

MINUTES of the 11th meeting of the ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee

Zoom meeting, 16 September 2020, 15–17 (Paris time)

Present: Jorge Gustavo Caicedo, Naila Ceribašić, Donghwan Choi, Kaloyan Nikolov, Meg Nömgård, Reme Sakr

Absent: Butholezwe Kgosi Nyathi

Agenda:

1. Welcome, opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Approval of minutes of the 10th 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. Reflection on 8.GA and Forum's discussion sessions related to it
6. Preparation of programme for 15.COM
 - 6.a. Work of the Election Board
 - 6.b. ICH NGO Forum report for 15.COM
7. Financial matters
 - 7.a. Financial report
 - 7.b. Ongoing problem with closing the Forum's account in France
8. Follow-up on each member responsibilities
9. Other business
10. Next meeting
11. Closing of the meeting

1. Welcome, opening of the meeting

Nömgård opened and chaired the meeting. All members reported on their current situation, including Nikolov about fire in his office on 2 September, and Sakr on her father's infection with coronavirus, her care for him, and circumstances in the hospital.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

3. Approval of minutes of the 10th 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 is continuously in contact with ICHCAP concerning the online conference "ICH and

resilience in crisis: Implication in the Era of B.C. (Before Corona) and A.C. (After Corona)”. The organizers have selected presentations and participants for the conference, and ICHCAP is in contract with all of them. The selection of keynote speakers is in the process, following also the suggestions received from the Steering Committee in August. Besides, the ICHCAP asked the Forum if we can provide a congratulatory message for its 2020 World Forum for ICH in late September, and thus Nömgård sent our greeting in a form of a short video.

4.b. Next Newsletter of the Forum

The members of the Steering Committee confirmed for the next Newsletter to be prepared and published before 15.COM.

5. Reflection on 8.GA and Forum’s discussion sessions related to it

Caicedo provided an overview of the Forum’s two online sessions at which participants discussed programme of 8.GA. One was organized prior to 8.GA, on 1 September, and the other one after 8.GA, on 14 September in English and on 15 September in French. Those in English were facilitated by Caicedo, and the one in French by Choi. Apart from agenda items of 8.GA, in particular the reform of the listing mechanism, the role of NGOs in the Convention, and a new initiative to examine the accreditation of NGOs from non-States Parties, participants also discussed the functioning of the Forum, certain aspects of the online voting system, the sharing of best safeguarding practices, and the examples of good cooperation between NGOs and governments. This last topic, as some of the participants suggested, could be included in our programme for 15.COM. The French session was poorly attended, probably because French-speaking colleagues, majority of whom are from Africa, have weak Internet connection. Therefore it was shorter than initially planned.

As for the Forum’s more direct and more visible involvement in the work of 8.GA, it was realized through our statement, presented by Nömgård on 8 September in a form of a video message, and through our intervention on agenda item 11, related to the reflection on the listing mechanisms, which was read to the Committee by Fumiko Ohinata from the Secretariat.

6. Preparation of programme for 15.COM

6.a. The work of the Election Board

At the online session following 8.GA, Ananya Bhattacharya, one of the members of the Election Board, expressed her concern for the lack of coordination between the Election Board and the Steering Committee. It has appeared, however, that the major problem is in a lack of clarity concerning the authority of the Election Board, in contrast to only a supporting technical role that the Steering Committee may play. For the 2020 elections, it seems necessary to enable online voting, as well as to allow for the candidates to present their candidatures online, although the existing election rules do not provide for such options. Nevertheless, the Election Board has an authority to determine modalities of the elections, relying in that on Art. 23 of the Bylaws, which says that “[a]ll other policies and procedures regarding the election of the Steering Committee shall be determined by the Election Board.” The members of the Steering Committee agreed to urgently clarify this

matter with the Election Board. As for the technical solution, they agreed to purchase a certified online voting software – instead of designing the voting platform within the Forum’s website – to additionally secure secret voting and avoid any possible doubt concerning their counting. The price of such independent certified online platforms is 13 € for a seat, that is, 52 € in total. Since the Steering Committee has no access to the Forum’s account, the needed amount should be secured through donation, most likely by the Nömgård’s NGO.

6.b. ICH NGO Forum report for 15.COM

On 16 September, Ceribašić has completed the draft of the report and circulated it to the members of ad hoc working group and members of the Steering Committee. In parallel with expected revisions of the draft within this group, Choi will make translation to French, so that both English and French versions can be sent to the membership on 20 or 21 September, asking for their feedback until 26 or 27 September. This will be followed by the last cycle of consultations and corrections by the working group and the Steering Committee. The report should be sent to UNESCO by 30 September.

7. Financial matters

7.a. Financial report

Choi reported that out current balance, as of 31 August, is 4,184.22 €.

7.b. Ongoing problem with closing the Forum’s account in France

The members of the Steering Committee once again discussed the ongoing huge problem with the Forum’s account in France – the impossibility to use it, and impossibility to close it before all members of the Steering Committee meet in person in Paris, what is very unlikely to happen this year. A new problematic aspect relates to the fact that the composition of the Steering Committee will change after the elections in December, and therefore the question is whether both new and old members of the Steering Committee will need to meet in person in Paris to close the account. The Steering Committee agreed that Nömgård and Nikolov would once again contact Diego Gradis, urging him to help inquiring if there is any way out from this conundrum.

8. Follow-up on each member responsibilities

Apart from above mentioned responsibilities, no additional ones were addressed.

9. Other business

Following new accreditations and de-accreditations of NGOs by 8.GA, Nikolov will update the list of currently accredited NGOs, and share the new list with Gabriele Desiderio, while Nömgård will write a welcome letter to newcomers.

10. Next meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for 3 p.m. on Thursday, 8 October (subsequently re-scheduled for 14 October). Nikolov will host it via Zoom.

11. Closing of the meeting

Nömgård thanked all members and closed the meeting at 17.

Minutes drafted by Ceribašić on 2 October 2020; approved by the Steering Committee on 14 October 2020, followed by their publication on the ICH NGO Forum website; translation into French made by Choi.