



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

Original:English

## CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fifth session  
Nairobi, Kenya  
November 2010

#### NOMINATION FILE NO. 00434 FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN 2010

<p><b>A. STATE(S) PARTY(IES)</b></p> <p><i>For multi-national nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.</i></p>
<p>Armenia</p>
<p><b>B. NAME OF THE ELEMENT</b></p>
<p><b>B.1. Name of the element in English or French</b></p> <p><i>This is the official name of the element that will appear in published material about the Representative List. It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation. The name should be transcribed in Latin Unicode characters (Basic Latin, Latin-1 Supplement, Latin Extended-A or Latin Extended Additional).</i></p>
<p>Armenian cross-stones art. Symbolism and craftsmanship of Khachkars</p>
<p><b>B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable</b></p> <p><i>This is the official name of the element in the vernacular language corresponding to the official name in English or French (point B.1.). It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters in Unicode (Latin or others), including spaces and punctuation.</i></p>
<p>Խաչքարի խորհուրդը, արվեստն ու խաչքարագծությունը</p>

### **B.3. Other name(s) of the element, if any**

*In addition to the official name(s) of the element (B.1.) please mention alternate name(s), if any, by which the element is known, in Unicode characters (Latin or others).*

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## **C. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ELEMENT**

### **C.1. Identification of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*According to the 2003 Convention, intangible heritage can only be identified with reference to communities, groups or individuals that recognize it as part of their cultural heritage. Thus it is important to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element. The information provided should allow the Committee to identify the communities, groups or individuals concerned with an element, and should be mutually coherent with the information in sections 1 to 5 below.*

Armenian people in the Republic of Armenia and Armenian communities in the Diaspora, as well as individual craftsmen in numerous Armenian towns and villages. All the practitioners listed below are registered in the state inventory of Armenia, have certificates of national experts and have experience in transmitting their skills to others:

- Hambartsumian Varazdat (Yerevan)
- Mkrtchian Hovhannes (Yerevan)
- Khachikyan Harutyun(Yerevan)
- Yanikin Robert (Yerevan)
- Rubenyan Aramais (Yerevan)
- Rubenyan Arthur (Yerevan)
- Harutyunian Vardan (Yerevan)
- Harutyunian Varazdat (Yerevan)
- Khachikyan Eghya (Yerevan)
- Petrosyan Davit (Yerevan)
- Chakhalyan Martiros (Yerevan)
- Martirosyan Aramays (Yerevan)
- Smbatian Harutyun (Yerevan)
- Khachatrian Karen (Yerevan)
- Sargsyan Arsen (Yerevan)
- Mirzoyan Gaguik (Yerevan)
- Sargsyan Tigran (Yerevan)
- Martirosian Hovhannes (Yerevan)
- Asatrian Ashot (Yerevan)
- Danielyan Norayr (Yerevan)
- Ter-Hovhannisyan Ara (Yerevan)
- Panosyan Arsen (Kotayk marz, Argel village)
- Paruyryan Paruyr (Argel village)
- Paruyryan Arthur (Argel village)
- Nazaretian Avetik (Hnaberd village)

- Arakelian Vardges (Oshakan)
- Ter-Hovhannisian Ara (Haghtanak)
- Khachbulaghyan Artak (Charentsavan)
- Lusikyan Suren (Artik, Norashen village)
- Karapetyan Ashot (Martuni, Geghahovit village)
- Hovhannesyan Hayk (Aparan)
- Vardanyan Sasoun (Spitak)
- Aslanyan Rafael (Georgia, Akhaltsikhe)
- Nalbandyan Ruben (Etchmiadzin)
- Nalbandyan Meruzhan (Etchmiadzin)
- Nalbandyan Armen (Etchmiadzin)
- Kutoyan Zaven (Gyumri)
- Khachatryan Harutyun (Gyumri)
- Melkonyan Kaycer (Gyumri)
- Banshumjan Hrayr (Gyumri)
- Gevorgyan Arthur (Gyumri)
- Aghanyan Levon (Gyumri)
- Petrosyan Artak (Gyumri)
- Tokmajyan Davit (Gyumri)

**C.2. Geographic location and range of the element and location of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned**

*This section should identify the range of distribution of the element, indicating if possible the geographic locations in which it is centred. If related elements are practiced in neighbouring areas, please so indicate.*

The present nomination concerns the element as practiced within the Republic of Armenia, and related practices can be found among Armenian communities in the Diaspora.

**C.3. Domain(s) represented by the element**

*Identify concisely the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. (This information will be used primarily for visibility, if the element is inscribed.)*

Traditional craftsmanship, social practices, rituals

#### **D. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENT**

*The brief description of the element will be particularly helpful in allowing the Committee to know at a glance what element is being proposed for inscription, and, in the event of inscription, will be used for purposes of visibility. It should be a summary of the description provided in point 1 below but is not an introduction to that longer description.*

Khachkar is an outdoor, vertically erected flat stele, reaching 1.5m, with an ornamentally carved cross in the middle, resting on the symbol of the sun, or of the wheel of eternity, accompanied by vegetative-geometric motifs, animals and carvings of people. (photo 1) Cross-stones very often have date-palm leaves symbolizing Christ's resurrection. The cross incorporates both victorious and savior philosophy, and is presented in the center of universe as a tree of life on the paradise mountain, referencing future and eternity. Historically, the most common reason for erecting a khachkar was salvation of the soul of either a living or deceased person. Nowadays, its main functions are social: focal point for worship, relic that facilitates communication between secular and divine, provides help and protection and serves as a memorial stone.

The Armenian cultural environment is impossible to imagine without khachkar, which is considered to be holy and by its very presence, it becomes an indicator, defender and consecrator of the terrain: this explains khachkar's placement on crossroads, edges of roads, borders, hills dominating the terrain and near springs. (photo 2)

Khachkar craftsmanship is transmitted in families or from master to apprentice, by teaching the traditional methods and patterns while encouraging regional distinctiveness and individual improvisation.

## 1. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ELEMENT (CF. CRITERION R.1)

*This is the key section of the nomination to satisfy criterion R.1: “The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention”. A clear and complete explanation is essential to demonstrate that the nominated element meets the Convention’s definition of intangible heritage. This section should address all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include:*

- a. an explanation of its social and cultural functions and meanings today, within and for its community,*
- b. the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners of the element,*
- c. any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element,*
- d. the current modes of transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element.*

*The Committee should receive sufficient information to determine:*

- a. that the element is among the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith —”;*
- b. “that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage”;*
- c. that it is being “transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history”;*
- d. that it provides communities and groups involved with “a sense of identity and continuity”;*  
*and*
- e. that it is not incompatible with “existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development”.*

*Overly technical descriptions should be avoided and submitting States should keep in mind that this section must explain the element to readers who have no prior knowledge or direct experience of it. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.*

With the adoption of Christianity as state religion in 301A.D. in Armenia, together with a number of complexes of national identity, like Armenian alphabet, book, etc., the principles of organization of sacred space, national worship of the cross, and iconography were shaped. The development of these complexes and specific historic-cultural environment led to the emergence of khachkars.

In the cities, khachkars are more viewed as a means to forge memory, venture, friendship, and an expression of national traditional art. For the communities in Diaspora, khachkar is an element linking them with their historical roots, their Motherland, a means for preservation of their national identity. According to an Australian-Armenian: ‘Regardless of where we live, khachkar is not going to become irrelevant, because it’s a part of us’. The acclaimed khachkar Master Varazdat Hambartsumian has precisely characterized it as follows: ‘For Armenians who live far from their Motherland khachkar is an element of nostalgia. It is a birthmark on the face of Armenia and in the heart of an Armenian, and it is a kind of expression of self-preservation for us’.

Khachkar composition has triple structure, in the middle section is the cross-tree itself, bottom symbolizes earth, top – sky. The cross-tree points up –God, down - dragon, left and right - secular and spiritual, past and future, death and immortality. It categorizes the vegetation, animals, people and saints, in other words integrates several attributes of tree of universe (photo 3). The relief line like a woven thread knits the rosette, the palm decor, the cross, the corner belt, etc, infinitely and elastically turning and trying to avoid sharp angles. The infinity of the line visibly ensures the semblance of eternity and completeness of the composition. Khachkar is a basic iconographical image reflecting universal conception of the world by Armenians.(Photo 3A)

For creating khachkar, usually local materials, such as basalt or yellow-reddish tuff are used. As a first step, the stele is rendered into certain proportions, and surfaces of future monument are

polished. The components of future composition are sketched on the surface. Creation of complicated and proportional geometric carvings needs precise measuring with ruler and compass. Also, different stencils are used for carving: chisel, die, sharp pens, hammers. Carving without sketching is also common. The main technique of carving is dual crossing, in which two corners of future shape are sketched by two parallel lines and are carved to the imaginary central line. The carvings are ground by fine sand. Small breaks and unsmooth parts formed during the carving are later eliminated by plaster of clay or lime, and then painted.

Initially the craftsmanship was handed down from father to son, nowadays - also from master to apprentice through practice in private workshops (photo 4). The masters are referred to as 'sketchers', 'workers', 'compilers', 'inventors', 'decorators', 'painters', 'sculptors', etc. Khachkar creation is a multi-dimensional profession – lying in between architecture and sculpture, and the creation of each khachkar requires not only knowledge of the materials, craft and history but also skills in sketching, carving, sculpting, architecture, construction, as well as hard work, genuine talent, and time.

Khachkars are erected for the most varied reasons in social, economic and political life, motives including both joyous and tragic moments of the life. Any believer with any purpose that did not contradict prevailing Christian perceptions of morality can erect khachkar. The spiritually or socially important motives are more central. They can be categorized as following:

- a. Secular and spiritual construction (construction, renovation or foundation of a tower, bridge, guest house, water reservoir, church);
- b. Economic-administrative and communal activities (planting of a garden, foundation of land for cultivation, regulation of water usage, demarcation and ratification of borders, foundation of a settlement, signage of orders, agreements; nomination to official position, ratification of donations);
- c. War issues (military victory, participation in a war, losses, missing-in-action); (photo 5)
- d. Family-personal life (various situations, tragedies);
- e. Religious-mystic events (vision,).

There is a specific religious ceremony associated with placement of khachkar, which is the blessing of khachkar (prayer, reading, make the sign of the cross) and anoint ('cleaning' with chrisem or water and wine). The basis of the ritual is the perception that an inanimate subject cannot have any power if God is not living in it. Particularly interesting is the practice of anointing with wine: in the case of those khachkars on which the 'wine-providing' grape rods and pomegranate are required elements of the composition (photo 6), this practice has been viewed as an anointing with the blood of God. After being blessed and anointed, khachkar already possesses holy powers and can provide help, protection, victory, long life, remembrance, mediation toward salvation of the soul. By virtue of its open air placement and by the invitation to worship the cross, each khachkar is open to any believer. One of the primary features of khachkar is precisely the assurance of a direct (unmediated) connection of believers with the holy power and its symbol.

In addition to the above, khachkars are also closely linked to numerous popular beliefs and practices. From this perspective, the most famous khachkars are those that are believed to heal of various sicknesses, especially those called 'all-savior's. The list of 'specialized' khachkars includes the 'blue crosses' or 'cough crosses,' the 'wrath crosses' which are ascribed natural disaster prevention features.

Currently the tradition to go on a pilgrimage to the nearest khachkar during various holidays and rituals is still preserved. Starting from the 1960s, new cemeteries with new khachkars began sprouting. Around the same time, khachkars were declared to be national monuments. Their functions enlarged to a memorial, obelisk, decorative monument, element of national value, souvenir. (DVD, Booklet of Varazdat Hambartsumyan)

## **2. CONTRIBUTION TO ENSURING VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS AND TO ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE (CF. CRITERION R.2)**

*The nomination should demonstrate (Criterion R.2) that "Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity".*

*Please explain how the element's inscription on the Representative List will contribute to ensuring visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and will raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of its importance. This section need not address how inscription will bring greater visibility to the element, but how its inscription will contribute to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage more broadly. Explain how inscription will promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, and will promote mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals.*

*Not to exceed 1,000 words.*

Khachkar is a complex of different disciplines: religion, philosophy, ethnography, folklore, historiography, lithography, architecture and sculpture. Moreover, it bears elements inherent to different crafts: carving, grid decorations, knot and interlacement patterns which are used in embroidery, carpet weaving and other applied arts. From this perspective, it can be suggested that khachkar can encourage not only dialogue between different cultures but also 'dialogue' between different crafts. And its inscription in the List of Intangible Heritage of Humanity may have positive effect on maintaining and exchanges in the tradition of creation of similar works of art, thus enhancing a variety of cultural expressions and invigorate craftsmanship that are in danger of becoming irrelevant.

Being widely used and spread in the Armenian Communities worldwide, khachkar by its inclusion in the list would give bigger visibility to the intangible cultural heritage and promote it by serving as a means of transmission of its ideas, purposes and objectives, as well as UNESCO values among those people closely interacting with Armenians in their respective countries.

Initially all the patterns were used as meaningful symbols by our ancestors who could 'read the text' engraved on a khachkar. Some symbols are common to different cultures. According to Mr. Tigran Hakobyan, Head of the Center of Popular Creation and Handicraft of Armenia, the motif which is called 'happiness or eternity knot' has been worn by women as a decoration on the chest; the 'life tree' knot as well has been used as a decoration on women's dress widely spread in Asian and European art to symbolize courage and loyalty. However, the most typical feature of the Armenian khachkar ornamentation is prevalence of chain and interlacement elements (photo 7). There may be an impression that these geometric shapes are purely decorative motifs. In fact, everything in khachkar has its meaning: Rhythmical repetition of the elements symbolizes eternity. It really introduces an example of creative art, since among more than 50000 khachkars in Armenia, each one has its own pattern, and no two are alike. But above all - khachkar links the Armenians with all those peoples who know how an inanimate object can not only be admired but also worshiped, if it becomes a living tradition to honor the saints, memory of the ancestors and eternity of the soul. It testifies to the fact that common cultural and human values take precedence over the people's individual differences and divisions.

Its proclamation might also induce engagement in cooperation with Armenia in the region on reconstruction and renovation of Armenian historical and cultural monuments in the neighboring states, and those of our neighbors, in Armenia. Such cooperation presumes first of all sharing of knowledge, expertise and practice; joint study, inventorying, preservation and awareness-raising, as well as give boost to associated crafts and advance regional and international cooperation. Presentation and safeguarding of khachkar craftsmanship can be implemented also in the framework of the UNESCO Caucasus project aimed at broadening intercultural dialogue among Caucasus and Baltic countries, a part of which is developed to promote the key role of the artistic creativity in visual and performing arts and cultural industries, in order to foster contemporary creativity in the various fields of culture and promote South Caucasus artists and craftsmen outside of the region. All this will help promote mutual respect among communities for their cultural diversity and increased interrelation and interaction between creative groups and

individuals.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES (CF. CRITERION R.3)**

*Items 3.a. to 3.c. request the elaboration of a coherent set of safeguarding measures as called for in Criterion R.3: "Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element". Such measures should reflect the broadest possible participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned, both in their formulation and in their implementation.*

#### **3.a. Current and recent efforts to safeguard the element**

*Please describe the current and recent efforts of the concerned communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals to ensure the viability of the element. Describe efforts of the concerned State(s) Party(ies) to safeguard the element, taking note of external or internal constraints, such as limited resources.*

At present, khachkar craft is safeguarded through traditional transmission from father to son and from master to apprentice, as well as through research, documentation and awareness-raising at state level. Public institutions support the craft also directly by placing orders on various occasions for khachkar-monuments and memorials. The recent efforts include the following:

- Acclaimed master Varazdat Hambartsumyan has established 'Cross-Stone making School' charitable foundation and is raising funds for perspective khachkar school – with studio and classrooms.

- National Master Ruben Nalbandian is the author of innovation in the art of khachkar-making: together with his brothers Master Ruben created thirty six stone-cross letters of the Armenian alphabet. They were blessed by His Holiness Karekin II, the Catholicos of All Armenians and were erected in the backyard of St. Mesrop Mashtots Church in the village of Oshakan in 2005, on the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of the Armenian alphabet. Each stele represents a letter with decorations.

- First textbook on khachkar craftsmanship is in the phase of being finalized.

- Armenian custodians participate in numerous local and international craft fairs, symposiums and festivals, the recent one being on July 24-August 31, 2009, in Lebanon, where khachkar making was demonstrated in practice.

- On November 5-7, 2009, Regional Conference of the CIS with participation of international experts 'Cultural Policy - Policy for Culture' took place in Yerevan, where means for safeguarding of khachkars were discussed.

- A website was produced with financial support of UNESCO, which by the means of virtual galleries and compressed texts presents the entire picture of the culture and art of khachkars, as well as those realities and complexes of national life and world outlook, which fostered its formation, development and long-lasting existence.

- A book 'Khachkar: The Origins, Functions, Iconography, Semantics' by Hamlet Petrosian, researcher, scientist, Professor of Department of Culturology of Yerevan State University was published in 2008, which based on the source study, archaeological, historical-cultural and semantic analysis recreates the complete picture of culture of khachkars.

Armenian khachkars are donated and displayed at the UN premises in New York, IAEA in Vienna, in the backyard of the Parliament building in Sydney, etc.

- During Days of Armenian Culture in France in 2006, in the framework of 'Armenia Sacra' exhibition more than 40 khachkars were transported from Armenia and exhibited in Louvre, in Paris and other cities of France.

-Information about khachkar nomination for inscription is on the websites of Ministries of Culture, Diaspora, and Foreign Affairs. It has been widely covered in the Armenian and Diaspora media.



### 3.b. Safeguarding measures proposed

*For the Representative List, the safeguarding measures are those that may help to solidify the element's current viability and to ensure that its viability is not jeopardized in the future, especially as an unintended result of inscription and the resulting visibility and public attention.*

*Identify and describe the various safeguarding measures that are elaborated that may, if implemented, protect and promote the element, and provide brief information concerning, for example, their priority, scope, approaches, timetables, responsible persons or bodies, and costs..*

Today in Armenia the formal education on khachkar craftsmanship - textbooks, specialized schools, courses and trainings, is insufficient. Transmission of skills is carried out primarily in private workshops, where masters receive orders at the same time having limited number of apprentices/ pupils. The small size and inadequate conditions of the premises do not allow to have big number of students, which could yield wider transmission of skills and have financial benefit for the master to cover a part of extensive financial costs associated with the whole process of khachkar making: acquiring, transportation of big blocks of stones, preparation of instruments, exhibition, so on. Given the specifics of this craftsmanship, measures aimed at safeguarding should first of all be directed to the grass root level, since the main bearers of the knowledge and skills are the practitioners themselves. Due to these circumstances, there is a risk that certain elements of the tradition can die out, become irrelevant or disappear if sufficient and targeted efforts are not undertaken.

An amount of 38,5 million AMD (appr. 100 500 USD) has been allocated to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in 2010. Part of this funding is earmarked for safeguarding khachkar craftsmanship, including:

- 6.800\$ will be contributed by Ministry of Culture of RA for publication of a textbook on 'Khachkar Craftsmanship'. Responsible persons is Masters father and sons Panosian Arsen, Paruyrian Paruyr and Paruyrian Arthur.
- 13000\$ -for organizing trainings on khachkar craftsmanship. This is aimed at promoting the skills of practitioners and encouraging transmission of knowledge and skills through master classes. Responsible body Ministry of Culture of RA.
- 1200\$ - for translation of films on khachkar symbolism and craftsmanship for raising visibility and international awareness. Responsible body Ministry of Culture of RA.
- 5200\$ - for sequel of TV programs on renowned Armenian khachkar makers will be produced and broadcasted by 'Ararat' and 'Shoghakat' cultural TV channels.

The long-term safeguarding measures will cover the following spheres:

#### Education

- Introduction of courses on craftsmanship in the current curriculum on khachkar education at the Academy of Fine Arts and Department of Culturology of Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan and inclusion into 2-year Masters Degree curriculum.
- Introduction of courses on craftsmanship within regional cultural centers or the departments of the Municipalities.
- Establishment of full-fledged carving school in Yerevan.
- Expansion of the curriculum on khachkar symbolism and craftsmanship in the relevant higher educational institutions in Armenia.

#### Community Awareness

- 5200\$ - Sequel of TV programs describing khachkar as tangible and living intangible heritage; Responsible body is the Ministry of Culture.
- Publication and distribution of informative materials (booklets, posters, etc.) on the Masterpieces of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity in general and the traditions, social practices, rituals connected with khachkar, in particular.
- Scientific expeditions in the marzes (regions) to study new ritual functions of khachkars. Responsible body is the Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage.

- Collection and digitalization of the old records and their promotion. Responsible body is the Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage.

- Finalization of the database on the Intangible heritage and creation of a trilingual web-site on the 'Armenian Khachkar';

-Institution of an award for those having significant scientific or cultural contribution in khachkar popularization in order to raise awareness of and respect for craftsmanship and encourage the practitioners in Armenia.

- Organization of cultural festivals and open-air exhibitions including elements of woodcarving and khachkar- making in all regions of Armenia. These events will function as workshops and Master classes for participants (mainly local practitioners). It will be a good platform for the revitalization and strengthening of local traditions.

Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts with relevant support will organize courses, documentary films viewing, conferences, and symposiums in the venues of famous Armenian church complexes, with a goal to provide greater national and international visibility to khachkar symbolism and raise knowledge about the craftsmanship.

Traditionally, khachkars were made by male masters, and this is still predominantly the case as it is a very laborious and heavy-weight craft. Women are more engaged in the study of the symbolism and craftsmanship of khachkar and its renovation efforts. It is intended through the curricula and training to broaden women's engagement.

### **3.c. Commitment of communities, groups or individuals concerned**

*The feasibility of safeguarding depends in large part on the aspirations and commitment of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned. This section should provide evidence that the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned have the will and commitment to safeguard the element if conditions are favourable. The best evidence will often be an explanation of their involvement in past and ongoing safeguarding measures and of their participation in the formulation and implementation of future safeguarding measures, rather than simple pledges or affirmations of their support or commitment.*

After several decades of Soviet period of forbiddance of worship and use of khachkars, the tradition prevailed and the craftsmanship was revived mainly in late 1980s through loyalty of its masters and bearers of the symbolism.

-Master Varazdat Hambartsumyan is the author of more than 400 khachkars which are represented in Armenia and abroad. He has trained more than 20 apprentices, has established 'Cross-Stone making School' charitable foundation and is raising funds for perspective khachkar school – with studio and classrooms.

- Famous Master Arsen Panosyan opened his house-museum in 1990; with a studio where in his 55-year practice he has trained more than 69 pupils and transmitted his knowledge and skills to his two sons (Master Panosyan and his sons are renowned for their unique three- and four-layer ornamental motives). Given available financial resources, he would like to renovate and extend his studio to be able to accept more people and hand over the craftsmanship.

-National Master Ruben Nalbandyan is the author of innovation in the art of khachkar making – stone cross letters of the Armenian alphabet. During the years of his practice he has created 500 khachkars which are represented in more than 50 countries, has a studio in the Arshaluys village of Armenia where he has trained 20 pupils. He will be engaged in the Action Plan implementation. (Master R.Nalbandyan's book )

- Museum of Folk Arts has been involved and will continue to organize exhibitions related to khachkars and its craftsmanship.

### **3.d. Commitment of State(s) Party(ies)**

*The feasibility of safeguarding also depends on the support and cooperation of the concerned State(s) Party(ies). This section should provide evidence that the State Party concerned has the commitment to support the safeguarding effort by creating favourable conditions for its implementation and should describe how the State Party has previously and will in the future demonstrate such commitment. Declarations or pledges of support are less informative than explanations and demonstrations.*

Ministry of Culture of Armenia is in charge of the cultural policy and implementation of the legislation on safeguarding and promotion of crafts, including khachkars. The following legislative acts were adopted:

Law on the Cultural Legislation Principles- 20 November 2002;

Regulation on crafts development in the Republic of Armenia- 28 July 2005 Government decision;

Ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage - 20 March 2006;

Regulation on Preservation of intangible cultural heritage, protection of its vitality – 23 November 2006 Government decision;

Timetable of events issuing from the regulation on preservation of intangible cultural heritage, protection of its vitality - 3 May 2007 Government decision;

Programme on Popularization of Culture – 29 January 2009 Government decision: includes parts on preservation and promotion of intangible heritage;

Law on Intangible cultural heritage - 7 October 2009: Khachkars are registered in the state lists of Armenian historic and cultural immovable monuments.

In 2009, the process of inventorying intangible cultural heritage was initiated in Armenia. 'Khachkar craftsmanship' is N12 in the state inventory list.

Courses on khachkar craftsmanship are included in the curriculum of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan, which is the second largest higher educational institution in the Republic of Armenia; Courses will be introduced at the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts and regional cultural centers or the departments of the Municipalities.

## **4. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT IN THE NOMINATION PROCESS (CF. CRITERION R.4)**

*This section asks the submitting State Party to establish that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.4: 'The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.*

### **4.a. Participation of communities, groups and individuals in the nomination process**

*Describe how and in what ways the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated actively in the nomination process at all stages, as required by Criterion R.4. States Parties are further encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other concerned parties, including where appropriate local and regional governments, neighbouring communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and other interested parties. The participation of communities in the practice and transmission of the element should be addressed in point 1 above, and their participation in safeguarding should be addressed in point 3; here the submitting State should describe the widest possible participation of communities in the nomination process.*

Masters participated actively in preparing the nomination file; they provided information about the current state of the craft, its transmission to younger generation, consulted on the main needs and concerns (Masters Arsen Panosyan, Paruyr Paruyryan, Artur Paruyryan). They have also submitted booklets, DVDs, photos depicting khachkars and the process of their

craftsmanship (Masters Ruben Nalbandyan, Varazdat Hambartsumyan), prepared letters of support for the nomination /see point b/.

Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences provided information on the semantics, structure and ideology of Khachkar Composition.

Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage provided information on the spiritual-ritual functions of khachkars.

Center of Popular Creation and Handicraft provided the list and data on the custodians and practitioners of crafts in different regions of Armenia. It also provided valuable information on the symbols and semantics of the ornamentation, as well as interweaving of different crafts within khachkar composition.

Hamlet Petrosyan, specialist in Armenian archaeology and cultural anthropology with focus on traditional world-perception, identity and behavior, monuments and iconography, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor of medieval culture, culture of khachkars and Armenian Identity at Yerevan State University. Has provided extensive scientific information from his book 'Khachkar. Origins, Functions, Iconography and Semantics'

Armenian Diaspora communities have provided numerous letters of support for Proclamation.

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia coordinated the work of different stakeholders

Armenian National Commission for UNESCO coordinated the overall process of finalization of the file and its compliance with UNESCO criteria.

Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia ensured widespread awareness of the Armenian communities about the nomination process.

#### **4.b. Free, prior and informed consent to the nomination**

*The free, prior and informed consent to the nomination of the element from the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations...*

*Please attach supporting evidence demonstrating such consent and indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes.*

Aside from enthusiastic participation in the nomination preparation process, all communities and individuals concerned have provided formal support to the nomination.

See attached letters from:

- Master Paruyr Arsen Paruyryan
- Master Ruben Nalbandyan
- Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts
- Armenian Pedagogical Institute after Kh. Abovyan
- Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography SONP  
National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
- UNESCO Chair of Armenian Art History  
Yerevan State University
- Armenian community in Italy /Unione Degli Armeni D'Italia/
- Armenian community in Iran /Armenian Diocesan Council-Tehran Ave.Ostad Nejatollahi/
- Armenian community in the Netherlands  
Armeense Culturele Vereniging Abovian  
Federatie Armeense Organizaties Nederland  
Stichting Verenigde Armeniers in Nederland
- Armenian community in Romania /Uniunea Armenilor din Romania/

- Armenian community in Georgia
- Armenian community in Belgium  
Ephorie de L'Eglise Apostolique Armenienne de Belgique  
Comite des Armeniens de Belgique
- Armenian community in Russia /Union of Armenians of Russia/
- Armenian community in the Czech Republic /Representation of Armenian Church of the Armenian community in the Czech Republic /
- Armenian community in Argentina /Iglesia Apostolica Armenia Arquidiocesis de Argentina/
- Armenian community in Kazakhstan /Armenian cultural center LUIS/
- Armenian community in Kyrgyzstan /Armenian community NAIRY/
- Armenian community in Germany  
Diocese Der Armenischen Kirche in Deutschland  
Zentralrat der Armenier in Deutschland
- Armenian community in Poland /Armenian Assembly of Poland/
- Armenian community in Latvia / Armenian Apostolic of Riga/
- Armenian community in India / Pastor of Indian Armenians/
- Armenian community in Egypt / Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate/
- Armenian community in Belarus  
Minsk City Cultural Educational Society HAYASTAN  
Apostolic Church St. Gregory the Illuminator Religious Community
- Armenian community in Lithuania /Armenian Community of Lithuania, Armenian Assembly of Baltic States/
- Armenian community in Brazil /Comunidade da Igreja Apostolica Armenia do Brasil/
- Armenian community in Greece /combined letter/
- Armenian community in Cyprus  
Representative of the Armenian Community, House of Representatives  
Diocese and Party combined letter
- Armenian community in Lebanon  
Armenian Catholicosate of Culicia Antelias-Lebanon  
Patriarcat Armenien Catholique  
Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East  
Near East School of Theology  
Haigazian University

#### **4.c. Respect for customary practices governing access**

*Access to certain specific aspects of intangible cultural heritage is sometimes restricted by customary practices governing, for example, its transmission or performance or maintaining the secrecy of certain knowledge. Please indicate if such practices exist and, if they do, demonstrate that inscription of the element and implementation of the safeguarding measures would fully respect such customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage (cf. Article 13 of the Convention). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.*

In the course of Armenia's tumultuous history, the khachkars have passed through different periods – from thriving to suppression (during various invasions), oblivion (Soviet atheism), or even destruction (aftermath of military conflict). However, as any intangible cultural heritage, it has followed a life cycle, adapted to the surrounding environment, lost and acquired certain elements, in some cases evolved in its shape, giving birth to new genres or schools of craftsmanship - from classical or traditional to contemporary. (DVD, Book of Ruben Nalbandyan) In short, it has recreated in different forms (photo 8), yet leaving its intrinsic meaning and

sacrament intact. As prominent master Ruben Nalbandian has noted: 'It bears the Christ imprint on it, and it has inherited the Christ's destiny – to be crucified and resurrected'. It's noteworthy that with the revival of the art, it has become possible for masters possessing the knowledge of the craft and its symbolism to expand the studentship and transmit the knowledge and skills.

With time, some differences in the khachkar functions as well have surfaced, depending on the regions, places or communities. For example, in the rural areas with more links to folklore culture, people would more often appeal to khachkars for healing than in the urban areas. (photo 9). After the 1988 earthquake, khachkars abounded especially in the devastated regions. There they were used to honor the memory of the victims and symbolize eternity of soul. In the result, its functions have been confined to sad missions. Therefore, access to the khachkar as an artifact and a religious-cultural expression should respect a code of ethics and generally accepted practices with regard to the sanctity of the heritage.

Protection of khachkars falls under RA Law on the 'Principles of Cultural Legislation' and RA Law on the 'Protection of State Property'.

## **5. INCLUSION OF THE ELEMENT IN AN INVENTORY (CF. CRITERION R.5)**

*This section is where the State Party establishes that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.5: "The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) as defined in Articles 11 and 12".*

*Identify the inventory in which the element has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory. Demonstrate that the inventory has been drawn up in conformity with Articles 11 and 12, in particular Article 11(b) that stipulates that intangible cultural heritage shall be identified and defined "with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations" and Article 12 requiring that inventories be regularly updated.*

*The nominated element's inclusion in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to nomination. Rather, a submitting State Party may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but has already duly included the nominated element on an inventory-in-progress.*

Ministry of Culture is responsible for maintaining the state inventory. Khachkar craftsmanship is included in the inventory-in-progress, since the process was initiated in Armenia in 2009. 'Khachkar craftsmanship' is N12 in the state inventory list. It has been identified and defined with the participation of the following individuals and organizations:

- Center of Popular Creation and Handicraft, which provided the list and data on the custodians and practitioners of crafts in different regions of Armenia.
- Khachkar craftsmen Master Ruben Nalbandyan, Arsen Panosyan and Arthur and Paruyr Paruyryan who provided information about current practice, conditions, transmission modes and functions of khachkars.
- Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences, which conducted expeditions to different marzes (regions of Armenia) to investigate on the ground the level of preservation of certain heritage, including khachkars.
- Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences, which provided information on the semantics, structure and ideology of khachkar Composition.
- Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage, which conducted research and provided information on the spiritual-ritual functions of khachkars.
- Agency for Conservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments, which provided the state list of the monuments, including khachkars on the territory of Armenia, as well as data on khachkars.
- Service for the protection of historical environment and cultural museum reservations, which submitted information about measures underway aimed at preservation of the khachkars on the territory of the reservations.
- Research on Armenian Architecture NGO, which provided data on erection of modern Armenian khachkars in different countries.

<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
<b>a. Required and supplementary documentation</b>
Required documentation provided.
<b>b. Cession of rights including registry of items</b>
Required cession of rights provided.
<b>c. List of additional resources</b>
<p>Books:  Petrosian 2008 – Petrosyan H.L. Khachkar. Origins, Functions, Iconography and Semantics, Yerevan, 2008  Yakobson 1986 – Yakobson A.L. Armenian cross-stones (Khachkars), Yerevan  Nalbandyan 2009 – Nalbandyan R. The Stone-Cross Letters to the World, Yerevan</p> <p>Websites:  <a href="http://www.psalmtours.com">www.psalmtours.com</a>  <a href="http://www.armeniapedia.org">www.armeniapedia.org</a></p> <p>Multimedia resources:  DVD – Varazdat Hambartsumyan's gallery  DVD- Ruben Nalbandyan 'Qare Simfonia (Stone Symphony)'  DVD- Arsen Panosyan.</p>
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>
<b>A. Contact person for correspondence</b>
Ms. Dziunik Aghajanian Armenian National Commission for UNESCO Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yerevan, Republic Sq. Government Bld.2 Tel: (+3741) 544041-212, Fax: (+3741) 543925
<b>B. Competent body involved</b>
Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia Hasmik Poghosyan, Minister of Culture 3, Government Building, 0010Yerevan, Armenia Tel: +37410 529349 Fax: +37410 523922 E-mail: <a href="mailto:inter@mincult.am">inter@mincult.am</a>
<b>C. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)</b>
State agencies: <u>Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia</u> 3, Government Building, 0010Yerevan, Armenia Tel: +37410 529349 Fax: +37410 523922 E-mail: <a href="mailto:inter@mincult.am">inter@mincult.am</a>

Armenian National Commission for UNESCO

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Yerevan, Republic Sq. Government Bld.2  
Tel: (+3741) 544041-212, Fax: (+3741) 543925

Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences

Director Pavel Avetisyan  
RA, 0025, Yerevan, Charents str 15, Tel/Fax (37410)55.68.96, E-mail archeo@web.am,  
Pavetisyan@sci.am

Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences

Director Ararat Aghasyan  
RA 0019, Yerevan, Barshal Baghramian str.24, Tel: (37410) 58.37.02,  
E-mail:instart@sci.am

Scientific Research Center of the Historical and Cultural Heritage NCSO

Director Hakob Simonian  
RA 0010, Yerevan, Pavstos Buzand str. 1/3, 7-th floor, Tel: (37410) 52.66.18,  
E-mail:hakobsimonyan@yahoo.com

Agency for Conservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments NCSO

Director Artyom Grigoryan  
RA, 0010 Yerevan, Pavstos Buzand str. 1/3, 6th floor, Tel: (37410) 52.37.33.

Center of Popular Creation and Handicraft NCSO

Director Tigran Hakobian  
Yerevan, Arshakunyats ave. 28/7  
Tel: (37410) 44.15.80.

Service for the protection of historical environment and cultural museum reservations. NCSO

Director Serjik Arakelian  
Yerevan, Tairov 15, Tel/Fax (37410)58.74.27

Museum of Folk Arts NCSO

Director Hovik Hoveyan  
Yerevan, Abovian str. 64  
Tel: (37410) 56.93.83,

**Organizations:**

Research on Armenian Architecture NGO

Director Samvel Karapetian  
Yerevan, Gyulbenkian str. 38 A, office 45  
Tel: (37410)52.15.25. E-mail:raayer@sci.am; www.raa.am  
www.armenianarchitecture.am

Cross-Stone Making School» Charitable Foundation

Chairwoman Ms. Susanna Baghdasarian  
Yerevan, Shiraki str, office 56 Tel: (37410)56.70.28., E-mail:xachqar@mail.ru  
www.khachqar.narod.ru

**Individual craftsmen:**

- Varazdat Hambartsumian, Yerevan, Arami str. 29/4 E-mail: xachqar@mail.ru, Tel: (+37410) 530092, (+37491) 941744
- Panosyan Arsen Armenia, Kotayk marz, Argel village Tel: (+37493) 65 07 53
- Paruyryan Paruyr (Argel village, Kotayk)
- Paruyryan Arthur (Argel village, Kotayk) Tel: (+37493) 30 60 46
- Nalbandian Ruben (Arshaluys village, Etchmiadzin marz) Tel: (+37494) 30 78 90
- Nalbandyan Meruzhan (Arshaluys village, Etchmiadzin marz)
- Nalbandyan Armen (Arshaluys village, Etchmiadzin marz)
- Mkrtchian Hovhannes (Yerevan, Manasyan str. 23 A, apt 38)
- Khachikyan Harutyun(Yerevan, Margaryan str. 2)



- Yanikin Robert (Yerevan, Kurghinyan str 10, apt 29)
- Rubenyan Aramais (Yerevan, Nor Norq 2, Moldovakan str 27)
- Rubenyan Arthur (Yerevan, Nor Norq 2, Moldovakan str 27)
- Harutyunian Vardan (Yerevan, Norqi Ayginer, house 243 )
- Harutyunian Varazdat (Yerevan, Tel (+37410 53 00 92)
- Khachikyan Eghya (Yerevan, Margaryan str. 2)
- Petrosyan Davit (Yerevan, Nor Norq 6, house 21-26)
- Chakhalyan Martiros (Yerevan, Nor Norq, Moldovakan str 50/1-46)
- Martirosyan Aramayis (Yerevan, Jrvezh, Mayak 5-6)
- Smbatian Harutyun (Yerevan, Shengavit, Artashesyan str. 60-48)
- Khachatryan Karen (Yerevan, Shahumyan str 10, apt 91)
- Sargsyan Arsen (Yerevan, E.Kochar str 17-44)
- Mirzoyan Gaguiq (Yerevan, Shirak str, Z lane, 5-13)
- Sargsyan Tigran(Yerevan, Ereboundi, Khaghagh Doni str 1-29)
- Martirosian Hovhannes (Yerevan, Adonts str 17/1, apt 8)
- Asatrian Ashot (Yerevan, Arshakunyats str. 135, apt 37)
- Ter-Hovhannisyanyan Ara (Yerevan, Haghtanak, Noriki str, house 12)
- Lusikyan Suren (Artik, Norashen village)
- Karapetyan Ashot (Martuni, Geghahovit village)
- Khachatryan Harutyun (Gyumri, Kazachi Post 1 raw, house 3, Tel: (+37493 80 71 88) )
- Kutoyan Zaven (Gyumri, Sundukyan str 54, Tel (+37493 86 53 69))
- Melkonyan Kaycer (Gyumri, Aghyusi 41, Tel (+37491 74 91 18))
- Banshumjan Hrayr (Gyumri, Pemza 236/075 Tel (+37493 38 00 99))
- Gevorgyan Arthur (Gyumri, Akhuryan Mets Muselyan, Tel (+37494 93 60 70))
- Aghanyan Levon (Gyumri, Shahumyan village 22 str, Tel (+ 37493 89 24 66))
- Tokmajyan Davit (Gyumri, Akhuryan village 10 str, Tel (+ 37455 82 62 42))

**SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY**

Name: Hasmik Poghosyan

Title: Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia

Date: 15 janvier 2010

Signature:<signed>