



Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador-Intangible Cultural Heritage (HFNL-ICH) recommended for Observer Status with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

February 28th, 2011, ST. JOHN'S- The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador-Intangible Cultural Heritage (HFNL-ICH) Office has been recommended for Observer Status to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as of November 19th, 2010. The decision to recommend HFNL-ICH office was made at the 5th Session of the Committee in Nairobi, Kenya. The final decision will be made by the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage to take place in Summer 2011 in France, at its Fourth Session.

"Having observer status will enable HFNL ICH Office to learn from the many international activities involving intangible cultural heritage that are happening worldwide", says Dr. Gerald Pocius, Chair of the Provincial Advisory Committee on ICH. They will also be given the opportunity to actively participate in the Committee's work and activities, including making requests for international assistance with the development of safeguarding plans for intangible cultural heritage at risk. Dr. Pocius explains that "being able to meet directly with experts working in these [UNESCO ICH] programs and activities will enhance our work here in the province, and build networks of expertise we can draw upon".

Dr. Pocius says "The direct dialogue with UNESCO on ICH issues is especially important, given the growing interest of cultural and heritage associations/organizations and universities in the intangible cultural heritage in Canada since the adoption by UNESCO, in 2003, of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage".

“The Canadian Commission for UNESCO is pleased that HFNL – ICH Office has been granted observer status with the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage as it is the only organization in Canada to have been accorded this honour. This will provide many benefits to the organization for the continuation of its work in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as increase the interest and work of intangible cultural heritage stakeholders in other provinces”, says David A. Walden, Secretary-General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

Established in 1984 to preserve the architectural heritage of the province, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador was further chosen in 2008 to lead and implement the province's Intangible Cultural Heritage Strategy. Its mission is to safeguard and sustain the intangible cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations everywhere, as a vital part of the identities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as a valuable collection of unique knowledge and customs. This will be achieved through policies that support initiatives that will celebrate, record, disseminate and promote our living heritage and help to build bridges between diverse cultural groups within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador.

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If you would like to arrange an interview please contact below:

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