**REPORT ON THE STATUS OF AN ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING**

**DEADLINE 15 DECEMBER 2015 FOR EXAMINATION IN 2016**

Instructions for completing the report are available at:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. COVER SHEET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.1. State Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2. Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| This information is available online at www.unesco.org/culture/ich.  
23-03-2006 |
| A.3. Element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List that is the subject of this report |
| For multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.  
Name of element: Naqqâli, Iranian dramatic story-telling  
Inscribed in: 2011 |
| A.4. Reporting period covered by this report |
| Please indicate the period covered by this report.  
Beginning date: 2011  
Ending date: 2015 |
| A.5. Other elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, if any |
| Please list all other elements from your country inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, together with the year of inscription; for multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.  
Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf (2011) |
A.6. Executive summary of the report

Please provide an executive summary of the report that will allow general readers to understand the current status of the element, any positive or negative impacts of inscription, and the implementation of safeguarding measures during the reporting period.

Between 400 and 600 words

Naghalli is the oldest form of play in Iran which has been widespread in the country since previous epochs and is a unique safeguarding measure and oral transmission of folklore, epic, and folk tales that has been able to transfer parts of Iranian folklore along with performing techniques to the younger generations from the ancestors and within traditional context.

Fortunately after its inscription, a large number of safeguarding measures have been carried out which resulted in improvement of current status of the element.

During the report period, following safeguarding measures accomplished by the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization, the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, as well as the individuals who wish to exert their contributions in safeguarding and developing Iranian Naqqali.

1- In last four years, the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture, has facilitatated insurance and pension for traditional artists including Naqqâls (story tellers). Considering their age and their need for more health care, the dedicated budget is not sufficient.

2- In order to appreciate Naaqqâls, the artistic degrees has been donated to them by the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture.

3- In 2011, 2013 and 2015 the Dramatic Arts Association has set up a biennial Festival of Ritual-Traditional Theatre. One of the main sections of this festival has always been dedicated to Naqqali in different forms. This festival constitutes an oppurtunity for Naqqali to be presented properly, to raise public awareness, at the national, regional, and international levels.

4- In 2014 "Ferdowsi House of Iran" has been established by master Amir Sadeghi. Recently, a number of outstanding research projects have been done on the topic of Naqqâli by Master Sadeghi. And the project of training apprentices accomplished based on traditional (unofficial) manner of old Naqqals experiences in order to strengthen and encourage the Naqqâli and inherit its knowledge and talent into the future generations.

5- Between 2011-2013 the Iranian House of Theatre and the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture, jointly, organized a series of training programs on the topic of Naqqali. The courses were supervised by Morshed (Master) Torabi to train the youth through the oral method.

6- During the report period, many seminars, conferences and roundtables were disposed about various sorts of Naqqali by the Dramatic Arts Association, Iranian Academy of Art, Iranian Music Association, and Ferdowsi Foundation, among others.

7- Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults made documentary movie, television programs, published CD, photo exhibition about this topic through media in order to propagate, popularize and disseminate art of epic in the society.

A.7. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning the report. If an e-mail address cannot be provided, indicate a fax number.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr

Family name: Nazari

Given name: Farhad

Institution/position: Director General in Registration and Preservation and Revitalization of Intangible and Natural Heritage, Deputy for Cultural Heritage ICHHTO

Instructions for completing the report are available at: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms

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B. STATUS OF ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE URGENT SAFEGUARDING LIST

This report is normally submitted to the Secretariat by 15 December of the fourth year following the year of inscription, and each fourth year thereafter. At the time of inscription, the Committee may have established a specific timetable for reporting that takes precedence over the normal four-year cycle. Refer therefore to the nomination file as basis for reporting on the current status of the element and report only on relevant changes since the date of inscription on the List or since the last previous report. Nomination files, specific timetables and earlier reports, if any, are available at www.unesco.org/culture/ich or on request from the Secretariat.

The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of each report, and is asked in point B.6 below to describe how it has done so.

B.1. Social and cultural functions

Please explain the social and cultural functions and meanings of the element today, within and for its community, the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners, and any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element, among others. Attention should be given to any relevant changes related to inscription criterion U.1 ('the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention').

Between 200 and 500 words

The Naqqali is a living oral expression, originated in ancient Iran that play a vital role in Iranian cultural identity. Naqqali fits perfectly with the goals for sustainable development with gathering the audience and training young performers in order to sustain intergenerational transmission, while strengthening the status accorded to their performers and revitalizing the traditional ritual contexts of performance.

This dramatic performance concerns the telling of a story, historical or legendary based, in a variety of genres. So that many details of traditions of ancient Iranians can be explained, retold and learned. Naqqali shows and true human characteristics such as brotherhood, celebrations, war and peace, worships, Iranian worldviews and art of caring, comforting and befriending with the nature.

As result of the inscription, the element has attracted more serious attention. The bearers and practitioners feel that they are really and dutifully paid attention to. Therefore, They now know that all those social and cultural functions and meaning of the element are more important to themselves and for the community as a whole. This inscription of the element by the State Party proves that Naqqali and its social and cultural functions play important role for the whole nation. Besides, a positive aspect of the element is, however, its popularity among a small community of female practitioners, who are allowed to perform for a mixed community of audiences. At the moment they not only perform Naqqali for large audiences but also they are assisting for oral transmission of the element to younger female generation.
B.2. Assessment of its viability and current risks

Please describe the current level of viability of the element, particularly the frequency and extent of its practice, the strength of traditional modes of transmission, the demographics of practitioners and audiences and its sustainability. Please also identify and describe the threats, if any, to the element's continued transmission and enactment and describe the severity and immediacy of such threats, giving particular attention to any strengthening or weakening of the element's viability subsequent to inscription.

Between 200 and 500 words

The current level of its viability is better that before inscription. As a result of safeguarding measures carried out, the element has been more practiced than before. Now the number of practitioners is a bit increased. As their number increased, the strength of traditional transmission is also boosted.

Demographically speaking, about 65 individuals have been trained to be Naqqāl. Twenty four of them are female practitioners and thirty one of them are university educated. Almost all of them are living in cities but some of them come from rural areas. Twenty three of them have practices Naqqali in their hometowns and villages where the element was forgotten for some times.

Inspite of increase in the number of practitioners and number of performances, but there still exists a threat which is no Naqqāl, seasonal or professional, can support his living just by Naqqāli. This lead to less interest in professional Naqqāli.

The inscription has had no threat to the element but the problematic situation that threatens the survival of Naqqāli regards the fact that the budget allocated for this element could not be secured because of the sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Anyway, the State Party tried and tries her best to meet the deficits.

One of the main goals is to support Naqqāls' living for at least several years to encourage them not to quit their profession.

B.3. Implementation of safeguarding measures

Please report on the safeguarding measures that were described in the nomination file. Describe how they have been implemented and how they have contributed substantially to the safeguarding of the element during the reporting period, taking note of external or internal constraints such as limited resources. Include, in particular, information on the measures taken aiming to ensure the viability of the element by enabling the community to continue its practice and transmission. Include the following detailed information concerning the implementation of the set of safeguarding measures or safeguarding plan:

Between 200 and 500 words

B.3a. Objectives and results

Indicate what primary objective(s) were addressed and what concrete results were attained during the reporting period.

The primary objectives and expected concrete results of safeguarding measures during the report period include, among others, the following:

A. Human resources:

1. Official registration of the specifications of the practitioners to provide financial supports for them, as well as convenience to train the younger generations of Naqqāl's.

2. A four-year plan for training 500 Naqqāl's, 20 coffee-house painting artists, as well as 10 traditional music instrument makers.

B. Oral Heritage

1. Preparation of records of the oral heritage related to the Naqqāli, including the literature, as well as the traditional knowledges of traditional painting and instrument making, as well as the related performance conventions.
2. Classifying, digitizing and publishing the abovementioned records.

C. Raising the awareness, dissemination and promotion
1. Increasing epic Naqqâls' social status in the society and respecting them
2. Transmitting Naqqâl to the next generation and to increase the number of its audience and Naqqâls
3. Studying the Naqqâl, popularizing them in the society and helping to improve the public awareness about the element.

Outcomes:
1. Social knowledge about Naqqâl has improved and their participation of safeguarding Naqqâl has increased.
2. Number of the researchers and amateurs on Naqqâl increased. There were total 200 people registered in Iran as a Naqqâl in 2011, by the time when we were making research to get register “Naqqâl, Iranian dramatic story-telling” in UNESCO's Intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding list. But now the number of talented people who got that official title “Naqqâl” has increased and they are inheriting this scarce and precious heritage.
3. Naqqâls started to have more pride on what they inherited till today and they became more initiative to improve their ability and add on in their repertory.
4. Value of social view on Naqqâl has improved and number of the participants on local and national competitions about epic art has dramatically increased.

B.3b. Safeguarding activities

List the key activities that were carried out during this reporting period in order to achieve these expected results. Please describe the activities in detail and make note of their effectiveness or any problems encountered in implementing them.

Between 500 and 1000 words

Actions took in order to inherit and protect Naqqâl, Iranian dramatic story-telling:
A. Establishment of one Naqqâl House in Southern Khorasan Province in 2015, four Naqqâl houses are under construction in north, south, west, and center of the country. The activities of such houses converge in such a way as to cover the entire country.

These Naqqâl Houses are expected to function in three fields: Research, Training and Transfer, and Performing.

a. Research
1. Preparation of recordings of all Naqqâl oral heritages;
2. Enrollment of the bearers and practitioners, to engage them in the program, at their request, and provide them with financial supports.

b. Training and Transfer
1. Creation of training programs, in the, so called, master-pupil method, for younger generations;
2. Recording the traditional transfer process.

c. Performance
1. Preparation of the atmosphere for re-establishment of performances in coffee-houses, among other suitable historical, or traditionally respected places.

B. Establishment of a Naqqâl Foundation is under construction
Such a foundation shall, primarily, be involved in processing the information it receives from the mentioned Naqqālī Houses. The information will be categorized, digitized and published, both in print, and electronic versions.

The Foundation will implement its own web site, to facilitate access to electronic versions of the mentioned information. The interested sides can find various performances of Iranian Naqqālī here. Besides, an "Archive Center" of The Foundation will be one of the top priority objectives; such a center will play an important role in preserving and popularizing Naqqālī.

The Foundation is, also, expected to produce 10 documentry films, each lasting 2 hours, on the topic in the course of four years, following the registration of the element.

C. Planning and regular execution of a Naqqālī Festival

Naqqālī is, truly, the ancestor of Iranian traditional theatre; due to its ancient underpinnings, it has manifested in various forms, in terms of performing conventions, as well as narration. Many festivals have been held in two sections: one on traditional performances of Naqqālī; the other on modern performances inspired by the performing conventions and narrations of Naqqālī.

B.3c. Participation of communities, groups or individuals in the safeguarding activities

Describe how communities, groups or, if appropriate, individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations have effectively participated in the safeguarding measures. Describe the role of the implementing organization or body (name, background, etc.) and the human resources that were available for implementing the project.

Between 200 and 500 words

The safeguarding measures were elaborated with full participation of the ICH bearers, concerned representatives of relevant NGOs, and their opinions and recommendations were freely been reflected in the National Safeguarding Plan of the Naqqālī.

The main activities under this project for safeguarding the Naqqālī, conducting research, advertising and transmitting to the younger generation were implemented with full participation of the Naqqāls:

Musa Zangshahi (Baluchestan), Amir Hussain Nobakht (Semnan), Ashiq Mohammad Hussain Dehghan (Azarbaijan Province), Mohammad Moradof (Golestan), Safar Afsari (Gilan), Ali Asqar Aslani (Golestan), Jaber Zare (Khorasan), Nezam Shekarchian (Mazandaran), Naser Vahdati (Gilan), Amir Sadeqi (Tehran), Saqi Aqili (Tehran), Fateme Habibi Zad (Tehran), are worth mentioning, among others.

There are also several Iranian traditional theatre experts focusing on recording and researching on Iranian Naqqālī including: Ardeshir Saleh-pour, Davood Fatalibaigi, Hossein Naserbakht, Jahangir Nasiri Ashrafi, Hamid Ardalan, and Maryam Nemat Tavousi.

The State organizations and non-governmental organizations that are concerned to safeguard Naqqālī include:

- Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHHTO)
- the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance
- the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology
- Iranian Academy of Art
- Dramatic Arts Association
- Dramatic Arts Center
- Shahname Foundation (NGO)
- Iranian House of Music (NGO)
- Iranian Theatre Forum (NGO)
### B.3d. Timetable and budget

*Indicate in a timetable when each activity was implemented and the funds that were used for its implementation, identifying the source of funding for each (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.)*

**Between 200 and 500 words**

By the Ministry of Sciences, Technology and Researches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Ministry of Sciences, Technology &amp; Researches</td>
<td>33,000,000.00 US$ for Buying and establishing houses of Naqqālī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>10,000.00 US$ for organizing committee of experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>5,000.00 US$ for starting the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>6,000.00 US$ for setting research programs for houses of Naqqālī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-1014</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>2,000.00 US$ for supervising outcomes and achievements of the houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2014</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>5,500.00 US$ for relating academic publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2014</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>13,000.00 US$ for producing related CD’s and DVD’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2015</td>
<td>Committee of Experts</td>
<td>4,500.00 US$ for preparing data &amp; materials uploaded on internet</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

By the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO) and other ministries and organizations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICHHTO</td>
<td>67,000.00 US$ for locating 5 places for establishment of houses of Naqqālī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICHHTO &amp; Ministry of Islamic Guidance &amp; Culture</td>
<td>3000.00 US$ for registering all interested individuals, Naqqāls and setting specific groups for the houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICHHTO &amp; Ministry of Sciences</td>
<td>10,000 US$ for following up the proposed suggestions and formation of a legal and regulated framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICHHTO &amp; Ministry of Sciences</td>
<td>3,000.00 US$ for developing work programs and job descriptions for each of members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Members of Houses of Naqqālī</td>
<td>40,000.00 US$ for launch of houses of Naqqālī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>Founding members of Houses of Naqqālī</td>
<td>30,000.00 US$ for identification, research and documentation of oral heritage of Naqqālī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2014</td>
<td>Members of Houses of Naqqālī</td>
<td>40,000.00 US$ for training courses in three fields of Naqqālī, traditional painting and making traditional musical instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>Members of Houses of Naqqālī</td>
<td>15,000.00 US$ for organizing Naqqālī performances</td>
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B.3e. Overall effectiveness of the safeguarding activities

Provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the activities taken to achieve the expected result and of the efficiency of use of funds for implementing the activities. Please indicate how the activities contributed to achieving the results and whether other activities could have contributed better to achieving the same results. Also indicate whether the same results could have been achieved with less funding, whether the human resources available were appropriate and whether communities, groups and individuals could have been better involved.

Between 400 and 600 words

As described in section B. 2 and B.3, our assessment is that the safeguarding measures carried out for the element in the said period have met a part of expected results. The amount of budget allocated for the actions were enough for the first time that the nomination file was inscribed but at the moment, because of many general problems in the country including the ecomimical inflation more budget should be allocated or at least the part that could not be materialized, should be met to carry out more of the expected activities.

Among activities done, establishment of House of Naqqāl contributed a lot in achieving the results because this house functions as a commanding and strategic center that tries not only to implement the safeguarding measures mentioned in the original nomination file but also to devises new and innovative other measures.

Attracting younger male and female apprentices strengthened the current status of the element as well as the social status of the Masters. This measure is one of the pillars of the entire project, for as the same season, all concerning and interested parties in the nomination file, did their best to attract any focused individuals. At the moment there are some individuals who are member family of the masters who have already no interest in Naqqāl due to insufficient financial supports, but now they are confident that their living will be supported for several years till they can stand on their own feet.

When we can expect in less funding that Naqqāls themselves can support their living though profession of Naqqāl. For the same reason, the measures have been programmed in a way that after several years, Naqqāl can economically stand on its own two feet.

From the other side, NGO's have a very crucial role in implementing the proposed safeguarding measures and in securing a part of the budget. Fortunately, they as people-governed institutes have contributed a lot in programming, allocating budget, implementing and awareness-raising. They have had an important role in attracting more and more audiences especially in towns other than the capital.

At the beginning the human resources were not appropriate but through the implementation of the proposed measures, we succeeded to provide a number of interested and then trained individuals who can assist in advancing safeguarding activities.

In this respect, one of the very promising issues was the enthusiasm shown by the practitioners, as the main concerning communities. They have also introduced interested young individuals to the governmental and non-governmental organization. Then, the organizations planned for training those interested people under the supervisions of the very same masters who introduced them.

Those individuals who accomplished their trainings were also helpful in attracting more audience. For example, they practised the elements in schools, metro stations and even in some big modern restaurants for a few times.

B.4. Community participation

Please describe the participation of communities, groups and individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations in safeguarding the element and their continued commitment to its further safeguarding.

Between 200 and 500 words

There are a variety of different ethnic groups in Iran, who follow their own and diverse cultural and customary characteristics. From within ethnic groups, there are almost 100 Naqqāls still
performing; prominent among whom, Morshed Zabiholla Bahari, Morshed Abol Hassan Mirza Ali (Tehran), Morshed Vali-ollah Torabi (Tehran), Musa Zangshahi (Baluchestan), Amir Hussain Nobakht (Semnan), Ashiq Mohammad Hussain Dehqan (Azarbaijan Province), Mohammad Moradof (Golestan), Safar Afsari (Gilan), Ali Asgar Asliani (Golestan), Jaber Zare (Khorasan), Nezam Shekarchian (Mazandaran), Naser Vahdati (Gilan), Amir Sadeqi (Tehran), Saqi Aqili (Tehran), Fateme Habibi Zad (Tehran), are worth mentioning, among others.

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The State organizations and non-governmental organizations that are concerned to safeguard Naqqali include:
- Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHHTO)
- the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance
- the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology,
- Iranian Academy of Art
- Dramatic Arts Association
- Dramatic Arts Center
- Shahname Foundation (NGO)
- Iranian House of Music (NGO)
- Iranian Theatre Forume (NGO)

B.5. Institutional context

Please report on the institutional context for the element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, including:

a. the competent body(ies) involved in its management and/or safeguarding;

b. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding.

Not to exceed 150 words

The following associations and institutions are involved in its management and safeguarding:
- Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHHTO)
- The Research Center for Iranian Traditional Arts affiliated with RICHT
- Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults
- Iranian Academy of Art
- Dramatic Arts Association
- Dramatic Arts Center
- Shahnameh Foundation (NGO)
- Ferdowsi Foundation (NGO)
- The National Association of Naqqālān (Storytellers)

B.6. Participation of communities in preparing this report

Describe the measures taken to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of this report.

Between 150 and 250 words

A number of organizations, institutes, associations and individuals cooperated together to provide this report:

For example the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHHTO)
managed and supervised the whole process to ensure the widest possible participation of the following contributors:

- In the wake of the inscription of the "Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling" Nomination file, the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults provided the ICHHTO with the reports about its activities on promotion, awareness-raising, safeguarding.

- The Iranian Academy of Art as one of the leading academies of Iran published books and articles. This Academy organized a series of cultural events which Naqqāli was practised in. The Academy provided the ICHHTO with reports about its above-said activities.

- The Dramatic Arts Association in collaboration with the Dramatic Art Center organized a series of workshops for young and inexperienced story-tellers under the supervision of the masters. These two intitities furnished the ICHHTO with reports on their activities.

- Shahname Foundation (NGO) and Ferdowsi House (NGO) function as hubs and organizers of many related cultural events and they have also presented their reports on concerning activities that were used in this reports.

ICHHTO organized several meetings and invited the representatives of all of the above-said organizations and NGOs to involve them in preparation of this report.

C. SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY

The report should conclude with the original signature of the official empowered to sign it on behalf of the State, together with his or her name, title and the date of submission.

Name: Dr Farhad Nazari

Title: Director General in Registration and Preservation and Revitalization of Intangible and Natural Heritage, Deputy for Cultural Heritage ICHHTO

Date:

Signature: