

# UNESCO-ACCU Expert Meeting on Transmission and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage through Formal and Non-formal Education

Chiba Japan, 21-23 February 2007

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions and Recommendations to the Inter-Governmental Committee

We, the experts attending the UNESCO-ACCU Expert Meeting on Transmission and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) through Formal and Non-formal Education;

Acknowledging with thanks the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) and UNESCO for their excellent organisation of the meeting;

Expressing satisfaction with the fact that the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter 'the Convention') entered into force in 2006, that the States Parties to the Convention met for the first time in a General Assembly in Paris in June 2006, and that the first Intergovernmental Committee (hereafter 'the Committee') met in Algiers in November 2006;

Taking into consideration that the Committee is required under article 7 of the Convention to prepare and submit to the General Assembly for approval Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention;

Aware of the importance assigned by the Convention to formal and non-formal education for the transmission and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (hereafter 'ICH');

Suggest that the Committee take into account the following considerations in the preparation of the abovementioned Operational Directives:

1. Methods that have in the past been used to transmit the ICH should be encouraged to continue wherever possible. These methods can be successfully supported and enriched by awareness-raising and educational programmes, with the active participation of both families and communities (or groups, where appropriate). Such programmes should promote understanding of, respect for and dialogue about the ICH and thus prevent or reduce conflict between communities.
2. Programmes encouraging transmission of ICH to youth in both formal and non-formal settings cannot be successful without community motivation to continue practice and transmission of the ICH. This motivation is usually associated with the community's awareness of the value of the ICH to them, and the potential consequences of its loss.
3. In designing formal education programmes around ICH, due attention should be paid to the deeper meanings and conceptual structures underlying the ICH and its relationship to other social practices. Therefore, recognition of the way in which factors such as gender, age, and traditional access previously structured transmission will be important. Incorporating the ICH into formal education with a view to ensuring its continued viability should not prevent appropriate adaptations to changes in the social and natural environment.

4. Integrating ICH in formal educational programmes, which can be located in schools or other institutions, should promote understanding of, respect for and dialogue about ICH both within and between communities. ICH can be integrated across the curriculum in schools and teacher training programs (for example, in science and art classes, and in classes on cultural diversity). Extra-curricular activities are also an important way of promoting ICH. The curriculum should accommodate the needs of specific communities within schools.
5. As language is a vehicle for ICH, educational programmes should involve an engagement with the language of the community. Using the languages or dialects of the community alongside the mainstreaming of local ICH in basic education may promote literacy and improve access to education.
6. Immigrant communities add to the cultural diversity of a country. Education can play a role in helping these communities to continue practising their ICH and in promoting understanding and respect between immigrant and other communities.
7. The continued practice of and respect for a community's ICH is an essential precondition for its sustainable development. Safeguarding of ICH through education should be interpreted within the broader concept of sustainable development, as prioritised by the UN through the proclamation of the 'Decade of Education for Sustainable Development' in 2005.
8. Existing NGOs should be encouraged to widen the scope of their educational activities with the purpose of safeguarding the ICH as defined in article 2.3 of the Convention. A network should be created to encourage communication and collaboration between them. An international NGO could be established to encourage this process, collect experiences in different parts of the world, and highlight the importance of including ICH in educational programmes. Given the centrality of community participation to the identification and safeguarding of their ICH, it is important to ensure the establishment of community-based NGOs and/or the active involvement of communities in NGOs.

### **Recommendations to ACCU and UNESCO**

We, the experts attending the UNESCO-ACCU Expert Meeting on Transmission and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage through Formal and Non-formal Education; Considering that, in order to promote the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, world-wide initiatives for cooperation between Centres and Institutions are to be encouraged,

Taking into account the significant and wide-ranging expertise of ACCU in the promotion and protection of intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific, we

call upon ACCU:

to strengthen its interregional contacts and cooperation with institutions and experts in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, and to seek collaboration with Category II Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, already existing or in the process of preparation,

to continue collecting and disseminating data on safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in order to promote good practices in safeguarding initiatives undertaken by and with communities.

call upon UNESCO to continue its cooperation with ACCU.