Dear Ambassador,

Following my letter of 30 June 2017, I am writing regarding the request submitted by Albania for financial assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund in the amount of US$213,260. The request concerns the project 'Community based inventory of ICH in Albania with a view to safeguarding and transmitting to future generations'. The core documents of this file are available on the web page dedicated to the files under process for the 2018 cycle 1.

You will find attached an in-depth assessment of the Secretariat concerning the content of the request, which focuses on sections where we believe revision will help to meet the eligibility and selection criteria laid out in Chapter 1.4 of the Operational Directives for the implementation of the 2003 Convention 2. While hoping this analysis will be useful in your revision work, you may also wish to refer to the aide-mémoire for completing a request for international assistance available at www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms in which you will find a number of recommendations by bodies that previously evaluated requests like yours and relevant Committee decisions.

I invite you to submit a revised version of your request in electronic format (standard .rtf or .doc format) to ich-assistance@unesco.org addressing the issues raised by the Secretariat at your earliest convenience and in any case no later than 13 October 2017. We will substitute it in place of your previously submitted request and transmit it to the Evaluation Body that is to provide recommendations to the Committee for its examination in 2018. If we do not receive a revised request before the above-mentioned date, the Secretariat will transmit the initial version as it stands, to the Evaluation Body.

Ref.: CLT/CRE/ITH/17/0125300019
Reference to be used on all correspondence: 01253

Should you require further clarification, the regional officer responsible for your country in the Intangible Culture Heritage Section, Mr Rasul Samadov, can be contacted at the following email address: r.samadov@unesco.org or by telephone: +33(0)1 45 68 41 62.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Curtis
Secretary, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Chief, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section

Enclosure: Technical assessment from the Secretariat

cc: Ms Elira Kokona, Secretary-General, Ministry of Culture
    Albanian National Commission for UNESCO
REQUEST FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT

General

- When revising the form, please make sure that the indicated word count limits for each section is respected (the text in sections 3, 10, 14, 19 is too long, while in section 13 it is too short).

Section 3. Project title

- This section should only contain the official title of the project which should not exceed 200 characters. The descriptions on the rationale and objectives of the project may find a better place in Section 13 (Background and rationale) and Section 14 (Objectives and expected results).

Section 7. Previous financial assistance from UNESCO for similar or related activities

- This section also needs to mention the International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund in the amount of US$24,500 granted to Albania in 2010 and entitled ‘Inventory of Albanian folk iso-polyphony’.

Section 13. Background and rationale

- The request should provide information on the past inventorying and/or documentation efforts undertaken by the Institute of Anthropology and Arts Studies of Albania, especially in the field of oral poetry mentioned under Section 14 (point 2.4) and Section 15 (point 4.6.2). This section must also respect the minimum amount of words mentioned in the form.

Section 14. Objectives and expected results

- This section should be revised to provide clarity and to distinguish between the objectives and expected results. The objectives should be presented as medium-term measurable effects of the project and not simply as short-term activities. The expected results should also show what kind of concrete accomplishments, in relation to safeguarding, would be seen throughout the implementation period of the proposed project.
- In the part of ‘specific objectives’ of this section, the request should clearly state which of the statements are identified as objectives and which ones as expected results.
- As regards point 2.2, this request may wish to refer to an electronic database instead of a website, since the inventorying may reveal certain ICH elements whose customary practices may require specific access to information about them. Such information (provided that the communities concerned agree to share it) could consequently need to be stored in a database with limited access. This being said, it is important that the project pays attention to such practices and the way information is collected, stored,
used and disseminated during the implementation of the project and after its completion.

Section 15. Activities

- The level of detail provided in this section is insufficient to demonstrate to the reader that the activities are 'well conceived and feasible'. Additional information is also required to better understand the effective participation of the communities concerned.

- The revised version should illustrate coherence between the activities proposed (section 15), the timetable (section 16) and the budget (section 17). All activities with a budget implication should be displayed in Section 15 and in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form with a homogeneous naming and numeration. For example, in Section 15, Activity 4.5.2 'technical assessment' corresponds to Activity 7 'Material and equipment acquisition' in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form. Some other activities in this Section appear in the wrong order or in a different hierarchy or are referred to differently in the Timetable and budget form, which, for instance, is the case of Activity 1.4.1 in Section 15 and Activity 1.4 in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form, as well as Activity 1.4.2 in Section 15 and Activity 1.5 in ICH-04 Timetable and budget form.

- The request needs to provide more detailed information on the activities. For example, Activity 4.4 could mention the profile of the local expert who is supposed to be in charge of the webpage concerned. Activity 4.5.1 could specify by which institution the vehicle will be provided and whether the submitting State or the International Assistance is expected to cover the expenditures related to this activity, which could also be reflected in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form.

- As regards Activity 4.6, the request needs to provide more information on how digitization of the archive of oral poetry in the Institute of Anthropology and Arts studies will be complementary to the previous measures undertaken by the same Institute and to the project in general.

Section 16. Timetable of the project

- As mentioned above, the request should be revised to show a clear correlation between the activities proposed and the timetable part of the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form. The activities listed in the timetable do not correspond to the activities listed in Section 15. Some activities mentioned in Section 15 are missing in the timetable of the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form.

Section 17: Budget

- The ICH-04 Timetable and budget form should detail the cost calculations for all amounts, whether they are requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund or are borne by a contribution from the State Party or other sources including those contributions provided in kind. The request mentions in Section 15 a number of expenditures that have not been included in ICH-04 Timetable and budget form. This includes, for instance, the following items:
  o One 4x4 Vehicle for missions on monitoring and evaluation
  o 6 recorders
  o 12 32 GB memory cards
  o 6 external hard drives
  o One photocopy
  o One video projector
  o 6 anti-virus licenses
o Fees for the local expert who will set-up the webpage where the data will be stored

- There should be an exact coherence between the needs stated in Section 15 and the costs expressed in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form. For example, Section 15 expresses the necessity of acquiring six lap top computers; meanwhile only three computers have been included in the budget.

- There is a need to provide further clarifications on the costs associated to the members of both the local and the national teams (Activity 4 in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form). For instance, the respective monthly costs of US $30 and $50 seem relatively low in relation to other estimations, such as US $300 cost/person/month of the team who will digitalize the data existing in handwriting materials and documents concerning oral poetry.

- Additionally, in the same spirit as the previous comment, further clarifications will be needed to better understand the fees of the National Coordination Team, which is foreseen to work on the project during its whole duration (26 months, 5 members for US$1,000 each). Should the amount mentioned set in the ICH-04 Timetable and budget form be correct, the request needs to explain how this activity is expected to be implemented with this amount.

Section 18. Community involvement

- It is crucial for the project to explain in this Section how the communities concerned with the inventorying in three selected regions have been involved in the project design and whether their aspirations have been fully reflected. It should also provide information on how communities will be involved in the evaluation of activities.

- The request needs to be consistent when referring to 'permanent national teams' to be established in three regions, which in this Section are mentioned as 'permanent units'.

Section 20. Partners

- The request should provide more information to better understand what are the specific roles and responsibilities of the partner institutions listed in this Section.

Section 21. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

- This section needs to provide more detailed information on how communities concerned will be involved in the mechanisms of monitoring, reporting and evaluation. It should also clarify if the fees of the international expert for the evaluation have been included in the budget.

Section 22. Capacity-building

- In this section, the request should explain in what way the capacities of the staff of the implementing organization will be strengthened.

Section 23. Sustainability after the assistance ends

- The 2003 Convention (Article 12) requires that the State Parties regularly update their inventories, since certain data on ICH elements might change over time including, for instance, the viability of ICH elements which would require additional safeguarding measures to be taken if there is a need. In the context of the sustainability of the project, the request needs to explain how the outcomes of inventorying (not only in the three
regions selected, but also in other regions of Albania where this experience is expected to be applied) will be sustained in terms of regular updating of the established inventory.

Section 24. Multiplier effects

- It is advisable that the submitting State clarify the source of the additional financial allocations expected and mentioned in this section. In particular, the request could explain if those allocations will be borne by government authorities or otherwise provide information of alternative sources of financing.