

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

17th Conference of Parties 17

Musical Instruments Intervention Regarding Document 42

Frequent Cross-Border Non-Commercial Movements of Musical Instruments

October 2, 2016

Thank you, Chair.

I am pleased to provide this statement on behalf of the League of American Orchestras, in collaboration with the American Federation of Musicians, the American Federation of Violin and Bow Makers, the International Association of Violin and Bow Makers, the National Association of Music Merchants, Martin Guitars, and Taylor Guitars.

As representatives of hundreds of thousands of musicians, nonprofit performing arts presenters, and instrument manufacturers and retailers globally, we appreciate the leadership that CITES parties have undertaken to support noncommercial travel with musical instruments in this and prior Conferences of the Parties.

Musicians rely on instruments for their livelihoods, and use them internationally to advance the education of young people, and to bridge differences through the shared experience of live music. CoP16 established, under Resolution Conf. 16.8, a new process for obtaining a musical instrument certificate for non-commercial travel. Our community's experience in attempting to put those certificates to use has revealed the urgent need to streamline and harmonize implementation across Parties.

The proposals offered under Doc. 42 would make important progress towards that goal by recommending that all CITES Parties implement the personal effects exemption permissible under the existing Resolution Conf. 13.7 when a musical instrument is hand-carried or in checked baggage. This would enable musicians to more reliably and cost-effectively travel back and forth from their home countries with their instruments. Doc. 42 also clarifies that the Musical Instrument Certificate is available for instruments loaned to musicians, and eligible for use when traveling for paid performances.

Just as permit and enforcement procedures should be harmonized across CITES Parties, uniform public guidance must be developed that will enable those who use musical instruments to understand and be in compliance with the evolving rules for international travel.

On implementation of a revised Resolution Conf. 16.8, we look forward to continuing to partner with the management authorities of CITES Parties to craft streamlined, domestically-adopted implementation and enforcement strategies. We also remain committed to educating music community stakeholders globally about how their compliance with CITES requirements will support both urgent conservation needs and essential international cultural activity.

The proposed revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.8 under Doc. 42 will support the goals of conservation of protected species, while also supporting the world's musicians, their music, and their efforts to collaborate across borders.

Thank you.