

MINUTES of the 13th meeting of the ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee

Zoom meeting, 3 November 2020, 15–17 (Paris time)

Present: Jorge Gustavo Caicedo (joined on agenda item 3, had to leave on agenda item 5.c for family reasons), Naila Ceribašić, Donghwan Choi, Kaloyan Nikolov, Meg Nömgård, Butholezwe Kgosi Nyathi (had to leave on agenda item 5.a), Reme Sakr (had to leave on agenda item 5.c)

Agenda:

1. Welcome, opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Approval of minutes of the 12th meeting of the Steering Committee
4. Current issues
 - 4.a. ICH NGO Conference co-organized by ICHCAP and ICH NGO Forum
 - 4.b. Next *Newsletter* of the Forum
5. Preparation of programme for 15.COM
 - 5.a. Work of the Election Board
 - 5.b. ICH NGO Forum General Assembly
 - 5.c. ICH NGO Forum programme during 15.COM
 - 5.d. ICH NGO Forum report for 15.COM
6. Financial matters
 - 6.a. Financial report
 - 6.b. The issue of closing the Forum's account in France
7. Other business
8. Next meeting
9. Closing of the meeting

1. Welcome, opening of the meeting

Nömgård opened and chaired the meeting. It started at 15:15. All members reported on their current local situation.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

3. Approval of minutes of the 12th meeting of the Steering Committee

The minutes were approved. Choi will make translation into French. Ceribašić will send the English version to Gabriele Desiderio, who will publish it at the Forum's website.

4. Current issues

4.a. ICH NGO Conference co-organized by ICHCAP and ICH NGO Forum

Sakr informed the committee about the ongoing preparation of the conference. Janet Blake accepted to serve as one of moderators. There is a problem to get in touch with an OECD representative from Latin America; Caicedo expects his response by tomorrow.

A representative from Amagugu International Heritage Centre should send her full application; Nyathi will mediate concerning this request. The committee agreed that Nömgård would greet the participants at the beginning of the conference. She will also invite Tim Curtis to address the conference participants, and Sakr will provide her with background information. An updated version of the material of the conference has just been published by ICHCAP, and these days it will also be published on our website and through social media; Sakr will contact Desiderio in this regard.

4.b. Next *Newsletter* of the Forum

This morning, Nyathi has sent to the Steering Committee the very first draft of the Newsletter. The members agreed that this is a good starting point, but instead of taking over the complete documents (such as our report and intervention for 8.GA, our report for 15.COM, call for nominations for the SC, etc.), they should rather be summarized, emphasizing the rationale and main points, and providing links to original documents. Also, the parts relating to currently ongoing activities should be updated. Therefore, instead of taking over the call for nomination, the Newsletter should include the latest information on the election process (such as basic information about the candidates, if they will be known at the time of publication), and a report (instead of an announcement) about the conference co-organized with ICHCAP. Nyathi will continue to work on the Newsletter, and send the new version well in advance to the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

5. Preparation of programme for 15.COM

Nömgård informed the members that the Bureau of 15.COM has just decided to consult the members of the Committee if 15.COM should be postponed or held as scheduled but in fully online format. At this moment, unfortunately, it is not known when the decision will be made. Nevertheless, we have to continue our planning as if 15.COM will be held as scheduled, from 14 to 19 December 2020.

5.a. Work of the Election Board

Nikolov provided a report on his and Desiderio's correspondence with the Election Board. All of them will meet online on 10 November to define all details regarding the technical realization of the election process. A part of it, as suggested by the members of the Steering Committee, should be to discuss the format of presentation of candidates. For instance, they may address the membership in a form of video presentations, with subtitles in other official language of the Convention. Nikolov should also inform the Election Board that 15.COM might be postponed.

The members of the Steering Committee also touched upon a problem that the new Committee will be formed, and meet and work until 16.COM only online, possibly in some cases even without any previous face-to-face experience with other members of the Committee, what will surely represent a challenge.

5.b. ICH NGO Forum General Assembly

Nömgård proposed, and members of the Steering Committee agreed upon the following

draft agenda, as well as and upon the division of labour on specific agenda items of the ICH NGO Forum General Assembly, scheduled for Wednesday, 16 December:

1. *Adoption of the agenda*

2. *Report of the Steering Committee on its work from December 2019 to December 2020*

– Caicedo will prepare the draft, relying on the minutes of our meetings; the report should be sent to the membership four week in advance to the Assembly, that is, by 18 November 2020;

3. *Financial report of the Steering Committee*

– Choi will prepare the draft; the report should also be sent to the membership by 18 November;

4. *Elections of new members of the ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee*

– In this cycle, the elections pertain to four members representing Africa, Asia and Pacific states, Western Europe and North America, and International NGOs. Announcement of election results will be made by the Election Board;

5. *ICH NGO Forum Plan of activities for 2021*

– The plan should incorporate the work of the Steering Committee, Working Groups, #HeritageAlive, regional groups, and main projects. Following our report for 15.COM and its draft decision, as well as our plan of activities that was approved last year, the members of the Steering Committee have agreed that a special emphasis should be given to: a) advisory functions of NGOs to the Committee on specific thematic issues, including their more active contribution to the statutory sessions (through the Forum’s report and/or its interventions on specific agenda items); b) elaboration of ways and means to strengthen the network of ICH NGOs in under-represented regions, and to overcome unbalanced geographical distribution of NGOs accredited to the Convention; c) development of capacity-building material intended specifically for NGOs, carried out in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention (and depending on available resources); d) more active involvement of the Forum in the second cycle of regionally-based periodic reports and, more broadly speaking, in follow-up (reporting and monitoring) on inscribed elements; e) participation in the project “Culture Beyond Borders” guided by the Network of European Museum Organizations, NEMO (depending on whether the project will be accepted by the funding agency).

6. *Other business.*

Apart from the above agenda items, it is not clear whether the GA should approve the minutes (or perhaps a summary) of the General Meeting held in 2019 and if this should be one of agenda items. Nömgård will consult Hanna Schreiber regarding this matter.

As for Art. 5 of the Bylaws, concerning the membership of accredited NGOs in the Forum, the members of the Steering Committee agreed that it may not need revision at this stage of the development of the Forum, even more so because the Secretariat has recently included within the accreditation and re-accreditation forms a question pertaining to NGOs’ membership in the Forum. It means that in not later than four years from now, the Forum will have a completely clear, unambiguous and affirmative answer concerning the membership of accredited NGOs in the Forum. Therefore the amendment to Art. 5 can be made in one of the following years.

As for Art. 21 of the Bylaws, concerning the incompatibility of serving in the Steering Committee and concomitantly in the official delegation of a State Party, Ceribašić has proposed to suggest to the General Assembly to prolong a decision on exceptional basis – the decision “to suspend the application of art. 21 of the Bylaws” – until the General Assembly in 2021. Given the obstacles caused by the pandemic, this could be both the easiest and the most adequate solution. On the other hand, Caicedo proposed to prepare a reflection on pros and cons of Art. 21, which can help the General Assembly to come to the most appropriate decision. He will prepare a draft until the next meeting of the Steering Committee, while Nömgård will consult Schreiber whether the last year decision on exceptional basis should be a separate agenda item or it may be included under “other business”.

5.c. ICH NGO Forum programme during 15.COM

Nömgård was in contact with Albert van der Zeijden, who is expected to coordinate the programme of our mini-symposium on ICH and sustainable tourism during and after COVID-19, as well as with Jorijn Neyrinck concerning a capacity-building session for newly accredited NGOs, Leena Marsio concerning the wheel chart of sustainability, and Eivind Falk concerning the *#HeritageAlive*. All of them are willing to prepare the sessions in coordination with the Steering Committee, but actual schedule cannot be defined at the moment because the dates of 15.COM are not yet confirmed. Likewise, Nikolov contacted chairs of all working groups, asking if they would like to organize their online meetings during 15.COM. Ananya Bhattacharya, chair of the Working Group on Overall Results Framework, and Antoine Gauthier, chair of the Working Group on Ethics, responded positively, but same as in the former cases, the exact schedule cannot be defined at the moment. As for English-French interpretation service provided by the Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant, Choi will check with Gauthier if it may be extended to include both the General Assembly and a mini-symposium on ICH and sustainable tourism.

5.d. ICH NGO Forum report for 15.COM

On 22 October, Nömgård and Ceribašić had a meeting with the Secretariat, namely with Tim Curtis, Fumiko Ohinata, Elena Constantinou and Leandro Peredo. Their useful remarks and comments were observed in the revised version of the report, which was drafted by Ceribašić and further on discussed, corrected and endorsed by the members of the ad hoc working group and the Steering Committee. This revised version was sent to the Secretariat on 28 October. The Secretariat is expected to read the document once again, especially examining the draft decision and all its nuances.

6. Financial matters

6.a. Financial report

Choi reported that we did not receive any new statement from the bank.

6.b. The issue of closing the Forum’s account in France

A long-standing problem with closing the Forum’s account in France has been resolved.

Nikolov will these days carried out the technical part of the process of closing the old account and opening of a new, wallet account where the amount will be transferred. For legal and financial reasons, this new account should remain, formally speaking, the account of a French subsidiary of the ICH NGO Forum, namely of the Forum des ONG du PCI.

7. Other business

Nömgård did not yet send a welcome letter to newly accredited NGOs. She is waiting for exact dates of 15.COM to be confirmed by the Bureau.

8. Next meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for 3 p.m. on Monday, 16 November (later on rescheduled for 17 November). Nikolov will host it via Zoom.

9. Closing of the meeting

Nömgård thanked all members and closed the meeting at 17:25.

Minutes drafted by Ceribašić on 3 November 2020; approved by the Steering Committee on 17 November 2020, followed by their publication on the ICH NGO Forum website; translation into French made by Choi.