

## **FOREWORD BY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE TAJIKISTAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO**

Culture is the “key” to understanding human life and death, when it is understood as the concept of the way human life is organized. When it is possible to learn what culture (history, present, future) means, it may be possible to find out what meaning life can have for human beings. In this sense civilizations are special forms of cultural organizations. Societies are social forms enabling people to live together.

History witnesses that the governments that rely on their rich culture and its diversity always overcome development obstacles and forge newer relationships and make significant contributions to the development of global cultural life. One of the important points of strength of the government of Tajikistan since the declaration of its independence is its precise attention to the cultural aspect of the country including sustaining and preserving the century-old cultural traditions and assisting new emerging cultural phenomena.

Tajik culture is at the core of Tajik national identity and its spiritual-moral development. The Tajik nation is proud to be recognized by its unique culture and forms of cultural expressions.

In the two and a half decades of Independence years with the initiatives and cultural policies of the Founder of Peace and National Unity, Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon became an intellectual force contributing to the further developments of various aspects of the cultural sector, such as cultural diversity, heritage, tradition, ethics, and other national cultural values.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan has established regulatory and legal frameworks for the development of the national culture. For example, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan has declared and set the March 20 - the «Day of Culture», May 12 - the «Day of the professional music «Shashmaqom»» and October 10th - the «Day of the traditional music «Falak»», which are annually celebrated throughout the country by holding academic and cultural events e.g. conferences, concerts and other cultural programs.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan has ratified the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan «On Culture», «Museums and Museum's collections», «Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Sites», including the state programs on «Development of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2008-2015», «Development of artistic talents and skills in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2009-2015», «Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2013-2020», «Development of Cultural Institutions in the Republic of Tajikistan for the years 2016-2020». The above mentioned are few examples from many policies and initiatives attesting special attention and care of the President, Emomali Rahmon, about the national culture.

Some significant results achieved in the framework of the above mentioned laws and programs are the ongoing publications of multivolume book series such as «Tajik

National Encyclopedia», «Encyclopedia of Traditional Culture» and «The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Tajik People». Additionally, in 2014 «National Inventory List of Intangible Culture Heritage» was prepared and published by the members of the Research Institute of Culture and Information, which includes 286 titles of the traditional culture expressions and forms. In 2016, this register has been updated with the new materials gathered in result of art and ethnography expeditions undertaken by the members of the mentioned institute. The second updated publication contains 515 titles of cultural expression from the intangible cultural heritage sector. The work in enriching and cataloguing the intangible culture heritage elements are is still in process.

In addition, organization of the annual festivals and competitions, exhibitions related to the intangible cultural heritage has become a regular norm. The Republican cultural contest «Andaleb», International «Falak» festival, «Taronai Vahdat», folk-ethnographic ensembles contest, «Khandai husn – Jilvai chakan» republican contest, «Navoi Badakhshon» republican contest, «Chakomi Gesu» republican contest, «Oshi palov» republican contest and festival fairs such as «Korvoni Navruz» and «Sairi guli lola» significantly contributes to the awareness and development in the intangible cultural heritage sphere.

Cooperation between the state and non-governmental organizations and Tajik experts and International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP) of South Korea is very significant and effective in implementing the projects relevant to intangible cultural heritage sphere. With a view to increasing the visibility of cultural heritage of Central Asia in collaboration with the Tajikistan National Commission for UNESCO's affairs local experts has organized a working group and the series of documentary films are being filmed that focus on promotion of study, sustaining and preservation of intangible cultural heritage of Tajikistan.

This new initiative, that is publication of the book dedicated to the «Intangible Cultural Heritage in Tajikistan» is one of the measures aimed at safeguarding and promoting the history, and intangible cultural heritage of the Tajiks, which has also been developed and published as a result of cooperation with the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP).



**Shamsiddin Orumbekzoda**  
Minister of Culture of the  
Republic of Tajikistan

Director-General of the  
Tajikistan National Commission for  
UNESCO