Launching a South-East Asian Regional Body for Intangible Cultural Heritage

2012 Sub-regional Meeting for Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding in South-East Asia

The first Sub-regional Meeting for Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-East Asia was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 10 to 12 September 2012. The meeting was co-organised by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia and ICHCAP.

South-East Asia is home to various ethnic groups and diverse cultures intermingling with one another harmoniously. In particular, the region’s abundant intangible cultural heritage (ICH) contributes to establishing the inhabitants’ identity, and this heritage is a major factor in achieving social and economic development. The purpose of the sub-regional meeting was to mobilise international cooperation throughout the region by identifying the current situation and issues for ICH safeguarding in the region and discussing possible solutions within the framework of information and networking.

For the two-day meeting, the participant countries—Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam—UNESCO, ICHCAP, and relevant organisations in the region established a regional cooperation system with the aims of regularly discussing ICH issues and deriving mutual cooperation. Furthermore, the participants adopted the Agenda for Collaboration to serve as a mid- to long-term plan by recommending that the UNESCO Member States in the region:

- consider ratifying the UNESCO 2003 Convention, and integrate ICH safeguarding into their national sustainable development strategies;
- mutually respect and safeguard ICH elements found within each country;
- develop partnerships among organisations in the region;
- continue discussion through similar forums, information sharing, and inviting ICHCAP to co-organise the next sub-regional meeting in 2013; and
- facilitate personnel, networking, and information exchanges amongst countries and organisations in the region and promote ICHCAP’s ICH programmes and events.

The meeting began with opening remarks from Dr Samuel Lee, Director of ICHCAP. And two keynote presentations followed with titles of ‘Strengthening Information Sharing and Networking for ICH Safeguarding in the South-East Asia’ by Dr Seong-Yong Park, Assistant Director of ICHCAP and ‘Role and Importance of Strengthening Regional Cooperation for ICH Safeguarding’ by Ms Wiendu Nuryanti, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education and Culture. In the first session, UNESCO and relevant organisations reviewed the importance of major strategies for regional and international cooperation in safeguarding ICH. Mr Tim Curtis, Chief in Culture Unit of UNESCO Office in Bangkok, presented UNESCO strategies for implementing the 2003 Convention, including capacity-building workshops and training of trainers in the Asia-Pacific region. Then, Mr Suparmin Sunjoyo, General Chairman of Indonesian National Puppetry Secretariat, gave a presentation on the various efforts in the ICH field in South-East Asia. Mr Masanori Nagaoka, Head of Culture Unit of UNESCO Office in Jakarta, presented on regional collaboration for building a network among stakeholders.

At the second session, representatives from eleven countries in South-East Asia delivered presentations on the current status and issues for ICH safeguarding at the national level and discussed ways to strengthen collaboration with a focus on information and networking.

The third session on promoting information and networking for ICH safeguarding in South-East Asia gave international experts from Uzbekistan, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, and Viet Nam an opportunity to share their experiences and insights on issues needing to be highlighted to implement the 2003 Convention successfully. Some of the topics revolved around the participation of communities and NGOs, sub-regional cooperation cases in Central Asia, ICH documentation and the establishment of database/archives, cross-border issues on ICH, and Best Practice development. The session provided participants with directions for promoting information and networking for ICH safeguarding in South-East Asia.

At the plenary discussion, as stated in the agenda, participants agreed to continue discussions through similar forums, and to invite ICHCAP to co-organise the next sub-regional meeting in 2013 with a country of the sub-region and in collaboration with regional organisations.

Pilyoung Park (ICHCAP)
Myanmar ICH Experts’ First Visit to Korea for ICH Safeguarding

Expert Seminar on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Myanmar

A
n expert seminar for ICH safeguarding in Myanmar took place in the Republic of Korea on 17 September 2012. The expert meeting was organised by ICHCAP in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Myanmar. This event was prepared in response to a letter that was sent from the Ministry of Culture requesting possible collaboration. ICHCAP and the Ministry have been communicating since May, and they agreed that it would beneficial to collaborate and share each other’s experience in the ICH field.

In this regard, ICHCAP invited three Myanmar delegates, including Mr Ye Myat Aung, Director of National Museum of NaypyiTaw; Ms Mya Mya Khin, Professor of Yangon University; and Mr Mar Lar Aung, Officer of the Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library, Ministry of Culture. In addition to the Myanmar participants, Korean ICH experts from the Cultural Heritage Administration, the National Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, and the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation took part in the seminar.

At the first session, Myanmar participants presented papers concerning ICH safeguarding activities—policy, inventory making, and research results. In response to these presentations, Korean experts shared Korea’s sixty years of accumulated experience in the field.

On the second day, Myanmar participants and ICHCAP discussed the urgent ICH safeguarding needs in Myanmar, and the participants agreed on developing a joint project on ICH safeguarding through information sharing and network building. ICHCAP and the Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library, Ministry of Culture will continue to discuss ICH-related matters, and a second meeting will be held in Myanmar before the end of 2012 to finalise a project proposal for next year.

The meeting was followed by a four-day field trip that allowed participants to visit cultural institutes in Korea—namely, the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, the Natural Heritage Centre, the National University of Cultural Heritage, and the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation—in addition to Dangjin city and Seocheon county, where they met ICH holders and practitioners of myeoncheon dugyeonju (traditional liquor) and hansan mosijagi (ramie weaving) and the community of the Gijisi Juldarigi (Tug-of-War Preservation Association).

The seminar was designed as an expert exchange programme to share useful information and experience among the participants. ICHCAP plans to work with the Ministry of Culture to implement a joint project in Myanmar using information and networking in the ICH field.

Boyoung Cha (ICHCAP)

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Cultural Heritage as a Human Right

Farida Shaheed (UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights)

“Linking the past, present, and future, cultural heritage comprises things inherited from the past that people consider so significant or valuable today that they want to transmit them to future generations.”

Closely linked to human dignity and identity, cultural heritage embodies resources that enable the cultural identification and development of individuals and communities, through which they express their humanity, give meaning to their existence, build their worldviews, and articulate their encounters with the external forces affecting their lives. Linking the past, present, and future, cultural heritage comprises things inherited from the past that people consider so significant or valuable today that they want to transmit them to future generations.

A dynamic process, like culture itself, cultural heritage inevitably reflects people’s constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions, and has considerable importance as habitat for evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions, heritage inevitably includes past actions and practices that do not accord with human rights; these may contradict current understandings and aspirations of the community. Full effective participation can promote the transmission of heritage in alignment with human rights.

Universalisation, the exploitation of economic resources, the promotion of tourism, and development programmes can all adversely influence the right to cultural heritage and intensify a disconnection between people and their heritage. This makes it all the more important to ensure that people, in particular source communities, are empowered to participate meaningfully in all decision-making processes surrounding the identification, interpretation, and development of cultural heritage. It is equally important that the access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage be free of political, religious, economic, or physical encumbrances.

The state always plays a major role in decision making both within the country and in international arenas. Internally, a selective recognition of cultural heritage by states can be problematic. Cultural symbols of dominant communities may be glorified, and the content of education and information on diverse cultural heritage may be distorted; particular aspects of the past may be emphasised or removed. This may force individuals and communities to assimilate into a mainstream community or society as well as undermine cultural diversity. When states promote the cultural heritage of specific communities as national symbols or treasures, it is vital that this be with community consent and that communities benefit from this.

Respecting the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups, and individuals concerned under the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) needs to be guided by the meaning a particular heritage holds for a specific community, rather than its ‘universal value.’ For example, the consent of source communities should be ensured in the storage and display of their cultural heritage, particularly in museums, libraries, and archives, and practices must respect the significance and interpretation assigned to such heritage by source communities.

Careful policymaking is required to guard against the misappropriation of cultural heritage that impairs the rights of communities to exercise control over, access, and enjoy their own cultural heritage but also avoid overly strict protection measures that may stifle creativity, artistic freedom, and cultural exchanges.

In concluding, I should clarify that my mandate as Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights is not about preserving culture. Its concern is ensuring that conditions exist to provide opportunities for every person, individually or collectively, to continuously (re)create a plurality of cultures that enable humankind to flourish. A vital aspect of the right to participate in cultural life is the right of people to access and enjoy all cultural heritages that hold meaning for them and have the freedoms necessary to continuously re-create, revisit, reinterpret, and create new cultural heritage and transmit it to future generations.

2. See also my first report, A/HRC/14/36, para. 9.
4. A/2012–09–26 오후 8:56:45

A young Ni-Vanuatu boy beating a tam-tam or slit drum in Vanuatu © PIMA

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A shaman, known as a jhankri or dhami in Nepal, is a part of a unique tradition that is based on spiritual belief. Nepalese society, with its deep-rooted religious faith in supernatural powers, still believes that miseries, illnesses, and bad luck are caused by evil powers and that these ill effects and consequences of evil can be removed or treated by evoking divine power. It is believed that a properly trained jhankri is gifted with the ability to gain intimate knowledge of supernatural beings—their whereabouts, desires, dislikes, and requirements—and drawing out their divine spirit to remove evil and thus cure the inflicted.

Jhankri customs are known for their traditional healing system that uses Tantra, Mantra, and special rituals. A jhankri acquires divine power through meditation, parental teaching, or guidance of the Ban Jhakri, a half-human, half-animal shaman spirit of the forest. Because jhankris are widely believed to possess special spiritual powers, they have traditionally held prominent roles Nepalese society. In most rural areas and even in some urban areas, they advise people on social and health affairs. They are also acknowledged as musicians, herbalists, diviners, and protectors, among other roles. Furthermore, jhankris are believed to be able to help guide the souls of the dead into their next lives.

Jhankris can evoke their power through different processes. They work with the traditional five elements of creation: earth, water, air, fire, and ether. Jhankris wear special costumes, play drums, sing chants, dance, and worship in special, predetermined patterns to offer different things to satiate the desires and wishes of the spirits in the hope of alleviating any present evil.

Throughout Nepal, the associated customs of the jhankri vary from place to place and even from jhankri to jhankri; however, there are common elements that bind jhankri traditions. For example, rituals often involve an animal sacrifice. Jhankri traditions also tend to start with drumming, singing, chanting, or dancing to invite the spirits into the mind and body of the jhankri, who protects his or her body with different colours and protective spiritual energies while praying to the spirits in all directions, north, south, east, and west. The process allows the jhankri to connect with the universe and the spirit world. Through song, the jhankri helps the spirits remember and relive the moment the spirits first came into contact, and when this happens, a jhankri feels a physical sensation in his or her chest and a burning in the umbilical region, and then the jhankri’s body convulses and shakes.

For holding the ceremony, a jhankri must have intimate knowledge of the spirit keepers as well as their associative places of power, such as sacred mountains, lakes, and rivers. While jhankris work in partnership with the spirits, the whole healing process is also a partnership between the jhankris and the needy person.

The jhankri traditions in Nepal are natural, spiritual, and psychological practices of healing. Elderly jhankris pass on this special art of curing illness to their disciples usually through experiential learning processes. These traditions are a form of important intangible cultural heritage of Nepalese societies, and they represent pre-historic practices that have managed to remain prevalent even though there are no written documents. The traditions have been transmitted from the past through verbal descriptions and practices. Nepalese people consider jhankri customs traditional practices that have been guided by traditional wisdom.
Monoglia  Traditions of Nature Worship: Böö and Udgan
Sonom-Ish Yundenbat (Head, ICH Protection Division, Center of Cultural Heritage)

The shamanism of the Mongols, based on the beliefs that animals and all things in nature have souls, originates in the worship of Father-Sky and Mother-Earth. Worshiping these elements has roots from the traditions of nature worship that also involves worshipping the souls of ancestors and magical power of the spirits (ongon), revering respect to the mountain and water deities through divine practices, and executing remedies and verses (shivshleg). People believe that a male shaman (böö) and a female shaman (udgan) are capable of averting and warding off misfortune and evil and taming any enemy by foretelling the future causes communicating with the ninety-nine deities (tengris) that exist in the heavens and the spirits of earth and water.

In Mongolian folk expressions, there is a proverb that translates roughly to ‘every shaman’s practice differs; every bunny rabbit’s running differs’, which expresses the idea that every shaman is an individual and the worship rituals are unrepeatable phenomena. Böö and udgan, indeed, have their own distinct characteristics related to worship, rituals, ongon, movements (dances), costumes, decorative ornaments, and tools.

Shamanism, a primary religion of Mongols, is a cultural phenomenon that reflects many forms of tangible and intangible heritage. Shamanism is a folk knowledge that regulates the relationship between the human and non-human, a mentality to protect the nature and earth, and an original source of traditional Mongolian ideology towards universe.

As an ICH expression, shamanism is deeply absorbed in intentional and unintentional activities and behaviours of people in their daily lives. Many rites, such as conducting a milk (tea) libation every morning as an offering for the spirits, offering a piece of fat to the fire as a reverence of hearth, and adding a stone to the cairn (ovoo), have become routine behaviours out of tradition rather than practices of religion, and they have been transmitted from generation to generation.

Shamanic rites, such as calling the spirits of humans and animals, purifying, consecrating of animals, and worshipping a sacred mountain, cairn, fire, or sun, each has its own distinct melodic chant and verse that have become an independent form of traditional oral literature, an important oral heritage of the Mongols.

For calling spirits, shamans perform ceremonies with dance movements while chanting melodic verses in rhythm with their tools, including tömör khil-khuur (musical instruments) and khets-khengereg (drums). This practice is considered rare, and it has become an outstanding heritage of folk performing arts of the Mongols.

Shamans respect their costumes, which are called khuyag (armor), and consider them living objects that possess their own soul and deity. The costumes, tools, and ornaments of shamans reflect the shamans’ distinctiveness with unique styles that vary not only among böö and udgan but also among localities, regions, and ethnic groups. These items are also considered products of traditional craftsmanship, possessing ethnographic values that reflect both tangible and intangible heritage characteristics.

Originating and developing between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and according to the unanimity of shamanic and Buddhist views about elements of nature, worshipping rites have a predominant role in shamanism, and they are a manifestation of the diversity in ICH expressions.
Indigenously developed shamanism varies according to geographic location and anthropological characteristics. But all these variations share the belief that nature commands all life. So it can be said that shamanism of Myanmar originates from nature worship in which the spirits within nature govern life. Appeasing these spirits brings good to all living creatures; however, evil is cast upon those who disobey the laws of the spirits. Within the context of these beliefs, humans must soothe the spirits through rituals. However, since direct contact with deities and spirits is not possible for everyone, shamans emerged to act as agents who can communicate with the spiritual world through various rituals.

A variation to the basic nature worship of indigenous shamanism is ancestral worship, which is based on the belief that humans are made up of a body and soul and that the soul lives on when a person dies. To invoke or expel spirits, shamans perform rites and chant mantras. These shamans use their powers to cure family members who fall sick. As herbalists, the shamans also create herbal medicines and concoctions learnt from their forefathers.

Astrological worship is another variation of shamanism in which it is believed that all heavenly bodies govern our planet and everything on it. According to this form of astrology, a person is born in harmony with the position of the heavenly bodies, so the planetary positions are recorded at the exact time and date of delivery. The astrological diagrams, numbers, and letters are recorded on a palm leaf, which serves as a birth certificate and a horoscope. The information can then be examined by a shaman astrologer who will give advice or prescribe remedies based on his mathematical workings. Short-term prescriptions may include making offerings to planet posts, where shamans are available to chant and pray. For long-term remedies, the shaman astrologer may give the advice seeker a paper that includes a list of food and drink to avoid and to consume, colours to wear or not wear, lucky and unlucky days, and similar things.

Alchemy is also associated with shamanism in Myanmar, and it has four specialisations: 1) turning base metals into gold, 2) concocting a panacea for all diseases, 3) concocting aphrodisiacs, and 4) making a ball of mercury that allows one fly in the air and dive into water and earth to conquer all enemies. Beginners in alchemy, if they are to learn the specialisations, must be highly educated in classical literature on metals, metal smelting, herbal medicine, and occult science. Once they become accomplished alchemists they often leave the community to live in remote places where they can avoid crowds and the public. This is especially true of alchemists of the fourth variety who had produced a mercury ball.

Historically, Myanmar kings had tried to stamp out spirit worship and all superstitions related to shamanism, especially after Theravada Buddhism was established. However, religious freedom and tolerance stopped these attempts. Today there is a peaceful coexistence between shamanism and Buddhism, and Myanmar people embrace the two religious. To improve their present life, they worship spirits and deities related to shamanism. But to improve conditions for the afterlife, they strongly embrace Buddhism.
Korean shamanism is a collective term to designate a religious folk tradition that includes private, domestic, and communal rituals. Shamanism is an accumulation of five thousand years of Korean life, thought, and culture, so it is a representative folk belief of Korean society. It also has played a key role as a carrier of traditional culture, such as music, dance, myth, and epic poetry. Furthermore, most Koreans, even though many of them are sceptical about shamanism these days, believe that shamanism helps preserve the deep-rooted national ethos. Indeed, the influence of shamanism is so prevalent that one might say that the worldview and symbolism found in shamanism constitutes Korea’s fundamental religious system.

Since the 1960s, Korean shamanism has been revived through government support. The authorities have promoted shamanic performing arts as a representative of traditional culture. The government’s exertion in establishing traditional culture resulted in the system of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), which was legislated in 1962. Since shaman rituals preserve the past in the Korean mind, the authorities regarded them as the most forcible type of promotion for traditional culture. Eleven shaman rituals have been designated as ICH since the 1970s. The local shamanic rituals designated as ICH have become representations of national culture. They no longer represent solely local culture but are instead more generically representative since the rituals remind Koreans of what they used to signify culturally, and at the same time, they remind Koreans about what is representative of their contemporary lives in modern Korea.

After identifying the means of shaman recruit, the manners of conducting a ritual, the ritual materials, and the shamanic performing arts, Korean shamans can be roughly divided into two types: spirit-descended shamans and hereditary shamans. Typically found in the northern half of the Korean peninsula, the former have a spiritual experience through which they become capable of telling fortunes during a ritual. Found in the southern half of the peninsula, the latter do not experience spirit possession but rather inherit the profession from their parents. The boundary that separates the two types of shaman is the Han River that crosses the centre of the Korean peninsula.

The shamanic ritual is a composite performance of song, music, dance, and drama. A shaman sings to usher, revere, entertain, and see off gods and spirits. She dances to gratify divine beings and to enter a trance state. She performs a comic mime to amuse not only deities but also her clients at the ritual site. The shamanic ritual, furthermore, has long exerted a potent effect on the development of many performing arts, such as sinawi (instrumental ensemble music with improvisations), sanjo (soli instrumental music), pansori (epic vocal music), and salpuri (exorcism dance).

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Field Report

We’ve Made it and Made it in Style—The Eleventh Festival of Pacific Arts in the Solomon Islands

David Tuhanuku (Chairman of the Eleventh FOPA Media Communications Committee)

The indigenous Maoris of New Zealand perform their traditional poi dance © Charles Kauiku

The Solomon Islands hosted the eleventh FOPA under the theme; ‘In Harmony with Nature,’ to reflect and signify the need for Pacific islanders to re-establish their traditional respect and intimate link with their environment, the basis of their existence over past generations.

It had taken the Solomon Islands forty long years to host the most prestigious regional cultural event in the Pacific, the Festival of Pacific Arts (FOPA). The Festival brought to the Solomon Islands about 2,500 dancers, artists, and other cultural practitioners from twenty-two countries in the region to share, interact, and showcase the uniqueness and diversities of their Pacific cultures and traditions in the context of a changing Pacific.

From 1 to 14 July 2012, the Solomon Islands hosted the eleventh FOPA under the theme; ‘In Harmony with Nature,’ to reflect and signify the need for Pacific islanders to re-establish their traditional respect and intimate link with their environment, the basis of their existence over past generations. The theme also speaks of the need to reject threats to the very existence of future generations, such as rising sea level due to climate change, a serious threat to the survival and future of many Pacific islands communities today.

Every four years since its inception in 1972, FOPA has been bringing together thousands of artists and other cultural practitioners to show case their cultural and contemporary dance and music, theatre and film, literature, culinary arts, navigation and canoeing, and their various forms of handicrafts. Pacific countries first initiated FOPA as a long-term strategy aimed at preserving the Pacific’s unique cultures and traditions in response to eroding external forces of influence. While more recent festivals had to address emerging challenges to FOPA, such as its relevance and sustainability in the face of increasing hosting costs, FOPA has been hailed as the ‘Pacific Cultural Renaissance.’ A tribute to FOPA’s role in raising the profile of the Pacific region while being an ever-important venue for cultural exchange amongst Pacific communities.

At the closing ceremony at the Lawson Tama Sports Stadium in the capital Honiara on July 13, Festival Chairperson Ms Doreen Kuper, said FOPA has developed into one of the most important social gatherings of the ordinary people of the Region. ‘As part of that development trend, we now see wider participation by other regions with our brothers and sisters from the Asian region, such as Japan and Taiwan, now taking part.’ She said that there had never been a gathering in the Solomon Islands to rival the eleventh FOPA.

About fifty overseas and local journalists covered the Festival and were as impressed about its achievements.

An Aboriginal new Media Artist, Jenny Fraser, described her delegation’s arrival in the Solomon Islands before the official opening as hitting the ground running and describing the Festival as ‘hectic and massive with so much going on which you cannot absorb within the short period of time’ She also described the audience as ‘inspiring, warm, enthusiastic, and welcoming.’

A visiting Papua New Guinea journalist, Simon Eroro, said that during the performances, he realised that ‘I have failed to live my own culture, and all I can do is to try to ensure that my own children would not go the same way,’ adding that it is one’s culture and traditions define a person as a human being and are fundamental to existence and survival.
Ms Linda Patterson, who spoke at the closing on behalf of the Secretariat of the Pacific Commission (SPC), described the eleventh FOPA as the best ever.

The Festival village was the largest attraction with its well-decorated and well-structured setup. It gave regional participants their own Pasifika venue to showcase their arts and crafts and to perform songs and dances. A separate Solomon Islands’ village was set up so locals were able to have a venue to showcase the diversity of their Melanesian, Polynesian, and Micronesian multicultural society. The Solomon Islands’ village had an artificial lake and different huts with specific designs and styles to represent the country’s nine provinces and their different styles of art and decor, which add colour and beauty to the cultural diversities of Solomon Islands’ society. Many visitors and commentators spoke of the Festival as creating new potential and opportunities to take the regional event into new heights, new horizons, and new visions.

The Governor General of the Solomon Islands, Sir Frank Kabui, also spoke of the Festival as ‘a source of wealth, knowledge, inspiration, and new horizons’. And to the performers he said that ‘you created in us a feeling of happiness and fulfilment by your dancing, art, music, colour, and imagination. You have opened our eyes to the world of art and its importance in society.’ His Excellency added that the Festival ‘binds us together in friendship and identifies us as the peoples of the Pacific with distinct cultures, traditions, and experiences’. He also appealed to the regional governments and donors ‘to recognise the importance of Pacific cultures and traditions and to invest more financial resources to preserve, develop, and improve our cultures and traditions before they are lost forever.’

Visiting PNG-Australian-based journalist, Tania Nugent, who has been a TV producer and presenter with ABC for eighteen years, described the Festival as an incredible two-week showcase of the diversities of Pacific cultures. She said the main venue was very well organised and enabled visitors to find out what was going on without any difficulty. Her observation about the Solomon Islands’ village was it had brought the culture alive. Ms Nugent also praised the participation by so many young people in the Festival. She said that the spirit of FOPA is to preserve our cultures and that the eleventh FOPA has shown these endeavours are indeed working. Young people not only participated in the various cultural activities in the Solomon Islands village, but gained real sense of pride in their own cultures. ‘They realise just how special, valuable, and unique they are in a country of so much diversity when you put them side by side with other countries,’ Ms Nugent said.
The culture of the Kazakh people originates from the deepest history of Eurasia. Its roots appear in the creativity of the nomadic tribes who roamed Kazakh steppes long before the Kazakh nation was created. This culture originates from a nomadic lifestyle, and it reflects a harmonious model that combines different cultures, languages, and confessions. Nomads maintained cooperative relationships with settled populations, and this facilitated cultural exchanges that enriched the cultures of the region.

The Silk Road infiltrated the most fertile and densely populated regions of Central and Western Asia. Travellers of all kind caravanned on their east-west and west-east journeys bringing samples of their original culture, traditions, and customs. In ancient cities education and religious centres were created as were workshops for crafts. Furthermore, many traditions and master crafts were cross-generationally transmitted from father to son or from master to apprentice. These cross-cultural dialogues benefited the nomads, travellers, and permanent settlers, as the interactions helped shape a world view and encouraged tolerance and acceptance.

The Kazakhstaniis, like most cultures, celebrate the key stages of human life (birth, circumcision, marriage, mourning, etc.) as well as auspicious periods, such as Nauryz. The contribution of ancient traditions and practices have left a strong imprint on language, religious beliefs and practices, gastronomy, manners, work, building, and creativity. Hence, the Kazakhstanis need tangible and intangible references to feel secure inside their social and cultural environment. Therefore, it would be disastrous if these objects and practices were to disappear. At the same time, however, authorities formally had disregarded these social practices for almost two centuries.

The Ministry of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan and the local governments are responsible for safeguarding, inventorying, and promoting cultural heritage. The State Registry includes inscription on the national and local levels, thus combining the territorial principle with site classification (historical monuments, sites, and objects). The government adopts the State Registry of the National Heritage Objects and the State Registries of the Local Heritage Objects.

Even though the registries already incorporate the petroglyphs of Tamgaly (included in the list of the World Cultural Heritage) and some sacred sites, the intangible heritage elements are not part of the registries yet.

The Kazakhstan Parliament ratified the 2003 Convention in December 2011, and as of now, it is the only legal document referring to the term intangible cultural heritage. However, more broadly, national legislation includes intangible heritage in a number of legal acts and regulations. Hence, ICH safeguarding policy did not start from zero, but rather it built upon an already established infrastructure. There was a policy for folk culture that focused on traditions, customs, knowledge, and techniques transmitted cross-generationally. There was academic ethnic and cultural research in traditional beliefs, oral and musical heritage, crafts, and applied arts. In addition, there was the long-term practice of musical competitions, festive events, and folklore performances.

It also became clear that safeguarding intangible heritage is not confined to the cultural domain as it involves matters such as environmental management, intellectual property, formal and informal education, crafts, and tourism. Disregarding these matters reduces inventories to be mere proclamations of cultural value, and the documentation becomes yet another archive for experts to consult. Therefore, it is essential for public policy to involve the producers and stakeholders of intangible heritage at every stage of the safeguarding process.

The National ICH Committee introduced an inventory of Kazakhstani ICH. The regulations contain the criteria and procedures for entering an element on this inventory.

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culture and on safeguarding the historical and cultural heritage, provide the framework for protecting cultural heritage. Heritage can include both tangible and intangible elements. Movable heritage (artefacts and utensils), intangible heritage (practices, customs, and knowledge), and immovable heritage (buildings and landscapes) are often interrelated and reinforce one another. Heritage encompasses those cultural expressions that people find sufficiently valuable to transmit. The legislation also highlights the importance of sharing responsibility for safeguarding among the public sector, community, and individuals.

The main challenge is to establish a legal mechanism that takes into account the dynamic and procedural nature of intangible cultural assets and that simultaneously contributes to evaluating and promoting those assets for the benefit of stakeholders and of society in general. Therefore, cultural authorities are not limited to a supervisory role in implementing laws, but rather exist as important partners for supporting groups and cultural heritage communities, which enables these groups and communities to exert their right to produce and protect cultural objects.

After joining the Convention, the Kazakhstan National Commission for UNESCO broadly pursued a two-track policy. Already in December 2011, the Chairman of the National Commission launched consultations on drawing up a long-term ICH policy with the Office of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and relevant national cultural ministries. This process resulted in the draft Concept on Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Kazakhstan, a document with an analysis of existing and past safeguarding efforts as well as the policy framework to align national heritage programs to the Convention.

The Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO and ISESCO convened two meetings in February and March 2012 on ICH inventorying and establishing the National ICH Committee. The meetings included government and non-government cultural experts, academics, and artisans. The meetings resulted in drafting a provisional intangible heritage list for nomination to the UNESCO lists (four elements) and an outline of the regulations and criteria for ICH selection. Kazakhstan submitted four nominations for the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity:

• Nauryz Celebration (joining an existing multinationl nomination)
• Falconry (joining an existing multinational nomination)
• Kara Zhorga Folk Dance (submitted for possible inscription in 2013)
• Orteke Puppet Performance (submitted for possible inscription in 2013)

The National ICH Committee introduced an inventory of Kazakhstan ICH. The regulations contain the criteria and procedures for entering an element on this inventory. The regulations also describe the procedures for nominating an element included in this inventory for the Representative List. With this inventory, the National ICH Committee wants to achieve more than a list of Kazakhstan ICH; the committee wants the inventory to provide insight into

• the heritage communities involved with the ICH;
• the measures taken by the heritage community to safeguard the ICH; transmit it to future generations, and increase societal support for the ICH; and
• the heritage experts involved with the heritage community, who assist and support the community in ICH safeguarding.

Quality checks have been built into the regulations. The regulations recommend that the cultural heritage community cooperates with academic and creative organisations, which could include museums, cultural archives institutions, heritage libraries, and many others, even NGOs and local authorities with a cultural heritage policy. This cooperation should enhance the heritage reflex of the cultural heritage community and help design measures to safeguard the ICH element.

The first five-day training workshop on implementing the 2003 Convention was organised in April 2012 in Astana. About thirty representatives from the government agencies, leading universities, the ICH National Committee, and the UNESCO Observatory on Central Asia as well as ICH bearers—artisans, musicians, storytellers, and representatives from youth NGOs—took part in the training.

Another component of quality control is the Technical Expert’s Committee, an advisory body established by the National Commission for UNESCO. This committee of experts checks the submissions against the criteria and examines the quality of a nomination dossier. The committee indicates the areas for file improvement, if necessary, and advises the National Commission whether to include an element on the national ICH List. By September 2012, the committee included eighteen ICH elements to the Provisional National Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Kazakhstan:

• Oral Traditions and Expressions (two elements)
• Performing Arts (nine elements)
• Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events (one element)
• Knowledge and Practices Concerning Nature and the Universe (one element)
• Traditional Craftsmanship (five elements)

Government control also raises questions about the qualifications of those implementing the ICH Convention. ICH is a matter of cultural particularity and nuance. Properly researching, documenting, understanding, and presenting local cultural traditions requires adequate linguistic skills; superior levels of background training in cultural fields such as ethnology, linguistics, ethnomusicology, folklore, and the ethno-sciences. It often anticipates advanced knowledge of various scientific and technical disciplines. Therefore there is a definite need for continual training and information sharing through UNESCO, ICHCAP, and other organisations. Through international collaboration, Kazakhstan and other nations of the Asia-Pacific region can continue to implement proper ICH safeguarding measures.
Leading Discourse on ICH Issues in Korea

Cooperative Network Meetings for ICH Safeguarding in the Republic of Korea

“These meetings aim to raise awareness in implementing the 2003 Convention and to reinforce ICHCAP’s main functions—information and networking.”

As part of its network-building activities, ICHCAP organises different meetings at the international, national, and regional levels. It is very important to lead discourse on ICH safeguarding in the Republic of Korea, which is the geographical base of the Centre. To this end, ICHCAP has held meetings for different stakeholders to involve them in discussions and safeguarding activities. Categorising the main stakeholders as 1) ICH-related organisations, 2) ICH practitioners, 3) experts, and 4) local governments, the Centre provides stages for discussion more than two times every year. These meetings aim to raise awareness in implementing the 2003 Convention and to reinforce ICHCAP’s main functions—information and networking. For this issue, ‘ICHAP Inside’ introduces the main objectives and the substance of the meetings targeted towards stakeholders, with the hope that this information can be helpful to others by providing a measure for stimulating discourse on ICH issues.

ICH-Related Organisations

To build cooperative relationships with diverse organisations in the country, ICHCAP has invited organisations in the ICH field to discuss matters related to information, networking, and international cooperation. This has contributed to reinforcing the Centre’s functions by exchanging information and establishing cooperation system. The Korea International Cooperation Agency, the National Folk Museum, the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts, and the Korea Creative Content Agency, to name a few, have suggested methods for collecting, using, and distributing information, and they have exchanged their ICH work to enhance collaboration.

ICH Practitioners

Collaborating with the Cultural Heritage Administration, ICHCAP introduces the 2003 Convention and any changes in government ICH policies to ICH stakeholders, particularly to concerned practitioners. Keeping these stakeholders and their supporting organisations aware of ICH and the Convention will increase their self-respect towards their own heritage and will naturally strengthen the viability of heritage. Therefore, ICHCAP has put forth efforts to raise awareness of practitioner communities on the Convention and ICH itself and to form a consensus on the importance of safeguarding ICH.

Experts

There have been various meetings targeted towards experts who work in fields related to ICH and ICH safeguarding, including area studies in the Asia-Pacific region, intellectual property rights, and international organisations. These experts also provide advice and support on the Centre’s activities. Bringing questions such as ‘what are the characteristics and considerations of ICH in each country?’ and ‘how should IPR issues in the process of safeguarding ICH be approached?’, the meetings seek effective safeguarding measures not only through in-depth study on ICH itself but also by linking separate fields.

Local Governments

To settle urgent tasks that local governments face in relation to UNESCO in particular, ICHCAP makes agreements and seeks solutions through meetings. The Centre helps local governments develop models for ICH safeguarding that are most suitable for each government and shares with others the experiences and knowledge from those activities. In addition, to help ensure that local governments can effectively establish and implement safeguarding plans, ICHCAP puts forth efforts to raise awareness of the local governments, which are the principle agents for safeguarding widely dispersed ICH.

Through these series of cooperative network meetings in Korea, ICHCAP establishes cooperative relationships with relevant organisations and reinforces its main functions. The meetings also help enhance stakeholders’ awareness of the importance of ICH and understanding the Convention. Furthermore, ICHCAP is provided with consultations on its activities to become aware of new issues through the help of experts while the Centre solves local tasks in collaboration with local governments. In holding the meetings, ICHCAP should work with the abovementioned bodies for more inclusive ICH safeguarding activities and broaden the target bodies to the general public, including younger generations.

Woonmo Park and Milee Choi (ICHCAP)

Major meetings held in Korea, by target groups

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<th>Theme of Meeting</th>
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<td>Measures for Establishing Information and Networks for ICH Safeguarding</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Measures for Establishing Information and Networks for ICH Safeguarding</td>
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<td>Enhancing Collaboration among ICH-Related Organisations for International Cooperation in ICH</td>
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<td>ICH Practitioners</td>
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<td>UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tasks Essential to Area Studies in Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>Expanding Experts Pool and Reinforcing International Cooperation in the ICH Field</td>
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<td>Policy Trends and International Cooperation Strategy</td>
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Safeguarding Pioneers

Indonesian National Puppetry Secretariat (SENA WANGI)

Hari Suwasono (Secretary General, SENA WANGI)

Background
The Indonesian National Pewayangan / Puppetry Secretariat (SENA WANGI) is a social and cultural organisation established on 12 August 1975, and it is currently located in Jakarta. The organisation's basic tasks involve coordinating activities for conserve and develop wayang and the art of puppet performances in Indonesia.

SENA WANGI is the national secretariat of wayang and puppetry art organisations. Its members are various wayang artists and cultural experts as well as prominent members of society, SENA WANGI is an independent and self-supporting social organisation endeavouring to develop wayang as a force in the field of national culture.

Vision
In its effort to conserve and develop wayang, SENA WANGI envisions making it one of the pillars of national culture. To achieve this end, the art of wayang should become a vehicle and mouthpiece of culture to uplift the quality and standards of humanity.

Mission
- To establish its role as a body for conserving, preserving, and innovating the art of wayang
- To develop wayang arts according to present challenges
- To increase society's appreciation of wayang arts, especially among the younger generation
- To spread within society and into the lives of the people the philosophical values and moral messages contained in wayang arts
- To apply management principles, including communication and collaboration with institutions and individuals within Indonesia and overseas, in developing wayang art
- To create an institution for critiquing wayang arts

Program
The strategic program of SENA WANGI involves four basic programs—namely, formulation and establishment of policy for conserving and developing wayang; research and development; documentation and information; and overseas connections. Implementing the strategic program includes the following tasks among others:

- Forming and establishing policy for wayang conservation and development
- Researching and developing wayang, both classically and innovatively
- Documenting and informing about wayang throughout Indonesia using the Wayang Database Centre (PDWI) and its website
- Developing organisations, bodies, and traditional learning institutions of wayang (sanggar)
- Holding seminars and other meetings
- Developing human resources involved with wayang—namely artists, experts, and lovers of the art
- Developing critiquing standards
- Maintaining good connections with international organisations, foundations, and experts

Activities
Organisation
- Increase the abilities of the organisation and its committee members in carrying out their duties
- Carry on close and effective collaboration with government bodies and departments as well as private organisations and individuals within Indonesia and overseas, for instance by organising friends of wayang

Research and Development
- Research critiques of wayang, the noble values contained in wayang, and the development of wayang along with the challenges of the age

- Develop classic wayang as well as new innovations
- Conserve and develop rare styles of wayang

Publication
Publish books, such as the Encyclopedia of Wayang, manuscripts for books on wayang, and a journal and upgrade the wayang magazine Cempala and others.

Appreciation of Wayang
- Motivate organisations, especially PEPAD (Indonesian Puppeteer Union), a traditional learning institution of wayang, as well as private and governmental bodies related to wayang arts, to organise performances
- Organise periodic wayang festivals (The Indonesian Wayang Week is held once every five years, and various wayang festivals and performances are held annually.)
- Include wayang performances in a special package for broadcast media (TV program, film, video, etc.)

International Cooperation
- Pioneer and motivate the formation of an ASEAN Puppetry Association (APA) as a form of ASEAN collaboration in the social and cultural field
- Participate in the international puppetry organisation, UNIMA (Union Internationale de la Marionnette)
- Collaborate with UNESCO to conserve and develop wayang, which has become a cultural masterpiece of the world
- Participate in various puppetry festivals, meetings, and other international events
- Collaborate and communicate with puppetry artists and experts overseas

Based on the eighth Congress of SENA WANGI on 20 and 21 October 2011, the General Chairman of SENA WANGI is Mr. Suparmin Sunjoyo and the Secretary General is Mr. Hari Suwasono from 2011 to 2016.
UNESCO’s global strategy to strengthen national capacities for intangible cultural heritage safeguarding is well into its first year of implementation. More than thirty-five countries have already benefitted from the initial round of projects, and another twenty are in the process of basic needs assessment and project elaboration. Among the pioneer countries are nine from Asia and the Pacific (Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao Peoples’ Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste), thanks to generous support provided by Japan and the Republic of Korea, and four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan), thanks to funding from Norway to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.

Capacity building for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage recognises that effectively implementing the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) depends upon profound knowledge and understanding of the concepts, measures, and mechanisms in the Convention. The UNESCO global strategy, with its carefully designed multi-country projects, therefore, supports revising policies and legislation, redesigning the institutional infrastructure, developing inventory methods and systems, fully involving diverse stakeholders, and using the technical skills required to plan and request international assistance or submit nominations to the Convention’s lists.

While workshops and training activities are the most visible part of the capacity-building strategy, they are embedded in an integrated process of contextualised technical assistance to beneficiary states. In addition to needs assessments that precede the training phase, consultancies provide support to states in strengthening national laws and policies. The various activities are organised according to the specific needs of beneficiary states and provide ongoing accompaniment in the process of putting the means in place to implement the Convention effectively.

The goals of the Convention and the challenges of implementing it at the national level provoke passionate debate everywhere. Topics include the definition of intangible cultural heritage, the meaning and benefits of safeguarding, the role of communities as key stakeholders, state obligations, policy implications, inventorying, and international cooperation mechanisms. Workshops on community-based inventorying combined with pilot activities help to solidify inventory mechanisms or establish them where none exist.

Training materials have been prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with internationally recognised experts covering four initial priority topics: (i) ratification, (ii) implementation, (iii) community-based inventorying, and (iv) nominations. A network of seventy-seven regional experts, including thirteen from Asia and the Pacific, participated in intensive training on how to use these four training curricula. This network of facilitators is now conducting capacity-building activities around the world, thanks to the successful mobilisation of some US$8.5 million in extra-budgetary resources that have been contributed or pledged by different governments such as Bulgaria, the European Union, Flanders (Belgium), Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, and Spain.

With the implementation of the global capacity-building strategy in full flow, UNESCO is organising a first review from 7 to 10 November in Guangzhou, China, hosted by the Training Center for the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (CRIHAP) with the generous support of the Chinese Government. Twenty-five facilitators and UNESCO colleagues who have been active in this first implementation phase will take stock of their experiences to date, discuss lessons learnt, and make suggestions on curriculum revision, training methods, and the future orientation of the strategy.

Wherever these capacity-building activities are underway, they foreground the importance of intangible cultural heritage for the well-being of communities and the sustainable development of their societies, especially in times when the continued practice and transmission of that heritage face many threats. The question of the role that ICH plays for the identity and livelihoods of communities inspires very lively debate in workshops across the world, reflecting the linguistic and conceptual diversity that participants bring to the capacity-building activities. Facilitators emphasise that when stakeholders understand the ethos and benefits of safeguarding, they become eager and devoted members of the ICH family, ready to spare no effort to promote the common cause of implementing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.

### Understanding ICH

UNESCO’s Global Capacity-Building Strategy on Implementing the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Susanne Schnüttgen* (Chief of Unit, Capacity Building and Heritage Policy, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, UNESCO)

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* Contact: Susanne Schnuettgen, Chief of Unit, Capacity Building and Heritage Policy, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France, Email: s.schnuettgen@unesco.org / Tel: +33 1 45 68 37 11

UNESCO’s workshops for global strategy to strengthen national capacities for ICH safeguarding

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**Note:** The table above provides an overview of the implementation and workshop topics related to the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
ICH News Briefs

[UNESCO] 7.COM Date and Venue Change Announced

The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee will take place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris between 3 and 7 December 2012.

Grenada announced that it would be unable to host the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, the Bureau of the seventh session met electronically and, pursuant to Rule 4.1 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure and in consultation with the Director-General, recalled Decision 6.COM 23, which scheduled the seventh session to take place in Grenada in November 2012, and changed the date and venue of the meeting by adopting Decision 7.COM.4.BUR 1.

The Chairperson for the Bureau is Mr Arley Gill of Grenada, and the Vice Chairs hail from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Morocco, and Spain. Mr Ion de la Riva Guzmán de Frutos of Spain is the Bureau’s Rapporteur.

[ROK] Korea-Central Asia Cultural Ministerial Meeting

The first Korea-Central Asia Cultural Ministerial Meeting took place in Gwangju Metropolitan City, Korea, on 20 and 21 August 2012. The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Korea, and it was organised to commemorate the twentieth anniversary since Korea established diplomatic ties with Central Asian States. Culture Ministers from five Central Asian countries—namely, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—participated in the meeting.

During his keynote speech, Mr Kawng-shik Choe, Minister of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Korea, emphasised the anticipated roles of the Asian Culture Complex, which will be constructed in Gwangju by 2014. He said the complex will be a venue to promote mutual understanding of culture and diversity and the importance of cultural as a resource.

The participating Ministers also shared their views on how to enhance cooperative relations among Central Asian States and Korea through Asian Culture Complex. The Ministers agreed to make collective efforts to safeguard and promote cultural heritage in Central Asia and Korea with respect to each other’s cultures. The Ministers signed the Gwangju Declaration, which aims to encourage cultural cooperation, and they held a press conference on 21 August.

[Nepal] International Folklore Congress

The Nepali Folklore Society organised the 4th International Folklore Congress, which was held in Kathmandu from 17 to 19 August. The focus of the Congress was on intangible cultural heritage within folklore and folk life studies. The two venues for the Congress were the Nepal Tourism Board and the Nepal Academy.

The Congress served as an academic forum for ICH scholars and bearers from Australia, Bangladesh, China, France, Germany, India, Pakistan, Spain, USA, UK, and other nations. Researchers, teachers, and practitioners from varied disciplines, such as folklore, sociology, anthropology, culture, and history, presented over a hundred papers on topics as varied as the backgrounds of the participants. A few of the more noteworthy topics were ‘Folklore, Folk Life and Intangible Cultural Heritage’, ‘Folklore, Tourism and Development Issues’, ‘Folklore, Intellectual Property and Legal Issues’, and ‘Folklore, Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Rights’. As a way of honouring Siddhicharan Shrestha, a celebrated Nepalese poet, the Society also included a special international poetry recitation session on the schedule.

Established in 1995, the Society promotes folklore and folk life studies in Nepal. To date, the Society has organised three international congresses, one each in 2001, 2003, and 2009, and a National Folklore congress in 2006.

[UNESCO] Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, during its sixth session that was held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2011, decided to convene an open-ended intergovernmental working group to discuss the scale or scope of an ICH element in the context of implementing the 2003 Convention (Decision 6.COM 15).

The working group will meet on 22 and 23 October 2012 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. On the opening day, discussions on four interrelated themes will be guided by discussion papers prepared by experts from States Parties to the Convention. The themes for discussion will be as follows.

- Concepts of the element in drafting the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives
- Taking stock of the elements inscribed on the Lists: actual trends, categories, and examples
- Possible ways to deal with similar elements: the extension of an inscribed element and the nomination of serial elements
- ‘Right’ for what context? Elements of intangible cultural heritage in inventorizing, listing, safeguarding, and raising awareness

On the second day of the meeting, general discussions will take place to allow States Parties to reflect on matters raised while drafting and implementing the Convention.

The results of the two-day discussions will be presented at the seventh session of the Committee that is scheduled for Late 2012.

[Viet Nam] Cultural Heritage Training Workshop

The Department of Cultural Heritage of Viet Nam (DHC) organised Cultural Heritage Training Workshop 2012, which was held from 6 to 8 September.

The workshop was part of the DHC’s annual programme that aims toward raising awareness and building capacity of Vietnamese cultural officials, including directors of provincial museums and members of relic management boards.

This year’s workshop topics were on the theory and practice of education in museums,
ICH inventory making, and database development, archives, and management. Deputy Director Nguyen Huu Toan introduced the workshop, and Director Nguyen The Hung gave the opening statement. Dr Diana Walters, an expert of museology and cultural heritage, came from the United Kingdom to discuss the role of education in museums. Tackling the topic of inventories, Prof Jang Hyuk Im, Department of Folklore, Chung Ang University, presented information on Korea’s experience in making ICH inventories. From ICHCAP, Mr Ki Jong Park led an informative discussion on building and managing ICH databases.

The workshop was highly successful in that it not only facilitated information exchange for experts to increase their knowledge but also reinforced the overall importance of international cooperation in ICH safeguarding activities.

[UNESCO Bangkok] Using Technology to Combat the Effects of Technology

The massive influx of technology into traditional societies has long been understood to be a threat to intangible cultural heritage. Ironically enough, however, UNESCO has made a move to use technology as a way to disseminate heritage information to young learners.

With the support of the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and the city of Gangneung in Korea, UNESCO has created a two-CD set that children can use on computers as a way of learning about traditional heritage. This pilot project’s CDs include interactive games and documentaries covering information about ninety traditional games of fourteen ethnic groups scattered over Thailand, Malaysia, Laos, and Cambodia.

By clicking through the different icons, users see animations and videos of other children demonstrating how to play the games. Furthermore, as a teaching tool, teachers have access to PDF files that give ideas on how to incorporate the games into different subjects—maths, science, history, art, physical education, and others.

The initial distribution of the CDs took place on 22 September 2012 at the Museum of Siam in Bangkok, Thailand. Also included with the launch were a video presentation, a toy exhibition, and many other activities for both children and adults. [Source: Bangkok Post]

[ROK] International Conference on Museums and Intangible Heritage

On 28 and 29 August 2012, the National Folk Museum of Korea held an international conference on museums and intangible heritage. The conference was organised as a way to promote the use of intangible heritage in museums. In addition, the conference provided an opportunity to increase awareness of the value and importance of intangible heritage.

Ten renowned international scholars and museum experts presented papers on various topics related to museums and intangible cultural heritage. Mr Jingi Cheon, the Director of the National Folk Museum of Korea delivered the welcoming speech, and Prof Kidong Bae of Hanyang University, who is also a chairperson for ICOM Korea, delivered the keynote speech. Following the introductory speeches, seven papers were presented, and a follow-up group discussion, which was chaired by Prof Kyeongsu Na of Chonnam National University, took place to close out the first session. On the second day, the final three participants presented their papers. The closing discussion session was chaired by Prof Jeonggil Choe of Sejong University.

The presenters were Ms Alissandra Cummins (Barbados Museum and Historical Society), Mr James Deutsch (Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage), Prof Catherine E. Bell (Alberta University), Prof Hanhee Hahn (Chonbuk University), Prof Amargeswar Galla, (International Institute for the Inclusive Museum), Prof Soojin Jung (Dongguk University), Ms Damodar Frlan (Croatia National Ethnology Museum), Mr Kunwook Lee (National Folk Museum of Korea), Prof Kenji Yoshida (National Ethnology Museum of Japan), and Mr Changhyun Oh (National Folk Museum of Korea).

[PNG] Community-Based Inventorying Workshop

Following the first PNG Intangible Cultural Heritage National Implementation Workshop that was held from 15 to 18 May, 2012 in Port Moresby’s Grand Papua Hotel, the PNG National Cultural Commission, in conjunction with UNESCO Office in Samoa and the PNG National Commission for UNESCO, will be hosting a community-based inventorying workshop. The workshop will be held from 22 to 27 October 2012 at the Pacific Gardens Hotel in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province.

The main objective of the workshop is to promote data collection and inventorying at the community and local levels. The workshop will focus on the following issues:

- Community(ies) involvement in inventorying cultural resources
- Importance of cultural protocol in community-based inventorying
- A hands-on experience in preparing fieldwork

As it is a follow-up to the implementation workshop, this second workshop is for professionals or senior level administrative personnel responsible safeguarding heritage resources from various stakeholder organisations, provincial cultural experts, and those from NGOs, community-based organisations, and faith-based organisations.

The workshop will be facilitated by Prof Noriko Alkawa, the Former Director of the ICH Unit of UNESCO, and Mr Setoki Qalubau, the Senior Administration Officer under the ICH Unit of Language and Culture, Fiji.