UNESCO Approval of the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region

Charged with pursuing the task of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Asia-Pacific region is no small mission, but under the auspices of UNESCO as a category II centre, the newly approved International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region is set out to do just that. The category II approval granted by the 35th UNESCO General Conference that an intangible cultural centre be established in the Republic of Korea was the final step before officially signing a formal agreement.

In this current era of globalisation and rapid development, we have witnessed the consequences of rapid unbridled development which has resulted in the erosion of intangible cultural heritage, the intrinsic fabric of our social cultural identity. The lack of awareness regarding the value of intangible heritage, and the lack of institutional safeguarding measures have also posed challenges in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Now facing the threat of disappearance, the need for heritage protection has increased. UNESCO has risen to meet this challenge through the implementation of international measures such as the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. With a history of nearly half a century of domestic policy protection of intangible cultural heritage, the Republic of Korea has also made contributions to international safeguarding efforts. Perhaps most notable was the proposal to UNESCO in 1993 to disseminate the Living Human Treasures System as a means of promoting the transmission of knowledge and skills of ICH practitioners, which was followed by a series of annual international UNESCO training workshops in the field. With the accumulated experience and knowledge regarding the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, the Republic of Korea is now poised and prepared to further enhance regional safeguarding capacity by promoting cultural cooperation and exchange through the establishment of an intangible cultural heritage centre for the Asia Pacific region as a category II institute.

Under the direction of the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, a plan to establish an intangible cultural heritage centre in the Republic of Korea for the Asia-Pacific region was developed. In October 2005, at the 33rd UNESCO General Conference, the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Korea officially announced the intention of the Korean Government to set up the aforementioned centre under the auspices of UNESCO. In September 2006, the Establishment Initiative for the Intangible Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (EIIHCAP) was founded within the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation, and it began to lay the base for the future centre by embarking upon several bilateral and multilateral projects with other Asian Pacific States. In November 2008, EIIHCAP changed its name to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP). Throughout this time, the Centre has undergone the necessary procedures in the application process to receive category II status such as undertaking a UNESCO feasibility study in January 2009. The 181st UNESCO Executive Board made the recommendation to the General Conference in April 2009 that the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region be approved as a category II centre under the auspices of UNESCO which was granted at the 35th session of the UNESCO General Conference in October.

The 35th General Conference of UNESCO (Photo by ICHCAP)
Publisher’s Message

Hong-Real Kim
(President, Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation)

I am pleased to present the ICH Courier, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Courier of Asia and the Pacific, along with the news of the approval of the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific under the auspices of UNESCO.

The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation has participated in regional efforts to safeguard the intangible heritage of the Asia and Pacific region, with its experience in cultural heritage protection in Korea. The foundation has proudly supported the bid to create a UNESCO category II regional intangible heritage centre in the Republic of Korea.

I look forward to the active exchange of information within the ICH Courier regarding intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in the region as well the promotion of the creativity and diversity of Asia and the Pacific.

Director’s Note

Presenting the First Issue of the ICH Courier

This marks the first issue of the ICH Courier, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Newsletter of Asia and the Pacific, and we are excited for this chance to share with you the collected knowledge and experience of this vast region in regards to the safeguarding of intangible heritage. Through this quarterly newsletter, we hope to contribute to strengthening the regional capacity for safeguarding, while continuing to raise awareness of the issues facing intangible cultural heritage and networking with the various stakeholders in the region.

The ICH Courier will introduce the diverse intangible heritage of Asia and the Pacific region. The content will also reflect international trends and will address the major activities and issues within the field of intangible heritage safeguarding. As ICHCAP further develops its capacity for safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage for future generations, the ICH Courier will grow with ICHCAP.

It is our goal that the newsletter reflects the diverse voices of the relevant communities and experts working for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and provides an interactive forum for intellectual and policy-based discussion and feedback. I sincerely hope for your ongoing interest and active participation in our newsletter.

Seong-Yong Park
Executive Director ICHCAP

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India is the repository of an astounding wealth of intangible heritage with distinctive qualities of its own. The variety of geo-physical features of India reflects its cultural diversity, from the Himalayan peaks to the sea coast, river-fed plains, marshlands, and deserts, all of which has helped shape its intangible culture in consonance with nature.

India is a pluralistic society that combines different religions, faiths, racial communities, languages and cultures. It has a wide range of artistic activities, traditional knowledge systems, folklore, performing arts and festivals, with about eight hundred dialects, and more than twenty officially recognised languages, several faiths, various styles of art, architecture, literature, music, dance, and lifestyle patterns from the urban and rural to the tribal.

The great challenge in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in India is the immense diversity and multiplicity of expressions prevalent in the country. India has well-developed strategies to address the issues of documentation and revitalisation of its intangible cultural heritage. There are a number of institutions set up by the Government of India at the national level, which are devoted to the safeguarding and fostering of different domains of intangible cultural heritage. There are national academies that were founded in the 1950s for music, dance and drama, literature and the visual arts. They have their counterparts in the provinces, as well as diverse efforts in the voluntary and private sector to encourage and support different activities pertaining to the promotion of local and national heritage.

Broadly, there are institutions engaged in the promotion and preservation of every stream of artistic activity in the country. Between them, they organise performances and exhibitions, publish literary works, give awards in recognition of individual artistic or scholarly achievement, subsidise the work of training institutions, give grants-in-aid for research and documentation, organise and subsidise seminars, document and disseminate the arts through various media, maintain reference libraries and galleries, and publish books and specialised journals.

Given the multiplicity of heritage expressions in India and the forces of homogenisation at work in the world today, the task of preservation of India’s intangible cultural heritage is evolving continuously. Intangible heritage needs to be fostered and promoted in a way that contributes to strengthening respect for diverse cultural traditions and identities, and to promoting tolerance and creativity.

For effective safeguarding of India’s intangible cultural heritage, there is an urgent need to draw up inventories on aspects relating to intangible cultural heritage, pool documentation efforts by providing resources, and taking up steps for their revitalisation and transmission. Many of the existing efforts by different groups, institutions and individuals across India need to be evaluated and cultivated in terms of significance, priority and benefit to the community and the world at large. It is a shared responsibility to be Shouldered through a collaboration of local effort, coordinated academic resource support and catalysed by visionary social responsibility.
The Four Palaces religion of Vietnam, Mother Goddess Liễu Hạnh is the most important figure. People believe that this Mother Goddess has the power to create and govern the four domains of the Universe, which are represented by different colors: the Celestial Palace (Heaven) is red; the Earth Palace is yellow; the Water Palace (rivers and oceans) is white; and the Mountain Palace (mountains and forests) is green. Below this Mother Goddess in the pantheon is a system of male and female deities including Quan (Great Mandarins – male deities), Chầu (Ladies of Honor – female deities), Ông Hoàng (Princes – male deities), Cô (Royal Damsels – female deities), and Cậu (Boy Attendants – male deities).

In Vietnam, thousands of temples and palaces have been built to worship Mother Goddess Liễu Hạnh and other deities in order to wish for good health, good luck, prosperity and happiness. It is believed that the Mother Goddess and the deities were incarnated as important historical figures who made valuable contributions to the country and the people, which therefore transformed the Mother Goddesses religion into a foundation for patriotism in Vietnam.

Lên đồng, the ritual to venerate the Mother Goddesses, is performed with music, songs, dances and plays. The death anniversary festival of Mother Goddess Liễu Hạnh is organized during the 3rd lunar month and includes a worship ceremony, procession, Lên đồng ritual and other rites that attract the participation of millions of people from around the country.
abad Tanah Jawi (History of Java) evidences the existence of traditional (not religious) beliefs in a goddess of the Southern Ocean called Kanjeng Ratu Kidul since the 15th – 16th centuries.

Along the southern coast of Java, in places like Pareng Kusuma, Pelabuhan Ratu and Cilacap, some people still believe in Ratu Kidul and make offerings on special occasions. At least three times a year, large crowds converge at Pareng Kusuma to witness the larung ceremony in which three palanquins containing offerings including batik cloth worn by the Sultan are taken to the ocean in ceremonial procession and submerged.

Annually on the eve of the Javanese New Year (called Sura) thousands gather on Pareng Kusuma beach, and some make flower offerings. On the anniversary of the King’s ascension to the throne, the sacred Bedoyo Ketawang Dance is performed annually before the kings in Java and symbolises the meeting of the king with Kanjeng Ratu Kidul, who is believed to appear and mystically guide the dancers.

The goddess is depicted as an exceptionally beautiful woman dressed in greenish cloth, residing on the ocean floor with her many servants. Out of respect for the goddess, wearing green is still considered taboo for visitors to the south coast of Java. Ratu Kidul is believed to be a spiritual being who provides guidance to leaders, while her servants may also inflict punishments in the form of natural disasters if leaders neglect to perform noble actions for the benefit and welfare of the people. There are various legends about the origin of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul. She exists on the subtle plane and is approached through meditation and spiritual practices.

REFERENCE: Dr. Budya Pradpta, Emeritus Faculty of Cultural Science, University of Indonesia, Interview, 29/08/09
The presence of goddesses has been a consistent feature within Korean polytheistic shamanism and traditional popular religions. These goddesses are often associated with nature or aspects of family and life. Samsin is a grandmother goddess who gives life to babies. Known as Samsin Halmeoni (Samsin grandmother), she protects the mother and newborn during the birthing process and while growing up. Youngdeung Halmeoni (Youngdeung grandmother), the goddess of wind, is a capricious goddess who reflects the stereotypical character of a mother-in-law who torments her daughter-in-law. As Korea became a male-dominant society, Sanshin (mountain god) was modified to become a male god, although Sanshin was originally a female goddess.

Despite the gender shifts of some gods over time, references to Eomisan (mother mountain), and Halmisan (grandmother mountain) still exist today. The god of water is also a goddess called Yonggung Agissi (Lady of the Underwater Dragon Palace). According to Jeju Island’s legend of origin, the island was created by the goddess Seonmundae Halmang (Seonmundae grandmother). Throughout this history, goddesses were worshipped as the embodiment of life. These dominant characteristics of goddesses are still reflected today in Korean intangible cultural heritage. However, there is a noticeable difference as the goddesses were transformed to male gods and became more personalised in the process. The mask dance associated with the Hahoe Byeolsingut (shamanist ritual), which became famous under the designation as an Important Cultural Property, was considered to be a gift to console the patron saint of the village, Miss Kim, a woman who died at the age of 15. People in the village practice rituals and mask dances to comfort the soul of this woman who died at such a young age. Designated as a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, the Gangneung Danoje Festival also features a goddess known and worshipped as Guksa Yeo-Seonangsin (a national goddess in village folklore). In her lifetime, the origin of this goddess was the Lady Chung who was killed by a tiger. Every year, the people of Gangneung carry out the Dano gut ritual to offer consolation to the goddess for her tragic death.

The personalised goddesses featured in Korean intangible heritage are typified by extreme grief in their life stories. Most of the recorded history reflects the viewpoint of successful groups and individuals. But through Korean folk festivals or rituals, history finds balance by recalling people who have failed in their lives. That the majority of those being remembered through the rituals are goddesses is a special characteristic of Korean culture.
In Buddhism, deities and gods are imagined as either male or female. They can appear either calm and peaceful or fierce and frantic. Generally, the more peaceful gods are the deities of harmony, aesthetics, kindness, diligence, etc., whereas the fierce ones are the guardians whose role is to threaten and daunt the demons.

Some of the most well-known goddesses in Buddhism are Tsagaan Dar Ekh (White Tara), Nogoon Dar Ekh (Green Tara), Yanjinlkham (goddess of the arts), and Baldanlkham (guardian goddess). In Mongolia, there are special rites and customs for each god and deity that are performed by religious practitioners as well as ordinary people. The following is an introduction to a unique rite for the deity Baldanlkham. This ritual dates back hundreds of years and is practiced annually with great enthusiasm and respectfulness.

Baldanlkham or Lkham is the sole female deity amongst the ten guardian deities who protect both Buddhism and the people by fighting against demons and evil spirits. Lkham is considered to be the strongest guardian deity and the only one able to vanquish the undefeatable demon. According to legend, Lkham turned herself into an evil spirit and married the demon in order to kill him. After getting married, she succeeded in annihilating the demon along with his son.

On the eve of the Lunar New Year, religious practitioners carry out a special rite for Lkham. During the rite, monks read the dharma sutra named Tsedor Lkham all night until dawn the following day and make an offering of a tsedor, an elaborately decorated ceremonial cake. The offering cake is made of flour, butter and sugar with beautiful, delicate shapes and colours.

Outside of the temples, most families also provide an offering to Lkham at their homes as a gesture of hospitality because it is believed that Lkham pays a visit to each family on New Year’s Eve.

Each family puts three pieces of ice or snow on the doorjamb of their home, which symbolises a drink for Lkham’s mule. A lamp is also set outside the ger (traditional Mongolian dwelling) to guide the deity’s way to visit. Inside the home, sweets, dairy products and other food delicacies are placed in front of icons of the deity. If these provisions are not fully prepared, it is said that Lkham will not visit, thus denying the family of her blessings. For instance, if there is no lamp outside, Lkham would not be able to find the family because she comes down to earth precisely at dusk. If there is no food prepared or an offering is incomplete, the family would not receive her full blessing nor protection for the entire year. Hence, there is an emphasis on faithfully carrying out the customs.
Angkor in Cambodia is a World Heritage Site (inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992) renowned for its archaeological and architectural significance. It contains artistic masterpieces of Khmer sculpture and design and is known for its regional influence of Khmer art. The tangible heritage aspects of Angkor have received global recognition and have been the focus of remarkable international conservation and restoration efforts in recent decades. Angkor, however, is also the site of lesser-known, yet unique, forms of intangible heritage, many of which have links to the Angkorian and Pre-Angkorian periods. Over the past four years I have researched the intangible heritage of Angkor and potential mechanisms for its safeguarding. Many of the forms of intangible cultural heritage researched are intricately associated with the daily activities of people who live around the monuments of Angkor. These activities are related to the belief system of local Khmer and are often deeply intermingled with Buddhist and animistic values as well as familial and agricultural knowledge.

The rural Angkor landscape is a very spiritual place with many local shrines and Buddhist monasteries. These religious features are often located within, or in close proximity to, Angkorian temples. Some of the shrines are dedicated to a belief in animistic and ancestral spirits that guard the Angkorian monuments and reside in features across the landscape. Cambodians frequently give offerings at these shrines and rely on the spirits to ensure the safety and well-being of their families and livelihood. When illness or misadventure occurs, animistic spirits are consulted through...
a myriad of mechanisms. One such means of communicating with spirits is called bowl and is often practiced by women in conjunction with other traditional healing modes. Bowl is used to divine the spiritual cause of an illness. The type of bowl can depend on the equipment used however, it typically involves the use of rice, incense and candles. The diviner will call upon the spirits and ask them individually if they are causing the particular illness. An affirmative answer is determined based on a change being seen in the equipment being used such as the movement of rice. The spirit is then asked what is needed to appease them and remedy the illness. Suitable offerings are then presented.

One of the most important spirits at Angkor is known as Neak Ta Reach which resides within the Vishnu statue in the west entrance gallery at Angkor Wat. This royal spirit, like other spirits, is thought to influence the health and well-being of local communities. An annual ceremony is held within Angkor Wat on the third day of a new moon in the Cambodian month of Miek to pay homage to and seek advice from the spirit. Within this ceremony, spirit mediums, known as rup memot, communicate with the guardian spirits often mimicking their personalities.

The belief in spirits is just one aspect of the intangible heritage of Angkor. Others include forms of ancient traditional healing, life-stage ceremonies that were performed during the Angkorian period, oral histories of local villages connecting them to ancestors who lived in the area centuries earlier, traditional Buddhist practices and inherited agricultural and artistic knowledge.

The enduring intangible links between the Cambodian people and Angkor are often sadly overlooked by tourists who are unaware of the significance of religious features and traditional livelihoods. Recent research and work conducted on intangible heritage at Angkor is striving to demonstrate that the outstanding universal value of Angkor is derived from both its tangible monuments and its intangible cultural heritage. Angkor is certainly not just a site of World Heritage monuments, it is also a landscape comprised of local communities and their unique beliefs and livelihoods that are inseparable from the monuments themselves and provide meaning and spirituality to Angkor.
Mongols have practiced pastoral nomadism for centuries within the vast steppe that stretches throughout Central Asia, which has led to the creation of nomadic civilization – one distinct civilization accepted worldwide. Within the context of this residing landscape the main features of spirituality, and oral and intangible cultures practiced by Mongols have been crafted and determined.

The oral traditions, music and dance performing arts, customs, social practices and festive events of Mongolia are all closely linked to nature and the universe, while manifesting their numerous patterns and sounds. Listening to Mongolian traditional long songs and the sound of the *morin khuur* (horse-headed fiddle) naturally brings to mind the vast endless steppe, whereas the melody of *khuumii* (throat-singing) and flutes inspire the sounds and images of mountainous rivers. Mongolians honour ‘Father sky’ and ‘Motherland’in their praise songs, well-wishing verses. In this way, these types of intangible songs, well-wishing poems and worshipping 'Motherland' in their praise songs, well-wishing verses.

In this way, these types of intangible cultural heritage along with ballades, social practices, ceremonial and festive events, and folklore arts have formed an entire system for the protection of nature.

However, a departure from pastoral nomadism toward intensive urbanisation and the prevalence of globalisation in educational development along with technological breakthroughs have been the prevailing characteristic of the 20th and 21st centuries. Subsequently, the new lifestyle that has emerged within Mongolian society has begun to push intangible culture heritage traditions away from daily life.

In response to these present-day challenges, the Government of Mongolia has made a tremendous effort to raise the awareness of the general public, policy makers and heritage practitioners of the significance of intangible cultural heritage, as well as strengthen the safeguarding capability in part through the use of intangible heritage inventory-making. A brief history of these endeavours follows:

- The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage was approved in 2001.
- The Mongolian President’s Decree on promoting and developing traditional culture of *morin khuur*, long songs and *khuumii* was issued.
- Projects and activities to establish a safeguarding system and inventory for the intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia have been implemented.
- The National Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding were formulated and approved by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of Mongolia.

Currently, on-going activities include extensive field surveys and research on the status of intangible cultural heritage and its bearers together with the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, elaboration of fundamental normative instruments for the establishment of a legal framework for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, creation of an inventory and reference materials for the intangible cultural heritage of Mongolia and so on.

The Cultural Heritage Centre, one of the key institutes for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, has undergone major structural change and is starting a national project to establish an extensive database and inventory on the intangible cultural heritage Mongolia. Furthermore, the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO has been implementing a number of activities through international joint projects aimed at safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage and its bearers.

**1.** Originally a nomadic culture, one of Mongolia’s primary livelihoods has been animal husbandry. The five types of animals herded are horses, camels, sheep, goats and cows. In Mongolia, the traditional way of life is inseparably connected to nature, animals and spirits.

**2.** Men wrestling at a small Mongol Naadam. Mongol Naadam is a festival celebrated nationwide highlighting the three primary sports of Mongolia, or “Eriin Gurvan Naadam”, the “three manly games”: wrestling, horse racing and archery. Mongol Naadam is on the National Representative List of the Mongolian Intangible Cultural Heritage.

**3.** One of the many types of dairy products produced in Mongolia, *aarul*, or dried curds, dry outdoors in the sun and wind.

**4.** In Mongolia, numerous games are played with the ankle bones of animals. Ankle bone shooting is usually played during festive events or festivals. The games popularity has recently seen a resurgence due to initiatives to safeguard, promote and develop the traditional game.

All photos by Batbold Chimed

*Two men set up ger, the Mongolia traditional house. The history of the portable dwelling dates back thousands of years of Mongolian nomadic life. (Photo by Batbold Chimed)*
The Republic of Korea has established the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP) to contribute to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the region. ICHCAP will serve as a resource for the Asia-Pacific working toward the improvement of capacity building and collaborative projects between countries to promote and safeguard intangible cultural heritage and broaden the scope of activity within the specialisation of information and networking.

**PURPOSE**
To safeguard intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific region for the purpose of:
- Contributing to the peace of the region through intangible cultural heritage activities.
- Encouraging the sustainable development of the region with intangible cultural heritage resources.
- Promoting inter-cultural dialogues by intangible cultural heritage networking.
- Preserving intangible cultural heritage to safeguard creative diversity.

**FUNCTIONS**
The Centre is to promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in line with helping the implementation of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage with a focus on information and networking.

**Establishment of an ICH information system**
Establish an information system to ensure effective management of intangible cultural heritage data through the construction of a database, support identification and documentation of intangible cultural heritage, conserve and digitise archival materials and support the development of metadata standards.

**Dissemination of ICH information**
Make use of the accumulated information and data on ICH for the purpose of dissemination, produce and publish informational and promotional materials, and promote the protection of intellectual property rights of ICH practitioners and creators.

**Networking for ICH transmission**
Build networks among concerned communities, groups and individuals to reinforce transmission and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, organise public events and meetings at the regional and international level.

**Cooperation to promote ICH exchange**
Strengthen international and regional networks to exchange information and knowledge concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, particularly among intangible cultural heritage centres and institutes including those established under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2), as well as among individual intangible heritage specialists.

**ACTIVITIES**
ICHCAP is involved in varied projects both internationally and domestically. These projects can be divided by the target groups for each project, whether UNESCO State Parties, experts, or the public.

On an international level, several of ICHCAP’s projects are partnerships with other UNESCO State Parties in the region. A field survey of the present status of intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific region is being conducted in order to better understand how ICHCAP can serve regional needs as a networking and information centre, as well as to establish the foundation for a regional archive. The field survey has started with four countries for 2009 and will expand to include additional countries over the next several years.

ICHCAP has provided assistance in establishing the Living Human Treasures System to other countries in the region such as Vietnam and Mongolia. Through the project, ICHCAP provides resources and materials based on existing systems including expert legal advice to guide countries through the process of creating their own Living Human Treasures System. Support is also provided for the drafting of national lists of intangible cultural heritage and proposals for the Urgent Safeguarding List and National Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Exchange tours of expert teams between countries are also part of the process.

Another international project ICHCAP has provided support for is the India Cultural Atlas which has been carried out in collaboration with the UNESCO Delhi office and Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The Cultural Atlas will be a comprehensive database cataloguing intangible heritage including traditional crafts, performing arts, oral traditions and festivals.

Shifting to a more direct focus on experts in the field, ICHCAP aims to facilitate a greater exchange of knowledge and experience through national, regional, and international expert networks.

This fall, ICHCAP will be holding a capacity building workshop for experts from throughout the region. The International Workshop on the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage will take place at the Grand Hilton Hotel from 3-4 November. The conference will bring together specialists in the field of intangible cultural heritage from around the world to share their expertise and experience. Conference sessions will address the topics of intangible cultural heritage information...
Established on the basis of the Cultural Properties Protection Law, the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation is a corporation that specialises in traditional culture, and pass on traditional Korean culture, while engaging in international joint projects to develop intangible and tangible cultural heritage worldwide.

The foundation promotes cooperative activity through its interaction with various intangible heritage safeguarding bodies from governments and public institutions, to centres for intangible cultural heritage, bearers and the general public. The foundation plays a key role in using traditional culture to enhance communication and understanding across generational, class and sectoral divides.

The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation has implemented various projects in order to promote and popularise traditional Korean culture including reproductions of traditional ritual ceremonies, traditional music and dance performances and exhibitions of arts and crafts, educational programs and publications, cultural tour souvenir product development, traditional Korean weddings, excavation and investigation of cultural relics.

In an effort to expand upon the existing cultural base, the foundation also provides an opportunity to develop and utilise traditional cultural contents to the general public in addition to arts practitioners. Through this process, meetings of cultural heritage experts have also been held to discuss the successes and challenges among current safeguarding efforts as well as the future of policy directives and cooperative international projects.

On a public scale, ICHCAP has also organised and sponsored the Understanding the Cultural Heritage of Korea programme in conjunction with the Training Center for Traditional Culture (based out of the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage). The programme includes site visits to historic sites, museums, and temples along with lectures and workshops that provide hands on experience in traditional performing arts, crafts and cuisine. Targeting foreign students and researchers residing in Korea, the programme has welcomed a very diverse group of participants from across the globe and provided them with an in-depth look at and broader awareness of the cultural heritage of Korea, both past and present.

The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation applied for accreditation as a non-governmental organisation and is currently waiting for accreditation approval from the General Assembly. Once accredited, non-governmental organisations have advisory functions to the Intergovernmental Committee, in reference to nomination files for the Urgent Safeguarding List as well as requests for international assistance.

**Safeguarding Pioneers**

The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation: A Leader of Cultural Heritage Protection and Promotion
Understanding ICH

The Criteria for Inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List and Representative List

After the announcement of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Article 16) and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Article 17) were among the top priority tasks necessary to implement intangible cultural heritage safeguarding measures at the international level.

The Intergovernmental Committee was organised to set the guidelines for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage after the Convention came into effect in April 2006. The Intergovernmental Committee held five ordinary and extraordinary sessions to draft the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which was submitted for approval at the 2nd General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention in June 2008.

No limit was placed on the number of nomination files a State Party may submit for the Intangible Cultural Heritage List in contrast to the World Heritage List, due to the inherent nature of intangible heritage. The first nomination by State Parties for the inscription on the Representative List was processed in August 2008, and in March 2009 for the Urgent Safeguarding List. Several meetings of the subsidiary bodies have been held to examine nominations for inscription on both lists. At the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, nominations for inscription on the two lists were evaluated and decided upon at the meeting.

Below is the criteria for inscription presented in the Operational Directives drafted at the intergovernmental meetings for the promotion and the implementation of the Convention.

The List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

In nomination files, the submitting State(s) Party(ies) or, in the case of extreme urgency, the nominator(s) will be requested to demonstrate that an element proposed for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List satisfies all of the following criteria:

U.1 The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention.
U.2 a. The element is in urgent need of safeguarding because its viability is at risk despite the efforts of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals and State(s) Party(ies) concerned; (or) b. The element is in extremely urgent need of safeguarding because it is facing grave threats as a result of which it cannot be expected to survive without immediate safeguarding.
U.3 Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may enable the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned to continue the practice and transmission of the element.
U.4 The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.
U.5 The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies), as defined in Articles 11 and 12.

The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

In nomination files, the submitting States Parties will be requested to demonstrate that an element proposed for inscription on the Representative List satisfies all of the following criteria:

R.1 The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention.
R.2 Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity.
R.3 Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element.
R.4 The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.
R.5 The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies), as defined in Articles 11 and 12.

Newly Inscribed Elements to the Urgent Safeguarding List Decided Upon at the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee in Abu Dhabi (October 2009)

BELARUS
Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars)

CHINA
Qiang New Year festival
Traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges

CHINA
Traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering

FRANCE
The Cantu in paghjella: a secular and liturgical oral tradition of Corsica

KENYA
Traditions and practices associated to the kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda

LATVIA
Suiti cultural space

MALI
The Sanké mon: collective fishing rite of the Sanké

MONGOLIA
Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian traditional folk dance
Mongol Tuuli: Mongolian epic

MONGOLIA
Traditional music of the Tsuur

VIET NAM
Ca trù singing
**ICH News Briefs**

**[ICHCAP] Congratulatory Banquet for the UNESCO Approval of the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region**

A congratulatory banquet will be held at the Seoul Grand Hilton Hotel Convention Center on Tuesday, 3 November 2009 for the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO. The evening will be a chance to celebrate the establishment of the first UNESCO category II centre in the field of culture in Korea. Approximately 100 people are expected to attend the banquet.

The event will also present a photography exhibition of the intangible cultural heritage from Asia and the Pacific. It is a select portion of the larger photo exhibition entitled Living Heritage: Exploring the Intangible, which was organised by UNESCO as a travelling exhibition in order to highlight the elements that have entered the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity established under the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This exhibition features 90 photos that depict examples of traditional music, dance, theatre, social practices, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, skills and oral traditions. The exhibition will be available for viewing 3-4 November at the Seoul Grand Hilton Convention Center, during the International Conference on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

**[Indonesia] Inventory-Making Symposium and Workshop for the Safeguarding of the ICH of Indonesia**

The Inventory-Making Symposium and Workshop for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was held at the Alila Hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia on 19-20 August 2009. The event was co-organised by the Jakarta UNESCO office and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia.

The workshop aimed to strengthen national capacities for implementing the 2003 ICH Convention and provide information relating to its implementation to stakeholders. The workshop had a special focus on inventory-making, with the participation of communities, and understanding the nomination procedure for the Representative List and the List of Intangible Heritage in Urgent Need of Safeguarding. The workshop included a hands-on practicum and training in identifying and inventorying intangible cultural heritage elements.

![Inventory-Making Symposium and Workshop in Jakarta](Photo by ICHCAP)

**[ICOM-ICME] 2009 Conference in Seoul**

The annual conference of the International Council of Museums International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography (ICOM-ICME) was held in Seoul, Korea from 19-21 October 2009 hosted by the National Folk Museum of Korea. The conference addressed two themes of Museums for Reconciliation and Peace, and Roles of Ethnographic Museums in the World. Through these themes, the conference explored ways in which museums can serve as an educational venue that facilitates open discussion around the historical and cultural issues facing the region. The conference was followed by a post-conference tour of cultural places of interest on 22-24 October.

**[ICHAP] Field Survey of the ICH Safeguarding Efforts in the Asia-Pacific Region**

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific has embarked on a field survey of the intangible cultural heritage safeguarding efforts in the Asia-Pacific region that will span five years from 2009 to 2013. The first year of the survey will begin by focusing on the states of Uzbekistan, Thailand, Fiji and Cambodia.

The goal is to collect basic information regarding the present state of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region while developing a method for conducting field surveys. The hope is that a clearer picture will be gained by interviewing intangible heritage relevant administrative bodies and safeguarding organisations, and by collecting additional background data on current safeguarding efforts in the region.

It is expected that the field survey project would help to build a foundation for a cooperative network among intangible cultural heritage experts and relevant organisations by providing an opportunity to exchange information and experience.

**[Mongolia] Symposium and Workshop on the Safeguarding of the ICH in Mongolia**

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO held The Symposium and Workshop on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 7 to 10 September 2009. The symposium and workshop are part of the ongoing process of developing a system for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Among the nearly 60 participants were Mongolian government officers, intangible heritage experts and bearers.

The main outcomes of the event were to:
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and transmitting intangible cultural heritage among related government officers, experts and bearers;
- Train selected holders of intangible cultural heritage;
- Develop a training module for the young generation focusing on the transmission and maintenance of intangible cultural heritage;
- Enhance the capacity of intangible cultural heritage relevant institutes and government officers in Mongolia.

![Blessing for the Guests at the Symposium and Workshop for Safeguarding ICH in Mongolia](Photo by ICHCAP, 2009)
The next session of the Intergovernmental Committee (i.COM) will take place in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2010.

[UNESCO] 4th Intergovernmental Committee Meeting in Abu Dhabi
The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage took place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from 28 September to 2 October 2009. There were approximately 450 participants from around 40 countries at the meeting.

Of the major issues discussed, decisions were made concerning which nominated elements would be inscribed. Among other things, it was decided that 12 items would be inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List and 76 items would be inscribed on the Representative List. In addition, 47 non-governmental organisations were approved for accreditation.

Draft operational directives that were tabled at the third session of the Intergovernmental Committee on increasing visibility of intangible cultural heritage, the use of the emblem, and the means to increase the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund were adopted. These directives will then go to the General Assembly for final approval at the 2010 meeting.

A topic of heated debate at the fourth session was about whether there should be a limit to the number of nominations a single country may submit. The reality being that the sheer number of nominations has thus far been difficult for both the Secretariat and Subsidiary Body to process. However, the prevailing sentiment was that not setting a limit would be more in line with the Convention. Thus, the decision was made that on an exceptional basis relating only to the nominations proposed for evaluation in 2010, that the Secretariat and the Subsidiary Body examine with priority the nominations for the Representative List submitted by States Parties that do not have elements inscribed on such List, have few elements inscribed or have presented multinational nominations.

In this workshop, cultural heritage experts and policy makers from Asia and the Pacific region have been invited to exchange knowledge and experience, discuss the current regional issues being faced and the tasks necessary in the search for solutions.

Twelve participants will represent Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

There will be a focus on emerging issues in the field of cultural heritage safeguarding during the discussions and lectures. In addition, there will be study tours and institute visits to government and nongovernmental organisations related to cultural heritage safeguarding in Korea in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the scope of Korean cultural heritage preservation policy.