

## MESSAGE ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNESCO CONVENTION

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- **Organization/institution:** University of Botswana (UNESCO Chair on African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development)
- **Country:** Botswana
- **Role in relation to the 2003 Convention:** UNESCO Chair – Research and events on cultural heritage

The UNESCO 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage is a vital international instrument that has brought diversity to the safeguarding of both cultural and natural heritage, and revitalized the living spirit of the landscapes and places around the globe.

It will be helpful for the convention to focus on its potential to enhance sustainable development of already designated heritage places, by so doing overlaying the values of intangible cultural heritage in places that are otherwise viewed as of natural and wilderness value only (For Africa, these are national parks and game reserves). This will ensure representation of diverse heritage perspectives that enable a wider representation of stakeholders; as well enhance experiences for those visiting these landscapes.

The ICH Convention faces challenges of compacting its relevance in the global space, and one way to achieve this is for the convention to illustrate its value-add to already existing efforts on conservation and general societal needs.

Institutions such as NGOs are important in the implementation of the ICH convention in that they exist within a space where real life intangible cultural heritage practices take place, as such are better placed to disseminate knowledge of the convention as well as assess the needs that could benefit from implementation of the convention, and thus are better placed to advise and assist UNESCO in its mandate as regards the 2003 ICH convention.



As the University of Botswana, we have embarked on a UNESCO Chair (African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development) that covers discourses around both the 2003 ICH convention and the 1972 World heritage convention as a way to conduct research and engage in activities that illustrate how the two are not only intertwined but combined carry a substantial potential for a more sustainable conservation of both cultural and natural heritage across the globe. So far the UNESCO Chair has raised awareness on the value of heritage in a university campus, as well as involved in projects with international organizations such as ICRROM, presented in international conferences, webinars and seminars and published

academic works on cultural heritage that have a bearing on intangible cultural heritage.

At the University of Botswana UNESCO Chair (African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development), we recognize that the link between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development remains the most urgent task for the ICH convention as it evolves to become a key player in conservation worldwide.



### **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and the World Heritage Convention: Looking at possible synergies**

Susan. O. Keitumetse - UNESCO Chair on African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development, University of Botswana

Presented at World Heritage Leadership programme : Heritage Place Lab  
Sept-Oct 2021  
Online hosted by ICCROM



### **Living heritage and sustainable tourism: Experiences from expert reflections**

Susan. O. Keitumetse - UNESCO Chair on African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development, University of Botswana

Presented at WEBINAR and Launch by ICH -NGO for web dossier on Intangible Heritage and Sustainable Tourism  
27 Oct 2022  
Online