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Fifth Session
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Item 9A of the Provisional Agenda: Proposal for an Electronic Reporting System

This document illustrates a proposal for the development of an electronic reporting system in response to decision 4. SC 14.

Draft Decision: Paragraph 22
I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its 4th session held in September 2016 (UNESCO, Paris) the Members of the Subsidiary Committee adopted decision 4.SC 14\(^1\) which requested the Secretariat to prepare a proposal for an electronic reporting system which corresponds to the needs and expectations of States Parties.

2. With reference to the above request, the Secretariat has prepared this document in order to demonstrate the objectives and advantages of the new electronic reporting tool in addition to various proposals regarding the structure, features and access to be expected.

II. STATUS OF THE REPORTING FORM

3. In accordance with Article 16 of the 1970 Convention\(^2\), States Parties shall, on dates determined by the General Conference of UNESCO, submit a report to UNESCO on the legislative and administrative provisions they have adopted and other actions taken to implement the Convention. In October 2003, 32 C/Resolution 38 of the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO set the periodicity for reporting at a four year interval.


5. An updated reporting form was adopted as per decision 4.SC 14. However, further amendments might be proposed, as the adopted reporting format would have to be harmonized with the results framework for the Expected Result 2 of the draft 39 C/5 to be submitted to the General Conference at its next session in November 2017.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE ELECTRONIC REPORTING SYSTEM

6. The new electronic reporting system aims at developing a comprehensive searchable database encompassing policies, legislative systems, implementation and operative frameworks of States Parties. In addition, it will present facts regarding good practices and international cooperation, as well as up to date statistics concerning thefts, illegal excavations, seizures and restitutions.

7. The electronic reporting system will be available for all stakeholders of the 1970 Convention\(^3\) (States Parties, UNESCO Member States, UNESCO-affiliated entities NGOs, researchers, students, and members of the public) and will be running on the Convention’s webpage. It is anticipated that the new reporting system will be operational for the next reporting period in 2019.

8. In addition to the purpose of periodic reporting in terms of monitoring and updating relevant information concerning the illicit trafficking of cultural property, the electronic reporting system will highly contribute to the institutional memory of the 1970 Convention. Furthermore, it will present all the data for each State Party in a clear and concise user-friendly manner which will ensure well-informed and consistent information relating to illicit trafficking trends overtime for each State Party of the Convention, and well-informed decision making.

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\(^3\) Please refer to paragraph 10 regarding confidentiality.
IV. PROPOSALS FOR AN ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM

A. Features of proposed online electronic reporting system

9. Once the electronic reporting system is operational, it will allow for all the data to be organized in a system where it is easily accessible. The main page will consist of a template in which information can be found based on various themes. Therefore, queries can be made by year, period, country, region, or by specific keywords that will be standardized such as “seizures” or “specialized police units”. Once the search is launched all relevant information will be displayed.

10. In addition to the general text, all the information will also be displayed in the form of charts (trend lines, pie charts, column charts, etc.) which will be interactive and clearly illustrate the facts and figures. Users can click on the parts of the chart they are interested in to access more detailed information. The advantage of this tool is that it will allow evolutions to be displayed and comparisons can be made based on year, region etc. This is essential considering all of the changes occurring globally from civil unrest to conflict which has a domino effect on illicit trafficking.

11. Furthermore, maps will also be available pinpointing various elements in every region with specific information for each country. This will allow a geographic visual representation of data.

12. Sections will consist of multiple choice questions and narrative segments. To ensure that States Parties are answering the questions in the most appropriate way, theoretical answers will be provided as a guideline, in addition to an e-guide video on how to proceed with the questionnaires.

13. In order to assist States Parties, the Secretariat will pre-fill the online template with previous data from the periodic reports submitted in 2015. As a result, during the first electronic periodic reporting cycle, States Parties that have already submitted a report during the previous reporting period will be asked to confirm information (if information is still valid) or update sections that are new or incomplete. However, it is important to note that States Parties who have not submitted their periodic report will have empty sections and will need to start the process anew, thereby improving the baseline data for future cycles of reporting.

14. Although information will generally be available to the public, the 1970 Convention Secretariat will ensure that confidentiality of certain documents is respected when required by States Parties. For States Parties that do not wish for their information to be made public, a summary will be requested from them and published instead.

15. The structure of the 1970 Convention electronic reporting tool is inspired by the World Heritage Convention State of Conservation information system which has been operational for five years and has proven to be a successful tool for all stakeholders.4,5

B. Access and cross-referencing to proposed online system

16. The 1970 Convention webpage6 will be updated and transformed within the next few months. The electronic reporting system will be available on the Convention’s webpage in time for its first cycle of the 2019 reporting period.

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4 http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc
5 The electronic reporting tool will be established in English and French.
17. Previous reports that have been submitted to the Secretariat are already available and accessible online in their original form. Hyperlinks will also be available to link the online system to final reports, decisions and working documents.

18. As of 2015, the Secretariat received 57 reports, 74 States Parties did not submit their report to the Secretariat. The upcoming cycle will give States Parties a year to complete and submit their report electronically. However, once the deadline has passed, the questionnaire will be closed to allow for statistical analysis to be made.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTRONIC REPORTING SYSTEM

19. The development of the electronic reporting system is still in its early stages. It will be an on-going project from its inception as there will be room for growth. The Secretariat will continue to improve the features of the system and ensure it is comprehensible and easily accessible for all stakeholders.

20. The Secretariat plans to cross link the new electronic reporting system with other tools such as the National Cultural Heritage Laws database. This will enable stakeholders to have access to a wide range of all-inclusive information.

21. In order to achieve the above-mentioned advancements, the Secretariat is seeking financial support to sponsor the technical expertise and human resources required to complete this project, especially considering the possibility of retrospectively integrating the data collected from previous reporting cycles into the online tool.

22. The Subsidiary Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 5.SC 9A

1. Having examined document C70/16/5.SC/9A proposal for the new electronic reporting system by the Secretariat;

2. Welcomes the proposal to develop an electronic reporting system;

3. Requests the Secretariat to continue making progress towards its completion so that it is operational for the next reporting period in 2019;

4. Invites States Parties to provide financial and human support to the Secretariat.