

I . GANGNEUNG DECLARATION

International Round Table of Mayors on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Gangneung City, Republic of Korea, 15-17 June 2004)

An International Round Table of Mayors on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, jointly organized by the Gangneung City Government and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO with technical assistance from UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Section, took place in Gangneung City, Republic of Korea, from 15 to 17 June 2004. This unprecedented forum was held within the framework of the 2004 Gangneung International Folklore Festival devoted to the theme "Communion with Man and Myth". The thirty-four participants, including Governors, Mayors or their representatives, and international experts expressed their gratitude to the Gangneung City Government for its cordial welcome, hospitality and courtesy extended to them, and for its excellent organization of the forum.

The Gangneung Round Table of Mayors considers itself as a follow-up activity to the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (1998), UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003). It prides itself to be an integral part of all actions of international community aimed at maintenance of world cultural diversity, the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage and ensuring the inseparability between culture, sustainable development and coexistence of culturally diversified communities.

This forum has unanimously confirmed that the intangible cultural heritage, while being as crucial nowadays as never before, is facing a series of threats and challenges. The growing influence of globalization, commercialization, urbanization, and migration implies that cultural communities need to be armed with the most appropriate cultural and development strategies/policies to meet these new threatening realities. And actions for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage become really imperative, necessitating the united and constructive solidarity of all possible partners. In this respect, local governments, particularly

of those cities which are headed by Mayors, play a crucial role. While perceiving and sharing common challenges, we however understand that concrete solutions to the problems implied must reflect different circumstances affecting each of our cities.

Therefore, we, participants at the Gangneung International Round Table of Mayors on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, appeal to Mayors and policy-makers in the world to:

- a. strive steadfastly for defence and maintenance of world cultural diversity as a fundamental prerequisite for existence and development of humanity, and, with this noble cause in mind, to encourage UNESCO in its efforts to create a new normative instrument – Convention on Cultural Diversity;
- b. promote an intercultural dialogue in order to ensure mutual rapprochement and enrichment of all cultures of the world;
- c. pursue sustainable development that builds on and enhances the strengths of the intangible cultural heritage.

To achieve these goals, the Gangneung Round Table of Mayors addresses the following recommendations:

To intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

1. to seek more funding and support from development-financing institutions towards the programs initiated by local governments and aimed at the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage;
2. to promote cooperation between the agencies working in the field of the intangible cultural heritage through their reinforced linkages and networks;
3. to support the establishment of new regional centers and networks on the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in conformity with the "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage".

Particularly to UNESCO

4. to pursue its ground-breaking work on maintenance of world cultural diversity and especially on successful completion and adoption by international community of the "International Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions" as a cornerstone for new era of world cultural diversity and better future of humanity;

5. to provide its continuous assistance to the Member States in the safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage, using the "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" as the normative basis for such activities;

To Mayors of cities/towns and other leaders of local governments

6. to give top priority to strategies and policies on the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage through application of required administrative, legislative, financial and promotional actions;

7. to ensure the reinforced involvement of private sector (companies, foundations, civil society organizations) as an indispensable partner in the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage and ensuring culturally-oriented sustainable development;

8. to establish and develop an inter-city cooperation network aimed at the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage and maintenance of sustainable development. With this view in mind, to entrust Gangneung City to be a focal point of such network. The newly-created mechanism will facilitate the organization of thematical meetings and discussions, the exchange of experiences and operational contacts, the sharing of innovative policies/programs/projects, and the increased intercultural dialogue through the organization of joint festivals and cultural events, production of CDs and CDroms, publication of representative works on various cultures, and other appropriate pertinent activities ;

9. to elaborate a long-term program, which will identify, promote and disseminate the most effective ways and means of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. Key components of this program will be the working out of collaborative/comparative studies on the experiences of different cities/ towns and the organization of thematical workshops for local government administrators. Topics for these studies and workshops should include

such aspects of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage as: gender dimensions, relationship to tourism, role of formal education system and promotional activities.

10. (a) to organize a thematical workshop in Gangneung City in 2005 as a concrete follow-up to the present International Round Table of Mayors (2004).

(b) to plan the holding of the Second International Round Table of Mayors on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2006).

We, the participants at the Gangneung International Round Table of Mayors, take the initiative of launching a world-wide movement of Mayors and other local government leaders of local for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage as a vital component of sustainable development. We solemnly declare that all those, who share the credo and principles enunciated in the present "Gangneung Declaration", are most welcome to join our movement.

17 June 2004

Gangneung City (Republic of Korea)