

# Records of the General Conference

Twenty-fifth Session    Paris, 17 October to 16 November 1989

Volume 1

# Resolutions

United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

*Note on the Records of the General Conference*

The Records of the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference are printed in three volumes:

The present volume, containing the resolutions adopted by the General Conference and the list of officers of the General Conference and of the Commissions and Committees (Volume 1);

The volume *Reports*, which contains the reports of Commissions I to V, the Administrative Commission and the Legal Committee (Volume 2);

The volume of *Proceedings*, which contains the verbatim records of plenary meetings, the list of participants and the list of documents (Volume 3).

*Note on the numbering of resolutions*

The resolutions have been numbered serially, It is recommended that references to resolutions be made in one of the following forms:

'Resolution 7.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session'; or  
'25 C/Resolution 7,1'.

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# Contents

I	Organization of the session, admission of new Member States, election of members of the Executive Board and tributes	
0.1	Credentials .....	1
0.2	Communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article IV.C, paragraph 8(c), of the Constitution .....	3
0.3	Adoption of the agenda .....	3
0.4	Composition of the General Committee .....	8
0.5	Organization of the work of the session .....	9
0.6	Admission of new Member States .....	9
	0.61 Admission of the Cook Islands and Kiribati as Member States .....	9
	0.62 Request for the admission of Palestine to Unesco .....	9
0.7	Admission to the twenty-fifth session of observers from international non-governmental organizations .....	11
0.8	Election of members of the Executive Board .....	11
0.9	Tribute .....	12
	0.91 Tribute to Professor José I. Vargas, Chairman of the Executive Board .....	12
II	Reports on the activities of the Organization and programme evaluation	
0.10	Report by the Executive Board on its own activities in 1988-1989, including the reform process .....	13
III	Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995	
100	Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995 - General Resolution .....	15
101	Major Programme Area I: 'Education and the future' .....	16
102	Major Programme Area II: 'Science for progress and the environment' .....	22
103	Major Programme Area III: 'Culture: past, present and future' .....	26
104	Major Programme Area IV: 'Communication in the service of humanity' .....	31
105	Major Programme Area V: 'The social and human sciences in a changing world' .....	37

106	Major Programme Area VI: 'Unesco's contribution to prospective studies and to strategies concerned with development' . . . . .	40
107	Major Programme Area VII: 'Unesco's contribution to peace, human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination' . . . . .	43
108	Transverse Themes - General part . . . . .	47
109	Transverse Theme - Women . . . . .	47
110	Transverse Theme - Youth . . . . .	50
111	Transverse Programme - General Information Programme . . . . .	51
112	Transverse Programme - Clearing-house . . . . .	52
113	Transverse Programme - Statistical programmes and services . . . . .	53
114	Transverse Programme - Future-oriented studies . . . . .	54
115	Mobilizing Projects - General part . . . . .	55
116	Mobilizing Project 1 - Combating illiteracy . . . . .	56
117	Mobilizing Project 2 - Youth shaping the future . . . . .	57

#### IV Programme for 1990-1991

##### A. Major Programme Areas

1	Education and the future . . . . .	59
1.1	Major Programme Area I: 'Education and the future' . . . . .	59
1.2	International Bureau of Education . . . . .	66
1.2.1	Amendment of the Statutes of the International Bureau of Education . . . . .	68
1.3	International Institute for Educational Planning . . . . .	70
1.4	Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg . . . . .	71
1.5	Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000 . . . . .	71
1.6	International Literacy Year . . . . .	73
1.7	National Committees for International Literacy Year . . . . .	74
1.8	World Conference on Education for All . . . . .	74
1.9	Literacy for women and girls . . . . .	76
1.10	Promoting the right to education . . . . .	77
1.11	Education for migrants and nomadic and resettled people . . . . .	78
1.12	Co-operation with the Regional Centre for Adult Education and Functional Literacy for Latin America (CREFAL) . . . . .	79
1.13	The young child and the family environment . . . . .	80
1.14	The fight against drugs . . . . .	81
1.15	Assistance for preventive education . . . . .	83
1.16	Statutes of the International Fund for the Development of Physical Education and Sport . . . . .	83
1.17	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport . . . . .	88
1.18	Development of physical education and sport . . . . .	88
1.19	The fight against doping in sport . . . . .	89
1.20	Universality of the Olympic Games . . . . .	91
1.21	Development of technical and vocational education . . . . .	92
1.22	Teacher education . . . . .	92
1.23	Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers . . . . .	93
1.24	Recognition of studies, degrees and diplomas in higher education . . . . .	95

1.25	New information and communication technologies in education and training . . . . .	95
1.26	Computer education in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic . . . . .	96
1.27	European co-operation in education . . . . .	97
1.28	Election of members of the Conciliation and Good Offices Commission to be responsible for seeking the settlement of any disputes which may arise between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education . . . . .	98
2	Science for progress and the environment . . . . .	99
2.1	Major Programme Area II: 'Science for progress and the environment' . . . . .	99
2.2	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme . . . . .	104
2.3	Election of members of the International Co-ordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere . . . . .	104
2.4	Amendment to Article VII(3) of the Statutes of the International Co-ordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere . . . . .	105
2.5	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme . . . . .	105
3	Culture: past, present and future . . . . .	106
3.1	Major Programme Area III: 'Culture: past, present and future' . . . . .	106
3.2	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation . . . . .	109
3.3	Election of the members of the Executive Committee of the International Campaign for the Establishment of the Nubia Museum in Aswan and the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Cairo . . . . .	110
3.4	World Decade for Cultural Development . . . . .	110
3.5	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Committee of the World Decade for Cultural Development . . . . .	113
3.6	Jerusalem and the implementation of 24 C/Resolution 11.6 . . . . .	113
3.7	International Fund for the Promotion of Culture . . . . .	115
3.8	Integral Study of the Silk Roads . . . . .	115
3.9	Commemoration of the Five-Hundredth Anniversary of the Encounter between Two Worlds . . . . .	116
3.10	Safeguarding of works in the public domain . . . . .	118
4	Communication in the service of humanity . . . . .	118
4.1	Major Programme Area IV: 'Communication in the service of humanity' . . . . .	118
4.2	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication . . . . .	123

5	The social and human sciences in a changing world .....	124
5.1	Major Programme Area V: 'The social and human sciences in a changing world' .....	124
5.2	Philosophy, ethics and the life sciences . . . . .	126
6	Unesco's contribution to prospective studies and to strategies concerned with development .....	127
6.1	Major Programme Area VI: 'Unesco's contribution to prospective studies and to strategies concerned with development' .....	127
7	Unesco's contribution to peace, human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination . . . . .	130
7.1	Major Programme Area VII: 'Unesco's contribution to peace, human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination' .....	130
7.2	Full and comprehensive implementation of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974) .....	132
7.3	Human rights and scientific and technological progress . . . . .	135
7.4	Search for greater equity and more active solidarity in relations between industrialized countries and developing countries . . . . .	136
7.5	Role of the Associated Schools, Unesco Clubs, Centres and Associations in the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation .....	136
7.6	Implementation of 24 C/Resolution 13.5 concerning the follow-up to the recommendations of the International Congress on Human Rights Teaching, Information and Documentation (1987) .....	139
 B. Mobilizing Projects		
8.1	Mobilizing Project 1: Combating illiteracy . . . . .	140
9.1	Mobilizing Project 2: Youth shaping the future . . . . .	140
 C. Transverse programmes and Ancillary services; Participation Programme and Transverse themes <sup>1</sup>		
15.1	Transverse programmes .....	141
15.11	General Information Programme .....	141
15.111	Amendment to Article 4.1 of the Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme .....	144
15.112	Election of members of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme .....	144

1. It has been decided to start Part II.C with number 15, although it is preceded by number 9, in order to align the numbering of the resolutions adopted by the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference as closely as possible with the numbers of the proposed resolutions in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1990-1991.

15.12	Clearing-house . . . . .	145
15.13	Statistical programmes and services . . . . .	145
15.131	Standing panel of experts on Unesco's statistical services . . . . .	146
15.14	Future-oriented studies . . . . .	147
15.2	Ancillary services . . . . .	148
15.21	Bureau for External Relations . . . . .	148
15.211	European co-operation . . . . .	150
15.212	The role of National Commissions for Unesco and their contribution to the work of Unesco . . . . .	152
15.213	Sexennial report of the Executive Board on the contribution made to Unesco's activities by international non- governmental organizations in categories A and B . . . . .	154
15.22	Bureau for Co-ordination of Field Units . . . . .	157
15.23	Office of Public Information/Unesco Courier . . . . .	158
15.231	Commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Francisk Skorina . . . . .	158
15.232	Commemoration of the 750th anniversary of the birth of Yunus Emre . . . . .	160
15.3	Participation Programme . . . . .	160
V	Programme supporting services	
16	Office of Conferences, Languages and Documents . . . . .	165
16.1	Planning of meetings in categories I to VIII . . . . .	165
VI	Budget	
17	Appropriation Resolution for 1990-1991 . . . . .	167
VII	General resolutions	
18	Improvement of the status of women . . . . .	175
19	Implementation of 24 C/Resolution 24 concerning Unesco's contribution to the promotion of international co-operation with regard to young people . . . . .	176
20	Implementation of 24 C/Resolution 25 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories . . . . .	178
21	Implementation of 24 C/Resolution 27 concerning the fortieth anniversary of the founding of Unesco . . . . .	180
22	Follow-up to the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men: Yamoussoukro Declaration; Seville Statement on Violence . . . . .	181
23	Establishment of the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize . . . . .	182
24	Feasibility study on the establishment of a Unesco fellowship bank . . . . .	183
25	Plan for the Development of Education for Inter- national Understanding, Co-operation and Peace . . . . .	184

26	Education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms . . . . .	186
27	Co-operation with Africa . . . . .	188
28	Proposal for an informatics and telecommunications development plan . . . . .	189

#### VIII Constitutional and legal questions

29	Amendments to the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference . . . . .	191
29.1	Proposed amendment to Article II, paragraph 2, of the Constitution' . . . . .	191
29.2	Proposed amendments to Article II, paragraph 6, and Article IX of the Constitution . . . . .	191
29.3	Amendment to Article VI, paragraph 2, of the Constitution . . . . .	192
29.4	Amendment to Article 1X.3 of the Constitution . . . . .	193
29.5	Amendment of Rules 6 and 67B of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference and of Article 7B of the Regulations for the general classification of the various categories of meetings convened by Unesco . . . . .	193
30	Consideration of the constitutional and statutory texts from the point of view of form and language . . . . .	194
31	Possibility of requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the interpretation that should be given to the Constitution on the financial obligations of a Member State which withdraws from the Organization in the course of a budgetary period . . . . .	195

#### IX Financial questions

32	Financial reports . . . . .	197
32.1	Financial report and audited financial statements relating to the accounts of Unesco for the financial period ended 31 December 1987, and report by the External Auditor . . . . .	197
32.2	Financial report and audited financial statements relating to the United Nations Development Programme as at 31 December 1987, and report by the External Auditor . . . . .	197
32.3	Financial report and interim financial statements relating to the accounts of Unesco as at 31 December 1988 for the financial period ending 31 December 1989 . . . . .	198
33	Contributions of Member States . . . . .	198
33.1	Scale of assessments . . . . .	198
33.2	Currency of contributions . . . . .	201
33.3	Collection of contributions . . . . .	204
34	Working Capital Fund . . . . .	205
34.1	Level and administration . . . . .	205
34.2	Facility to assist Member States to acquire the educational and scientific material necessary for technological development . . . . .	206
35	Amendments to the Financial Regulations . . . . .	206
35.1	Amendments to Articles 6.7, 7.3, 7.6, 9.1 and 13.2 . . . . .	206



36	Appointment of an External Auditor . . . . .	207
37	Financing of the Fund for End-of-Service Grants and Indemnities . . . . .	208
X	Staff questions	
38	Staff Regulations and Staff Rules . . . . .	209
39	Salaries, allowances and other benefits . . . . .	209
	39.1 Staff in the Professional category and above . . . . .	209
	39.2 Staff in the General Service category . . . . .	210
40	Geographical distribution of the staff, revision of the quota system and medium-term overall plan (1990- 1995) for the recruitment and renewal of the staff . . . . .	212
41	Unesco Staff Pension Committee: Election of represen- tatives of Member States for 1990-1991 . . . . .	213
42	State of the Medical Benefits Fund . . . . .	213
43	Administrative Tribunal: Extension of its jurisdiction . . . . .	214
XI	Headquarters questions	
44	Report by the Headquarters Committee . . . . .	215
45	Mandate of the Headquarters Committee . . . . .	216
XII	Methods of work of the Organization	
46	Methods of preparing the Draft Programme and Budget for 1990-1991 and budgeting techniques . . . . .	219
47	General Policy and Direction . . . . .	221
	47.1 Services of the Directorate . . . . .	221
	47.2 General Conference and Executive Board . . . . .	222
48	Definition of the regions with a view to the implemen- tation of regional activities . . . . .	224
49	Working languages of the Organization . . . . .	224
	49.1 Wider use of the Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish languages . . . . .	224
	49.2 Use of the Portuguese language in Unesco . . . . .	226
XIII	Twenty-sixth session of the General Conference	
50	Place of the twenty-sixth session of the General Conference . . . . .	229
51	Composition of the committees for the twenty-sixth session . . . . .	229
	51.1 Legal Committee . . . . .	229
	51.2 Headquarters Committee . . . . .	230

Annexes

I.	Conventions and recommendations . . . . .	231
A.	Convention on Technical and Vocational Education . . . . .	231
B.	Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore . . . . .	238
II.	List of officers elected at the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference . . . . .	245

Annex I

ARTICLE 15

In conformity with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, this Convention shall be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations at the request of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Done in Paris, this sixteenth day of November 1989, in two authentic copies bearing the signature of the President of the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference and of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and certified true copies of which shall be delivered to all the States referred to in Article 9 as well as to the United Nations.

## B. Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore<sup>1</sup>

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Paris from 17 October to 16 November 1989 at its twenty-fifth session,

Considering that folklore forms part of the universal heritage of humanity and that it is a powerful means of bringing together different peoples and social groups and of asserting their cultural identity,

Noting its social, economic, cultural and political importance, its role in the history of the people, and its place in contemporary culture,

Underlining the specific nature and importance of folklore as an integral part of cultural heritage and living culture,

Recognizing the extreme fragility of the traditional forms of folklore, particularly those aspects relating to oral tradition and the risk that they might be lost,

Stressing the need in all countries for recognition of the role of folklore and the danger it faces from multiple factors,

Judging that the governments should play a decisive role in the safeguarding of folklore and that they should act as quickly as possible,

Having decided, at its twenty-fourth session, that the safeguarding of folklore should be the subject of a recommendation to Member States within the meaning of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution,

Adopts the present Recommendation this fifteenth day of November 1989:

---

1. Resolution adopted at the thirty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1989.

The General Conference recommends that Member States should apply the following provisions concerning the safeguarding of folklore by taking whatever legislative measures or other steps may be required in conformity with the constitutional practice of each State to give effect within their territories to the principles and measures defined in this Recommendation.

The General Conference recommends that Member States bring this Recommendation to the attention of the authorities, departments or bodies responsible for matters relating to the safeguarding of folklore and to the attention of the various organizations or institutions concerned with folklore, and encourage their contacts with appropriate international organizations dealing with the safeguarding of folklore.

The General Conference recommends that Member States should, at such times and in such manner as it shall determine, submit to the Organization reports on the action they have taken to give effect to this Recommendation.

A. Definition of folklore

For the purposes of this Recommendation:

Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.

B. Identification of folklore

Folklore, as a form of cultural expression, must be safeguarded by and for the group (familial, occupational, national, regional, religious, ethnic, etc.) whose identity it expresses. To this end, Member States should encourage appropriate survey research on national, regional and international levels with the aim to:

- (a) develop a national inventory of institutions concerned with folklore with a view to its inclusion in regional and global registers of folklore institutions;
- (b) create identification and recording systems (collection, cataloging, transcription) or develop those that already exist by way of handbooks, collecting guides, model catalogues, etc., in view of the need to co-ordinate the classification systems used by different institutions;
- (c) stimulate the creation of a standard typology of folklore by way of: (i) a general outline of folklore for global use; (ii) a comprehensive register of folklore; and (iii) regional classifications of folklore, especially field-work pilot projects.

C. Conservation of folklore

Conservation is concerned with documentation regarding folk traditions and its object is, in the event of the non-utilization or evolution of such traditions, to give researchers and tradition-bearers access to data

Annex I

enabling them to understand the process through which tradition changes. While living folklore, owing to its evolving character, cannot always be directly protected, folklore that has been fixed in a tangible form should be effectively protected.

To this end, Member States should:

- (a) establish national archives where collected folklore can be properly stored and made available;
- (b) establish a central national archive function for service purposes (central cataloging, dissemination of information on folklore materials and standards of folklore work including the aspect of safeguarding);
- (c) create museums or folklore sections at existing museums where traditional and popular culture can be exhibited;
- (d) give precedence to ways of presenting traditional and popular cultures that emphasize the living or past aspects of those cultures (showing their surroundings, ways of life and the works, skills and techniques they have produced);
- (e) harmonize collecting and archiving methods;
- (f) train collectors, archivists, documentalists and other specialists in the conservation of folklore, from physical conservation to analytic work;
- (g) provide means for making security and working copies of all folklore materials, and copies for regional institutions, thus securing the cultural community an access to the materials.

D. Preservation of folklore

Preservation is concerned with protection of folk traditions and those who are the transmitters, having regard to the fact that each people has a right to its own culture and that its adherence to that culture is often eroded by the impact of the industrialized culture purveyed by the mass media. Measures must be taken to guarantee the status of and economic support for folk traditions both in the communities which produce them and beyond. To this end, Member States should:

- (a) design and introduce into both formal and out-of-school curricula the teaching and study of folklore in an appropriate manner, laying particular emphasis on respect for folklore in the widest sense of the term, taking into account not only village and other rural cultures but also those created in urban areas by diverse social groups, professions, institutions, etc., and thus promoting a better understanding of cultural diversity and different world views, especially those not reflected in dominant cultures;
- (b) guarantee the right of access of various cultural communities to their own folklore by supporting their work in the fields of documentation, archiving, research, etc., as well as in the practice of traditions;

- (c) set up on an interdisciplinary basis a national folklore council or similar co-ordinating body in which various interest groups will be represented;
- (d) provide moral and economic support for individuals and institutions studying, making known, cultivating or holding items of folklore;
- (e) promote scientific research relevant to the preservation of folklore.

E. Dissemination of folklore

The attention of people should be drawn to the importance of folklore as an ingredient of cultural identity. It is essential for the items that make up this cultural heritage to be widely disseminated so that the value of folklore and the need to preserve it can be recognized. However, distortion during dissemination should be avoided so that the integrity of the traditions can be safeguarded. To promote a fair dissemination, Member States should:

- (a) encourage the organization of national, regional and international events such as fairs, festivals, films, exhibitions, seminars, symposia, workshops, training courses, congresses, etc., and support the dissemination and publication of their materials, papers and other results;
- (b) encourage a broader coverage of folklore material in national and regional press, publishing, television, radio and other media, for instance through grants, by creating jobs for folklorists in these units, by ensuring the proper archiving and dissemination of these folklore materials collected by the mass media, and by the establishment of departments of folklore within those organizations;
- (c) encourage regions, municipalities, associations and other groups working in folklore to establish full-time jobs for folklorists to stimulate and co-ordinate folklore activities in the region;
- (d) support existing units and the creation of new units for the production of educational materials, as for example video films based on recent field-work, and encourage their use in schools, folklore museums, national and international folklore festivals and exhibitions;
- (e) ensure the availability of adequate information on folklore through documentation centres, libraries, museums, archives, as well as through special folklore bulletins and periodicals;
- (f) facilitate meetings and exchanges between individuals, groups and institutions concerned with folklore, both nationally and internationally, taking into account bilateral cultural agreements;
- (g) encourage the international scientific community to adopt a code of ethics ensuring a proper approach to and respect for traditional cultures.

Annex I

F. Protection of folklore

In so far as folklore constitutes manifestations of intellectual creativity whether it be individual or collective, it deserves to be protected in a manner inspired by the protection provided for intellectual productions. Such protection of folklore has become indispensable as a means of promoting further development, maintenance and dissemination of those expressions, both within and outside the country, without prejudice to related legitimate interests.

Leaving aside the 'intellectual property aspects' of the protection of expressions of folklore, there are various categories of rights which are already protected and should continue to enjoy protection in the future in folklore documentation centres and archives. To this end, Member states should:

(a) regarding the 'intellectual property' aspects:

call the attention of relevant authorities to the important work of Unesco and WIPO in relation to intellectual property, while recognizing that this work relates to only one aspect of folklore protection and that the need for separate action in a range of areas to safeguard folklore is urgent;

(b) regarding the other rights involved:

- (i) protect the informant as the transmitter of tradition (protection of privacy and confidentiality);
- (ii) protect the interest of the collector by ensuring that the materials gathered are conserved in archives in good condition and in a methodical manner;
- (iii) adopt the necessary measures to safeguard the materials gathered against misuse, whether intentional or otherwise;
- (iv) recognize the responsibility of archives to monitor the use made of the materials gathered.

G. International co-operation

In view of the need to intensify cultural co-operation and exchanges, in particular through the pooling of human and material resources, in order to carry out folklore development and revitalization programmes as well as research made by specialists who are the nationals of one Member State on the territory of another Member State, Member States should:

- (a) co-operate with international and regional associations, institutions and organizations concerned with folklore;
- (b) co-operate in the field of knowledge, dissemination and protection of folklore, in particular through:
  - (i) exchanges of information of every kind, exchanges of scientific and technical publications;
  - (ii) training of specialists, awarding of travel grants, sending of scientific and technical personnel and equipment;

- (iii) the promotion of bilateral or multilateral projects in the field of the documentation of contemporary folklore;
- (iv) the organization of meetings between specialists, of study courses and of working groups on particular subjects, especially on the classifying and cataloging of folklore data and expressions and on modern methods and techniques in research;
- (c) co-operate closely so as to ensure internationally that the various interested parties (communities or natural or legal persons) enjoy the economic, moral and so-called neighboring rights resulting from the investigation, creation, composition, performance, recording and/or dissemination of folklore;
- (d) guarantee Member States on whose territory research has been carried out the right to obtain from the Member State concerned, copies of all documents, recordings, video-films, films and other material;
- (e) refrain from acts likely to damage folklore materials or to diminish their value or impede their dissemination or use, whether these materials are to be found on their own territory or on the territory of other States;
- (f) take necessary measures to safeguard folklore against all human and natural dangers to which it is exposed, including the risks deriving from armed conflicts, occupation of territories, or public disorders of other kinds.



## Annex II: List of officers elected at the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference

The following are the elected officers of the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference:

President of the General  
Conference

Mr Anwar Ibrahim (Malaysia).

Vice-Presidents of the  
General Conference

Heads of the delegations of the following Member States: Algeria, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guatemala, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

### Commission I

Chairman: Mr Siegfried Kaempf  
(German Democratic Republic).

Vice-Chairwomen: Ms Rachida Titah  
(Algeria), Ms Cecilia Gallardo de  
Cano (El Salvador), Ms Nanzadyn  
Itgel (Mongolia), Ms Ingrid Eide  
(Norway).

Rapporteur: Mr N'Tji Idriss Mariko  
(Mali).

### Commission II

Chairman: Mr Victor Ordoñez (Philip-  
pines).<sup>1</sup>

Vice-Chairmen and Vice-Chairwoman:  
Mr Jaroslav Kubrycht (Czecho-  
slovakia), Ms Carmen Jarvis -(Guy-  
aria), Mr Edgar Tripet (Switzer-  
land), Mr Asavia Wandira (Uganda).

Rapporteur: Mr Zougan Obeidat  
(Jordan).

### Commission III

Chairman: Mr Driss Bensari (Morocco).

Vice-Chairmen and Vice-Chairwoman:  
Mr Heinz Löffler (Austria),  
Mr Tzanko Stoytchev (Bulgaria),  
Ms Graciela Alonzo (Cuba), Mr Kam-  
haeng Sathirakul (Thailand).

Rapporteur: Mr Alemayehu Teferra  
(Ethiopia).

### Commission IV

Chairman: Mr Alberto Wagner de Reyna  
(Peru).

Vice-Chairmen and Vice-Chairwomen:  
Ms Brigitte Weyl (Federal Republic  
of Germany), Mr Khalid Mabmood  
(Pakistan), Ms Krystyna Mar-  
szalek-Mlynczyk (Poland), Mr Hich-  
am Haddad (Syrian Arab Republic).

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1. Mr Victor Ordoñez was elected following the resignation of Ms Lourdes R. Quisumbing (Philippines).

Annex I I

Rapporteur: Mr Adamou Ndam Njoya  
(Cameroon).

Commission V

Chairman: Mr Bethwell Allan Ogot  
(Kenya).  
Vice-Chairmen: Mr Attila Harmathy  
(Hungary), Mr Soepojo Pad-  
modipoetro (Indonesia), Mr Ahmed  
Baba Ould Deida (Mauritania),  
Mr Rail Olmedo Carranza (Mexico).  
Rapporteur: Mr Jacques Boisson  
(Monaco).

Administrative Commission

Chairman: Mr Georges-Henri Dumont  
(Belgium).  
Vice-Chairmen: Mr Oleg N. Laptinok  
(Belorussian Soviet Socialist  
Republic), Mr Alhaji Yahya Aliyu  
(Nigeria), Mr Carlos Ortiz Chal-  
baud (Venezuela), Mr Ahmed Moham-  
mad Hashim (Yemen).  
Rapporteur: Mr Ananda W.P. Guruge  
(Sri Lanka).

Legal Committee

Chairman: Mr Pierre-Michel Eisemann  
(France).  
Vice-Chairmen: Mr Léon Louis Bois-  
sier-Palun (Benin), Mr Mario  
Calderón (Chile).

Rapporteur: Mr John Brook  
(Australia).

Nominations Committee

Chairman: Mr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin  
Hassan (Oman).  
Vice-Chairmen: Mr E. Besley Maycock  
(Barbados), Mr Lamine Kamara (Gui-  
nea), Mr Giacomo Ivancich-Biaggini  
(Italy), Mr Vladimir F. Skofenko  
(Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Re-  
public).  
Rapporteur: Mr Ram Bhakta P.  
Bishwakarma (Nepal).

Credentials Committee

Chairwoman: Ms Ruth Lerner de Almea  
(Venezuela).

Headquarters Committee

Chairman: Mr Ananda W.P. Guruge (Sri  
Lanka).  
Vice-Chairman and Vice-Chairwoman:  
Ms Vivienne Rivera de Solis (Costa  
Rica), Mr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin  
Hassan (Oman).  
Rapporteur: Mr François Nordmann  
(Switzerland).