

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

18th Conference of the Parties

August 22, 2019

Musical Instruments Intervention Regarding Document 56:

Simplified procedure for permits and certificates

Thank you, Chair.

I am pleased to briefly comment on behalf of the League of American Orchestras, in collaboration with the International Association of Violin and Bow Makers, the Confederation of European Music Industries, International Wood Products Association, Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, the French Musical Instrument Organization, Forest Based Solutions, Taylor Guitars, Martin Guitar, Paul Reed Smith Guitars, as well as several others that are unable to join us here today, including the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, the Association of British Orchestras, Orchestras Canada, the International Federation of Musicians, National Association of Music Merchants, and Pearle* Live Performance Europe.

Musicians perform with valuable and culturally significant musical instruments legally crafted decades and even centuries ago. A number of these instruments contain small amounts of materials regulated under CITES.

At the 16th Conference of the Parties (CoP16), Resolution Conf. 16.8 was adopted on *Frequent Cross-Border Non-Commercial Movements of Musical Instruments*, creating a multi-use Musical Instrument Certificate, with revisions adopted at CoP17.

To be clear, the Musical Instrument Certificate is not an exemption from the permit process. It is a consolidated permit. The Certificate streamlines the requirement for obtaining multiple CITES permits when musicians bring their instruments through multiple ports for use, but it must still be credentialed by CITES enforcement officials, and only at designated ports through which a musician must travel. This means that substantial resources must be invested by both musicians and management authorities, simply to allow musicians to perform internationally with their instruments and bring them back home, still firmly in their possession.

The process of issuing and credentialing these permits is extremely variable from country to country and is in urgent need of harmonization in order to fully facilitate travel with musical instruments. Further – and consistent with the work undertaken to establish simplified procedures for other items – the Parties should consider between now and the next CoP opportunities to exempt noncommercial movement of musical instruments from the current full battery of permit requirements.

We have been informed by individual musicians and some ensembles that the required time and financial expense of obtaining and putting to use the MIC has left no option but to forgo travel with their best musical instruments.

We support the US proposal to continue the work on simplified procedures for permits and certificates, and ask that this work include review of simplified procedures for *Frequent Cross-Border Non-Commercial Movements of Musical Instruments*.

A more detailed statement summarizing the perspective of musical instrument stakeholders is included in Information Document 23, signed by 27 national and international organizations.

We stand ready to be an ongoing resource to the Parties during CoP18 and beyond, and remain committed to educating musicians globally about how their compliance with CITES requirements will support both urgent conservation needs and essential international cultural activity.