

ICH NGO

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À: ICH NGO
Cc: Bogyay, Katalin; Dr. Hámori József; Felföldi László; Gabor.Soos@koh.hu; Nagy Éva
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Madam Cécile Duvalle
Chief, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section

Recu CLT / CIH / ITH

Le 18 JAN. 2010

N° 2420

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Dear Madam Cécile Duvalle,

Referring to your letter CTL/CIH/ITH/2009/561 I'm sending you attached *Consultation on the modalities and methods of facilitating the contribution of NGOs from developing countries* compiled by the Hungarian expert dr Laszlo Felföldi and consultant dr Gabor Soos.

Accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ágnes Bíró

Ms Ágnes Kovács Bíró
Secretary-General

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Comments on the modalities and methods of facilitating the contribution of NGOs from developing Countries

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Participant States Parties of the 3rd and 4th sessions of the intergovernmental committee recognized the need of the balanced geographical contribution of NGOs concerning advisory assistance to the Committee in the implementation of the Convention 2003, in accordance with the Operational Directives. They discovered that there was a regrettable imbalance on the existing list, in the geographical distribution, and they shared the concern of the Committee to take measures for equitable geographical representation. They agreed that it was a common responsibility of the State Parties of the Convention and of the members of the present Committee. In this spirit, Committee called upon States Parties to send written contributions by 1 March 2004, and later by 15 January 2010 about the modalities and methods to facilitate the contribution of NGOs in developing countries. (D3. COM 9/7, D4. COM 10/4)

We recall that the Ambassador of Hungary in his capacity as Chairperson of the Committee on International NGOs of UNESCO's Executive Board called attention to the fact, that many NGOs having headquarters in Europe, are active in Africa, Asia or Latin America. Therefore, when considering the "equitable geographical distribution" of accredited NGOs, what should be taken into account is not mechanically the location of their headquarters, but their actual fields of activity. He suggested (supported by representatives of international NGOs) to take into consideration the potentials of these organizations in promotion and protection of the NGOs' and local communities' interests in developing countries, and facilitating them in their advisory role to the Committee. We confirm the Hungarian (and other's) suggestion – mentioned in the Rapporteur's oral report of the 3rd session – not to enlist international professional NGO's (having headquarters outside the developing countries), to the list of accredited NGOs mechanically, and we suggest to take them into consideration in judging the geographical equity prescribed by the Operational Directives. (Concrete suggestion below)

Hungary suggests analyzing the real situation in the developing countries before deciding the methods and modalities of facilitating NGOs in developing countries. We note that the problems raised by the delegates and observers on the 3rd and 4th sessions would be useful guidelines for determining the criteria of the analysis. These problems were identified as follows:

1. lack of competent and dedicated NGO-s with proper legal formation;
2. formal inability of the existing NGOs to accredit themselves because of the rules prescribed by the Operational Directives of Convention 2003, see: 4 years continuous activity, 2 years' legal representative etc. Majority of the NGOs in developing countries are "too young" and not prepared enough to answer the above mentioned rules. (As the Convention 2003 is too young as well, compared to other ones in the field of culture and education).
3. procedural problems hindering the NGOs in developing countries in easy and simple way of accreditation, see: complicated data sheet, improper deadlines,;
4. low level of the socio-cultural interest and orientation (in written and electronic media, formal and out of school education, cultural programs etc) in raising awareness on ICH and sustainable safeguarding and urging the establishment of NGOs on local, regional, national and international level;
5. miscommunication between the agents participating in the implementations of the Convention on and across the different levels – e.g. UNESCO divisions, regional centers, national committees, intergovernmental committee, national, governmental administrative bodies, international and local NGO-s;
6. lack of funding for NGOs to widen their scope of activities in the direction of the safeguarding of ICH (compared to the previous scope) and to cover the expenses of participating in the international UNESCO activities in order to fill their advisory role;

- A thorough analysis of the situation made by the States Parties from developing countries themselves with the assistance of the Committee will facilitate us to decide the steps of capacity building, confirming dedicatedness and raising awareness. The above mentioned 6 criteria (and others being determined later) would be applicable in making the analysis. Direct involvement and participation of the States Parties, national commissions and any other organs of the third world are crucial.

We have to be aware that some of the problems will be solved soon by "time" itself. In time, existing NGOs will be able to meet the requirements of the Operational Directives. But many of the problems take longer period of time to be solved. That is why the Committee has to prepare plans of different terms: short, medium and long terms. In addition we have to define the problems needing continuous attention (e.g. education, funding).

Some concrete suggestions for solving the problems relating rules, principles

- In the current lack of competent and dedicated NGOs, the Committee may ask individual professionals having grass root experiences and competence in the implementation of the Convention. It is in harmony with the Convention: Article 8/4. (See also the suggestion of the Brazilian delegation on session 3 in Istanbul.) In this way, the momentary geographical imbalance in advisory practice may be reduced.

- Accreditation of the international NGO-s according to their scope and space of their activities would also contribute to reducing imbalance in this field. The point is not only geographical but also thematic (in respect domains) equity, which is equally important in the proper and fair advisory work.
- The Committee may ask international NGOs to use worldwide programs or to establish new ones in their field of interest and space of geographical activity with the aim of raising awareness and promoting implementation of the Convention 2003 on local, regional, national and international levels. Indirectly it will enhance the establishment of professional NGOs all over the world.

Some concrete suggestions for modalities facilitating NGOs in the developing countries:

- Establishment of international (south-south, south-north) connections in the field of higher education applying the UNITWIN and other educational networks of UNESCO, European Union and all the other regional organizations acting in the field of culture.
- - Joint MA and PhD programs of the universities from different regions of the world giving joint diploma to the students would guarantee the unity of the content and grading. Curricula should contain systematic knowledge about the theoretical and practical problems of intangible cultural heritage and especially of the establishment social-, cultural organizations (NGOs) for sake of the implementation of the Convention. Exchange of experiences in both (south-south or south-north) relations will be mutually useful for partners in collaboration.