UNESCO’s Presentation

Towards the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Two lines of action

• Programmes
  – Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity
  – Traditional Music
  – Endangered languages

• Legal texts
  – Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore (1989)
  – Steps towards a new normative instrument, preferably a Convention (1997, 2001)

UNESCO

• UNESCO: founded 16 November 1945
• Mandate: contributing to international cooperation in Education, Science, Culture and Communication as a:
  – Laboratory of ideas
  – Clearing house
  – Standard setter

while promoting peace, preventing conflict and pursuing millenium goals

The Sector of Culture

• World heritage (monuments and sites)
• Intangible heritage
• Museums
• Cultural policies
• Cultural industries
• Development and follow-up of standard-setting instruments

• Priority 2006-2007: promoting cultural diversity, with special emphasis on the tangible and intangible heritage

Conventions and cultural diversity

• 1954: Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict
• 1970: Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
• 1972: Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
• 2001: Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage
• 2003: Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)
• 2005: Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

Towards Recognizing ICH

• Bolivia’s proposal, 1973
• Mexico City Declaration, 1982
• Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore, 1989
• Our Creative Diversity, 1996
• Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001

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Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and
Intangible Heritage of Humanity

- Created in 1997
- Proclamations in 2001, 2003, 2005
- 90 Masterpieces have been proclaimed in all
- No new Proclamations will be
- Masterpieces located in States
- Parties to the Convention will be
- inscribed in the List of the
- Convention

The Convention

- Adopted: October 2003
- Open for ratification since November 2003
- Ratified by 30 States: 20 January 2006
- Ratified now by 34 (37) States
- Entry into force: 20 April 2006

10 March 2006: 34 States Parties

Algeria
Mauritius
Japan
Gabon
Panama
China
Latvia
Lithuania
Belgium
Syria
Republic of Korea
Seychelles
United Arab Emirates

Mali
Mongolia
Croatia
Egypt
Oman
Dominica
India
Vietnam
Peru
Pakistan
Benin
Nigeria
Ireland
Medoro

Slovakia
Spain

Domains covered

- Oral traditions and expressions
- Performing arts
- Social practices, rituals and festive events
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- Traditional craftsmanship

Oral Traditions, including Language as a vehicle of the ICH

Performing Arts: traditional dance, music, theatre

The Sagas Song, India

The Storytelling, India

Manchu, Inner Mongolia, China

Mongolia

The Traditional Music of Music House

The Year of Song Culture, Vietnam

Art of Uyghur Music, China

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Social Practices, Rituals, Festive Events

Knowledge about nature and the universe

Traditional craftsmanship

Defining ICH: expressions and practices, knowledge and skills that

Goals

Obligations of States Parties

States Parties are committed to safeguarding the ICH present on their territory, starting by its identification, leading to one or more Inventories

- Community, groups to be involved
- Access to be regulated
- To be regularly updated
Mechanism of the Convention

- General Assembly of States Parties
- Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity
- List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding
- Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

General Assembly

- Sovereign Body of the Convention
- Will meet in ordinary session every two years, or in extraordinary session
- Elects the members of the Committee
- Approves the Operational Directives
- Meets for the first time 27-29 June 2006

Intergovernmental Committee

- 18 Members, 24 after 50 ratifications
- 4 year term, renewal of half of the members every 2 years
- Principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation (2+7)
- Members to send experts as their representatives

Functions of the Committee

- Implement the Convention
- Prepare Operational Directives for the implementation
- Examine requests for — inscription on the Lists — international assistance
- Make recommendations on safeguarding measures
- Seek means of increasing its resources
- Examine periodic reports of States Parties

The Lists

- Representative List of the ICH of Humanity
- List of the ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding
  Criteria for inscription
  - To be prepared by Committee
  - To be adopted by General Assembly

The Fund: providing international assistance for

- Safeguarding of heritage inscribed on the List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding
- Preparation of inventories
- Programmes, projects and other activities in the States Parties (incl. capacity building)
Asia-Pacific Database on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)
by Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

Work in progress

Preparation of the Implementation of the Convention:
- Organization of experts meetings
to elaborate notions and approaches, exchange experiences
- Preparation of thematic manuals
- Preparation of meetings of the Statutory Bodies

Work in progress: Communities, groups, individuals

- How to define these notions?
- How to be involved in
  - Defining ICH
  - Inventory making
  - Preparation and management of safeguarding measures?

Action:
- collecting various practices
- this meeting

Features of the Convention

- Introduces List system, other main focus on programmes and projects
- Emphasis on living heritage, enacted by people, often collectively, mostly transmitted orally
- Attention for processes/conditions rather than products
- Role of communities/groups
- Contribution to promotion of creativity and diversity, to well-being (of communities and groups and societies at large) and peaceful development

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