

EXECUTIVE BOARD

EX



Sixty-fifth Session

Item 4.4.1 of the Provisional Agenda

65 EX/9

PARIS, 22 March 1963

Translated from the French

STUDY OF MEASURES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF MONUMENTS THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL FUND OR BY ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS

Preamble

1. At its twelfth session in 1962 the General Conference adopted resolution 4.412 authorizing the Director-General, inter alia:

"(a) to resume, in the spirit of resolution 6.43 adopted by the General Conference at its third session in 1948, the study of measures for the preservation of monuments of historical or artistic value through the establishment of an international fund or by any other appropriate means, and to prepare and submit to the General Conference, at its thirteenth session in 1964, a report on this subject."

2. This resolution confirmed the decision adopted by the Executive Board at its 60th session in November 1961, which is worded as follows:

"The Executive Board.....

Pays tribute to the work Unesco has already done for the preservation of monuments and historic and artistic sites through its Secretariat and the International Committee set up for this purpose;

Expresses the hope that this work will be continued and extended to an ever greater variety of regions, since destructive forces are very powerful in all parts of the world;

Recommends that Unesco intensify its activity in this field, study the problem as a whole, define the methods to be adopted and carry out pilot projects;

Considering that the resources available to the Organization are unfortunately inadequate for large-scale operations, which, in many cases, are very urgently required;

Invites the Acting Director-General to revert to resolution 6.4 adopted by the General Conference at its third session concerning the establishment of

an international fund for the preservation of artistic and historic monuments, and to explore, in particular, ways and means of financing the fund from special sources."

3. In pursuance of the General Conference resolution, the Secretariat resumed its studies concerning an international fund and also undertook new studies on other possible ways of achieving the desired results by other means.

PART I

INTERNATIONAL FUND

I. Background information

4. At its early sessions, the General Conference on several occasions examined problems concerning the preservation of monuments in general, and particularly the problems of financing conservation and restoration work on them. Resolutions 6.41 and 6.42, adopted at the third session in 1948 and the fourth session in 1949 respectively, called for the preparation of reports on the possibility of establishing an international fund. An international committee of experts, convened by the Director-General in October 1949, also expressed keen interest in this project, although it recognized the practical difficulties connected with methods of financing (the Committee's report was published in: Sites and Monuments, in the series "Museums and Monuments", Vol. I).

5. At its fifth session, in 1950, the General Conference was given the opportunity of examining a concrete project, based on a proposal by the Mexican delegation, and adopted the following resolution (5 C/4.45):

"The Director-General is authorized:

To submit to the sixth session of the General Conference a report on the possibility and advisability of adopting an international convention instituting a special tourist tax, the proceeds of which would be reserved in part for the preservation of monuments and museums in the signatory countries and partly for an international fund controlled by Unesco."

6. Pursuant to this resolution, the Secretariat, resuming the preparatory work undertaken in accordance with the decisions of the two previous sessions of the General Conference, sent Member States a detailed note concerning the problem as a whole (CL/452, Annex I, December 1950), accompanied by a questionnaire calling for information and observations on the various aspects of the problem.

7. The replies received from Member States were submitted to the General Conference at its sixth session in 1951 (documents 6 C/PRG/10 and Addendum). The results of the survey may be summarized as follows: only three States favoured both the establishment of an international fund and the institution of a tourist tax. Four States were in general opposed to the suggested Convention. Nine States favoured the establishment of an international fund, but were opposed to the institution of a tourist tax.

8. The idea of a tourist tax was therefore dropped, but this did not mean that the fund project itself was eliminated from Unesco's programme, for the General Conference, at its sixth session in 1951, adopted the following resolution (6 C/4.23):

"The Director-General is authorized, in collaboration with the Consultative Committee for Monuments.....

To report to the seventh session of the General Conference on the possibility of establishing, by an international convention, or by other appropriate means,

an international fund for the maintenance of museums, monuments and collections possessed of universal interest:....."

9. However, the General Conference also approved, at the same session, a proposal by the Swiss delegation limiting Unesco's work to the establishment of a research institute. To implement this General Conference decision Unesco's activities from 1955 onwards included the establishment of this institute, culminating in the creation of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, with its headquarters in Rome. The studies concerning an international fund for carrying out preservation and restoration work on monuments were broken off as from that same date.

10. In 1962, the Secretariat resumed the study of the international fund project, in accordance with the Executive Board's decision at its 60th session (see paragraph 2 above).

II. Summary of the basic elements of the problem

11. (a) Purpose. The object of an international fund for monuments, established under the auspices of Unesco and directed by it or by some other administrative body, specially created, should be to provide particular States with the financial assistance needed to carry out essential work for the preservation, restoration and presentation of monuments of world interest existing in their territory.

12. (b) Scope of assistance. The financial assistance provided by the fund should take the form of sharing in the cost of the work concerned, the beneficiary State being also required to make a substantial contribution of its own. The extent of the fund's share might vary according to circumstances, including the type of work, general conditions in the beneficiary country, the interest of the monument or monuments, etc. Something around 50% might be taken as an average figure. It would seem logical, also, that States, in order to be entitled to obtain assistance from the fund, should contribute to its financing in accordance with the agreements governing its establishment.

13. (c) Scope of assistance. Monuments of world interest almost always consist of extensive and massive groupings, and the work of preserving them involves large sums of money: recent experience has shown that operations of this kind often call for sums ranging from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in each case, with payment sometimes spread over periods of from three to ten years. An international fund capable of meeting what is likely to be a flood of requests from States should be large enough to cover a certain number of requests by means of fairly substantial grants-in-aid: to meet 20 requests calling for an average of \$50,000 each, for example, the fund would have to have an income of about \$1,000,000 a year.

14. (d) Allocation of assistance. Examining and dealing with requests for assistance will be a difficult task which the responsible services, whether those of the Unesco Secretariat or a specially created body, would need to carry out under the guidance of an ad hoc consultative organ consisting either of experts appointed by the Director-General or of representatives of the countries contributing to the fund.

III. Financing of the international fund

15. As a general principle, the fund would be financed from either compulsory or voluntary contributions.

16. (a) Compulsory contributions. As a first possibility, these might take the form of contributions drawn from national budgets according to set regulations; however, such contributions would represent a fixed expense, and governments would probably be unwilling to agree to them for that reason. Another possibility is compulsory contributions borne directly by individuals (such as the tourist tax already proposed in 1950, or an extra charge levied on admission to museums, places of entertainment, and the like); but here, again, such measures would certainly be unpopular, and not at all welcome to the general public.

17. (b) Voluntary contributions. If a prolonged and steady flow of finance for the fund is to be assured, there can be no question of requests for voluntary contributions from States, which in point of fact could only supply such contributions una tantum or would have to commit themselves for a specific period - a procedure equivalent to establishing a system of compulsory contributions. It is to the general public, therefore, that the approach for voluntary contributions must be made, with the provision of counterpart benefits for all those contributing to the international fund.

18. It would seem logical to seek these counterpart benefits within the general range of activities relating to the artistic and historic heritage of each country, i.e., within the general framework to which monuments belong. Since the public concerned with these activities consists mainly of visitors to museums and monuments, special entrance facilities to such institutions might be a very acceptable counterpart; and the creation of an international card providing free entry to museums and monuments might be considered in that connexion, the card to be issued by Unesco at a modest price and the proceeds paid into the international fund.

19. The idea of a card of this kind is not a new one, having already featured in the plan suggested by the Mexican delegation at the fifth session of the General Conference in 1950 as a counterpart to the tourist tax, although the latter would still have been compulsory. A similar arrangement already operating is that of the Cultural Identity Card issued by the Council of Europe and provided free of charge through the governments of member countries. It is valid for European countries only, and is restricted to limited categories of users, its object being "to encourage the free movement of men of letters, scientists, technicians, research workers, artists, teachers and students in our European countries and by means of this cultural intercourse to create greater mutual understanding in the furtherance of a European way of life".

20. The suggested international card, on the other hand, could be issued to all persons wishing to acquire it, and would be valid in all countries belonging to the fund. The card:

- (1) would ensure its purchasers certain facilities, including, first and foremost, the right of free access to excavation sites and monuments open to the public, and to museums and other similar cultural institutions
- (2) would be obtainable through National Commissions for Unesco or any other body delegated for that purpose by Unesco, such as certain recognized tourist or banking associations operating on a world-wide scale.

21. For the States concerned, of course, the introduction of the card would mean a decrease in receipts from their museums to an extent difficult to foresee at the

present time, since it would depend on the number of card-holders. However, judging from the ever-increasing number of persons engaging in "cultural tourism" (i.e., tourists interested in museums and monuments), which must be reckoned in tens of millions, it does not seem over-venturesome to estimate that an annual total of about \$1,000,000 could be obtained through the sale of cards alone (with 500,000 persons acquiring a card at an average price of \$2.)

22. The introduction of an international card providing free entry to museums and monuments thus seems to be worth recommending as an effective means of financing the international fund through a system of voluntary contributions from the public based on payments and counterpart benefits.

23. A convention whereby States would undertake to grant card-holders the corresponding facilities would be necessary to that end, and could be drawn up by Unesco in the manner presented in the relevant Rules of Procedure.

PART IIOTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
MONUMENTS OF HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC VALUE

24. Under this heading might be included international activities of a general nature designed to facilitate the dissemination of information and international collaboration between specialists.

25. (a) Dissemination of information

(i) Technical and general publications: Unesco has included, in its programme for 1963-1964, the publication of a Manual on the preservation and restoration of monuments (to appear in 1964)... Suitable measures might be taken to arrange for similar works on various aspects of preservation to be published in future years. It should be stressed, however, that a realistic plan for producing such publications presupposes that questions of financing will have been solved (either on the basis of a direct initiative taken by Unesco, or through collaboration with a private publisher interested in the matter).

26. (ii) Documentation centre: The possibility might be considered of setting up a centre which would collect an extensive body of documentation concerning all aspects of the preservation of monuments (historical, technical and scientific), and which would give valuable assistance to specialists in all countries through the dissemination of information. The problems involved in establishing a centre of this kind are mainly economic, since fairly considerable resources would be required for its operation (premises, equipment, staff, etc.). It is still too early to decide what body would be responsible for financing the centre. Should the fund envisaged in Part I of this document amass very large sums, consideration might be given to allocating part of them for the running of the centre, as coming within the framework of the aims to be achieved. It would also be possible to consider placing the centre under the authority of a new international organization dealing specifically with monuments (see below), on the pattern of the International Council of Museums, which is responsible for running the International Centre of Museographic Documentation.

27. (b) International Organization for Monuments: A desire has long been manifest for the creation of an international organization for monuments which would provide a focal point for relations between persons and institutes concerned with monuments; and it was along those lines that the recommendation of the International Committee on Monuments, Artistic and Historical Sites, and Archaeological Excavations at its 8th session in October 1961 was couched.⁽¹⁾ The task of the prospective organization, at the national and international level, would be to collaborate in carrying out certain legal, scientific and technical projects designed to make monuments, and more particularly their rôle in contemporary society, better known. Here, again, there are financial problems, for the creation and operation of such an organization would require an annual subvention which Unesco might be asked to provide. A study of the various problems connected with this project is included in Unesco's programme for 1963-1964, in accordance with the wishes of the International Committee on Monuments, Artistic and Historical Sites, and Archaeological Excavations.

(1) In pursuance of the Committee's recommendation, a study concerning the creation of an organization of that nature was included in Unesco's programme for 1963-1964.

CONCLUSIONS

23. Directives are requested from the Executive Board as regards the questions and proposals set forth in paragraphs 15-23, in Part I, section III, and paragraphs 24-27, in Part II.