

20th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee
For the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Speech by H.E. Mr KANO Takehiro (Japan)

Mr. Chair,

Thank you once again.

On behalf of the Government of Japan and all concerned local communities in Japan, I am honoured to express my sincerest gratitude for this inscription, on an extended basis as a national extension of “Yama, Hoko, Yatai, float festivals in Japan” on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

For this inscription, four new elements have been added to the Representative List, namely:

- The Ofune Festival of Hitachi Otsu in Kita-Ibaraki City, Ibaraki Prefecture, Eastern Japan,
- The Murakami Yatai Festival of Murakami City, Niigata Prefecture, northern part of Central Japan,
- The Hikiyama and the Hojozu Hachiman-gu Shrine Hikiyama Tsukiyama Festival of Imizu City, Toyama Prefecture, northern part of Central Japan, and
- The Otsu Hikiyama Festival of Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture, Central Japan.

Each of those elements represent an irreplaceable heritage that has long strengthened local community cohesion and supported regional

development in various parts of Japan. With this extension, the number of inscribed elements under “Yama, Hoko, Yatai, float festivals in Japan” now stand at thirty-seven. The communities associated with these 37 float festivals regularly come together to share knowledge and experience, and discuss common challenges related to their preservation and transmission. We highly appreciate and welcome such community-led initiatives.

I am confident that this inscription will further encourage the community-led initiatives and contribute to the safeguarding and transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Japan as a whole.

Thank you very much.