

**Hundred and fifty-fifth Session**

155 EX/16 Rev.  
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Item 3.5.6 of the agenda

**SHARJAH PRIZE FOR ARAB CULTURE**

**SUMMARY**

The authorities of the United Arab Emirates (the Government of Sharjah) have proposed to the Director-General the establishment of a prize entitled 'Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture' to reward action taken to promote Arab culture. The Director-General is therefore submitting document 155 EX/16 Rev. to the Executive Board for approval. This document has been revised at the request of two Member States so as to clarify the purpose of the Prize and emphasize the role played in its establishment by the Government of Sharjah.

Decision required: paragraph 3.

## INTRODUCTION

1. In a letter dated 5 January 1998, the Permanent Delegate of the United Arab Emirates to UNESCO advised the Director-General of the intention of the authorities of his country to propose the establishment of a prize entitled 'Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture' by placing a fund amounting to US \$250,000 at UNESCO's disposal. The purpose of this Prize is to reward the efforts of a national of an Arab country and a national of any other country who have contributed, through their artistic, intellectual or promotional work, to the development and diffusion of Arab culture in the world. This initiative was taken as part of activities carried out in 1998 under 'Sharjah, Cultural Capital of the Arab Region'. The value of this Prize will be determined by the Director-General on the basis of the interest accruing to the fund.

2. On 4 May 1998 an initial agreement was signed between the Director-General of UNESCO and the Government of Sharjah which stipulates that the Prize shall be awarded once every two years during the General Conference of UNESCO to honour intellectually distinguished persons, groups or institutions worldwide for their activities to promote Arab culture.

3. If the Executive Board gives its assent to the draft Statutes, as proposed in Annex I to this document, it may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 155 EX/16 Rev. concerning the establishment of the 'Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture',
2. Considering that the objectives of the Prize are in conformity with those of UNESCO, as stated in the second and sixth preambular paragraphs and in Article 1, paragraph 2(c), of the Constitution of UNESCO,
3. Expresses to the Government of Sharjah (United Arab Emirates) the Organization's deepest gratitude for this initiative and for its generous offer of a fund amounting to US \$250,000;
4. Approves the Statutes of the Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture as set out in Annex I to this decision;
5. Takes note of the Financial Regulations governing the Special Account opened for this Prize, as set out in Annex II to this decision.

## ANNEX I

### STATUTES OF THE SHARJAH PRIZE FOR ARAB CULTURE

#### 1. **Purpose**

The purpose of the Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture is to reward the efforts of a national of an Arab country and a national of any other country who have contributed, through their artistic, intellectual or promotional work, to the development and diffusion of Arab culture in the world. The objective of this Prize is in conformity with the second and sixth preambular paragraphs and with Article 1, paragraph 2(c), of the Constitution of UNESCO, according to which the Organization is assigned the task of promoting the mutual understanding of peoples through activities that encourage greater knowledge of the cultures of different peoples and international exchange between the different cultures.

#### 2. **Amount and frequency of award**

- 2.1 The value of the Prize shall be determined by the Director-General on the basis of the interest on the investment by the Secretariat in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO of the sum of US \$250,000 offered for this purpose by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, it being understood that the interest shall also be used to administer the Prize.
- 2.2 The Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture shall be awarded once every two years and shall be shared, in equal parts, between one prizewinner from an Arab country and one prizewinner from another country.

#### 3. **Qualifications of candidates**

Candidates shall be eminent persons, groups or institutions that have made a significant contribution to the promotion of Arab culture throughout the world, and to the safeguarding and revitalization of the Arab intangible cultural heritage.

#### 4. **Selection of prizewinners**

The prizewinners shall be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of the proposals made to him by a Jury.

#### 5. **Jury**

- 5.1 The Jury shall consist of a minimum of five members, of different nationalities, appointed by the Director-General for a period of four years.
- 5.2 The Jury shall adopt its own working procedures and shall be assisted in the performance of its task by a member of the UNESCO Secretariat designated by the Director-General.
- 5.3 The Jury shall meet every two years.

**6. Submission of nominations**

6.1 Nominations shall be submitted to the Director-General by the governments of Member States in consultation with their National Commissions and by non-governmental organizations maintaining formal relations with UNESCO.

6.2 Each nomination shall be accompanied by a written recommendation, which shall include, *inter alia*:

a description of the candidate's work;

a summary of the results of his or her work;

a definition of the candidate's contribution to promoting Arab culture or improving its diffusion.

**7. Procedures for awarding the Prize**

The names of the prizewinners shall be announced every two years, on a date fixed by the Director-General of UNESCO. The Prize shall be awarded by the Director-General or his representative at an official ceremony held for that purpose.

## ANNEX II

### FINANCIAL REGULATIONS OF THE SPECIAL ACCOUNT FOR THE SHARJAH PRIZE FOR ARAB CULTURE

#### 1. **Establishment of the Special Account**

In accordance with Regulations 6.6 and 6.7 of the Financial Regulations of UNESCO, there is hereby established an account which shall be known as the 'Special Account for the Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture', hereinafter called 'the Special Account'.

#### 2. **Purpose of the Special Account**

The Special Account shall be credited with funds for investment, the interest on which shall be used to finance a Prize which shall be awarded for the promotion of Arab culture. The Prize shall be awarded every two years as from 1999, on a date fixed by the Director-General.

#### 3. **Income**

Donations made by the authorities of the United Arab Emirates (the Government of Sharjah) and other donors - with the prior agreement of the United Arab Emirates (the Government of Sharjah) - and interest accruing on the investment of those donations shall be credited to the Special Account.

#### 4. **Expenditure**

The Special Account shall be debited with the amount (or amounts) awarded to the prizewinner (or prizewinners) and the administrative expenses, including those incurred for the holding of meetings of the Jury entrusted with the selection of the prizewinners. Expenditure may not exceed the amount of interest accrued.

#### 5. **Financial statements and accounts**

- 5.1 The financial period shall be the same as that of UNESCO's regular programme.
- 5.2 The financial statements of the Special Account shall be presented in dollars of the United States of America. Subsidiary accounts may, if necessary, be kept in other currencies.
- 5.3 Separate accounting records shall be maintained for the operations of the Special Account and they shall be included in the financial report of the Director-General.
- 5.4 Any unused balance at the end of a financial period shall be carried over to the following period.
- 5.5 The financial accounts shall be submitted for verification to the External Auditor of UNESCO.

**6. Investments**

In accordance with Regulations 9.1 and 9.2 of the Financial Regulations of UNESCO, the Director-General is authorized to invest the funds credited to the Special Account. Interest accruing from these investments shall be credited to the said account.

**7. General provision**

Unless otherwise provided in the present financial regulations, the Special Account shall be administered in accordance with UNESCO's Financial Regulations.

**8. Termination of the Prize**

UNESCO or the United Arab Emirates (the Government of Sharjah) may terminate the Prize. Any unspent balance upon termination of the Prize shall be transferred to the United Arab Emirates (the Government of Sharjah) after the deduction of expenses not yet recorded in the accounts.