DECISION 13.COM 1.BUR 3.3

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,

2. Having examined Document ITH/18/13.COM 1.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 01311 submitted by Zimbabwe,

3. Takes note that Zimbabwe has requested International Assistance for the project entitled Construction of a facility (theatre house) for the promotion of inter-generational transmission of diverse cultural heritage:

   Implemented by the Patsimeredu Edutainment Trust, the proposed project concerns the construction of a 200-seat theatre facility in Harare installed with lighting, sound and audiovisual recording equipment, with the aim of promoting the intergenerational transmission of the performing arts heritage of the communities concerned, mainly cultural practitioners and cultural school teachers. The project responds to a lack of spaces that promote performing arts in the country and a limited awareness of the 2003 Convention among cultural practitioners. In view of this, the proposed theatre would host the following activities: a ten-day training of trainers workshop on awareness raising and the promotion of intergenerational transmission, targeting cultural leaders, teachers and lecturers; eight monthly performances at the theatre; an annual three-day theatre festival; regular arts education programmes; and recording and documentation activities using the facility’s equipment, for educational, showcasing and broadcasting purposes.

4. Further takes note that this assistance is to support a project implemented at the local and national levels, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the provision of a grant, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;

5. Also takes note that Zimbabwe has requested assistance in the amount of US$100,000 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;

6. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01311, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

   Criterion A.1: The identification of the communities associated with the request is addressed in very general, broad terms. According to the information provided in the request, the project considers the following groups as the main communities concerned: cultural practitioners (also identified as performing arts groups); cultural school teachers; and university arts lecturers. These groups were consulted during the drafting phase of the project and will be involved in the implementation of the project through the modalities described in the request. However, the request demonstrates a clear absence of participation on the part of the communities, groups and individuals who create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage, as defined in Article 2 of the Convention. While the groups described in the request may be involved in the promotion of cultural performances, they do not explicitly represent the communities directly concerned with intangible cultural heritage;

   Criterion A.2: Although the budget is clearly structured, the request does not demonstrate the appropriateness of the amount requested. Certain costs are disproportionate, such as 47 per cent of the budget that is allocated for setting up the theatre facility, which appears to primarily benefit the implementing agency rather than
the communities concerned. In addition, there are a number of calculation errors and lump sums that are not budgeted in sufficient detail; a more comprehensive activity-based budget is required to justify the planned expenditures;

**Criterion A.3**: The proposed activities are not clearly framed in terms of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and ensuring its viability. Contrary to their description as activities aimed at the intergenerational transmission of traditional cultural practices, they are presented essentially as promotional and potentially income-generating activities of theatre performances and performing arts festivals. Furthermore, the request does not distinctly identify what intangible cultural heritage is to be safeguarded by the activities and it is therefore not possible to assess the appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed activities;

**Criterion A.4**: The sustainability of the project seems to rely on the potential to generate income from the activities proposed, which could be considered as a means towards ensuring that the project results are sustained. However, the communities concerned appear to be neglected as the primary beneficiaries in favor of the implementing agency, which will mainly benefit from the capital raised through the theatre facility. In addition, there is no adequate information justifying that the provision of employment for young people through the project would facilitate the sustainability of the project. Not only is it unclear how this project would contribute to a sustainable strategy for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, but questions are also raised about the risks of the commercialization and de-contextualization of intangible cultural heritage;

**Criterion A.5**: The State proposes contributing 13 per cent of the total budget of the project for which International Assistance is being requested;

**Criterion A.6**: Although the information on capacity-building activities related to workshops on raising awareness about the 2003 Convention and safeguarding measures was included in the request, their effectiveness in ensuring the intergenerational transmission of intangible cultural heritage is not substantiated. The information provided is limited to general statements instead of a clear and well-founded demonstration of how the capacities of the communities concerned would be reinforced, to continue safeguarding efforts in the future;

**Criterion A.7**: Zimbabwe has benefitted from International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund twice, for the projects entitled ‘Manyanga Misumo Protocol’ (File no. 00489, 2011, US$12,000), carried out by the Manyanga Traditional Custodians, and ‘Safeguarding cultural heritage aspects of Njelele’ (File no. 00552, 2011-2012, US$25,000), implemented by the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The work stipulated by the contracts related to these projects was carried out in compliance with UNESCO’s regulations;

**Paragraph 10(a)**: The project is local and national in scope and involves local and national implementing partners;

**Paragraph 10(b)**: The project, mainly through the promotional activities of performances and the festival, has the potential to attract the interests of the private sector and media broadcasting companies. However, these possibilities may give rise to over-commercialization, and there are also concerns about the meaning of intangible cultural heritage being distorted.

7. **Decides not to approve** the International Assistance request for the project entitled **Construction of a facility (theatre house) for the promotion of inter-generational transmission of diverse cultural heritage**;
8. **Recalls** that the purpose of the assistance provided to State Parties from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund is to support them in their efforts to safeguard intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention, and that, therefore, these efforts cannot be overshadowed by other objectives, as legitimate as these may be;

9. **Recognizes** that the safeguarding measures proposed should aim to ensure the viability of intangible cultural heritage and, while noting the absence in the request of greater involvement on the part of the communities, groups and individuals that create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage, as defined in Article 15 of the Convention, **further recalls** that these safeguarding measures should fully reflect the aspirations and wishes of the communities as active participants and emphasize the strengthening of the capacities of the communities concerned, with a view to continuing their safeguarding efforts in the future.