

ICH NGO Forum Intervention 8.GA 11 (September 2020)

Submitted on 4 September 2020 by the ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee to the Secretariat of the Convention to be presented during Agenda item 8.GA 11

Dear Delegates gathered at the General Assembly,

During the annual ICH NGO Forum Symposium held last year in Bogotá we addressed the ongoing process of global reflection on the listing mechanisms with the view to also include a reflection on the advisory functions of NGOs therein. All NGOs provided their views along with concrete recommendations that we would like to share with distinguished delegates. We want to reiterate readiness of accredited NGOs to collaborate and support States Parties in the listing processes as well as in the discussions on its reform.

- Regarding **pre-inscription process**, we would like to underscore crucial importance of the involvement of communities, groups and individuals, and NGOs since their inclusion in the ICH element selection processes for nominations to UNESCO lists varies widely. We insist on introduction of bottom-up strategies in pre-inscription processes as well as creation of space for this dialogue.
- Regarding **post-inscription monitoring**, NGOs agree that such monitoring is not happening because there are no concrete procedures available to monitor individual elements after inscription. Such procedures would include whether and how safeguarding plans are implemented and whether and how communities concerned benefit from it. ICH NGO Forum hopes that NGOs will be included in the cooperation with States Parties on the post-inscription monitoring.
- Regarding **the assessment of the urgent need to safeguard an ICH element**, ICH NGO Forum noticed that there is no methodology to evaluate the level of urgency available at hand at the moment. There is little understanding of what “urgent” safeguarding means, and a need for more specific criteria for determining **whether** an element requires urgent safeguarding, and **when** it should be removed.
- The importance of the **application of Twelve Ethical Principles** is highlighted by the ICH NGO Forum in this regard. Ethical principle 4 states that “all interactions with the communities, groups and, where applicable,

individuals should be (...) contingent upon their free, prior, sustained and informed consent.” The notion of empathy is also suggested when embarking on urgent safeguarding projects.

- Regarding the **discussion about the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices**, ICH NGO Forum agreed that the register is not given the visibility it deserves. We agreed that the listing is now constructed in a manner that makes the Register simply not attractive to States Parties, in addition to criteria that are difficult to meet. Existing criteria should either be revised and transformed into more concrete terms or fewer criteria should be provided. *Aide-memoire* need to be created to guide States in preparing their nominations. There is also a need to establish Capacity Building Training focused upon the Register.
- Regarding **alternate, lighter ways of sharing good safeguarding practices**, we underline the substantial number of ongoing inspiring initiatives. However, they are often not connected. There is a lack of clarity about who is to take an initiating or coordinating role. We recommend concentrating efforts on clustering and coordinating the networks and initiatives that already exist.

The NGO Forum prepared short report presenting all conclusions elaborated during its workshop in Bogotá, which is easily available at the ICH NGO Forum website to all interested States Parties taking part in the General Assembly.

Thank you for your interest in the work done in this matter in advance!