian National Kris Secretariat, pointed out that although the UNESCO convention does not directly mention measures for the legal protection of intangible cultural heritage, it does include several aspects of intellectual property rights. In addition, Mr Mancacaratadipura provided examples of Indonesia putting forth effort to protect the rights of communities which practice particular elements of intangible cultural heritage.

The last session of the meeting touched upon the combination of three crucial issues: intangible cultural heritage, intellectual property, and information technology. Professor Chul Nam Lee, of Chungnam National University Law School, stressed the importance of providing a proper guideline for those who record and digitalise intangible cultural heritage. He also emphasised the importance of organisations such as ICHCAP for the purpose of promoting such activities.

Although the expert meeting re-identified seemingly insurmountable difficulties in protecting intellectual property of intangible cultural heritage, signs of prosperity and hope were noticeable as experts of the meeting recognised their passion and willingness to tackle the matter at hand. In this sense, providing a platform for uniting international experts with the opportunity to discuss and work towards solutions regarding these matters is no doubt one step in the right direction for the promotion of intellectual property as a means of safeguarding ICH. Furthermore, measures proposed by experts such as the establishment of a legal framework for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, recognising and promoting the importance of community participation, and the establishment of proper guidelines during the time of recording and digitising intangible cultural heritage will all contribute to further enforcing safeguarding measures for intangible cultural heritage.
Inventory-making, a Prerequisite for ICH Safeguarding

ICH Issues

Expert Seminar on ICH Inventory-making for Central Asia
Intangible Cultural Heritage & Inventory

Intangible cultural heritage is a main feature in the cultural diversity of humanity. To safeguard these elements of living heritage, there are various measures to consider, therefore ICH inventorying, inter alia, is an essential safeguarding activity.

According to the 2003 Convention, each State Party should take necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the ICH elements present in their territory. In light of this, each State Party shall draw up a manifest to the Convention geared towards its country’s own situation to ensure the identification of ICH elements for its safeguarding.

To help countries follow through with this, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific hosted an Expert Meeting on ICH Inventory-making for Central Asia which took place from 27 to 28 October in Seoul, Korea.

The expert meeting was organised by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP) under the sponsorship of the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) of Korea. This event was designed as a follow-up to the Action Plan which was adopted by the Korea. This event was designed as a follow-up to the Action Plan which was adopted by the Korea. This event was designed as a follow-up to the Action Plan which was adopted by the Korea.

The meeting commenced with opening remarks by Mr Kun Moo Yi, Administrator of the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea and welcoming remarks were followed by Mr. Jung Hyun Lee, Member of the National Assembly. The keynote presentation was delivered by Professor Dawn-hee Yim who addressed the present issues and necessary tasks for ICH inventorying as a safeguarding measure. Soon after, presentations on national ICH inventory case studies were presented by distinguished participants of various Central Asian countries to provide a better understanding of the current situation of ICH safeguarding efforts in the Central Asia region.

The first session was aimed at introducing current issues which Central Asian countries have faced, while the following session focused more on inventory-making issues such as domains and classification of ICH, the purpose and responsibility of inventories, possible measures for promotion of ICH inventory-making, involvement of communities for inventory-making and networks among experts. On 29 October Mr Seong-Yong Park, Executive Director of ICHCAP chaired the final session of the meeting. For this session of the meeting, all of the participants were asked to present a possible work plan for inventory-making procedures in their country. An in-depth debate followed the presentations in line with developing future cooperative projects regarding the implementation of ICH inventory-making in the Central Asia region.

As a result of this, the call to Action regarding ICH inventory-making for Central Asia was adopted.

This event was followed by field trips which lasted 3 days in addition to a meeting between the participants and the communities involved in the transmission of ICH elements that are designated by the government of Korea as important ICH.

Director’s Note

Inventory-making, a Prerequisite for ICH Safeguarding

The fall season in many countries presents its beauty and serenity to our daily life. As the clear weather continued through October, ICH experts from Central Asia and Korea gathered in Seoul to discuss ICH inventory-making.

In the Expert Meeting on ICH Inventory-making for Central Asia, participants discussed various efforts and methodologies to develop national inventories in Central Asia. In addition, they shared unique characteristics and current issues pertinent to ICH in their own societies. Indeed, inventory-making must be a prerequisite in the implementation of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and it has proven as being a pressing issue in the development and application of safeguarding measures in the ICH field.

Interestingly, participants of the Meeting particularly stressed the need to develop guidelines for inventory-making while agreeing that the inventory-making process should be based on an individual basis of the circumstance of ICH in each country. During the meeting participants also made several suggestions such as exploring an integrated approach to tangible and intangible cultural heritage in inventory-making. Finally, a ‘Call to Action’ was adopted, promising to hold continuous expert seminars to promote inventory-making projects and to collaborate in developing online tools for aiding the inventory-making process and to push ahead with the plan for developing the ‘Atlas of ICH in Central Asia’ project. Encouraging international cooperation in the field of ICH inventory-making, a very important task for the safeguarding of ICH, will be one of ICHCAP’s major activities for the future.
Modern state cultural institutions can lend support to safeguarding its national ICH by injecting financial, administrative and logistical support. However, the fact remains that for ICH to express itself as a ‘living heritage’ it needs active involvement from the community or communities that bear it and practise it in order to provide a platform for its ongoing dynamic and special history-rooted organic qualities to transcend through generations within the broad context of the changing society in which it is located.

This aspect of safeguarding ICH as a ‘living heritage’ among modern nation states led the cultural experts who formulated UNESCO’s definition of ICH to emphasise the position and role of communities in the overall system of heritage safeguarding. With regard to evidence of community participation, UNESCO affirms that the nomination files submitted for inscription should fully illustrate the community or communities’ participation as extensively as possible for all stages of the nomination process: the identification of the element, the preparation of the nomination, elaboration and implementation of safeguarding measures and so on. This emphasis on communities signifies their fundamental role in maintaining ICH as living heritage traditions, and not as dusty relics of the past that are displayed in silent museum corridors.

About sixty years ago, American anthropologist Robert Redfield formulated the concept of the ‘Little Community’, to designate the most widespread organisation of human life, particularly in agrarian peasant societies and alike. As an abstract ideal, the Little Community was described as being small, homogeneous, religious, relatively isolated, governed by kinship obligations and moral traditions, thus enjoying a high level of social solidarity. The peasant village Little Community is viewed as being a carrier of little (cultural) traditions as compared with larger more metropolitan cities which are seen as carriers of great traditions.

In most present-day modern societies, traditional communities have been experiencing major shifts not only in their social geography, but also in the economic activities their members are currently pursuing. The present influx of ongoing rural-urban migration, geographical mobility, urban planning, and dispersal of kinship and familial groups within the expanding cityscapes in search of better economic opportunities as well as a quest for social mobility, market forces and global currents, have all combined leading to a generation of serious shifts and restructuring of the key socio-economic and cultural fabrics of old local ‘Little Communities’.

Subsequently, major changes have been occurring in the dialectical interplay between the ‘village little traditions’ and the ‘city great traditions’. Both urbanisation of rural life and the ruralisation of city life are taking place simultaneously, particularly in third world developing countries. It is perhaps this

(Continued on page 4)
evolutionary trend that led UNESCO experts to merge the notion of little and great (cultural) traditions into one concept called Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

In view of these evolutionary trends, the current stance of communities is to break beyond their old restricted local boundaries, but nonetheless continue to carry on with their local cultural ICH traditions as a kind of cultural marker of their identity and source of pride. Due to the transformation of modern life conditions, present-day modern communities are now unable to fully embrace their ICH heritage in an organic way in conjunction with their everyday life, as was the case in traditional little communities. Thus, heightened awareness and conscious efforts are required by communities and policy makers to keep their heritage alive. They also require the use of modern media channels such as television, radio, newspapers and internet, and even the educational system to mobilise and coordinate efforts to celebrate and transmit ICH in the communities concerned.

With the increase of roles recently performed by nation states, local communities are happy to welcome support provided by state cultural institutions to aid them in activating and celebrating community ICH as an integral aspect of safeguarding national heritage. Intangible heritage defines the identity of the community at hand as a local group and as a nation. The state itself can be viewed as an ‘imagined community’ as conceptualised by Benedict Anderson (1983). Recently, the way ICH is being celebrated and transmitted in a country such as the UAE is through joint efforts by both local communities and the state to define, redefine and safeguard what both entities regard as community and/or national heritage.

A few brief examples from the UAE will illustrate these general statements.

Camel racing has been celebrated annually for the last 20 years as an Emirati ICH. Bedouin tribal communities are the bearers and the practitioners of camel culture in its present-day changing form. While the Bedouins take an active part in the annual six month long camel racing celebration, the state also regards the camel as one of its heritage elements and has elevated it to the level of a national cultural icon. Therefore, both have been on the heritage stage joining resources, efforts, traditional skills and knowledge in order to safeguard the camel racing culture and develop it within the transforming modern globalised reality.

The camel beauty contest is a newly-invented tradition in the UAE which is rooted in the traditional Bedouin camel culture. Thus, the new cultural camel event, al Mezaina, is now celebrated every winter for two weeks as an Emirati ICH element. The Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage is the official institution responsible for the organisational and financial support of this element, but it is the Bedouin communities in the UAE and other neighbouring Gulf countries, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, who are involved in the actual day-to-day safeguarding of this camel heritage in the rapidly changing Gulf societies.

The Liwa Date Festival is located in the oases of Liwa which are located deep in the desert, some 180 km west of Abu Dhabi. The oases are well known for their harvests of good dates. The date palm is viewed by Emiratis as a blessed and all-giving tree, thus it has been regarded as a significant element of Emirati ICH. The festival is a new summer cultural event that brings both the Bedouin oasis farming communities and Abu Dhabi agencies together in celebration of the early date harvest known as al-ruttab. The festival brings in the Liwa community to display and compete in the production of fine quality dates and above all to safeguard the date palm oasis cultural heritage. Artisan shops and exhibitions of traditional lives in oases are also celebrated, in addition to the building of a larger traditional souq (market) to exhibit and sell traditional palm related handicrafts.

These examples show how local communities and the nation-state can join together to safeguard what both entities regard as their intangible cultural heritage.
A

ccording to the oral traditions of the Cook Islands, sacred rituals were commonly performed on what is known as a marae or sacred ground. Each tribe has its own marae where ceremonies such as offerings of prayers, tributes to the gods and the induction of traditional titles on family members were once carried out. It also acted as a meeting place for important tribal matters.

Entry onto the marae compound was usually restricted to those with titles or prominent members of the tribe. During ceremonies, the remaining parties would surround the marae complex and observe the proceedings from the exterior side of the boundary. A priest referred to as taonga karakia would perform prayers and incantations as he was deemed ‘the spokesperson of the gods’. From the outer perimeter of the grounds, the tribe would participate from time to time by joining in with chanting, or by offering their support to the prayers of the taonga karakia.

Many of the rituals that were once performed on the marae are no longer practiced. Prayers and tributes to the ancient gods have now been replaced by prayer services in historic Christian churches and other religious venues that were introduced to the Cook Islands almost two hundred years ago.

However, induction of a chief or sub-chief is still performed on the marae. The induction of a high chief occurs once every twenty years or so, whereas the induction of sub-chiefs occur more frequently, mainly on the island of Rarotonga. It is at the death of the reigning chief that his successor is inducted. Although each tribe has its own specific procedures when carrying out an induction, there are still many similarities among the various tribal groups of the Cook Islands.

Chiefly titles are hereditary and are passed on to the first born male. However, if this is not possible then the immediate family convenes to make a joint decision on the successor. Once a decision has been reached, the announcement is then made to the tribe, nearby villages and the entire island. Up to a year may be spent preparing for the induction ceremony, crops are planted, induction garments are crafted and other preparations are carried out.

On the day of induction the chief is usually dressed in traditional garments and carried by warriors on a pa’ata or platform to the marae. The tribe follows closely behind the pa’ata reciting a traditional chant that is only used for this special occasion.

Upon arrival to the marae, the taonga karakia welcomes the procession to the sacred grounds. The high chief is then lowered to allow for him to walk on the sacred marae site to where a seat carved out of stone, made especially for the person who holds this prestigious title rests.

The taonga would perform his duties and bless the event before the chief bites the ear of a wild boar to signify his acceptance of the title and his responsibility to protect and care for the people of his tribe. To conclude this customary event, the chief is then carried once more on his pa’ata to a new location, one where all parties observing and supporting the ceremony from the exterior can be involved in the celebration of their newly inducted chief.

This sacred ritual is still very much alive and a part of the customary traditions of the indigenous population of the Cook Islands. For each individual, tracing your genealogy to a chiefly title is a crucial part of knowing your identity. The historical accounts of chiefs are bound by the great warriors of ancient times. For this reason the cultural heritage of the marae from the Cook Islands should be preserved for future generations to understand and appreciate their cultural identity.

Cook Islands Sacred Rituals of its Indigenous Population

Ngatuaine Maui (Anthropologist, Ministry of Cultural Development, Cook Islands)
Munmyo is a Confucian shrine in which various spiritual-tablets of past Confucian scholars rest. In this shrine, a total of thirty nine spiritual-tablets are enshrined that belong to Confucius, four disciples, sixteen Chinese Confucian scholars, and eighteen Korean Confucian scholars. Currently, the Munmyo shrine is located in Sungkyunkwan, which was an institution of higher education during the Joseon dynasty and is now Sungkyunkwan University located in Seoul. Every February and August, according to the lunar calendar, commemorative rites are prepared and called Munmyo Jerye or Seokjeonje. Currently, Seokjeonje is listed as No. 85 on the Important Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Korea, designated in 1986.

Procedures of the Munmyo Jerye ceremony are as follows:

It begins with the greeting of spirits, Yeongsin; next is the offering of ceremonial food, Jeonpye; offering of the second cup of wine, Aheon; offering of the third cup of wine, Jongheon; partaking of sacrificial food and drink, Emboksujo; the removal of the ceremonial vessels from the altar, Cheolbyeondu; and it is completed with the sending off of spirits, Songsin.

Every procedure is offered with great respect to the spirits. In addition to great respect being offered to the spirits, Munmyo Jerye is also an exhibition of honour for the significant Confucian scholars that carried out the essence of Confucianism. Therefore, to prepare for this ceremony, officials cleanse their body and mind a few days in advance for the ritual. On the day of the ritual, officials welcome the spirits of great scholars with full respect and present to them sacrificial offerings. They also prepare for them an attractive arrangement of food and wine and then partake in tasting the wine as a blessing from the spirits. The ritual is concluded with the burning of tribute paper by an official.

Munmyo Jerye is carried out in a solemn mood while traditional music plays throughout the ceremony. During the Joseon dynasty, people who were ruled by Confucianism contributed to this combination of the ritual’s refined manner and solemn music with their modest character which has subsequently led us to this magnificent piece of art. In other words, Munmyo Jerye is celebrated with dance, song, instrumental music, and it is carried out in a Confucian manner to exhibit his vision of the universe. The Deungga orchestra plays in Dangsang and the Heonga orchestra plays in the court yard in collaboration with the Palilmu line dancing which reflects the three powers of thought observed by Confucius, representing the sky, the earth and man. Deungga represents the sky; therefore it is played at the highest place. Heonga represents the earth; therefore it is played at the lowest place. Palilmu, which requires sixty four dancers, represents man so it is performed in the middle of the Deungga orchestra and Heonga orchestra.

The music of sacrificial rituals at the Munmyo shrine is played with instruments made from eight elements: metal, stone, thread, bamboo, gourd, soil, leather and wood. The eight elements used in this ceremony are called Paleum (八音), literally meaning eight sounds. These musical instruments construct the Deungga and Heonga orchestras, and the dancers who perform Palilmu are accompanied by this music. Dance and music make the traditional Korean custom Munmyo Jerye magnificent to observe. Munmyo Jerye, which materialises through Deungga, Heonga and Palilmu, reflects the sounds of the universe which are greater than that of the human world.
India *Mudiyettu*, Ritual Dance-Drama from Kerala
Molly Kaushal  (Associate Professor, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, India)

*Mudiyettu* is a ritual art form practiced in the southern Indian state of Kerala. It is performed annually in different villages throughout Kerala along the rivers, Chalakkudy Puzha, Periyar and Moovattupuzha among the Marar and Kurup communities in venues known as ‘bhagavati kavus’, temples which are dedicated to the Hindu goddess Kali. The temple provides as the focal point for this ritual and all villagers, irrespective of their caste, participate and play a specific role in its organisation.

*Mudiyettu* is divided into two distinct roles. The first concerns ritual worship and the second involves the ritual enactment of a battle between the goddess Kali and the demon Darika, a popular Hindu myth. According to the myth, a demon named Darika became extremely powerful after being blessed by god Brahma, who promised him that he would never be defeated by any man living in the fourteen worlds. Darika, armed with this blessing, conquered the world and even defeated Indra (the king of gods). When his atrocities became intolerable, Lord Shiva was requested by the divine sage Narada to contain the menace. As Darika had blindly ignored the threat of ever being killed by a woman, Lord Shiva stated that he would die at the hands of a woman born not among human beings, but the goddess herself.

The ritual starts with the drawing of a large, impressive and ferocious image on the temple floor of goddess Bhadra Kali holding multiple weapons. The number of hands of the goddess determines the size of the drawing, which may be in the range of eight to thirty two hands or even more, drawn in perfect symmetry in accordance with ‘ tantric’ calculations. A three-dimensional effect is illustrated on the ferocious figure by placing two mounds of coloured powder on her breasts. Various colours prepared from rice, turmeric, charcoal, green leaves of two specific trees and lime are used for this purpose. Wicker lamps and coconuts are placed at appropriate places to illuminate and decorate the drawing. This auspicious drawing is called ‘kalam’. An elaborate ritual prayer, called ‘kalam puja’ is offered to the Bhadra Kali drawing accompanied by the singing of hymns called ‘kalam pattu’. These hymns describe the deity from head to toe.

To commence the second part of the ritual - the enactment of the Bhadra Kali myth - a lamp that was used to illuminate the ‘kalam’ is brought to light the lamp at the performance arena because it is believed that it carries the spirit of Bhadra Kali. The beating of performance drums is an open invitation to all the devotees to witness the performance. Two people holding a curtain appear on the scene while the chorus of singers and musicians stand on one side singing invocation songs. This is followed by the main performance which is held in the temple courtyard. The myth unfolds in the form of a drama. The performers worship the lamp and circumambulate the temple. Spectators join the performers, running and dancing around the temple with a heightened sense of drama and excitement. The demon is ultimately defeated and his headgear or ‘mudi’ is removed, signifying his decapitation. This dramatic sequence ends with the distribution of ‘prasada’, the ritual sacrament by the performers to the assembly in the form of flowers and other materials.

It is believed that the performance of *Mudiyettu* purifies and rejuvenates the whole community. The staging of this ritual promises a peaceful future for humanity conveying a message synonymous with the Malayalam saying, ‘kavu thendiyal kudwellum muttum’, which means, ‘destroy the kavu and the whole village will perish without water’. Kavu is a stretch of virgin land and is worshipped as an abode to the goddess. It is always protected from human encroachment. The performance of this ritual in a sense signifies the protection of mother earth herself.

Demon Darika being vanquished by a goddess at the end of the performance  (Photo courtesy of IGNCA)
The Andong region has many highly renowned historic and cultural sites, such as Hahoe Village, however, the major cultural attraction of the region is the Andong International Mask Dance Festival.

Masks reflect characteristics of culture through various styles and shapes. The mask dance is an essential and ancient part of Korean culture, and each locale throughout the country has its own particular theme, style, and costume. These dances are an important part of Korea’s cultural heritage, in particular the byeolsingut talnori dance, which has been designated an Important Intangible Cultural Heritage of Korea.

At this year’s International Mask Dance Festival, mask dance troupes were invited from various countries providing visitors to the event the opportunity of being exposed to folk cultures from around the world.

Recently, the transmission of traditional culture has suffered due to the transformation and destruction of regional communities as well as the rise in globalisation and industrialisation. These phenomena have incited communities to place more of an emphasis on attempting to protect intangible cultural heritage with systemic safeguarding mechanisms. When considering Korea in this aspect, a limited amount of intangible cultural heritage elements have the footing for transmission. Most elements of intangible cultural heritage are exhibited and safeguarded through awareness raising mechanisms such as performance. For that reason, festivals and community based events act as a platform for the acknowledgement and appreciation of certain elements of ICH. The Andong International Mask Dance Festival is a good example of this.

The town of Hahwe was recently designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Based on the Hahwe mask tradition, the town decided to establish the Andong International Mask Dance Festival in 1997. This festival was founded on Hahwe masks and mask dances, and exhibits features related to mask culture handed down throughout the world and Korea.

One of the most appealing and prominent programs of the Andong International Mask Dance Festival is the Hahwe mask dance. This particular dance has become a brand for representing Andong and its local citizens, where they feel and exhibit pride as over 10 teams perform this masked dance. Recently this element of intangible cultural heritage of Korea has been taught in schools, subsequently acting as a safeguarding measure of ICH. Furthermore, there are roughly 20 traditional mask dances handed down in Korea. Most of the traditional mask dances are performed at the Andong festival, drawing much public attention from domestic citizens as well as international. Additionally, performances and plays related to masks from various corners of Korea.
the world are invited to this festival. In other words, the Andong mask festival is a platform for various kinds of masked heritage elements to be exhibited for the promotion of cultural diversity.

The performance of ICH elements is a popular method of safeguarding heritage through awareness raising efforts and is possible when there is a venue to link performers, spectators, and interested individuals. Festivals are representative venues of performance. The freedom and relaxation felt during festivals becomes a forum for cultural understanding, establishing the ability to pass down elements of intangible heritage.

The Andong International Mask Dance Festival founded the International Mask Art & Culture Organization (IMACO) to strengthen cultural activity among its members, to build a network for international mask arts & culture based on this organisation, and to enhance knowledge of culture related to masks. Masks are an important element to many cultures, but none are the same. That is, masks demonstrate characteristics of cultural diversity respective to a particular country. In this regard, masks can be considered the ‘face’ of culture. Precisely based on this value and concept, IMACO was created in order to provide a forum for cultural understanding for the future.

IMACO is currently running three programs. One program is dedicated to collecting and organising materials in relation to masks, including their shape, correlating costumes, dramas, dances and rituals to share them with people all over the world. The materials related to masks are also very meaningful to the culture and performance. The second program was constructed to form a network of people related to these cultural elements. By connecting researchers, producers, artists, groups and museums, as well as providing a forum for discussion, the prospect of later generations experiencing this aspect of cultural heritage is more probable. The third program is meant to create a ‘world mask culture map’. Masks symbolise a particular culture and creating a map of masks in relation to their region and cultural spheres will not only raise awareness of cultural characteristics respective of the country, but also regional trends.

The Andong festival itself is outstanding. It has become a site for the succession of traditional intangible cultural heritage related to masks not only of Andong, but the whole of Korea as well. This festival acts as a forum for cultures of the world to gather and contribute to a mutual understanding of the diversity and distinctiveness of cultures worldwide. Furthermore, this forum provides the opportunity to assess the efforts and tasks necessary for the future of cultural diversity. The Andong festival should be observed and appreciated as a mechanism of awareness raising for intangible cultural heritage.
Intangible Cultural Heritage is one of the most unprotected forms of artistic heritage. Nowadays, in a globalising world where different cultures exist and interact, intangible cultural heritage requires our special attention. For Tajikistan, the first victory of efforts put forth toward safeguarding ICH was the acknowledgement of Shashmaqom as a masterpiece of human intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

As you may be aware, on 23 February 2010, at the 64th session of the UN General Assembly, by unanimous decision, it was confirmed that 21 March be declared ‘International Day of Navruz’. The word ‘navruz’ is a compound Tajik (Persian) word, one which is a fusion of two words, ‘nav’ – new and ‘ruz’ – day, meaning new day of the new year. In any case, these days Navruz is a festival celebrated by many countries in Central Asia and one of the best displays of multinational intangible cultural heritage.

At the present time, our country is currently ratifying the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of ICH. We are currently in the beginning stages of renewing our countries present inventory system for intangible cultural heritage. Until recently, the process of preparation for the inventorying of ICH was fragmentary and spontaneous.

Safeguarding measures that previously existed were not complete and were inconsistent. They were related to different levels and stages, specific fields, separate regions and archives, as well as heritage elements being manifested into different domains of the UNESCO classification system. Safeguarding efforts were undertaken by governmental organisations, structural entities and units of the Ministry of Culture, Research Institutes of the Academy of Sciences, and scientific production associations at the end of the 1990’s and beginning of the 21st century. These inventory-making procedures were financially supported by the government of Tajikistan in addition to international funds which were provided from organisations such as the Christensen Fund, Japanese Fund, Aga Khan Fund, and SDC. Tajikistan’s Ministry of Culture on-site administration and departments of culture are responsible for designing renewed inventory systems in the country. All existing inventories are digitalised by developers from the involved organisations under the Ministry of Culture. All five domains of ICH presented in the 2003 Convention are covered in our inventory.

The following criterion was used for the inscription of elements of ICH inventory in Tajikistan:

- Significance of the element in a historical sense for the people, its level of integrity for the duration of the historical period
- Level of popularity among the population
- Availability of the element itself and/or its own traditions
- Respectfulness to this particular element

Due to the results from the first stage of the inventorisation process, we now have the first version of the list of genres and forms of oral music, poetry, folklore, dances, plays, folk theatre, folk circus, folk competitions, etc.

During the summer of 2010 we had two missions, one to Khatlon and the other to Badakshon with the goal of executing tasks for developing a national inventory-making system. I should note that the local population was very active in the national inventory-making process. We received significant support from the local population; every one showed support towards safeguarding intangible cultural heritage by trying to find elements of ICH that were...
threatened or have disappeared. These efforts display how the local population is ready to help collect and provide for the protection of ICH.

Main issues that exist in the inventory-making process of Tajikistan are lack of an institutional basis, shortage of financial means, insufficient involvement of local communities, and the need for qualified experts in the field of ICH safeguarding and inventory-making.

Several decrees and programmes were adopted by the government of Tajikistan in order to safeguard ICH and provide viable measures to carry out particular activities. For example, after the establishment of several public holidays such as ‘The Day of Shashmaqom’ and ‘The Day of Falak’ by the decree of the president of Tajikistan, as far as arts education goes, at the front burner is the educational institution ustod-shogird – a traditional system of education. The ustod-shogird educational institution historically belongs to the Aryan civilisation, which was accepted by Islamic culture after several centuries; this intellectual artistic phenomenon is an element of intangible cultural heritage. The system of ustod-shogird is where all forms of traditional artistic creativity of the Tajik people are based and its revival ensures the viability of this element of intangible cultural heritage.

Last year, the government adopted special programmes such as, the ‘State Programme for the Development of Culture for 2008-2015’ (№ 85 3 March 2007) and the ‘State Programme on the Development of Artistic Craftsmanship for 2009-2015’ (№ 513 31 October 2008). No doubt, thanks to these government programmes the inventory-making process will become more active.
Introduction
Interest in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage has continued to rise since the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by UNESCO Member States in 2003.

The Asia-Pacific region is well known for its distinctive and abundant intangible heritage, however, due to industrialisation and urbanisation, much intangible heritage in the region is now threatened.

As ICHCAP prepares for the establishment of the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Asia and the Pacific, a field survey project was designed and carried out in the context of safeguarding ICH within the framework of the 2003 Convention aiming towards collecting appropriate data regarding the current safeguarding efforts for intangible heritage in the region. This project is planned to be implemented from 2009 until 2013. For this project, ICHCAP will continue to work in collaboration with intangible heritage institutes from each country and various recommended experts in the field of ICH.

Objective
The goal of the projects is to collect data on current safeguarding efforts of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, we would like to take this opportunity to build a network of concerned experts in the field of ICH among the region’s Member States as to promote groundwork for the establishment of an informational and researching system for ICH data.

ICH CAP has been preparing and implementing this survey project since 2008 and 2009. Regarding the preparation of the projects, ICHCAP collected relevant data from reports, workshop books, meeting resolutions, internet databases, etc. While the information is valuable, in many cases, the data is not accurate, nor up to date. This is a primary reason for ICHCAP to prepare a new survey for the accumulation of more current data.

Implementation
For implementation of the project, ICHCAP developed a questionnaire under the supervision of several ICH experts. The questionnaire contains specific areas of research on the topic of ICH safeguarding systems & policies, intangible heritage inventory, relevant organisations, ICH elements inscribed on the UNESCO Lists, Living Human Treasure systems as well as current issues & urgent needs in the field of intangible heritage.

The questionnaire was developed in light of the necessity to collect practical data to lay the groundwork for further development of safeguarding measures in the region. This information will be used as the starting point from which ICHCAP will organise new projects for the future.

ICHCAP typically works with 6-8 countries each year and conducts projects in collaboration with corresponding institutes to the subject matter. Although each country has different conditions on the effort put forth for safeguarding their intangible heritage, they are consistently acknowledging the value of intangible heritage and its contribution to maintaining cultural identity while undergoing the predicaments of modernisation. Despite the fact that general awareness about intangible heritage is growing, most Asian-Pacific countries are not yet equipped with adequate policies, programmes and scientific methodologies, particularly in the areas of inventory-making and documentation to sufficiently move forth with safeguarding measures. These methodologies are related to the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage to the next generation.

In 2009, we worked with 6 countries, namely Cambodia, Fiji, Mongolia, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. These field survey projects could not be completed without cooperation from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts in Cambodia, Institute of Fijian Language and Culture, Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, Office of the National Culture Commission in Thailand, the Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism in Vietnam, the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO and the International Institute for Central Asian Studies.

Currently, seven field surveys are in progress in seven countries in close collaboration with the Centre for Research and Development of Culture in Indonesia, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts of the Philippines, Shilpakala Academy in Bangladesh, Odam va Olam in Tajikistan, the National Cultural Commission of Papua New Guinea, the National Library of Bhutan, and the Nepal National Commission for UNESCO.

Each research team consisted of 4-10 researchers who shared duties to complete the given questionnaire.

Expected outcome
ICHCAP believes that it is important to initiate projects like this in order to ensure and strengthen capacity-building and public awareness-raising activities. It will also reinforce links between civil, legal, cultural and economic bodies involved in orchestrated activities for the safeguarding of intangible heritage in the Asia-Pacific region.

As a result, projects are based on field surveys conducted by ICH experts in each country followed by the publication of report books. Depending on the agreement with each institute, all or partial products will be available for the benefit of the public through the ICHCAP website.

Furthermore, each research team, along with their final text is requested to submit visual materials such as photos which are to be displayed on the ICHCAP website. We expect this to contribute to the strengthening of the visibility of intangible cultural heritage throughout the region.
Safeguarding Pioneers

Department of National Heritage in Malaysia: The Role of Conservation and Preservation of Heritage

A Ghafar Bin Ahmad (Deputy Commissioner of Heritage, Department of National Heritage, Malaysia)

Malaysia is a developing nation of Southeast Asia. A few of their famous slogans reflect the diversity of its present ethnic groups in terms of language, customs and traditions inherited from past generations, ‘One Malaysia’ and ‘Malaysia Truly Asia’. Malaysia’s cultural fusion is the result of immigration, trade and cultural exchanges over many centuries with Arab nations, China, and India, where the arrival of the first foreigners brought along with them their wealth as well as their cultural heritage and religion. Presently, these ethnic groups still maintain their cultural traditions, but managed to come together to develop Malaysia’s unique and contemporary diverse heritage.

In December 2005, the Parliament of Malaysia passed the National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645); an act that encompasses a broad dimension of preservation, conservation and management of the country’s natural and cultural heritage. The Act provides for the preservation and conservation of national heritage, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, underwater cultural heritage, treasure trove and related matters. The Act also considers all provisions of the (now defunct) Antiquities Act 1976 and Treasure Trove Act 1957. Antiquity matters which were once under the auspices of the Department of Museums and Antiquities is now under the patronage of the Department of National Heritage.

The Department of National Heritage was established on 1 March 2006 under the National Heritage Act 2005. The Ministry of Information, Communications and Culture is responsible for all heritage policies; headed by the Commissioner of Heritage who is appointed under the Act by the Minister, the Department of National Heritage is the custodian of Malaysia’s rich and diversified heritage. According to the Act, cultural heritage includes cultural property, structures or artefacts, performances, dances, songs and music that are pertinent to the history or contemporary way of life for Malaysians as well as land or underwater cultural heritage of the tangible form. Whilst natural heritage includes natural features of an area in Malaysia consisting of the earths physical or biological formations or groups of such formations, geological or physiographical features, mountains, rivers, streams, rock formations, sea shores or any natural sites with outstanding value from the point of view of nature, science, history, conservation or natural beauty including flora and fauna.

Malaysia’s intangible cultural heritage comprises of (i) oral traditions (phrases and idioms, chanted hymns, folks tales, narrated myths and legends); (ii) performing arts (folk music, folk dances and dramatic performances); (iii) customs (rituals, social practices including ceremonies and festivals) and (iv) material folklore (functional objects made by folk groups). Various traditional art forms are still practised including the Chinese opera, Indian dance, Malay dance and Malay martial arts called Silat. Festivals such as Hari Raya and Malaysia Fest are open for everyone inside and outside the community(ies) to enjoy. Malaysian handicrafts have been declared as ‘unique’ by the UNESCO-AHPADA (ASEAN Handicraft Promotion and Development Association).

One of Malaysia’s elements of intangible cultural heritage is Mak Yong, declared by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in November 2005. Mak Yong is an ancient form of dance-theatre which incorporates elements of custom, stylised dance and acting, vocal and instrumental music, stories, songs as well as formal and improvised spoken text. The Mak Yong orchestra is made up of a three-stringed spiked fiddle (rebab), double-headed barrel drums (genden) and hanging knobbed gongs (tetawak) accompanied by singing and dancing. Mak Yong’s singing and musical repertoire are unique and this integral element of Malaysia’s intangible cultural heritage was listed as a National Heritage under the Act in 2007.

The Department of National Heritage has been at the forefront of promoting public awareness for the cultural heritage of Malaysia. Their efforts include conserving buildings and monuments of historical, architectural and cultural significance; promoting performance and visual arts; organising exhibitions, seminars, workshops and tours on heritage; publications, websites and competitions; and establishing archaeological galleries. The Department of National Heritage has played a major role in conserving, preserving and safeguarding Malaysia’s heritage with support from the state government. To date, 173 heritage items in Malaysia including buildings, objects, intangible cultural heritage, archaeological sites and living heritage treasures have been listed as national heritage under the Act. The Department of National Heritage will strive to preserve and protect Malaysia’s natural and cultural heritage as a legacy for future generations.
Raising awareness for intangible cultural heritage is one of the major objectives of the Convention, where as Article 1 prescribes that the Convention shall "raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof". Furthermore, according to Article 14, it can be achieved through each State Party’s efforts on the development of education, awareness-raising and informational programmes, implementation of capacity-building activities, and the dissemination of information on ICH.

The General Assembly and the Intergovernmental Committee developed continuous discussions on the topic of awareness raising which finally reached a conclusion when the Operational Directives on Raising Awareness about Intangible Cultural Heritage was approved during the third ordinary session of the General Assembly (Paris, France, 22 to 24 June 2010). The Operational Directives are a compilation of guidelines for possible safeguarding activities at the local, national and international levels as well as key points for carrying out these efforts.

The Operational Directives note that all States Parties should observe the following principles when they engage in awareness raising activities (IV.1.1 General Provisions):

a. The intangible cultural heritage concerned responds to the definition in Article 2.1 of the Convention;

b. The communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals concerned have given their free, prior and informed consent to raise awareness about their intangible cultural heritage, and their widest possible participation in the awareness-raising actions is ensured;

c. The awareness-raising actions fully respect customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage, in particular secret and sacred aspects;

d. The communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals concerned shall benefit from the actions taken to raise awareness about their intangible cultural heritage.

As for efforts carried out at the local and national levels, the Operational Directives propose that States Parties attempt to keep the public informed about the importance of intangible cultural heritage and the dangers threatening it, as well as the activities performed to carry out the ideals of the Convention through formal and non-formal educational measures, use of community centres and associations, museums, archives and other similar entities, communication and media, as well as commercial activities related to intangible cultural heritage. It also recommends that States Parties attempt to ensure, particularly through the application of intellectual property rights, privacy rights and any other appropriate form of legal protection, that the rights of the communities, groups and individuals which create, bear and transmit their intangible cultural heritage are duly protected when raising awareness about their heritage or engaging in commercial activities (VI.1.2 Local and national levels).

At the international level, the Directives encourage the annual publication of the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List, as well as the registration of programmes, projects, activities and support for the widest possible dissemination of the Lists through formal and non-formal means. It is noted that care should be given to presenting the elements in their original context and to focus on their value and meaning for the communities concerned, rather than only focusing on their aesthetic appeal or entertainment value when publicising and disseminating information for the elements inscribed on the Lists.

It additionally defines the functions of the UNESCO Secretariat as assisting the Committee in raising awareness of intangible cultural heritage by operating as a clearing house for the collection, exchange and dissemination of information on intangible cultural heritage; facilitating the exchange of information among communities and groups, civil society, non-governmental organisations, centres of expertise, research institutes and other entities with expertise or interest in the field of intangible cultural heritage; and organising and participating in workshops, seminars and international conferences in order to provide information about the Convention (VI.1.3 International level).

The Directives not only provide guidelines for implementing awareness raising actions, but it also encourages States Parties to bestow particular care to its activities (V.1.1 General provision).

All parties are encouraged to take particular care to ensure that awareness-raising actions will not:

- de-contextualize or denaturalize the intangible cultural heritage manifestations or expressions concerned;
- mark the communities, groups or individuals concerned as not participating in contemporary life, or harm in any way their image;
- contribute to justifying any form of political, social, ethnic, religious, linguistic or gender-based discrimination;
- facilitate the misappropriation or abuse of the knowledge and skills of the communities, groups or individuals concerned;
- lead to over-commercialization or to unsustainable tourism that may put at risk the intangible cultural heritage concerned.

With the approval of the Directives, the General Assembly requested the Committee to apply them to its safeguarding activities and to report on the implementation at the fourth session of the General Assembly (Resolution 3.GA 5).
ICH News Briefs


The Korean Expert Meeting for the Safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region was held in Andong, Korea from 10 to 11 September. The Meeting was organised by ICH/CAP in collaboration with IMACO (International Mask Arts and Culture Organisation) and sponsored by Andong City and The World Confucianism Festival Organising Committee. At this festival 34 renowned Korean scholars and experts presented the current status of scholastic studies on ICH and discussed methods to strengthen cooperative measures among relevant actors in the field to safeguard ICH in the Asia-Pacific region. Presentations provided by the experts were organised into three main sessions: 1) Theoretical and practical approaches to intangible cultural heritage, 2&3) Current status and tasks of scholastic studies on ICH in the Asia-Pacific; Music, Drama and Dance. The Meeting contributed to building a consensus on international activities to safeguard ICH under the 2003 UNESCO Convention, the revitalisation of scholastic studies in the field of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region, and building networks among domestic experts.

[Bhutan] Workshop on National Language in Bhutan

A workshop on the National Language of Bhutan was recently held from 28 September to 1 October 2010, organised by the Division for Social Etiquette, the Department of Culture, and the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs. This workshop was located in Central Bhutan in the district of Bumthang. Bumthang is a city rich in culture and is the resting place for many temples, monasteries, and holy places where various spiritual personnel have visited and lived.

The entire workshop was conducted in the National Language of Bhutan known as Dzongkha. The theme of the workshop was ‘Conscious Harmonious Living’, emphasising the importance of respect and understanding towards culture.

This workshop was the 8th of its kind organised by the Department of Culture and roughly forty participants selected from various Ministries and Departments were present. These participants were invited so as to bring back to their respective Ministries and Departments information and knowledge obtained at the workshop. At the end of the workshop, participants expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the organising body for holding such an important workshop.

[UNESCO] 5th Intergovernmental Committee Meeting in Nairobi

This year’s host for the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is Kenya. This fifth session will take place in Nairobi, capital of the Republic of Kenya from 15 to 19 November 2010 at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre.

Decisions regarding elected members of the conference were declared at 4.COM 23. The members of the Bureau of the fifth session of the Committee are: Dr Jacob Ole Miaron from Kenya as Chairperson; Cyprus, Croatia, Republic of Korea and Oman as Vice-Chairs; and Ms Margarita Ruiz Brandi from Cuba as Rapporteur.

According to rule 12.2 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure, the Bureau shall coordinate the work of the Committee and fix the dates, times and order of business of meetings. It shall exercise any other duty entrusted to it by the Committee. Paragraph 49 of the Operational Directives designates the Bureau as the authorising body to approve requests for international assistance up to US $25,000 and paragraph 50 of the Operational Directives entrusts the Bureau with the legitimacy to evaluate and approve emergency requests greater than US $25,000. In case of extreme urgency, and in conformity with Criterion U.6, the Bureau of the Committee may invite the State(s) Parties concerned to submit a nomination to the List of Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding on an accelerated schedule as stated in paragraph 33 of the Operational Directives.

The Bureau of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee met for the first time on 27 November 2009 for the purpose of evaluating requests for international assistance, including preparatory assistance (5.COM 1.BUR).

[UNESCO Bangkok] UNESCO Award of Excellence in Southeast Asia

This year’s evaluation of UNESCO’s Award of Excellence for the Southeast Asia programme took place for the first time in Indonesia at the SMESCO-UKM Building in Jakarta on 22-23 September 2010.

Jointly organised by the Indonesian National Chapter of ASEAN Handicraft Promotion and Development Association (AHPADA, Indonesia or INAC), UNESCO Bangkok and Jakarta Offices, this year’s programme was supported by the Indonesian Ministry of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, the SMESCO-UKM Gallery, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of National Education, the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, the Indonesian National Crafts Council and members of INAC.

This year, 112 products of seven categories (Textile, Natural Fibres, Ceramics, Wood, Stone, Metals, Others) were proposed from nine countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, Timor-Leste) and evaluated by five international jury experts.

Participants to this event were judged in the category of excellence, authenticity, innovation and marketability of the submitted products. Respect for the environment regarding materials and production techniques as well as social responsibility were taken into account as a benchmark of the award.

19 products were awarded and were given the opportunity to be exhibited at the Trade Expo in Jakarta from the 13 to 17 October. During this event, the organising committee officially announced the awarded products on 15 October 2010.

Furthermore, these products will be presented at the BIG Fair Exhibition in Bangkok, Thailand scheduled for April 2011.

[Tonga] Kava Kuo Heka Exhibition

The Kava Kuo Heka Exhibition is a celebration of Tongan culture and was held on 10 October 2010. The representative of UNESCO to the
Pacific and the Director of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in Apia, Samoa, Dr Visesio Pongi, gave a donation of US$5,000 on behalf of the organisation towards the staging of the Kava Kuo Heka Cultural Exhibition in July at the Fāonelua Convention Centre. The Ministry of Education, Women’s Affairs and Culture, Hon Rev Dr Tevita Hala Palefau received the donation on behalf of the Ministry.

In line with UNESCO’s mandate, this ‘International Year’ is both the culmination of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and the starting point of a new strategy.

Dr Pongi paints a rather bleak scenario when countries do not see culture as a developmental priority in its own right, but as often happens in developing countries, as just a component of a country’s tourist attraction. “The consequence of this is” Dr Pongi warned, “the tourists dollar decides what your culture is. That should never happen. Once the tourists decide what your culture is, then something is wrong.”

The Kava Kuo Heka Exhibition is a celebration of Tongan culture in all its manifestations, and is expected to attract exhibitors and participants all throughout Tonga and abroad.

[Source: Tongan National Commission for UNESCO]

[Kava Kuo Heka Exhibition (UNESCO)]

**[Solomon Islands] Workshop on Cultural Strategy**

At the request of the authorities of the Solomon Islands and as a follow up of the Director-General’s visit to the country in May 2010, a Workshop on the Cultural Strategy of the Solomon Islands was held in Honiara from 18-21 October 2010. The Workshop was organised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in cooperation with the Solomon Islands National Commission for UNESCO.

The Workshop lasted four days and emphasised three important areas of the culture, namely, intangible cultural heritage (ICH), diversity of cultural expressions (DCE) and underwater cultural heritage (UCH). The Workshop addressed challenges and opportunities facing the Solomon Islands whose cultures, with 87 different languages, are at a crossroad between tradition and modernity.

The Workshop consisted of UNESCO presentations on the 3 Conventions, presentation by national experts on different aspects of their ICH (pin pipe music and dance, shark calling, customary laws, tattoo as traditional body arts, rituals for reconciliation), demonstration of ICH practices and skills (shell ornament/money making and bride prize ceremony) and small group exercises to prepare draft cultural strategies in each field of ICH, DCE, and UCH.

[Source: UNESCO Apia]

**[UNESCO Kabul] International Conference for the Safeguarding of Afghan Cultural Heritage for Sustainable Development**

The UNESCO Office in Kabul and Ministry of Information and Culture held the first International Conference since 2003 for the Safeguarding of Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage in Kabul from 18 to 20 October to highlight the important role of culture in nation building and sustainable development in Afghanistan.

Afghan authorities, including Mr Sayed Makhduum Raheen, Minister of Information and Culture and Mr Sultan Husain Resari, Minister of Urban Development as well as national and international experts from different agencies and universities came together to discuss the current condition of cultural heritage in Afghanistan and underlined the necessary steps that are to be taken in the future.

This is the first major conference on Afghanistan’s cultural heritage since 2003 and follows the high-level round table on ‘Culture for Development’, organised within the framework of the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which took place in New York from 20 to 22 September. The Ministry of Information and Culture aims to promote this as a forum for dialogue on culture for development in Afghanistan to help set the agenda for the coming years for the integration of cultural approaches to develop within existing development programs.

[Source: UNESCO Kabul]

**[ICHCAP] Closing Ceremony of the International Intensive Course for Cultural Heritage**

The closing ceremony of the ‘International Intensive Course for Cultural Heritage’ will be held on 5 November 2010 in the auditorium of the Training Center for Traditional Culture in Buyeo, Republic of Korea. Participants from the UNESCO Member States in Asia and the Pacific region were invited to participate in this course, they included: Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Uzbekistan. The key objective of this course was to strengthen networking among cultural heritage experts of governmental organisations and agencies in the field of safeguarding cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific. It provided a chance to exchange knowledge and experience, discuss regional issues currently being faced and the tasks necessary for the search of solutions regarding ICH. It was conducted in three sessions for the duration of two weeks with English as the official language.

Upon conclusion of the course, participants received certificates of completion for their participation.

[Photo by ICHCAP]