**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE  
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Sixteenth session**

**Online**

**13 to 18 December 2021**

**Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Adoption of the summary records   
of the fifteenth session of the Committee**

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| **Decision required**:paragraph 7 |

1. This document contains the summary records of the fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, held online from 14 to 18 December 2020.
2. Up to 2,500 people followed all or part of the debates and 837 participants registered for the session, including delegations from twenty-four States Parties Members of the Committee, 118 States Parties not Members of the Committee, two States non party to the Convention, one organization of the United Nations, three intergovernmental organizations (other than the UN), seven category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO, and nine press/media entities.
3. The full list of participants is available the [webpage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/list-of-participants-01151) of the Convention.
4. The working languages of the session were English and French, with additional interpretation made available in Spanish thanks to support from Spain.
5. The Living Heritage Entity of UNESCO provided the Secretariat for the meeting.
6. The elected Members of the Bureau of the fifteenth session of the Committee were:

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| Chairperson: | H.E. Ms Olivia Grange (Jamaica) |
| Vice-Chairpersons: | the Netherlands, Azerbaijan, China, Djibouti and Kuwait |
| Rapporteur: | Mr Askar Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan) served until the fifteenth session of the Committee but was no longer in a position to complete his term of office. The Netherlands, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, was elected as Rapporteur of the fifteenth session of the Committee (Decision [15.COM 3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/3)), in accordance with Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. |

1. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

**DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 4**

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/21/16.COM/4,
2. Adopts the summary records of the Committee’s fifteenth session contained in this document.

**SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE**

*[Monday, 14 December 2020]*

**ITEM 1 OF THE AGENDA**

**OPENING**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/INF.1*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.1-EN.doc)

1. The **Secretary of the Convention**, Mr Tim Curtis,began by announcing that interpretation was available in English and French – the working languages of the Committee – as well as Spanish for the entire duration of the session thanks to the generous support of Spain. As this was an online meeting through the Zoom platform, each State Party was provided with an active meeting link that was communicated by electronic circular letter sent out by the Secretariat on 5 December, with Committee members receiving two links. Submitting States with nomination files received an additional active connection, with additional links provided upon request.
2. The **Chairperson**, H.E. Ms Olivia Grange, spoke of her pleasure in welcoming the delegation to the fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. She was particularly honoured to welcome the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay, as well as Ministers and dignitaries of the States Parties who had joined online, as well as non-States Parties to the Convention, experts and representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society. The Chairperson noted that 737 participants from 133 countries had registered to join, and she was particularly grateful to those who were connecting early or late depending on their time zone, which demonstrated their dedication and adaptability to making the online session a success. She had hoped to welcome delegations to Jamaica, but the pandemic had rendered that impossible. However, she conveyed the warmth and hospitality of Jamaica, and in order to get a feeling of being in Kingston the organizers had prepared reggae greetings featuring international reggae ambassadors with video clips by Peetah Morgan of Morgan Heritage, Marcia Griffiths of the I-Threes, who had toured with Bob Marley, and Mykal Rose of Black Uhuru, appearing alongside the Inner Circle Band. The Chairperson was confident that all the necessary decisions would be taken at this fifteenth session despite the new online medium. She noted the tight schedule as a result of the shortened agenda, but she counted on everyone’s cooperation in making interventions short and succinct, as well as the assistance of the Vice-Chairs (Netherlands, Azerbaijan, China, Djibouti and Kuwait), which composed the Bureau of the Committee, for the smooth progress of the session. The Rapporteur for the session would be replaced, which would be discussed under agenda item 3. She invited the Director-General of UNESCO to address her words of welcome.
3. The **Director-General of UNESCO**, Ms Audrey Azoulay, spoke of2020 as an exceptional year in every respect. It had plunged all societies into a deep crisis, which had severely affected heritage and culture. It had also forced everyone to change their habits and ways of being together, with the Committee taking place online for the first time. For this capacity to adapt and organize, she expressed thanks to the Government of Jamaica, the Chairperson, Ms Olivia Grange, as well as to the Secretariat. This enabled the work to continue, even though all regretted not being able to attend the session in Jamaica. Nevertheless, the music just played provided a sense of being together that helped transcend physical distances. The Director-General also welcomed the new States that had joined the Convention in 2019, namely, Angola and Somalia, adding that this was another step further on the road to peace for these countries, one that was based on culture, education and the transmission of values, with both countries having experienced internal conflicts. With 180 States Parties, the universality of the Convention was gaining ground. However, in 2020, intangible cultural heritage had been put to the test. Centuries-old festivals and ceremonies had been cancelled, such as the Gion Festival in Kyoto, Japan, and craft traditions were economically threatened, such as in Botswana where potters, whose skills are listed as intangible heritage, could no longer sell their crafts in markets. Transmission was also weakened in Cremona, Italy, for example, where luthiers were deprived of their workshops, and apprentices of their masters. Faced with this exceptional situation, UNESCO organized online events, such as a world concert on 30 April, International Jazz Day, which brought together more than 300,000 people online. UNESCO also launched the ResiliArt[[1]](#footnote-1) movement, to collectively find ways out of the crisis with more than 220 debates taking place in more than 75 countries where artists, practitioners, crafts people, alongside institutions, were given a voice, and whose messages were compiled in the publication *Culture in Crisis*[[2]](#footnote-2). Intangible heritage is a precious resource for responding to contemporary challenges, which is the very philosophy of the Convention, as it turns gestures, festivals, rituals, not into evanescent memories of a bygone past, but into a living heritage that can meet today’s challenges.
4. The **Director-General of UNESCO** spoke of work in recent years focused, in particular, on reaffirming the social dimension of urban living heritage, which Jamaica knew well as was demonstrated in its commitment that led to the inscription on the Representative List of the Maroon heritage of Moore Town in 2008, and the reggae music of Jamaica in 2018. She remarked that Bob Marley and Dennis Brown had gifted their music to the world, in which the message of intangible heritage could be heard: a message of diversity, freedom and emancipation. A message of diversity because reggae embodies harmony, borrowing rhythms from the Caribbean, swing from North America, beats from the songs of Africa’s Nyahbinghi order (a religious movement spanning Congo, Kenya and Uganda), which inspired some of the greatest artists, including Jimmy Cliff and others. A message of freedom and emancipation because reggae, along with jazz, had played an important role in bringing South Africans together to defeat apartheid. Intangible heritage is indeed a powerful way of healing wounds in our societies. This is true for tears in the social fabric; it is also true for the fracture between humanity and nature. For example, preserving traditional knowledge such as Suri Jagek, which is related to the observation of the sun by the Kalasha people of Pakistan, preserves detailed knowledge of the environment that could help rebuild our relationship with the living world. Intangible cultural heritage is also a resource that can be used to rise above political disputes, as in the case of the joint inscription of Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum) that was inscribed on the Representative List by the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in 2018. The Director-General was also delighted to see this spirit of dialogue reflected in the Committee and in its decision-making processes, which had been revised to make them fairer, more inclusive and open. Making this a reality is an essential prerequisite for facing the challenges of the future; the focus of this session. By looking ahead is to consider heritage from the perspective of transmission and education because respecting heritage not only involves protection, it also means transmitting it to future generations and ensuring that young people can appropriate heritage, take pride in it, and renew it. In the words of Linton Kwesi Johnson, the renowned Jamaican dub poet, ‘At the end of the day, life’s about realizing one’s human potential’. The Director-General concluded by wishing the delegations fruitful discussions.
5. The **Chairperson** thanked the Director-General for her encouraging words, and she presented the reggae interlude featuring the Inner Circle Band, Marcia Griffiths, Mykal Rose and Julian Marley.

*[Music video of reggae greetings]*

1. The **Chairperson** hoped that the delegations had enjoyed the Jamaican reggae, and she invited the Assistant-Director General for Culture, Mr Ernesto Ottone, to present the initiative, ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’.
2. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture**, Mr Ernesto Ottone, was happy to note the online presence of many distinguished representatives and participants. He recalled that this new and innovative tool ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’[[3]](#footnote-3) had been launched in Mauritius in 2018. This vast constellation shows the diversity of cultural practices, and how the inscribed elements interconnect with one another. In the same tool, another visualization highlights the intertwining of culture in our societies with the environment, sea, mountains, deserts and forests. Another visual mapping also displays the threats weighing on living heritage, while another new essential dimension in today’s world – sustainable development – was also added to show the considerable challenges faced by humanity to ensure its survival, which was further brought to the fore by the pandemic. The question now was how to demonstrate the links between living heritage and sustainable development, which is crucial for the 2003 Convention and beyond, as well as the relationship between music, poetry and dance and the future of humanity on Earth. It was hoped that the elaboration of a new virtual universe would respond to this question, and the Secretariat was invited to present ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage and sustainable development’.
3. **Mr Hugues Sicard** of the Secretariatexplained that the work sought to recognize the complex links of living heritage with sustainable development, beginning with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The links between the 17 SDGs and living heritage for each of the 549 elements inscribed on the Lists were thus identified. Thanks to this systematic approach, the Secretariat was able to design a constellation image of the linkages[[4]](#footnote-4), starting with SDG 17 on ‘partnerships for the goals’ through to the SDGs on health, education and the environment where the elements are linked depending on the many correlations relative to the goals. By placing the cursor on each SDG in the constellation, Mr Sicard demonstrated how, for example, SDG 4 on education revealed an abundance of linkages, as did SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and SDG 15 on life on land. Mr Sicard took reggae as a way of an example of its links with sustainable development. Using the search function to bring up reggae, the caption explains that reggae was born among marginalized groups who were fighting for greater justice and freedom, which is linked to SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 5 (gender equality) – because women also fully share in the practice of reggae – as well as SDG 17 that calls for unity and the building of a sustainable humanity. This was then carried out for all the other elements by looking at the information provided in the nomination files. It was found that there were 63 elements, including reggae, which contribute – in one way or another – towards reducing inequalities in all fields of intangible cultural heritage in every region of the world.
4. **Mr Hugues Sicard** gavethe example of Al-Zajal, recited or sung poetry, where men and women in Lebanon joust poetically around a meal waxing lyrical on the beauty of their country and on issues such as tolerance, among others. Moreover, in addition to the links to the SDGs, the element is linked [the grey lines] to a whole array of concepts that characterize it, such as family, conflict resolution and of course poetry. Clicking on the concept of ‘poetry’ leads to a multi-coloured ring that indicates the extent of the links of poetry to the specific SDGs. For example, the blue-coloured segment corresponds to SDG 16 (peace and justice). In this way, through the various elements, the correlations between poetry and sustainable development can be deduced, providing a general overview of the element in question. However, it was also felt important to propose a whole set of specific data for each SDG that provided greater detail on the resonance between living heritage and a specific SDG. Mr Sicard gave the example of SDG 3 on health, which – by clicking on the tab and then the white cross – opened up to a brief introduction, a list of all the elements linked to SDG 3, as well as the case studies related to health, which had come from capacity-building (it was recalled that the many years of the capacity-building programme had accumulated many resources that were now available through this tool). Bibliographic references related to each SDG, as available on the Convention website, were also integrated into the tool covering scientific research related to the work of the Convention, to which contributions could also be added. By clicking on ‘Explore the visualization for this goal’, the tool also visualized the data for each of the SDGs, with the case studies accessed through the hexagons, and the publications accessed through the crosses. In addition, four elements that are considered emblematic of the link between living heritage and health, were highlighted. For instance, the visualization for yoga shows the various elements that are linked to yoga and explain why yoga fully resonates with a specific SDG. This compilation was put together so that users of the interface can find the resources they need to enable them to become an advocate for the safeguarding of living heritage. Mr Sicard explained that the interfaces were already available and that users could simply follow the guide by clicking on the play button positioned on the left-hand side that will automatically navigate the user through the constellation, and from one link to the next, users you will be able to discover the various elements.
5. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** thanked Mr Hugues Sicard and the Living Heritage Entity for this truly extraordinary work of research, which had been requested by Member States so that normative instruments could go beyond these sessions and find ways of rapprochement with the communities and civil society. The ADG spoke of culture as the keystone of sustainable development, and that through such initiatives, culture will gain ground and achieve the goals of sustainable development.This tool will be made available in many places, for example, as a permanent installation in the UNESCO lobby, in museums, cities, but also during international meetings and forums where UNESCO and culture were not always sufficiently visible.The ADG invited all interested States to contact the Secretariat to see how they could best make use of this tool in schools and public places.In this regard, heexpressed sincere thanks to the Netherlands, especially Ms Riet de Leuw, for supporting this project since 2018 and which, despite a particularly difficult year, had continued to contribute towards this new element of the tool.
6. The **Chairperson** remarked on the wonderful presentation that marked the launch of ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage and sustainable development’, and declared the fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage open.

**ITEM 2 OF THE AGENDA**

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Documents:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-2-EN.docx)

[*LHE/20/15.COM/INF.2.1 Rev 3*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.2.1_Rev.3-EN.docx)

[*LHE/20/15.COM/INF.2.2 Rev 8*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.2.2_Rev.8-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 2*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/2)

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to present the item on the adoption of the agenda.
2. The **Secretary** remarked that due to the impossibility to convene a physical meeting in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, an online meeting was decided in consultation with members of the Committee. It was recalled that Jamaica had been designated as the host country for this session. However, once Jamaica voiced its inability to host the session, the Bureau had considered convening an in-person session at UNESCO Headquarters in December 2020. Unfortunately, as the complexities of the pandemic continued, the Bureau convened an electronic consultation (30 October to 5 November 2020) so that the Committee members could express their preference for either a fully online meeting in December 2020 or a postponement to 2021 when a presential meeting could be safely held. The results showed a strong preference for an online meeting, with only three out of 24 members preferring an in-person meeting in 2021. Consequently, it was decided to hold the fifteenth session online – on an exceptional basis – from 14 to 18 December 2020. The Bureau also approved a reduced provisional agenda with five three-hour daily sessions from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Paris time). Due to the revised timeframe, the Secretariat had proposed not to include five[[5]](#footnote-5) items on the provisional agenda, especially as they had either been discussed extensively during the eighth session of the General Assembly, which was held 3 months prior to the present session, or that they could be postponed without statutory consequences.
3. The **Secretary** recalled that all the working documents had been published online by the statutory deadline of 16 November, four weeks prior to the opening of this session. In accordance with the timetable (document [INF.2.1](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.2.1_Rev.3-EN.docx)) approved by the Bureau, items would be examined in the sequence of their agenda numbers, with the exception of agenda item 10 (election of the Evaluation Body members), which was dealt with both on the first and last day. This allowed the Secretariat to explain the election process, identify two volunteers (physically present in Paris) to act as tellers, and allow representatives of the Committee to physically come and vote at UNESCO HQ. This system enabled physical distancing measures to be applied and guaranteed a vote by secret ballot. The results of the vote would be adopted by the Committee on Friday. The Bureau would meet virtually 30 minutes prior to the start of each day’s session to adjust the provisional timetable as required. The meeting was open to Observers using the same zoom link. The Committee was asked to adopt the agenda and not the timetable. Press or media representatives were directed to find resources on a dedicated subpage of the session’s [webpage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/press-resources-01149). A press briefing would take place via Zoom at 4.45 p.m. (Paris time) on Tuesday 15 December 2020 with another session planned on Saturday 19 December at the same time. The Secretary remarked that it was the first time for the Secretariat to organize an online Committee meeting, which involved connecting two podiums, one in Paris and one in Jamaica, as well a third podium for the Evaluation Body representatives. Preparation for this meeting required a significant number of tests and coordinated actions, and the Secretary warned that despite these efforts, technical problems may still occur, and he asked for their indulgence.
4. The **Chairperson** remarked on the important topics for discussion during the online meeting under an extremely tight schedule, and she asked for cooperation in keeping interventions brief, inviting Committee members to limit themselves to two minutes and to not take the floor more than twice for a single item. Members were invited to submit to the Secretariat any amendments to the draft decisions by completing the relevant form at least one day prior to the examination of the item concerned so as to facilitate the debates. Following the general debate on each item by Committee members, the floor would be given to Observers, if time permitted, but not during a general debate. Concerning the report of the 2020 Evaluation Body, approximately 10 hours would be dedicated to agenda items 8, 8.a, 8.b, 8.c and 8.d, which would give the Committee about 9 minutes on average to discuss each file. In order to facilitate the participation of the delegations concerned, the Secretariat had drafted a tentative schedule with estimated timeslots, which was included in the annex of [INF.1](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.1-EN.doc) document under ‘General Information’, as well as the document ‘Order of files’ under agenda item 8. In accordance with Decision [14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18), the 2020 cycle nominations would be examined by the Committee in alphabetical order in English, starting with the files of States beginning with the letter Q.
5. The **Chairperson** recalled that the schedule and order of nominations was subject to change based on the length of debates. To ensure efficient time management and to facilitate the debates, she would apply the same working method as in previous years, meaning that all decisions under the sub-items would be adopted without debate, unless a Committee member wished to raise a particular point, in which case they were invited to inform the Secretariat beforehand. As a consequence, it was taken for granted that draft decisions on nominations, for which no request for amendment or debate had been put forward, could be proposed for adoption as a whole instead of paragraph-by-paragraph. This would give more time debating other nominations that deserved attention, though members of the Committee would always be entitled to ask for the floor. During the debates on each nomination, submitting States were invited to take the floor only to provide information in reply to questions raised by Committee members, as per Rule 22.4 of the Rules of the Procedure of the Committee. It was noted that consultations had taken place among Committee members to respect the tacit agreement known as the ‘gentleman’s agreement’, which was accepted as important for the credibility of the Committee’s work and for the Convention. The submitting State(s) would then be invited to give a speech, show a short video or a combination of both following the Committee’s decision for a maximum of two minutes, including in the case of multinational nominations. This was due to the reduced duration of the session and the necessity to allocate a fair amount of time to all files. The Chairperson noted that several delegations wished to take the floor to deliver general statements and would be given the opportunity to do so after the discussion on agenda item 5 and the adoption of the summary records of the fourteenth session of the Committee.
6. With no forthcoming comments or requests to take the floor, **Chairperson** **declared Decision** [**15.COM 2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/2) **adopted**.

**ITEM 3 OF THE AGENDA**

**REPLACEMENT OF THE RAPPORTEUR**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/3*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-3-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 3*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/3)

1. The **Chairperson** then invited the Secretary to introduce agenda item 3.
2. The **Secretary** explained that by its Decision [14.COM 21](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/21), the Committee had elected Mr Askar Abdrakhmanov from Kazakhstan to serve as Rapporteur. However, at the second meeting of the Bureau in September 2020, Mr Abdrakhmanov informed the members of the Bureau that due to national commitments he was unable to complete his term of office. Rule 16.2 of the Rules of Procedures of the Committee states that ‘if the Rapporteur […] is for any reason unable to complete his/her term of office, he/she shall be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson, after consultation within the Committee, for the remainder of the term of office’. In other words, the Committee was asked to elect a Vice-Chairperson to serve as Rapporteur during the fifteenth session of the Committee.
3. The **Chairperson** therefore invited one of the Bureau members to volunteer to replace Mr Abdrakhmanov as the Rapporteur of the present session, and she took the opportunity to appreciate the commitment shown by Mr Abdrakhmanov for contributing to the good governance of the Convention. Given the online modality of the session, the Secretariat had undertaken a consultation and the Netherlands had proposed to step in.
4. The **delegation of the Netherlands** confirmed its readiness to accept the task of Rapporteur.
5. The **Chairperson** thanked the Netherlands for offering to serve as Rapporteur. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 3**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/3) **adopted**.

**ITEM 4 OF THE AGENDA**

**OBSERVERS**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/4*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-4-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 4*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/4)

1. The **Chairperson** turned to agenda item 4 on Observers.
2. The **Secretary** explained that Rules 8.1 to 8.3 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure provide the criteria for the attendance of Observers to Committee sessions, and in conformity with Decisions [12.COM 3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/12.COM/3) and [14.COM 3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/3) the two following organizations were able to participate as Observers: The African Trade Centre (ATC), and The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO). The Committee was also asked to authorize the participation of Ms Eva-Maria Seng as an Observer at the sixteenth session of the Committee in 2021 following a written request received in April 2020. It was noted that accredited NGOs were automatically admitted as Observers in conformity with Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure. The Committee was thus asked to adopt the draft decision relating to the Observers authorized to attend this session and future sessions upon written requests received to date by the Secretariat. The Chairperson reminded the Committee that Observers could take the floor during a general debate or after a decision had been taken, but not during discussions on draft decisions. With no forthcoming comments, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 4**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/4) **adopted**.

**ITEM 5 OF THE AGENDA**

**ADOPTION OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/5*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-5-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 5*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/5)

1. The **Secretary** presented the item on the summary records of the debates of the fourteenth session of the Committee in accordance with Rule 45 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure, which traced the debates and discussions in Bogotá in 2019.It was recalled that recordings of the debates were also available [online](https://ich.unesco.org/en/15com).
2. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for comments on the draft decision, requesting countries making general statements to do so after the adoption of the decision.
3. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** congratulated the Secretariat for having assisted the Committee in holding its fifteenth session online, adding that it was pleased to take part in this important session and was delighted that efforts had been made to organize the session smoothly. Azerbaijan also greatly appreciated efforts by the Secretariat to promote the implementation of the Convention and the decisions of the Committee and the General Assembly despite the pandemic, as well as the measures taken by the Secretariat to support the basic mechanisms of the Committee. Although the agenda of the session was limited it remained important for the Committee to continue its work on a number of important subjects, such as the role of NGOs and the mechanisms for inscription on the Lists.
4. The **Chairperson** reiterated that general statements would follow after the draft decision, turning to its adoption as a whole. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 5**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/d%C3%A9cisions/15.COM/5?dec=decisions&ref_decision=15.COM) **adopted.**
5. The **Chairperson** invited theSecretariat to update the Committee on the activities it undertook since the eighth session of the General Assembly in September 2020.
6. The **Secretary** recalled that there was no Secretariat’s report, but he nonetheless briefly reported on a number of activities undertaken since the General Assembly in September 2020 in addition to a number of statutory actions to support various international cooperation mechanisms, particularly in the preparation of the present session. The eighth annual coordination meeting of the Category 2 Centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage took place online on 30 November 2020[[6]](#footnote-6). An intersectoral online expert meeting on education-related indicators in the overall results framework for the Convention and their relationship with SDG 4 (on education) was hosted by ICHCAP[[7]](#footnote-7) on 1, 3 and 8 December 2020. As a result, a public online restitution meeting will be held in January 2021 to share the results of these meetings. Preparation was also underway in the development of a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on living heritage and sustainable development, which was hoped to launch in 2022.
7. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the update of the Secretariat’s recent activities, adding that the Committee appreciated the Secretariat’s efforts to keep the Convention going under the difficult circumstances.TheChairpersonopened the floor to Committee members, as well as Observers to deliver their general statements, inviting Azerbaijan to take the floor.
8. Resuming its statement, the **delegation of** **Azerbaijan** spoke of how important it was for the Committee to pursue its work on a certain number of important questions, such as the role of NGOs, mechanisms for inscription on the Lists, as well as ICH in emergency situations including ICH in armed conflict situations. It was noted that the Committee will take up the results of the periodic reporting exercise in Latin America and the Caribbean, and it would closely monitor that work. The delegation also wished to reiterate the importance of ensuring consistency in current and past decisions. The challenges were becoming all the greater as the scope of the Committee’s work and its discussions become broader. It expressed concern over the situation of certain nominations and the priorities for the next cycle, adding that a debate might be in order to consider the situation and to propose means for the Committee to make progress at its next session.
9. The **delegation of** **Brazil** was very proud to once again serve as a member of the Committee, and congratulated the new members, thanking everyone for the support it had received. It congratulated Colombia for its magnificent organization of the last session in Bogotá; the first to be held in Latin America and a reference in the region’s history. The delegation wished to celebrate the 17 years of the Convention, which although relatively young, had shown its growing relevance in today’s world. The relationship with Brazil and the Convention began with the first debates and negotiations, and culminated in Brazil’s adoption of the Convention. Brazil will work with the Committee to broaden and intensify the Convention’s implementation in order to better promote and protect the invaluable intangible cultural heritage of our peoples. The reasons for its commitment were deeply rooted in its own history. The great diversity of Brazilian intangible cultural heritage is not something of the past, it is a living heritage. This is a society of which people of different ethnic origins live together, and it is a nation made up of hundreds of distinct autochthonous groups, enriched by the customs and religions of people with African origins. This can be seen in its language, food, dances and customs brought together by the contributions made by the enormous influx of immigrants. They have mixed with the people of Brazil to create a distinguished and unique national culture whose manifestations are recognized the world over. Intangible cultural heritage makes it possible for Brazilians to develop a feeling of unity and belonging, which deserves protection and support. Brazil is committed to that mission and has been for decades through its Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN). In 2020, Brazil will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of its national programme for the safeguarding of intangible heritage, which in fact pre-dates the 2003 Convention. Thanks to IPHAN, Brazil has continued to expand its technical cooperation with the different institutions in Latin America, especially with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL). The delegation understood that these were not easy times for culture; the pandemic had already affected millions of artists, artisans and cultural workers who have lost their ability to work. It was therefore the duty of everyone to promote resilience of cultural expression, and to support the practices, the communities and bearers of intangible cultural heritage, as well as cultural institutions, which is needed more than ever need. The Convention has created a direct bond with communities, which has to be reinforced to create a new starting point, a renaissance, and the reason the States were all here, to work together.
10. The **delegation of China** congratulated the Chairperson and expressed gratitude to Jamaica for its hospitality as the host for this session, as well as the Committee members and the Secretariat for their great efforts to make this online session possible. The delegation recalled the precious memories of the last session in Colombia. Guided by the principles and objectives of the Convention, the Committee had achieved fruitful results, such as the reform of the periodic reporting system, the upstream dialogue process, reflections on the listing mechanisms, and so on. The COVID-19 pandemic had profoundly changed our way of life, threatening people’s lives and health, as well as the diversity and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. Although the Committee had to meet online with a reduced agenda, the delegation believed that with the Chairperson’s leadership and the contributions of members of the Committee, the promotion and implementation of the Convention would continue.
11. The **delegation of Panama** expressed its wishes for a successful Committee session, conveying its greetings from the Minister of Culture of Panama who had sent a representative to attend this important forum. The delegation also expressed greetings to the Director-General of UNESCO, the Assistant Director-General, and the Secretary of the Convention. Panama, with the creation of its Ministry of Culture in 2019 and its cultural law in the same year, has positioned its main focus on the enjoyment of cultural rights, alongside universal human rights, to strengthen and deepen the recognition of cultural diversity of peoples and societies with a view to sustainable development. Over recent years, Panama had made progress in the implementation of the Convention, with a special focus on the planning, protection and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in a participatory and inclusive way. From the region comprised of Latin America and Caribbean countries, this was seen as a vital and urgent task. The importance of protecting and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is crucial for the region given the need to manage new realities brought about by the global impact of COVID-19 on our way of life. In this regard, Panama, as signatory to the Convention, was committed to working as a team in all aspects of culture.
12. The **delegation of Japan** commended the Chairperson and the Secretariat for making the online Committee session possible during this difficult time as a result of the coronavirus, especially taking into account the time constraints of the Committee, as well as the time difference between the different regions. It understood that it was very early in the morning in Jamaica and it thanked the hosts for organizing this session. It also thanked the Evaluation Body for its professionalism in evaluating and examining the submitted files despite the many restrictions, which had to be conducted online. The delegation also appreciated the introduction of the upstream dialogue process in the evaluation of files, which resulted in many favourable recommendations, adding that Japan will continue to support and be actively involved in the global reflection of the listing mechanisms of the Convention. This process is expected to take place in 2021 when important issues will be discussed, such as the review of the evaluation criteria, the upper limit on the number of cases to be evaluated, the use of external information, and the transfer and removal of elements from the Lists. The delegation emphasized once again how intangible cultural heritage is very dear in the hearts of the Japanese people, and in that context, it looked forward to very fruitful discussions.
13. The **delegation of Czechia** was delighted to be on the Committee, and it thanked the States Parties for their support in its election during the General Assembly in September 2020, adding that it would work hard with the members of the Committee in the implementation of the Convention. The delegation would have been delighted to meet in Jamaica, but was at least satisfied to hold this meeting virtually, adding that it would faithfully follow the Chairperson’s instructions and the Secretariat’s recommendations to ensure that the session is fruitful and runs smoothly.
14. The **delegation of Sri Lanka** thanked the Secretariat for the efforts taken to organize this online Committee session despite the challenges faced by everyone due to the pandemic. Living heritage around the world had been greatly affected during the past year, which is built on human relations and interactions, and thus mechanisms to preserve living heritage – even where human interactions are minimal – have had to be devised. Obviously this is a very intricate relationship between living heritage and the social and psychological well-being of any community. If we are to build peace in the minds of men and women, which is the ultimate objective of UNESCO, we must mend and develop the social fabric under the threat of COVID-19, but also by countering the post-crisis recovery period so as to hopefully lead to a more inclusive and peaceful society.
15. The **delegation of Poland** congratulated the Chairperson for the warm, musical opening session, and commended the Secretariat for its dedicated work in organizing this online session during this difficult time. The delegation shared the opinion that it is crucial in today’s world to take all the necessary measures to prevent cultural heritage from the threats to its transmission and viability, which are the core elements of people’s cultural identity and the well-being of communities, groups and individuals. The pandemic had revealed threats to intangible cultural heritage that had not previously been defined and there was thus a need for tools to safeguard and protect both the bearers and the elements themselves. The delegation was satisfied that the operational principles and modalities for safeguarding ICH in emergencies were effectively established during the last General Assembly in September 2020. It especially appreciated the new solutions in promoting the Convention’s provisions, such as the ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’ initiative, and the initiative on Living heritage and the COVID-19 pandemic[[8]](#footnote-8). Moreover, it was happy to acknowledge that an increasing number of States are implementing the Convention. The delegation congratulated the new Committee members and wished all the delegations a constructive meeting.
16. The **delegation of Morocco** congratulated Jamaica and the Chairperson on the manner in which she was conducting the session, extending warmest thanks to the Secretariat for its great work in allowing the meeting to take place, as well as the Director-General for the great achievement over the past months that allowed States Parties to meet and work despite the pandemic. The delegation also expressed thanks to the Secretariat for preparing and organizing this fifteenth session of the Committee during the COVID pandemic. Obviously, it would have preferred a presential meeting, but it fully understood the decision in view of the circumstances. The delegation was also delighted to note the UNESCO had been able to rise to the challenge of the pandemic as presented by the Director-General. Many events related to cultural heritage had to be cancelled or postponed, but the Organization had been present when support of local communities was needed throughout the world to safeguard and maintain the various expressions of cultural heritage. Morocco has a rich history of creativity and oral expressions, and it was hugely committed to employing the means available to protect and safeguard its very diversified heritage. It was also fully committed to the values of the Convention and the implementation of its objectives to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. The delegation then spoke of the importance of this session that will enable the Committee to discuss a number of important points, such as the 2020 report of the Evaluation Body and the nominations for inscription on the Lists, requests for International Assistance, the establishment of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle, and so on. The delegation believed that the reflection on questions relative to the management and procedures for inscription on the Lists and the Operational Directives should strive to find an optimal solution to achieve better geographical balance.
17. The **delegation of Colombia** conveyed warmest greetings to Jamaica, thanking the hosts and the Chairperson for making this Committee meeting possible, and for the reggae moment that opened the session. The delegation wished to highlight in particular the adoption of the overall results framework, which will serve as a roadmap for all States Parties. It had participated in the first cycle of the periodic reporting on the basis of the indicators of the framework, and it had seen the important contribution of the instrument to improving the efficacy and planning for effective safeguarding, and to ensure the visibility of intangible cultural heritage as a contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The delegation also wished to thank the Living Heritage Entity of UNESCO and the network of facilitators[[9]](#footnote-9) for facilitating the adaptation of periodic reporting for the Latin America and the Caribbean group. The delegation also wished to highlight the importance of increasing efforts to ensure quality education as a human right, including the safeguarding of living heritage as a vehicle as well as a goal. It encouraged the Committee to support the participation of all Member States to contribute to this laudable objective, and in this regard, it thanked the Republic of Korea for its initiative and support in starting the reflection process to build more relevant tools to promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage through education. The delegation wished the Chairperson success in leading the Committee, and thanked all those who had expressed their thanks for the Bogotá meeting held in 2019.
18. The **delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic**, a signatory of the Convention since 2005, congratulated the Chairperson, the Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, for her chairing of the Committee, and thanked the members of the Bureau. It particularly welcomed the Secretariat, the Secretary, and the efforts of the Assistant Director-General for Culture for their work, and it welcomed the speech given by the Director-General at the opening of the session. Holding this fifteenth session online called for considerable efforts and demonstrated the commitment of the Committee to ensuring good governance of its work. The Syrian Arab Republic is aware of the major challenges facing humankind. It is a country with thousands of years of history, and over the past nine years it has faced an unprecedented crisis that has never been seen since the beginning of the twentieth century. It has suffered illegal unilateral sanctions, which have had dramatic consequences during the pandemic, but despite this, the people and the Government of Syria have done their utmost with determination, courage and resilience in order to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage in Syria. It has strengthened the universal dimension and the dynamism of its intangible cultural heritage through authentic and sustainable intergenerational links so as to sustain the Arab-Syrian cultural identity that is both united and diverse. The delegation wished the Chairperson and the Committee success, adding that it called for a show of fraternal solidarity, which is reflected in the universal message of reggae.
19. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** congratulated Jamaica and the Chairperson for the wonderful opening session, and UNESCO for organizing this important session despite the very difficult circumstances.
20. The **delegation of Palestine** expressed thanks to the previous Chairperson in Colombia for the fantastic session, adding that it had looked forward to going to Jamaica, but unfortunately the situation did not allow for it. Nevertheless, it welcomed the new members of the Committee, wishing them well. On a technical issue, it asked that the name of Rapporteur be provided as the decision had only mentioned the country, whereas the Rapporteur is elected on his/her personal capacity. Regarding the reports, the delegation thanked the Secretariat for the summary records, noting that the Secretariat had worked very hard during this period of confinement. It was also happy to note that the Chairperson had mentioned the ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ at the beginning of the session, which had been followed and respected since 2017. The delegation concluded by asking for confirmation regarding the timing of the sessions over the coming days, wishing a fruitful session to all.
21. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to respond to the questions raised by Palestine.
22. The **Secretary** responded to the question as to whether the replaced Rapporteur would be nominal, as would normally be the case, by explaining that according to Rule 16.2 ‘if the Rapporteur ceases to represent a State Member of the Committee or if he or she is unable for any reason to complete the term of office, he or she will be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson after consultation’. Consequently, just as a Bureau member may replace the Chairperson, it is not in its nominal capacity, and this same rule applied to the Rapporteur. Regarding the timetable, the Secretary referred to the online timetable, which would be updated daily following each meeting of the Bureau and accessible during the meeting.
23. The **delegation of Slovakia** congratulated the Chairperson on her presidency and for her effective leadership, thanking her for the difficult but important organization of the meeting and for a great opening session. The year in which the COVID-19 pandemic brought many changes to the lives of people the world over, it was crucial to help one another in every possible way. Sharing good practices in the area of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is more important than ever. In addition, a greater understanding, research and documentation of the threats posed to the transmission and practice of intangible cultural heritage over the long term will be important in the future. Slovakia welcomed the research-related activities, for example, the COVID-19 questionnaire initiated by the Secretariat. At the national level, it was launching the second wave of inquiry, as it was deemed necessary to strengthen cooperation with regional partners, as well as to establish new forms of cooperation with actors beyond the field of culture, such as with the military and security sectors. Related to the monitoring of the safeguarding practices in general, the delegation looked forward to the new reporting system based on regions aligned with the overall results framework and facilitated by regional workshops and capacity-building. Slovakia strongly supported the reflection on the listing mechanisms, however, the listing mechanisms was just one part of the Convention’s agenda in implementing the Convention’s goals. An important aspect is the exchange of experiences and methods for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage among countries, as well as practices in reporting. The delegation was thankful for the experiences of States Parties from the first cycle of reporting. The Secretariat’s activities are a cornerstone for the implementation of the Convention on national as well as international levels and thus it was important that the Secretariat have the necessary resources to continue and develop its work. This was the reason why Slovakia had financially contributed more this year than was necessary.
24. The **delegation of Jamaica** spoke of its pleasure and delight in seeing the Chairperson lead this important session of the Committee, remarking on her great commitment to the work of UNESCO and the seriousness with which she would undertake the task. Jamaica is pleased to have assumed the leadership from its sister country of Colombia. It was a fortuitous set of circumstances that allowed Jamaica to move hands across the region from Colombia. The delegation thanked the Director-General and the Secretariat for the efforts made to host this meeting with a view to ensuring the continuity of the Committee’s business. It recognized the challenges and greatly appreciated the efforts expended to ensure that the meeting would take place. The delegation also thanked the Committee members who had displayed an enormous amount of flexibility in responding to the arrangements made, extending its best wishes for the success of the fifteenth session of the Committee. This session will continue its important work to consider files submitted by States Parties, even though it recognized that agenda items would be limited. The delegation recognized the importance of inscriptions for the continued integrity of UNESCO’s work to promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. As said by Nelson Mandela, ‘a rich and varied cultural heritage has a profound power to build our new nation’, speaking of his own country. It was the delegation’s belief that this principle was applicable to all States Parties and that cultural protection was therefore important to everyone. The delegation concluded by wishing success to all the members of the Committee, the States Parties, Observers and NGOs.
25. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** voiced its appreciation to Jamaica for hosting the fifteenth session of the Committee under such dire circumstances, and thanked the Evaluation Body for evaluating the files during the pandemic. Intangible cultural heritage holds a very special place in the hearts of our people as it represented their identity, while serving as a bridge to find commonalities with other cultures. As a newly elected member of the Committee, the delegation expressed its commitment to uphold and protect the values and principles of this Convention and to support the Secretariat and the States Parties to carry out its mandate in an effective and efficient manner, wishing everyone a productive meeting.
26. The **Chairperson** gave the floor to an NGO from Bangladesh.
27. Ms Lubna Marum of the NGO, **Shadhona, Centre for Advancement of Southasian Culture**, expressed appreciation of efforts of the Chairperson in conducting this meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as UNESCO’s efforts in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. She particularly thanked the UNESCO Dhaka Office for consistently helping to raise awareness and thanked the Government of Azerbaijan, adding that hopefully in 2021 Bangladesh will have its first community-led inventory of intangible cultural heritage with the help of all the communities involved. It had been a good awareness-building tool that not only safeguarded cultural practices, but also empowered the various communities.
28. The **delegation of Botswana** congratulated Jamaica for hosting the Committee and thanked the Secretariat for organizing the online session, which was the only option for the Committee during this difficult time of the pandemic. Botswana was pleased to have been elected as a Committee member for the first time during the eighth session of the General Assembly, adding that it had been a State Party to the Convention since 2010. Botswana also appreciated the Director-General’s recognition of the Botswana potters’ plight brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EVALUATION BODY FOR THE 2021 CYCLE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/10 Rev*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-10.Rev-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 10*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/10)

1. The **Chairperson** turned to agenda item 10, explaining that it would be finalized later during the week as this was the only item not entirely conducted online with the voting physically taking place at UNESCO Headquarters, as required for secret ballot voting. She invited the Secretariat to explain the voting procedure.
2. **Ms** **Fumiko Ohinata** of the Secretariatpresented theitem, explaining that the Committee was invited to adopt the Terms of Reference of the Evaluation Body, as contained in Annex 1 of [working document 10](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-10.Rev-EN.docx), and appoint two experts from Group III and Group IV and one NGO from Group V(b) in accordance with Section B of Rule 39 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure and Decision [14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18). It was important to note that the election of the members of the Evaluation Body will be held by secret ballot. The Committee was also invited to reappoint the nine members elected in previous years. Candidates were proposed by the States Parties concerned through the President of each Electoral Group. A maximum of three candidates were proposed, as provided for in paragraph 28 of the Operational Guidelines. The nominations received in each Electoral Group were as follows: i) 1 expert candidate for Group III; ii) 3 experts candidate for Group IV; and iii) 3 NGO candidates for Group V(b). The list of applicants could be found in Annex 2 of document 10, which includes websites and applications for accreditation in the case of NGOs, and CVs for experts. For Group III, there was only one candidate, which is equal to the number of seats to be filled. In this case of a clean slate, the expert is appointed automatically without election. In 2019, the Committee introduced a new practice to establish the order of examination and evaluation of the nomination files, with the letter ‘Q’ selected by drawing lots. Thus, the files for the 2020 cycle were examined and presented in English alphabetical order beginning with ‘Q’. This meant that States beginning with a letter at the end of the alphabet would not always have their nominations examined last. It was also proposed that the Committee select a letter to determine the order of examination of the files for the 2021 cycle.
3. **Ms Fumiko Ohinata** proceeded to explain thesecret ballot vote and voting procedures, recalling that the election of the new members of the Evaluation Body cannot take place online and must in fact be held by secret ballot in order to comply with the provisions of Article 39 B. The Secretariat had sent information on voting procedures on 10 December, as reflected in [document INF.1](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-INF.1-EN.doc). As is customary for a presential vote, members of the Committee were asked to appoint two volunteers to serve as tellers for the election who must be physically present in Paris for the duration of the vote; a voting booth had been set up at UNESCO Headquarters. Voting was planned to take place on 15 December following the voting schedule that had been communicated to the Committee. As voting was to take place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, all members of the Committee had to designate a representative who had to be physically present in Paris to vote and who had to present an identity document. Delegations with no representative in France were able to designate an individual of their choice based in France with the right to vote (with the exception of persons already representing another State on the Committee). Letters of accreditation had to follow standard practice and be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Secretariat requested that the letter be sent electronically before the end of the day. The representative also had to present a copy of this letter at the time of voting. Any member of the Committee who did not show up to vote at the allotted time would be considered absent. The two tellers appointed and members of the Secretariat would be present during the voting and counting of votes. During the voting, Committee members will receive one envelope and one ballot per seat to be filled, which will include the names of all candidates by Electoral Group. Each member of the Committee had to vote by circling the names of the candidates for whom they wished to vote: one candidate per Electoral Group. Ballots would then be folded, placed in the envelope and sealed. The envelope must not be marked. The absence of ballots in the envelope will be considered an abstention. Ballot papers with more names selected than the number of seats to be filled, as well as ballot papers that do not bear any indication of voting intention, were considered invalid. If two or more candidates obtained the same number of votes, there would be a second secret ballot reserved for those candidates. Although the provisional timetable stated that the final results would be presented on Saturday 19 December 2020 [but in fact were presented on Friday 18 December], the Chairperson may decide, in consultation with the Bureau, to announce the results earlier once the votes are counted.
4. The **Chairperson** proposed that the Committee first adopt the terms of reference of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle, followed by the designation of the two tellers to monitor the election, adding that the Bureau would meet the following day to decide whether to announce the results before Saturday. With no members wishing to take the floor on the question of voting procedure, she asked the Committee to refer to Annex 1 of working document 10 to adopt the terms of reference of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle. With no forthcoming comments, the Chairperson pronounced the terms of reference adopted. She then proceeded with the identification of two tellers. Given that the meeting was held online, a preliminary consultation through the Secretariat had been undertaken and two delegates had come forward to serve as tellers: Ms Jun Takai from the delegation of Japan, and Mr Farhan Ali Omar from the delegation of Djibouti.
5. The **delegation of** **Djibouti** congratulated the Chairperson and the Secretariat for the work accomplished, which made it possible for the Committee to convene, even though a presential meeting would have been preferred. The delegation confirmed Mr Farhan Ali Omar’s readiness to serve as a teller.
6. Ms Jun Takai of the **delegation of** **Japan** was delighted to serve as a teller for the election.
7. The **Chairperson** thanked the tellers for volunteering in the election of the new members of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle. She suspended agenda item 10, adding that the results would be announced in consultation with the Bureau the following day upon the completion of the counting of ballot papers. For the formal adoption of the draft decision, the Committee would return to agenda item 10, as indicated in the provisional timetable, to officially recognize the results of the election. At that time, the Committee will select a letter of the alphabet to determine the order of the examination of nominations for the next cycle. Agenda item 10 was therefore suspended.

**ITEM 6 OF THE AGENDA**

**REPORT OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FORUM**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/6*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-6-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 6*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/6)

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to present agenda item 6.
2. The **Secretary** remarked that this was the first time that a separate agenda item had been placed on the Committee’s agenda to receive the report from the ICH NGO Forum. This was due to the fact that the Committee, at its previous session, wished to hear directly from the accredited NGOs.Thiswish aligned with the reflection carried out by the Committee between 2017 and 2019, which is to highlight the role of accredited NGOs in supporting the implementation of the Convention and to tap into the potential of the ICH NGO Forum.Moreover, this initiative was welcomed by the General Assembly at its eighth session in September 2020.The annex to working document 6 therefore was the first report submitted by the ICH NGO Forum. It presents organizational issues and activities carried out during the period 2019–2020, as well as the Forum’s views on the role of accredited NGOs in the implementation of the Convention.The Secretary thus invited Ms Naila Ceribasic, the NGO representative on the Steering Committee of the Forum, to present the report.
3. On behalf of the **ICH NGO Forum, Ms Naila Ceribasic**, was grateful for the opportunity to deliver this report, which was made possible thanks to Decision [14.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/15), especially in view of the reduced timetable of the session. This was seen as a sign of greater involvement of NGOs in the functioning of the Convention on the international scale. One of the Forum’s aims is indeed to work independently, yet collaboratively, with governments, the Committee the General Assembly, the UNESCO Secretariat, and other stakeholders on national and international levels in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Convention for the benefit of communities, groups and individuals, and in the interest of civil society. Established in 2009–2010, the Forum has over time become the principal platform for networking and cooperation among accredited NGOs, and for exchanging information and ideas about safeguarding intangible heritage, while strengthening its governance. The first Steering Committee, composed of seven members each representing an NGO from six electoral regions, and one member representing an international NGO[[10]](#footnote-10) was created in 2015, with electoral procedures instituted in 2018, and the Bylaws and Code of conduct adopted in 2019. In the context of the ongoing reflection process on the role and advisory functions of accredited NGOs, the Forum identified seven sets of functions: i) networking; ii) fostering ethical principles; iii) providing information about safeguarding practices; iv) advancing cooperation with various stakeholders; v) contributing to the capacity-building programme; vi) sharing experiences on good safeguarding practices; vii) and advising the Committee. The Forum thus considered that the explicit advisory functions to the Committee, as proposed in the draft decision, could incorporate not only the current service of NGOs in the Evaluation Body, but also under specific thematic issues encompassing experience-sharing on good safeguarding practices, and participation in the follow-up, reporting and monitoring on inscribed elements.
4. **Ms Naila Ceribasic** also highlighted a second point regarding the great diversity among NGOs accredited to the Convention. This is seen as a strength and merit of the Forum, evidenced in its annual meetings and symposia, the journal and book series #HeritageAlive[[11]](#footnote-11), activities of its working groups, and other joint ventures such as, for instance, a conference on ICH and resilience in crisis held in November 2020 in cooperation with ICHCAP[[12]](#footnote-12). As a whole, the Forum prioritizes participatory engagement by its members to the greatest extent possible, even though it is not always easy to accomplish, so as to achieve the highest possible engagement of ICH NGOs, thus benefitting from their various capacities, perspectives and expertise. At the same time, it tailored capacity-building specifically for NGOs as a whole and for specific groups that need to be enhanced. However, the Forum cannot act alone in broadening its activities on the one hand, and operating as volunteers in an unpaid capacity on the other, as was currently the case. The draft decision therefore encourages States Parties to consider supporting the operation of the Forum and/or its specific programmes. The Forum also wished to emphasize its third point related to the ever-present imbalance in geographical distribution of accredited NGOs. In this regard, the Forum should do more through networking and direct communication with NGOs from under-represented regions that are directly involved with the elements inscribed but have not applied for accreditation. It was hoped that the newly formed working group dedicated to this issue would be instrumental in achieving more balanced geographic participation. Ms Ceribasic concluded by stating the Forum’s readiness to assume an enhanced advisory role to the Committee, including a more active role in the deliberations, and the Committee may therefore consider how to remove impediments to exchanges during the sessions so as to involve NGOs in a more integral way. In this regard, the Forum was grateful for the debate, and happy to respond to questions and comments.
5. The **Chairperson** thanked Ms Ceribasic for her comprehensive presentation on behalf of the ICH NGO Forum. The report clearly showed the contributions made by accredited NGOs in the implementation of the Convention and the important role that the Forum has been playing in coordinating their work in numerous ways. The floor was opened for comment.
6. The **delegation of Panama** wished to know how the Committee would move forward on the Forum’s request, particularly in relation to paragraph 6 of the draft decision [i.e. in terms of their involvement in the global capacity-building programme, as well as in an enhanced advisory role to the Committee].
7. The **delegation of** **Switzerland** congratulated the Chairperson and Jamaica for chairing and hosting this Committee session and regretted that it could not be held in Kingston. It also congratulated and thanked the Bureau for allowing the Committee to meet under these very special conditions. The delegation was also very grateful to the Secretariat for organizing and implementing a creative, technical solution for the online session. Switzerland thanked the ICH NGO Forum for its report and for the activities of civil society in the Convention. The report also reflected on the questions and issues that can help better structure and coordinate the important participation of NGOs in the governance and implementation of the Convention. It welcomed the Forum’s work and reflections, and encouraged NGOs to pursue their efforts in a concerted and constructive way. It asked that the Forum strengthen its own organization and to make clearer its role in terms of future contributions. The delegation supported the proposal to maintain the Forum’s report on the agenda in future Committee sessions.
8. Congratulating the Chairperson, the**delegation of the Netherlands** added that it had full confidence in fruitful outcomes despite the difficult circumstances, even though it would have loved to go to Jamaica and experience its culture and people, as well as meet with the rest of the UNESCO family. The delegation thanked the ICH NGO Forum for a clear and rich report, adding that it welcomed the Forum’s multi-layered work through its activities in support of the Committee and the implementation of the Convention, whose function was much greater than its advisory role to UNESCO. The Forum also helped by presenting broad and important themes that were discussed during its symposia and workshops. The delegation had attended the online symposium organized by the Forum on sustainable tourism in a post-COVID situation that had taken place the previous day. Strategies and examples on rebuilding responsible tourism were presented by NGOs from different regions in the world. Examples included tourism in which communities also participate in the decision-making, recommendations on better access to digital media for communities, and passports for responsible tourism. The NGO Forum was developing a toolkit on sustainable tourism, which will be made available online for NGOs, governments, heritage organizations and communities. The NGO Forum was working on issues that the Evaluation Body had mentioned for several years, which placed emphasis on tourism, over-commercialization, decontextualization, gender, intellectual property, as well as discussion points regarding the inscription process of nomination files. The delegation also welcomed the work of the ICH NGO Forum in examining, discussing and reflecting on these subjects and reporting on their findings, thereby fulfilling their role as mediators. It also welcomed its capacity-building activities that aimed to involve as many NGOs as possible across the many regions of the world, and it was hoped that the Forum will be able to continue its important work.
9. The **delegation of Czechia** thanked the ICH NGO Forum for its first and very informative report, which it had read with great interest, adding that it was extremely pleased that the Convention had allowed such an open and inclusive platform. It took note of the Forum’s many diverse activities and its desire to contribute in a more permanent way in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as well as in the statutory organization of the Convention’s work. The activities of the Forum were proof of the dedication and commitment of its members. The Forum was not merely a formal association of different organizations, it had created its own agenda and working methods to create links with the work of the Committee and the General Assembly. Taking into consideration the expertise of the Forum and the desire to facilitate the work of the Committee and the General Assembly, its contributions and potential should not be underestimated. The Committee should thus look for ways to best use the capacities and skills of the accredited NGOs, especially when dealing with persistent challenges, for example, how to effectively share good safeguarding practices, monitor inscribed elements, or provide assistance to less experienced States in the process of drafting nomination files to the Lists. The options open to the Committee and the Secretariat are often limited, owing to a duty of objectivity, but the capacity of the Forum could significantly help in resolving the different, persistent issues. It would also be worthwhile to consider the Forum’s request to contribute to the Committee’s activities on different issues, especially as regards important conceptual methods. For example, the Forum could be invited to prepare background material or proposals to individual items of the agenda, which would comprise the meeting’s documents. The Committee would thus have access to viewpoints and fresh ideas based on a wide range of expert experiences. However, such a new approach would probably bring systematic changes, new administrative challenges, and likely financial demands. As the Secretariat worked closely with the NGO Forum, the delegation wished to hear from the Secretariat how the Forum could engage in the operation of the Committee’s sessions.
10. The **delegation of Sweden** congratulated the Chairperson on her chairpersonship, adding that of course it had hoped to be in Jamaica, but was thankful for the music and the musicians. The delegation looked forward to its first year on the Committee, and thanked the Secretariat for arranging this meeting under extraordinary circumstances and in such a short time. Sweden also thanked the Forum for its first report under a separate item on the Committee’s agenda, adding that it was of utmost importance that this item be included on the agenda of future Committee sessions as NGOs have a crucial role to play in ensuring that intangible heritage remains living and dynamic. The question of how to increase the participation of NGOs in the implementation of the Convention was also an important issue for the future of the Convention. After reading the report, the delegation was glad to see how the Forum’s work had developed in recent years and that it was fully in line with the core of the Convention. This strengthened the position of the Forum as the association of accredited NGOs, as well as its connection to the Committee. Nevertheless, there were challenges in realizing elements of their work, but all States must see the value of the NGOs work and be the first to create the best conditions. The report also provided many good suggestions and Sweden looked forward to taking further steps towards giving NGOs a more formalized role, whose knowledge was needed, not only about intangible cultural heritage but also on the different practices for which everyone had to work together on this common and important mission.
11. The **delegation of Republic of Korea** expressed appreciation for the excellent leadership of the Chairperson and the tireless efforts of the Secretariat. Despite the online modality, there was a tangible sense of collective commitment to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The delegation was pleased to serve once more in the Committee, assuring the Committee of its commitment and contribution for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, adding that it appreciated the hard work of the Secretariat and the NGOs. Following past discussions on the role of NGOs in implementing the Convention, the delegation believed that NGOs are best positioned to communicate with, motivate and energize communities in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, the international network of NGOs will facilitate the dissemination of best practices, and eventually enhance mutual understanding. The delegation welcomed and fully supported the requests from the Forum to promote the participation of accredited NGOs in sharing good practices and experiences, in following up on inscribed elements, and in the assessment of periodic reporting. In recent years, the Forum – in cooperation with the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP) – had published volumes on traditional medicine and traditional food in its online journal #HeritageAlive[[13]](#footnote-13). As in this example, we expect there to be increased cooperation with NGOs, other organizations of the Convention, UNESCO Regional Offices and the Secretariat in the future.
12. The **delegation of Brazil** expressed thanks for the report, reaffirming the important role played by NGOs in the work of the Convention and adding that results depended on the constructive dialogue between governments and civil society. In this context, the NGO Forum is a wonderful opportunity for dialogue and the exchange of ideas to improve the institutional measures that exist, and to provide new solutions for any issues that might arise. The delegation wished to receive more information on the activities carried out by NGOs in order to better understand how their contributions could add value to the Convention. It believed that the Forum is also a good place for dialogue, not only between the Evaluation Body, the Secretariat and the NGOs, but also with the members of the Committee. The delegation understood that geographical diversification of NGOs in the Convention would not be possible without a vast programme of capacity-building, which is not only necessary but would also enrich the debating quality of the work undertaken by the Committee.
13. The **delegation of Singapore** congratulated the Chairperson on her excellent stewardship and thanked the Secretariat for its hard work in making this virtual session possible. Singapore expressed its deep appreciation to the Steering Committee of the ICH NGO Forum for inviting States Parties to participate in the Forum and for co-organizing the symposium on ICH in an urban context held in Bogotá in 2019. Singapore’s collaboration with the NGO Forum was a positive and enriching experience. It shared its experiences in safeguarding ICH in an urban context and how intangible cultural heritage plays an important role in fostering cultural understanding and social cohesion among diverse urban communities. The rich discussions at the Forum provided many insights on good safeguarding practices involving the active participation of communities. Singapore looked forward to future opportunities to share its experiences on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, and to further collaborations with the NGO Forum. The delegation believed that dialogue and networking at the Forum promotes mutual understanding between States Parties and NGOs. Based on its own positive experience, it encouraged all States to strengthen their engagement and partnerships with accredited NGOs as States work together to advance the common mission to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.
14. The **delegation of Lithuania** expressed appreciation and joy in the session’s successful new format despite the global challenges posed by the pandemic. It thanked Jamaica and the Secretariat, and was grateful for the reggae music that enriched the sessions. The delegation congratulated the Chairperson for her work, dedication and commitment. Regarding the inclusion of the Forum’s report, Lithuania supported and strongly welcomed this approach, which will strengthen the role of NGOs in the functioning of the Convention in the future. The scope of activities of the NGO Forum was impressive, including its highly relevant input in networking, the exchange and cooperation among NGOs, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, especially in the global reflection process on the listing mechanism reform, as well as ICH in new urban contexts, ICH in emergencies, COVID-19, or balanced geographical distribution. It was thus essential to strengthen interactions between the Committee and the NGO Forum, and this decision was therefore a relevant starting point in supporting and developing further partnership with the Forum. The delegation concluded by thanking the Forum for the well-prepared report full of analytical insights.
15. The **delegation of Mauritania** congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership, as well as the Secretariat and the members of the Committee for the quality of the documents. Mauritania welcomed the newly elected Committee members, adding that it was convinced that the Committee will continue its remarkable work despite the public health crisis and the threat it posed to intangible cultural heritage and its bearers around the world. The delegation thanked and congratulated the Secretariat and the Assistant Director-General for Culture for the remarkable work accomplished thanks to their understanding of the situation, and for the support provided to States Parties and the different actors in the field of culture. Mauritania is very much attached to the implementation of the Convention and is convinced of its importance for the safeguarding of the rich and diverse intangible cultural heritage throughout the world and within its own country. Various actions had been carried out with NGOs at the national level within the framework of the Forum, and the delegation welcomed the cooperation with States Parties with which it has strong cultural ties. The delegation also thanked and congratulated UNESCO for its support at this time, congratulating the Forum for the quality of its report. Mauritania will continue to work for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and was particularly convinced of the role that civil society must continue to play for the sustainability of intangible cultural heritage.
16. The **delegation of Syrian Arab Republic** thanked the NGO Forum for its report, adding that it supported retaining this item on the agenda in future sessions. The delegation spoke of the important contribution of accredited NGOs in response to communities in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and living heritage, particularly in situations of emergencies and crisis. It recalled the eighth session of the General Assembly and the discussion on ICH in emergencies that lead to the adoption of the operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of emergencies, thereby demonstrating its own priority and certainly that of many States Parties facing situations of grave crises, whether conflict, natural disasters or as a result of the ongoing pandemic. The delegation drew attention to the Syrian NGO, Syria Trust Fund for Development, that responded with great agility by taking appropriate measures to safeguard Syrian intangible cultural heritage for the benefit of civil society in Syria. This NGO had brought forward expertise and know-how that is inclusive and traditional, basing its roots in the diverse and ancestral culture of Syria. The delegation believed that the presence of NGOs at the session, their participation and the presentation of their report signified a new era that was beginning in the 21st century under the tragic influence of the COVID-19 pandemic.
17. The **delegation of Palestine** remarked that the previous speakers had largely covered the points it had wished to make, thanking the NGO Forum and insisting on the important role it plays. It supported and welcomed this first – and by no means last – report, and hoped that this item will remain on the agenda of future Committee sessions in view of the important role NGOs play, particularly in situations of emergency and armed conflict, as previously mentioned, but also with regard to indigenous languages. For these reasons, the delegation reiterated its thanks to the NGO Forum, wishing them great success.
18. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to respond, particularly to the question from Panama.
19. The **Secretary** recalled thatPanama’s question was directly addressed to the Secretariat on how the Secretariat would move forward in relation to paragraph 6 of the draft decision. Indeed, paragraph 6 of the draft decision ‘takes note’ of a number of potential roles of the NGO Forum. Some of these actions can be undertaken by the Secretariat, others will be subject to decisions by the Committee, and some may be carried out within the ICH NGO Forum. For example, in terms of [NGO participation in] the capacity-building programme, the Secretariat was ready to implement actions, but this required extrabudgetary financing. If the Secretariat was able to secure extrabudgetary financing for that purpose, there was no reason that it could not start rolling out the capacity-building programme with UNESCO Field Offices – as had been done on many occasions – for NGOs in the field of intangible cultural heritage. It would obviously be interesting to specifically focus on underrepresented regions. In terms of assuming an enhanced advisory role on thematic issues, the sharing of experiences of good safeguarding practices, or the follow-up of inscribed elements, the Secretary explained that these points had already been discussed, and he recalled the many reflections that had taken place on the role of NGOs. However, for these roles to be formalized, statutory decisions either by the Committee or the General Assembly would have to be taken. The Secretary reminded the Committee, as also mentioned by Japan, that it was in a process of reflection on the listing mechanisms, including the follow-up. That process had not advanced as much as had been hoped owing to the pandemic, but the process was ongoing and the Secretariat intended to continue as soon as possible. Within that process, there may be discussions about the role of the NGO Forum for example, or on the follow-up of inscribed elements on the Lists, as well as the sharing of experiences of good safeguarding practices. In terms of periodic reporting, it was also a very interesting concept to have ‘assessments’ of the periodic reporting, which would obviously be a decision that will have to go through intergovernmental processes to be officially implemented. The Secretary reiterated that this was not the first time these issues were on the table, but it was the first time that they have been part of a specific item for the Committee, and the Secretariat was following this issue closely. The Secretariat would be very pleased to implement a capacity-building programme for NGOs and urged States who were so inclined to propose funding, as limitations were largely financial.
20. The **Chairperson** turned to the adoption of the draft decision, inviting Panama to speak.
21. The **delegation of Panama** appreciated the explanation given by the Secretary in response to its concern in paragraph 6. It explained that there was no doubt of the value and the crucial role played by the Forum, which it completely supported. The delegation added that it was very important that the Forum help NGOs from underrepresented regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean. It could also see NGOs play a role as an advisory body on certain thematic issues. Nevertheless, the issues dealing with the follow-up to inscribe elements and the assessment of periodic reporting are issues that require examination and discussion among the members of the Committee so that it may submit a recommendation to the next General Assembly. However, if the Committee accepted the draft decision as presented, would it be adopting a new enhanced role for the NGOs? Is the Committee accepting the role that NGOs will play in terms of the evaluation and assessment of periodic reports? The delegation did not agree with this approach and therefore wondered how the Secretariat intended to follow through with this decision.
22. The **Secretary** understood the point raised by Panama, explaining that the decision merely ‘takes note’ of the request. It was not a binding decision that required implementation, which contained many aspects. Thus, the wording of the draft decision was such that the Committee was not accepting the request; the Committee simply took note. For the requests to be accepted, they would have to be unpacked into the different elements and presented in more detail at future meetings. As this was the first time the Forum presented its ideas, the Committee was simply taking note of these ideas, which had previously been discussed in Committees and in the special meeting that was held with both States and NGOs present.
23. The **Chairperson** noted that there were no further comments, and she turned to the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision 15.COM 6 adopted.**
24. Noting the time, the **Chairperson** suggested closing the day’s session, inviting the Secretary to present a few practical announcements.
25. The **Secretary** reminded the delegations that the Bureau will meet for the first time the following day at 1:00 p.m. Paris time with the same meeting Zoom link as for the plenary session. The Bureau meeting was open to the public, but Observers could not take the floor without the prior consent of the Chairperson as per Rule 12.4 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure. Concerning the election, voting under agenda item 10 and the establishment of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle was planned to take place at UNESCO HQ in Paris on Tuesday 15 December from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Paris time; details of which were found in the INF.1.1 General information document, as well as the email sent by the Secretariat on 10 December 2020. Concerning the nominations, as per the message sent by the Secretariat to all States on 3 December, Committee members were invited to inform the Secretariat of any discussion or amendments to specific draft decisions by the following day.
26. The **Chairperson** adjourned the session with Bob Marley’s *Turn Your Lights Down Low*, which is part of the ‘Playing for Change Video Series’ featuring Bob Marley’s music.

*[Tuesday, 15 December 2020]*

**ITEM 7 OF THE AGENDA**

**EXAMINATION OF THE REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF ELEMENTS INSCRIBED ON THE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/7*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-7-EN.docx)

**Reports:** [*9 reports*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/7-periodic-reporting-usl-01144)

**Decisions:** [*15.COM 7*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7)

1. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to present the next agenda item 7.
2. The **Secretary** noted that the Committee had received a total of nine reports for examination, and proposed that this agenda item be presented along the three main topics related to the safeguarding of the elements: i) the effectiveness of the safeguarding plan; ii) community participation towards the implementation of the safeguarding plan and in preparation of the report; and iii) the viability and risks associated with the element. Following the overall presentation, the floor would be opened for a general debate.The Committee would then adopt the individual decisions for each report as a whole and without debate, unless otherwise requested by a Committee member. All the draft decisions for the nine reports followed a similar structure: a few standard paragraphs, as well as specific ones addressing the needs, welcoming the achievements, and underlining the challenges for each inscribed element. The final paragraph concerned the next submission deadline.Once all the individual decisions were adopted, the Committee would adopt the chapeau decision on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis.Before ending this item, submitting States would be invited to share their experiences in safeguarding these inscribed elements.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary, inviting comments to the proposed methodology.
4. The **delegation of Switzerland** thanked the submitting States for their reports on the state of conservation of the elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, adding that it was pleased with the efforts made for safeguarding these elements. Switzerland agreed with the general comments made on the reports examined in 2020, notably with regard to the decrease in the transmission of certain elements and the need to enhance and include them in formal and non-formal education. The delegation was convinced of the important role played by museums and cultural centres, and it noted with concern the increased fragility of certain indigenous communities owing to the destruction of their environment by extraction, deforestation or through pollution. Rural exodus had in some cases made it impossible to promote an element. However, this should not obscure the fact that local communities – the bearers of traditions – must be at the heart of all safeguarding efforts. Switzerland wished to underscore the importance of taking into account fair gender balance in transmission and in support of the bearers, as gender imbalance might threaten the transmission of an element.
5. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked the States Parties for submitting their status reports under this item, as well as the Secretariat for the very useful document containing general observations highlighting trends but also pointing out some challenges that the Committee could further examine. The points raised in the report were not only relevant for the Urgent Safeguarding List, but also for the other mechanisms under the Convention and for safeguarding as a whole. Some of the findings of particular importance included the role of both formal and non-formal education for contemporary methods of learning and the transfer of knowledge, and the increasingly important role of institutions and organizations such as cultural centres and museums in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. They also revealed how an increased number of community practitioners and a greater gender balance had in some cases led to an enhanced appreciation of certain elements, including among young people, and that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage through indigenous peoples had received more attention than in previous cycles. Indeed, the reports were very important instruments for the successful implementation of the Convention and for sharing good practices. Sweden therefore asked the Secretariat if there were any other possible means to encourage the timely submission of reports by States Parties.
6. The **delegation of Czechia** thanked the Secretariat for this very important document, recalling that the state of conservation reports system is crucial to informing on the developments of an element and the effectiveness of its safeguarding plan, the integration of communities in safeguarding efforts, and the risks faced by the element. The report is a rich source of information on safeguarding measures showing which measures can be applied in general, and which are specific to the different regions and other communities. In addition to the participation of communities in defining an element, the delegation also wished to highlight the important role of museums and institutions of memory, and formal and non-formal education. The reports addressed the elements post-inscription, providing information on practical safeguarding measures. The delegation wished to make it easier to present the reports online in order to facilitate the digitization of the data and help increase the number of reports submitted. It was also noted that many States Parties do not fulfil their obligations [to submit a report], yet the document does not mention the reasons why this might be. The delegation believed that States failing to submit their reports on time should provide an explanation to the Committee; a rule that should be enforced. States must specify the reasons for the delay and set a new final date for submission. Moreover, States that had not submitted their state of conservation reports continued to present nomination files, and the delegation believed that this was therefore not a problem of insufficient capacity. What more can the Committee do to help States submit their reports and thus comply with the Convention’s obligations? The delegation was not in favour of sanctions, but since this was a recurrent issue before the Committee, it could consider the possibility of abstention from evaluating new nomination files submitted by States that had not submitted state of conservation reports on elements already inscribed. It therefore asked that the Secretariat provide information on the possibility of adding a condition to Article I.10 point 34 of the Operational Directives whereby only nominations from States that have submitted their state of conservation reports of elements already inscribed will be evaluated, and for the Committee to consider that possibility in the future.
7. The **Secretary** remarked on the similitude of the questions from both Sweden and Czechia that asked what could be done to further encourage submissions of the state of conservation reports on already inscribed elements. He reminded the delegations that elements on the Representative List are reported within the overall periodic reporting of the State, including on the general implementation of the Convention. However, elements listed under the Urgent Safeguarding List are subject to their own specific cycle of reporting. The Secretary drew the Committee’s attention to the wording under paragraph 5 in the draft decision, which ‘regrets that several reports have not been submitted on time and further invites the States Parties that have not yet submitted their expected reports to fulfil their reporting requirements before submitting new nominations’, adding that this was an invitation, not a request. Indeed, Czechia asked whether it would be possible to insert this condition into the Operational Directives. The Secretary explained that it would indeed be possible should the States Parties wish to do so, but it must be approved by the General Assembly of States Parties. The Committee was therefore already inviting States to refrain from submitting nomination files, but it was not an obligation at this stage. The Secretary would verify whether in fact the Committee could make that condition an obligation, particularly in relation to Article 10.1 point 34 of the Operational Directives. Otherwise, any change to the Operational Directives would indeed have to go to the General Assembly.
8. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** congratulated UNESCO and the Secretary for the report on the current state of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. It remarked on the importance of these reports because they underscored the crucial role of communities in education, while serving as examples for other elements inscribed by other States. The delegation regretted that only nine of the expected reports were submitted, and it joined countries such as Sweden that spoke on the need to react in this regard. It is a responsibility on the part of States Parties that have an element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, and a way must be found to compel States to submit their reports. As explained by the Secretary, this required a decision by the General Assembly, but the draft decision could employ wording that would encourage States to be more aware of the importance of submitting these reports.
9. The **delegation of the Republic of Korea** thanked the States Parties for having submitted their timely reports and for their diligence and hard work. It was satisfied with the various findings in the report, especially its special focus on the increased role of formal and non-formal education in the transmission of intangible heritage and the strengthening of community participation. The delegation was also pleased with the in-depth discussions that took place the previous week in this regard through the UNESCO Expert Meeting on education-related indicators of the overall results framework for the 2003 Convention and their relationship to SDG 4. The delegation believed that the use of the online format by States Parties, for the Urgent Safeguarding List, will help in this joint effort and thus facilitate the work of the Secretariat. It should be recalled once again that the transfer of an element from one list to another will need consideration and discussion requiring clear and specific procedures in line with the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention.
10. The **delegation of Peru** thanked Jamaica for hosting the fifteenth session of the Committee, and the Chairperson for her excellent management. It thanked the States Parties for having designated Peru as a member of the Committee for 2020–2024, adding that it was an honour to join the Committee for a third time and that it would bring its experience and willingness to the Committee. The delegation congratulated the countries that had submitted their reports on time on the current status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, congratulating them for their conscientious safeguarding, which was well reflected in their reports and in the report drafted by the Secretariat. It also encouraged States Parties to the Convention to use the Urgent Safeguarding List as a special safeguarding measure for international cooperation, which was further strengthened by its link to the Intangible Heritage Fund. In this way, financial resources could also be granted for safeguarding the elements inscribed. With respect to the reporting, it agreed with the previous speakers regarding the crucial importance of these reports, both for the elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List as well as on general reporting on the implementation of the Convention at the national level. The delegation recalled that the first cycle of regional reporting on the implementation of the Convention was underway through the new framework established for the Convention. Latin America and the Caribbean was launching the process of implementation of this new tool, which it considered innovative and participatory, and the delegation was confident that it will significantly contribute to the evaluation of the strengths and challenges faced by every State, as well as the region as a whole. It therefore recognized and congratulated the Secretariat for its excellent joint work carried out with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) in preparing and assisting the countries in the region in the use of this new tool, which demonstrates how the Convention’s mechanisms are as dynamic as intangible heritage.
11. The **Chairperson** thanked Peru, inviting the Secretary to present the reports.
12. The **Secretary** recalled that theCommittee had to examine nine reports submitted by States Parties on the status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, as shown in the table in paragraph 6 of the working [document 7](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-7-EN.docx). These included seven reports for elements inscribed in 2011 and two reports for elements inscribed in 2015. The majority of the reports for this cycle were therefore either the second ordinary report or a third report submitted by the States after submitting an extraordinary report two years following inscription. Due to the increasing number of second ordinary reports, the importance of States addressing the concerns raised by the Committee (based on the examination of their previous reports) was highlighted. The assessments of each second ordinary or third report therefore referred specifically to previous decisions, and highlighted how the State had addressed, or not, the Committee’s recommendations in previous cycles. The overdue reports were presented in the table in paragraph 5, which were expected to be submitted by 15 December 2020 for their examination at the Committee’s sixteenth session in 2021.
13. The **Secretary** spoke on the effectiveness of the safeguarding plans. Several reports received this year demonstrated the growing role of formal and non-formal education in the transmission, and hence safeguarding, of intangible cultural heritage. Transmission processes have been weakening in families and other informal social contexts, which highlighted the need to adapt to contemporary methods of learning and transmission (as mentioned by Indonesia, Mali and Uganda). In addition, museums are playing a prominent role, serving as a cultural space for performance practices and educational, training and awareness-raising activities (as mentioned by Iran and Mongolia). The organization of festivals was also considered a popular, widespread safeguarding measure, which was increasingly being applied (as mentioned by Indonesia, both Iran, Mali, both Mongolia, United Arab Emirates).A number of reports addressed a broad scope of issues related to the safeguarding of elements of intangible cultural heritage. The importance of safeguarding local languages as vehicles of intangible cultural heritage was highlighted in several cases. States were also making a great effort to ensure the economic sustainability of elements, especially in terms of the livelihood of tradition-bearers through funding schemes for practitioners. In general, improving the socio-economic conditions of practitioners has proven to be efficient in continuing their traditional practice (as reported by Iran and United Arab Emirates). Regarding the issue of funding for the implementation of safeguarding plans, States expressed concerns about the existing constraints and funding priorities. Funding is not equally accessible for all types of safeguarding activities and there are certain activities that attract external funding, such as festivals and communication activities. There was one case in 2020 where the use of International Assistance from the ICH Fund was reported (by Mongolia for Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing), which allowed the Committee at this session to evaluate the impact of International Assistance on the viability of the element.
14. The **Secretary** then spoke on community participation. Several States reported that participatory safeguarding measures had been developed to ensure community participation throughout all stages of safeguarding, as well as the reporting stage. Some reports also addressed the role of living heritage in raising a broader awareness in society about the ways of life of indigenous communities (as reported by Brazil and Uganda).In some cases, the loss of gender balance among practitioners was identified as a risk for the transmission of the element, whereas other reports suggested that greater gender balance in its practice, led to an enhanced appreciation of the element in society, including among youth. On viability and current risks, it was observed in several reports that the viability of inscribed elements was threatened by broad environmental and socio-economic changes, such as urbanization, and challenges accessing natural resources and natural sites associated with intangible cultural heritage (reported by Brazil, Mali, Mongolia, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates). In certain cases, the outflow of local community members, especially youth, to urban areas had led to a nationwide practice of the elements, substantially amplifying and diversifying the scope of the community concerned (reported by Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates). Several States in this cycle reported on the enhanced viability of the inscribed element, and stated that it was no longer in need of urgent safeguarding, while expressing their desire to transfer the element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List. The Secretary recalled Decision [12.COM 14](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/12.COM/14) in which States Parties were asked to refrain from submitting requests for such transfer of an element from one List to the other until clear, specific procedures and criteria have been established in line with the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention. The Secretary concluded by remarking on the rich and dense information in these reports, and although previous speakers had mentioned some of the shortcomings, the Secretariat had observed an increase in the quality of the reports received.
15. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for the debate on the reports prior to the examination of the individual reports and corresponding draft decisions.
16. The **delegation of Sweden** wished to propose an amendment to the chapeau draft decision.
17. The **Chairperson** asked Sweden to propose its amendment at the time of the adoption of the draft decision. She then turned to the draft decisions for the individual reports, beginning with the adoption of draft decision 15.COM 7.1 concerning the third report submitted by Brazil on Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people’s ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.1**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.1) **adopted**.
18. The **Chairperson** then turned to the adoption of draft decision 15.COM 7.2 concerning the report submitted by Indonesia on Saman dance.
19. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** wondered whether the chapeau draft decision 15.COM 7 had first to be adopted.
20. The **Secretary** explained that the Committee would first examine the individual draft decisions on each report, followed by the adoption of the chapeau decision 15.COM 7.
21. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thenext reporton Saman dance submitted by Indonesia. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.2) **adopted.**
22. The **Chairperson** thenpresented the draft decision of thereporton Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.3**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.3) **adopted**.
23. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of the report on Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM** **7.4**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.4) **adopted**.
24. The **delegation of the** **Islamic Republic of Iran** regretted that the Committee was unable to meet in beautiful Jamaica, thanking the Chairperson for her leadership and the Secretariat for its successful efforts in organizing this session online. Iran spoke of its pride in having succeeded in safeguarding this precious element Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling. As mentioned in the periodic report, Iran intends to propose the transfer of the element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List. The delegation thanked all the NGOs active in the field of intangible cultural heritage, Naqqāls and their relevant cultural bodies. It also agreed with the Committee on the impact of tourism on its safeguarding, adding that it will pay more attention to this particular issue with respect to its second file. The delegation took the opportunity to thank captains, sailors, NGOs, and the municipalities of Iranian ports on the north shore of the Persian Gulf.
25. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thereporton Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali submitted by Mali. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.5**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.5) **adopted**.
26. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thereporton Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing submitted by Mali. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.6**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.6) **adopted**.
27. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thereportonCoaxing ritual for camels submitted by Mongolia. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.7**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.7) **adopted**.
28. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thereportonKoogere oral tradition of the Basongora, Banyabindi and Batooro peoples submitted by Uganda. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.8**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.8) **adopted**.
29. The **Chairperson** presented the draft decision of thereportonAl Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates submitted by United Arab Emirates. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7.9**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7.9) **adopted**.
30. The **Chairperson** then turned to the chapeau decision, proceeding on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. With no comments or objections, paragraph 1 was adopted.
31. The **Secretary** reminded non-Committee Members that they may not request the floor during the adoption of the decisions, noting three Committee members wishing to take the floor. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** had an intervention on paragraph 5 and would wait.
32. The **delegation of Czechia** wished to propose a new paragraph 6 and would also wait.
33. The **delegation of Brazil** thanked the Secretariat and the Committee for its careful examination of its report submitted in 2019, and for the recognition given to the efforts made by Brazil in maintaining the viability of the Yaokwa ritual in keeping with the spirit of the Convention and the national programme for intangible heritage. One of the upcoming national efforts for the sustainability of the element will take place in 2021, which is part of Brazil’s policy for safeguarding intangible heritage and involves the process of evaluation of the cultural heritage title granted to the ritual in 2010. This process is carried out every 10 years with a view to national recognition of an element of intangible cultural heritage so as to evaluate the relevance of the element for the community and its bearers. The delegation emphasized that all the validation work is carried out with the participation of the communities and bearers of the element, as with other steps in the cycle of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Brazil. The procedures and results of the revalidation procedure for the Yaokwa ritual will be set out in detail in the next report that will be submitted to the Committee in 2023.
34. The **Chairperson** thanked Brazil, and then turned to paragraph 2, recalling the relevant Articles in the Convention and Chapter 4 of the Operational Directives, which was duly adopted. Paragraph 3, underlining the importance of reporting on updated and accurate safeguarding, was also adopted. Paragraph 4, thanking States Parties that submitted their reports on time, and welcoming the achievements reported by States Parties in implementing their safeguarding plans, was duly adopted. Paragraph 5, further inviting the States Parties that have not yet submitted their expected reports to fulfil their reporting requirements at the earliest opportunity.
35. Referring to paragraph 5, the **delegation of** **Côte d’Ivoire** noted the deadline of 15 December, the present day, which was therefore incorrect and should be deleted as the date was no longer relevant for the Committee to examine these reports at its sixteenth session in 2021.
36. The **Secretary** understood the concern, however, the 15 December is the statutory deadline. So even if it is deleted from the draft decision, the deadline would stay the same. The Secretary therefore could agree to delete the reference to the date.
37. The **delegation of** **Brazil** proposed to delete the date and to add instead, ‘bearing in mind the statutory deadline’.
38. The **Secretary** repeated Brazil’s proposal, which would read, ‘bearing in mind the statutory deadline in order for the Committee to examine these reports at its sixteenth session’.
39. The **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 5 adopted as amended. Czechia was invited to present its amendment.
40. The **delegation of** **Czechia** had submitted its amendment to the Secretariat, but since its intervention in the general debate the Secretariat had consulted with Committee members.
41. The **Secretary** read out the paragraph proposed by Czechia, which would read, ‘Requests the Secretariat to include an item in the provisional agenda of its next ordinary session concerning a possible amendment of the new Operational Directives on restricting submitting new nomination files for examination if the reporting duties concerning already inscribed elements have not been fulfilled by the States Parties’.
42. The **Chairperson** noted that the original paragraph 6 would become a new paragraph 7.
43. The **delegation of** **Kuwait** shared its concern with the proposal regarding the submission of a new nomination file, adding that this imposed further restrictions on States Parties. The delegation therefore preferred to replace ‘submitting’ to ‘evaluating’, which would read, ‘restricting evaluating new nominations’. In this way, the State Party can still submit its file.
44. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked Czechia for its proposal, which was very much in line with its own proposed text. It also agreed with the amendment made by Kuwait and therefore supported the proposed new paragraph 6 as amended.
45. The **delegation of** **Switzerland** supported the proposal by Czechia and amended by Kuwait.
46. The **delegation of Poland** sought clarification on how and in what way this decision would be implemented in terms of possible amendment to the Operational Directives.
47. The **Secretary** clarified that this was a request to include an item on the agenda of the next Committee so that it may be sent to the General Assembly for examination. This is the normal procedure for proposing changes to Operational Directives, meaning that the issue had to first be discussed by the Committee and then put forward to the General Assembly. Based on this request, the Secretariat would draft a document explaining how to move forward on this matter, with the details presented at the next session of the Committee so as to allow for a fully formed recommendation to the General Assembly that would then make its decision.
48. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson** adopted the new paragraph 6. Paragraph 7 [previously paragraph 6] on the online interface of Form ICH-11 was also duly adopted. Paragraph 8, underlining the importance of successive reports taking into account the recommendations of the Committee, was also adopted. Paragraph 9, taking note of the growing role of education as well as various institutions such as museums in enhancing the effectiveness of safeguarding plans, was also adopted. Paragraph 10, inviting those States to request International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for implementing their safeguarding plans, was also adopted. Paragraph 11, inviting States Parties to report on how community participation is being ensured throughout all stages of safeguarding, was adopted. Paragraph 12, acknowledging the positive impact that safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage could have on gender equity, was also adopted. Paragraph 13, encouraging States to report on the broader environmental and socio-economic challenges that may be encountered in the implementation of the safeguarding plans, was adopted. Paragraph 14, acknowledging that certain elements are reported to be no longer in need of urgent safeguarding but at the same time recalling Decision 12.COM 14, was adopted. Paragraph 15, deciding to submit to the General Assembly at its ninth session a summary of the reports of States Parties examined this year, was duly adopted. Turning to the draft decision as a whole, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 7**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/7) **adopted**.
49. The **Chairperson** gave the floor to the submitting States to share their experiences in preparing the report and implementing their safeguarding plan.
50. The **delegation of Mongolia** congratulated the Chairperson on her chairpersonship and Jamaica for the organization of the fifteenth session of the Committee. It expressed sincere gratitude to the Committee and the Evaluation Body for their decision on the two reports on the current status of elements (Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing, and coaxing ritual for camels) inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. The delegation also thanked the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body for their great efforts and support during this challenging time. With regard to Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing, Mongolia expressed sincere gratitude for the ICH Fund in granting International Assistance to implement the project for the safeguarding of the element. Mongolia also recognized the Committee’s decision on the element to enhance gender balance. Due to the specific nature of the element, the majority of practitioners and heritage bearers are male. However, thanks to the project’s implementation, the number of female practitioners will increase in the near future. Currently, 25 per cent of the apprentices participating in the project are female.
51. With regard to coaxing ritual for camels, the **delegation of** **Mongolia** referred to the national programme for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, which includes such objectives as the improvement of the social value of heritage bearers, the provision of financial support to practitioners, improvement of the incentive system, and promotion of the element nationwide for innovative technologies such as the creation of digital content to raise awareness among the younger generation. In addition, the government of Mongolia attached great importance to cultural heritage with a dedicated Ministry of Culture established in 2020 acting as the main authority and policy-maker in this field, as well as the main implementing authority of the national programme for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. In 2020, Mongolia is implementing various activities in the framework of the national programme, however, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic crisis, the country faces many challenges and difficulties in executing them as expected. Nevertheless, working together will help everyone get through these hard times.
52. The **delegation of the United Arab Emirates** thanked the Chairperson and the Secretariat for their considerable efforts during the pandemic. With regard to its report, Al Sadu was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2011 with the authorities fully committed to fulfilling their obligations to submit its periodic report every four years. In the space of almost 10 years since its inscription, Al Sadu has seen a rise in the number of practitioners, as well as the establishment of a safeguarding plan, which was currently being elaborated and was proof of its engagement. It will focus on the role of the artisans and training, as well as the delivery of their qualifications. The delegation reiterated its wish to begin the transfer of Al Sadu from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List. It was nonetheless fully aware of the ongoing reflection on the transfer of an element, whose operational modality had not yet been finalized, but it was hoped that this process would soon conclude.
53. The **Chairperson** thanked the United Arab Emirates for sharing its rich and inspiring experiences.

**ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA [CONT.]**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EVALUATION BODY FOR THE 2021 CYCLE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/10 Rev*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-10.Rev-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 10*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/10)

1. The **Chairperson** was informed that the counting of ballots in the election of the new members of the Evaluation Body had been completed, inviting Ms Fumiko Ohinata to communicate the results to the Committee.
2. **Ms Fumiko Ohinata** announced that 23 Committee members were present and voted. Twenty-three Committee members voted for Group IV, and 22 Committee members voted for V(b). The results of the votes were as follows: **Electoral Group IV**, one seat for an expert. Mr Moazami Goudarzi Shervin from the Islamic Republic of Iran received one vote; Ms Gulnara Aitpaeva from Kyrgyzstan received three votes; Mr Yeo from Singapore received 19 votes, and therefore **Mr Kirk Siang Yeo from Singapore was elected.** **Electoral Group V(b)** seat for one accredited NGO, Association des Lauréats de l’Institut national des sciences de l’archéologie et du patrimoine (ALINSAP) received 8 votes, Syria Trust for Development received 10 votes, the Saudi Heritage Preservation Society received 4 votes, and therefore the NGO **Syria Trust for Development was elected**. For **Electoral Group III**, **Mr Nigel Encalada was declared elected** without vote as he was the sole candidate for the seat as expert in this group.
3. The **Chairperson** thankedMs Ohinata for the names of the three new members of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle, adding that agenda item 10 would resume on Friday to formalize the results.

**ITEM 8 OF THE AGENDA**

**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION BODY ON ITS WORK IN 2020**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx)

[*Order of files Rev.2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/Order_files_Rev.2_EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 8*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8)

1. The **Chairperson** remarked on the online presence of the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body, Mr Saeed Al Busaidi from Oman, the Vice-Chairperson, Mr Léonce Ki, representing the Association for the Safeguarding of Masks (ASAMA), and the Rapporteur, Ms Lubica Volanska from Slovakia.
2. The **Secretary** recalled that the Evaluation Body for the 2020 cycle was established by the Committee at its fourteenth session in 2019 in Bogotá in order to evaluate: i) nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List, including nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List combined with an International Assistance request (item 8.a); ii) nominations to the Representative List (item 8.b); iii) proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (item 8.c); and iv) requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 (item 8.d). The Secretary informed the Committee that 7 files[[14]](#footnote-14) had been withdrawn by the submitting States and the Committee was therefore asked to examine 45 files over the course of three days. Given the reduced duration of the session, the Committee had on average 9 minutes to examine each file. To allow the proceedings to be followed online, the Secretariat had circulated an indicative order of examination of nominations on 3 December. However, the timing of examination for each file would likely be modified depending on the speed of the debates. The 2020 cycle was obviously unique in many ways owing to the impact of the global pandemic and the restrictions on international travel. Consequently, the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body had made significant adjustments throughout the year to carry out the evaluation process entirely online and to present recommendations for all files.
3. The **Secretary** however spoke of a number of challenges raised by the online evaluation process, which the Evaluation Body’s Rapporteur would outline in her presentation. This year was the first cycle in which the dialogue process had been fully implemented following the revision of the Operational Directives by the eighth session of the General Assembly in September 2020. Despite the postponement of the General Assembly, which had been scheduled for June, the Evaluation Body had decided to launch the dialogue process on an anticipatory basis in July 2020. In this cycle, the dialogue process had been applied in 11 cases: the draft decisions presented to the Committee for these files already reflect the outcome of the dialogue process. Of the 11 nominations, 10 had received a recommendation for inscription. With regard to the report of the Evaluation Body, the Secretary explained that the Rapporteur, Ms Lubica Volanska, would present a brief oral report on key cross-cutting issues identified by the Body during the 2020 cycle. Following the oral report, the floor would be opened to Committee members for specific questions addressed to the Evaluation Body on its report, after which the Committee will evaluate all individual files. As per Decision [14.COM 18](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/18) taken in 2019, nominations in principle were examined in English alphabetical order, starting with the files under each mechanism with States whose names began with the letter ‘Q’. All nominations, proposals and requests would be briefly presented by the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body, justifying the recommendation of the Body. The general debate would follow the evaluation of all individual files, after which point the Committee would move to the adoption of the overall decision 15.COM 8.
4. The **Chairperson** reiterated that due to the tight schedule, it was agreed to adopt the same working method as in previous years. In this regard, a message was sent by the Secretariat to all States Parties on 3 December. Committee members were invited to inform the Secretariat (by the morning) of any specific amendments to the draft decisions on the nomination files to any of the mechanisms, and the Secretariat would be asked to inform the Committee on the number of requests received. This was merely a matter of organization, but all the more important due to the online proceedings. The Chairperson reassured members of the Committee that this procedure did not prevent any member from taking the floor on any decision, if it so wished. As mentioned under item 2, there was an understanding that Committee members maintain the tacit agreement first put in place at its twelfth session in 2017 that is often referred to as the ‘gentleman’s agreement’. According to this agreement, Committee members would agree to refrain from inscribing nominations that the Evaluation Body had recommended not to inscribe, as well as those for which more than two criteria had not been satisfied. This agreement was considered of utmost importance to maintain the credibility of the Committee’s work and the evaluation process.
5. The **Chairperson** reiterated the working method for the adoption of draft decisions. In principle, draft decisions that had not received any amendments or requests for debate would be adopted as a whole. Draft decisions that had received amendments, however, would be adopted paragraph-by-paragraph. In all cases, submitting States would have a total of two minutes after adoption to deliver a statement and/or show a video clip, as was customary. The Chairperson then outlined how she wished to proceed with amendments to the draft decisions on nominations, particularly in light of the Committee’s Decision [11.COM 8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/11.COM/8) regarding the ‘clarification on the decision-making process concerning inscription, selection, or approval, of nominations, proposals and requests’. Taking into account past decisions and practices, the following working method was applied for the examination of nominations, proposals and requests under agenda item 8. In accordance with paragraph 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, the Chairperson would ensure the ‘smooth conduct of the proceedings and the maintenance of order’ during the debates. As reflected in Decision 11.COM 8, the Chairperson will ensure the spirit of consensus and international cooperation throughout the debates and decision-making process of the Committee. She also reminded the Committee that the draft decisions proposed had been prepared by the Evaluation Body, a consultative body comprising elected members, which was created to assist in the in-depth examination of the nominations. Therefore, debates and the decision-making process shall demonstrate respect towards the expertise and diligent work of the Evaluation Body.
6. The **Chairperson** explained that when amendments are put forward, consensus will be established through appreciating both supporting arguments and objections to the amendments under consideration. To this end, when an amendment is proposed, the Chairperson will first determine whether it receives active *relative* support from the Committee. This means looking for the expression of support from at least one-third of the Committee members. In the case of an objection by a Committee member to the amendment, active *broad* support from the majority of Committee members would be sought. The Chairperson reiterated the importance of the smooth conduct of debates, emphasizing how the decision-making process has an impact on the credibility of both the Committee and the Convention as a whole. It was therefore the duty and responsibility of Committee members to keep these considerations in mind. Other Committee rules and working methods included allowing Observers to intervene if time allowed, but not during the examination of specific nominations, which is limited to Committee members. An exception was given under Rule 22.4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee that allows submitting States to take the floor to reply to specific questions and to provide information in reply to any questions raised by Committee members. The same Rule specifies that submitting States, whether a member of the Committee or not, shall not however speak to advocate their own nominations. Committee members and Observers were reminded that there were large numbers of people following the proceedings online through live webcast or through the news media and it was therefore important to keep as closely as possible to the schedule. Before opening the floor, the Chairperson asked the Secretariat to confirm the number of requests for debate.
7. The **Secretary** noted that the Secretariat had received amendments on the following 6 nominations: i) item 8.b.3 (Egypt’s nomination had received a proposal to open the debate by Saudi Arabia supported by 13 Committee members); ii) item 8.b.4 (the joint nomination by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had received a proposal to open the debate by Morocco); iii) item 8.b.7 (Spain’s nomination had received a proposal to open the debate by Brazil, co-sponsored by Saudi Arabia); iv) item 8.b.26 (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nomination had received a proposal to open the debate by China); v) item 8.b.30 (the joint nomination by Indonesia and Malaysia had received a proposal to open the debate by China supported by 5 Committee members); and vi) item 8.c.4 (Greece’s nomination had received a proposal to open the debate by Switzerland).
8. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for questions on the organization, procedure and working method for this item. Noting that Switzerland and Sweden wished to take the floor, the Chairperson asked for their indulgence until after the adoption of the draft chapeau decision later in the week. The Chairperson invited the Rapporteur to present the Body’s report.
9. The **Rapporteur** presented the report of the Evaluation Body on its work in this cycle. There were some recurring issues that had previously been reported, and – given the limited time – the Rapporteur would thus focus on selected topics that the Body considered to be the most important in this cycle of evaluations. In this cycle, 52 files had been treated and submitted to the Committee for its decision, including 16 multinational nominations. The four documents related to the examination of the nominations for each of the mechanisms of the Convention would be presented by the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body, Mr Saeed Al Busaidi. The twelve members of the Evaluation Body met three times in February, June and September 2020. The first meeting was semi-virtual due to the pandemic, and the two remaining meetings were held completely online. Every member of the Body had evaluated each nomination online, and had prepared individual opinions and recommendations. Furthermore, in order to facilitate consultations among the members before and during the meeting, and to encourage consensus-building, the Secretariat developed new features in the online interface. These allowed the Evaluation Body to have exchanges outside of the meetings, consult each other’s evaluation texts, and engage in written discussions. In order to achieve a similar approach to evaluating nominations at the same quality level, more time and effort were required by both the Body and the Secretariat during and between the scheduled online meetings. Within the collective decision-making, the Evaluation Body members acted neutrally and accessed only the content of the files. While maintaining consistency within the cycle and with previous decisions, the members took into consideration the particularities of each file and the specific contexts. Furthermore, the members discussed the evolving character of the interpretation of the Convention, which also needed to be reflected in the evaluation process. Finally, the Body succeeded in reaching a consensus in its recommendations for *all* the files. Moreover, the special situation caused by the pandemic had shown how important it was to be thorough in the discussions throughout the whole nomination process, and how hard it was this year to keep the standards.
10. The **Rapporteur** explained that out of the 52 files examined by the Evaluation Body in this cycle, a total of 30 files were recommended for inscription, selection or approval, 20 were recommended for referral, and 2 were not recommended for inscription. This year the Evaluation Body assessed nominations of various standards and the Rapporteur regretted that the quality of the files received in this cycle was not as high as previous years, and there was thus still room for improvement. In cases where information in the nomination file was missing or insufficiently supplied, whether or not a particular criterion was met, the Body opted to refer the file. States Parties, and – in particular – the communities concerned might perceive the referral of a file as a failure. However, the idea behind the referral is to give an encouraging signal to the submitting States and to invite them to improve the quality of the file, including how the element and its safeguarding are presented to the wider public. In this cycle, the Evaluation Body discussed nine re-submitted files, and although the Body encountered a number of issues related to, for example, outdated letters of consent and States Parties having only a short period of time to review the information and apply for recommendations, most of the previously referred files benefitted from the referral option. The members of the Evaluation Body always tried to be very clear in explaining the basis of the information missing in the files in the hope that specific recommendations might help submitting States review their files before re-submission. There were also a number of methodological materials available on the UNESCO website, for example, the aide-memoire[[15]](#footnote-15). At the same time, the Body always highlighted good examples of nominations that can be used as an inspiration with this very goal. There was also the possibility to use the pool of qualified experts in the NGO Forum, as well as the know-how of cooperating countries that may have more experience and have been successful in preparing high-quality nominations files in the past. This principle of cooperation had proven to work in some cases of multinational nominations whereby the participating States Parties benefitted from each other’s experiences, preparing the file in mutual cooperation.
11. The **Rapporteur** further reported that the Evaluation Body was pleased to have examined 16 multinational nominations in this cycle, which highlighted the diversity of shared intangible cultural heritage. Thanks to this number, the Body was able to assess a variety of approaches to compiling and drafting multinational nominations. In this cycle, the Body welcomed a number of examples of bi- or multinational nominations, which clearly demonstrated the principles of international cooperation in the promotion of mutual understanding among countries. However, the Body also noted a worrying trend of multinational files that seemed to have been prepared by simply combining several individual nomination files. In such cases, the cooperation between the submitting States seemed to have been formal rather than involving a cross-collaboration throughout the nomination process; a trend that should not be encouraged. The lack of collaboration and sharing among submitting States accentuated the missed opportunities for facilitating and strengthening inter-cultural dialogue among communities and countries, which should one of the main goals and functions of a multinational nomination. This appeared to be a significant problem, especially in light of the Committee’s decision concerning the priority accorded to multinational files. The 2020 cycle was the first cycle in which the dialogue process was fully implemented, and it was applied in 11 cases, including nine nominations to the Representative List, one nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List, and one proposal to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. In one case, the Body sent one question, in the remaining 10 cases, multiple questions for a total of 31 questions were sent. The Body used the dialogue process in cases where the file did not include sufficient information to assess whether the criterion was satisfied. However, unlike in the case of the referral option, the dialogue was limited to specific questions requiring a specific response. Dialogue can only be used when there is a minor absence of information or a confusing statement, which the Body considered could be clarified through a simple question and answer exchange with the submitting States.
12. The **Rapporteur** further explained that in this cycle, following discussions and suggestions from States Parties during the fourteenth Committee session in 2019, the Body used the option of the dialogue process in more cases and with more complex situations than in the previous cycle. However, as in the previous cycle, the dialogue process was not used for every nomination file in which one criterion was recommended for referral because in some cases the issues or problems relating to missing or unclear information could not be resolved by a simple question and answer exchange, and the text would need to be completely redrafted. As a concept, the dialogue option had not been intended as an opportunity to rewrite the file or submit fundamental missing information. However, the Body also discussed the limits of the use of the dialogue option related to its capacities, as well as the capacities of the Secretariat. The members of the Evaluation Body often discussed the basic principle of the Convention and, in assessing each file, they tried to answer how the inscription of the element can contribute to mutual understanding among communities, as well as to the States Parties. When discussing mutual respect among communities, the Body expressed concerns regarding some nomination files that seemed to be exulting nationalistic ideas in the context of intangible cultural heritage. Members of the Body noted the repetition of essentialist notions, as well as an increased focus on nationalism and the construction of validation of the image of the country through intangible cultural heritage. The Body was concerned by the use of the Convention to claim historical, cultural, geographical and political ownership, and invited States Parties to show respect for collaboration and sharing, which are founding and guiding principles of the Convention.
13. To conclude on a more optimistic note, the **Rapporteur** remarked that the Evaluation Body particularly appreciated several nominations that emphasized the links between intangible cultural heritage and their tangible environment. It was pleased to examine an increased number of nominations of elements related to knowledge and skills concerning nature and the universe, which promote environmental sustainability, biodiversity and the safeguarding of the natural and cultural landscape. Furthermore, members evaluated positively the highly adaptive and creative approaches to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in ever-changing social contexts and its transition from a rural to urban environment presented in several nominations. Finally, the Body appreciated the examples of innovative working methods regarding the participation, inclusion and involvement of a wide variety of actors in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, as well as in the whole nomination process. Other topics that were not covered in the report could be found in the working [document 8](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx). On behalf of the Evaluation Body, the Rapporteur thanked the Committee for entrusting her with this task. Many questions were raised during the last evaluation cycle, which underline the importance of the reflection of the listing mechanisms, which unfortunately had been delayed in 2020. The members of the Evaluation Body wished to stress the importance of taking into consideration the recurring challenges and controversies in previous years in the early stages of the reflection process.
14. The **Chairperson** thanked the Rapporteur for her presentation, noting the important issues raised, which should inform the debate of the Committee, and she expressed her sincere appreciation to the twelve members of the Evaluation Body for carrying out their task despite the global pandemic. They had displayed dedication and engagement to overcome this year’s challenges and ensured that the Convention could continue its work, which the States Parties and communities truly appreciated. The Chairperson invited comments to the report.
15. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked the Evaluation Body for its excellent report and careful work that had been carried out under exceptional conditions during the past year. The delegation also wished to highlight the importance of respecting the Evaluation Body’s expertise and the observations and recommendations contained in the report. According to the Body’s assessment, a number of challenges and problems still need to be addressed in order to improve the quality of the nominations, proposals and requests submitted. It therefore hoped that the nominating States make use of UNESCO facilitators and the resources within communities and NGOs. Sweden was nevertheless pleased to see the positive aspects highlighted by the Evaluation Body. For example, the greater number of multinational nominations and that more elements are contributing to sustainable development, as well as the positive results of the dialogue process. The 52 files add up to an impressive and diverse list of intangible heritage from different corners of the world, and the delegation enjoyed learning about each element. According to the Body, a referral is usually due to insufficient information concerning the safeguarding of the element, the cooperation between stakeholders, or how to raise awareness. This is the very essence of the Convention and therefore it was crucial that the Body’s recommendations were taken into account. Sweden thanked the States that had withdrawn their files, which showed respect for the tremendous work carried out by the Body and facilitated the Committee’s work.
16. The **delegation of Switzerland** remarked that the report revealed the quality of the experts’ work, particularly given the difficult context in 2020 to actually hold their meetings, thanking them for their support to the Convention. The Evaluation Body had noted an increase in the volume of work, but its members were able to show flexibility and adaptability. The delegation appreciated how important it is to have informed decisions. Consequently, the Committee should ensure that the workload does not increase significantly. Moreover, the Body had shown great rigour, demonstrating the importance of consistency, relevance and the quality of the information received, which was shown in the number of suggested referrals. It was recalled that a referral did not indicate a failure and should be seen as an encouragement to complete the file. The delegation asked that the Committee respect the recommendations of the Evaluation Body as much as possible, as well as the gentlemen’s agreement, and it thanked the Evaluation Body for its relevant comments.
17. The **delegation of Czechia** echoed the sentiment and thanked the Body for its report, professionalism and rigour in the assessment of the files, particularly given the high workload and the current health crisis. The report provided very clear recommendations and it stood as an example to other States submitting files in the future. Given that the recommendations were presented during a very difficult time, the delegation asked that all members of the Committee recall the tacit gentlemen’s agreement, in other words, to refrain from inscribing an element when two or more criteria were not satisfied. In addition, the Committee should consider the ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ vis-à-vis the Evaluation Body concerning the decisions taken on the different nominations. When an element is recommended not to be inscribed, it does not reflect on the quality of the element itself. Rather, it concerns the procedure, which ought to be respected if the Committee is to ensure a fair and equitable process, and the reason why some files had received referrals. Czechia had itself experienced a referral, which it understands is never a pleasurable experience, but neither was it as as painful as one might expect. It is not a sign of failure, but more of an encouragement to do more and to ensure clarity in efforts to safeguard elements. The dialogue process that was used for the first time officially this year needs to be limited to very specific, concrete questions so as to receive specific, concrete answers. The delegation understood the disappointment that might be felt by submitting States in this process and reiterated that the dialogue process can only be entered into in the absence of information and only if clear, concise replies to the question(s) will satisfy the needs for information by the Body. Regarding multinational nominations, they can demonstrate exemplary cooperation between countries and communities as they pursue common objectives, respecting one of the fundamental principles of the Convention. For this reason, the delegation believed that Operational Directives on multinational cooperation was needed. In some cases, submitting States appeared to gather examples of common traits that could not be defined on the basis of fundamental characteristics of intangible cultural heritage.
18. The **Chairperson** reminded Committee members to keep to the allotted 2-minute limit.
19. The **delegation of Botswana** appreciated and commended the Evaluation Body for the good work accomplished under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had not compromised the quality of its work in the evaluation of the files. Botswana also noted the move towards dialogue in the evaluation process, which enhanced the spirit of understanding of the Convention, while taking note of its important issues. It also commended the submission of multinational nominations, which are very important as they enhance intercultural dialogue and teamwork, and the sharing of experiences and understanding in the implementation of the Convention. The delegation congratulated all the States Parties whose nominations were considered in this cycle.
20. The **delegation of the Netherlands** thanked the Evaluation Body for its detailed report and precise recommendations that covered many important observations. The Netherlands values the expertise of the Evaluation Body, which should be followed as much as possible. It was noted that on the one hand, the Evaluation Body was pleased that there were more nominations that highlighted the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development, as well as an increase in multinational files. However, on the other hand, there were still issues of great concern. For instance, a lack of community participation, inappropriate language, ownership and tourism issues, as well as the low number of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. Despite the fact that the dialogue process had proven to be an important tool and 30 nomination files were recommended for inscription or selection, 20 files were recommended for referral in this cycle; an increase of 23% and 38%, respectively. The delegation wished to ask the Evaluation Body how it views this aspect, and what could be done to improve the files. Do NGOs need be involved? Is more capacity-building needed? Over the years, the evaluation of the R.2 criterion had proved difficult for States Parties. For that reason, the Committee recommended reviewing this criterion as part of the reflection process on the listing mechanisms, and the delegation sought to hear from the Evaluation Body as to how R.2 could have been reviewed overall. Looking at the larger context of the discussion on the listing mechanism and at the new tools that have been developed, such as ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’, the delegation asked that the Body reflect on the contribution of intangible heritage to visibility, as well as the interrelationship of elements.
21. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** thanked the members of the Evaluation Body for its work in assessing the nomination files, and the Secretariat for having facilitated its work under these very difficult circumstances. It appreciated in particular the Secretariat’s ability to host an online format for the Body’s work, adapting to the circumstances of 2020. The delegation thanked the Body for its very thorough report, which nevertheless raised some very important issues. It was well aware that 2020 was the first cycle that had implemented the dialogue process, which had enabled greater and more efficient discussion between the submitting States and the Evaluation Body, and it hoped that this experience will continue. It was also pleased to note a greater number of multinational nominations this year, and it congratulated the submitting States for their spirit of dialogue and collaboration in the name of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as these nominations were of particular importance to the Convention because of this spirit of cooperation. The delegation also noted that it was sometimes difficult for States when submitting their multinational nominations to strike a balance in their nominations and they should therefore benefit from additional advice and a certain flexibility from the Secretariat. The delegation also noted that the criteria R.3 and R.4 were problematic in this cycle and that capacity-building efforts should be reinforced and discussed as part of the ongoing global reflection of the listing mechanisms.
22. The **delegation of Brazil** commended the Evaluation Body for the high quality of its report that will enable the Committee to follow developments, while providing a snapshot of the files that it would soon examine. It acknowledged the vast amount of work that this entailed with respect to the quality of their decision-making, but also because of the number of files that were examined under the difficult conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fact that the members of the Evaluation Body were able to undertake this mammoth task reflected their high level of professionalism, dedication and commitment to the Convention. The delegation was pleased to note the implementation of the dialogue process, which had clearly been useful. Not only was it now fully enshrined in the working methods, it also enabled the clarification of minor technical information, allowing the Body to focus on other aspects of the files, which ultimately improved the quality and coherence of the files. The delegation took note of the growing number of nominations as a result of the greater visibility and success of the Convention. Consequently, there was a need to constantly improve and adapt the working methodologies so as to continue safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.
23. The **delegation of Kuwait** thanked the Evaluation Body for the rich, clear and informative report. It voiced concern that criteria R.2 and R.3 were not met in 14 nominations. Looking at the report as a whole, the delegation urged submitting States to begin by reading the Evaluation Body report when they decide to draft new nominations and initiate the nomination process as it provided a wealth of information on how to improve their nomination files.
24. The **delegation of Poland** expressed appreciation for the work carried out by the Evaluation Body, especially during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report was very detailed, providing a lot of information regarding the specific work of the experts’ evaluation process. Poland appreciated their outputs and recommendations regarding the submitted nominations in each cycle, and it recognized the usefulness of the dialogue process for the Evaluation Body in the evaluation of nominations. However, it voiced concern regarding the challenges that arose in criterion R.2 and the difficulties that some countries continue to have in responding to this criterion. It was hoped that the global reform of the listing mechanism will help submitting States become more efficient in managing their nomination files. Poland welcomed the high number of multinational nominations, but that the capacity-building approach, together with workshops dedicated to better understanding the complexity of safeguarding intangible heritage, was still essential. It hoped that the nomination procedure would improve thanks to this approach. In this regard, the delegation reiterated the need to continue efforts for a comprehensive and sustainable implementation of the Convention.
25. The **delegation of China** expressed sincere appreciation to both the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for their excellent work in this cycle, particularly as the pandemic had significantly changed the working methodology resulting in a substantial increase in the workload. The delegation applauded the great efforts that gave rise to this detailed and informative report. It also congratulated the Evaluation Body on the full implementation of the dialogue process in this first cycle since the dialogue process was adopted by the General Assembly at its eighth session in September 2020. The report addressed those recurring issues and recommended several good examples, all of which provided valuable guidance for all nominations in future cycles. The delegation had two specific questions. First, it noted in the report that compared to the previous cycle, the number of files recommended for referral had increased: 18 nominations were referred or not inscribed. The delegation also noted that one nomination for the Representative List and one proposal for the Register of Good Practices had received the *no* option. In this regard, it drew the Committee’s attention to paragraph 28 of the report, which stated that the idea behind a referral was to present an encouraging sign to the submitting State. However, in paragraph 30, it stated that the Evaluation Body used the *no* option when the file had provided enough information to demonstrate that a criterion had *not* been met. It therefore seemed that the use of the referral and the *no* option by the Evaluation Body was not clearly defined. The second question was related to paragraph 74 in which the Evaluation Body mentioned that it had major concerns regarding the inventories. The delegation thus wished to know whether the Body sought to see the stated periodicity of updates of the inventory by the submitting State, for instance, on a yearly or another basis. However, it was of the understanding that the criterion would be examined according to the various contexts within the different States, and it sought some clarification in this regard.
26. The **delegation of Republic of Korea** appreciated the hard work and expertise of the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for having successfully completed the evaluation of files despite the pandemic. The professional opinions of the Evaluation Body provided clear guidelines to strengthen the safeguarding mechanisms, and it was pleased that the Body had actively used the dialogue option on more nominations and for more complex questions than in the previous cycle. In this cycle, the dialogue process, which had started as an interim measure in 2019, had become fully operational, thus advancing towards a more comprehensive and integral reform. The delegation expected this to improve the transparency and reliability of the evaluation mechanism, as well as contribute to the objective of the Lists, which is to enhance the visibility of intangible cultural heritage.
27. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** congratulated the Evaluation Body for the excellent work completed on the submitted files, adding that the Committee should reserve the greatest respect for the work carried out. It recalled how in 2019 a member of the Committee had spoken of how the Evaluation Body’s mission played a central role in the implementation of the Convention, and that what was at stake was not establishing lists but safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The delegation agreed on the need for establishing balance in the Lists and that efforts were required to assist countries that did not have elements inscribed on the Lists or multinational nominations. In this regard, the Committee must work to ensure the integrity of the Convention. The delegation recalled the working methodology which stated that the Committee should not take too much time to discuss files that had two or more criteria that were not met, but it should also look at the quality of the criteria. When a State is unable to satisfy R.1 in the presentation of its element as intangible cultural heritage, it is a problem in itself and the Committee should be cognizant of this reality.
28. The **delegation of Sri Lanka** thanked the Evaluation Body for its immense contribution, thanking the Secretariat for the document. With regard to the recurring challenges, it sought to hear from the Evaluation Body on how it might overcome the specific challenge of the lack of coherence between the information provided under the different criteria for inscription in some of the files, which seemed to be the case in most of the referred files.
29. The **delegation of Jamaica** welcomed the report of the Evaluation Body, thanking the Body for its excellent work and commitment to this enormous task, which was critical to the implementation of the Convention, and even more admirable amid the continuing impact of the global pandemic. It noted that the Evaluation Body had examined 52 files, a significant number, and it commended its efforts to continue to implement the dialogue process with the submitting States in an anticipatory manner that enabled greater understanding of the files, and generally influencing the overall recommendations. However, Jamaica noted with concern the increase in the number of referrals and the corresponding decrease in the recommendations for inscription. This could be influenced by many factors, not least the need to increase capacity-building among States Parties in preparing nomination files to tackle errors such as inappropriate vocabulary, as well as on the implementation of safeguarding measures. The delegation also noted a number of recurrent issues and challenges, particularly in reference to criteria R.2 and R.3, adding that Jamaica would be interested in participating in furthering dialogue to find a solution in this regard. It reiterated its gratitude to the Body for its work, and commended the Secretariat for the support provided.
30. The **delegation of Saudi** **Arabia** appreciated the efforts and hard work of the Evaluation Body in evaluating these files despite the pandemic, which required energy, flexibility and dedication. It also appreciated its recommendations and valuable insights, which Saudi Arabia would use to improve its nomination process. As a result, it had decided to withdraw one of its nominations on ‘Knowledge and practices related to cultivating Khawlani coffee beans’ out of respect for the ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ and to highlight its commitment to protecting its principles and empowering the Evaluation Body in achieving its mandate.
31. The **delegation of Lithuania** thanked the Evaluation Body for its work under the very difficult circumstances of the pandemic, noting the high quality of its report that provided a general overview of the various issues and relevant recommendations. It was also delighted to learn that the dialogue process had been successfully implemented in this cycle. The delegation was convinced that the Body’s recommendations to inscribe of refer were coherent with the in-depth analysis of the files as presented by the submitting States. It also noted an increase in the number of referrals during this cycle, adding that this was an excellent option to improve the files so to achieve a positive outcome for the safeguarding of the elements concerned. The delegation also appreciated the good examples of nominations, which will be a source of inspiration for submitting States in the future. It congratulated the Evaluation Body for its report, and it hoped that the various issues it raised, particularly with regard to the criteria and mechanisms for inscription and multinational files, will be taken into consideration by the Committee and submitting States, leading to further discussion in future sessions.
32. The **Chairperson** understood that the limited time did not allow members of the Committee to deliver all their points, and she therefore invited them to send their interventions to the Secretariat so that the full text could be included in the summary records. She thanked Czechia for this useful proposal, inviting the Rapporteur to respond to the questions raised.
33. The **Rapporteur** thanked the Chairperson for her support, adding that some of the questions had already been addressed in the oral presentation. The Rapporteur remarked that the evaluation of the files reflected the quality of the files submitted, while the increase in the number of referrals also mirrored the decrease in the number of *no* options, explaining that the Evaluation Body opted for the referral option whenever it was possible. The Evaluation Body had combined specific recommendations with its evaluations to enable the submitting States to better prepare their files, but also by highlighting the methodological materials available on the UNESCO website, the good examples of nominations, the possibility of employing NGO experts, and cooperating with countries to help in drafting a high-quality nomination. These options sought to help States respond to their specific situations. Concerning criterion R.2, the Rapporteur explained that answers were mainly a repetition of the questions in the nomination form, taking the form of a statement without further explanation, and concentrating more on the visibility of the element itself and failing to demonstrate how the element would impact intangible cultural heritage in general. In this regard, the Evaluation Body wished to stress the importance of the reflection on the listing mechanisms, which was unfortunately postponed in 2020. On the question regarding criterion R.5, the Rapporteur explained that the information provided often stated that the inventories were updated regularly, but the Evaluation Body expected to have information on the timeframe related to the updates of the inventory. It was clear that this would be based on specific contexts in the different countries, so the Evaluation Body was not expecting States Parties to provide a concrete figure for every year of the inventory, but it was expecting to have a concrete idea of the periodicity of updates. With regard to the *no* option and how this differed to the referral option, the Evaluation Body had used the option not to inscribe, select or approve a specific file, programme or request for International Assistance when the file had provided sufficient information to show that a criterion or several criteria had clearly *not* been met. By contrast, the referral option was chosen when the information provided was *not* sufficient to decide a positive outcome. The Rapporteur hoped to have answered all the questions, and would remain available as required.
34. The **Chairperson** thanked the Rapporteur, reminding the Committee that the general debate and the examination of draft decision 15.COM 8 would take place after the examination of the individual decisions under agenda items 8.a, 8.b, 8.c and 8.d.

**ITEM 8.a OF THE AGENDA**

**EXAMINATION OF NOMINATIONS FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8.a*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.a-EN.docx)

**Files:**[*4 nominations*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8a-urgent-safeguarding-list-01145)

1. The **Chairperson** turned to the first sub-item 8.a, inviting the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body to present its findings on the four nomination files.
2. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the first nomination **Traditional knowledge and techniques associated with Pasto Varnish mopa-mopa of Putumayo and Nariño** [draft decision 15.COM 8.a.1] submitted by **Colombia**. Traditional knowledge and techniques associated with Pasto Varnish mopa-mopa of Putumayo and Nariño encompasses three traditional trades: harvesting, woodworking and decorative varnishing. After initiating a dialogue process on criteria U.3 and U.4 the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination satisfied all five criteria. More specifically, it noted that the file offered a well-documented overview of the current situation relating to the element and the safeguarding plan, and adequately responded to the specific threats identified. This was the first recommendation from the Evaluation Body that took into consideration the outcomes of the dialogue process. The Chairperson explained that the draft decision was structured as follows: i) paragraph 1 provided a summary presentation of the nomination, as was customary; ii) paragraph 2 included an assessment of the criteria that have been considered as met based on the nomination file alone; iii) paragraph 3 was a new, additional paragraph the reflected that the Evaluation Body considered the criteria as satisfied after a dialogue process was initiated. This was the case in criteria U.3 and U.4. In conclusion, the Body recommended inscription of the element on the Urgent Safeguarding List.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body for the clear presentation and helpful explanation on the structure of the decision, which would save time when the Committee examined the remaining nominations concerned by the dialogue process. It was noted that the Secretariat had not receive any requests for debate or amendment for this file.
4. The **delegation of Peru** was satisfied with the report of the Evaluation Body, adding that the Pasto Varnish is a representative example of the capacity of different cultures to come together and create a new tradition. In this case, the element represented the different layers of culture of the autochthonous, original inhabitants, and Spanish techniques; a technique that also exists in Peru. In this regard, Peru was able to collaborate with Colombia to ensure the safeguarding and continuation of this practice for the benefit of humankind.
5. The **delegation of Brazil** associated with the remarks made by Peru and congratulated Colombia for the presentation of such an important element.
6. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.a.1**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.a.1) **adopted to inscribe Traditional knowledge and techniques associated with Pasto Varnish mopa-mopa of Putumayo and Nariño on the Urgent Safeguarding List**.
7. In a video message, the **Minister of Culture of Colombia**, **H.E. Ms Carmen Vásquez Camacho** sent special greetings to the skilled Mopa-Mopa collectors in Putumayo, the carpenters, the virtuous masters of Pasto Varnish and their apprentices and to all those who had made the inscription of this ancestral tradition on the Urgent Safeguarding List possible. Colombia assured the Committee of its commitment to safeguarding this practice, which epitomized the cultural diversity of the planet: the Pasto Varnish Mopa-Mopa of Putamayo and Nariño. The inscription calls on Colombia’s responsibility to implement the special safeguarding plan to guarantee the viability of this element that is a testament to the cosmogony of the southern Andes and Amazon foothills of Colombia. The combination of symbology and mastery expressed in the Mopa-Mopa art embodies knowledge that humanity cannot afford to lose. The master craftspeople, the Mopa-Mopa collectors, and the different institutions and cultural entities involved in its protection and promotion thank the Committee for reaffirming the need to safeguard this knowledge, positioning Nariño and Putamayo as heritage territories. The Minister was happy for the recognition of this practice by the international community in favour of these territories for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, and which represents the identity and diversity of Colombia.
8. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Wheat culture in Georgia, culture of wheat endemic species and landraces cultivation and utilization in Georgia** [draft decision15.COM 8.a.2]submitted by **Georgia**. Wheat culture, culture of wheat endemic species and landraces cultivation and utilization in Georgia encompasses numerous traditions related to wheat cultivation and use. Wheat plays a major role in the life of Georgians, both as a daily food and as a component of rituals, medical treatments and other social practices. The Evaluation Body considered that criteria U.4 and U.5 were met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine that criteria U.1, U.2 and U.3 were satisfied, in particular, the information provided was not sufficient to explain the relationship between the diversity of cereal species and the expressions of knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe. Furthermore, the file did not provide sufficient information on the concrete measures aimed at safeguarding the element. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the nomination be referred to the submitting State.
9. The **Chairperson** noted that Azerbaijan wished to take the floor.
10. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** agreed to adopt the decision, and had no additional comments.
11. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** remarked on the agreed approach to respect the gentlemen’s agreement as there were three criteria that had not been met, adding that it wished nonetheless to hear an explanation from Georgia.
12. The **Secretary** reminded Committee members of Rule 22.4 concerning discussions during decisions in which only Committee members may take the floor during the decision-making process. In this case, a specific question from a Committee member must be addressed to Georgia regarding its file. In the absence of a specific question, Georgia may be given the floor to make a general statement only after the adoption of the decision.
13. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** wished to hear from Georgia about the cultural aspects of the practice of wheat breeding, as the report indicated that its cultural importance was minor.
14. The **delegation of Georgia** thanked the Evaluation Body for its important observations and the opportunity to answer the question. It explained that the cultural aspects of wheat cultivation in Georgia is immense and diverse in the different parts of Georgia. It concerns the whole process, from seed conservation up to bread-making, sowing and ploughing; every action is part of the entire process, which is reflected in the diverse habits and customs that are practised throughout the country. This cultural unity, with its rules, habits and customs, are preserved by the wheat-growing communities and individual farmers, most of whom live in mountainous areas. Unfortunately, few farmers remain, but they continuously strive to keep these customs alive. These important customs are also related to the social responsibilities of the communities, as well as the consumption of wheat, and not only just growing wheat.
15. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** thanked both Georgia for its explanation and the Evaluation Body for its careful examination of the nomination. Indeed, U.1 is one of the most important criteria as it is directly related to the identification of the element. It fully understood the concerns of the Evaluation Body with regard to criterion U.1 and concurred that some information could have been better placed in the nomination form, but there were passages and extracts in the file that could have in fact answered the question. For instance, the delegation found the explanations of the cultural aspects of the element and its meaning in several parts of section 1 of the nomination file where it mentions cultural practices symbolizing life, resurrection and abundance for the communities. Similar information could also be found in the video that accompanied the nomination. Finally, the description of the element itself was quoted in paragraph 1 as, ‘Many traditions continue to be practised in communities and households, such as blessing the furrow and sharing seeds and starter bread, and wheat grains are still widely used in rituals related to birth, marriage and death.’ The delegation therefore found that the answer to criterion U.1 could indeed be found in the nomination, and if other members agreed, it would support changing *refer* to *yes* on U.1.
16. The **Secretary** remarked that the amendment had not been received by Azerbaijan, inviting the delegation to submit the amendment in writing, as had been requested earlier.
17. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** explained that it had not submitted an amendment as it first wished to hear whether other Committee members would support its position.
18. The **Chairperson** noted that there was no relative active support at this time, and proposed to adopt the draft decision as a whole.
19. The **Secretary** concurred that with no submitted amendment the Committee could continue to adopt the decision as a whole.
20. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.a.2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.a.2) **adopted to refer Wheat culture in Georgia, culture of wheat endemic species and landraces cultivation and utilization in Georgia** **to the submitting State.**
21. The **delegation of Georgia** appreciated the excellent organization of this online session of the Committee. It acknowledged the decision of the Committee to refer its nomination and to resubmit it to the Committee for examination at a subsequent cycle. The nomination of wheat culture in Georgia to the Urgent Safeguarding List was initiated and driven by the bearers, the concerned communities, groups and individuals for whom the wheat culture in Georgia is considered as an inseparable part of their cultural identity and inheritance, and is significant to further the communities’ desire to safeguard the element. The delegation was deeply convinced that the updated nomination file will fully meet all the criteria for its successful inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List in the following cycle, and will strongly motivate the communities concerned to promote their intangible heritage among the younger generation and the transmission of this traditional knowledge and practices within the communities and groups. The delegation assured the Committee that Georgia will spare no effort to further strengthen international cooperation for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and was fully committed to contributing to the effective performance of the Convention’s main principles and fundamental aspects.
22. The **Chairperson** then turned to the examination of two nomination files to the Urgent Safeguarding List for which International Assistance was simultaneously requested to support the implementation of the proposed safeguarding plan.
23. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed)** [draft decision15.COM 8.a.3]submitted by **Egypt**. The craft tradition, Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed) is a complex process that requires time, effort, patience and practice. Many steps and techniques are involved in the loom preparation, threading and weaving to achieve the final product; it is a work of precision and intricate workmanship. The Evaluation Body considered that the criteria U.1, U.2 and U.4 were met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria U.3 and U.5 were satisfied. In particular, the information demonstrating the coherent and consistent correspondence between the demonstrated needs and proposed measures was lacking. Furthermore, insufficient information was provided on the relationship between the organization involved in the management and updating of the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage, as well as on the relationship between the State Party and the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the nomination be referred to the submitting State. Concerning the International Assistance request, the criteria for identifying the potential beneficiaries of the training were not explicit. Moreover, the budget breakdown did not identify the activities in detail, including their timing, location and other related safeguarding activities. Furthermore, the information provided was not sufficient to clarify or identify whether the ultimate purpose of the programme was safeguarding or work training for young women. Moreover, the request did not convincingly demonstrate how this experience will continue to actively engage in the practice of the element. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the International Assistance request be referred to the submitting State.
24. The **Chairperson** noted that the nomination had received an amendment tabled by 11 Committee members, inviting Saudi Arabia or another co-sponsor to take the floor.
25. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** explained that after having receiving clarifications by Egypt, it proposed to accept the amendments co-sponsored by the Committee members as displayed on the screen to which Sri Lanka and Cameroon wished to be added. It invited Ms Ebtisam Alwehaibi from the Saudi Arabia delegation to provide further clarification on U.3.
26. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** [second speaker] thanked the Body for its assessment of the Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt. After reviewing criterion U.3 in the nomination form, and following clarifications from the State Party on the coherence and correspondence between the demonstrated needs of the proposed measures and the safeguarding plans, it asked Egypt to provide the Committee with a summary of the clarifications provided on the economic aspects of the element and the commercialization of the fabric present in U.3.
27. Regarding the economic aspects, the **delegation of Egypt** explained that sustainable development is the main concern for the communities, which is also an objective that should be considered in planning the safeguarding plan. According to the Operational Directives, Chapter VI, paragraph 183, ‘States Parties are encouraged to acknowledge that the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage contributes to inclusive economic development, and to recognize in this context that sustainable development depends upon stable, equitable and inclusive economic growth based on sustainable patterns of production and consumption and requires reduction of poverty and inequalities’. It also states in paragraph 185, ‘States Parties shall endeavour to recognize, promote and enhance the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to generating income and sustaining livelihoods’. Paragraph 185(b) i. also clearly indicates that the aim is to, ‘promote opportunities for communities, groups and individuals to generate income and sustain their livelihood’. The delegation explained that the file had proposed measures to facilitate the generation of a fair income to the practitioners, which is not considered commercialization by any means. Furthermore, the safeguarding measures are suggested by the communities themselves in order to improve their quality of life that is ensured from their work, as mentioned under section (b). The delegation recalled that the Operational Guidelines of U.3 state that the plan should enable the communities, groups and individuals to continue the practice for the transmission of the element. The inclusion of these measures therefore responded to the needs of ensuring transmission.
28. In the absence of time, the **Chairperson** proposed to continue the debate the following day, remarking that the Committee was seriously behind schedule and that people around the world were waiting online for the discussions on nomination files. The Chairperson adjourned the day’s session.

*[Wednesday, 16 December 2020]*

**ITEM 8.a OF THE AGENDA [CONT.]:**

**EXAMINATION OF NOMINATIONS FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING**

1. The **Chairperson** recalled the intense examination and completion of agenda item 7, the presentation of the Evaluation Body’s oral report, and the beginning of the examination of agenda item 8.a. The Bureau had met for the second time and proposed a revision to the timetable that was published online. Given the important amount of work remaining, the Bureau had agreed on a new working method. The Chairperson asked that Committee members wishing to join an amendment should raise their hand. Others should ensure that their hand is lowered. The Secretariat would then read out the names of all the co-sponsors so that they can be included in the summary records for the meeting. After the show of hands, the floor would be opened to anyone who may wish to intervene. It was noted that this methodology would take place within the framework of the gentlemen’s agreement and decision-making procedures, as previously explained. The Chairperson then turned to 15.COM 8.a.3, the nomination proposed by Egypt. It was recalled that the Committee had begun to discuss the amendment on U.3 proposed by 14 Committee members. Employing the methodology as explained, the Chairperson asked the Committee members for a show of hands in support of the amendment presented by Saudi Arabia.
2. The **Secretary** noted support for the amendment from Botswana, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Peru, Djibouti, Brazil, Panama, Morocco, China, Poland, Jamaica, Japan, Côte d’Ivoire, Sri Lanka, and Azerbaijan, Republic of Korea and Cameroon.
3. The **Chairperson** invited Committee members wishing to intervene to raise their hand.
4. With no forthcoming comments, the **Chairperson** noted that the amendment had received active broad support, turning to paragraph 1 and criteria U.1 and U.2, as initially proposed, as well as criterion U.3, which was duly adopted. Criterion U.4 did not receive an amendment, and paragraph 3 was duly adopted. Criterion U.5 received an amendment proposed by 14 Committee members (Botswana, China, Côte d’Ivoire, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Morocco, Djibouti, Peru, Sri Lanka, Cameroon, Panama, Togo, Republic of Korea), which was duly adopted.
5. The **Secretary** took the floor to explain the procedure for this item and future items, in line with the Committee’s practice over the past few cycles, so that the structure of the decision would be similar to decisions taken by the Committee in past sessions. The Secretary explained that criteria U.1, U.2 and U.4 that had not been amended would remain under paragraph 2 as initially proposed. Criteria U.3 and U.5, which had been amended, would be moved to a new paragraph 3 under a standard paragraph used by the Committee; most recently at its fourteenth session in 2019. The standard paragraph would read, ‘Further decides that based on the information provided by the State Party to the Committee at its present session, the following criteria for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity is satisfied.’ The Secretary had discussed this procedure with the Committee members who had proposed this amendment, as well as other amendments received thus far, and all were comfortable with this proposal. If the Committee agreed, the Secretariat would introduce this new paragraph for the Committee’s examination. The same approach would be applied to amend other draft decisions under this item.
6. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary, adding that it was indeed important to remain consistent with the Committee’s past practice, and with no voiced objections, the Secretariat introduced the new paragraph in the draft decision. The Chairperson now turned to paragraph 2 as a whole, which was duly adopted. Paragraph 3 now displayed the standard wording proposed by the Secretariat and included criteria U.3 and U.5 which had been adopted. Paragraph 4 was also adopted as amended.
7. The **Chairperson** invited the Netherlands to take the floor.
8. The **delegation of the Netherlands** explained that with an eye on the just adopted amendments on the one hand and the concerns raised by the Evaluation Body on the other, it wished to propose a new paragraph 5, which would read, **‘**Requests the State Party to submit for the next four years after inscription biannual reports on the results of the measures taken to ensure the safeguarding of the element, and invites the State Party to ensure that a product-oriented approach focused on marketing and commercialization is avoided and that the safeguarding of the cultural meanings and social functions of the element and the participation of the community are prioritized, highlighted and clearly described in the biannual reports’.
9. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for comments on the proposed amendment.
10. The **delegation of Panama** remarked that the Netherlands had presented an important proposal, but since it had come to the Committee at this very moment and there would be other nominations that are referred or contested, it suggested to suspend the paragraph until the Committee was able to decide as it moved further along the debates. The delegation explained that this situation would not only apply to the current nomination, adding that the request to the submitting State to submit biannual reports was a new element, and many other countries will be in the same situation. It therefore suggested not to adopt the decision with this additional paragraph at the present time, but to retain and decide on the amendment by the Netherlands at the end of the debates (on Friday or Saturday morning).
11. The **Chairperson** asked the Secretary to clarify the situation.
12. The **Secretary** explained that from a procedural perspective, once the decision had been taken the Committee should not go back and re-open it. In addition, he did not think there would be enough time to return to individual decisions, as the Committee was already behind schedule. The entire decision could be suspended until the situation can be resolved, but the Committee could not adopt the decision and then return to it to introduce a new paragraph.
13. The **delegation of Jamaica** thanked the Netherlands for its intervention, adding however that this amendment had ramifications for the new reporting mechanism and it was uncertain to what extent this would affect that process.
14. The **delegation of Czechia** understood that the proposal related to the urgent safeguarding aspect of the element and not to other nominations, as there was only one nomination file left to examine and the biannual reporting proposed would not be applied to the Representative List. The delegation recalled that this decision had been taken by the Committee in the past to ask the State Party [to present a report] when there were doubts about the sustainability or effectiveness of the safeguarding measures proposed, but the element was still inscribed. The proposal would thus request that Egypt report to the Committee within four years to inform it of the effectiveness of its safeguarding plan. As this proposal would not relate to any other files, and not those to the Representative List, the delegation supported the proposal by the Netherlands.
15. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** thanked the Netherlands for its proposal, adding that it understood the aim, which is to safeguard and protect the element. However, the question to the Secretariat was whether this was going to be conducive to accepting other such cases, or whether it could be resolved without spending more time and effort given time constraints.
16. The **delegation of Sri** **Lanka** agreed with Czechia and supported the Netherlands’ timely amendment, adding that this kind of proposal would be considered on a case-by-case basis and that it applied very well to this particular nomination.
17. The **delegation of Switzerland** welcomed the proposal by the Netherlands. With regard to the concerns expressed by Panama and others, it aligned with the position expressed by Czechia that this strictly applied to this particular case and that it would not set a precedent for the reporting mechanism.
18. The **delegation of Kuwait** thanked the Netherlands for its amendment, however, as had been mentioned in a previous session and echoed by Jamaica, the Committee should not change the reporting mechanism. The delegation trusted the States Parties to follow the procedure, so changing the reporting mechanism would be unwise at this time. Nevertheless, the submitting State could be asked to ensure that the commercialization aspect is taken into consideration, but the delegation did not agree with the amendment.
19. The **delegation of Poland** expressed gratitude to the Netherlands for submitting its amendment, reminding the Committee that the element was requested for inscription to the Urgent Safeguarding List combined with International Assistance. For this reason, Poland thanked Czechia for providing an additional perspective and thus supported the amendment.
20. The **delegation of Panama** asked the Secretariat whether the Committee was changing the rules or the criteria with regard to the biannual reports with this proposal.
21. The **delegation of Sweden** concurred with the Netherlands, Czechia and Sri Lanka, and wished to be added to the list of supporting members, including Switzerland and Poland.
22. The **delegation of Brazil** remarked on the importance of this discussion, adding that a reporting system was already in place by which the State Party provides information on elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Brazil did not believe a second system of reporting was required and did not wish to see additional reporting obligations.
23. The **delegation of Botswana** referred to the Operational Guidelines, noting that commercialization is considered as an element of sustainability, as such, for intangible cultural heritage to be sustainable, they require a form of commercialization.
24. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order called by Kuwait.
25. The **delegation of Kuwait** remarked that the draft decision did not reflect the discussion as some Committee members had disagreed with the proposal. For the sake of a balanced argument, this opposing position should also be clearly projected on the screen.
26. The **Chairperson** took note of the point raised by Kuwait.
27. The **delegation of Botswana** supported the view expressed by Kuwait, Panama and others that this proposal changed the reporting mechanism, and it did not support the amendment.
28. Thanking the Netherlands for its proposal, the **delegation of Morocco** supported the position held by Kuwait, Panama and Brazil, that the Committee should not follow this proposal for the time being, and wished to be added to the list together with Kuwait.
29. While thanking the Netherlands for its proposal, the **delegation of Peru** believed that the decision should not include this amendment for the reasons already expressed. Firstly, it was changing the mechanism for submitting reports with regard to the Urgent Safeguarding List, which should be the subject of an in-depth discussion rather than a decision based on a specific element. Secondly, it supported an earlier remark that elements of traditional art have always been the subject of commercialization since time immemorial in that they have been bartered and exchanged between communities. Every time there is production (of traditional handicrafts) by a specific community, commercialization has always been part of artistic enterprise. Peru believed that the search for new markets for traditional art is a form of safeguarding as it is a way of ensuring continuity of ancestral know-how, which is at the core of the work of the Convention. The Committee should therefore not be demonizing commercialization. Obviously, this is not the first aim of safeguarding, but it is part of it.
30. The **delegation of Djibouti** aligned with the remarks made by Kuwait, Morocco, Botswana and Peru, and therefore wished to be added to the list of supporters to delete the proposal.
31. The **Secretary** wished to respond to the interrelated question posed by Panama and Saudi Arabia, adding that it was true that there was a precedent for such an amendment, as recalled by Czechia, by which the Committee had asked for an interim report in the case of an Urgent Safeguarding file. Moreover, this would not in any way affect the overall reporting mechanism insofar as States Parties are required to report every four years on their elements on the Urgent Safeguarding List as a separate reporting mechanism to the periodic reporting. The periodic reporting on the implementation of the Convention also includes reports on elements on the Representative List. In this proposal, the submitting State would have to report once in two years, followed by a return to its normal cycle, which would be under its normal four-year reporting and then every four years thereafter.
32. The **delegation of Japan** did not wish to take up a position on either side, but wondered whether the second part of the proposal by the Netherlands, which was perhaps a bit too instructive, could be deleted so that the proposal would read, ‘Requests the State Party to submit for the next four years after inscription biannual reports on the results of the measures taken to ensure the safeguarding of the element’. The second part of the proposal could also be recorded in the summary records of the meeting. It was hoped that this could settle the differences of opinion.
33. The **Chairperson** noted that the proposal by the Netherlands did not enjoy active broad support and therefore would not be included in the draft decision. As there were no further amendments, the Chairperson proposed to adopt the draft decision as a whole.
34. The **delegation of the Netherlands** wondered whether there was active broad support for the compromise solution proposed by Japan.
35. The **Chairperson** asked Committee members for a show of support for Japan’s proposal.
36. The **Secretary** notedsupport from Switzerland, Netherlands, Sweden, Czechia, Japan and Poland.
37. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order called by Kuwait.
38. The **delegation of Kuwait** asked that Japan’s proposal be shown on the screen.
39. The **Secretary** noted that Japan’s proposal was to delete the second part of the sentence, which would now read, ‘Requests the State Party to submit for the next four years after inscription biannual reports on the results of the measures taken to ensure the safeguarding of the element’.
40. The **delegation of Japan** concurred with the understanding, and that in addition, the second part of the amendment be recorded in the summary records.
41. The **delegation of Kuwait** noted theefforts toachieve consensus and could agree to Japan’s proposal so as to move forward.
42. The **Secretary** noted support for Japan’s proposal from Switzerland, Netherlands, Sweden, Japan, Czechia, Poland, Kuwait, Morocco, Botswana, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Sweden, Jamaica, Djibouti, Rwanda and Brazil.
43. The **Chairperson** remarked on the broad support of Japan’s proposal in paragraph 5, which was duly adopted. With no further amendments, she turned to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.a.3**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.a.3) **adopted to inscribe Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed) on the Urgent Safeguarding List and grant US$262,400** **to the State Party**.
44. The **delegation of** **Egypt** expressed gratitude and thanks to the Committee for the inscription of Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt on the Urgent Safeguarding List. This inscription promotes intangible cultural heritage and reinforces Egypt’s commitment to safeguard, promote and transmit the element. This invaluable recognition would not be possible without the support and efforts of the rural and urban communities in Upper Egypt who are the bearers of the traditional weaving and its traditional loom, whose priceless efforts were saluted and acknowledged. The delegation also thanked the Evaluation Body for assessing this nomination and for the International Assistance, adding that it valued its opinions and would take them into consideration. Additionally, it expressed gratitude to the Secretariat, particularly the Culture Sector and the Living Heritage Entity, for their outstanding professionalism in organizing this session and for constantly responding to States Parties’ needs. The delegation concluded by expressing thanks to the Chairperson for her wise chairpersonship and hoped to meet soon in person.
45. The **Chairperson** thanked Egypt, and introduced the fourth and last nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List.
46. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Aixan/Gana/Obs#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills** [draft decision15.COM 8.a.4]submitted by **Namibia**. Aixan/Gana/Ob#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills relates to the specific traditional music of the Nama people, one of Namibia’s tribal minority groups. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and, in particular, appreciated that capacity-building efforts will help community members acquire skills to help them carry out awareness-raising programmes, providing a strategic framework for further capacity-building activities. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element to the Urgent Safeguarding List. The Evaluation Body considered the State Party’s request for International Assistance from the ICH Fund in the amount of US$99,329 for the implementation of the safeguarding plan for the element. The Evaluation Body considered that the project improves the visibility of the element and of living heritage in general, and increases the transmission of music performance skills among young people. The budget included a detailed description of the specifically itemized expenses. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the approval of the International Assistance request from Namibia for the implementation of the safeguarding plan for the element and granted the amount of US$99,329 to the State Party.
47. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.a.4**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.c.4) **adopted to inscribe Aixan/Gana/Obs#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills on the Urgent Safeguarding List** **and to grant US$99,329 to the State Party.**
48. The **delegation of Namibia** congratulated the Chairperson for her excellent stewardship of the proceedings, thanking Jamaica for hosting this session and for the reggae music. On behalf of all the Nama-speaking community in the Namibian province at large, the delegation was delighted to accept the inscription of Aixan/Gana/Ob#ANS TSI//Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills on the Urgent Safeguarding List. At the same time, Namibia wholeheartedly thanked the Committee for approving the International Assistance request in the amount of around US$100,000 for safeguarding this element. Namibia further took note of the recommendations presented by the Committee as part of its decision to inscribe the Namibian element, adding that it was committed to implementing the recommendations without delay. This commitment was made with an understanding that the element, which plays a vital role in the Nama-speaking community, is on the verge of extinction and requires urgent intervention in order to rescue this important heritage. The Namibian Government was committed to giving priority to the implementation of the Convention specifically through capacity-building and improved visibility of the element and living heritage in general. Finally, Namibia thanked the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body for the work they continued to do in ensuring the highest standards in evaluating nominations. On behalf of the Nama-speaking community in Namibia and Namibians, the delegation thanked the Committee for the favourable consideration of Aixan/Gana/Ob#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills.

**ITEM 8.b OF THE AGENDA**

**EXAMINATION OF NOMINATIONS FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8.b Rev.+ Add.4*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.b_Rev._Add.4-EN.docx)

**Files:** [*42 nominations*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8b-representative-list-01146)

1. The **Chairperson** then turned to the next agenda item 8.b, beginning with the nomination submitted by the Republic of Korea, inviting the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body to present the nomination.
2. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the first nomination **Yeondeunghoe, lantern lighting festival in the Republic of Korea** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.1] submitted by the **Republic of Korea**. Yeondeunghoe, lantern lighting festival, takes place during the fourth lunar month. The festival is a time of joy during which social boundaries are temporarily erased. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and, in particular, appreciated the inclusion of a set of safeguarding measures aimed at preventing unintended results of inscription. This well-prepared file is a good example of how the inscription of an element can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
3. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.1**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.1) **adopted to inscribe Yeondeunghoe, lantern lighting festival in the Republic of Korea on the Representative List.**
4. The **delegation of Republic of Korea** welcomed the Committee’s decision to inscribe Yeondeunghoe, extending deepest appreciation to the States Parties, adding that inscription afforded a great opportunity to enhance mutual understanding between countries and deepen their friendship, which was not always the case in reality, as seen in many recent examples of inscriptions. The delegation hoped that the spirit of dialogue of Yeondeunghoe will be widely shared, offering inspiration in addressing conflict between countries.
5. The **delegation of the Republic of Korea** [second speaker], represented by theChairperson of the Yeondeunghoe Safeguarding Association, expressed gratitude to the Chairperson and the Committee for the decision to inscribe Yeondeunghoe, lantern lighting festival on the Representative List. This is a great gift to Korea because the lantern lighting is a representative culture and festival with a long history. He hoped that COVID-19 would soon be over and that the lantern lighting festival will light up the darkness, adding that he hoped to meet everyone at the next lantern lighting festival in Korea in 2021. The Republic of Korea will do its best to safeguard and develop the lantern lighting festival so that it can become an intangible cultural heritage that is loved by many around the world.
6. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Traditional music band from Romania** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.2] submitted by **Romania**. The traditional music band from Romania is an instrumental band formed of a minimum of three players who play the melody, harmonic arrangements and rhythmic-harmonic support on three different instruments. There can be more than three instrumentalists in the band, but the number of instruments remains the same. The Evaluation Body considered that the information provided was not sufficient to determine criteria R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4 and R.5. In particular, the information to determine the actual scope of the element being transmitted does not demonstrate how the inscription of the element would contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. The proposed safeguarding measures showed insufficient information about the methodology applied to involve community members in drafting these measures. Furthermore, the file did not sufficiently demonstrate the participation of the members of the communities concerned in the nomination process or how the practitioners initiated the nomination process. The periodicity and modality of updating were not specified for the inventory. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the nomination be referred to the submitting State.
7. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.2) **adopted to refer Traditional music band from Romania to the submitting State.**
8. The **delegation of Romania** spoke of the honour to represent Romania and congratulated the Chairperson on fulfilling her important function. Romania proposed the nomination of Traditional music band by virtue of its importance as intangible cultural heritage for humanity. Almost every day in the eyes of numerous communities in Romania, and because of its undeniable potential, it is fully deserving to be inscribed on the Representative List. The delegation was believed that the essential aspects of the element had been acknowledged by the Evaluation Body, to which it offered its gratitude. The Body recognized the element’s role in encouraging local identity and the sense of belonging to the community, representing cultural diversity, as well as mutual respect between the different groups in Romania, instilling harmony between Serbian, Slovakian and Roma communities. Importantly, it is representative of small, rural communities in Romania, but also communities in urban environments and beyond the borders of Romania, serving as a source of inspiration, which is particularly important. Romania will take careful account of that aspect, as well as all the other aspects highlighted in the report by the Evaluation Body.
9. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** had withdrawn its nomination file.
10. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Traditional weaving of Al Sadu** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.4] submitted by **Saudi Arabia** and **Kuwait**. Traditional weaving of Al Sadu refers to the traditional woven textile made by Bedouin women: in Arabic, ‘Al Sadu’ means weaving done in a horizontal style. The cloth forms a tightly woven, durable textile and the weavers make use of natural fibres found in their natural environment. The Evaluation Body considered that criteria R.1, R.4 and R.5 were met, but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.2 and R.3 were satisfied. In particular, the information provided did not sufficiently demonstrate how the inscription would contribute to showing the visibility of intangible cultural heritage in general at the local, national and international levels. Moreover, insufficient information was provided on the fragile balance between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary artistic applications, as well as on the guarantees in place to ensure a fair amount of the profits are returned to the key stakeholders. The nomination did not propose safeguarding measures to respond to these challenges. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting States.
11. The **Chairperson** noted that an amendment had been tabled by Morocco.
12. The **delegation of Morocco** congratulated and thanked the Evaluation Body for its immense work. It welcomed Saudi Arabia and Kuwait’s presentation on this element and thanked Saudi Arabia for having withdrawn the presentation of its second element in order to comply with the principles and the recommendations provided by the Evaluation Body. The delegation added that Saudi Arabia had interacted with the Evaluation Body by providing the missing information, which formed the basis of Morocco’s amendment. This was why it believed that the Committee would be ready to adopt it, as the amendment espoused the principles and values of the Convention, while ensuring the promotion and empowerment of women, which is extremely important and is in addition to the value of the element itself. The delegation added that the amendment was co-sponsored by Azerbaijan, Djibouti, Kazakhstan, Côte d’Ivoire, Panama, Botswana and Cameroon.
13. The **Chairperson** thanked Morocco for its remarks, and turned to the adoption of the decision paragraph-by-paragraph. Paragraph 1 was duly adopted.
14. The **Secretary** reiterated that the procedure would follow in the same way as the recent Decision 15.COM 8.3 on the nomination by Egypt. It was noted that the amendment submitted by Morocco concerned criteria R.2 and R.3, as well as paragraphs 4 and 5. Thus, should the Committee wish to adopt these amendments, the Secretariat would apply the same principle, i.e. the draft decision would therefore show paragraph 2 as it was initially proposed, while paragraph 3 will include the amended criteria, in line with past practice.
15. The **Chairperson** turned to the adoption of paragraph 2 as a whole, and with no objections, it was duly adopted. The Chairperson asked for a show of support for the amendment submitted by Morocco on criterion R.2.
16. The **Secretary** noted support fromChina, Japan, Brazil, Republic of Korea, Peru, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Djibouti and Rwanda.
17. The **Chairperson** remarked on the relative active support of the Committee for the amendment in R.2, which was duly adopted as amended. The Chairperson asked for a show of support for the amendment submitted by Morocco on criterion R.3.
18. The **Secretary** noted support from Brazil, Republic of Korea, China, Peru, Jamaica, Japan, Djibouti, Sri Lanka, Rwanda and Sri Lanka.
19. The **Chairperson** remarked on the relative active support of the Committee for the amendment in R.3, which was duly adopted as amended. The Chairperson then turned to the adoption of paragraph 3 as a whole, which was adopted. All five criteria had now been adopted and therefore were no objections to the adoption of paragraph 4 as amended.
20. The **delegation of Czechia** acknowledged the inscription of Al Sadu to the Representative List. However, it voiced concern – together with the Evaluation Body – about the risks to the element, which, moreover, the States Parties were well aware of as they were very clearly stated in the nomination file. In this regard, Czechia wished to support the submitting States in their efforts and proposed an amendment in paragraph 5, which would read, ‘Encourages the States Parties to beware of possible unintended negative results of the inscription and to reflect them together with the threats identified in the file in all their safeguarding efforts.’ The delegation also noticed a proposal to delete the last paragraph on periodic updating, adding that it preferred to retain the last paragraph.
21. The **Chairperson** asked for a show of support for the amendment proposed by Czechia.
22. The **Secretary** noted support from Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden and Sri Lanka.
23. The **Chairperson** noted that the amendment proposed did not benefit from relative active support, and moved to delete the amendment, turning to the original paragraph 5.
24. The **Secretary** noted a point of order called by theNetherlands.
25. The **delegation of Netherlands** remarked that it now seemed that every amendment required active broad support when amendments could also be supported by three or four members if there were no opposing voices. The delegation asked that the rule be further explained.
26. The **Secretary** understood the question from the Netherlands, which referred to the decision-making process instigated since Addis Ababa in 2016 that for any amendment under items relating to the work of the Evaluation Body, the Chairperson will first look for active *relative* support, which is understood to be about one-third of members of the Committee, and if there was no consensus, the Chairperson would then look for broad *active* support, meaning a broad number of Committee members.
27. The **Chairperson** thanked the Secretary for the clarification, and turned to the adoption of paragraph 5, which was duly adopted. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.4**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.4) **adopted to inscribe Traditional weaving of Al Sadu on the Representative List.**
28. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** thanked the Committee members and the Evaluation Body for their very relevant evaluation that will be taken into consideration and followed in preserving this very important element.
29. The **Chairperson** congratulated Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, inviting the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body to present the next nomination file.
30. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Zlakusa pottery making, hand-wheel pottery making in the village of Zlakusa** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.5] submitted by **Serbia**. Zlakusa pottery making, hand-wheel pottery making in the village of Zlakusa relates to the knowledge and skills involved in making unglazed vessels for thermic food processing. Moreover, the pottery is closely associated with the village of Zlakusa and its environs due to its close link with the natural environment, which provides the raw material. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and, in particular, it appreciated that the Potters Association had established a close cooperation with institutions responsible for the safeguarding of cultural heritage to prevent any negative effects resulting from the inscription. Furthermore, the element contributes to the preservation of the environment and raising awareness of the importance of environmental safeguarding in the interest of sustainable development. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended its inscription on the Representative List.
31. The **delegation of Kuwait** remarked that a video should have been played following the inscription. It also wished to say a few words.
32. The **Secretary** apologized to the Committee, but the video had been received that morning and it took time to upload into the system. However, the video would be shown shortly.
33. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.5**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.5) **adopted to inscribe Zlakusa pottery making, hand-wheel pottery making in the village of Zlakusa on the Representative List.**
34. The **delegation of Serbia** thanked the Secretariat for the organization of this meeting, and the Evaluation Body and Committee for recognizing Zlakusa pottery making as intangible cultural heritage.

*[A video of Zlakusa pottery making was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson** invited Kuwait to make its statement.
2. The **delegation of** **Kuwait** thanked the Committee, UNESCO, the Evaluation Body and its joint partner, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the inscription of Al Sadu to the Representative List. The delegation especially thanked the nominating body in Kuwait, the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, the ICH team, as well as the partners and community guardians teaching Sadu, the Sadu House, and all those who contributed to the nomination file with their time and expertise. Special thanks were given to the master weavers for their dedication and for keeping this tradition alive, as well as those interested in learning Al Sadu so that we may take pride in it for decades to come.
3. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Hawker culture in Singapore, community dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban context** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.6] submitted by **Singapore**. Hawker culture in Singapore: community dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban context is present throughout Singapore. As a social space that embraces people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, hawker centres play a crucial role in enhancing community interactions and strengthening the social fabric. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and commended the State Party for devising creative ways to encourage the active participation of the communities concerned in the nomination process from the outset. The Body also appreciated the safeguarding measures that effectively foster dialogue, creativity and sustainability. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended inscription of this element on the Representative List.
4. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.6**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.6) **adopted to inscribe Hawker culture in Singapore, community dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban context** **on the Representative List.**
5. In a video message, **Mr Edwin Tong**, **Minister for Culture, Community and Youth**, and Second Minister for law, thanked the Evaluation Body for its favourable recommendation to inscribe the Hawker culture on the Representative List, and the Committee for its support and endorsement of this inscription. Hawker culture is a source of pride for Singapore, it reflects living heritage and multiculturalism, and is an integral part of the daily lives of everyone in Singapore regardless of age, race or background. The Minister thanked all Singaporeans for their overwhelming support of this inscription, which recalled the values of resilience, adaptability and unity, which was even more important in 2020 in the fight against COVID-19. Singapore pledged to do its part to safeguard its intangible cultural heritage, as well as to contribute to dialogue and collaboration in line with the spirit of the Convention.
6. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Wine Horses** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.7] submitted by **Spain**. *Los Caballos del Vino* (Wine Horses) takes place each year from 1–3 May in Caravaca de la Cruz and forms part of the fiestas held in honour of the Santísima y Vera Cruz in Caravaca. The equestrian ritual consists of a series of events in which the horse is the protagonist. The Evaluation Body considered the criteria R.1, R.3, R.4 and R.5 as met, but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criterion R.2 was satisfied. In particular, the nomination failed to convincingly demonstrate how the inscription would contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of similar practices around the world, especially those related to horses or festivals. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting State.
7. The **Chairperson** noted that an amendment had been tabled by Brazil, inviting Brazil to present its amendment.
8. The **delegation of Brazil** believed that the dialogue process had brought great dynamism to the evaluation of nomination files and made it possible to increase the number of nomination files capable of overcoming minor technical difficulties. Even though the dialogue process was already integrated into the evaluation process, some nominations files and referrals were not able to benefit from this consultation process and were not able to clarify any of the criteria in question. The delegation believed that this was the case for this nomination file, *Caballos del Vino* (Wine Horses) in Caravaca de la Cruz, presented by Spain. The Evaluation Body considered that criterion R.2 was not met. However, had the nomination file been able to benefit from the dialogue process, it would have been possible to demonstrate that this criterion was in fact satisfied. Above all, this nomination incarnates values that are universal, that is, it demonstrates respect for the close relationship between the natural world – in this case the animal world – and the human world. The delegation asked that Spain explain how this element ensures visibility and awareness of the importance of this and similar practices throughout the world, particularly with regard to the relationship with horses, or festivals based around horses. How does the inscription of this element improve dialogue between communities, groups and individuals, and defends cultural diversity and creativity?
9. The **Chairperson** invited Spain to respond to the questions.
10. The **delegation of Spain** congratulated the Chairperson on her excellent leadership, and thanked Brazil for allowing Spain to respond to this issue, which would compensate for the fact that it did not benefit from the dialogue process that would certainly have clarified the any minor doubt. This is a festival that has taken place for over 300 years. It is based on a ritual involving a blessing of flowers and vineyards, and performed by the local communities in Caravaca in a dialogue between horse breeders and veterinarians.
11. The **Chairperson** noted apoint of order from Poland.
12. The **delegation of Poland** recalled that according to the Rules of Procedure, a Committee member may pose a question to the submitting Party regarding the nomination on the unmet criteria. Poland, as a Committee member, wished to address a question to the submitting State on its nomination.
13. The **Secretary** remarked that Spain was answering the question from Brazil, and the Chairperson would give the floor to Poland to ask its question following Spain’s response.
14. The **Chairperson** asked Spain to complete its explanation.
15. The **delegation of Spain** reiterated that dialogue established between the communities and the horse breeders supports the horses, but also the veterinary community, the craftspeople and everyone who participates in the festival who are in constant dialogue with other similar festivals around the world. This is not new; it has existed for centuries. Not only do the horses have a symbolic value, representing a symbiosis between humans and nature, the festival requires a full year of work for the craftspeople and the women who embroider pieces for the festival, involving the entire community. The element embodies art, love for nature, combined with respect for the animal, which is important at the present time. Thus, there is dialogue with communities, and there is no doubt that inscription on the Representative List will give greater visibility to this dialogue and to similar festivals around the world, attracting interest thanks to this common link through the horses.
16. The **Chairperson** invited Poland to present its question.
17. The **delegation of Poland** remarked that the festival – together with related knowledge and techniques of work with horses – was of considerable importance to the local community, as stated by the Evaluation Body. The tradition also has an impact on broader audiences, especially artists. The element is included in the inventory, and the safeguarding plan was elaborated to ensure the viability of transmission. As stated in the file, the initial motivation to nominate the element came directly from the bearers. Taking into account that the communities of bearers are at the centre of the Convention, the delegation asked Spain to explain in more detail the steps that will be taken to ensure that the inscription contributes to enhancing dialogue between communities, groups and individuals, as well as promoting cultural diversity and creativity.
18. The **delegation of Spain** reiterated that dialogue [between communities] was already open, recalling that the main criteria had been met and that criterion R.2 could have been resolved if Spain had been given the opportunity for upstream dialogue. The delegation explained that the community had contact with other communities in the world for whom the horse is a distinguishing element. They all have a different way of approaching their intangible heritage, but the starting point is the respect for the multicultural approach. Regardless of whether it involves people from the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, they all share this encounter with horses. Inscription of this element through this network of festivals can help the community of Caravaca join in dialogue with all the other festivals, working and dialoguing together with these communities on their festivals. Moreover, such an encounter was planned in the event of the element’s inscription. The festival has existed for 300 years and the community have sought connection with partners from other parts of the world during this time. Many have already been found; some are yet to be found, but there is a shared and supportive community, and hence the reason why Spain has asked the Committee for its support.
19. Thanking Spain, the **Chairperson** turned to the adoption of the decision, paragraph-by-paragraph, and paragraph 1 was duly adopted.
20. The **Secretary** explained that the Secretariat had introduced the same wording as implemented for the other files in order to align with previous Committee decisions.
21. The **Chairperson** turned to paragraph 2 as a whole, which was adopted. She turned to criterion R.2 with the amendment submitted by Brazil.
22. The **Secretary** noted support for the amendment from Poland, China, Jamaica, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, Panama, Czechia, Côte d’Ivoire, Sri Lanka, Djibouti and Rwanda.
23. The **Chairperson** noted broad active support and paragraph 3 was duly adopted as amended. All five criteria were now satisfied and paragraph 4 was thus duly adopted as amended. There were no amendments proposed for paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8.
24. The **delegation of Poland** wished to co-sponsor the decision.
25. The **delegations of Jamaica** and **Morocco** also supported the amendment in paragraph 4.
26. The **Chairperson** pronounced the four paragraphs adopted. Turning to the decision as a whole, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.7**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.7) **adopted to inscribe Wine Horses on the Representative List.**
27. The **delegation of Spain** thanked the Committee and the Evaluation Body for the work accomplished, inviting the Mayor of Caravaca to speak on behalf of the bearer community.
28. The **Mayor of Caravaca** spoke of his sense of pride in speaking on behalf of all the women and men of Caravaca to thank the Committee for its support, adding that it was a real honour to share its most important legacy with the rest of the world from its humble beginnings as it extends its values to other communities in the world and helped to enhance links between humans and animals. The community was delighted with its inscription on the Representative List and to share the values transmitted across generations that has helped the community forge a sense of identity. Cultural diversity is a key aspect to achieve peace, social cohesion and sustainable development. It is a sign of hope, which the community wished to share with other cultures of the world.
29. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Craftsmanship of mechanical watchmaking and art mechanics** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.8] submitted by **Switzerland** and **France**. At the crossroads of science, art and technology, the skills related to the craftsmanship of mechanical watchmaking and art mechanics are used to create watchmaking objects designed to measure and indicate time (watches, pendulum clocks, clocks and chronometers), art automata and mechanical androids, sculptures and animated paintings, music boxes and songbirds. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. This well-prepared file can serve as a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of the element on the Representative List.
30. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.8**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.8) **adopted to inscribe Craftsmanship of mechanical watchmaking and art mechanics** **on the Representative List.**
31. The **delegation of** **Switzerland** spoke on behalf of the two submitting States, France and Switzerland, to thank the Committee for its decision to inscribe the element, thanking the Evaluation Body for its work. The know-how in mechanics in watchmaking and art mechanics represents the crossroads between science, technology, art and poetry, which is shared, developed and transmitted by artisans, practitioners, schools and museums, forming part of the common, intangible cultural fabric translated through its values in architecture, vocabulary or social relations. Inscription will also enhance cooperation between the two partner countries to develop a project of documentation, transmission and promotion of this tradition. The delegation welcomed the binational steering committee that prepared the nomination file, underscoring the excellent cooperation between the partner States based on a remarkable transborder dynamic.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Charfia fishing in the Kerkennah** **Islands** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.9] submitted by **Tunisia**. Charfia fishing in the Kerkennah Islands is a traditional, passive fishing technique that capitalises on the hydrographic conditions, seabed contours and natural resources both at sea and on land. The ‘charfia’ is a fixed fishery system consisting of palm fronds embedded in the seabed to create a triangular barrier, blocking the path of the fish pulled in by the ebb tide and channelling them into capture chambers and finally into a net or trap. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The Evaluation Body appreciated how the file focused on the interconnections between intangible cultural heritage and the natural environment, contributing to the maintenance of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of the element on the Representative List.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.9**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.9) **adopted to inscribe Charfia fishing in the Kerkennah** **on the Representative List.**
3. The **delegation of Tunisia** thanked the experts and the Committee members for this heart-warming decision, as well as the experts of the National Heritage Institute for the excellent work carried out on the nomination file. Charfia fishing in the Kerkennah Islands – an isolated place – had been brought before this Committee and the international community, representing the unique and intelligent relationship between man and nature; a relationship that involves a respect for nature and for fishery resources, but also ingeniousity as recognized by experts. Charfia fishing is completely integrated within nature and respectful of the environment, and it demonstrates the deeply rooted and respectful relationship that humans have with nature. Tunisia is delighted with this inscription which recognizes its ancestral know-how. Tunisian historians trace this back to dozens of centuries, and young generations will continue to transmit this tradition now that it has been recognized on the Representative List of Humanity. The delegation was delighted to have brought before this Committee this nomination that had satisfied all five criteria. Tunisia is proud of its national identity, its local specificity, but also its presence within the international community. Tunisia is an active, passionate and determined member of this Convention, and it thanked the Secretariat and the elected members of the Committee.
4. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Al Aflaj, traditional irrigation network system in the UAE, oral traditions, knowledge and skills of construction, maintenance and equitable water distribution**[draft decision15.COM 8.b.10] submitted by the **United Arab Emirates**. Al Aflaj and the related oral traditions, knowledge and skills of construction, maintenance and equitable water distribution are a source of pride for the associated communities. Al Aflaj is a traditional irrigation system which uses an underground tunnel to conduct water over long distances, from an underground source to a basin where the community can access it. After initiating the dialogue process the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. At the international level, Al Aflaj is an example of human creativity in adapting to the environment through one of the traditional irrigation methods which, along with other such creative methods in many regions of the world, enrich the cultural landscape. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
5. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.10**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.10) **adopted to inscribe Al Aflaj, traditional irrigation network system in the UAE, oral traditions, knowledge and skills of construction, maintenance and equitable water distributionon the Representative List.**
6. The **delegation ofUnited Arab Emirates** thanked the Evaluation Body, the Committee and the Secretariat for the work carried out, adding that it was delighted to share a short video.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson** congratulated the United Arab Emirates, and invited the Vice-Chairperson [from Djibouti] to replace the Chairperson from Oman to present the next nomination file.
2. The **Vice-Chairperson** **of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Camel racing, a social practice and a festive heritage associated with camels**[draft decision15.COM 8.b.11] submitted by the **United Arab Emirates** and **Oman**. The next file was a multinational nomination submitted by the United Arab Emirates and Oman, and the proposed element was Camel racing, a social practice and a festive heritage associated with camels. Camel racing is a widespread social practice in both States Parties and the element is a fundamental part of their nomadic lifestyle and a source of inspiration and creativity in their poetry and signing. After having initiated a dialogue process on criterion R.4, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. In particular, it noted that by practising the element, the members of the community communicated and consolidated social ties and fostered a sense of social cohesion and pride. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of the element on the Representative List.
3. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.11**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.11) **adopted to inscribe Camel racing, a social practice and a festive heritage associated with camelson the Representative List.**
4. The **delegation of United Arab Emirates** thanked the Chairperson and introduced the video.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** returned to presented the next nomination **Budima dance** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.12] submitted by **Zambia**. The Budima Dance is a warrior dance performed all year round by the Wee people on a number of sombre and spiritual occasions, especially during traditional ceremonies, funeral processions, weddings, initiation ceremonies, the installation of chiefs, thanksgiving, harvest celebrations and ritual activities. The dance is performed with spears, whistles, walking sticks, knobkerries, flutes, ceremonial axes, shields, horns/trumpets, drums and rattles. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and noted that the element serves as a unifying element for people from different communities. The State Party demonstrated that both the local communities and the State itself have supported the dance and enhanced the visibility through general and specific safeguarding measures. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.12**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.12) **adopted to inscribe Budima dance** **on the Representative List.**
3. The **delegation of Zambia** thanked the Chairperson and congratulated the Secretariat for organizing the meeting despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Zambia was grateful for the inscription of Budima dance on the Representative List, which is practised by the Wee people of the Zambezi Wimba valley in the Southern Province of Zambia. The Budima dance was previously a war celebratory dance, but currently the dance is used for entertainment at weddings and funerals, and the installation of chiefs and traditional leaders, at public and state functions. The recognition of the dance will go a long way in the preservation and promotion of the dance, and the Zambian Government will continue its moral, social, administrative and economic support to safeguard the dance. The delegation thanked UNESCO for its support, and for its platform and forum, which has helped in the preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage in its country.
4. The **delegation of Algeria** had withdrawn its nomination file.
5. The **Chairperson** **of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Knowledge, know-how and practices pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.14] submitted by **Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco** and **Tunisia**. The knowledge, know-how and practices pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous encompasses the methods of preparation, manufacturing conditions and tools, associated artefacts and circumstances of consumption of couscous in the communities concerned. The non-culinary aspects of the element – namely rituals, oral expressions and certain social practices – are also transmitted by the bearers. Couscous is a dish replete with symbols, meanings and social and cultural dimensions all linked to solidarity, conviviality, sharing meals and togetherness. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and particularly appreciated the clear and consistent description of the element, taking into account aspects ranging from the preparation process to manufacturing conditions and tools, associated artefacts and consumption practices. This well-prepared file is a good example of how the inscription of an element on the Representative List can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
6. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.14**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.14) **adopted to inscribe Knowledge, know-how and practices pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous** **on the Representative List.**
7. Congratulating the submitting States Parties, the **Chairperson** invited H.E Ms Malika Bendouda, Minister for Culture and the Arts of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to present her greetings.
8. The **Minister for Culture and the Arts of Algeria, H.E. Ms** **Malika Bendouda,** Ms Olivia Grange, Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Dear Members of the Committee, Dear Members of the Evaluation Body, I wish to express my thanks and gratitude to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on behalf of the Algerian people and the peoples of the Maghreb region. Couscous is a meeting dish and an important ritual of our heritage that has accompanied the people of the region for millennia and continues to do so. It has demonstrated the ingenious way in which nature has been exploited, protected and creativity through the recycling of its products for the benefit of humanity. We are proud today to be able to list this dish of love as a World Heritage Site. I would also like to salute the brotherly countries that have placed their trust in Algeria to oversee the coordination of this dossier in its various stages in order to achieve this happy result. Couscous dates back to the period 100-140 BC when kitchen utensils resembling those used for the preparation of couscous were found in the tomb of King Massinissa. The different ways of preparing couscous remind us of the human virtues of diversity and otherness, recognised by our ancestors since the dawn of time. Like all the other Arab countries that participated in the submission of the multinational candidature file to your honourable Committee for the inscription of the element: "knowledge, know-how and practices related to the production and consumption of couscous", Algeria, which has always been a fertile land benefiting from an abundant production of wheat for a long time, and more particularly during the Numidian period, is one of the first countries that gave birth to this dish, which is the result of the industrial work of transforming a seed into a rich and delicious dish. Couscous is associated with gratitude, joy, patience, festivity, generosity and many other values. With my thanks once again. The **delegation of Tunisia** wished to share this moment of great pride, not only as a Tunisian but as someone from the Maghreb. The Committee had inscribed an element that is a cornerstone of Maghreb unity; an identity marker of the region. This is not only a dish or a grain, but a way of life and an organization around the dish. It is a dish that accompanies us throughout our lives, in times of happiness, but also sadness and mourning. It is a marker of the culture of Maghreb, and the delegation was moved that the countries were able to overcome diverse but similar views to show that UNESCO is a place where people can unite to recognize their common identity. This inscribed dish is an element of culture, and today it reached beyond the Maghreb where it is appreciated on tables everywhere. It is an element that allows cultures to span from the local and regional to the universal, and there is perhaps no better element on the Representative List in this regard. The delegation was proud to have put forward this file, and proud to represent Tunisia in UNESCO, an organization that enables States to transcend borders and to recognize one another through the virtue of multilateralism that moves towards culture and the universal.
9. The **delegation of Morocco** presented the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of the Kingdom of Morocco, H.E Mr Othman El Ferdaous, to make his presentation.
10. The **Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Morocco, H.E Mr Othman El Ferdaous**, spoke of the great day and joy shared with colleagues from Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritania, adding that this excellent news demonstrated multilateralism at its best; gathering together and sharing values. Within the civilization of wheat, which dominated the northern hemisphere, the Maghreb region brought its own contribution with couscous. The laborious preparation of couscous is an act of community and solidarity, and the Minister spoke of a historian of the 17th century that described the peoples of the Maghreb as those of ‘the couscous or who wear a burnous and shaved their heads and eat couscous’. However, behind its consumption, couscous is an African dish that has travelled widely. Initially, Africans consumed couscous like rice, eaten separate from the main course, it later accompanied the Berbers to Andalusia, and returned to the region as an accompaniment of meat, vegetables and sultanas. It is therefore a truly shared common heritage from north and south to east and west that travelled beyond borders through gastronomic diplomacy. The delegation warmly thanked the Committee for the inscription of couscous, and the Evaluation Body in particular for its study and recommendation to inscribe this multinational file. Morocco is committed to preserve this know-how and practice, and its transmission to future generations as it promotes a universal approach, thanking colleagues and participants.
11. The **delegation of Mauritania** was delighted that the know-how and practices related to the production and consumption of couscous was inscribed as intangible cultural heritage on the Representative List, which is very close to the nation’s heart. It welcomed the work done by the Evaluation Body, as well as by the entire Committee throughout the adoption process. It congratulated the experts of the submitting States for all the work carried out. They are friends and neighbours with whom Mauritania has a common history and living culture, as shown today by this dish. The delegation wished to particularly thank Morocco’s expert, Mr Mustafa Benami who had pushed forward this file but had unfortunately passed away before he could see it adopted. The delegation welcomed the sub-regional cooperation throughout the Maghreb, which will highlight and promote the preservation of the know-how related to this speciality of the Maghreb, adding that it hoped it will remain universal.
12. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Chamamé** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.15] submitted by **Argentina**. Chamamé is a form of popular cultural expression that is mainly practised in the Corrientes province. Its key components include a style of ‘close embrace’ dancing where participants hold each other chest to chest and follow the music without set choreography. Chamamé highlights values such as love for one’s land, local fauna and flora, religious devotion and a ‘way of being’; a Guarani expression pointing to the harmony between the human, natural and spiritual realms. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination proposed a wide variety of safeguarding measures, including: i) the promotion of new spaces and the enhancement of existing ones; ii) transmission of the related knowledge and know-how; iii) informal education; iv) promotional and preservation activities; v) support for the creation of new music productions; vi) and research and identification measures. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
13. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.15**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.15) **adopted to inscribe Chamamé on the Representative List.**
14. The **delegation of Argentina** thanked the Chairperson for her management of the meeting and a glimpse of Jamaica. It thanked the Committee and the Evaluation Body for having made this inscription possible, as well as the Assistant Director-General and the Secretary for their marvellous team who have accompanied the delegation throughout this process. The delegation thanked the Director-General for her tireless work to ensure that culture in all its expressions are promoted and protected, and become a tangible reality.

*[A video of greetings from the provincial authorities was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Nar Bayrami, traditional pomegranate festivity and culture** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.16] submitted by **Azerbaijan**. Nar Bayrami is an annual festival in October/November in Azerbaijan’s Goychay region that celebrates the pomegranate and its traditional uses and symbolic meaning. Pomegranate culture is a set of practices, knowledge, traditions and skills related to the cultivation of the fruit, which is used not only in a range of culinary contexts, but is also referred to in crafts, decorative arts, myths, storytelling and other creative outlets. The element is linked to local agriculture and to the farmers and individuals in rural communities that grow and collect the fruit. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and in particular appreciated that the inscription will raise awareness about other elements of local traditional culture based on agricultural practices. This well-prepared nomination file is a good example of how the inscription of an element can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List*.*
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.16**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.16) **adopted to inscribe Nar Bayrami, traditional pomegranate festivity and culture on the Representative List.**
3. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** expressed gratitude to the Committee for inscribing Nar Bayrami, traditional pomegranate festivity and culture on the Representative List, as well as the Evaluation Body for its evaluation and careful examination of this nomination. Pomegranate culture plays an important role in every entire society in Azerbaijan. For every Azerbaijani, the pomegranate is a symbol of culture and love, and a marker of cultural identity and belonging. Communities see in pomegranates symbols of unity, integrity, diversity, dynamism and perfection. Traditionally held in the Goychay region of Azerbaijan every year, the Nar Bayrami festivity represents for communities a moment of special pride and celebration of centuries-old traditions. The delegation congratulated the local community and the local authorities of Goychay on this occasion, and thanked the stakeholders involved in the preparation of the file, especially the communities, local authorities and NGO who had made a huge effort to focus on the safeguarding of the pomegranate culture, and will continue to partner to safeguard the element and transmit it to the next generation.
4. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Art of miniature** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.17] submitted by **Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey** and **Uzbekistan**. The miniature is a type of two-dimensional artwork that involves the design and creation of small paintings on books, papier-mâché, rugs, textiles, walls, ceramics and other items using raw materials such as gold, silver and various organic substances. Historically, the miniature was exemplified by book painting in which the text was supported visually, but the element has evolved and can also be observed in architecture and as an adornment in public spaces. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and in particular it appreciated the establishment of a collaborative network involving entities from all the submitting States during the preparation of the multinational nomination. Furthermore, the States supported safeguarding measures centering on transmission and viability, visibility and awareness-raising, international cooperation, academic activities and documentation, and training programmers to enhance the practice. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
5. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.17**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.17) **adopted to inscribe Art of miniature** **on the Representative List.**
6. The **Chairperson** congratulated the submitting States, introducing the accompanying video.

*[A video of the element practised in the different countries was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Traditional art of nakshi kantha embroidery** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.18] submitted by **Bangladesh**. Nakshi kantha is an embroidered quilt with a pictorial design and/or a floral pattern covering its surface on either side. Nakshi kantha serves a number of functions and can be used as a floor mat, a wearable wrap, a bag, or given as a gift. Each category has its own specific name. The Evaluation Body considered that criterion R.1 was met, but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.2, R.3, R.4 and R.5 were satisfied. In particular, the nomination failed to explain how the inscription of the element would contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. Moreover, the State Party did not sufficiently demonstrate how the communities were involved in the planning of the proposed safeguarding measures or how the safeguarding measures support the activities of female embroiderers. Furthermore, the nomination did not provide clear information on the name of the inventory and its periodicity, or the modality of updating the inventory. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting State.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.18**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.18) **adopted to refer to Traditional art of nakshi kantha embroidery** **Art to the submitting State.**
3. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Grass mowing competition custom in Kupres** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.19] submitted by **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. The most important social event in the Kupres municipality is the annual mowing competition that takes place in July at a specific meadow called Strljanica, which is also the local name for the custom. The contest involves the manual mowing of grass using a scythe and is judged by the time, effort and amount mown as cutting grass at that altitude requires strength and a special technique. After initiating a dialogue process, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The file demonstrated that the inscription of the mowing competition custom in Kupres would further raise awareness among the local population of the values the element carries in terms of the overall life and development of their local community and area. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
4. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received for this nomination and therefore turned to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.19**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.19) **adopted to inscribe Grass mowing competition custom in Kupres on the Representative List.**
5. The **delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** spoke on behalf of the community that inherited the custom of mowing in Kupres to thank everyone who recognized the importance of the work of the local community and gave their support to their efforts to safeguard this tradition. Inscription on the national list, and in particular the Representative List, contributes to raising awareness, not only of the importance of intangible heritage but also on the importance of further activities and the transmission to young people. This is an incentive for the residents of the small town of Kupres to continue to transmit their tradition, which is deeply imbued with the nature that surrounds them. The custom of mowing is felt by the people of Kupres as a part of their identity as they try to safeguard it despite the numerous obstacles brought about by the modern way of life. In this regard, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage plays a significant role. It raises the quality of life and encourages creativity, brings cultures together, and generates intergenerational cooperation and dialogue. The delegation reiterated its thanks to everyone, with wishes for a successful continuation of the work.
6. The **Chairperson** thanked and congratulated all the submitting States once again, reminding the Committee that the Bureau would meet the following morning. She closed the meeting by showing the video of traditional weaving of Al Sadu from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

*[A video of Al Sadu was shown]*

1. The **delegation of** **Cambodia** had withdrawn its nomination file.

*[Thursday, 17 December 2020]*

**ITEM 8.b OF THE AGENDA [CONT:]**

**EXAMINATION OF NOMINATIONS FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY**

1. The **Chairperson** greeted the delegations, informing the Committee that there was currently no host for the sixteenth session of the Committee in 2021, which may be held in Paris at UNESCO Headquarters in December unless a State Party came forward. The dates were currently being studied, taking into account the possible dates of the 41st session of the General Conference. In the meantime, Bureau members had been asked to consult the Committee members in each region to find candidates for the positions of Chairperson, Rapporteur and Vice-Chairs. The Chairperson was pleased to report that the Committee had caught up well, adding that the working methodology appeared to greatly facilitate the debates, inviting the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body to present the next file. Cambodia had withdrawn its nomination file.
2. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Taijiquan** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.21] submitted by **China**. Taijiquan is a traditional physical practice characterized by relaxed, circular movements that work in concert with breath regulation and the cultivation of a righteous and neutral mind. The element builds upon the yin and yang cycle and the cultural understanding of the unity of heaven and humanity. It has been disseminated through legends, proverbs and rituals, among other vehicles of expression. After initiating the dialogue process, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and in particular it appreciated the wide range of relevant past and current safeguarding measures through a five-year plan for the safeguarding of Taijiquan (2021–2025). This includes measures from upkeeping venues to academic activities, training and recruiting apprentices and bearers, promotion through websites, and collaborating with seniors, women and students. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
3. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.21**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.21) **adopted to inscribe Taijiquan on the Representative List.**
4. In a video message, the **delegation of** **China** spoke on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to express sincere gratitude to all the Committee members, the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for their diligent work and support for the inscription of Taijiquan on the Representative List. Nourished by traditional Chinese philosophy and the notion of health preservation, the cycles of yin and yang, and the unity of the heaven and humanity, Taijiquan is a traditional physical practice characterized by moving in a relaxed way, while keeping a righteous and neutral mind, providing the communities concerned with a sense of identity and enhancing social cohesion. Taijiquan can be learned and practised by anyone, regardless of gender, age or profession, and does not require special venues. The inscription of Taijiquan will contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general, while encouraging dialogue and promoting respect for cultural diversity worldwide. Human society is going through the most serious global pandemic in the past century. Around the world, COVID-19 is posing a grave threat to human life and well-being. Being compatible with sustainable development, this element helps to achieve a healthy mind and the preservation of physical health for its practitioners. It also demonstrates the contribution of traditional Chinese knowledge and practices to the improvement of human life and health. China will earnestly fulfil its safeguarding commitment and spare no efforts in ensuring the viability of the element so that a wider range of communities, groups and individuals will benefit from the valuable traditional knowledge and practise of this element.
5. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang ceremony, rituals and related practices for maintaining the sustainable connection between man and the ocean** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.22] submitted by **China** and **Malaysia**. The Ong Chun ceremony and related practices are rooted in folk customs of worshipping Ong Yah, a deity believed to protect people and their lands from disasters. Performances head the procession and clear a path for Ong Yah’s barge (wooden or paper-made models). These performances include gaojia and gezai opera, different dances, comprising dragon and lion dances, and puppet shows, among many others. After initiating the dialogue process, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The element has been constantly practised and recreated, constituting a vivid reflection of the interactive and harmonious co-existence between Chinese and Malaysian culture. In both States Parties, the communities, groups and individuals concerned have made unremitting efforts to ensure the viability of the element. Interaction and joint efforts at community level to ensure the viability of the element has been effective since 2015. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
6. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.22**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.22) **adopted to inscribe Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang ceremony, rituals and related practices for maintaining the sustainable connection between man and the ocean on the Representative List.**
7. The **Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Malaysia, H.E Dato’ Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri**, also speaking on behalf of the People’s Republic of China, conveyed gratitude and thanks to all the States Parties that had supported the nomination, as well as the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for their excellent work. Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang ceremony is widely spread along the coastal areas both in Minnan, China and Melaka, Malaysia. In Minnan, it mostly takes place every three or four years when the northeast monsoon arrives in autumn, while in Melaka it is preferentially held in the dry season of the lunar leap year, both starting on an auspicious day meticulously selected and lasting for days or months and recognized as a shared heritage by communities in China and Malaysia. The element embodies the sustainable connection between humans and the ocean. It has long played a crucial role in maintaining community ties and enhancing social cohesion. It bears witness to the intercultural dialogue among communities along the maritime Silk Road and reflects the cultural creativity conforming to sustainable development. The inscribed element has become a symbol of friendship between the Chinese and Malaysian people. The joint nomination is a concrete action by China and Malaysia for the implementation of the Convention, which highlights the common concerns and responsibilities of the two peoples and their cross-border safeguarding efforts. This inscription will inspire countries along the maritime Silk Road to join hands and cooperate to safeguarding cultural heritage. This is just the beginning of a journey where greater responsibilities await to fulfil safeguarding commitments, and strengthen joint actions and cooperation.
8. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Festivity of Saint Tryphon and the Kolo (chain dance) of Saint Tryphon, traditions of Croats from the Bay of Kotor who live in the Republic of Croatia** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.23] submitted by **Croatia**. Croats originating from Montenegro’s Bay of Kotor have formed tightly-knit communities in the Croatian towns of Rijeka, Zagreb, Pula, Dubrovnik and Split since the 19thcentury. Today, this minority group is known as Boka Croats and its traditions are centered on two main events, the Feast Day of St Tryphon (held annually on 3 February) and ‘Boka Nights’ (held throughout February and March). The Evaluation Body considered that criterion R.5 was met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.1, R.2, R.3 and R.4 were satisfied. In particular, the file did not provide sufficient explanation of the nature and cultural and social functions of the element in Croatia in the present day. The file did not demonstrate how the inscription of the element would contribute to ensuring the visibility of intangible cultural heritage in general. Furthermore, the nomination file did not sufficiently demonstrate how the communities, groups or individuals concerned were involved in planning and implementing the safeguarding measures. The information provided in the file was insufficient to comprehend the mechanisms and methodology of the work with the communities and how they participated throughout the nomination process. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the nomination be referred to the submitting State.
9. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.23**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.23) **adopted to refer Festivity of Saint Tryphon and the Kolo (chain dance) of Saint Tryphon, traditions of Croats from the Bay of Kotor who live in the Republic of Croatia to the submitting State.**
10. The **delegation of** **Croatia** congratulated the Chairperson and Jamaica for the excellent chairpersonship and organization of this first online Committee session during this challenging time. It regretted that it was unable to feel the vibes in the reggae chill moments in Jamaica but it looked forward to a brighter future. Croatia strongly supports UNESCO work in the field of normative instruments in culture and reiterated the importance of the role the Convention played in promoting the safeguarding of living heritage. The delegation thanked all the Committee members, the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body, adding that it will continue to dialogue and work on the nomination file of the Festivity of Saint Tryphon and the Kolo (chain dance) of Saint Tryphon, traditions of Croats from the Bay of Kotor, which is of crucial importance for the communities concerned and intangible cultural heritage in general.
11. The **delegation of Cuba** had withdrawn its nomination file.
12. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Handmade production of Christmas tree decorations from blown glass beads** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.25] submitted by **Czechia**. Handmade production of Christmas tree decorations from blown glass beads refers to handmade decorations that are produced by blowing a heated glass tube inserted in a brass mould shaped into a string of beads called klautschata that are silvered, coloured and hand decorated. The creation of Christmas ornaments such as these appear in folk tales about Krakonoš, the legendary ruler of the mountains. After initiating the dialogue process, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The element fosters self-identification, positive intergenerational relationships, as well as the individual creativity of its bearers and the wider community. The inscription will strengthen interest in glass-making, which is a very varied area of manufacturing with a rich diversity of materials, as well as the know-how of the craft and uses of the artefacts produced. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
13. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.25**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.25) **adopted to inscribe Handmade production of Christmas tree decorations from blown glass beads on the Representative List.**
14. The **delegationof Czechia** was represented by a representative of the community who makes Christmas ornaments from blown glass beads. Almost all of them learn these skills from their families, and all will pass on their knowledge to future generations. During the nomination process, the community learned many new aspects and ideas that will surely help raise greater awareness of this craft. This December 2020, many people around the world will be decorating their Christmas trees. Christmas ornaments from blown glass beads are part of private family lives and are connected to the hearts of the people. The community was happy and honoured for this acknowledgement.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Custom of Korean costume in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.26] submitted by the **Democratic People’s Republic of Korea**. The element refers to the dress and customary practices related to the traditional Korean costume in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Made from natural fibres such as ramie and silk, the costume is divided into upper and lower parts. The upper part is a jacket for both men and women called Jogori, while the lower part consists of trousers for men (Paji) and a skirt for women (Chima). The Evaluation Body considered that criterion R.5 is met but that the nomination did not satisfy criteria R.3. State efforts did not appear to focus sufficiently on the safeguarding of the social functions and cultural meanings of the costume, and did not reflect the living and dynamic character of the element nor did it illustrate the role of the communities in the whole safeguarding process. In addition, the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.1, R.2 and R.4 were satisfied. The nomination did not include any information about know-how related to traditional crafts, without which the creation of costumes is not possible. Moreover, there was a lack of information on community participation including the methodologies adopted to this end. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended not to inscribe this element on the Representative List.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that an amendment had been submitted by China and co-sponsored by the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan and Kuwait, asking that the amendment be presented during the adoption of the draft decision.
3. The **delegation of China** concurred that it preferred to go through the draft decision paragraph-by-paragraph and would present its amendment at that time.
4. The **Chairperson** explained that she would apply the same methodology in adopting the decision paragraph-by-paragraph. When reaching the amendment submitted by China, Committee members would be invited to show support. The Chairperson turned to paragraphs 1 and 2 of the draft decision, which were duly adopted. She presented paragraph 3 and the new paragraph 4 proposed by China on criterion R.4. Paragraph 3 had been introduced with the standard wording used in the previous decisions. The Chairperson suggested examining both paragraphs together as the amendment in R.4 would simultaneously affect both paragraphs, inviting China to present its amendment.
5. The **delegation of China** remarked that this was the only nomination file that the Evaluation Body recommended *not* to inscribe on the Representative List, which drew special attention. According to its understanding, the cultural practices related to traditional costumes have played an important role in maintaining cultural identity and social cohesion. From the nomination file in section 3, the delegation noted that past and current efforts and proposed safeguarding measures constituted a comprehensive framework that reflected the commitment of the submitting State, the communities concerned, families, and professional associations at different levels for the safeguarding of the element. The proposed measures not only aim to maintain the traditional mode of intergenerational transmission, but also to facilitate more balanced gender relations and wider participation. The delegation therefore wished to hear more information from the submitting State on how the communities will be involved in the implementation of the proposed safeguarding measures.
6. The **Chairperson** invited the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to respond.
7. The **delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea** congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership, wishing States Parties success during the session. Regarding the question raised by China, the delegation explained that Korean costume is associated with many affiliated bodies, as well as numerous cooperatives, families, households and individuals, all actively participating in the safeguarding and development of the custom of Korean costume. Korean costume was developed in a variety of ways and transmitted from generation to generation for thousands of years. It has now become a part of daily life and a custom of Korean people. The nomination process undertook a methodology of receiving voluntary opinions provided by people nationwide, including Korean costume makers and custodians of the custom of Korean costume. During the nomination process, from August 2014 to June 2017, more than 187,000 individually signed consent letters were submitted that demonstrated the prior and informed consent of the communities. The delegation reiterated that the custom of Korean costume demonstrates intangible cultural heritage, which has been developed and practised by local people and their communities.
8. The **Chairperson** thanked the delegation and sought support from Committee members for the amendment in R.4 [that it satisfied the criterion].
9. The **Secretary** notedthe co-sponsors as Azerbaijan, Côte d’Ivoire, Brazil and Cameroon.
10. The **Chairperson** noted that the amendment proposed benefitted from relative active support, and R.4 was adopted as amended in paragraph 3. The Chairperson then turned to criteria R.1, R.2 and R.4 in paragraph 4, and specifically criterion R.3 with an amendment received from China, which would read, ‘Post, current and future efforts to ensure the intergenerational transmission of the element are described. Various safeguarding measures are also elaborated, including building a coordination mechanism, carrying out survey and research, establishing workplaces, holding workshops on designing and costume-making with young people, producing documentary films about custom of costume, publishing relevant books, and organizing contest for designs amongst others. Measures will be taken to design and disseminate the costume according to gender, season, age and customary occasions. The collaboration of Korean Costume Association and twelve other local associations, national and local authorities, communities and families, silk workers and designers, researchers and students is demonstrated, testifying to the specific attention given to sustainable materials and modern aesthetic sense. However, the file does not provide sufficient information on how the communities will be involved in the implementation of the safeguarding measures.’
11. The **Secretary** noted support fromChina, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Azerbaijan, Djibouti, Côte d’Ivoire and Brazil.
12. The **Chairperson** remarked on the relative active support received for the amendment by China, which was duly adopted.
13. The **Secretary** drew attentionto the original recommendation ‘not to inscribe’, which was based on criterion R.3. However, given that the criterion had now been amended to *refer* it followed logically and automatically that paragraph 6 should *refer* the nomination file rather than *not to inscribe*. The Secretariat would therefore introduce the standard ‘refer’ clause that invites the submitting State to revise and resubmit the nomination in a future cycle.
14. The **delegation of China** appreciated the support from the co-sponsors for its amendment. Given the adoption of the amendment, it invited the Committee to consider the final decision in a more encouraging and inclusive manner within the framework of the gentlemen’s agreement, and thus it supported the new, amended paragraph proposed by the Secretariat.
15. The **Chairperson** pronouncedparagraphs 4, 5 and 6 adopted. With no amendments proposed for paragraph 7 and 8, they were duly adopted. Turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b 26**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.26) **adopted to refer Custom of Korean costume in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the submitting State.**
16. The **delegation of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea** took note of the Committee’s decision to refer its file through debate and had clearly considered that the custom of Korean costume is a precious one to be inscribed on the Representative List. It expressed sincere thanks to members of the Committee who kindly supported the nomination. The delegation took the opportunity to reiterate its continued efforts to safeguard the world’s intangible heritage and cultural diversity and thus contribute to the implementation of the Convention.
17. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Sauna culture in Finland** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.27] submitted by **Finland**. Sauna culture in Finland is an integral part of the lives of the majority of the Finnish population. Sauna culture, which can take place in homes or public places, involves much more than simply washing oneself. In a sauna, people cleanse their bodies and minds, and embrace a sense of inner peace. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and it particularly appreciated that the inscription would draw attention to a practice of living heritage that benefits from the inclusion of findings from vernacular and formal medicine. The nomination file provided an ample reflection on the impact of sauna culture on sustainable development, and mentioned continued efforts to lower its impact on the environment. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
18. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.27**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.27) **adopted to inscribe Sauna culture in Finland on the Representative List.**
19. The **delegation of Finland** on behalf of the Government expressed heartfelt appreciation to the Committee and the Evaluation Body for this decision. In Finland, the sauna is an institution that cuts through the entire society. It has been an integral part of the Finnish cultural heritage and Finnish way of life for thousands of years. The initiative to propose the addition of sauna culture to the Representative List was taken together with a large number of Finnish sauna societies and other organizations promoting sauna culture in Finland. The delegation was pleased that this joint effort was rewarded by a successful outcome, adding that it believed inscription will foster the continuity of sauna culture and highlight its significance in Finland as part of its traditions, well-being and democracy.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Musical art of horn players, an instrumental technique linked to singing, breath control, vibrato, resonance of place and conviviality** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.28] submitted by **France, Belgium, Luxembourg** and **Italy**. The element brings together the techniques and skills used to play the horn. The pitch, accuracy and quality of the notes produced are influenced by the musician’s breath and the instrumental technique is based on the players’ body control. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. Inscription of the element would make citizens aware of the wide-scale fragility of intangible heritage due to changes in legislation, the effects of fashion and developments in society. The nomination process relied on the participation of most of the relevant federations and associations from the States Parties concerned through a lengthy process, involving many activities and opportunities for participation. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.28**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.28) **adopted to inscribe Musical art of horn players, an instrumental technique linked to singing, breath control, vibrato, resonance of place and conviviality** **on the Representative List.**
3. The **delegation of** **France** also spoke on behalf of Belgium, Italy and Luxembourg to thank the Committee for its decision to inscribe Musical art of horn players on the Representative List. The delegation continued to be impressed by the coordinating work of the *Fédération internationale française des trompes*, as well as groups from France, Belgium, Italy and Luxembourg that have also done much to support the continuation of this art and playing in public at festivals and major cultural events. This nomination has borne witness to excellent transborder coordination and relations, and the delegation thanked everyone who supported this nomination through to its successful inscription.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **delegation of** **Hungary** had withdrawn its nomination file.
2. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Pantun** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.30] submitted by **Indonesia** and **Malaysia**. Pantun is a form of Malay verse used to express intricate ideas and emotions. It is the most widespread oral form in maritime Southeast Asia and has been used in many parts of the region for at least 500 years. Pantun has a clear a-b-a-b rhyme scheme. Pantun has also been used as a diplomatic form of conflict resolution as it offers a way to gently evoke important issues. Harmony with nature and flexibility in human relationships are also lauded ideals. Pantun is formally taught in schools, artistic workshops and through informal means. After initiating a dialogue process on criteria R.3 and R.5, the Evaluation Body considered criteria R.1, R.2, R.4 and R.5 as met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine that criterion R.3 was satisfied. In particular, the proposed measures were aimed primarily at promoting the element and did not sufficiently address the problem of the transmission of knowledge. Moreover, there was insufficient information on the safeguarding measures aimed at mitigating the threats to the element identified in the nomination file. Furthermore, the file did not demonstrate how the relevant communities, groups and individuals participated in the past, current and future safeguarding measures. This is one of 11 cases where the dialogue process was carried out in this cycle. The decision was therefore structured as follows: paragraph 2 indicates that the Evaluation Body considered that criteria R.1, R.2 and R.4 were met based on the nomination file alone. Paragraph 3 states that the Body considered criterion R.5 satisfied after the dialogue process was carried out. Paragraph 4 notes that the information provided by the submitting States through the dialogue process was not sufficient to ascertain that R.3 was satisfied. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting States.
3. The **Chairperson** noted that amendments had been tabled by China, co-sponsored by Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.
4. The **delegation of China** congratulated the submitting States for nominating this valuable expression of oral tradition. According to the draft decision in R.3, it was stated that the proposed measures were aimed primarily at promoting the element. However, the delegation believed that promotion is an important part of the safeguarding process. In specific cases, the promotion of the element is essential to ensuring its viability and visibility, raising awareness among the general public on the importance of intangible heritage. It also noted relevant programmes and activities in the file to ensure wider community participation. The delegation invited Malaysia to provide further clarification on how it would propose to mitigate the threats identified in the nomination file.
5. The **Chairperson** invited the submitting State to respond.
6. The **delegation of Malaysia**, represented by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, presented clarifications on the safeguarding measures that aimed to mitigate the threats to the element identified in the nomination file under 3.b.(i), which outlined the proposed safeguarding plan for both submitting States. The first point was that Pantun will always be recorded by the community in the inventory on an intermittent basis to ensure the continuity of activities related to Pantun. The second point was that documentation and research, covering the recording of Pantun will be promoted. The third point involved the promotion of Pantun, which aims to give Pantun global reach, and finally, the involvement of the community in the safeguarding measures, including the granting of allocation grants and excellence awards, and the promotion of international dialogue. In addition, as stated in the nomination file, Malaysia had enacted the National Heritage Act 2005, which is the most preeminent act in Malaysia for the protection of heritage that encompasses intangible cultural heritage and includes Pantun. Pantun had also been declared as national heritage in 2009. Similarly, in Indonesia, Pantun has been continuously protected under the Ministerial regulation Permen no. 106 in 2015.
7. Thanking Malaysia, the **Chairperson** reiterated the methodology before turning to the adoption of the draft decision and paragraph 1, which was duly adopted. Paragraphs 2 and 3 as initially proposed were also adopted. Paragraph 4 included the first amendment submitted by China on criterion R.3, to which the Secretariat had introduced the standard wording [that the criterion had been met], for which support from the Committee was sought.
8. The **Secretary** noted support from Japan, Jamaica, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Peru, Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco, Brazil and Saudi Arabia.
9. The **Chairperson** noted the broad active support for the amendment and pronounced paragraph 4 adopted as amended. Paragraph 5 also had an amendment from China [to inscribe the element], and the Chairperson considered that the Committee members who supported the first amendment would also support this second amendment, and it was duly adopted. The final three paragraphs received no amendments and were adopted as a whole.
10. The **delegation of Czechia** remarked that paragraph 6 was reminding the ‘States Parties of the importance of ensuring the most active possible participation of communities related to the preparation of the nomination file’, adding that this made reference to the initial recommendation to *refer*. Following inscription of the element, the wording should therefore be replaced by ‘the implementation of the safeguarding measures’.
11. The **delegation of Netherlands** supported the amendment.
12. The **delegation of Jamaica** also supported this amendment, adding that it wished to be added as co-sponsor of paragraph 5 as well.
13. The **delegation of Botswana** and **Morocco** also supported the amendment in paragraph 6.
14. The **delegation of Kuwait** suggested that those objecting to the amendment raise their hand.
15. With no objections, the **Chairperson** adopted paragraph 6 as amended, as well as paragraph 7. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.30**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.30) **adopted to inscribe Pantun on the Representative List.**
16. The **Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture** **of** **Malaysia**, **H.E.** **Ms Dato’ Sri Nancy Shukri**, conveyed utmost gratitude and thanks to all States Parties and to the Secretariat for this honour. The Government was grateful for the strong networking and cooperation among States Parties that had worked tirelessly in safeguarding this shared heritage around the world. This inscription is an uplifting moment for Malaysia and Indonesia as the joint nomination had been acknowledged as a treasure worth preserving. Pantun is a Malay poem used as a medium for expressing the art of thinking, which depicts one’s intellectual power. Pantun is also regarded as a spirit which brings together the various ethnicities in Malaysia. Pantun is imbued with moral messages and relates to its listeners in fine and polite styles in verse form. The foreshadower is a description of nature and life lived and the wisdom gained therein, which acts as a shadow of the meaning that is to come in the next part of the verse. Traditionally, the foreshadow employs surrounding elements of flora, fauna or nature. This element provides hints of human emotions, thoughts and characters. From these fine verses one is able to catch a glimpse of the nature and temperament of the Malay people who are known for their kindness, openness and humility. The Minister understood the great responsibility and arduous journey to preserve, nurture and pass on the diverse forms of intangible cultural heritage to future generations, and there was still a long way to go. The inscribed element is a symbol of friendship between Malaysia and Indonesia, and it was hoped that it would inspire stronger ties of friendship between the two nations.
17. The **delegation of Indonesia** congratulated Jamaica and the Secretariat for convening this meeting despite the pandemic. It conveyed sincerest appreciation to the Evaluation Body for the report and the dialogue process in submitting this nomination, as well as to the members of the Committee for their support and decision to inscribe Pantun on the Representative List. The delegation also thanked Malaysia for its cooperation during the process of submitting the nomination. Pantun is Indonesia’s first joint nomination, and an important one for Indonesia and Malaysia as Pantun reflects closeness between the two countries who share common Malay identity, culture and traditions. Today, Pantun is also used in various performances, which fosters a creative economy, especially in Indonesia. For Malay communities, Pantun has an important social role as an instrument of communication and moral guidance and is laden with social content. Pantun also emphasizes balance, harmony and flexibility in human interaction and relationships. Through this inscription, Indonesia and Malaysia reaffirmed its commitment to continue their collective effort in safeguarding Pantun, including through the active participation of the local communities in both countries.
18. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery**[draft decision15.COM 8.b.31] submitted by the **Islamic Republic of Iran** and **Armenia**. The annual three-day pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery in northwestern Iran is held every July. The pilgrimage venerates two prominent saints: St. Thaddeus, one of the first apostles preaching Christianity, and St. Santukhd, the first female Christian martyr. The bearers of the element are the Armenian population in Iran, Iranian-Armenians residing in Armenia, and followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Pilgrims gather in Tabriz before departing for the monastery. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The file demonstrated that the Pilgrimage enhances solidarity, tolerance, respect for cultural diversity and dialogue, fostering cohesion and participation among the different communities and ethnic groups both in the territory concerned and abroad. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
19. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.31**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.31) **adopted to inscribe Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus Apostle Monasteryon the Representative List.**

*[A video of the element was shown simultaneously]*

1. The **Deputy Minister of Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran** expressed gratitude to the Committee members, Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for the decision taken to inscribe the joint nomination of the Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery between Iran and the Republic of Armenia. This auspicious occasion not only helps promote intercultural dialogue between the two nations, but also promotes interreligious dialogues of peace. The Deputy Minister expressed deepest appreciation to his colleagues in Iran, as well as all the Armenian colleagues who participated in the preparation of this nomination file.
2. The **delegation of Armenia** expressed thanks to the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for their work, as well as the Committee for its decision and all those who helped in the preparation of this file. Armenia was delighted to be able to prepare this multinational file in close cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran without which the element would not be so celebrated. Following the inscription of St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery on the World Heritage List of UNESCO, this new initiative once again shows the spirit of tolerance and cultural diversity that is part of the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is also a good example of coexistence between Islam and Christianity. The delegation believed that this was a great tribute to the community concerned. The pilgrims, who come from Armenia and elsewhere, and who over centuries – carried by their Christian faith and Armenian identity – have perpetuated this celebration with its religious rites and traditions as a social and cultural element that cannot be separated from the local elements. This is now part of the cultural memory of this pilgrimage. The delegation was delighted that this inscription will nourish the friendship and cooperation that bring together Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran and will ensure future harmony in terms of the relationship between the two countries.
3. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Crafting and playing the Oud** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.32] submitted by **Islamic Republic of Iran** and **Syrian Arab Republic**. The Oud is a pear-shaped, stringed musical instrument with a history dating back over 1500 years. To produce the instrument’s melodic and harmonic tones, a player stops the frets with the fingers of one hand and plucks the strings with the other. Knowledge of how to craft and play the instrument is passed down through master-apprentice relationships through families and in formal training. The Evaluation Body considered that criteria R.2, R.3 and R.5 were met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.1 and R.4 were satisfied. In particular, the file lacked information on the knowledge and techniques associated with the making and interpretation of the Oud as a shared practice of intangible cultural heritage in both the States Parties concerned. Moreover, the file did not sufficiently demonstrate how the communities concerned participated in the preparation of the nomination file. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting States.
4. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.32**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.32) **adopted to refer Crafting and playing the Oud to the submitting States.**
5. The **delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran** spoke of how it had hoped – together with the Syrian Arabic Republic – to present one of the most cherished examples of intangible cultural heritage in the world. The States will follow the Evaluation Body’s valuable recommendations on the nomination file and resubmit it in the coming cycle. The delegation thanked the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body in this regard.
6. The **delegation of Syrian Arab Republic** thanked the Chairperson for her efforts in the management of the work under these difficult circumstances, which had a devastating effect on the logistics and management of this file. It believed that a certain number of Committee members were prepared to present an amendment and had received active support, and that a number of members were also ready to pose some questions. However, the procedure had not been beneficial to this file. The two submitting States had presented a detailed response to the Evaluation Body to whom the delegation wished to thank for its work, and which had also been sent to the Committee members. The delegation regretted that this nomination file, which was a very solid file from a technical point of view, did not receive a favourable outcome from the Evaluation Body, and the communities in the two countries will be waiting for further clarification in this regard. The delegation would provide all the necessary support to this nomination file so as to present it again in a future cycle.
7. The **Chairperson** thanked the Syrian Arab Republic and the Deputy Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their comments.
8. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Ceremony of Mehrgan** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.33] submitted by **Islamic Republic of Iran** and **Tajikistan.** The Ceremony of Mehrgan is an annual festival that marks the autumn equinox and expresses the communities’ gratitude for an abundant harvest. It is celebrated by Iranian Zoroastrians (a religious ethnic group) and by the people of Tajikistan. The ceremony of Mehrgan is named after Mehr, the Zoroastrian god of friendship, peace and solidarity. The Zoroastrian faith reaches back to antiquity and the festival is a major part of the group’s identity. The ceremony functions to integrate people socially. People of all ages, genders and backgrounds come together. The ceremony promotes mutual respect among communities and peaceful relationships. The Evaluation Body considered that the criteria were not satisfied. In particular, the file failed to provide a clear and comprehensive description of the ceremony of Mehgran and of the intricacy and interwovenness of different aspects of the ceremony. Moreover, the nomination did not sufficiently demonstrate that the inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, the nomination did not describe how government bodies were involved in the planning process or how they will partake in the implementation of the measures. The documentation submitted by both States was insufficient to attest to the widest possible community participation in the nomination process. Additionally, the nomination file did not specify the names of the elements nor was there information provided on how the element was identified and defined. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this nomination be referred to the submitting States.
9. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.33**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.33) **adopted to refer Ceremony of Mehrgan to the submitting States.**
10. The **Deputy Minister of Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran** believed that justice had not been served regarding this procedure and both submitting States had already submitted a complete defence statement answering all questions. The Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan had presented one of the most known examples of intangible cultural heritage in the region, which has been practiced since ancient times. Nevertheless, the submitting States would take the valuable advice of the Evaluation Body on the nomination file and will resubmit it in a forthcoming cycle. It thanked the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body in this regard.
11. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **The art of glass beads** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.34] submitted by **Italy** and **France***.* The art of glass beads is closely linked to the wealth of knowledge and mastery of a material (glass) and element (fire). The art covers specific knowledge and shared skills, reflects the use of specific traditional tools and processes, and includes various stages. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The viability of the element was ensured by the communities, groups and individuals concerned through its practice, as well as through informal courses for individual bearers. The inscription would help consolidate, intensify and expand already established didactic workshops to other craft industries, thereby increasing the visibility of the know-how associated with several intangible practices. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
12. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.34**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.34) **adopted to inscribe The art of glass beads on the Representative List.**
13. The **delegation of Italy** spoke on behalf of both countries to thank the Chairperson, the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body for the inscription of The art of glass beads on the Representative List. This successful inscription is the fruit of successive waves of continual cooperation and collaboration, which bears testimony to artisanship, know-how and expertise. This is a very positive sign during a very difficult time for many cultural sectors, and the delegation was looking forward to sharing this news with the communities concerned.

*[A video message from community was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Traditional skills, techniques and knowledge for the conservation and transmission of wooden architecture in Japan** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.35] submitted by **Japan.** The conservation and transmission of wooden architecture in Japan consists of a set of traditional skills, techniques and knowledge. Roughly 70 per cent of the country is forested. Therefore, wood has been used in houses since ancient times. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria and commended the State Party for proposing an element that highlighted the interrelationship between intangible cultural heritage and World Heritage. This well-prepared file is a good example that shows how the inscription of an element can contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.35**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.35) **adopted to inscribe Traditional skills, techniques and knowledge for the conservation and transmission of wooden architecture in Japan on the Representative List.**
3. The **delegation of Japan** spoke of its great honour and expressed gratitude for the inscription of this file, which will allow the craftspeople to be proud of their skills, techniques and knowledge. As can be seen in the accompanying video, the skills and techniques of the craftspeople are essential for the preservation of this cultural heritage. Among this heritage, Japan has the oldest surviving wooden structures in the world with decorative masterpieces dating from the 17th century. This heritage cannot be maintained without the skills and techniques of the craftspeople, which clearly shows an inseparable link between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. On the basis of this inscription, Japan will continue to contribute to safeguarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage both in Japan and in other countries.
4. The **Secretary** apologized for the technical issue, which meant this it was momentarily unable to show the video from Japan, but would do so at a later time.
5. The **delegation of** **Kazakhstan** had withdrawn its nomination file.
6. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Traditional intelligence and strategy game: Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.37] submitted by **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan** and **Turkey**. Traditional intelligence and strategy game: Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme is a traditional game which can be played on special boards or improvised ones such as pits in the ground. The game can be played with pellets made of stone, wood, metal and bone, nuts or seeds, which are distributed across the pits; the player who gathers the most pellets wins the game. The Evaluation Body considered that criteria R.1, R.2 and R.4 were met but that the information provided was not sufficient to determine whether criteria R.3 and R.5 were satisfied. In particular, the file did not demonstrate the involvement of the communities concerned in the formulation of the safeguarding measures. The file also did not propose any safeguarding measures to deal with the possible unintended results of the inscription of the element. In addition, it was not sufficiently clear how the communities concerned were involved in the inventorying process. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that the nomination be referred to the submitting States.
7. The **Chairperson** noted that amendments had been tabled by Azerbaijan.
8. The **Secretary** noted that Azerbaijan may ask questions following the debate.
9. The **delegation of Poland** highlighted the fact that the game Toguz Korgool is a part of the historical and cultural identity of communities in all nominating States. It is an expression of cultural continuity, which promotes knowledge and positive values of strategic thinking and sports competition that are especially important for young people. Practise of the game is permitted for international and intergenerational meetings, and the delegation was convinced that the element will contribute towards raising awareness about the role of intangible cultural heritage in the development of human creativity. Taking into account that the file is an example of successful international cooperation, it appreciated the joint efforts undertaken to identify the element and elaborate safeguarding measures by all the participating States. Bearing in mind that traditional games are underrepresented examples of intangible cultural heritage, and also taking note of the positive values carried by the practise of the element, which increases awareness of intangible cultural heritage, the delegation asked the submitting States to further explain the joint safeguarding measures proposed and how the communities concerned were involved in their formulation.
10. The **Chairperson** invited the submitting State to respond.
11. The **delegation of Kyrgyzstan,** represented by a spokesperson for the community, spoke as someone born and raised on the shores of Issyk Kul lake who learned to play this game even before attending school, as did his friends in the neighbourhood. Speaking on behalf of people who play this game and as the voice of the local communities, he thanked the Evaluation Body for raising the question regarding the involvement of the local communities in the nomination process and in the inventorying process, as well as Poland for raising this question. Concerning the involvement of local communities in the nomination process and the inventorying process, the spokesperson spoke of great pride and conviction that local communities had masterminded both the inventorying process and the nomination process from the outset. In fact, the local communities in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkey had reached out to their governments to secure their support for the promotion of this nomination. As for the specific safeguarding measures, they were described in detail in the nomination file and the spokesperson referred the Committee members to the respective section of the nomination file. In conclusion, he assured the Committee that the local communities had been the driving force behind this nomination and would be more than happy if this nomination were approved and inscribed in this cycle.
12. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** thanked Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkey for having proposed the nomination Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme, which represents an important element of intangible cultural heritage in the communities concerned, allowing them to socialize, to develop logical skills in children, and to connect culture with elements of nature and the environment. The delegation noted a recurrent difficulty in multinational nominations for submitting States in explaining aspects of the file in detail given the word limitations, which partially explained why the Evaluation Body found that some information was missing in both criteria R.3 and R.5. With regard to criterion R.3, national experts carefully examined the file and found information within the file, as well as supporting documents that respond to the concerns raised by the Evaluation Body. For instance, with regard to the joint [safeguarding] measures proposed, the delegation found that such initiatives already existed in the past, as mentioned in section 3.a.(ii) and in the community consent letters. Moreover, it also found that the relevant NGOs in the three submitting States had implemented joint efforts with regard to this file. Based on these factual arguments, there was no doubt that some of the measures proposed will also be jointly implemented in the future by the communities in the three States, which is also confirmed by the clear references [made in the file]. In section 3.b, the [safeguarding] measures at international level, such as international tournaments, events and competitions, focus on the practise of the traditional game. Concerning community participation, proof of community involvement in the preparation of the safeguarding measures were outlined in section 3.b.(ii) with the related NGOs and communities. Section 3.b further explains how the concerned communities had participated in the implementation of the safeguarding measures, with each country having dedicated a paragraph explaining their participation. For these reasons, the delegation had submitted an amendment to the Secretariat concerning criteria R.3 and R.5.
13. The **delegation of Turkey** thanked Azerbaijan for its comments, adding that it wished to reply to the question posed by Poland. It referred to section 3.b where submitting States described the safeguarding measures with regard to the participation of communities and NGOs in terms of research and documentation, capacity-building, raising awareness and the transmission of the element. Turkey proposed safeguarding measures with the relevant communities and NGOs when then they were invited to submit their proposals at the ‘National Meeting for Preparation of the Multinational Nomination’ held in Istanbul on 21 January 2019. The proposed safeguarding measures of Turkey had been also added to the inventory form prepared with the participation of the communities concerned. This inventory form was also submitted with the nomination file.
14. The **Chairperson** continued with the same methodology, that is, inviting a show of support for the specific amendment during the adoption of the draft decision. She then turned to paragraphs 1 and 2, which were duly adopted. TheChairperson sought support for the amendment by Azerbaijan on R.3.
15. The **Secretary** noted supportfrom Kuwait, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Japan, Djibouti, Panama, China, Peru, Botswana, Jamaica, Poland, Republic of Korea, Morocco, Cameroon, Rwanda and Côte d’Ivoire.
16. The **Chairperson** remarked that the amendment benefitted from broad active support, and the R.3 was thus adopted. She then turned to criterion R.5, which had also received an amendment by Azerbaijan.
17. The **Secretary** notedsupport from Kuwait, Japan, Panama, Jamaica, Djibouti, China, Brazil, Republic of Korea, Côte d’Ivoire, Botswana, Peru, Morocco, Poland and Cameroon.
18. The **Chairperson** remarked that the amendment benefitted from broad active support and criterion R.5 was adopted as amended. Paragraph 3 [that the criteria were met] was thus duly adopted.
19. The **Chairperson** then turned to paragraph 4 as amended by Azerbaijan [to inscribe the element]. Given that all five criteria were met and had been adopted, and that the members supporting the previous amendments also lent their support, the Chairperson pronounced paragraph 4 adopted. Paragraph 5 also received an amendment from Azerbaijan, which was duly adopted. The Chairperson noted Switzerland wishing to take the floor.
20. The **delegation of Switzerland** thanked the delegation of Azerbaijan for its amendment [in paragraph 6, which reads, ‘Encourages the States Parties to place a greater focus on the implementation of the safeguarding measures to deal with the possible unintended results of the inscription of the element], adding that it was important for all inscriptions on the Representative List. It therefore supported its introduction into the decision. However, at the same time, the delegation proposed to also maintain the original wording in paragraph 6, which reads, ‘further encourages them, when submitting multinational nomination files in the future, to provide balanced information for each individual State concerned’, which mentioned another important issue that concerned multinational nominations in particular, and was regularly expressed by the Evaluation Body.
21. The **Chairperson** thanked Switzerland for its proposal, and paragraph 6 was duly adopted as amended. With no further comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.37**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.37) **adopted to inscribe Traditional intelligence and strategy game: Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme** **on the Representative List.**
22. Thanking the Chairperson, the **delegation of Turkey** spoke of how the strategy game, Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme, had been practised for centuries in a large part of the world, and it was very happy to see it on the Representative List. During the preparation process, the NGOs and submitting States had made great efforts and shown exemplary cooperation with the communities concerned in the preparation of the nomination file. The delegation expressed its appreciation to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan for their excellent cooperation.
23. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Art of crafting and playing Mbira/Sansi, the finger-plucking traditional musical instrument in Malawi and Zimbabwe**[draft decision15.COM 8.b.38] submitted by **Malawi** and **Zimbabwe**. The art of crafting and playing mbira/sansi, the finger-plucking traditional musical instrument in Malawi and Zimbabwe plays a key role in the communities concerned. The basic mbira/sansi instrument consists of a wooden board with metal keys attached on top, and the instrument is sometimes mounted on a calabash/wooden resonator. The music is also used to communicate information about events that happened in the past. After initiating a dialogue process, the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The inscription would encourage dialogue about elements of living heritage in both States, as well as foster networking and the sharing of experiences about the safeguarding of these elements and other cross border ones. It would also contribute to strengthening the variety of music genres and styles in the world, thus creating a fertile ground for human creativity and respect for cultural diversity. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
24. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.38**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.38) **adopted to inscribe Art of crafting and playing Mbira/Sansi, the finger-plucking traditional musical instrument in Malawi and Zimbabweon the Representative List.**
25. The **delegation of Malawi** thanked the Committee for its decision to inscribe Art of crafting and playing mbira/sansi, the finger-plucking traditional musical instrument, and the Evaluation Body for its recommendation and the Secretariat for the initial evaluation and guidance. It considered this inscription as an early Christmas gift to the communities concerned in both countries, and it wished to recognize the support of the UNESCO Harare Office. The delegation explained that in 2015, seven countries and the UNESCO Harare Office created a platform known as the Southern African Intangible Cultural Heritage Cooperation to spearhead the implementation of the Convention.[[16]](#footnote-16) Under this platform, several projects had been implemented with support from the Government of Flanders. These projects have helped build a cooperation network for the protection, preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage in the region. One of the milestones of this support is the inscription of mbira/sansi on the Representative List, which will no doubt increase the visibility of this practice and intangible cultural heritage of the region in general. The delegation extended profound gratitude and appreciation to the Flanders Government for its support. It took the opportunity to inform potential partners that there were other exciting project proposals to be implemented beyond the Flanders Government support, and hoped to partner with States in the spirit of South-South and North-South cooperation.
26. The **Minister of Youth, Sports, Arts and Recreation of Zimbabwe**, **H.E. Ms Kirsty Coventry**, thanked her colleague in Malawi for the great teamwork. As Minister responsible for arts and culture, and on behalf of all Zimbabweans, the Government, and most importantly the mbira crafting and mbira playing communities, she spoke of the honour to accept UNESCO’s inscription of the Art of crafting and playing mbira on the Representative List. Mbira music and other music genres are steadfastly gaining recognition in Zimbabwe’s cultural renaissance, which UNESCO had just confirmed. Zimbabwe continued to value the crafting and playing of mbira, as well as enjoying the beautiful music mbira provides. Music through instruments such as mbira unites communities, promotes peace and spiritual well-being, and recalled its strong history and heritage as storytellers. She thanked UNESCO and the Flanders Government, and congratulated Malawi and Zimbabwe. On behalf of the Government, the Minister assured UNESCO of Zimbabwe’s commitment to the implementation of the Convention.
27. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Il-Ftira, culinary art and culture of flattened sourdough bread in Malta** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.39] submitted by **Malta***.* Il-Ftira, culinary art and culture of flattened sourdough bread in Malta, is a key part of the cultural heritage of the inhabitants of the Maltese archipelago. Ftira has a thick crust and light internal texture, characterized by large, irregular holes (an open crumb). It is flatter than other Maltese breads and has a hotter baking temperature. A wide variety of people, including marginalized groups, can enter the baking profession as apprentices, and Ftira Days in schools help inform students about healthy eating. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria. The State Party had provided a useful explanation of the contribution of this culinary practice to the promotion and enhancement of the visibility of intangible cultural heritage in general. The nomination provided information related to different kinds of community participation at various stages of the nomination process, including concrete references to specific meetings, dates, locations and the (types and number of) participants involved. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
28. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.39**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.39) **adopted to inscribe Il-Ftira, culinary art and culture of flattened sourdough bread in Malta on the Representative List.**
29. In a video address, the **Minister for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government** **of** **Malta**, **H.E Mr José Herrera,** thanked the Evaluation Body and the Committee for its decision to inscribe Il-Fitra, culinary art and culture of flattened sourdough bread in Malta for inscription on the Representative List. It was Malta’s first inscription and a privilege to have Il-Fitra inscribed as it is a key part of the cultural heritage of the inhabitants of the Maltese archipelago; a State situated in the centre of the Mediterranean with half a million inhabitants and a great history dating back thousands of years. Now that this element was honoured with this recognition, the Minister assured the Committee that the safeguarding measures would adequately address the potential negative impacts of over-commercialization, while enhancing the viability of the Il-Ftira. The Minister thanked all those who had made inscription possible, and wished the Committee fruitful work in its endeavour to safeguard intangible heritage and sustain cultural diversity in this globalized world.
30. The **delegation of** **Oman** had withdrawn its nomination file.
31. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Practices and traditional knowledge of Terere in the culture of Pohã Ñana, Guaraní ancestral drink in Paraguay** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.41] submitted by **Paraguay**. The practices and traditional knowledge of Terere in the culture of Pohã Ñana, Guaraní ancestral drink in Paraguay are widespread in the Paraguayan territory and involve a variety of bearers. Terere is a traditional drink prepared in a jug or thermos in which cold water is mixed with Pohã Ñana crushed in a mortar. It is served in a glass pre-filled with yerba mate and sucked with a bombilla (metal or cane straw). After initiating a dialogue process the Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and it particularly appreciated that the main characteristic of the element is that it brings all types of people together in a shared moment. Its inscription on the Representative List would thus highlight the associated values of solidarity, empathy and harmony at the international level. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
32. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.41**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.41) **adopted to inscribe Practices and traditional knowledge of Terere in the culture of Pohã Ñana, Guaraní ancestral drink in Paraguay on the Representative List.**
33. The **National Secretary of Culture of Paraguay**, **Mr Rubén Capdevila Yampey**, spoke of his great honour to speak on behalf of Paraguay at this Committee session. Paraguay has a wide range of different languages and cultures going back to pre-colonial times. Moreover, the country has international treaties, national cultural laws and many cultural events that showcase its regional cultures, of which this ancestral drink, Terere. This oral tradition has been passed on from generation to generation within families for centuries. It encourages a very responsible attitude towards traditional cultures and it was included in the list of national culture, which has always been underscored by the participation of many local communities and institutions. These ancestral practices and the consumption of this drink can be found across the national territory. In fact, it has connections with many other cultures across its borders. The Minister was delighted that Terere had now been inscribed and it was hoped that this will open the way to other inscriptions in the future. The Minister expressed thanks to the Committee and the Evaluation Body for its continued support, adding that Paraguay was committed to safeguarding measures to ensure the protection of these cultural practices.
34. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Tree beekeeping culture** [draft decision15.COM 8.b.42] submitted by **Poland** and **Belarus**. Tree beekeeping culture includes knowledge, skills, practices, traditions, rituals and beliefs connected to wild bees breeding in tree hives or log hives located in forest areas. Tree beekeepers take care of bees in a special way by trying to recreate the primeval living conditions in tree hives without interfering with the natural life cycle of the bees. The Evaluation Body considered that the nomination met all five criteria, and in particular it appreciated that the element would promote the principles of sustainable development and their relation with intangible cultural heritage, highlighting the potential importance of traditional practices for the preservation of biodiversity and even for food safety. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the inscription of this element on the Representative List.
35. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.b.42**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.b.42) **adopted to inscribe Tree beekeeping culture on the Representative List.**
36. The **Chairperson** congratulated the submitting States, inviting them to take the floor.
37. The **delegation of Poland** expressed sincere happiness and thanks to the Committee for this inscription. It was very proud that an important element of intangible cultural heritage, presenting the synergy between wild bees and their protectors – the tree beekeepers – was now part of the Representative List. The delegation thanked the Evaluation Body for its remarks, adding that it was a pleasure to receive so many commendations on the nomination file. Together with Belarussian colleagues, it had worked very hard for the rare culture of tree beekeepers in both countries to be internationally safeguarded and recognized. Intangible cultural heritage is all about the people, and it thanked those involved in the process, especially the bearers, but also the many experts from the Ministry of Culture and Polish National Commission. The delegation invited one of the experts engaged in the process of this nomination to say a few words.
38. The **delegation of Poland** [second speaker], representingthe Ministry of Culture and National Heritage as the coordinator of the nomination file, spoke of her privilege to work proudly with groups of bearers on this nomination. She thanked the Committee for the inscription and congratulated the bearers. Tree beekeeping culture enriches the natural and cultural landscape and offers meaningful insight into the relation between people, nature and culture. She appreciated the bearers deeply rooted awareness and sustained efforts invested in the cultivation and transmission of their heritage.

[A *video plays of greetings from a number of bearers of the element*]

1. The **delegation of Belarus** spoke on behalf of the National Commission of the Republic of Belarus for UNESCO to express sincere gratitude for supporting the joint Poland-Belarus inscription on tree beekeeping culture. It was especially grateful to colleagues and friends from Poland for their cooperation and mutual understanding during the preparation of the file, as well as to the Evaluation Body. The delegation was very pleased to have received such high recognition of its cultural traditions at an international level. There was also a feeling of great responsibility for its safeguarding and sustainable development. Today is a very special day for Belarusian tree beekeepers who maintain this traditional practice and are transmitting it through generations. A representative of the tree beekeeping community, Mr Ivan Osipau, founder of the Brotherhood of Barefooted Tree-beekeepers, was invited to say a few words.
2. **Mr Ivan Osipau** spoke on behalf of the tree beekeepers community to express gratitude and an incredible sense of pride. The tree beekeeping culture has become known to all humanity, and it was a great opportunity for the preservation and transmission of tree beekeeping culture for society and future generations.

**ITEM 8.c OF THE AGENDA**

**EXAMINATION OF PROPOSALS TO THE REGISTER OF GOOD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8.c Add.*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.c_Add.-EN.docx)

**Files:**[*4 proposals*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01147)

1. The **Chairperson** moved to the third sub-item 8.c and the examination of proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.
2. The **delegation of** **Algeria** had withdrawn its nomination file.
3. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the first nomination **The Martinique yole, from construction to sailing practices, a model for heritage safeguarding** [draft decision15.COM 8.c.2] submitted by **France**. Created several centuries ago, the Martinique yole reflects the importance of traditional boats in the history of the region. A yole is a light, fast, shallow-draught boat with a tapered shape, which can sail with one or two sails. The Evaluation Body considered that the State Party had convincingly demonstrated the effectiveness of the safeguarding actions for ensuring the revitalization and viability of the yole, which can serve as a source of inspiration in the implementation of grassroots activities. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the selection of this project for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.
4. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.c.2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.c.2) **adopted to select The Martinique yole, from construction to sailing practices, a model for heritage safeguarding for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.**
5. The **delegation of** **France** was very grateful to the Committee for its decision to inscribe the Martinique yole, from construction to sailing practices on the Register of Safeguarding Practices. France shared the great joy felt by the Martinique population in bringing this element to UNESCO and its much anticipated recognition of its intangible cultural heritage, which will stimulate its safeguarding for the future. This inscription recognizes the wealth of culture on this Caribbean island and was the result of joint initiatives in the region in line with the principles and objectives of the Convention in terms of education, training and university cooperation to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.

*[A video of the element was shown]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops, or Bauhütten, in Europe, know-how, transmission, development of knowledge and innovation** [draft decision15.COM 8.c.3] submitted by **Germany, Austria, France, Norway** and **Switzerland**. The workshop organization or Bauhüttenwesen appeared in the Middle Ages on the construction sites of European cathedrals. Now, as then, these workshops are home to various trades working in close collaboration. The Evaluation Body considered that the programme was based on an important combination of practices of intangible cultural heritage related to traditional crafts and modern, innovative technologies. The workshop safeguarding system could be applied to any kind of built construction and could be transferred to other geographical or social contexts. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the selection of this project for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments or requests for debate had been received, turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.c.3**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.c.3) **adopted to select Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops, or Bauhütten, in Europe, know-how, transmission, development of knowledge and innovation for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.**
3. The **delegation of** **France** spoke on behalf of all the participating States, Germany, Austria, Norway, Switzerland and France as coordinator to express deep gratitude to the Committee for the selection of Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops or Bauhütten in Europe for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, and thanking the Evaluation Body for recognizing this as an excellent example of international cooperation to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. The video of thanks that was shown represented the feelings of all 18 workshops and the five European countries that came together behind this file through a supranational network that has existed since medieval times. It was hoped that this model of construction of human architectural practices and its transmission will serve as an inspiration to other States in other contexts.

*[A video of greetings and thanks on behalf of the community]*

1. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next nomination **Polyphonic Caravan, researching, safeguarding and promoting the Epirus polyphonic song** [draft decision15.COM 8.c.4] submitted by **Greece**. The Polyphonic Caravan is a longstanding project in Greece aimed at raising awareness of the Epirus polyphonic song and practice, documenting it through extensive field research and creating bridges across generations and geographical boundaries. The Evaluation Body considered that the project clearly contributed to the revitalization of safeguarding the element, as well as ensuring the visibility among different audiences in both rural and urban environments. It could serve as a model of a coherent safeguarding plan that has evolved over time in response to the needs of communities of the bearers. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended the selection of this project for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.
2. The **Chairperson** noted that a minor amendment had been received from Switzerland to correct a clerical issue, and asked the Committee to adopt the draft decision as a whole. With no comments or objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.c.4**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.c.4) **adopted to select Polyphonic Caravan, researching, safeguarding and promoting the Epirus polyphonic song** **for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.**
3. The **delegation of** **Greece** representing the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports spoke on behalf of the community of bearers, members of the Polyphonic Caravan and the larger community of bearers of polyphonic singing in Epirus to express deep gratitude to the Evaluation Body for its excellent work in treating all the submitted files of this cycle. The delegation also thanked the Secretariat for facilitating the implementation of the Convention, especially during this time of the pandemic, expressing the deep joy felt by the people involved in the project and polyphonic singing in Epirus today on the selection of this practice. The delegation hoped that the Polyphonic Caravan project will inspire similar efforts around the globe for the safeguarding of valuable intangible cultural heritage, not only for members of the broad and diverse communities of polyphonic singing around the world, but also for communities that have undergone the same process of recent urbanization because leaving their rural places of origin does not mean that they are cut off from their intangible cultural heritage. Polyphonic Caravan found a way to continue this heritage in the cities where bearers immigrated and were willing to share it with others.

**ITEM 8.d OF THE AGENDA**

**EXAMINATION OF REQUESTS FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8.d*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8.d-EN.docx)

**Files:**[*2 Requests*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8d-international-assistance-requests-01148)

1. The **Chairperson** turned to the last sub-item 8.d and the examination of requests for International Assistance, after which the Committee would return to agenda item 8 concerning the report of the Evaluation Body and examination of draft decision 15.COM 8.
2. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the first request **Capacity building for the safeguarding and management of intangible cultural heritage in the Central African Republic** [draft decision15.COM 8.d.1] submitted by **Central African Republic**. The proposed 36-month project is aimed at building capacities for the safeguarding and management of intangible cultural heritage in the Central African Republic. Due to a lack of qualified human, financial and infrastructural resources, there is a marked need to collect, process, protect and enhance the rich intangible cultural heritage present in the country. The Evaluation Body considered that from the information included in the file the request responded as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives. The project gave no description of how the communities will benefit from the results of the project. Furthermore, the budget structure was not fully aligned with the information provided in the file. The request also lacked sufficient details on the content of the training for community members. Moreover, there was some doubt about the effectiveness of certain training courses as the request did not provide enough information on their content. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended that this request be referred to the submitting State.
3. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments had been received for this nomination and therefore turned to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.d.1**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.d.1) **adopted to refer Capacity building for the safeguarding and management of intangible cultural heritage in the Central African Republic to the submitting State**.
4. The **Chairperson** noted the absence of the submitting State, inviting the Chairperson of the Evaluation Body to introduce the next request.
5. The **Chairperson of the Evaluation Body** presented the next request **Safeguarding of ludodiversity of Malawi through non-formal education and community transmission** [draft decision15.COM 8.d.2] submitted by **Malawi**. The 36-month project is aimed at safeguarding the ludodiversity of Malawi through the nonformal learning of nine of these traditional games, as well as through their informal transmission by and within the practising communities to be implemented by the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO. The Evaluation Body considered that from the information included in the file the request responded as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives. There were some concerns about the budget breakdown being too focused on organizing the festival of games. Moreover, there were several inconsistencies between the timetable and the description of activities. Furthermore, there was no convincing argument that some results of the project would be sustainable after the funding had come to an end, for instance, in the organization of the festival. In addition, there were no reasonable arguments in the file to indicate that this will take place and be sustained after the project and its funding come to an end. In conclusion, the Evaluation Body recommended this request be referred to the submitting State.
6. The **Chairperson** noted that no amendments had been received for this request and therefore turned to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8.d.2**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8.d.2) **adopted to refer Safeguarding of ludodiversity of Malawi through non-formal education and community transmission** **to the submitting State**.
7. The **Chairperson** announced that the Committee had completed its work under agenda item 8.d, and the video submitted by Japan on Traditional skills, techniques and knowledge for the conservation and transmission of wooden architecture was ready to be shown.

*[A video of the inscribed element was shown]*

**ITEM 8 OF THE AGENDA [CONT.]**

**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION BODY ON ITS WORK IN 2020**

**Documents :** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx)

[*Order of files Rev.2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/Order_files_Rev.2_EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 8*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8)

1. The **Chairperson** congratulated Japan once again, adding that the Committee had now completed the examination of all the individual files under agenda items 8.a, 8.b, 8.c and 8.d, and was now ready to return to the general debate concerning the report of the Evaluation Body under agenda item 8, opening the floor to Committee members.
2. The **Secretary** remarked that there was also a request for debate from Armenia, a non-Committee member, but first the floor was given to Committee members.
3. The **delegation of Czechia** congratulated all the States Parties for their new inscriptions and for their good work. It also thanked colleagues on the Committee for managing to finish the work so effectively, adding that the new online situation had helped develop some new working methods and skills that may also be used in the future in presential meetings. The Committee had faced several situations when it decided to scrutinize the recommendations of the Evaluation Body and based on additional explanations by the submitting States overturned the recommendations, which was perfectly in line with the mandate of the Committee. However, the delegation expressed some concern over the way some of the draft decisions had been redrafted during the deliberations. The original draft decisions contained many serious issues, concerns and challenges directly related to the basic principles of the Convention and some of them could have been clarified during the meeting by the submitting States, however, some went beyond simple question/answer clarifications. The delegation expected that in such cases these important recommendations, encouragements and reminders would remain part of the decisions so that submitting States could follow the expert guidance and reflect on these comments in their safeguarding efforts. In addition, when the draft decisions were amended, in some cases the issues were openly denied as if they did not exist. The delegation was of the opinion that by adopting such an approach, the Committee was giving up on the opportunity to reflect on these challenges and to improve the methodologies for effective safeguarding, community participation and so on. It believed that inscriptions are very important, but so is safeguarding, and it hoped that the Committee will be more open-minded in this respect in the next cycle.
4. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked and congratulated the Chairperson for chairing the Committee well, as well as all the States Parties and communities that had their elements inscribed. It fully subscribed to the intervention made by Czechia. As a new member of the Committee, it had on occasion been a little surprised to see how decisions and amendments had been presented with quite substantial changes that not all Committee members had seen beforehand. They had appeared on the screen during the session and it was therefore sometimes difficult to react quickly and spontaneously, while on occasions there were aspects that it considered very important that had been removed, but there was little possibility or time to discuss. The delegation fully understood the challenges of a virtual meeting, but this issue should be discussed and reflected upon for the next Committee session, adding that it was happy to engage in such a discussion.
5. The **delegation of Botswana** congratulated the Chairperson and all the States Parties, recognizing the Evaluation Body’s good work in assessing the nomination files submitted for inscription on the Lists. In examining the files, Botswana recognized that the Evaluation Body had identified both the good efforts made by the submitting States Parties in completing their nomination forms, as well as the gaps that needed to be addressed. The Evaluation Body had noted that some of the nomination files had demonstrated the interlinkages between tangible and intangible heritage, which is a positive development in the safeguarding of cultural heritage. Botswana further noted that some States Parties had managed to resubmit their nomination files in a way that satisfied the criteria. However, it observed that some submitting States had exceeded the specified number of words in their nomination files, which enabled them to provide additional information compared to those that adhered to the prescribed limit. The delegation thus sought clarity as to whether the word restriction is strictly adhered to or if there is room for flexibility.
6. The **delegation of Jamaica** congratulated the Evaluation Body on conducting the affairs of its work with due diligence. It also congratulated the States Parties that had inscriptions and the States whose files had been referred. It hoped that they will take into consideration the recommendations made to improve their files so that they will be successful in their second round when the files are put forward again. The delegation also thanked the Chairperson for the efficiency with which the meeting had been conducted so far. The Committee was now ahead of the agenda, and the delegation congratulated the Committee for its efficiency and the Secretariat for its excellent support in this regard.
7. The **Chairperson** acknowledged the presence of the Assistant Director-General for Culture, sending greetings from Jamaica, reminding the Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur that the Bureau meeting would take place the following day, after which members of the press were invited to a press briefing. The Chairperson adjourned the day’s session with a reggae chill moment with the Redemption song performed by John Legend.

*[Friday, 18 December 2020]*

**ITEM 8 OF THE AGENDA [CONT.]**

**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION BODY ON ITS WORK IN 2020**

**Documents :** [*LHE/20/15.COM/8*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-8-EN.docx)

[*Order of files Rev.2*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/Order_files_Rev.2_EN.docx)

**Decision :** [*15.COM 8*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8)

1. The **Chairperson** welcomedthe Committee and was happy to note that all the files under the four sub-items of item 8 had been examined, and returned to the discussion on agenda item 8 on the overall report of the Evaluation Body, opening the floor for debate.
2. The **delegation of Netherlands** congratulated all the States Parties and the communities for their new inscriptions, thanking the Evaluation Body once again for its report and detailed recommendations. As mentioned in its earlier statement, the delegation valued the expertise of the Evaluation Body and believed in respecting the recommendations. Owing to the special circumstances of the meeting and the lack of time, the Committee could not properly discuss the recommendations to the files. As mentioned by Czechia, the original draft decisions contained many serious issues, concerns and challenges directly related to the principles of the Convention, for instance, on the participation of communities. In some cases the recommendations were removed or were redrafted in such a way that not much was left of the original concern or issues, even though the concerns presented in the decisions were important, all the more because the minor issues had already been resolved by the upstream dialogue mechanism. These recommendations represented valuable guidance for implementing the safeguarding measures and monitoring the elements. The delegation asked the Evaluation Body to reflect on this matter in relation to its expressed concerns regarding the lack of quality of the files, for example, on the definition of the elements, its social functions and cultural significance, and the role of communities.
3. The **delegation of Switzerland** congratulated the States Parties and communities whose elements had been inscribed, and encouraged submitting States to take into consideration the important remarks made by the Evaluation Body in the preparation of their future nomination files. It regretted that the recommendations and observations of the Evaluation Body were not systematically retained in the decisions taken by the Committee. The delegation welcomed the growing number of multinational files, but nonetheless noted that some difficulties in terms of collaboration and participation of the communities had been observed. To overcome them and to assist submitting States, the delegation believed directives based on the Evaluation Body’s recommendations should be established. In this regard, the delegation asked the Rapporteur of the Evaluation Body how such recommendations could be formulated going forward. In this regard, Switzerland and Côte d’Ivoire, with the support of Kuwait, would propose an amendment in paragraph 8 of the draft decision in order to improve the multinational nominations files. The delegation also welcomed the increase in the number of files with a view to environmental sustainability, as related to Agenda 2030, which was particularly important for the Convention, and it congratulated the Secretariat for the remarkable work carried out in this context with the tool ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’. The delegation also recalled the decision taken by the Executive Board of UNESCO the previous week on the impact of climate change on all heritage, adding that this should be reflected more systematically in the nomination files themselves. For this reason, Switzerland had also presented an amendment inviting the Secretariat to propose a reflection in this regard to better integrate the issue of sustainability.
4. The **delegation of Kuwait** congratulated the States Parties and the communities for the new inscriptions and thanked the Evaluation Body for the great job done. Kuwait echoed the remarks made by the Netherlands that some of the files had expressed concerns even though the Committee had changed the decisions. It would have been good to retain some of the draft decisions so that States Parties could keep them in mind. Kuwait also wished to urge the Evaluation Body to utilize the use of technology in the examination process. The delegation noted the exceptional work by the Secretariat in the past six months, which had seen a huge improvement in the efficiency of the meetings that enabled the Body to achieve its tasks in a more efficient manner through online consultations. It therefore urged the Evaluation Body to utilize this technology in the future so as to make their tasks easier, more efficient, while saving time and costs.
5. The **delegation of Sri Lanka** extended its gratitude to all members of the Evaluation Body for their hard work in making the fifteenth session a success despite the challenges faced due to the pandemic. It agreed that despite the fact that the Committee may have overwritten certain remarks made by the Evaluation Body, it was paramount that the submitting States address these concerns in order to preserve the living heritage of their communities.
6. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** expressed satisfaction on the balanced way in which the Chairperson had chaired the work so far. It also congratulated the Evaluation Body for its in-depth analysis of the different files, which had made it possible, not only to highlight the important aspects of each file, but also to adhere to the timing imposed by the coronavirus in this cycle. It was true that the examination of the files had enabled the Committee to inscribe new elements, but it had also revealed limitations in this exercise, and Côte d’Ivoire encouraged the Secretariat to do two things. First, to continue the upstream dialogue with submitting States. The delegation believed that this was important to reduce the difficulties encountered in completing the forms. Second, to initiate capacity-building programmes for submitting States, taking into consideration their needs, some of which had clearly appeared in the files examined by the Evaluation Body. The delegation mentioned in particular that no State Party should encounter difficulties with regards to the identification of its element as intangible cultural heritage. However, to be able to explain the element so that it satisfied criterion R.1 was not easy for all countries. The delegation therefore encouraged submitting States to request technical assistance from the Secretariat even with the drafting of their nomination files, if possible. It believed that this would assist States Parties in better understanding the Convention mechanisms.
7. The **delegation of Peru** greeted all the members of the Committee and the Observers. Peru thanked the Evaluation Body for its excellent work and also for its recommendations with regard to future work concerning the Lists of the Convention. It wished to call upon the States Parties to make better use of the mechanism of the Urgent Safeguarding List, adding that there was still an imbalance between the Representative List, which of course is very interesting and a good safeguarding mechanism, and the Urgent Safeguarding List, which should be highlighted to a greater extent. The delegation understood that post-pandemic there would be an increasing array of elements in danger of disappearing due to migrations, poverty and other issues, and therefore it invited the Committee to reflect in a future meeting on how it could increase interest for the Urgent Safeguarding List. The delegation concluded by congratulating the Chairperson on her excellent leadership.
8. The **delegation of Brazil** congratulated the States Parties and communities whose elements had been listed under the Convention, and especially the Iberian-American States, its closest neighbours. It was delighted to see that the dialogue process had now been fully integrated into the work of the Evaluation Body, the excellence of which had once again been demonstrated. The dialogue process had worked very well in this virtual session, and the Committee was also able to overcome some of the difficulties of the nomination files that had not benefitted from the dialogue process as the submitting States were able to present their considerations and remarks on their files, which were later integrated. The delegation congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership and the Secretariat for its work.
9. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** congratulated the States Parties on their new inscriptions. It understood that the limitations of virtual sessions had led to the application of the ‘active support’ methodology to propose amendments. However, it echoed the sentiment expressed by other Committee members that it was occasionally difficult to reflect and react to some decisions owing to the restricted time. It understood that this was the first online Committee session, nevertheless, it was an opportunity for the Committee to reflect and improve upon the approach in upcoming sessions in the event of similar circumstances.
10. The **delegation of Kazakhstan** congratulated the Chairperson on her balanced chairing of the session, and the Secretariat for its excellent work under very difficult circumstances. It joined with the other members to congratulate the States Parties on their new inscriptions, which will surely contribute to a more colourful Convention. Kazakhstan was very grateful to the Committee for its support given to its country in its joint nomination [Traditional intelligence and strategy game Togyzqumalaq, Toguz Korgool, Mangala/Göçürme] with Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. It thanked the Evaluation Body with a special *shukran* to its Chairperson, Mr Saeed Al Busaidi. The delegation had taken comprehensive notes of the Evaluation Body’s comments, which will be reflected in all future safeguarding plans in strengthening the element. It also reiterated the comments raised by some of the Committee members during this session about the need for precise clarification of criteria R.2 and R.3, adding that the Committee may propose to establish a working group on this important issue.
11. The **delegation of China** congratulated all the States Parties on their new inscriptions and selections as best practices. It commended once again all the members of the Evaluation Body for their excellent work, and the Secretariat for its assistance under difficult circumstances arising from the pandemic. The delegation appreciated the recommendations by the Evaluation Body, and hoped that all States Parties would take full advantage of the good examples presented for more qualitative nominations in future cycles. It also noticed that the Evaluation Body had observed many recurring issues such as over-commercialization, folklorization, decontextualization, and so on. However, it counted on the Secretariat to develop more guidance documents to help States Parties in elaborating their nomination files and in the planning and implementation of safeguarding measures.
12. The **delegation of Morocco** congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership, as well as all the States Parties that had elements inscribed on the Lists. It also welcomed the excellent work carried out by the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat under difficult conditions. The delegation remarked that a referred nomination file was not a refusal; it was a call to improve the file and, in fact, it has frequently been the case that having overcome certain difficulties these nomination files lead to a positive outcome. Morocco also welcomed the inscription of couscous on the Representative List, thanking the Committee for confirming this inscription.
13. The **delegation of Japan** echoed the voices of other delegations in expressing sincere appreciation of the Chairperson for her leadership and success of the session. It also congratulated the States Parties, including Japan, for the new inscriptions, expressing appreciation to the Evaluation Body for the very high quality analysis of the individual files. In this regard, the success of the upstream dialogue was happily noted, with 10 out of 11 files guided towards successful inscription; an important achievement. In one case, there was a divergent opinion, but on that particular file, the Committee was able to hear clarifications from Malaysia and Indonesia, which were convincing in many ways. In any case, it was good to note that the value of this upstream dialogue had been demonstrated in this current cycle. The delegation understood that Switzerland was to propose two amendments to the decision, and it looked forward to seeing those amendments, but Switzerland raised an important point about sustainability in the context of inscription, and it wished to support Switzerland in this regard. On the question of multinational files, the delegation required more clarification on the issue but would return to discuss these points when the amendments are presented.
14. The **delegation of Panama** congratulated the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for the excellent work, as well as the Chairperson for the prompt manner in which the meeting was conducted. The delegation made reference to the table in paragraph 77 of the Evaluation Body’s report under the subject of ‘recurring challenges’, adding that this was at the core of future meetings and work of the Secretariat as a supporting body to States Parties. These were very important challenges in terms of the future capacity-building that countries and communities need, especially for the ministries in charge of overseeing the implementation of the Convention going forward. The delegation hoped that the Secretariat would be able to suggest how to build capacity-building programmes for the coming years and beyond. References made to issues such as confusion between inscriptions, concerns linked to top-down approaches, absence of measures, the importance of audiovisual materials, among other things, meant that more could probably be done to provide information and implement capacity-building with the communities.
15. The **Chairperson** now opened the floor to Observers, inviting Armenia to take the floor.
16. The **delegation of Armenia** wished to refer to the nomination ‘Art of miniature’ presented by Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Without any prejudice to the nomination as a whole, the delegation reiterated the preoccupations it had with regard to the claims by Azerbaijan concerning the presence of Azerbaijani miniature art school within Nagorno-Karabakh, as contained in its letter uploaded on the Committee website. Owing to a lack of time, it refrained from presenting the argumentation in detail. However, the delegation wished to reiterate that the type of art of miniature referred to in the nomination had never existed in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. The miniature of Nagorno-Karabakh is fundamentally different, which has been confirmed by relevant experts. The absence of letters of consent from the representatives of the region provided further proof. The delegation believed that the requirement of scientific rigour must in all circumstances take precedence over any other consideration. Nevertheless, it noted with regret that Azerbaijan continues to use the nomination process for political purposes through systematic insertion of references to Karabakh in almost all its nominations. The delegation concluded by congratulating the Chairperson for the excellent conduct of the meeting, congratulating all the countries on their successful nominations.
17. The **delegation of Austria** congratulated the Chairperson on her chairpersonship and all the countries whose elements were inscribed on the Lists and Register. It also commended the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the meeting and documents under these extraordinary circumstances. The delegation also congratulated the Evaluation Body for the coherence and diligence of its work, the detailed and insightful report, and its extraordinary efforts and dedication to the evaluation of nominations, which was greatly appreciated. However, there was one recurrent issue that was still a serious concern, which was due to the fact that regardless of the recommendations made by the Evaluation Body – a group of experts and accredited NGOs established by the Committee itself – a number of nominations submitted in this cycle were overturned and inscribed, and some very relevant comments were neglected or deleted. The decisions taken seemed to imply that a new tacit rule had been established in that elements with three out of five criteria satisfied were inscribed even when the Evaluation Body highlighted serious issues under one or two criteria. The delegation was concerned that the current practice will have a distinct impact on the future of the Lists, placing the credibility of the current inscription mechanisms, including the dialogue process, at stake. It was hoped that the global reflection process on the role and functions of the Lists will lead the way to a satisfying solution that will increase awareness about safeguarding practices and further enhance dialogue and cooperation among communities and countries.
18. The **delegation of Latvia** spoke on behalf of Latvia and Estonia to greatly appreciate the Chairperson’s efficient leadership of this novel online format. They commended the members of the Evaluation Body and the Committee for fulfilling their responsibilities in terms of online modalities. The delegations appreciated the efficacy adopted by the Secretariat as a result of the current pandemic. However, they regretted that the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices continue to attract limited attention. Nevertheless, the positive increase in multinational nominations revealed the diversity of shared heritage. The delegations were well aware of the challenges of applying current evaluation priorities, while limiting the number of files per cycle, and they hoped to see more multinational files evaluated in future cycles. The delegations concurred with the emphasis on monitoring inscribed elements, as expressed in the report of the Evaluation Body, as well as in the report of the ICH NGO Forum discussed earlier in the week. They acknowledged the need for more inclusive and participatory reporting where various partners could contribute, including UNESCO Chairs who are active in the field of intangible cultural heritage for example. Finally, the delegations congratulated the communities, groups and individuals, and States Parties for their new inscriptions, and they looked forward to their follow up and welcomed the quick return of the files that were referred.
19. The **delegation of Palestine** congratulated all the States Parties whose elements were inscribed, and warmly thanked the Evaluation Body for its hard work despite the difficult circumstances. The delegation remarked on the smooth proceedings, especially during the inscriptions, which was due of course to the Chairperson, but also thanks to the upstream process, the respect for the gentlemen’s agreement, and the step-by-step decision-making, which was a proposal by Palestine four years ago. The gentlemen’s agreement did not mean refraining from opening the debate on elements that were recommended not to inscribe, and it was not meant to change the recommendation of the Evaluation Body from refer or not to inscribe when an element does not satisfy more than two criteria, which had been respected, and it was hoped that this would become a regular practice in future Committee sessions. The delegation looked forward to seeing the outcome of the working group on the revision of the criteria and the different mechanisms, surmising that the Committee might consider the introduction of another level in the evaluation between referral and not to inscribe, such as a deferral. This proposal had been raised in the past, and the situation encountered with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea justified this direction. The delegation concluded by congratulating all the actors for the session’s success, starting with the Secretary, the Chairperson, and the members of the Committee and the Evaluation Body.
20. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** regretted that the Committee had yet again been faced with a situation in which Armenia seemed to interfere with the internal affairs of Azerbaijan, especially given all the efforts undertaken by the other submitting States to present the multinational nomination file. Regarding the mention of Karabakh in the nomination file, the delegation explained that the communities, practitioners and bearers of the Art of miniature in Baku, Karabakh, Shamaki and Ganja comprise four important schools in Azerbaijan. From the 13th century, the Art of miniature has played a very important part in the development of traditional artistic forms of mural painting and crafts in the Karabakh region, as well as elsewhere in Azerbaijan. The existence of the school of Art of miniature in Karabakh had been severely affected by the occupation of the region by Armenia, as well as by the displacement of the population. The school of Art in miniature remains a part of the Azerbaijani cultural heritage and nobody had the right to deny the communities use of its culture, creativity and religion. The delegation hoped that the artists would one day be able to visit the region that had recently been liberated, adding that Armenia raising an issue of intangible cultural heritage in a neighbouring country created division and conflict for the people in the region. The delegation added that the Armenian authorities should reflect on how they can support dialogue and peaceful coexistence in the region.
21. The **Chairperson** thanked Azerbaijan, inviting the Rapporteur to respond to the questions.
22. The **Rapporteur** spoke on behalf of the Evaluation Body to thank the Committee for its confidence in its work. The members congratulated the States Parties for the inscription of their new elements in the listing mechanisms of the Convention. She thanked the States whose files had been selected as good examples for enlarging the list of inspiring cases, showing the wide variability of living heritage, as well as possible approaches to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The members also appreciated the States Parties’ decision to take the recommendation to refer a file as an invitation and opportunity for the submitting States to further develop their nomination files, enriching the presentation of an element with valuable additional information. This might be an answer to the question of how to improve the nomination files in the future, and finding inspiration in the original draft decisions as proposed by the Evaluation Body. The Body liked to compare its role as one of a loving parent who at times deprives its children of a small amount of joy, not for personal pleasure but with a view to building a future happiness for the children. It was therefore with reluctance that the Evaluation Body had to sometimes decide to recommend a file for referral. However, these recommendations were always made in the hope that the presentation of the element and its safeguarding will be improved and submitted in a subsequent cycle. Concerning the necessity of the guidelines related to the multinational nominations, the Evaluation Body welcomed the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention, which may provide a solution. The Bodyrecommended taking into consideration the good examples of multinational nominations recommended by the Evaluation Body and the Committee.
23. The **Rapporteur** echoed some of the comments expressed by a number of Committee members regarding the inequality in the nomination files submitted, as noted in previous cycles. The Representative List was accorded by far the greatest importance, while the other three mechanisms were under-utilized. The Body discussed the evolving character of the interpretation of the Convention and that it also needs to be reflected upon in the evaluation process. Nevertheless, thanks to the Convention, the notion of the importance of intangible cultural heritage in our lives in general is much more widespread than it was 20 years ago. The discussion had now evolved around the necessity to shift attention to a more effective and well-designed safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage that is based on mutual cooperation of the various stakeholders. The Evaluation Body believed that inscription should not be the goal of all these efforts, but the beginning of an adventure of building a collaborative spirit and actions around safeguarding living heritage in a world of diversity.
24. Thanking the Rapporteur, the **Chairperson** noted the completion of the general debate on the report of the Evaluation Body and turned to the draft decision and the two amendments submitted by Switzerland [and co-sponsored by Côte d’Ivoire and Kuwait]; one in paragraph 8 and a new paragraph 9. On a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, paragraph 1 was duly adopted. Paragraph 2, recalling the Operational Directives and the resolution of the General Assembly that introduced the dialogue process, was adopted. Paragraph 3, expressing satisfaction with the quality of the Evaluation Body and appreciating the support by the Secretariat, was adopted. Paragraph 4, taking note of the unprecedented circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and appreciating that the 2020 cycle files could be evaluated, was adopted. Paragraph 5, welcoming the positive results of the first full implementation of the dialogue process, was adopted. Paragraph 6, congratulating submitting States whose nominations are considered as good examples, was adopted. Paragraph 7, relating to the observations and recommendations made by the Evaluation Body, was adopted. Paragraph 8, appreciating the high increase of multinational nominations in this cycle, with the amendment tabled by Switzerland at the end of the paragraph, which would read, ‘and invites the Secretariat to prepare guidance notes for the preparation of multinational files in order to improve their quality’.
25. The **delegation of Switzerland** explained that with all the work done by the Evaluation Body, it felt that there was a need to streamline and improve the preparation of multinational nomination files. In this regard, it believed that a form of toolkit to help submitting States with their files with good practices would serve as a guide in the future, and that the Secretariat could perhaps prepare this in cooperation with the Evaluation Body.
26. The **delegation of Japan** was not opposed to the notion of some kind of guidance for multinational files, but it was not sure that it was a good idea for the Secretariat to prepare such guidelines for States Parties. The delegation referred to a point made by the Rapporteur of the Evaluation Body that the global reflection process might provide discussions and possible solutions on this issue. It therefore proposed alternative wording that might be better in this context, which would read, ‘invites the open-ended working group on the global reflection process to discuss the preparation of multinational files’.
27. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** was very interested in multinational files as it had many commonalities with several neighbouring countries. As was known, Africa had been broken up with the creation of borders, but across these borders there are many similarities between regions, and hence why these multinational files are of great interest. From a cultural perspective, the multinational files serve as a powerful representation of the unity between States, and the amendment should thus be supported to encourage multinational files going forward. This was the reason behind the request for the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat to provide assistance in establishing guidance notes to help prepare and thus encourage multinational files. The delegation understood that a reflection process was currently underway, but it was concerned about the length of time it would take to formulate such guidance, and hence its direct request to the Secretariat.
28. The **delegation of Brazil** supported the idea of encouraging multinational candidatures, as this is an important element to increase diversity and to demonstrate the connection between elements and countries. Nevertheless, it wished to support the proposal by Japan, which would include States in the reflection on possible points of orientation in this regard.
29. The **delegation of Kuwait** wished to clarify the reasoning behind the amendment submitted by Switzerland, Kuwait and Côte d’Ivoire. It understood the point made by Japan regarding the working group in the reflection process and that the outcome would be more detailed and systematic with regard to the reflection on multinational files. However, the amendment proposed that the Secretariat – with help from the Evaluation Body – provide a summary or guidelines to help submitting States prepare their multinational files. The delegation explained that it had seen inconsistencies and differences in files submitted by different States, and yet this information already existed, albeit in a scattered way, and had been used by the Evaluation Body in previous years. The amendment therefore simply asked that the Secretariat and Evaluation Body put together a few pages of guidelines for the sake of consistency and clarity in the files and it would not be a new document.
30. The **delegation of Kazakhstan** remarked on how multinational nomination files in this cycle had shown in two cases the difficulties encountered by submitting States to propose joint safeguarding measures. It therefore shared the concern raised by Japan.
31. The **delegation of Jamaica** supported the amendment proposed by Switzerland. It also noted the concern raised by Japan, while at the same time, it stressed the importance of having guidelines rather than instructions. Seen in this light, the delegation had no issue to support the amendment and wished to add its name as co-sponsor.
32. The **delegation of Czechia** understood the concerns raised that had led to this amendment. It wished to support the amendment, but also to ask the Secretariat whether it was indeed possible to formulate such practical guidance along the lines suggested by Kuwait and that it would be made available sooner. The delegation also preferred that the Secretariat prepare the guidance, perhaps in consultation with States Parties.
33. The **Chairperson** invited the Secretary to respond.
34. The **Secretary** wished to clarify the situation with regard to the overall reflection process as some States Parties may have had a sense that it is a very distant undertaking. In fact, the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the overall reflection will take place in June 2021, prior to which an expert meeting will be held that will include a re-examination of criterion R.2. The Secretary recalled a decision in 2019 that had requested the Secretariat to change the way multinational files were compiled, which was a work priority for the Secretariat in 2021, starting with the expert meeting in early 2021 and followed by the Intergovernmental Working Group in June, which will then report to the next session of the Committee in December 2021. It was therefore not a long process, and in fact the end of the process was on the horizon, notwithstanding delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this was a work flow issue but also a logical one because should the Working Group decide to change some of the criteria and to examine the evaluation process, anything that the Secretariat will put together in the guidance note would immediately become obsolete. The Secretariat fully understood the need and supported the idea of a guidance note, but there was an issue of timing. On a positive note, the Secretary proposed that the wording could include, ‘taking into account the overall reflection on the listing mechanisms’. The Secretary had heard some comments that the reflection was taking a long time, but it was also highly unlikely that the Secretariat would be able to formulate any guidance notes prior to this reflection process, as this was already the next item on its work schedule.
35. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order raised by Kuwait.
36. For the sake of fairness, the **delegation of Kuwait** believed that Japan’s wise proposal should be reflected in the draft decision so that its point of view can be considered alongside its own amendment as this would clarify the different opinions. The delegation asked that any proposals by members of the Committee be reflected in the draft decision in future, and prior to any intervention by the Secretariat.
37. The **delegation of Djibouti** supported the amendment by Switzerland, Côte d’Ivoire and Kuwait, and aligned with the clarifications made by Kuwait and the concerns of Côte d’Ivoire.
38. The **Chairperson** asked Japan to submit the text of its proposed amendment.
39. The **delegation of Japan** had initially wished to propose the following wording, ‘invites the Open Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the global reflection to discuss the preparation of multinational files in order to improve their quality’. However, following the clarifications made by the Secretariat, the delegation proposed to add after Switzerland’s amendment, ‘taking into account the global reflection on the listing mechanisms’.
40. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** wished to add its name to the amendments.
41. The **delegation of Switzerland** thanked and welcomed Japan for its suggestion, which was fully in line with its own reflection.
42. The **delegations of Brazil, Poland, Morocco** supported the addition of Japan’s amendment.
43. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** was favourable to the amendment by Japan, which aligned with its own reflection.
44. The **delegation of Kazakhstan** wished to be added to Japan’s proposal.
45. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked Switzerland for introducing this amendment, and Japan, which it supported.
46. The **delegations of Sri Lanka**, **Botswana, Kuwait**, **Panama** and **Djibouti** supported Japan’s amendment.
47. The **Secretary** notedsupport for Japan’s amendment from Poland, Cameroon, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Czechia, Botswana, Panama, Peru, Republic of Korea, Brazil and Rwanda.
48. The **Chairperson** turned to adopt paragraph 8 as amended, which was duly adopted, turning to the new paragraph 9 proposed by Switzerland, which would read, ‘Welcomed the increased number of elements highlighting links between intangible cultural heritage and environmental sustainability, further underlines the importance of including more systematically the contributions of the elements to sustainability according to Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals in the nomination files and requests the Secretariat to conduct a reflection on this subject and to present it to the Committee for consideration at its sixteenth session’.
49. The **delegation of Switzerland** explained that its proposal echoed various remarks from the Evaluation Body that had welcomed the reference to environmental sustainability in several files and that had also shown the important links between sustainability and intangible cultural heritage. The delegation congratulated the work done by the Secretariat and the Netherlands on the tool ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’ and its alignment of elements with Agenda 2030, but the idea with this paragraph was to integrate the links with the SDGs and their possible direct contribution to the files in order to facilitate the work of the Secretariat and to raise awareness among submitting States.
50. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for debate.
51. The **delegation of Kuwait** suggested following the same methodology with a show of hands of members supporting the proposal.
52. The **delegation of Botswana** supported the proposed paragraph.
53. The **delegation of Japan** supported the proposed process.
54. The **Secretary** thanked Switzerland for its remarks on the work done by the Secretariat on ‘Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage’, adding that the Secretariat obviously fully supported this objective. As mentioned, the Secretariat will be working in the coming year on the overall reflection of the listing mechanisms, which will be presented to the Committee in 2021. Thus, as previously explained, the new paragraph 9 risked creating a parallel process by which the Secretariat would present an overall reflection to the Committee, as well as a side reflection on a specific part of the listing mechanisms. It might therefore make more sense, and be more conducive to the work, to introduce a slight amendment, which would read, ‘to request the Secretariat to include a reflection on this subject within the overall reflection process and present it to the Committee’. In this way, the topic can be added to the reflection process and can be presented as one item as part of the overall reflection to the next Committee, integrating into the work rather than as a parallel reflection.
55. The **delegation of Sweden** thanked Switzerland for introducing this very important issue, but it also understood the constraints regarding the ongoing reflection process, as explained by the Secretariat. It thus supported the paragraph with the slight amendment proposed by the Secretariat, which was to include this topic in the current reflection on the listing mechanisms.
56. The **delegation of Jamaica** supported the suggestion by Sweden and was grateful for the intervention by the Secretariat, and thus supported the position and the wording proposed.
57. The **delegation of Brazil** endorsed the amendment proposed by the Secretariat, supported by Sweden and Jamaica, to adopt paragraph 9 as amended.
58. The **Secretary** noted support for the overall paragraph submitted by Switzerland from Poland, Netherlands, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Czechia, Djibouti, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Jamaica, Botswana, Kazakhstan, Peru, Morocco, Côte d’Ivoire, Sweden, Panama and China. The Secretary then noted support for the amendment proposed by the Secretariat from the Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Japan, Cameroon, Switzerland, Brazil, Botswana, Jamaica, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Poland, Czechia, Sweden, Panama, Sri Lanka, Peru, China, Côte d’Ivoire, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.
59. The **Chairperson** noted a point of order from Kuwait.
60. The **delegation of Kuwait** had no issue with the amendment proposed by the Secretariat. However, it sought clarification from a legal point of view as to whether the Secretariat was legally able to submit an amendment when normally it should come from a State Party.
61. The **Secretary** concurred with Kuwait’s understanding and thus deleted the reference to the Secretariat.
62. Withno furthercomments orobjections,the **Chairperson** pronounced paragraph 9 adopted. Paragraph 10, recommending that issues and recommendations from the Evaluation Body report to be taken into consideration in the ongoing global reflection on the listing mechanisms, was also adopted. Turning to the adoption of the draft decision as a whole, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 8**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/8) **adopted.**

**ITEM 9 OF THE AGENDA**

**NUMBER OF FILES SUBMITTED FOR THE 2020 AND 2021 CYCLES AND NUMBER OF FILES THAT CAN BE TREATED IN THE 2022 AND 2023 CYCLES**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/9*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-9-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 9*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/9)

1. The **Chairperson** recalled thatsince 2009, when the Committee examined the first nomination files and at successive sessions, the Committee had extensively discussed issues related to the ‘number of files’.This was also the subject of lengthy debates during the last session of the General Assembly in September 2020, which resulted in a recommendation addressed to the Committee.The challenge was therefore to reach a decision that would find the right balance between a spirit of inclusiveness and the workload related to the nomination process. The Secretary was invited to provide additional details.
2. The **Secretary** remarked that the issues related to the ‘number of files’ had a long and complex history. Before summarizing the main points, he referred the Committee to the working document for this item, which provides an overview of the files submitted for the 2020 and 2021 cycles. It was noted that the warning raised for the 2019 cycle had been confirmed for the 2021 cycle, i.e. an unusually high number of files, including multinational files and from a higher than normal number of submitting States, meant that the annual ceiling and priorities system appeared to no longer be sustainable. Mindful of the importance of multinational files for international cooperation, as well as the need to continue efforts to improve the geographical balance of the Lists, the Secretariat decided to examine 60 files in the 2021 cycle, even though the request was for 50 files. This problem was discussed at length during the eighth session of the General Assembly in September 2020. While welcoming the goodwill of the Secretariat to increase the number of files for the 2021 cycle to 60, the Assembly emphasized the need to step up efforts to render the Lists more geographically representative, balanced and culturally diversified. To that end, the General Assembly recommended that the Committee consider the possibility of increasing the number of files to include all the files submitted by States Parties for the 2022 and 2023 cycles [[Resolution 8.GA 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Resolutions/8.GA/11)].
3. The **Secretary** explained that the issue of the annual number of files touched upon a series of interrelated issues that are fundamental to the Convention, such as the spirit of inclusiveness and the search for balanced Lists, but they also include the credibility of the mechanism and workload of all concerned. The Secretariat was of the opinion that any reflections leading to a sustainable change in the number of overall files must be carefully undertaken in conjunction with the global reflection process on the listing mechanisms, as initiated by the thirteenth session of the Committee. At the same time, the experience of the Evaluation Body and the Committee in evaluating and examining 60 files in the 2021 cycle should also be taken into account. In other words, while the Secretariat could – if reinforced with extra human resources – increase the number of files processed, the evaluation of files under the current system cannot be augmented simply by adding extra evaluators. This is because the Evaluation Body members must reach consensus on each criterion. If the annual ceiling were to be changed to include a higher number of files, the overall listing system would need to drastically change, which would necessarily involve alleviating the evaluation process, including the criteria. Moreover, if the Committee were to continue with the annual ceiling system, different ways of managing the priority system would need to be devised. In the meantime, an intermediary solution had to be sought. The Committee may thus adopt the approach envisaged for the 2021 cycle, i.e. to include at least 50 files under both the 2022 and the 2023 cycles, while ensuring that all files under priority (0) are included. If the number of files under priority (0) alone exceeds the ceiling of fifty files, the Secretariat may consider the possibility of also treating priority (i) national files from submitting States with no elements inscribed on any of the Lists, and priority (ii) multinational files, with priority given to files from States with no national elements inscribed.
4. The **Chairperson** opened the floor for the debate.
5. The **delegation of Sweden** remarked on the major challenges regarding the number of files that can be examined, adding that it was of the utmost importance that this problem is resolved through the reflection process of the listing mechanisms. However, it was currently a fact that the financial and human resources within the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body are limited. Attempting to exceed that limit will affect the quality and legitimacy of the evaluation and, by extension, the possibilities of working in accordance with the spirit of the Convention. All States Parties must take this into account when considering submitting new nominations. Sweden thanked the Secretariat for presenting a workable, intermediary solution within the proposal in the draft decision, underlining the importance of the possibilities for treating files under priorities (i) and (ii) in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. These priorities include the Urgent Safeguarding List, International Assistance, the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, and the multinational files, the mechanisms of which are of fundamental importance to this Convention.
6. The **delegation of Czechia** thanked the Secretariat for the analysis of the situation, and for its proposal to raise the number of examined files to 60 in the coming cycle. The delegation was well aware of the gravity of the situation with regard to the pending files and hoped that a sustainable solution can be found, particularly as the global reflection process was underway. The delegation was also aware that the Evaluation Body, the Secretariat and the Committee had reached its limits in terms of available options and that it was not possible to increase the number of files to be examined by the Committee. Moreover, the examination of a file takes too long given the time available, which could be used to consider other aspects of the Convention, such as safeguarding measures and community participation, as well as interesting initiatives, such as ICH in urban contexts and links to tangible heritable. The delegation hoped that the global reflection will find a defined and acceptable solution, and it thanked the Secretariat for its interim proposal.
7. The **delegation of Japan** welcomed the constructive report of the Secretariat to increase the number of files for examination in the 2021 cycle from 50 to 60. At the same time, it was concerned about the accumulation of backlog files, which pointed to a serious issue. Japan for example had many potential files waiting for inscription and there was pressure nationally to move forward. Thus, a fundamental review of the evaluation system was needed, while taking into account the working capacity of the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body who actually perform the work. There was thus a relationship between expectations and work capacity, which many delegations had mentioned needs to be examined in the reflection process. Consequently, the Committee could not really increase the number of files for examination, and hence the need to reflect on the rules to find the right path for the future.
8. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** took due note of the increase of files from 50 to 60 for the 2021 cycle under the list of priorities established in the Operational Directives, which was for the first time in a situation of crisis. It understood the urgency of the situation, not least because multinational files were positioned outside of the listed priorities. The situation was particularly worrying given the huge efforts made by States Parties in preparing their files. The delegation made reference to Resolution [8.GA 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.GA/11) of the eighth session of the General Assembly held in September 2020, which recommended that the Committee – in the framework of the listing mechanism reflection – increase the number of files examined so as to include all files submitted by States for the 2022 and 2023 cycles. It was well aware of the constraints imposed by the work capacity, as mentioned by the Secretariat, which meant that the Committee would not be able to include all the files in 2022 and 2023 if it were to include all the files for States that have no inscriptions, as well as multinational files. Considering the need for flexibility, the delegation suggested removing that part from paragraph 9 in the draft decision. It hoped that the reflection on the listing mechanisms will provide solutions and a path forward.
9. The **delegation of Switzerland** welcomed and concurred with the Secretariat’s analysis of the situation for the 2021 and 2022 cycles in the submission of files. The increase in the number of requests, the expectations of submitting States, and the current mechanisms in place are a complex challenge. Indeed, given the limited resources of the Secretariat, the Evaluation Body and the Committee itself, the Committee must pay particular attention to the conditions enabling the appraisal of nomination files so as to ensure the credibility of its work. The delegation understood the willingness expressed by some States Parties to increase efforts to have balanced, culturally diverse and geographically balanced lists. However, it was important not to make hasty decisions regarding the number of files to be examined in the 2022 and 2023 cycles. The Committee should first conclude the overall reflection on the listing mechanisms and consider the outcomes of the process before launching into major changes of the current mechanism that would overburden the system. It therefore supported the Secretariat’s interim solution as reflected in the draft decision.
10. The **delegation of Brazil** remarked on the growing number of nomination files, which was a good sign as it showed the success of the Convention and raised visibility of intangible cultural heritage in general. It appreciated that the Secretariat, the Committee and the Evaluation Body were doing their utmost to ensure culturally diverse and geographically lists, and that the Operational Directives under paragraph 34 set out some priorities, which ensured that priority is granted to underrepresented States. States Parties were well aware that this did not mean that there must be a systematic limitation placed on States that already had elements inscribed on the Lists, and hence why increasing the number of nomination files was going to be necessary at some point in time. However, this increase in the number of examined files cannot be done at the expense of integrity and the legitimacy of the work currently underway. The delegation therefore believed that it was a reasonable request to ensure that the Evaluation Body is not overburdened and why any changes brought to the Operational Directives would have to be done with a great deal of thought. Otherwise, it may involve changing the evaluation process, perhaps by convening meetings more frequently. The delegation recognized the super-human efforts already undertaken by the Evaluation Body, particularly in the current situation, and that incomplete information in the files was one aspect that occasionally held up the work of the Evaluation Body. For all these reasons, it believed that the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat for an interim solution was a positive starting point before moving towards a more permanent solution that includes technical assistance, capacity-building, and perhaps an overhaul of the way of working. Nevertheless, it was important not to preempt the outcome of the reflection process.
11. The **delegation of Netherlands** echoed the remarks made by Czechia and many others. It also recognized the importance of increasing the number of files examined for the sake of all the States and for the communities concerned. However, it would be better that this process is included as part of the global reflection process on the listing mechanisms and to await the outcomes of this reflection in order to have more balanced files.
12. The **delegation of Poland** thanked the Secretariat for its very detailed report regarding the number of files submitted for this cycle and the upcoming cycles. Having read the report, it asked the Secretariat whether an increase in the number of files in the next cycle will affect its other activities over the next few years, for example capacity-building, adding that the Secretariat’s response would help in arriving at a future decision.
13. The **Secretary** thanked Poland and Azerbaijan for their questions. Responding to the question by Azerbaijan, he explained that within the current framework, files submitted by States that do not have an element inscribed might not have their file treated in that cycle, even though the Secretariat would do its utmost to include as many files as possible based on its capacities. The Secretary recalled that 2021 was the first time that the Committee had found itself in a situation where multinational files were not able to be treated. The Secretariat’s proposal however was an attempt to move forward. Responding to the question from Poland, the Secretary concurred – as mentioned during the General Assembly – that resources spent on processing files were undoubtedly taking resources from other parts of its work, including capacity-building. It was a question of balancing resources and allocation.
14. The **delegation of Botswana** sought clarity on the number of files that a State Party is allowed to submit, including multinational files, as some States Parties seemed to have submitted a number of submissions under multinational files, which ultimately impacted negatively on the quality of the files submitted in which a number of them did not satisfy the criteria.
15. The **delegation of Austria** joined the previous delegations to commend the Secretariat for the excellent document on the number of files for the upcoming cycles, which provided a very clear explanation concerning the challenges in the evaluation process. It noted that further increasing the number of files risked the collapse of the system. The delegation highly appreciated the Secretariat’s efforts in dealing with an increased number of files in 2021, especially considering the high workload that this implied. It was a pleasure to note the ever-growing interest in intangible cultural heritage, in the Convention and in nominations. But this raised a number of issues and concerns, which were also addressed at the eighth General Assembly. One of these concerns was related to the growing number of backlog files. As the Secretariat had explained, increasing the number of members of the Evaluation Body or even splitting up the Body was not considered a desirable solution. The delegation supported the Secretariat’s suggestion to continue with the current procedure of evaluation until the completion of the reflection on the listing mechanisms, and that this needed to be examined annually to ensure the coherence and quality of future cycles. Most importantly, the Committee should keep in mind the central aspects of the Convention, such as safeguarding and capacity-building.
16. The **Chairperson** thanked the members of the Committee, and turned to the draft decision.
17. The **Secretary** informed the Committee that an amendment had been received from Kuwait on the draft decision.
18. The **Chairperson** proceeded paragraph-by-paragraph. Paragraph 1, citing the documents examined, was adopted. Paragraph 2, recalling previous decisions, was adopted. Paragraph 3, considering the limited capacity of the Committee and the Secretariat, was adopted. Paragraph 4, further considering the limited capacity of the Evaluation Body given its composition and working method, was adopted. Paragraph 6, deciding to set the number of files to be treated for the 2022 and 2023 cycles to at least 50, included the amendment by Kuwait to increase the files to ‘at least sixty’.
19. The **delegation of Kuwait** thanked the Secretariat for the brave decision it took to increase the number of files from 50 to 60 in the current cycle, which was a major step forward in finding a short-term solution. It also understood that the global reflection on the listing mechanisms was ongoing, which it hoped would arrive at a permanent solution. The delegation explained the logic behind its draft amendment, which was based on three things. Firstly, it reflected the debate at the General Assembly on the 2022 cycle, during which many States Parties expressed an interest to increase the files to be evaluated by 10%. While this was a discussion at the General Assembly, it is the Committee’s responsibility to set the ceiling. Secondly, there was a current backlog of over 160 files covering 46 countries. The delegation understood that the global reflection will hopefully come to a permanent solution, but in the meantime the Committee could attempt to address this issue through a minor change, i.e. treating 60 files instead of the 50 proposed, as was implemented for the 2021 cycle. Thirdly, the delegation recalled that seven files had been withdrawn, which in terms of numbers amounted to more that the proposed 10%, especially as most of the work on these files had already been done. Thus, increasing the number of files from 50 to 60 will help those States Parties that had withdrawn their files, giving them a chance to present a revised nomination. Kuwait was therefore proposing a minor, not a major change.
20. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** supported Kuwait’s amendment.
21. The **delegation of Morocco** also supported the proposed amendment by Kuwait given the intense discussion at the General Assembly. It commended the Secretariat on its work to date and hoped that this would not overburden the Evaluation Body, but it wondered whether it was indeed possible to repeat the work load for the 2022–2023 cycle as implemented in the 2021 cycle. This would be a minor change, after which the Committee would await a permanent solution that would emerge from the global reflection on the listing mechanisms.
22. The **delegation of Japan** was not against the idea of including 60 files in the draft decision. However, the original wording mentioned ‘at least fifty per cycle’ with additional flexibility clauses in paragraphs 8 and 9 with a view to increasing the number up to 60. Consequently, if the base number is increased to 60, it would give an impression that it can be extended further with the flexibility clauses in paragraphs 8 and 9 to 70, which would be excessive. The delegation therefore proposed to delete ‘at least’ and go along with the idea of 60 as the upper limit. Moreover, the Committee should agree that 60 is around the maximum that the system can absorb at this moment. The Committee will have to wait for the outcome of the reflection group to arrive at a higher number, and 60 was the likely target for the time being. The **delegation of Djibouti** also supported the proposed amendment by Kuwait.
23. The **delegation of Czechia** believed that it would be difficult to follow Kuwait’s amendment given the discussion and the explanation given by the Secretariat, and noting that the Secretariat had demonstrated goodwill and that it would do its best – together with the Evaluation Body – to treat more than 50 files as their capacity allowed. As recognized by Kuwait, this would be a small change and therefore it preferred to revert to the original wording with ‘at least fifty per cycle’. This meant that the number was flexible enough to reach up to 60 if the number of priority files fell within that range, without overburdening the Evaluation Body from the outset.
24. The **delegations of Azerbaijan** and **Peru** also supported the proposal by Kuwait.
25. The **Secretary** summarized the current positions held with regards to the original amendment proposed by Kuwait, which was supported by Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Djibouti and Peru; the amendment by Japan to delete ‘at least’; and Czechia’s position to maintain 50 files.
26. The **delegation of Switzerland** supported the proposal by Czechia, and in the eventuality of an exception to the amendment by Kuwait, would support the amendment by Japan.
27. The **delegation of Brazil** supported the original wording, but should the Committee decide to endorse Kuwait’s proposal, it would support Japan’s proposal to delete ‘at least’.
28. The **delegation of Netherlands** supported Czechia’s proposal to revert to the original wording.
29. The **delegation of Sweden** also supported the original wording as proposed by Czechia, and secondly Japan’s proposal.
30. The **delegation of Panama** sought clarification as to whether the number also referred to nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List, International Assistance requests over US$100,000, and situations of emergencies.
31. The **Secretary** clarified that the item was neither related to situations of emergencies nor solely to the Urgent Safeguarding List. The number would represent files submitted to the Representative List, Urgent Safeguarding List, Good Safeguarding Practices and International Assistance above US$100,000.
32. The **delegation of Panama** remarked that a maximum of 50 or 60 files followed by paragraph 7, which decided that one file per submitting State would be treated, was not realistic given that there are 180 States Parties to the Convention, amounting to 90 files per year.
33. The **Chairperson** asked for a show of hands in support of Czechia’s proposal.
34. The **Secretary** noted support from Switzerland, Netherlands, Sweden, Republic of Korea and Brazil.
35. The **Chairperson** asked for a show of hands in support of Kuwait’s proposal.
36. The **Secretary** noted support from Saudi Arabia, Peru, Morocco, Djibouti, Azerbaijan, China, Côte d’Ivoire and Sri Lanka.
37. The **Chairperson** asked for a show of hands in support of Japan’s proposal.
38. The **Secretary** noted support from Sweden, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, Japan, Brazil, Cameroon, Kazakhstan, China, Sri Lanka and Jamaica.
39. The **delegation of Panama** asked that the Secretariat repeat Japan’s proposal.
40. The **Secretary** reiterated the three proposals by which Czechia wished to retain the original wording ‘at least 50’, Kuwait proposed ‘at least 60’, and Japan proposed to delete ‘at least’.
41. The **delegation of Peru** favoured the amendment presented by Japan.
42. The **delegation of Kuwait** was happy to note that Committee members agreed that 60 is a reasonable number. However, if the decision mentioned 60 files then that would be the permitted maximum. According to this scenario, the Secretariat would not be able to exercise any flexibility regarding the priorities in the 2022 cycle. The delegation could agree to 60, but it was important to bear in mind that the Secretariat would not be able to increase this number even by one nomination as was currently the case for the 2021 cycle when the number of files increased from 50 to 60, or 20%.
43. The **Secretary** highlighted Rule 25.1 on amendments based on the three proposals, albeit two of them were linked, noting that Kuwait’s and Japan’s amendment had received a lot of support. Rule 25.1 reads, ‘When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved, the Committee shall first vote the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be the furthest removed in substance from the original proposal’. With this in mind, the Secretary proposed to first determine whether Kuwait’s and Japan’s joint proposal was acceptable.
44. The **delegation of** **Kuwait** called a point of order remarking that, according to the rules, the Committee could not have two different amendments with the same countries supporting both, which appeared to be the case with Japan and Czechia, but it also applied to Kuwait, while at the same time determining a majority or minority position. There were three different proposals and Committee members should clearly support the proposal they favoured.
45. The **delegation of Panama** supported the amendment presented by Japan.
46. The **delegation of Poland** supported the amendment presented by Czechia as the Evaluation Body will then be able to evaluate slightly more than 50 nomination files.
47. The **Secretary** understood the intervention by Kuwait, adding that the Committee was not technically voting. Nevertheless, certain members, such as Switzerland and Sweden, supported Czechia’s proposal, but if Kuwait’s proposal was retained then they would support Japan’s proposal. Thus, the intention was to resolve the current situation rather than move to a vote. Thus, according to Rule 25.1, the Committee should first discuss Kuwait’s amendment and decide whether it wished to support Kuwait’s or Czechia’s proposal. After which, and if adopted, members should decide whether to introduce Japan’s proposal should Kuwait’s proposal be retained.
48. The **delegation of Brazil** clarified that it supported the original proposal, but should the Committee decide to have 60 files, then it would support Japan’s amendment.
49. The **delegation of Czechia** sought a consensus and withdrew its proposal, and instead add to Japan’s proposal by adding ‘maximum 60 per cycle’.
50. The **delegation of Botswana** wished to wait to hear Kuwait’s response to Czechia’s proposal, otherwise, it supported Kuwait’s amendment.
51. The **delegation of Kuwait** thanked Czechia for its proposal, however, it was important to give the Secretariat some flexibility in the future, as was the case in the 2021 cycle when it increased the number of examined files by 20% from 50 to 60. For the sake of consensus, the delegation proposed ‘at least 55’, which still afforded the Secretariat flexibility to increase the number even by a little, adding that its own experts believed that an increase of five files was possible, especially as they had already examined 60.
52. The **Secretary** agreed that ‘at least 55’ would be a manageable increase, while providing some flexibility.
53. The **delegation of Sweden** wanted to react to Czechia’s intervention in order to reach consensus, adding that Japan’s proposal seemed to meet everyone’s concern. It had an issue with the original proposal presented by Kuwait, but it could agree to ‘at least 55’ in order to be flexible and reach a consensus.
54. The **delegation of Peru** agreed with Sweden that the Secretariat should be given some flexibility, adding that ‘at least 60’ did not necessarily imply that the Secretariat would have to treat up to 70 files, as suggested by Japan, but that the Secretariat would examine at least 60 files. However, if the decision sought not to exceed 60 files, then it preferred to maintain ‘at least 60’, giving the Secretariat flexibility, and thus it supported Kuwait’s proposal.
55. The **Secretary** noted that Kuwait’s second proposal allowed for flexibility, which was important because of the following paragraphs by which the Secretariat applied certain criteria in the selection. The Secretary appreciated the remarks commending the Secretariat for its work, adding that the second proposal of ‘at least 55’ would address the concerns raised by Japan on linking it to the following paragraphs. It thus proposed this a workable solution, which appeared to be a way forward.
56. The **Chairperson** asked for a show of hands from members supporting ‘at least 55’.
57. The **Secretary** noted broad support from Brazil, Botswana, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands, Djibouti, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Jamaica, China, Czechia, Côte d’Ivoire, Rwanda, Japan, Azerbaijan, Poland, Switzerland, Cameroon, Sri Lanka, Cameroon and Morocco. The Secretariat projected the second proposal by Kuwait, which had the broadest support, removing all previous amendments, and which would read, ‘is determined to be at least 55 per cycle’.
58. The **Chairperson** turned to paragraph 6, which was duly adopted as amended. Paragraph 7, with at least one file per submitting State processed during the two-year period of 2022–2023, was adopted. Paragraph 8, allowing the Secretariat to exercise some flexibility, was adopted. Paragraph 9, requesting the Secretariat to consider the possibility of also treating, according to its resources and those of the Evaluation Body: priority (i) national files from submitting States with no elements inscribed on any of the Lists, and priority (ii) multinational files, giving priority to files from States with no national elements inscribe, was adopted. Paragraph 10, inviting States Parties to take the present decision into account when submitting files for the 2022 and 2023 cycles, was adopted. Paragraph 11, requesting the Secretariat to inscribe this item in the fifteenth session, was adopted. Turning to the adoption of the decision as a whole, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 9**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/9) **adopted.**

**ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA [CONT.]**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EVALUATION BODY FOR THE 2021 CYCLE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/10 Rev*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-10.Rev-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 10*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/10)

1. The **Chairperson** returned to agenda item 10, which was opened at the beginning of the week on the Establishment of the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle. As already announced, the Committee had elected new candidates for the Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle and they were: Mr Nigel Encalada (Belize), expert from Electoral Group III; Mr Kirk Siang Yeo (Singapore), expert from Electoral Group IV; and Syria Trust for Development, an accredited NGO from Electoral Group V(b). The Chairperson reiterated her congratulations to the new members of the Evaluation Body on their election, and she turned to the selection of the letter that will determine the order by which the examination and evaluation of files in the 2021 cycle will be established. A member of the Secretariat was asked to choose a letter from the pieces of paper carrying each of the letters from A to Z.
2. **Ms Fumiko Ohinata** explained that following the precedence established in previous Committee sessions, the youngest member of the Secretariat, Ms Alice Thibaud, was asked to select a letter.
3. The **Chairperson** announced that the evaluation and examination process of files under the 2021 cycle would continue by alphabetical order beginning with the letter ‘X’. The Chairperson then proceeded with the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. With no comments of objections, the **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 10**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/10) **adopted**.

**ITEM 11 OF THE AGENDA**

**DATE AND VENUE OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/11*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-11-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 11*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/11)

1. The **Chairperson** moved to the next agenda item 11 on the date and venue of the 16th session of the Committee, inviting the Committee to refer to document 11 and its draft decision. She informed the Committee that the Secretariat had not received an invitation from a Committee member to host the next session, which was not surprising given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the obvious uncertainties for individuals and State authorities to honour such a commitment in 2021. The Chairperson invited the Secretary to provide some additional information concerning the venue and possible dates.
2. The **Secretary** explained that in conformity with Rule 4 of the Committee’s Rules of Procedure, ‘the Committee shall examine at each session, in consultation with the Director-General, the date and place of the next session’. The Bureau may, if necessary, modify the date and/or place. Concerning the venue, as mentioned by the Chairperson, the Secretariat had not received an invitation from interested Committee members to host the Committee’s session in 2021. The Secretariat therefore proposed to hold the next session in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Concerning the date, and in coordination with the other Conventions of the Culture Sector, while taking into account the possible dates for the 41st session of the General Conference [the unconfirmed dates are 9 to 24 November 2021], the Secretariat proposed to hold the 16th session of the Committee from 13 to 18 December 2021.
3. The **Chairperson** proposed to amend the decision to reflect the fact that no Committee member had proposed to host the 16th session and proceeded with the adoption of the draft decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 11**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/11) **adopted**.

**ITEM 12 OF THE AGENDA**

**ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE**

**Document:** [*LHE/20/15.COM/12*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-12-EN.docx)

**Decision:** [*15.COM 12*](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/12)

1. The **Chairperson** turned to agenda item 12 to elect the next Bureau of the Committee.
2. The **Secretary** recalled that in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of Procedure, the Committee shall elect its Bureau consisting of a Chairperson, one or more Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur who shall remain in office until the end of the next ordinary session. When electing the Bureau, the Committee shall have due regard for the need to ensure equitable geographical representation and – inasmuch as possible – a balance among the various fields of intangible cultural heritage in accordance with Rule 13.4. Members of the Bureau must also be members of the Committee. It had been customary in the last few years for the Committee to have all electoral groups represented in its Bureau through the Chairperson and Vice-Chairs. According to the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, the Rapporteur should not express his/her opinion or vote in the capacity as Rapporteur. This is to respect the principle of equitable geographical representation within the Bureau pursuant to Rule 12.1 of the Rules of Procedure. His/her role is to validate the decisions taken by the Committee and its Bureau after their preparation by the Secretariat.
3. The **Chairperson** remarked on the unusual situation as it was customary that the Chairperson of the Committee be appointed from the host country. However, with the session now scheduled to take place at UNESCO Headquarters in 2021, the normal arrangement cannot apply. Yet the Committee still had to identify a Chairperson. As discussed in the Bureau, because of the unprecedented times, the necessary consultations to identify a Chairperson could not be undertaken. In order to resolve this situation, the following procedure was discussed in the Bureau. The Committee would proceed to elect six Bureau members, one from each Electoral Group. The Committee would then be asked to suspend part of Rule 13.1 by two-thirds majority of members present and voting to give the Bureau time to identify a Chairperson. In January, a nominal Chairperson will be elected from among the existing Vice-Chairs through electronic consultation with Bureau members. This solution will also leave open the possibility, should the situation change, to allow one of the Vice-Chairs to come forward as a host. The Chairperson recalled that a similar situation was faced at the twelfth session of the Committee with Decision [12.COM 20](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/20) when it had been decided that the thirteenth session would take place in Mauritius, but the nominal Chairperson had not been immediately identified. In that case, it had also been decided to elect the Chairperson through electronic consultation with the Committee. If the proposed solution is agreeable, the Chairperson would ask the Secretariat to propose an alternative draft decision, which will allow for the election the Chairperson of the Committee for its 16th session from among the Vice-Chairs through electronic consultation by 15 March 2021 at the latest. The Chairperson noted that there were no objections to suspending a part of Rule 13.1 of the Rules of Procedures to give the Bureau time to identify a Chairperson. She then invited the Committee to propose a Rapporteur.
4. With no forthcoming proposals, the **Secretary** proposed to move to the election of the Vice-Chairpersons, thus allowing time for a Rapporteur to volunteer.
5. For the Bureau, the **Chairperson** took note of the following proposals for Vice-Chairs.
6. The **delegation of the** **Netherlands** proposed **Sweden** on behalf ofElectoral Group I.
7. The **delegation of** **Azerbaijan** proposed **Czechia** on behalf ofElectoral Group II.
8. The **delegation of** **Jamaica** proposed **Brazil** on behalf ofElectoral Group III.
9. The **delegation of** **China** proposed **Sri Lanka** on behalf ofElectoral Group IV.
10. The **delegation of** **Côte d’Ivoire** proposed **Djibouti** on behalf ofElectoral Group V(a).
11. The **delegation of** **Kuwait** proposed **Saudi Arabia** on behalf ofElectoral Group V(b).
12. The **Chairperson** invited a proposal for the role of Rapporteur.
13. The **Secretary** appealed to the Committee members for someone to step forward as Rapporteur, or it could be resolved at a later stage through electronic consultation, adding that Rapporteur was merely validating the Committee’s work.
14. The **delegation of** **Netherlands** volunteered for the work the year before, adding that it was not a burden and would be gratifying to have an overview of the Committee’s work.
15. The **Chairperson** thanked the Netherlands for volunteering, and amended the decision.
16. The **Secretary** explained that without the Rapporteur, the Committee would have to suspend the Rules of Procedure.
17. The **Chairperson** suggested a reggae chill moment while the Secretariat sought a solution.
18. The **Secretary** noted the proposal of Ms Jun Takai of the delegation of Japan to serve as Rapporteur in a nominal capacity.
19. The **Chairperson** applauded Japan and proceeded with the adoption of the decision as a whole. **The** **Chairperson declared Decision** [**15.COM 12**](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/12) **adopted**.

**ITEM 13 OF THE AGENDA**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. The **Chairperson** turned to the agenda item 13 and ‘Other business’, inviting Committee members to discuss any issues that they wished to raise.
2. The **delegation of** **Czechia** congratulated the States Parties that had their elements inscribed in this session, as well as those that had submitted their first nomination file. In light of the discussions, particularly concerning the nomination files, the delegation noted a certain disparity in the expectations and approaches of the different Committee members. In this context, it wished to propose that interested Committee members consider reflecting on establishing an informal consultation system to consult and prepare – as much as possible – the session prior its commencement so as better harmonize common positions. This could take place, for example, when the working documents for the session are published. As guardians of the Convention, one of the Committee’s tasks is to ensure its proper implementation. The inscription of new elements always pleased the large family that represents living traditions, but it should not be overlooked in this shared joy that some files present various issues or shortcomings that have an impact on their safeguarding, but also that the elements themselves will not disappear if the recommendations of the Evaluation Body changes. The delegation hoped that the submitting States – together with the communities concerned – would be able to meet the challenges identified by the Evaluation Body, responding to them with respect for the Convention. They should better consult with each other so as to better communicate their intentions. Finding a consensus-based solution would benefit all, the communities, the elements and intangible cultural heritage in general. The delegation thanked the Chairperson for her management of the proceedings, as well as the members of the Committee, the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat.
3. The **Chairperson** thanked Czechia for its suggestion, which would be reflected in the summary records. With no further comments, she turned to agenda item 14 and the adoption of the List of Decisions.

**ITEM 14 OF THE AGENDA**

**ADOPTION OF THE LIST OF DECISIONS**

1. The **Chairperson** remarked that according to the practice, Committee members adopt the list of all decisions up to the lunch break of the last day. The Committee delegated to its Rapporteur the responsibility to validate the rest of the Decisions. Given the online modality and reduced time of this session, the Chairperson proposed that the Committee delegate to the Rapporteur the responsibility to validate all the decisions instead, which would save time. With no objections, the Chairperson thanked the Rapporteur from the Netherlands for making sure that the decisions taken during the Committee properly reflected the discussions.

**CLOSURE**

1. The **Chairperson** remarked that the intense and productive week had come to an end, congratulating the Committee for its no-small feat and for achieving something that had never been done before. It had managed to debate and decide on all the items on the agenda in a fully online modality and with only half normal daily working hours. The enthusiasm, cooperation and willingness to work together in the spirit of consensus meant that Committee members had accomplished a tremendous number of tasks thanks to their flexibility to work in a new way and their commitment to having a successful session despite the many challenges. Special thanks went to fellow Bureau members, the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur for making the job as Chairperson easier and for greatly facilitating the debates. The Chairperson offered sincere thanks to all the Committee members, delegates and representatives who had joined online. Before closing, the Chairperson wished to summarise the achievements. During the session, at times, 1100 people were following simultaneously online, of which there were 833 registered participants from 141 different countries. The Committee examined 44 files as part of the 2020 cycle, of which 3 were inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List and 29 on the Representative List. In addition, 3 programmes were included on the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, and 9 reports were examined on the current status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List from Brazil, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mali, Mongolia, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates. The Committee had taken important decisions related to the number of files to be treated in the 2022 and 2023 cycles, and it had established a new Evaluation Body for the 2021 cycle, including three new members.
2. The **Chairperson** remarked that this session of the Committee required a podium in Paris, Kingston and another for the Evaluation Body, and she thanked the teams on all sides. In this regard, she expressed great appreciation to the interpreters, translators, technicians and everyone else working behind the scenes who had kept the meeting running smoothly online. The Chairperson offered sincere gratitude to the Director-General, the Assistant Director-General for Culture and the Secretary of the Convention and his team for their preparation and hard work before and during the session, especially for adapting to the new online modality. Although the Committee could not be held in Jamaica, she hoped that the reggae chill moments brought the colours and sounds of Jamaica to homes and offices around the world. The music came from the heart with the Redemption song, songs of freedom and solidarity for this wonderful world and people working to attain One Love. The Chairperson wished to give delegations a final opportunity to make closing statements after a final reggae experience featuring the son of Reggae icon Bob Marley, Julian Marley, singing One Love.

*[A reggae chill moment]*

1. The **delegation of** **Jamaica** was pleased to acknowledge the Chairperson’s sterling leadership, having led safely and efficiently, and in record time. The steadiness of her gavel and the calm of the reggae chill moments will live on. This staging of the Committee’s meeting had been significant and the Committee was able to add 32 important elements to the growing list of inscriptions, thereby contributing to the body of intangible cultural heritage globally, which will be preserved and protected. The Committee also proved itself able to pivot and respond to the challenges posed by the pandemic by carrying out its work in unique, creative and effective ways. These two developments were intrinsically linked and offered a roadmap for the flexibility with which the Committee continues to approach its work on the basis of established principles and procedures. The delegation also congratulated the newly elected members to the Evaluation Body and States Parties for their successful inscriptions. Jamaica was grateful for the role played by all the members of the Committee, while commending the Secretariat for working closely and tirelessly with the delegation to ensure the smooth conduct of this meeting. It extended best wishes to all for continued good health and safety, and for a peaceful and enjoyable season and every blessing into the new year.
2. The **delegation of Poland** congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership during this unique and historical fifteenth session of the Committee, thanking her team for their great dedication. This session had been different and historical for many reasons, which proved that despite difficult conditions caused by the pandemic the Committee had managed to continue its duties to ensure the continuity and functioning of the Convention. There were now several new elements on the Representative List, the Urgent Safeguarding List and new inscriptions on the Register of Good Practices. For the first time, a new item was presented, the report of the ICH NGO Forum, and Poland appreciated the important work that the ICH NGO Forum contributes to the implementation of the Convention. The delegation welcomed its readiness to assure an advisory role to the Committee. However, due to the health crisis, the Committee was unable to continue working on the global reflection of the listing mechanism. It was hoped that this process would continue so as to strengthen the mechanism under the Convention in the future. The delegation addressed thanks to the Secretariat for providing a working environment that enabled the Committee to fulfil its obligations. Last but not least, it thanked the Committee members for their great cooperation in the sense of dialogue and mutual respect. The global health crisis taught us that no matter the circumstances, they were able to find solutions to continue the work. The delegation looked forward to cooperating in the next session *in presentia.* As Julian Marley just sang, let’s get together and feel all right.
3. The **delegation of Panama** thanked the Chairperson for her excellent management of the session, as well as the members of the Committee, the Secretariat, the Observers and the organizers. The delegation also thanked the Assistant Director-General who accompanied the Committee throughout the meeting and in the important discussion on the mechanisms for future work. This is a Convention that Panama fully supports, and it sent greetings from the Ministry of Culture, thanking the Committee for allowing Panama to participate. It hoped to meet again once when this very difficult period of the pandemic is over.
4. The **delegation of Botswana** congratulated the Chairperson on the manner in which she conducted and managed this unique and historic fifteenth session of the Committee. Botswana would have loved to be in Jamaica and enjoy the splendour and beauty of the beautiful and wonderful country. Unfortunately, COVID-19 had prevented it. Nevertheless, it was grateful for the taste of Jamaica that had been presented through its music and reggae chill moments. Together with the excellent backstopping provided by the Secretary and his team, the Chairperson managed to pull of this meeting successfully despite the odds. The delegation thanked the Secretariat for the professional manner in which it facilitated the session and the manner in which all the files were treated. It also appreciated the good work of the Evaluation Body and the Committee members for their contribution to making this meeting a success. One advantage of the online meeting was that it enabled small countries like Botswana to have a greater number of people participating, which was a silver lining even though everyone would have preferred the meeting *in presentia*.
5. The **delegation of Kuwait** thanked the Chairperson, the Assistant Director-General, the Secretary and his team, the Bureau, the Evaluation Body, the Committee members, and the Kuwaiti experts, and of course Jamaica.
6. The **delegation of the Netherlands** congratulated the Chairperson on her excellent leadership and for the many reggae chill moments. It thanked the Secretariat for its hard work and excellent documents in these extraordinary times, and congratulated the new members of the Evaluation Body. It looked forward to better times in which delegates can meet and discuss in person, cooperating in a constructive and positive way, and to times in which communities can practice intangible cultural heritage whose wealth shines in the world.
7. The **delegation of Sri Lanka** spoke of the extraordinary session, given the circumstances of the pandemic, congratulating the Chairperson on her excellent leadership, as well as the Secretary and his staff. It also congratulated the new members of the Evaluation Body and all the States Parties with successful inscriptions. The delegation thanked the Committee for electing Sri Lanka to the Bureau, adding that all together the Committee was able to defeat the threat of the pandemic and conduct its meeting with success.
8. The **delegation of Japan** thanked the Assistant Director-General, the Secretariat, the Evaluation Body and the Committee members for the successful meeting. Although it missed not being in Jamaica, it enjoyed the reggae chill music that was played every day. The delegation looked forward to the discussion on the reflection process, which will kick start in February 2021, adding that Japan is committed to UNESCO and intangible cultural heritage.
9. The **delegation of China** expressed sincere appreciation for the highly efficient way the Chairperson had guided this Committee throughout the tight schedule. Thanks went to the Evaluation Body, the Secretariat and all the Committee members. This year had been a special Committee session in a full online modality, and despite not having had enough in-depth discussions due to the global time differences, the Committee still succeeded in completing its duties and tasks in a spirit of cooperation and reaching productive consensus. The pandemic, among other challenges and risks, posed great threats to people’s lives and their social development, as well as the practices and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. China reiterated its commitment to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and joined hands with all the Committee members to contribute to the sustainable development and implementation of the Convention.
10. The **delegation of Côte d’Ivoire** congratulated the Chairperson on her leadership and the Secretariat for having shown that it could face any obstacle. It thanked UNESCO and the Evaluation Body and congratulated the States that had their elements inscribed.
11. The **delegation of Morocco** congratulated the Chairperson for her excellent management of the session, thanking the Secretary and all his team, as well as all the Committee members. The delegation added that the meeting was a success despite the exceptional conditions, and hoped to meet again under better circumstances.
12. The **delegation of Switzerland** congratulated the Chairperson for the way in which she wisely, tactfully and effectively chaired this meeting, as well as Jamaica for its hospitality. It also thanked the members of the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body for this highly successful meeting despite the problems faced. The delegation extended thanks to the Swiss colleagues who are members of the Committee and who managed to overcome the problems despite the distance and thanks to a very positive and constructive mindset that augurs well for the future. The delegation reiterated Switzerland’s total commitment to intangible cultural heritage and its international cooperation in this field.
13. The **delegation of Azerbaijan** thanked the Chairperson on her excellent management and leadership of the session, and the Secretariat for the excellent organization, management and communication, adding that it hoped this was the first and last online Committee meeting.
14. The **delegation of Brazil** expressed immense gratitude to the Chairperson for the outstanding way in which she had led the discussions and enabled the Committee to work online through the agenda, inscribing new elements on the different Lists. The delegation remarked that the Committee had to a certain extent been able to enjoy the wonderful country of Jamaica through its reggae music, even though it would have loved to have been there. It also thanked the Secretariat for the way it had managed to support the work throughout the week. Thanks also went to the Evaluation Body and everyone who had made it possible to hold this successful virtual meeting. The delegation also congratulated the countries and communities whose elements had been inscribed on the various Lists, particularly those from Latin America that are historically close to Brazil’s hearts. It concluded by thanking the Committee for having elected Brazil as a member of the Committee.
15. The **delegation of Saudi Arabia** voiced appreciation to Jamaica for having hosted the fifteenth session of the Committee under such dire circumstances. It congratulated all the States Parties for the inscription of their elements. Saudi Arabia deeply believes in the role of culture in building bridges between countries, cultures and societies. The delegation thanked Morocco and Kuwait for entrusting it to represent the Electoral Group V(b). It expressed its commitment to uphold and protect the values and principles of the Convention and to support the Secretariat and all States Parties in carrying out their mandate in an effective and efficient manner. The delegation thanked Jamaica for the beautiful reggae music that was enjoyed by all, and the Chairperson for her successful leadership.
16. Thanking the members of the Committee, the **Chairperson** noted that States Parties, non-members of the Committee, wished to speak, thanking them for their interest. However, having run out of time, only Committee members were able to take the floor.
17. The **Assistant Director-General**, Mr Ernesto Ottone,remarked on how it would have been a pleasure to be in Kingston, nevertheless, there were some great reggae chill moments to end the year. He spoke of the unusual work situation in the organization of this session with its many difficulties, as undoubtedly many had experienced this year. However, with hard work and perseverance, the Committee had managed to work through these challenges and yet again hold a successful session, one that everyone will remember. This year had revealed the Committee’s ability to adapt to ever-changing needs, highlighting the unquestionable importance of the Convention. His sincere thanks went to Jamaica for its incredible hospitality which was felt even through this online modality, and in particular, the Chairperson. The ADG regretted not being in Jamaica, but the Chairperson had accomplished something truly remarkable by successfully leading the Committee through this online session, for which she and her team should be proud. The ADG spoke of his tremendous gratitude to all the delegates for their support this year, as well as the Committee members for their spirit of cooperation as demonstrated during the meeting. It is through these strong working relationships that the Committee is able to accomplish so much together. In this regard, he extended his welcome to the new Committee members, adding that he looked forward to working with them, thanking the outgoing members for their commitment to the Convention.
18. The **Assistant Director-General** wished to mention in particular Ms Riet De Leeuw of the Netherlands who will retire this year and who had been closely involved with the Convention since its beginnings. She had accomplished so much for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, and the ADG was sure that others would join him in thanking her for her tireless efforts and in wishing her the best in the next chapter of her life. As the year 2020 was coming to a close, he wished to thank the three members of the Evaluation Body who left during this period: Ms Sonia Montecino Aguirre of Chile, Ms Hien Thi Nguyen of Vietnam and the NGO Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions, thanking them for their continued support in the work of the Secretariat. After this successful meeting, there was much to reflect upon and everyone will no doubt take on 2021 with a renewed sense of energy and rigour and, of course, buoyed by the reggae. The ADG thanked everyone, with a special mention for the Secretariat for their remarkable work.
19. The **Chairperson** thanked the Assistant Director-General, adding that it was a pleasure for her and her team to work with him and his team. As they say in Jamaica, a big up to the Secretary, the team and the Secretariat! The Chairperson spoke of the wonderful experience for her and her team, which gathered behind her to applaud everyone for their work. The Chairperson declared the fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage closed.

*[Close of the fifteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee   
for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage]*

1. . Find more information on the activities of ResiliArt [here](https://en.unesco.org/news/resiliart-road-recovery). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . Read the Culture in Crisis publication [here](https://en.unesco.org/creativity/publications/culture-crisis-policy-guide-resilient-creative) (available in English, French, Korean and Spanish). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . Read more about “Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage” [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive&display=constellation). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. . See the image for sustainable development [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive&display=sdg#tabs). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 5. These were: i) Report of the Secretariat on its activities (January to June 2020); ii) Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: voluntary supplementary contributions; iii) Reports of States Parties on the use of International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund; iv) Follow up on elements inscribed on the Lists of the Convention; and v) Reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. . Read the presentation document on the latest developments and strategy for Category 2 Centres [here](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/49686-EN.pptx). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. . Read more about the work of the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP) [here](https://www.unesco-ichcap.org/). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. . Read more about the Living heritage experiences and the COVID-19 pandemic [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/living-heritage-experiences-and-the-covid-19-pandemic-01123). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. . Consult the roster of facilitators in the Global network of facilitators [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/facilitator). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. . Read more about the Steering Committee [here](http://www.ichngoforum.org/steering-committee/). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. . Download the ICH NGO Forum publications on Traditional Medicine and Traditional Food [here](http://www.ichngoforum.org/heritage-alive-2/heritagealive/). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. . Read more about the conference and download the conference papers [here](https://www.unesco-ichcap.org/2020ichngoconference/). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. . Access the publications [here](http://www.ichngoforum.org/heritage-alive-2/heritagealive/). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. . The States Parties of Algeria, Cambodia, Cuba, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Oman and Saudi Arabia had withdrawn their nomination files from examination to the Representative List. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. . The aide-memoires for the different mechanisms can be accessed [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. . Read more about the initiative [here](https://ich.unesco.org/en/projects/strengthening-sub-regional-cooperation-and-national-capacities-in-seven-southern-african-countries-for-implementing-the-2003-convention-for-the-safeguarding-of-the-intangible-cultural-heritage-00359). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)