

Minutes of proceedings of the Extraordinary General Assembly of the ICH NGO Forum held online on November 2nd 2022 at 16h00 (Central European Time, UTC +1)

Mode of meeting: online

Representatives of accredited NGO members of the Forum present at the Extraordinary General Assembly:

1. Sekou Berte - Mali Cultural Heritage Agency (Mali) (Co-chair / Co-président)
2. Mohamed Lemine Beidieu – Association mauritanienne pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel (Mauritania) (Co-chair / Co-président)
3. Alain Muneean, ABAIM (Mauritius) (Secretary)
4. Robert Baron – International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF)
5. Laurier Turgeon - L'Association canadienne d'ethnologie et de folklore (Canada)
6. Janet Blake – Persian Garden Institute for Living Heritage - (Islamic Republic of Iran)
7. Jorge Gustavo Caicedo – La Enciclopedia del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial (Mexico)
8. Reme Sakr – Syria Trust for Development (Syria)
9. Tamara Nikolić Đerić – Association House of Batana (Croatia)
10. Matti Hakamäki, Finnish Folk Music Institute (Finland)
11. Cholponai Usbalieva-Gryshchuk, Aigine Cultural Research Center (Kyrgyzstan)
12. Richard Lavoie, Société québécoise d'ethnologie (Canada)
13. Sophie Elpers, International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF)
14. Irina Ruiz, ACAMPADOC (Panama)
15. Titus Kockel, German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (Germany)
16. Jorijn Neyrinck, Intangible Cultural Heritage Workshop (Belgium)
17. Sabine Monpierre, Femmes et traditions (Canada)
18. Magdalena Tovornik, International Organization of Folklore Festivals and Traditional Arts (Bulgaria)
19. Pranav Chendke, Shree Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal (India)
20. Comlanvi Zohou, Culture-développement (Togo)
21. Hanna Schreiber, Association of Folk Artists (Poland)
22. Eivind Falk, Norwegian Crafts Institute - Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Norway)
23. Vincenzo Capuano, Associazione Sant'Antuono & le Battuglie di Pastellessa (Italy)
24. Gabriele Desiderio, UNPLI - Italian network of Pro Loco Associations (Italy)
25. Charlotte Courtois, Association Konstelacio (France)
26. Julie Aerts, PARCUM VZW (Belgium)
27. Linda Midholm, The Storytelling Network in Kronoberg (Sweden)
28. Lluís Garcia Petit, IPACIM (Spain)
29. Sara Green, Art for Refugees in Transition (ART) (USA)
30. Gary Timbrell, International Association For Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey
31. Madhura Dutta, All India Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association (AIACA) (India)
32. Marco van Baalen, Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Netherlands)
33. Bamogo Sayouba Jacob, Association Culturelle Passaté (Mali)
34. Qurbonidin Alamshoe, Public Association Kuhhoi Pomir (Tajikistan, Afganistan, Krgyzstan)
35. Tumbu Astiani Ramelan, Indonesian Batik Foundation (Indonesia)

According to article 10 of the current ICH NGO Forum Bylaws, the quorum of a General Assembly consists of “20 voting members of accredited NGOs from at least three different regional groups”. Quorum was attained and the meeting began at 16h09 (CET).

The meeting started with a brief welcoming introduction from Laurier Turgeon from the steering committee. He stated that the meeting will be co-chaired by Sekou Berte from Mali and Mohamed Lemine Beidieu from Mauritania whereas Alain Muneean from Mauritius has been assigned with the function of secretary. Mohamed Lemine Beidieu however would join the meeting as soon as this would be possible for him as he was on his way. He joined the meeting at 16h20.

Sekou Berte took the floor to thank all members present. He had a special word of thanks for members of the Ad Hoc Committee who have worked on the proposals to revise the bylaws and electoral rules of the organisation.

He then read the agenda of the meeting as follows:

1. Welcoming of members and presentation of the agenda
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Presentation of the proposal for the revision of the bylaws followed by questions/answers/discussion and, where required, voting
4. Closure

Sekou Berte requested the approval of the agenda by the Assembly as per a proposal presented by Laurier Turgeon and seconded by Sabine Monpierre and Richard Lavoie. The proposal was unanimously approved by the Assembly.

Sekou Berte proceeded with a presentation of the key orientations of the meeting aiming at giving the opportunity to members from every region to express their views on the proposals, to discuss and to vote as the case might be. In order to meet this goal, he stated that every speaker would be allowed two minutes' intervention and, if needed, this would be followed by a second round of interventions. The procedure would consist in i) the reading of the initial proposal of the Ad Hoc Committee (on Regulatory Instruments), ii) presentation of amendments if any, iii) presentation of the response of the ad-hoc committee to the amendments proposed iv) discussion to reach consensus v) voting as the case may require.

No objection was raised by any member as to the above proposal and the chairperson declared that the assembly had accordingly approved the proposal.

The chairperson then introduced the spokesperson of the Ad Hoc Committee , Jorge Gustavo Caicedo. In his preliminary introduction, Jorge Gustavo stated that the Ad Hoc Committee had received a mandate from the steering committee for the purpose of reviewing and revising the bylaws and electoral rules of the organisation. He presented members of the Ad Hoc Committee with emphasis on good representation of all regions as to its composition. He mentioned that two calls for enlisting members to serve on the committee were duly sent to all organisations with no response however from members of international organisations.

Before the reading of the proposal of the Ad Hoc Committee , Jorge Gustavo presented the Assembly with a historical background of the organisation and its track record as regards its achievements in terms of institutional functioning through its bylaws and electoral rules and its recognition by the intergovernmental institution of UNESCO (see annexed document.) The understanding of this background with its strengths and weaknesses, was, according to him, crucial to a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the proposals for revision of the bylaws and electoral rules.

Jorge Gustavo then proceeded with the presentation of each initial proposal captured and summarised as per table below:

Initial proposal of ad-hoc committee	Proposed amendment by members	Response from ad-hoc committee	Discussion /clarification	Outcome
Art 3	An addition	It is viewed that in as much as English and French are regarded as authoritative in the conduct of discussion and documentation, it is imperative that it be spelt out clearly	Nil	The proposal was adopted
Art 4 code of conduct	From IPACIM – two proposals were made		CQPV was satisfied their views had been integrated. Therefore, the amendment was withdrawn	The proposal was adopted without amendment
Art 5	From IPACIM To move this provision to article 6	Welcomed the amendment	It is proposed that article 5 be interated to article 6	The amended proposal was adopted
Art 6	From Patrimoine vivant Viewed it as ‘too strong’	Persuaded to the idea that it might be perceived as harsh		The amended proposal was adopted
Article 7	From CQPV Concerned that i) hybrid mode could	i) Stressed the hybrid mode will in no	Members opined that amendment for the election of	The proposal was adopted

	result in lower attendance ii) chairperson needed to be elected at the general assembly	circumstance decrease the level of participation of members ii) Drew attention to previous occasion, such as the one in Bogota, whereby this type of initiative created more problems	a chair at the GA would indeed carry a high risk of undermining the steering committee on the one hand and provoke a chaotic situation at the very start of the GA	without amendment
Art 12	CQPV – the amendment aimed at allowing members to propose new items on the agenda at the beginning of the GA	It was argued that i) one has to reckon with time constraints at the GA and ii) better phrasing would allow for the inclusion of urgent matters in exceptional cases	No objection was heard to the response of the ad-hoc committee. It was understood that the agenda would have to be circulated in a timely manner.	The proposal was adopted with a better rephrasing.
Art 18	IPACIM – added ‘except in exceptional circumstances’	Is agreeable to accepting this proposal	A further proposal for amendment is that article 18 be presented before article 12.	Both proposed amendments have been adopted
Art 20	IAF - i) Viewed the proposal as a disenfranchisement of the international organisations and proposed to set up a committee with representatives from international organisations to look for more appropriate solution	i) The initial proposal is in line with the undisputed need for a more equitable geographical representation while the actual situation provides one additional seat for western Europe as all international	Arguments in favour of the amendment pointed to the fact that i) international organisations bring along an international perspective together with expertise that will be missing, ii) it is important to differentiate between	The initial proposal has been adopted without amendment by a large majority (19 in favour and 2 against, with 1 abstention)

	<p>ii) Proposed establishment of a new Ad Hoc Committee with the presence of a representative from an international NGO to reconsider this article</p>	<p>organisations are based in this region. Also, it does not ‘disenfranchise’ international NGOs since they can still be members of the Steering Committee.</p> <p>ii) The international NGOs showed no interest in providing inputs into this process by choosing not to participate to the works of the Ad Hoc Committee on Regulatory Instruments, despite two calls for participation.</p>	<p>headquarters and places of intervention of international organisations, iii) being based in Europe allows them to access and make better use of financial resources, iv) international organisations are active in 100-150 countries where there are no NOGs and the proposal would constitute a disenfranchisement of international organisations</p> <p>Arguments in favour of the initial proposal pointed to the fact that i) being based in Europe, the international organisations are likely to show bias in favour of that region; this constitutes an unfair additional advantage with an over-representation of Group I on the Steering Committee. The point is not about excluding but providing a level playing field ii) international expertise should not be considered</p>	
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			<p>to be an exclusive attribute of international organisations as other NGOs do have an international perspective of their work, iii) in no way does the proposal constitute a disenfranchisement of the international organisations in as much as they belong to a region and they may join their region to seek representation. The experience of the Asia-Pacific region has been cited in this respect, iv) the proposal in not taking away opportunities from international organisations but are giving them the same opportunities as all other NGOs, v) the concerns of NGOs remain their communities and international organisations cannot replace the NGOs.</p>	
Art 22	CQPV proposed that some examples be given	Agreement to the proposal		Adopted with proposed amendment
Article 25	CQPV proposed i) to remove 'will' and ii) to rephrase the article to	i) Not agreeable to the proposal to remove 'will'		Adopted with proposed amendments by

	include 'programme of activities' and iii) to rephrase it to include 'take the initiative to meet...'	ii) Proposal accepted iii) Proposal accepted		the ad-hoc committee
Art 27	IPACIM – i) has removed the proposed amendment as it has been taken care of in the previous paragraph ii) proposed rephrasing 'should be adopted by Assembly'	To replace 'such...' by 'any new instrument'	No objection was raised	Adopted with amendments
Art 30	CQPV – to rephrase by including 'can work in French and /or English' as this is inconsistent with the bylaws requiring the presence of at least 3 regions	It is not necessary to state precisely in which language they prefer to conduct the sessions. When working with communities it is understood that we would work with the vernacular language they think fit, knowing that reporting would be done in English and French.		Adopted without amendment
Art 31	IPACIM – To include 'requires a signed petition'	Proposal to read as follows: 'requires a signed request'	No objection to new proposal of Ad Hoc Committee	Approved with amendment
Art 32	CQPV – proposal may seem too rigid	Experience has shown that some working groups have	Working groups should be required to show concrete results; they could	Initial proposal adopted with amendments taking into

	IPACIM – To eliminate period of operation	existed without having submitted any report	be required to submit an annual report failing which they will be dissolved; In view of the fact that some working groups are not performing while others are, the suggestion would be that we don't specify the period of time but request for full justification for continuation of existence; a little time pressure is justified. Thus, a period of two more years could be given as extension without specifying that there will not be the possibility of renewal; this can be coupled with a rotating chair	consideration the following: a period of two more years could be given as extension without specifying that there will not be the possibility of renewal; this can be coupled with a rotating chair.
Art 35	CQPV – b) specify “purpose inter alia”	The expression “inter alia” be added	No objections	Proposal adopted with amendment
Art 36	online	Proposal to include online and in-person		Proposal adopted with amendment
Electoral rules	Comment from IPACIM	The comments have been incorporated into the proposal The lone sub-paragraph (a) of Article 3 should		Proposal adopted with amendments

		be removed for the sake of form.		
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All the proposals having been addressed, the chairperson of the extraordinary meeting, Sekou Berte, thanked all participants for having shown great interest in the deliberations at this extraordinary meeting. He pointed out to the inestimable work carried out by members of the Ad Hoc Committee. This has indeed allowed the Organization to move forward according to him. As regards the proposals presented by the spokesperson of the ad-hoc committee, Sekou Berte took note that the extraordinary meeting has approved them all with or without amendment. He thus declared the proposals adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of the ICH NGO Forum meeting online on 2 November 2022.

The co-chair of the assembly, Mohamed Lemine Beidieu, joined Sekou Berte in his note of thanks. He reiterated the fact that the proposal can now to be implemented.

Janet Blake extended a huge thanks to those who worked so hard on the Ad Hoc Committee, particularly Jorge Gustavo Caicedo who chaired and took responsibility to conduct the meetings. She mentioned that this has been a really successful collegial experience carried out through consensus.

The co-chairs once more thanked the members for their presence and participation. They then closed the Extraordinary General Assembly at 19h01 (CET).