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## Diversity of Cultural Expressions

3 CP

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### CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

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**Item 8 of the provisional agenda:** Pertinence and feasibility of appointing public persons to promote the Convention

At its second ordinary session in June 2009, the Conference of Parties invited the Committee to examine the pertinence and feasibility of appointing one or several public persons to promote the Convention (Resolution 2.CP 7). This document provides a summary of the proposals submitted to the Committee and the discussions that it held concerning this issue, which the Conference of Parties may wish to use as a basis for its discussions.

Decision required: paragraph 10



1. The Conference of Parties, at its second ordinary session (June 2009), invited the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”, to examine the pertinence and feasibility of appointing one or several public persons to promote the Convention, taking into account the objectives, modalities, mandate and costs of such a mechanism, and to report thereon to the Conference of Parties at its third ordinary session (Resolution 2.CP 7).

2. In accordance with the mandate given to the Committee by Resolution 2.CP 7 of the Conference of Parties, the Secretariat sent a questionnaire on 6 July 2009 to the Parties and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee: 32 Parties and five civil society organizations returned the questionnaire to the Secretariat. The replies, which were reproduced in information document CE/09/3.IGC/211/INF.5, were distributed at the third ordinary session of the Committee (December 2009) and published on the Convention’s website (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/2005-convention/the-convention/>). One of the questions concerned the profile and role of a potential spokesperson, and whether the spokesperson should be appointed at the international and/or national level.

3. At its fourth ordinary session (December 2010), the Committee held its first debate on this issue. The working document (CE/10/4.IGC/205/6) took account of the request submitted to the Committee by the Conference of Parties (Resolution 2.CP 7) and the replies to the questionnaire provided by Parties and civil society organizations. This document put forward several suggestions concerning the objectives, modalities, mandate, and costs of such a mechanism.

4. The replies to the questionnaire indicated that the suggested **objectives** of appointing a public personality could be to promote the principles and objectives of the Convention, to facilitate a better understanding of the Convention by the general public, to help to increase the number of ratifications of the Convention (by emphasizing the benefits and usefulness of ratification, especially in under-represented regions), and to contribute to fundraising efforts in general and for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) (by mobilizing potential donors, participating in fundraising events, etc.).

5. With regard to the **modalities**, the replies to the questionnaire highlighted three alternatives: the appointment of a *single spokesperson* at the international level; the appointment of *six spokespersons*, each representing an electoral group (the Committee, assisted by the Secretariat, would determine the nature, timetable and follow-up of activities of this group of spokespersons); the engagement of *several spokespersons at the national, regional and local levels* (from different backgrounds with different profiles, ranging from artists to academics, celebrities, prominent leaders and entrepreneurs, community role models, educators, etc.). The modalities would depend on whether one or several international and/or national spokespersons were engaged. However, it appears from the replies to the questionnaire that the first alternative, engaging a single spokesperson, would be extremely difficult given that one person could not adequately speak for the entire range of messages in the Convention or for the sheer diversity of cultural expressions worldwide. In addition, there is no precedent for the appointment of such a panel of spokespeople for other UNESCO conventions. Moreover, the first two alternatives would require additional human resources from the Secretariat, and financial resources would have to be allocated for that purpose.

6. As to the **mandate**, should the decision be made to appoint a *single spokesperson*, a shortlist of candidates could be considered by the Committee and voted on by the Conference of Parties. The selection of candidates could be based on their prestige and networks to promote the Convention, their ability to reach out and identify with an international audience, and their potential to serve as a positive role model for young people in particular. Should the decision be made to appoint *six spokespersons*, their mandate could be determined by the Committee based on the objectives and messages to be

communicated identified by each electoral group. Concerning the procedures for appointing *one or several public person(s) at the national, regional or local level*, each Party would determine on its own the appointment procedure, the activities to be undertaken, and the human and financial resources to be allocated.

7. The **costs** of such a mechanism would be determined by the modality selected. Should it be decided to appoint a single spokesperson, the minimum estimated annual expense would be US \$151,413. Should it be decided to appoint six spokespersons, each representing one electoral group, the minimum estimated annual cost would be \$327,846. The resources invested in the activities of one or several spokespersons at the national, regional or local level would be borne by the Parties themselves.

8. Replies to the questionnaire underlined the importance of the participation of *civil society and citizens as “public personalities”*. Additional human and/or financial resources would be required to support designated civil society organizations to ensure implementation of awareness-raising activities and events. Each Party could determine how and to what extent they would be involved in such activities.

9. On the basis of these proposals, the outcome of the Committee’s discussions was that appointing public personalities appeared to be premature in view of the newness of the Convention and that the issue was not a priority for the implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, the costs entailed in establishing such a mechanism would be too high; it would be better if the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) were used to fund development projects. Besides, the appointment of public personalities would give rise to difficulties concerning the precise mandate and competencies of each spokesperson, which would then be hard to monitor, as would the expected results. Moreover, the Committee stressed that the points of contact responsible for sharing information on the Convention designated by the Parties could participate in activities promoting the Convention. It also emphasized that UNESCO’s regional groups would not have to assume the role of spokesperson. In that connection, the Committee said it was open to all measures and mechanisms for the promotion of the Convention, but the appointment of public personalities was not deemed the best response. At this stage, the Committee has decided that each Party is entitled to choose whatever mechanism it deems appropriate to promote the objectives of the Convention, including the possibility of appointing a spokesperson (Decision 4 IGC.6).

10. The Conference of Parties may wish to adopt the following resolution:

### **DRAFT RESOLUTION 3.CP 8**

*The Conference of Parties,*

1. Having examined document CE/11/3.CP/209/8;
2. Takes note of Decision 4.IGC 6 of the Committee;
3. Recalls that the functions of the Committee shall be, inter alia, to promote the objectives of the Convention (Article 23.6 (a) of the Convention);
4. Decides that each Party shall be entitled to determine the most appropriate mechanism to promote the objectives of the Convention, including the possibility of appointing a spokesperson.