



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

NGO Review of Accreditation

ICH-08 Report – Form

REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**DEADLINE 15 FEBRUARY 2021
FOR EXAMINATION IN 2021**

File may be downloaded at:
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Please provide only the information requested below. Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.

A. Identification of the organization

A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report

A.1.a. Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.

“Aşıq Şəmşir” Mədəniyyət Ocağı İctimai Birliyi

A.1.b. Name of the organization in English and/or French.

“Ashiq Shamshir” Cultural Center Public Union

A.1.c. Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)

NGO-90327

A.2. Address of the organization

Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.

Organization: “Ashiq Shamshir” Cultural Center Public Union

Address: Mehdi Huseyn st. 73/1 Baku, AZERBAIJAN AZ1001

Telephone number: +905349156226 / +994506282575

Email address: qasimovfazil@yahoo.com

Website:

Other relevant information:

A.3. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr

Family name: Gasimov

Given name: Fazil

Institution/position: Head of Department of International Relations

Address: Mehdi Huseyn st. 73/1 Baku, AZERBAIJAN AZ1001

Telephone number: +905349156226 / +994506282575

Email address: qasimovfazil@yahoo.com

Other relevant information:

B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national level (Chapter III of the Convention)¹

Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.

B.1. *Describe your organization's participation in State efforts to develop and implement measures to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) (Article 13 and Operational Directive (OD) 154), e.g. in the drafting of ICH-related policies or legislation, in the establishment of national ICH committees or in other government-led processes.*

Not to exceed 250 words

The decision on the establishment of "Ashiq Shamshir" Cultural Center Public Union (shortly, The Public Union) was made on the general meeting held on November 9, 2009. The Public Union has been registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan on January 29, 2010. The Public Union is a non-governmental organization aiming to safeguard, promote and transmit the Azerbaijani ashig art that has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2009.

In 2016 - 2020 the Public Union participated in State efforts to develop and implement measures to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage of Azerbaijan through the implementation of the joint projects with the Council of State Support to NGOs,

¹. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers when filling in parts B, C and E.

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and ANAS Institute of Folklore.

The Public Union worked with the Institute of Folklore of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences to prepare a project proposal for the establishment of the UNESCO "Ashiq Shamshir" Chair on Folk Music Heritage and Storytelling Traditions. The project proposal received an approval from the UNESCO Secretariat in 2019 and after the completion of official procedures the Chair was announced to be established in December 2020. This is the first UNESCO Chair in the field of storytelling all over the world. In addition to collaboration of international researchers, the Chair will provide an opportunity to promote the heritage of oral folk literature and traditional music culture of Azerbaijan.

B.2. *Describe your organization's cooperation with competent governmental bodies for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (Article 13), including existing institutions for training on and the documentation of ICH (OD 154).*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union continued to implement the joint projects with the Council of State Support to NGOs, Ministry of Culture of the Azerbaijan Republic, ANAS Institute of Folklore, and other governmental organization. The project "Proper formation and development of creative thinking in children and adolescents" funded by the Council of State Support to NGOs was implemented in 2016. The project aimed to develop creative thinking of the Azerbaijani youth through performing art.

The project "Preservation of the storytelling traditions belonging to master ashigs from refugee and IDP areas" funded by the Council of State Support to NGOs was implemented in 2018. The aim of the project was to preserve record and transmit the heritage of the ashigs from refugee and IDP areas to future generations.

The project "Implementation of UNESCO practices in the study and promotion of the ashig art" funded by the Ministry of Culture and the Council of State Support to NGOs in 2020 aimed to study the development of the ashig art since its inscription on the UNESCO Representative List and to identify the list of activities that need to be implemented in the following years to promote the ashig art as an example of Azerbaijan's intangible cultural heritage at the international level. The events held in different regions of Azerbaijan has supported the study of the ashig art, the recording and dissemination of ashig epics using modern technologies, as well as effective work on promoting the ashig art to the Azerbaijani youth.

B.3. *Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the State's Periodic Report (OD 152).*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union closely cooperates with the Azerbaijan National Commission for UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation of Azerbaijan to UNESCO. Experts of the Public Union are actively involved in the preparation of periodic reports and nomination files. Representatives of the Public Union have participated in four sessions of Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage since its accreditation in 2016.

The Public Union also contributes to the establishment of institutional relations between Azerbaijani academic institutions and UNESCO Secretariat. Thus, the UNESCO "Ashiq Shamshir" on Folk Music Heritage and Storytelling Traditions established at the Institute of Folklore with the expert support of the Public Union serves for the preservation of Azerbaijani folklore and also development of folklore studies in Azerbaijan.

The Public Union also implemented the projects for the development of inclusive arts education in Azerbaijan. Launched by the Public Union in 2019, the project "Lighting up the darkness with music" aims to support the activities of visually impaired talented people. The short film made within the project was shown on the 11th international forum of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, on 16 and 17 December 2019, on the

theme “Challenging Inequalities”. <https://youtu.be/BiXklqgiqAc>

The Public Union has been cooperating with the Azerbaijan National Conservatory in the field of inclusive arts education since 2020. With the support of the experts of the Public Union, a project proposal is being prepared for the establishment of the UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Arts Education at the Azerbaijan National Conservatory.

B.4 Describe your organization’s participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.

Not to exceed 250 words

Members of the Public Union contributed to the preparation of the nomination file "Heritage of Dede Qorqud/Korkyt Ata/Dede Korkut, epic culture, folk tales and music" which has been submitted by Azerbaijan, Turkey and Kazakhstan and inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List since 2018. Members of the Public Union also worked closely with the relevant government agencies to preserve and develop Azerbaijani ashig art and epic/storytelling culture. The Council of State Support to NGOs funded 5 projects of the Public Union in 2016-2020. These projects have contributed to the preservation and development of intangible cultural heritage in Azerbaijan.

The representative of the Public Union participated in the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for Safeguarding of ICH and made a number of proposals at the ICH NGO forum. The Public Union was represented on the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee in Ethiopia (2016), South Korea (2017) , and Colombia (2019). In addition, the representative of the Public Union participated in the UNESCO General Assembly of State Parties for the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris in 2018, and made a presentation at the UNESCO ICH NGO Forum dedicated to the 125th anniversary of birth of Ashiq Shamshir.

The representative of the Public Union also participated in the forums of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO in Sozopol, Tunisia, Moscow and Paris.

B.5. Describe your organization’s participation in the identification, definition (Article 11.b) and inventorying of ICH (Article 12, OD 80 and OD 153). Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union contributed to safeguarding ICH of Azerbaijan through implementing joint projects in collaboration with government agencies, public and private foundations, educational and academic institutions, NGOs and IDP communities. Within these projects, the Public Union held concert programs, commemoration events, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, webinars, etc. The Public Union also promote cultural diversity in Azerbaijan and support cultural expressions of people in the region.

Since its accreditation in 2016 the Public Union has implemented the following projects related to the safeguarding, promotion and transmission of intangible cultural heritage of Azerbaijan.

- In May 2016, in collaboration with the Council of State Support to NGOs the Public Union started the 4-month project named “Proper formation and development of creative thinking in children and adolescents”.

- With the grant of the Council of State Support to NGOs, on July 20, 2017 the Public Union started the 3-month project for publication of a book on the Kalbajar heroes and its presentation to the public.

- With the grant of the Council of State Support to NGOs, in May, 2018 the Public Union started the 4-month project named “Preservation of the storytelling traditions belonging to master ashigs from refugee and IDP areas”.

- With the grant of the Council of State Support to NGOs, in 2019 the Public Union started the 4-month project named “The theme of patriotism and heroism in the poetic work of our

contemporary ashigs”.

- With the grant of Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan and the Council of State Support to NGOs, in August, 2020 the Public Union started the 4-month project named "Implementation of UNESCO practices in the study and promotion of the ashig art".

B.6. Describe your organization's participation in other safeguarding measures, including those referred to in Article 13 and OD 153, aimed at:

- a. promoting the function of ICH in society;
- b. fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view to effective safeguarding;
- c. facilitating, to the extent possible, access to information relating to ICH while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of it.

Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.

Not to exceed 250 words

Since its establishment in 2009, the Public Union has been involved in numerous projects and events related to the safeguarding, promotion and transmission of intangible cultural heritage of Azerbaijan.

- The Public Union started the implementation of the project "Promotion of Nearly Forgotten Folk Art Genres" in March, 2010. The project was sponsored by The Council of State Support to NGOs. The samples of the forgotten folk art genres, especially the family-domestic folk plays were gathered filmed and the educational materials were prepared with the aim of promotion of Azerbaijani folk arts.

- On February 2, 2011, the Public Union organized and hosted an event named "the Role of Young Ashiqs in Development of Ashiq Arts". The Objective of the event was the safeguarding of traditions of folk arts.

- In June 2012, the Public Union started the implementation of the project "Masterworks-Reading the Alphabet of our National Values Together". The aim of the Project was to promote heritage of masterworks ("ustadnamələr") in the education of the young generation and transmission of this heritage to the young generation in this regard.

- In October 2012, the Public Union started the implementation of the project "The National Wealth of the Modern Azerbaijan-Ashiq Art" and held a scientific conference.

- In collaboration with The Council of State Support to NGOs, the Public Union implemented a project "Ashiq-Ozan, the Symbol of Shared Culture of Azerbaijan-Turkey" in June, 2013. The aim of the project was to contribute to cultural integration between the nations.

- With the support of the Council of State Support to NGOs, on March 10, 2014 the Public Union started the 3-month project named "Protecting Saz and Balabani as a National Instrument of the Azerbaijani People".

B.7. Describe your organization's involvement in measures to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of ICH, in particular those referred to in Article 14, ODs 105 to 109 and OD 155:

- a. educational, awareness-raising and information programmes aimed at the general public, in particular young people;
- b. educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;
- c. capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of ICH;
- d. non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;
- e. education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing ICH.

Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union involved in measures to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of ICH through cultural and scientific events nationwide since its establishment.

- The Public Union organized and hosted a seminar called "Uzeyir Hajibayli and the Ashiq Art", in December, 2010. The lecturers presented their works on the importance of folk arts in Uzeyir Hajibayli's works and the role of Uzeyir Hajibayli in the development of Ashiq Art and his works in this regard.

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, the Public Union organized the "Ashiq Competitions between the Young Ashiqs -a Tribute to Ashiq Shamshir" on December 22, 2010. 77 young ashiqs from 33 districts throughout the country performed their works.

- In collaboration with the Institute of Folklore, the Public Union organized the scientific-practical conference on "Folk Art of Azerbaijan in the Context of European Civilization" on December 21, 2011.

- In collaboration with ANAS Institute of Folklore, the Public Union organized and held an international scientific conference on "The Historical Development Path of Ashiq Art and Ashiq Shamshir's Era" in December 7, 2013. The aim of the event was to study the role of the outstanding representatives of Ashiq- Ozan Art of the 20th century, including Ashiq Shamshir's heritage from scientific perspective.

- On November 14, 2014 the Public Union held International Scientific Conference on "Karabakh folk dances and performances in the context of the Turkic context", organized jointly by the ANAS Institute of Folklore.

- On March 24, 2019 the Public Union held the Nowruz Festival with the participation of Azerbaijani, Turkic, Pakistani, Persian and other Eurasian communities in Vienna, Austria.

C. Bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation

Report on any activities carried out by your organization at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives, as referred to in Article 19 and OD 156. You may, for example, consider the following issues:

- a. sharing information and documentation concerning shared ICH (OD 87);
- b. participating in regional cooperation activities including, for example, those of category 2 centres for ICH established under the auspices of UNESCO (OD 88);
- c. developing networks of NGOs, communities, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes at subregional and regional levels to develop joint and interdisciplinary approaches concerning shared ICH (OD 86).

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union contributed to the implementation of the 2003 Convention at the regional and international events. To this end, the Public Union made extensive use of opportunities for international cooperation. The UNESCO Chair project, initiated and supported by the Public Union at the Institute of Folklore, provides ample opportunities for regional cooperation. The first goal of this project is to promote the rich folk music heritage and storytelling tradition of Azerbaijan at the international level. UNESCO-inscribed Azerbaijani mugham, art of Azerbaijani ashiq, Yalli dance are examples of folk music heritage. The Heritage of Dede Qorqud inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List is a symbol of the storytelling tradition of the Turkic peoples. The Public Union closely cooperates with government agencies and civil society organizations to preserve the ICH elements mentioned above.

The Public Union also contributed to the preservation of Novruz traditions in the world, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List since 2016. The Novruz festival held in Vienna in March, 2019 jointly with the Azerbaijani-Turkish Culture and Businessmen's Association (AZER-DER) served this purpose.

Representatives of the Public Union participated in international scientific conferences and cultural events organized in various countries around the world, tried to promote the intangible cultural heritage of Azerbaijan, as well as worked closely with Azerbaijanis living abroad.

In addition, the Public Union cooperated with foreign partners to promote the heritage of Ashiq Shamshir, a prominent figure of Azerbaijani oral folk literature and traditional music culture.

D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

D.1 Has your organization participated in the Committee meetings or those of the General Assembly? If so, please indicate which meetings you attended and describe the nature of your contribution to the Committee's work.

Not to exceed 250 words

Fazil Gasimov, representative of the Public Union, participated in the eleventh session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that took place from November 28 to December 2, 2016 in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. He also participated in the ICH NGO Forum and made a speech on importance of preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in conflict regions.

Fazil Gasimov, representative of the Public Union, participated in the twelfth session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that took place from 4 to 9 December, 2017 in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. He also contributed to the work of the ICH NGO Forum and gave the recommendations regarding the assessments of Evaluation Body.

Fazil Gasimov, representative of the Public Union, participated in the seventh session of the UNESCO General Assembly for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that took place from May 30 to June 1, 2018 in Paris, France. He joined the ICH NGO Forum, and made a presentation on activities of the Public Union toward refugees and internally displaced people of Azerbaijan. He also delivered a commemoration speech on 125th anniversary of Ashiq Shamshir, the prominent Azerbaijani folk musician of the 20th century.

Fazil Gasimov, representative of the Public Union, participated in the fourteenth session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that took place from 9 to 14 December, 2019 in Bogota, Colombia. He also participated in the ICH NGO Forum and presented the short film "Lighting up the darkness with music".

Fazil Gasimov, representative of the Public Union, participated in the fourteenth session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that took place online from 14 to 18 December, 2020. He also participated in the ICH NGO Forum held online.

D.2 *Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (OD 26 to 31), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.*

Not to exceed 100 words

The Public Union has neither served as a member of Evaluation Body nor as a member of the Consultative Body.

D.3 *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (OD 96) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

Not to exceed 500 words

The Public Union has extensive experiences, networks and progressive initiatives in the field of preservation and promotion of oral folk literature and traditional music heritage. The Public Union works with the most experienced specialists in Azerbaijan in this field, supports their scientific and cultural activities.

The Public Union also has extensive experience in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of refugees and IDPs. With the expert support of the Public Union, the Institute of Folklore established a UNESCO Chair on folk music and storytelling. This Chair creates new opportunities for regional cooperation in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

The Public Union contributes to the development of an inclusive society in Azerbaijan through its projects. One of the missions of the Public Union is to ensure the accessibility of master folk musicians for the IDP communities and to support the talented young musicians. In 2020, the Public Union submitted a project to the UNESCO IFCD Foundation to increase the inclusive arts education practices in Azerbaijan.

In addition, the Public Union provides technical support for the preparation of a project proposal for the establishment of the UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Arts Education at the Azerbaijan National Conservatory.

During the pandemic, access to arts education is severely problematic all over the world. In this regard, the Public Union can contribute to the future activities of the Committee with its experience in the field of inclusive arts education.

The Public Union is working on new projects to support the development of the innovative cultural industry in Azerbaijan. The applications of cultural innovations in Azerbaijan by the Public Union will form new practices for the world in the near future.

E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (as described in OD 27 and OD 96):

E.1. *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Among the members of the Public Union there are prominent Azerbaijani folklore scholars, poets, writers, singers, ashigs, cultural figures, as well as students. The number of members of the Public Union is more than 1,000. The Public Union has more than 10 employees with a good command of English.

E.2. *Does your organization have experience in working across several ICH domains? Please describe your experiences.*

Not to exceed 250 words

(a) oral traditions and expressions, (b) performing arts (c) social practices, rituals and festive events

The Public Union has a rich experience in each domain. Detailed information about these experiences is provided above. In addition, the Public Union has started to share its experiences both nationally and internationally. To this end, it develops cooperation with local and international organizations. At the same time, the Public Union strives to contribute to the

cooperation between UNESCO and Azerbaijan.

E.3. *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Experts of the Public Union assist to the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO in the preparation of nomination files, as well as support the preparation of project proposals for the establishment of UNESCO chairs in academic institutions of Azerbaijan. At the same time, the Public Union submitted a project proposal to the IFCD Foundation and applied for the fund. Related information was provided above. In 2020, the Public Union prepared a nomination document for the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the prominent Azerbaijani musicologist Dr. Sanubar Bagirova and sent it to the UNESCO Secretariat.

E.4. *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Public Union has more than 10 employees who are fluent in English. The project proposals prepared by experts of the Public Union are submitted to both local and international foundations. Experts of the Public Union also provide technical support to Azerbaijani universities in preparing project proposals. The project proposal prepared for the Folklore Institute received an approval from the UNESCO Secretariat.

E.5. *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Since its accreditation in 2016, the Public Union has started to learn UNESCO practices to apply locally. For this purpose, the representatives of the Public Union have participated in numerous UNESCO meetings, seminars and forums held in different countries.

In 2018, the Public Union began to provide technical support to Azerbaijani universities to join the UNESCO UNITWIN Program. The first project proposal to establish a UNESCO chair was prepared for the Institute of Folklore. In December 2020, the UNESCO "Ashiq Shamshir" Chair on Folk Music Heritage and Storytelling Traditions was announced to establish by the Institute of Folklore. In 2020, the Public Union began to provide technical support for the Azerbaijan National Conservatory to join the UNESCO UNITWIN Program. The project proposal to establish UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Arts Education at the Azerbaijan National Conservatory is being prepared with the assistance of the experts of the Public Union.

In order to increase access to arts education in Azerbaijan, the Public Union studies international experiences and aims to create the best practices. The project "Lighting up the darkness with music" that launched in 2019 by the Public Union has attracted international attention. The short film was shown on the 11th international forum of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, at UNESCO Headquarters on December 17, 2019. The Public Union will further expand its activities in this direction in the coming years.

The Public Union plans to submit new project proposals to IFCD and other foundations. These project proposals envisage both the application of international experience in Azerbaijan and the promotion of local experience at the international level.

F. Cooperation with UNESCO

Report on activities carried out by your organization in cooperation with UNESCO (both direct cooperation with UNESCO as well as activities carried out under the auspices of UNESCO or for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention, or financial support, such as funding from the Participation Program).

Not to exceed 250 words

Here are a summary of the activities carried out by the Public Union in cooperation with UNESCO:

The Representative of the Public Union participated in four sessions (Ethiopia in 2016, South Korea in 2017, Colombia in 2019, and online session in 2020) of Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage since its accreditation in 2016.

The representative of the Public Union participated in the UNESCO General Assembly of State Parties for the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris in 2018.

The representative of the Public Union participated in the five ICH NGO forums from 2016 to 2020 and contributed to the discussions on safeguarding of world's intangible cultural heritage.

The representative of the Public Union also participated in the forums of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO in Sozopol, Tunisia, Moscow and Paris.

The representative of the Public Union participated in the International Youth Forum on Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Roads held in China in 2017 and 2018.

The representative of the Public Union also participated in the UNESCO Partners' Forum held in Paris in 2018.

The project "Lighting up the darkness with music" that launched in 2019 by the Public Union has attracted international attention. The short film relating to the project was shown on the 11th international forum of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, at UNESCO Headquarters on December 17, 2019.

In 2018, the Public Union began to provide technical support to Azerbaijani universities to join the UNESCO UNITWIN Program. The first project proposal to establish a UNESCO chair was prepared for the Institute of Folklore. Thus, in December 2020, the UNESCO "Ashiq Shamshir" Chair on Folk Music Heritage and Storytelling Traditions was announced to establish by the Institute of Folklore.

In 2020, the Public Union began to provide technical support for the Azerbaijan National Conservatory to join the UNESCO UNITWIN Program. The project proposal to establish UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Arts Education at the Azerbaijan National Conservatory is being prepared with the assistance of the experts of the Public Union.

In 2020, the Public Union submitted the project "Capacity-building of Azerbaijani art professionals in the field of inclusive education" to the IFCD to increase the practices of inclusive arts education in Azerbaijan.

In 2020, the Public Union prepared a nomination document for the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the prominent Azerbaijani musicologist Dr. Sanubar Bagirova and sent it to the UNESCO Secretariat.

In 2020, the Public Union launched the project "Implementation of UNESCO practices in the study and promotion of the ashig art" that was jointly funded by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Council of State Support to NGOs. It aimed to study the development of the ashig art since its inscription on the UNESCO Representative List and to identify the list of activities that need to be implemented in the following years to promote the ashig art as an example of Azerbaijan's intangible cultural heritage at the international level.

The Public Union closely cooperates with Azerbaijani government agencies and civil society

organizations to preserve the ICH elements like Azerbaijani mugham, art of Azerbaijani ashig, Yalli dance, the Heritage of Dede Qorqud and others.

The Public Union also contributed to the preservation of Novruz traditions in the world, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List since 2016. The Novruz festival held in Vienna on March 24, 2019 jointly with the Azerbaijani-Turkish Culture and Businessmen's Association (AZER-DER) served this purpose.

The Public Union strives to apply cultural innovations in Azerbaijan to create best practices in the field of storytelling and folk music. These experiences will be shared with other countries through UNESCO in the future.

G. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum

Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.

For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>.

Yes

No

H. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of the organization.

Name: Habib Misirov

Title: Deputy Head of the Public Union

Date: 12.02.2021

Signature:

