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Intangible Cultural Heritage

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

First extraordinary session
Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room XI
9 November 2006

DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD

This document contains the draft summary record of the first extraordinary session of the General Assembly. The resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the list of participants are annexed hereto.

The first extraordinary session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 9 November 2006. At its first session, in June 2006, the General Assembly decided, by resolution 1.GA 5B, to convene the extraordinary session to elect six additional States Members of the Intergovernmental Committee and to select by lot half of the States Members of the Committee whose term of office would be limited to two years. Representatives of the 58 States Parties participated in the meeting and representatives of 47 Member States were present as observers. UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Section provided the secretariat for the meeting.

[Room XI, 09/11/06, 10 a.m.]

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE SESSION

[Opening of the extraordinary session]

1. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture, Ms Françoise Rivière**, opened the session by briefly introducing the work for the day, noting that the session would deal only with organizational questions. She also invited all of the delegates to an information meeting at lunchtime, organized by the Permanent Delegation of Algeria to UNESCO, and relating to the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on 18 and 19 November 2006, in Algiers.
2. In his opening address, the **Director-General** welcomed all the representatives of the States Parties to the Convention and the observers of Member States. He expressed his regret that H.E. Mr Mohammed Bedjaoui was unable to attend the extraordinary session and said that he was especially grateful to the Rapporteur, H.E. Mr Faruk Loğuđlu, the four Vice-Chairpersons, Brazil, Ethiopia, India and Romania, and the 18 States Members of the Committee. The Convention had more than 50 States Parties, even before the first meeting of the Committee. It was therefore necessary to elect six additional members, and he wished the candidates every success. At the end of the extraordinary session of the General Assembly, everything would be in place to allow the Committee to begin its long and weighty task, which included the preparation of operational directives for the implementation of the Convention. He was confident that the first items on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity would be inscribed in the autumn of 2008.

[Appointment of a Chairperson of the session in the absence of H.E. Mr Mohammed Bedjaoui]

3. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture**, after thanking the Director-General, said that the report of the first ordinary session of June 2006 would be adopted at the second ordinary session in June 2008. She then invited the General Assembly to put forward a candidate for chairperson of the extraordinary session in the absence of Mr Mohammed Bedjaoui, Chairperson of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria.
4. The delegation of **Gabon**, on behalf of Group V(a), supported by the delegation of **Ethiopia**, proposed Brazil for the chairmanship. The delegation of **Morocco**, on behalf of Group V(b), and the delegation of **Peru** endorsed that proposal and the Vice-Chairperson, H.E. Mr Luiz Filipe Macedo Soares (Brazil, Group III) was elected by acclamation as Chairperson of the extraordinary session.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE SESSION

Document *ITH/06/1.EXT.GA/CONF.203/2*

5. After thanking the States Parties for the confidence they had shown in him by appointing him Chairperson of the extraordinary session of the General Assembly, Mr Macedo invited the General Assembly to adopt the provisional agenda, which was adopted without amendment.

AGENDA ITEM 3: DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS AMONG ELECTORAL GROUPS IN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

Document *ITH/06/1.EXT.GA/CONF.203/3*

6. Introducing the item, the **Chairperson** said that in June 2006, at the time of the first session of the General Assembly of States Parties, the Convention had entered into force in 45 States Parties. The General Assembly had then elected its Intergovernmental Committee of 18 members, pursuant to Article 5 of the Convention. Since then, the number of States Parties for which the Convention had entered into force had exceeded 50, which meant that the Committee would henceforth be composed of 24 members as laid down in Article 5.2 of the Convention.
7. Furthermore, at its first session in June 2006, the General Assembly had adopted its Rules of Procedure except for Rule 13.2 concerning the possibility of establishing an upper limit for the number of seats per electoral group. In Resolution 1.GA 3, the General Assembly had reserved the right to re-examine the question at its next session. The General Assembly therefore had two options:
 - (a) not to establish an upper limit, thus leaving Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure unamended;
 - (b) limit to X the number of seats by amending Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure.
8. With that in mind, the **Chairperson** asked the General Assembly whether consultations had been held with a view to attributing or transferring one additional seat to Group I which, according to the principle of proportionality, should occupy only two seats on a Committee of 24 members, whereas a minimum of three seats per group had been decided upon and confirmed in the Rules of Procedure at the first ordinary session of the Assembly.
9. The delegation of **India**, on behalf of Group IV, supported by the delegations of **Gabon**, **Algeria** and **Japan**, asked for the order of the proposals to be reversed, to which the Chairperson agreed. It indicated that Group IV, preferring to discuss a possible upper limit for seats per electoral group at a later date, hoped that a minimum of three seats per group could be decided upon immediately by identifying the seat to be attributed to Group I. It urged Groups III and V(a) to consult each other informally on that matter.
10. The delegations of **Peru**, on behalf of Group III, and **Romania**, on behalf of Group II, said they were in favour of a maximum number of five seats per electoral group.
11. The delegations of **Lithuania**, **Hungary**, **Estonia**, **Senegal**, **Bolivia**, **Honduras**, **Burkina Faso** and **Nigeria**¹ agreed with the delegation of India that the question of an upper limit should be examined at a subsequent session. The delegation of **Lithuania** proposed that

¹ The statements are not in chronological order. The statements have been summarized here according to their content.

Groups III and V(a) should consult each other and come to an agreement with regard to the transfer of a seat to Group I.

12. The delegation of **Mexico** recalled that Article 6 of the Convention already set out the principles of geographical representation, proportionality and rotation. Mexico hoped that a political debate on that question could be avoided and invited the General Assembly to refer to the documents and to the Secretariat's analysis.
13. The delegation of **Brazil**, on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and supported by the delegations of **Bolivia**, **Peru** and **Belgium**, said it was in favour of an upper limit for seats. It urged the General Assembly to decide on an upper limit at the current extraordinary session and endorsed an upper limit of five seats per group to ensure greater representivity within the Committee.
14. The delegation of **Iran** endorsed India's proposal to defer to a later date the debate on a possible upper limit, pointing out that "equity" was not geographical "equality" and that an equitable representation was not egalitarian.
15. While noting the various positions with regard to when an upper limit might be set, the **Chairperson** recalled that Resolution 1.GA 3 adopted in June 2006 had provided for the examination of that question at the next session of the General Assembly, without however specifying whether it would be an ordinary or extraordinary session. While recognizing that there were opposing positions, he reminded the Assembly that it was necessary to elect six new members to the Committee at the extraordinary session.
16. The delegation of **Gabon**, speaking on behalf of Group V(a), said that the Group attached great importance to the intangible cultural heritage and to the active participation of all States in the effective and rapid launching of the Committee's work. Group V(a) was willing to give one seat to Group I, on an exceptional basis, it being understood that that proposal was in no way tied to a decision, at the present meeting, regarding the immediate establishment of an upper limit for seats. The proposal, commended by the Chairperson, was welcomed enthusiastically.
17. The delegation of **India**, after congratulating the delegation of Gabon and Group V(a), asked whether its calculations regarding the seats to be filled, namely one seat for Group I, one seat for Group II, one seat for Group III, two seats for Group V(a) and one seat for Group V(b), were accurate. The **Secretariat** confirmed the calculations and the **Chairperson** then said that it was necessary to amend the resolution by adding a new point 3 that would mention Gabon's statement specifying that the African Group's gesture would not be linked to the question of a possible upper limit. A new point 4 should also set out the results of the election.
18. The **Chairperson** took note of India's proposal to adopt Option 1 of Resolution 1. EXT.GA 3 as proposed by the Secretariat.
19. The delegations of **Brazil**, **Mexico**, **Viet Nam**, **Egypt**, **Estonia**, **Belgium** and **Albania** expressed their deep appreciation for the generosity shown by Group V(a). **Brazil** said that, with reference to India's suggestion, it wished to propose a slight change aimed at clearly separating the expression of gratitude to Group V(a) from the postponement of the debate on the upper limit to the next session. The delegation of **Viet Nam** endorsed the proposal made by the delegation of **India**. The delegation of **Egypt** said that the contribution by the delegation of **Gabon** demonstrated tremendous North-South and South-South cooperation and endorsed **India's** proposal. The delegation of **India** said that it was not in favour of a separation of ideas, as proposed by the delegation of **Brazil**.

20. The delegation of **Belgium** endorsed **India's** proposal to defer the debate on the upper limit to the next ordinary session, noting that the matter could be decided by a simple majority. The delegation of **Brazil**, considering that the proposal by the delegation of **India** was clearly compatible with its own, withdrew its proposal, while supporting the delegation of **Belgium** with regard to the simple majority.
21. The **Chairperson** recalled that the General Assembly had decided, at its first session in June 2006, that such a decision did not represent an amendment to the Rules of Procedure and could therefore be made by a simple majority. He invited the **Secretariat** to read out the English text of Resolution 1.EXT.GA 3 as amended. Draft Resolution 1.EXT.GA 3 (Option 1), as amended by a new paragraph 3 and a new paragraph 4, was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 4: ELECTION OF SIX ADDITIONAL MEMBER STATES TO THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

Document *ITH/06/1.EXT.GA/CONF.203/INF.4*

22. Introducing the agenda item, the **Chairperson** said that, in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, "the number of States Members of the Committee shall be increased to 24 once the number of States Parties to the Convention reaches 50", and requested the Secretariat to read out the list of candidates. The **Secretariat** announced that ten States Parties were candidates for the six additional seats on the Intergovernmental Committee: **Belarus, Bolivia, Central African Republic, France, Luxembourg, Mali, Slovakia, Syrian Arab Republic, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Zimbabwe**.
23. The **Chairperson** then recalled that, given the generous proposal of Group V(a) and since the number of candidates from Groups III and V(b) was equal to the number of seats to be filled and there was no seat to fill for Group IV, the General Assembly had to elect additional members to the Committee for electoral groups I, II and V(a). At his request, the Secretary recalled Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure. The Chairperson then appointed the tellers approved by the plenary – the delegations of **India** and **Peru** – and informed the General Assembly that once under way the voting could not be interrupted.
24. The General Assembly proceeded to elect the additional members of the Committee for Groups I, II and V(a). The **Secretariat** distributed an envelope and three ballot papers to the 58 delegations of States Parties present, in alphabetical order. The delegations of Bhutan and Sao Tome and Principe were absent at the time of the election.

[Counting of votes]

25. The **Chairperson** thanked the tellers and declared elected to the Intergovernmental Committee the additional States Parties as set out below:

Group I:	France (30 votes)
Group II:	Belarus (28 votes)
Group III:	Bolivia (clean slate)
Group V(a):	Central African Republic (41 votes), Mali (36 votes)
Group V(b):	Syrian Arab Republic (clean slate)
Number of voters:	58
Number of invalid ballot papers:	1
Number of abstentions:	1

26. The delegation of **France** expressed its satisfaction at having been elected to the Committee and thanked, in particular, the delegations of **Cyprus** and of Group V(a) for having enabled the vote to take place in an atmosphere of calm and goodwill. The delegation of **France** then informed the General Assembly that its expert for the Committee would be Mr Chérif Khaznadar.

27. The delegation of **Belarus** expressed its gratitude at having been elected and recalled its commitment to the 2003 Convention, noting that it had been among the first ten States Parties to ratify it.
28. The delegation of the **Syrian Arab Republic** expressed its gratitude for the agreement reached within the Arab Group and said that it looked forward to being on the Committee. It further recalled that an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage in its territory had already been drawn up.
29. The **Chairperson** declared agenda item 4 closed.

[Lunch]

[Room XI, 09/11/06, 3 p.m.]

30. During the lunch break, the Permanent Delegation of **Algeria** to UNESCO held an information session concerning the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee, to be held at the invitation of the Algerian authorities on 18 and 19 November 2006 in Algiers.

[Room XI, 09/11/06, 3.30 p.m.]

AGENDA ITEM 5: SELECTION BY LOT OF 12 STATES MEMBERS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE WHOSE TERM OF OFFICE WILL BE LIMITED TO TWO YEARS

Document *ITH/06/1.EXT.GA/CONF.203/5*

31. The **Chairperson** opened the afternoon meeting by reviewing the basic principles for the partial renewal of the membership of the Committee which had been introduced in order to ensure its continuity, and specified that no country could have two consecutive terms of office.
32. Several States took the floor,² in particular to endorse Option B of Draft Resolution 1.EXT.GA 5 whereby geographical distribution would be taken into account when selecting by lot. The delegations of **Romania** (on behalf of Group II), **Peru** (on behalf of Group III) and the **United Arab Emirates** stressed that Option B would ensure the fairest representation and was a balanced solution. The delegation of **India** reminded the Chairperson that Option A ran counter to the spirit of the Convention; the delegation of **Nigeria** said that Option A risked penalizing an entire region while Option B would ensure equitable rotation.
33. The delegations of **Algeria**, **Jordan**, **Morocco**, the **Republic of Korea**, the **Central African Republic** and **Gabon** then said that they were in favour of Option B, endorsing the remarks of the previous speakers.
34. The **Chairperson** confirmed, at the request of the delegation of the **United Arab Emirates**, that the procedure was exceptional and noted the consensus in the General Assembly in favour of Option B as proposed in the reference document. Resolution 1.EXT.GA 5 (Option B) was adopted.
35. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** announced the procedure to be used to draw by lot the States Members whose term of office would be limited to two years. The **drawing by lot** was carried out by a member of the Secretariat under the supervision of the

² The statements are not in chronological order. Owing to the strong consensus regarding Option B, the statements have been summarized here according to their essentially similar content.

Chairperson. The 12 States Members of the Intergovernmental Committee (two per electoral group) whose term of office will be limited to two years are:

Group I:	Belgium, France
Group II:	Bulgaria, Romania
Group III:	Bolivia, Brazil
Group IV:	China, Japan
Group V(a):	Nigeria, Senegal
Group V(b):	Algeria, Syrian Arab Republic

AGENDA ITEM 6: CLOSING SESSION

36. After the **Rapporteur, H.E. Mr Faruk Loğuđlu**, had made his oral report on the day's proceedings and the resolutions adopted, the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**, at the invitation of the Chairperson and on behalf of the Director-General, thanked all the Member States for their rich and constructive contributions. Noting that the Committee now had 24 members, she expressed the hope that the Committee's work at its meeting in Algiers would be productive. Lastly, she thanked the Rapporteur and the Chairperson.
37. The delegation of **Mexico** congratulated the Chairperson and thanked the Secretariat for organizing the extraordinary session. In order to ensure that the Committee could work in an atmosphere of exchange, the delegation of **Mexico** asked for the meetings of the Committee to be held in six languages. It further proposed that the Committee should henceforth meet at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In the event that meetings were held in another country, a request would be made for financial support to be provided for the travel costs of those participants who did not have the resources to cover them themselves. A request was also made for those proposals to be included in the summary record of the meeting.
38. The **Chairperson** thanked the Assistant Director-General for Culture, the Secretary, the Secretariat, the tellers and the interpreters and declared the first extraordinary session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the 2003 Convention closed.