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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-sixth session

Budapest, Hungary
24 - 29 June 2002

**Item 22 of the Provisional Agenda: Progress Report on the Implementation of
the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan.**

SUMMARY

Since 2001, the General Assembly of States Parties, the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau have requested UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to make all efforts to reactivate the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan in co-operation with the authorities concerned. This document presents an up-to-date report on the progress made to this effect since the 25th session of the Committee (December 2001). In particular, this document includes synthesis reports on:

- (A) the Findings and Recommendations of the *UNESCO World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Joint Mission (28 April to 11 May 2002)*;
- (B) the Conclusions and Recommendations of the *International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (27-29 May 2002, Kabul)*;
- (C) the progress made by UNESCO to assist the Government of Afghanistan in conserving the cultural and natural heritage of Afghanistan.

Action required:

The Committee is requested to:

- (i) examine the content of this report;
- (ii) consider adopting the draft recommendations presented within the document.

PART (A) The Findings and Recommendations of the *UNESCO World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Joint Mission (28 April to 11 May 2002)*

I. TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION AND DATES OF THE MISSION

I.1. During its 25th session (December 2001), the World Heritage Committee examined the chronology of events related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan and the nomination for inclusion on the World Heritage List of heritage properties of Afghanistan. This discussion followed a request made to the Committee by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention during its 13th session (November 2001). Upon examining the matter in detail, the Committee adopted several decisions to reactivate the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan, to be planned and executed within the overall framework of the UN Inter-agency programme being elaborated for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

I.2. In order to assist the authorities of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan in reactivating the World Heritage Convention, the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre to organize a technical fact-finding and consultative mission to Afghanistan, as soon as possible and when the security situation permits,

- (i) to assist the Afghan authorities in elaborating a national action plan for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
- (ii) to provide assistance to the Afghan authorities for collating scientific documentation to elaborate a national inventory on natural and cultural heritage properties of Afghanistan in close co-operation with the relevant Advisory Bodies;
- (iii) to assess the state of conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Afghanistan;
- (iv) to encourage the authorities, supported by the World Heritage Centre, in reactivating the nomination process initiated by the former Afghan authorities in 1981;
- (v) to provide assistance to the authorities as appropriate to reformulate and/or complete the nomination dossiers of those properties deferred in 1983 by the World Heritage Committee, in spite of the recognition of the universal significance of such properties;

I.3. The World Heritage Centre originally organized the mission to include representatives of ICOMOS, IUCN, the Director of the World Heritage Centre and the Programme Specialist responsible for the Asian Region at the World Heritage Centre. However, one week before the departure date of all participants, the Centre was requested to reduce the mission participants in light of logistical and security constraints within Afghanistan. Therefore, the mission was composed of the Director of the World Heritage Centre, Mr Francesco Bandarin, and the Representative of ICOMOS, Mr Akbar Haji-Ebrahim-Zargar (Iran). The mission by the Representative of IUCN, Mr Kishore Rao (India), has been postponed to a date to be determined.

I.4. The mission visited Kabul between 30 April and 5 May 2002, and Herat (via Islamabad) between 7 and 8 May 2002.

II. FINDINGS OF THE MISSION

II.a. Situation of Afghanistan

II.a.1. After over 20 years of war and civil unrest, Afghanistan is in a state of total deprivation. At the moment, the state and its people are subsiding with large scale international assistance being mobilized and / or provided by the United Nations agencies, numerous NGO's, various governments and the Afghan authorities, while the international military assistance force (ISAF) is supporting the Interim Administration of Afghanistan in maintaining peace and order in the country. Great uncertainty remains as to the sustainability of the future rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country, as peace, order and development of Afghanistan greatly depends on the success of the governmental structures being established and the co-operation and will of the various regional and ethnic leaders of Afghanistan. A Loja Jirga will meet in June 2002 to create a 18-months Government, which will prepare a new Constitution. Thereafter, this Constitution will be approved by another Loja Jirga.

II.a.2. The Interim Administration of Afghanistan lead by Chairperson Hamid Karzai has been able to create a very positive atmosphere. Mr Karzai has already successfully launched several development programmes in priority areas, such as food production and education. It should be underlined here that the issues of cultural development and heritage conservation have remained priorities within the Interim Administration's political agenda, thanks also to the very effective work of the UNESCO Kabul Office.

II.a.3. At the time of the UNESCO WHC - ICOMOS mission, it was noted that the Interim Administration of Afghanistan has extremely limited and constrained resources. It is foreseen that the authorities will continue to depend on international assistance for its operational programmes for a considerable time. However, it is important to note that the authorities have been successful in re-establishing the administrative structure of ministries and agencies and to define the priority tasks of these different departments. It is foreseen that the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan will require persistent and major effort on the part of the international community and is likely to take a very long time.

II.b. Prospects for the conservation of cultural and natural heritage in Afghanistan

II.b.1. The responsibility for the conservation of Afghan cultural and natural heritage at the national level lies in the hands of two ministries: the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Ministry of Agriculture. Other scientific bodies such as the Academy of Sciences and the Kabul Museum, and local governmental departments are also responsible for heritage conservation at a national or regional level, depending on the property concerned.

II.b.2. After two decades of civil conflict, both ministries and specialized agencies are currently in an initial stage of organization and reconstruction. All suffer from severe **lack** of basic tools and human and financial resources to effectively carry out their work. **Documentation** is extremely scarce and scattered. **Legislation** is still being discussed and is expected to be elaborated and adopted in the forthcoming Loja Jirga sessions. **Capacity building** is therefore a priority in the implementation of all activities relative to heritage conservation.

II.b.3. The Ministry of Information and Culture has conducted an initial survey to identify the priority needs for cultural heritage conservation in Afghanistan. A preliminary list of over 30 sites requiring urgent conservation work for an estimated total amount of US\$ 1.2 million was being

finalized at the time of the UNESCO WHC - ICOMOS mission. Simultaneously, the Ministry is seeking international support for training of its personnel, development of local capacities in restoration and maintenance of historic monuments, and the protection of mobile cultural heritage.

II.b.4. Actions already launched by the Interim Administration of Afghanistan or by other regional administrations include:

- restoration of the **Babur Gardens** and **Timur Shah Mausoleum** in Kabul with the support of the Agha Khan Foundation;
- restoration of parts of the **Friday Mosque in Herat**, promoted by the Herat Governor and being implemented by local engineers;
- prevention of water penetration from the Hari and Jam rivers to the base of the **Minaret of Jam**, largely being undertaken at the initiative of SPACH (Society for the Protection of Afghan cultural heritage, an NGO created in 1994);
- rehabilitation of the **Kabul Museum**, including the protection and inventorying of the remaining collection of the Museum, with assistance from foreign institutions (Government of Greece, Musée Guimet of France, others).

II.b.5. Several Governments and non-governmental organizations and specialized institutions have come forth to offer support to heritage conservation efforts in Afghanistan.

II.b.6. In January 2002, UNESCO was formally requested by the Interim Administration of Afghanistan to play a co-ordinating role with archaeologists and international organizations to safeguard Afghanistan's cultural heritage. Following this request, UNESCO organized with the authorities, an "**International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage**" in Kabul between 27-29 May 2002, to which the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, Mr Henrik Lilius (Finland) participated together with the Representative of the Director of the World Heritage Centre. At this seminar, the Afghan authorities, national and international experts and donors discussed the current state of conservation of Afghan cultural heritage and identified priority needs. PART (B) and Annex I of this present document report on the results of this Seminar.

II.b.7. The Ministry of Agriculture has not yet begun a survey of the state of conservation of natural properties. This is due mostly to the enduring difficulties in reaching the different areas within Afghanistan and the lack of adequate tools (transportation, communication). The authorities have identified reforestation, wildlife management, patrolling areas as priority actions. However, the authorities have been unable to quantify the damages of the 20 years of civil unrest, and have not secured the capacity to effectively respond to the conservation challenges for natural heritage. The complete absence of basic information and monitoring tools, from maps to aerial and satellite pictures, as well as the disruption of the local management infrastructure of the protected areas, constitute severe limitations to the natural heritage conservation effort. The Ministry is actively seeking international support. Regretfully, no comprehensive action framework had been established at the time of the UNESCO WHC-ICOMOS mission. UNEP was planning a mission in the short term to identify priority actions, while WWF had already commenced some action in the field such as basic wildlife numeration. Following the request of the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Centre, IUCN was requested to prepare an updated inventory of natural heritage properties in Afghanistan to enable the elaboration of an action plan.

II.c. The State of Conservation of Specific Cultural Heritage properties in Kabul and Herat

II.c.1. The Joint Mission visited some of the most significant historical monuments in the two areas of **Kabul** and **Herat**. The present security situation of Afghanistan does not allow easy access to all areas which is required for a comprehensive examination of the state of conservation of Afghan cultural and natural heritage. To this end, this report is limited.

KABUL

II.c.2. **Eid-Gah Mosque:** Located east of Kabul on the south bank of the Kabul River, the Eid-Gah Mosque has a peculiar form consisting of a central Ivan and a long Shabestan. The mosque (1898 A.D.) is 146 meters long, 44 meters wide with 76 small domes with a 12 meter-high central dome over a 10 square meters room. Carved decorations in gypsum cover the front elevation of the central dome. The open courtyard now demarcated by metal fences includes an area of over 134,000 square meters and is covered by asphalt. The building appeared intact and stable with no major erosion or cracks. Close examination of the building revealed a new coat of paint on all the surfaces including the brick work, which has decreased the value of the original surface of the building. Such practice should be avoided in the future. Minor damage was noted in the decorative finishing of the main façade. The character and public use of the building guarantees regular maintenance. No urgent conservation measure seemed evident at the time of the Joint Mission.

II.c.3. **Tapa Maranjan and the Blue Dome:** The archaeological site of Tapa Maranjan is located outside of Kabul and dates to the Kushano-Sasanian period (3rd - 4th centuries A.D.). This site has not been completely excavated and studied. Today, the summit of Tapa is flat and is used by people for enjoying a panoramic view of Kabul. Here, one finds the demolished remains of the Blue Dome, the Mausoleum of King Nadir Shah, father of King Zahir Shah. This 20th century building was destroyed in the past two decades. Whether or not to rehabilitate the Blue Dome is to be determined by the Afghan authorities. It is recommended however that the authorities prevent any intervention and disturbance on the archeological site of Tapa Maranjan, where further excavation and analysis is likely to reveal important historical evidence.

II.c.4. **Pul-Khishti Mosque:** This mosque was originally built by Shah Zaman (1793-1800 A.D.) and is located in the densely populated centre of Old Kabul. The mosque, whose main feature is the huge dome, has experienced several repairs and interventions and has been used continuously. The Joint Mission noted that the local population use the mosque for basic human needs such as water supply. The structure appeared to be sound, although it was noted that the huge and high dome has no opening or ventilation apparently causing damage to the internal decoration through birds and organic material growth.

II.c.5. **Babur Garden:** There are very few historic gardens in Afghanistan which have survived the passage of time, and the Babur Garden in Kabul is one of the exceptional cultural landscapes which has retained its original shape from the time the Moghul Emperor Babur created it in the mid-16th century. The terraced Babur Garden was laid out on a slope of a mountain and consists of a summer pavilion, built by Amir Abdur Rahman (1880-1901 A.D.), its supporting walls made in masonry and wooden columns, a marble mosque built by Shah Jahan in 1646 A.D., the tomb of Babur who died in Agra in 1530 A.D. surrounded by a few other modest graves from the same century, some decorated with calligraphy. The tomb of Babur originally had no roof, but during King Nadir Shah's period, a marble stone and small pavilion were added to his tomb. When the Joint Mission visited the Garden, gardeners were working on site, mainly taking care of new plants. The summer pavilion demonstrated that it had suffered severe damage and had also

undergone some restoration work, particularly in the roofs of the veranda. The garden evidently suffered serious deterioration throughout the years. The surrounding wall constructed in mud bricks has been damaged by rising humidity, requiring immediate conservation measures. Plantation of the garden is almost completely destroyed. With the exception of one dead Chenar tree close to the pavilion, the garden's plants are new. A careful study is required on the types of the original plants of this significant early Moghul period garden. The irrigation canals made in stone are destroyed and not functioning. It was unclear whether or not the main source of water that existed originally still exists. At the central longitudinal axis of the garden, there are remains of some pools made in stone, some of which have been repaired in previous years using new material. During 1964-66 A.D., the marble mosque was repaired by a group of Italian archeologists and conservators. The mosque and the tomb appeared to be stable, although the calligraphic decoration on the stone tombs are subject to damage by harsh climate. It is recommended that a stone conservator eventually examine these tombs and conservation measures taken. Extensive damage was noted on the main brick building to the north and upper side of the Garden, which was probably added on 100 or 200 years ago. This building has a central courtyard and its main entrance is covered by a dome with very large wooden doors. Arches and wooden roofing are visible as well as tin sheets covering for the roofs, which evidently were damaged from war. The main entrance of the garden that leads to the pavilion reveals the remains of a construction of the main gateway which no longer exists. Archeological study is required for this part of the building. A huge modern swimming pool in concrete distorted the view of this historic garden to large extent. Removal of this swimming pool must be among the first steps to be taken. Rehabilitation of the irrigation system and canals are also crucial for new plants.

II.c.6. Mausoleum of Timur Shah: The octagonal brick Mausoleum of Timur Shah constructed in 1816-17 A.D. with a huge dome is close to the Kabul River and is located in the midst of a highly populated area. The dome is covered by a tin roof today, and the interior of the mausoleum has no decoration. The Joint Mission noted no structural weaknesses, though vegetation growth was noted on the brick dome which require urgent removal. The main threat facing this building and its surrounding courtyard is the urban encroachment invading into the site.

II.c.7. Bala Hissar Citadel and the Forts of Kabul: Bala Hissar, meaning high fort, is an ancient citadel site located on the way to the Shoha-I-Salehin at 150 feet above the Kabul Valley. From 5th century A.D. until 18th century, this citadel was used by governors and gradually built upon. The Joint Mission was unable to visit the site since its strategic location lends itself useful to the army even today.

II.c.8. Shohada-I-Salehin Shrine: A vast cemetery is located at the south of Kabul City at the base of a mountain with thousands of graves. At the top of this cemetery are four holy shrines around which the cemetery expanded, which is visited by hundreds of pilgrims even today. The main shrines are dedicated to Shohada-I-Salehin (Pious Martyrs) according to legend, one of whom was killed by the Hindu Shahi rulers in 644 A.D., and two Islamic missionaries who introduced Islam to this area. The shrines are well maintained by the local population and look much newer than the origin of the place.

II.c.9. Mausoleum of Amir Abdu-Rahman: In one corner of the Zarnegar Park located at the centre of Kabul City is a building which was originally the private palace of Amir Abdu-Rahman (1880-1901 A.D.). His Son Amir Habibullah (1901-1919 A.D.) added a cupola and minaret after he buried his father here. A small mosque was also added during the same period near the main building. The palace is now used as an office for the conservation department of Kabul. In another corner, a colorful and highly ornamented building which was the house of Amir Abdu-Rahman, the

youngest queen, is under restoration. The main palace, the mosque and the queen's house appeared to be in good state of conservation with no serious damage. .

II.c.10. Kabul Museum: The two-storied building of the Kabul Museum suffered severe damage in the past two decades. The original wooden roofs have completely disappeared leaving the second story open to natural elements. The ground floor is in slightly better condition and in some rooms, fragments of damaged artifacts are safeguarded in boxes. Reconstruction as well as relocation of building was being discussed at the time of the Joint Mission.

II.c.11. Mosque and Mausoleum of Shahi-Du-Shamshir: A two-storied mosque and a mausoleum are located on a site originally believed to have been a Hindu temple site. For this reason, the Hindu community in Kabul still demonstrate acts of respect at this site. The two standing structures appeared to be in good state of conservation.

II.c.12. Jamalodin Afghani, Mausoleum: Inside the main campus gardens of the University of Kabul is a newly-built tower constructed in reinforced concrete and stone tiles. The building is severely damaged. Although the architecture of this tomb has no historic significance, the person enshrined here, Jamalodin, is a well-respected and honored Islamic political figure in Iran and Afghanistan. The structural instability suggested the need for reconstruction.

HERAT

II.c.13. The Joint Mission visited a selection of properties in Herat City and its suburbs. The old city of Herat still retains much of its historic buildings as the war did not damage this unique city as much as other cities such as Kabul.

II.c.14. Jame Mosque: The Jame mosque is the most outstanding monument of Herat. The present structure was established in 1200 A.D. replacing a mosque from the Ghorid dynasty (10th century). All facades of the mosque are decorated with tiles. In recent years, Timurid tiles were removed to reveal some of the original Ghorid period carved brick decorations and calligraphy. Over the past hundreds of years, the Jame mosque has undergone renovation, extension and development to meet the needs of the Muslim communities utilizing the structure. There is evidence that extensive work to cover any exposed facades with tiles has continued since 1946 until today. A traditional tile-producing workshop has been established in one corner of the mosque. The workshop produces tiles not only for restoration of the mosque but also for other buildings in Herat and other cities. Restoration work was underway in the southern Shabestan and under the main Portal (Ivan) during the Joint Mission. It was noted that the traditional bricks covering the floor of the mosque were being removed, disposed and replaced by concrete. The justification for this intervention was to provide smoother floors for prayers. In the same spirit, some new wooden doors and frames are being added to the Shabestans, and the plaster of the main Ivan is being removed and replaced with a mortar of sand and gypsum. This practice which disregards all international conservation norms was later seen repeatedly in Herat at the Jami tomb, and is causing the loss of authentic characters of historic buildings within Herat. The Joint Mission recommended that the national and local authorities be informed through international expertise on international conservation norms to mitigate further loss of the historic fabric of Herat's heritage.

II.c.15. The Citadel: An old citadel is located at the centre of Herat on the top of a hill, composed of several towers and fortification walls constructed in mud. There are still areas such as the upper parts of the citadel which require further archaeological excavations and examination. Other areas within the citadel, such as the Hamam, require immediate protection against rain. Damage was noted in some areas of the wall and towers. Control of rain water appeared to be a pressing need for

preventing further damage to the site. The current structures were built in 1305 A.D. by Kart Malik Fakhruddin, but the citadel has continued to play an important political and military role in the history of Herat. For over a hundred years, the citadel was the seat of the Timurid Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries, and more recently, the citadel was used as barracks for armies in recent decades. The citadel was also used as a tourist attraction with two small museums in the 20th century. Today, the army guards the citadel and permission is required for visiting the site, though in principle, the Herat City Department of Conservation has the official authority for protecting and managing the citadel. The Joint Mission noted that the remains of the museums could be rehabilitated in the future to assume their former functions. The Joint Mission recommended that the citadel does not assume any military function but that the complex be utilized for cultural activities only.

II.c.16. Kherga Mubark Mosque: A small mosque with a small Shabestan is located close to the Herat Citadel, within which a small shrine believed to house a piece of Prophet Mohammad's cloak has been established. The present shrine was completed in 1971 A.D. and is decorated in Timurid style. The Joint Mission was granted exceptional permission to enter the shrine, which is usually closed to the public who pray within the mosque. The structures appeared sound, although architecturally, it has historic or artistic value.

II.c.17. Gawhar Shad's Mausoleum: The Gawhar Shad (queen of Shahrokh Timuri) Mausoleum is in the Mussalla complex and was built in 1417 A.D. as a place for praying. The complex is outside of Herat City. Originally, the complex was a garden with four minarets marking each corner. Today only one of the four is standing and is in a critical state of conservation. The remaining minaret is decorated with carved bricks and glazed blue tiles. Dusty wind severely damages the minaret. The stability of the surviving minaret is endangered by irrigation plans for agricultural and gardening foreseen in the courtyard, which will undermine the foundation of the leaning minaret. The minaret, should it collapse, will cause damage and loss of the local people passing nearby and for the houses and shops nearby.

II.c.18. Mausoleum of Mir Ali- Shir- Nawai: A modest mausoleum with no decoration is located near the Gawhar Shad in the Mussalla complex. This mausoleum is dedicated to Mir Ali-Shir-Nawai, the prime minister of Sultan Hossein Baighara who died in 1501 A.D. The building appeared to be intact with no apparent conservation problem.

II.c.19. Sultan Hussein School: The remains of a former Madrassa built by the last of Timurid ruler of Herat, Sultan Hossein Baighra, is located close to the Mussalla complex. Today, only four original minarets remain in fragile condition. Earthquake is a serious factor that may destroy these minarets in the future. The exterior of the minarets is severely damaged from outside and the brick and ceramic decorations have almost vanished. A road passes through the remains of the Madrassa amidst the four minarets, causing additional threat to the remains. The Joint Mission recommended that the road be re-routed.

II.c.20. The Tomb of Poet Jami: The tomb of Jami, one of the greatest poets of the 15th century, is located outside of Herat. It consists of a mastaba and a grave that is severely damaged and the top tomb stone is fragmented. A tree grows from the centre of the grave. The tombstone and the mastaba urgently require conservation intervention. A new mosque has been built near the mastaba to accommodate visitors during praying time. At the time of the Joint Mission, two large foundations for a building planned to be added to the mastaba were being dug. There appeared no justification for this intervention causing negative impact to the historic site. The Joint Mission recommended that this intervention be stopped immediately.

II.c.21. Water Reservoir (Ab-Anbar): In the old city's bazar, there is a huge rectangular water reservoir (probably Safavid Period) covered by a huge dome with two staircases accessible from two streets. At present, the reservoir is empty. The Joint Mission deemed it important to consider new functions for this reservoir.

II.d. Capacity building for conservation of Afghanistan's heritage properties

II.d.1. The national offices which are responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention are:

- For cultural heritage - the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Academy of Sciences' Institute of Archaeology
- For natural heritage - the Ministry of Agriculture and the Academy of Sciences

II.d.2. In principle, these entities are responsible for the co-ordination of all activities related to cultural and natural heritage activities at a national level. Each provincial government also appears to have their respective departments of archaeology, culture or agriculture. For example, in Herat, the Joint Mission held meetings with the Provincial Department for the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

II.d.3. Trained specialists in all areas of conservation are scarce. The Joint Mission found that young engineers with little or no conservation background carry out interventions on important historic structures. During the mission, it appeared that there was no department or school of conservation in Afghanistan. When the Joint Mission visited the faculty of engineering of the University of Kabul where architecture is taught, it was revealed that conservation is not included within the curriculum.

II.d.4. Reconstruction of an effective system of heritage documentation and conservation will require sustained joint efforts of the concerned governmental and non governmental institutions as well as support from international donor agencies, governments and specialized institutions. During the Joint Mission, all documentation compiled by IUCN for natural heritage was transmitted to the Ministry of Agriculture. As the documentation being prepared by ICCROM and ICOMOS for cultural heritage had not been compiled at the time of the Joint Mission, all existing documentation for cultural heritage compiled by the World Heritage Centre was transmitted to the Ministry of Information and Culture.

II.d.5. For the natural heritage, UNESCO could reactivate its specific area programme such as MAB (Man and the Biosphere Programme), while the World Heritage Centre and IUCN could assist the authorities to identify potential world natural heritage properties and assist in the mobilization of donor contributions for enhancing the national site-management capacity.

II.d.6. The situation of the country and the uncertainties surrounding the future organization of the Government do not allow for the moment, the drafting of medium or long term action plans. This will be possible when the situation reaches a higher degree of normality and when a clearer picture of the role of the different actors and of the resources available is defined.

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT MISSION

III.1. Afghanistan's historic monuments and sites have suffered severe damage in the past decades. To safeguard those still surviving, prompt measures must be planned and implemented by the national authorities with international assistance.

III.2. To date and in spite of the rich cultural and natural heritage located within Afghanistan, there is no property inscribed on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee and UNESCO should mobilize maximum support to assist the Afghan authorities in re-establishing the national capacity for the conservation, management, presentation, and development of the unique heritage properties which have world heritage value.

III.3. During the Joint Mission, the Minister of Culture officially submitted a reformulated nomination dossier for the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam for inscription on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is recommended that the World Heritage Committee examine this dossier during its 26th session (Budapest, Hungary, 24-29 June 2002) and assist the authorities in protecting and managing this site in the coming years.

III.4. For reactivating the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan, a training assistance request was elaborated by the World Heritage Centre, the Joint Mission participants and the Afghan authorities during the Joint Mission. The objectives of the activity proposed, which will include a training seminar, is to increase the capacity of national administration officers, policy makers and future World Heritage site-managers including conservation technicians, in implementing the World Heritage Convention: (a) through better understanding of the Convention and its works; (b) through the exercise of elaborating a Tentative List of potential World Heritage properties located in Afghanistan, and; (c) through the exercise of elaborating draft nomination dossiers of potential World Heritage properties located in Afghanistan, particularly those which were nominated in 1982 by the Afghan authorities but were deferred by the World Heritage Committee in 1983. The request is included within the document WHC-02/CONF.202/22 and it is recommended that the Committee allocate funds to enable this activity to be implemented.

III.5. The activity referred to in paragraph III.4. will need to be implemented in conjunction with the following recommended actions which increase the national capacity in protecting Afghanistan's cultural and natural heritage:

a) Re-establishing documentation of Afghanistan's heritage

- Reconstruction of pre-existing data bases;
- New documentation activity on the state of conservation of sites;

b) Capacity building of national authorities through training

- Continuous training of technical personnel on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, preparation of Tentative Lists and nomination dossiers of natural and cultural heritage properties;
- Mobilization of funding for short and long-term professional training on cultural and natural heritage conservation;

c) Emergency assistance for endangered heritage properties

- Urgent interventions to prevent collapse of structures or irreparable loss of values.
- Immediate establishment of local monitoring and protection of threatened sites;

d) Technical Assistance for conservation and management of heritage properties

- Technical assistance for project preparation;
- Establishment of an adequate monitoring system of sites;
- Provision of basic equipment and tools;

III.6. Undoubtedly, there is a need to maintain the momentum for the national and international efforts to conserve and rehabilitate Afghanistan's heritage. To this end, the Joint Mission recommends the World Heritage Committee to call upon UNESCO, Governments, NGO's and experts to continue to publicize the great challenges facing the Afghan cultural heritage and to define ways and means to support the national efforts for enhancing the protection and revitalization of this heritage.

PART (B) The Conclusions and Recommendations of the *International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage* (27-29 May 2002, Kabul) organized by UNESCO & the Ministry of Information & Culture of Afghanistan.

I. TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION, DATES, AND RESULTS OF SEMINAR

I.1. At the request of the Government of Afghanistan in March 2002, the Director-General of UNESCO agreed to co-organize with the Ministry of Information and Culture, an "International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage" in Kabul between 27-29 May 2002. The Assistant Director-General for Culture mobilized the Division of Cultural Heritage and the World Heritage Centre to provide every support for the organization of this International Seminar under extraordinarily difficult conditions and constraints. 70 Afghan experts and representatives of the Government participated at the International Seminar together with 35 international experts representing UNESCO, Governments, IGOs, NGOs and specialized institutions. The Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, Mr Henrik Lilius (Finland), also participated at the Seminar. The Seminar's main objective was to identify the priority needs facing Afghanistan's cultural heritage today and to mobilize international support to address these needs.

I.2. During the International Seminar, presentations on the state of conservation of the major cultural heritage properties were made by Afghan and international experts. Visits were made to the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Kabul Museum to examine the state of the movable cultural heritage as well. Based upon the most up-to-date information on the conditions of cultural heritage in Afghanistan, priority needs and urgent conservation measures were identified by the Seminar participants.

I.3. Donor Governments and NGOs pledged approximately US\$ 7 million during the Seminar addressing the pressing needs facing Afghan cultural heritage today. One of the priority actions agreed by all Seminar participants was the rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum. The Seminar noted that the reconstruction of the destroyed statues of Bamiyan Valley was not a priority now when overwhelming humanitarian aid was necessary. Finally, UNESCO was requested to study with the Afghan authorities, the feasibility for establishing an international co-ordinating committee which could act as a "clearing house" for all cultural heritage conservation and rehabilitation activities to mobilize international assistance for priority areas and to avoid duplication of efforts.

I.4. The Conclusions and Recommendations adopted by the Seminar Participants are annexed to this document as **Annex I**. The final report of the meeting is being finalized by UNESCO.

PART (C) Progress made by UNESCO to assist the Government of Afghanistan in conserving the cultural and natural heritage of Afghanistan
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I. BACKGROUND:

I.1. The Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, during its 26th session in April 2002, invited the Director-General of UNESCO to provide a full report on all actions and initiatives taken by the various divisions of the Sectors for Culture and Science and the World Heritage Centre in assisting the authorities for the protection of Afghan heritage, for consideration by the Committee at its 26th session. The following information was compiled for the information of the Committee.

II. ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY UNESCO TO ASSIST THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES IN PROTECTING THEIR HERITAGE:

II.1. General information

II.1.1. The Executive Board of UNESCO, at its 164th session, endorsed the proposal of the Director-General to open a national office in Afghanistan to prepare UNESCO's contribution to the implementation and reconstruction of Afghanistan and to launch immediate activities. This UNESCO Kabul Office has been staffed by a Director since December 2001, and strengthened by an Advisor for Cultural Heritage since 1 February 2002. As UNESCO has been requested to be the co-ordinating agency for cultural activities within the United Nations Inter-agency Programme for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan, the Director-General and the Assistant Director-General for Culture are mobilizing human and financial resources to strengthen the UNESCO Kabul Office with a competent cultural heritage officer to co-ordinate all relevant activities.

II.2. Natural Heritage

II.2.1. Presently, the Sector for Science is mainly focusing on national capacity building for auxiliary education and hydrological issues for Afghanistan.

II.2.2. The World Heritage Centre is exerting efforts to involve its partners from within and outside of the United Nations system to promote capacity building for potential natural world heritage property identification, conservation, restoration and presentation. During the mission to Kabul to co-organize the "International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage" in May 2002, a World Heritage Centre staff and the UNEP Programme Manager for Afghanistan discussed possibilities of co-operation to assess the state of conservation of potential natural heritage areas. On 5 June 2002, UNESCO was provided a special exhibition space at a UNEP organized "World Environmental Day" event, where documentation on the World Heritage Convention and the activities being implemented by the World Heritage Committee and the Centre, and information compiled by IUCN on Afghan natural heritage, were displayed.

II.3. Cultural Heritage

II.3.1. The World Heritage Centre and the Sector for Culture's Division of Cultural Heritage have launched or organized the implementation of numerous activities for rehabilitating the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. The table below synthesizes the main actions taken to date as well as those planned for the coming months.

No.	Action	Results	Date	Remarks
1	Support to an international expert mission to examine the state of conservation of the monuments and sites of Bamiyan .	Emergency covering of remains of the destroyed statues in Bamiyan. Brief assessment of the state of conservation of the remains of the destroyed statues.	December 2001	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage and UNESCO Kabul Office
2	Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and Afghanistan	UNESCO assumes role as co-ordinating agency for the international efforts to rehabilitate the Kabul Museum .	1 March 2002	
3	International expert missions to examine the state of conservation of the historic monuments of Herat and Jam .	Assessment of the state of conservation of the Monuments of Herat and the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam . Project proposals for conservation work to be undertaken at these two sites.	March 2002	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage and UNESCO Kabul Office
4	Assistance to reformulate the deferred nomination dossier of the Minaret of Jam	Completion of the reformulation of the draft nomination dossier of the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam	January - April 2002	Undertaken by the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO Kabul Office and international experts
5	Submission of project proposals (total US\$ 10 million) to the UN Consolidated Joint Appeal for Afghanistan	Two project proposals amounting to US\$ 5 million for "Capacity Building for the Ministry of Information and Culture" and "Rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum" are placed by the Government of Afghanistan in Category I for immediate funding.	March 2002	Organized by the UNESCO Kabul Office and the Division of Cultural Heritage
6	World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Mission to Kabul and Herat to reactivate the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan.	Official submission of reformulated nomination dossier of the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam and an international assistance request for training for national capacity building for natural and cultural heritage properties.	April - May 2002	Organized by the World Heritage Centre and UNESCO Kabul Office

No.	Action	Results	Date	Remarks
7	"International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage" (Kabul, Afghanistan)	<p>1. Request to UNESCO to carry out a study in co-operation with the Afghan authorities to establish an International Co-ordinating Committee for cultural heritage activities.</p> <p>2. Pledges by donors for continuation or new implementation of activities:</p> <p><i>Aga Khan Trust for Culture</i> - Rehabilitation of Barbur Gardens & its historic buildings, Timur Shah Mausoleum, upgrading of traditional habitats near Timur Shah, the Babur Gardens, and Herat <u>approximately US\$ 5 million</u></p> <p><i>Bibliotheca Afghanica Foundation</i> - Safekeeping of Afghan cultural heritage <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>CEREDAF</i> - Provision of conservation equipment for the Kabul Museum <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>France</i>- Assistance to re-compile documentation & inventories of Kabul Museum, fellowships for Kabul Museum experts <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>Germany</i> - Institutional Capacity Building for the Institute of Archaeology and the University of Kabul (Euro 365,000) and Rehabilitation of the Barbur Gardens, traditional buildings in Bamiyan (Euro 365,000) <u>Euro 730,000</u></p> <p><i>Greece</i> - Rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum building, National Theatrical Company, Music Centre and the National Gallery <u>US\$ 750,000</u></p> <p><i>Hirayama Foundation</i> - Safekeeping of Afghan cultural heritage <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>India</i> - Assistance for conservation and training of archaeologists <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>International Foundation of Hope</i> - Restoration of the Kabul Theatre <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>Italy</i> - Evaluation mission to Ghazni and provision of documentation for establishing inventories & archives of museums <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>Japan</i> - Bamiyan consolidation, establishment of a site-museum and excavations <u>US\$ 700,000</u></p> <p><i>Pakistan</i> - Assistance to retrieve looted Afghan cultural heritage in Pakistan, archaeological excavations, site surveys <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>SPACH</i> - Assistance to re-compile Kabul Museum inventories and safekeeping of Afghan cultural heritage, emergency conservation measures for the Minaret of Jam with UNESCO <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>United Kingdom</i> - Assistance to re-compile documentation & inventories of Kabul Museum, fellowships for Kabul Museum experts <u>in kind / cash</u></p> <p><i>United States of America</i>- Rehabilitation of Barbur Gardens and the Afghan National Gallery <u>in kind / cash</u></p>	27-29 May 2002	Co-organized by the Assistant Director-General for Culture, the Division of Cultural Heritage, the World Heritage Centre, and UNESCO Kabul Office with the Government of Afghanistan

No.	Action	Results	Date	Remarks
8	"International Symposium - Culture of Afghanistan - International Cultural Exchange and the Culture of Buddhism" (Tokyo, Japan)	<i>Expected results:</i> Enhanced public awareness on the heritage of Afghanistan and the challenges facing the Afghan authorities and the international community to safeguard this heritage. Increased public support for the efforts being made by the international community in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan's cultural heritage.	29 July 2002	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO Kabul Office, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan and Asahi Shimbun
9	Organization of a mission by a hydraulic engineer to Jam	<i>Expected results:</i> Evaluation of the state of conservation of the base of the Minaret of Jam and the damage caused to the banks of the Hari and Jam Rivers by flooding	July - September 2002	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage and UNESCO Kabul Office
10	Organization of a mission by a structural engineer to Jam	<i>Expected results:</i> Structural analysis of the Minaret of Jam and elaboration of project proposals for conservation and consolidation of the Minaret.	September 2002 ~	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage & UNESCO Kabul Office. Expected to be funded by the Italian Government
11	Organization of missions to Herat, Balkh, Ghazni	<i>Expected results:</i> Evaluation of the state of conservation of the monuments of Herat, Balkh, and Ghazni.	2002 ~ 2003	Organized by the Division of Cultural Heritage and UNESCO Kabul Office

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee may wish to adopt the following draft recommendations:

The Committee examines the information in Document WHC-02/CONF.202/19 and the presentations of the Director of the World Heritage Centre and the Assistant Director-General for Culture.

1. Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and protection of cultural and natural heritage properties in Afghanistan

- 1.1 The Committee welcomes wholeheartedly the importance the Government of Afghanistan places on the protection of the natural and cultural heritage located in Afghanistan. Appreciating the extraordinary difficulties faced by the authorities in rehabilitating the natural and cultural heritage of Afghanistan, the Committee lends its full support to the Government of Afghanistan to increase the national capacity to conserve, present, manage and develop such heritage.
- 1.2 The Committee expresses its deep gratitude to the Government of Afghanistan for all its efforts to reactivate the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
- 1.3 The Government of Afghanistan is thanked for inviting the UNESCO World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Fact-Finding and Consultative Mission undertaken between 28 April and 11 May 2002. The Committee examines the findings and recommendations of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Fact-Finding and Consultative Mission and expresses its appreciation to the Director of the Centre and ICOMOS Representative for undertaking the mission under difficult conditions.
- 1.4 Taking note of the postponement of the participation of the Representative of IUCN in the Fact-Finding and Consultative Mission, the Committee requests the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to re-organize an World Heritage Centre - IUCN Joint Mission to elaborate a preliminary natural heritage action plan and to commence the assessment of the state of conservation of potential natural world heritage properties in Afghanistan as soon as the security situation permits.¹
- 1.5 The Committee expresses its gratitude to the Government of Afghanistan and the Director-General of UNESCO for the co-organization of the "International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage" (Kabul, 27-29 May 2002) in spite of exceptionally difficult conditions. The Committee examines with appreciation, the report of the discussions, conclusions and recommendations of the "International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage" presented by the Assistant Director-General for Culture.
- 1.6 The Government of Afghanistan is congratulated for submitting an international assistance request for supporting its efforts to increase national capacity in the implementation of the

¹ To this end, the Committee allocates US\$ 7,140 in 2002 for IUCN to undertake the postponed mission and to elaborate an action plan for potential natural world heritage, to be financed from the US\$ 50,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2002.

World Heritage Convention. The Committee supports this request for US\$ 42,860,² and requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to provide support and co-operation to the authorities in implementing this activity.

2. Documentation, national inventories, Tentative List and the reactivation of deferred nominations of properties to be inscribed on the World Heritage List

- 2.1. The Committee takes note with grave concern, the lack of basic requirements to re-compile surviving documentation and archival resources of Afghanistan's cultural and natural heritage. The Committee underscores the importance of compiling databases for cultural and natural heritage in Afghanistan to re-establish the national inventories with a view to elaborate Tentative Lists of properties to be eventually nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List. The Committee requests the World Heritage Centre to mobilize international technical and financial support for providing basic equipment and tools for the monitoring, conservation, and management of natural and cultural heritage in Afghanistan.³
- 2.2. To this end, the Committee calls upon States Parties to the World Heritage Convention with institutional capacity and technical resources to provide assistance to the authorities of Afghanistan in their efforts to re-compile their scientific documentation and to re-establish their national inventories of cultural and natural heritage properties.
- 2.3. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the World Heritage Centre, IUCN, ICCROM and ICOMOS for their immediate actions to commence the recompilation of scientific documentation for the reconstruction of the Afghan national inventories. However, while appreciating the preliminary assessment work undertaken by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre to collate scientific documentation to elaborate national inventories of natural and cultural heritage, the Committee recognizes the need to continue assisting the authorities in view of the scope of the task.⁴ The Committee encourages the Government of Afghanistan to elaborate a Tentative List of properties which the authorities intend to nominate for inscription to the World Heritage List in the coming five to ten years, utilizing the scientific documentation collated together with the Advisory Bodies.
- 2.4. The Committee congratulates the Government of Afghanistan for submitting a reformulated nomination dossier of the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam for inscription on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the World Heritage Centre and international experts for their efforts to assist the authorities in preparing the draft reformulated nomination dossier of Jam. Noting the need for establishing local monitoring and conservation mechanisms for the

² The Committee examines the international assistance request for training presented in Document WHC-02/CONF.202/22 and decides to allocate US\$ 42,860 to support this activity, to be financed from the US\$ 50,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2002.

³ To this end, the Committee decides to allocate US\$ 5,000 to the World Heritage Centre to elaborate project proposals for presenting to potential donors, to be financed from the US\$ 100,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2003.

⁴ To this end, the Committee decides to allocate US\$ 12,000 to IUCN and US\$ 15,000 to ICCROM and ICOMOS to provide assistance to the Afghan authorities to collate scientific documentation to elaborate national inventories of natural and cultural heritage, to be financed from the US\$ 100,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2003.

Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam, the Committee requests the World Heritage Centre to support the Afghan authorities with the Division of Cultural Heritage to ensure that the ICOMOS recommendations (Information Document WHC-02/CONF.202/INF.4.Add.2) for enhanced protection of the site are implemented.⁵

- 2.5. The Committee encourages the Government of Afghanistan to further proceed in the reformulation of the deferred nominations of the Historic City of Herat and the Monuments and Archaeological Sites of Bamiyan Valley for possible examination by the Committee in 2004 or 2005. To assist the authorities in compiling necessary documentation and management plan for these two properties, the Committee requests the World Heritage Centre to provide technical support to the Afghan authorities.⁶
- 2.6. The Committee encourages the Government of Afghanistan to prepare a nomination dossier for the Lakes of Bandi-e-Amir, with the assistance of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, for possible submission in February 2004.⁷

3. Deliberate destruction, plundering and illicit traffic of heritage assets of Afghanistan

- 3.1 The Committee expresses grave concern over the continued and systematic illegal plundering and looting of cultural and natural heritage properties located in Afghanistan, constituting an irreversible impoverishment of the common heritage of all the people in the world.
- 3.2 The Committee urges the Government of Afghanistan to become signatory to the UNESCO 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, its two Protocols, the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the UNIDROIT Convention and other international legal instruments protecting cultural and natural heritage.
- 3.3 The Committee notes with regret that of the 172 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, only 91 are signatory to the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.
- 3.4 The Committee reiterates the appeal made by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention to all States Parties to become signatories to the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the UNIDROIT Convention to prevent further illicit traffic of Afghan cultural heritage.

⁵ To this end, the Committee decides to allocate US\$ 20,000 to assist the Afghan authorities in implementing the ICOMOS recommendations (Information Document WHC-02/CONF.202/INF.4.Add.2), to be financed from the US\$ 100,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2003.

⁶ To this end, the Committee decides to allocate US\$ 30,000 for assisting the authorities in preparing the reformulated nomination dossiers of Bamiyan Valley and Herat, to be financed from the US\$ 100,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2003.

⁷ To this end, the Committee decides to allocate US\$ 18,000 for assessing the state of conservation and preparing the nomination dossier of Bandi-e-Amir, to be financed from the US\$ 100,000 Emergency Package for Afghanistan for 2003.

- 3.5 While recognizing that the Government of Afghanistan has the first and foremost duty to ban all illegal excavations within its territory and to strictly control its borders to prevent smuggling of illicitly acquired movable heritage resources, the Committee calls upon the neighboring countries of Afghanistan to co-operate in strengthening control of their national borders to prevent further illicit traffic of Afghan heritage.
- 3.6 Moreover, fully noting the significant constraints faced by the Afghan authorities in controlling illegal plundering and excavations within the country and transport of heritage, the Committee appeals urgently to those countries where Afghan heritage material is sold to provide co-operation to prevent further illicit traffic of such property.
- 3.7 Underscoring the importance for effective co-operation with NGOs such as the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) amongst others, the Committee calls upon the Assistant Director-General for Culture to organize actions similar to those taken in Angkor (Cambodia) with ICOM to increase the Afghan national capacity to prevent illicit trafficking of heritage.
- 4. Appeal to the international community to assist the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to rehabilitate the country's endangered heritage**
- 4.1. Upon examination of the state of conservation of the principal monuments and sites, the deplorable and continuing looting of major archaeological properties throughout the country, and the conditions of the surviving inventories, documentation and archives of Afghan heritage, the Committee fully recognizes the overwhelming challenge to rehabilitate Afghanistan's cultural and natural heritage.
- 4.2. The Committee affirmed the need for significant mobilization of international and national support for the Afghan authorities and people to conserve and rehabilitate the country's endangered heritage.
- 4.3. The Committee notes with appreciation, all efforts made by the Director-General of UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre, the Division of Cultural Heritage and the Advisory Bodies in assisting the Afghan authorities in reactivating the World Heritage Convention and to conserve Afghan heritage. The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the various Governments and NGOs which have commenced or have plans to support the Afghan authorities in their efforts to rehabilitate their heritage. In particular, the Committee pays special tribute to all Afghan specialists and citizens who have made, and continue to make, extraordinary efforts to protect Afghanistan's irreplaceable heritage assets during the past two decades of difficult periods.
- 4.4. Convinced of the important role that cultural and natural heritage can play in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan, the Committee reiterates its appeal to the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, IGOs and NGOs active in the field of heritage conservation, to continue to publicize the great challenges facing Afghan heritage and to support the national efforts to enhance the protection and revitalization of this heritage.

ANNEX I: Conclusions and Recommendations of the *International Seminar on the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage* organized by UNESCO & the Ministry of Information & Culture of Afghanistan (27 – 29 May 2002, Kabul Hotel Intercontinental)

I. BACKGROUND

I.1. Over many thousands of years, Afghanistan has been the home of many civilizations and different religions. Its rich historical culture has played a great and important role in the heritage of humankind. Over many generations, Afghanistan has attracted the attention of many historians, archaeologists, and an endless variety of scholarly researchers. Unfortunately, the economic, social, and cultural foundations of this country have been subject to tragic abuse and destruction over two decades of war and civil unrest. As a consequence, the country's cultural heritage has suffered irreversible damage and loss.

I.2. The rehabilitation of Afghanistan's cultural heritage is one of the main priorities of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community. However, the challenge to rehabilitate the country's endangered cultural heritage is overwhelming, requiring significant mobilization of international and national support for the Afghan authorities and people. It is for this reason that the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan requested the international community to provide assistance and co-operation to meet this challenge through UNESCO. The Director-General of UNESCO responded wholeheartedly and provided every support for the co-organization of this international seminar under exceptionally difficult conditions.

I.3. Participants in the International Seminar included Representatives and heritage experts from (i) the Governments of Afghanistan, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America; (ii) the intergovernmental organizations UNESCO, its World Heritage Committee and UNEP, (iii) NGO's including Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Agency for Technical Co-operation and Development (ACTED), Bibliotheca Afghanica Foundation, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Documentaires sur l'Afghanistan (CEREDAF), Helping Afghan Farmers Organization (HAFO), Hirayama Foundation, ICOMOS, International Foundation of Hope, Society for the Protection of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH), and the World Monuments Fund.

I.4. In the presence of His Highness the Prince Mirwais, the Seminar was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr Hamed Karzai, Chairperson of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan, followed by a comprehensive speech given by His Excellency Mr Makhdoum Raheen, Minister for Information and Culture. A message from the Director-General of UNESCO was delivered by the Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO, Mr Mounir Bouchenaki. Opening and congratulatory statements were further made during the Opening session by UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassador for Culture, Professor Ikuo Hirayama, the Chairperson of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, Professor Henrik Lilius, the President of ICOMOS, Mr Michael Petzet, the Representative of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Mr Stefano Bianca and the Spokesperson for Ms Nancy Dupree, Ms Ana Rosa Rodriguez.

I.5. During the three-day seminar, scientific discussions were held concerning the importance, problems, and difficulties in the conservation and rehabilitation of the Afghan tangible and intangible cultural heritage and definition of practical and achievable priority actions to achieve this end. During the seminar, visits to the Ministry of Information and Culture's storage room and the remains of the Kabul National Museum of Afghanistan were organized. During the seminar, appreciation was expressed for previous and / or continued support to the important efforts of the

Afghan authorities in commencing the assessment, conservation and rehabilitation of the country's endangered heritage. Special tribute was paid to all Afghan specialists and citizens who have made extraordinary efforts to protect Afghanistan's cultural heritage during the past two decades of difficult periods.

I.6. After examination and consideration of the surviving inventories, documentation and archives of the Afghan cultural heritage (including those of the National Museum, Institute of Archaeology and the Ministry of Information and Culture), the state of conservation of the principal monuments and sites, the deplorable and continuing matter of the looting of major archaeological properties throughout the country, the Seminar adopted the following concluding remarks and recommendations.

II. KABUL NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFGHANISTAN, OTHER PROVINCIAL MUSEUMS, AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING OF AFGHAN MUSEUMS

II.1. The Seminar participants agreed that during the period of the reconstruction of the Kabul Museum, or ideally, as soon as possible, plans should be laid to find another, centrally located site for a temporary museum and/or work place; probably an already existing structure which can be turned to temporary museum use. Such a place would help to consolidate the surviving collection and to remind local people at a central easily accessible place of the importance of their ancient roots and of the museum which helps to interpret these issues to them.

II.2. The need now for an area large enough for the surviving collections to be examined, conserved, repaired, or dealt with in whichever way was clearly recognized. These objects, once settled in conservation terms, will require documentation through digital photography and checking against all or any existing museum records, and thereafter stored or temporary displayed in a safe place designated and secured by the Afghan authorities. When the old museum building is finished and made secure, the collections will be transferred to the Darul-Aman site until the new museum is established for final display.

II.3. The Seminar underscored the importance for all existing written or photographic records associated with the museum to be collated and entered into an electronic database. Noting the importance to identify what does and does not exist, all old registration entries need to be collated in digital form. This process is an essential part of the management of any modern museum. The Seminar supported the proposition to scan into a database, images of as many as possible objects in the original Kabul Museum display, including those known to have been lost or stolen to serve as the foundation for a "virtual" collection to give new life to the original collections. Such a "virtual museum" could be published on to the internet. The Seminar also recommended that examination of existing databases for possible adaptive use and application be considered

II.4. The need to increase the basic capacity of the Afghan museum service to carry out its tasks to the highest level was recommended by the Seminar as a matter of great urgency. In that connection, the following priorities were reaffirmed:

- (i) rehabilitation of the present museum building at Darul-Aman Darulaman to initially house the surviving collection of the Kabul Museum and to facilitate the re-establishment of its inventory and archives.
- (ii) restoration of the broken objects in the Kabul Museum as a matter of urgency.

- (iii) provision of show cases for the museum galleries and appropriate storage facilities.
- (iv) re-establishment of the departments of museology and design, restoration, photography and library through training activities and with the support of UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICOM, and other archaeological institutions
- (v) re-establishment of ethnographic and provincial museums, such as those in Balkh, Bamiyan, Ghazni, Herat, Kandahar, Kunduz, Mazar-i Sharif, Nangahar, and others.
- (vi) introduction of new information technology.
- (vii) elaboration of plans to identify an appropriate site for a new museum to be built in Kabul City.

II.5. The Government of Greece announced that it had committed US\$ 750,000 for the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. The bulk of this contribution would be allocated for the rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum building, as announced during the January 2002 Tokyo Conference, according to the existing original plans and with Afghan technical support. The Seminar participants were informed that UNESCO provided on 29 May 2002, with the agreement of the Afghan Ministry of Culture and Information, for the consideration by the Hellenic Aid, the *Mission Report and Project Proposal for the Rehabilitation of the Kabul Museum* prepared by Professor Andrea Bruno at the request of the Government of Afghanistan to UNESCO in March 2002.

II.6. The Seminar participants noted with appreciation that the Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente di Roma (ISIAO, Italy) would send a specialist expert to evaluate the Ghazni Museum and the Ghazni collections in Kabul within the next few months. ISIAO also assured the authorities that it would also provide a copy of all ISIAO inventories of objects excavated in Ghazni and other Afghan sites for re-establishment of the inventory and archives of the Kabul Museum and other provincial museums.

II.7. The Seminar participants expressed appreciation to the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Documentaires sur l'Afghanistan (CEREDAF, France) which pledged to provide basic conservation equipment to the Kabul Museum in accordance with the list of necessary equipment drawn up by the Museum authorities to enhance the restoration of objects of the collection.

II.8. It was noted that UNESCO would continue to support the safekeeping of the Afghan cultural heritage outside the country in "safe-havens", such as the Bibliotheca Afghantica Foundation and the Hirayama Foundation, with the aim of co-ordinating the return of such heritage to Afghanistan as soon as the situation in Afghanistan permits.

II.9. The Seminar participants noted with gratitude the offers made by the Musée Guimet (France) and the British Museum (United Kingdom) to assist the Afghan authorities in the re-compilation of scientific documentation and preparation of inventories of the Kabul Museum, and to provide fellowships for national museum experts in the fields of museology, numismatic, conservation, and museum management.

II.10. Taking into account the need to compile the existing documentation for the re-establishment of the inventory of the Kabul Museum collection, the Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's

Cultural Heritage (SPACH), and Ms Carla Grissmann in particular, offered to transmit previously prepared inventories of 1998, 1999 and 2000 to the Afghan authorities. The Seminar participants noted with appreciation, the announcement made by SPACH to re-open its office in Kabul, and its intentions to return to the National Museum of Kabul, cultural heritage objects which it has safeguarded until now. The Seminar participants advised SPACH to continue to safeguard these cultural heritage objects until the Kabul Museum is ready to recuperate this material.

II.11. The Seminar participants expressed appreciation to the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Pakistan which informed the participants that it would provide technical assistance to retrieve artifacts looted from the Kabul Museum and from illicit excavations in Afghanistan, which are currently on the Pakistan art market or in private hands.

III. NATIONAL INVENTORY, ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

III.1. The Seminar participants examined the national capacity-building requirements for re-establishing the national inventory of heritage properties and movable objects, archaeological research and documentation. The lack of basic requirements for recording surviving documentation and photographs were underscored by the Afghan authorities and experts, and the seminar recognized the urgent need to mobilize international support for compiling existing records and documentation, and to rebuild the archival resources.

III.2. The Seminar participants expressed gratitude to the Government of Germany for pledging Euro 365,000 for institutional capacity-building for the Academy of Sciences' Institute of Archaeology and the University of Kabul's Department of Archaeology through co-operation and assistance from the German Archaeological Institute, based upon the list drawn up by these institutions of required equipment and training for this purpose.

III.3. The Seminar participants recommended that a publication presenting Afghan cultural heritage properties be prepared in co-operation with the Ministry of Information and Culture's Department of Historical Monuments to enhance awareness of the international community.

IV. MONUMENTS AND SITES OF AFGHANISTAN

IV.1. The Seminar participants examined the presentations made by Afghan and international experts concerning the most up-to-date state of conservation reports of specific cultural heritage properties in Afghanistan. The overwhelming need for the mobilization of financial and technical assistance to conserve, present, manage and rehabilitate Afghan cultural heritage properties was underscored.

IV.2. The Representative of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre informed the Seminar participants on the chronology of events related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Afghanistan, an early signatory to the World Heritage Convention. The process and requirements for nominating Afghan cultural and natural heritage properties for inscription on the World Heritage List were clarified, and the Afghan authorities and Seminar participants were urged to utilize this unique international instrument for mobilizing support to conserve and manage properties the authorities intend to nominate in the coming years.

IV.3. The Afghan authorities and international experts reaffirmed the importance of the nine cultural heritage properties (The City and Monuments of Herat; the Monuments of Bamiyan Valley including Fouladi, Kakrak, Shahr-I Gholghola, and Shahr-I Zohak; the Archaeological Site of Ai

Khanum; the Site and Monuments of Ghazni; the Minaret of Jam; the Mosque of Haji Piyada or Nou Gunbad; the Stupa and Monastery of Guldarra; the Site and Monuments of Lashkari Bazar - Bost; the Archaeological Site of Surkh Kotal) which had been nominated in 1982 and deferred by the World Heritage Committee in 1983.

IV.4. The Seminar noted that potential natural world heritage properties include the Band-e Amir Lakes, Hadda, Upper Murghab and Jawand Canyons, Pamir Knot, and the Eastern Forests of Nuristan, Paktya and Paktika.

IV.5. Following the decisions of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (November 2001) and the World Heritage Committee (December 2001), and the recommendations of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee adopted during its 26th session (April 2002), the Seminar participants were assured that UNESCO continues to make every effort to mobilize international support to assist the Afghan authorities in reactivating the World Heritage Convention. In particular, the Seminar participants were informed on the results and recommendations of the Joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre - ICOMOS Mission undertaken between 28 April - 11 May 2002, which emphasized the points reiterated during the Seminar which were:

- (a) compilation of data bases of cultural heritage in Afghanistan and assessment activities for the state of conservation of heritage properties, to re-establish the national inventory of cultural and natural properties with a view to elaborate a new Tentative List of properties to be eventually nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- (b) building capacity of technical personnel on the World Heritage Convention, international conservation principles, preparation of nomination dossiers, management plans, establishment of protective core and buffer zones.
- (c) urgent intervention to prevent collapse of structures or irreversible loss of heritage values and establishment of local monitoring and conservation of endangered properties.
- (d) technical support for systematic monitoring of properties, provision of basic equipment and tools for conservation and management, project elaboration for the mobilization of technical and financial resources.

IV.6. The Seminar participants recommended that the Afghan authorities prepare and present the Tentative List of potential World Heritage properties to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

IV.7. The Seminar Participants were assured that the Conclusions and Recommendations of this International Seminar for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage would be transmitted to the World Heritage Committee at its forthcoming 26th session in June 2002 to disseminate the cultural and natural heritage conservation needs in Afghanistan to the 170 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, with a view to mobilize further maximum support from Governments, institutions, NGOs, and experts for the Afghan authorities.

IV.8. Noting the development pressure in urban areas, the Seminar participants recognized the importance to establish adequate building regulations, town planning and legislative acts to protect urban heritage.

IV.9. The Seminar participants acknowledged with deep appreciation, the assistance and on-going work supported by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, which has committed a minimum of US\$ 5 million for a number of cultural development projects, including the conservation of the walled city of Herat, the Timur Shah Mausoleum complex, its adjacent old markets, and the Babur Gardens in Kabul, the latter which is foreseen to be implemented in co-operation with ICOMOS and the German Government. The Seminar was also informed that there were plans for the conservation of other historic cities being elaborated parallel to pilot projects promoting the enhancement of traditional houses in Kabul, Herat and Bamiyan.

IV.10. The Seminar participants expressed appreciation to the Government of Germany for pledging Euro 365,000 to be provided through ICOMOS for the implementation and co-ordination of activities to safeguard endangered monuments and sites in Afghanistan. It was noted that this contribution would focus on the co-operation with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in favour of the conservation of the walls and monumental buildings of the Babur Gardens in Kabul, the repair and reconstruction of houses in traditional materials and techniques in Kabul and Bamiyan also in partnership with the Aga Khan Trust, capacity building of the Department of Historical Sites through pilot projects and the establishment of a databank of Afghan monuments and sites.

IV.11. The Seminar participants noted with appreciation, the commitment by the Government of the United States of America to support the rehabilitation of the Afghan National Gallery and the restoration of Babur Gardens.

IV.12. The Pakistan Government's Department of Archaeology and Museums informed the Seminar participants that it would assist in archaeological excavations and site surveys. In addition, the Seminar participants noted with appreciation, the Department of Archaeology's intention to participate to conserve museum objects, if requested by the Afghan Government, and to assist in the conservation of the Babur Gardens.

IV.13. The commitment of the Government of India to assist the Afghan authorities to conserve their monuments and sites and to provide training to the Afghan archaeologists was noted with appreciation.

IV.14. The eyes of the world have been on the Bamiyan Valley since early 2001 since the destruction of the great Buddhist statues, a dominant feature of that famous place. It was noted that much discussion has taken place in Afghanistan and around the world about the future of this great site. The Seminar participants clearly recognized that the first emergency priority is the stabilization of the cliff face and the niches and caves carved into it which are in a serious state of conservation and a matter of grave immediate concern. The decision to engage in reconstruction of the Buddhist statues of Bamiyan is a matter to be settled by the Government and people of Afghanistan, a point clearly recognized by the Seminar participants. In any case, the Seminar participants underscored that such work could be undertaken only after major stabilization work on the cliffs at Bamiyan has been completed, a process which is an essential first step in any conservation process at the Bamiyan Valley site.

IV.15. The Seminar participants agreed that the concept of reconstruction was not a priority when humanitarian aid for the Afghan people was urgently needed today. The Seminar participants emphasized that the authenticity and integrity and historical importance of this great place need to be memorialized in an appropriate way, and that the reconstruction of the statues of Bamiyan requires further discussion and careful consideration by the appropriate authorities, taking into full account the intention of the authorities to nominate the Monuments and Sites of Bamiyan Valley for eventual inscription on the World Heritage List.

IV.16. The Seminar participants expressed deep gratitude to the Government of Japan which pledged US\$ 700,000 as UNESCO Funds-in-Trust to consolidate the cliffs of the former Bamiyan statues, to establish a Site Interpretation Museum on the history of the Bamiyan Valley and to carry out archaeological excavations.

IV.17. The Seminar recommended that a feasibility study be carried out for any proposition to install a hologram of the statues of Bamiyan, which was proposed as a possible means to demonstrate the different stages in the history of this site and its former glory.

IV.18. It was noted with appreciation that SPACH will undertake emergency removal of debris from the Hari and Jam Rivers to prevent water penetration at the base of the Minaret of Jam with the financial support of UNESCO.

V. *INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF AFGHANISTAN*

V.1. Underscoring the fact that cultural heritage concerns not only monuments and sites of archaeological importance, the Seminar participants thanked the International Foundation of Hope for pledging support for the restoration of the Theatre of Kabul, a rehabilitation activity which would directly lead to the revitalization of the living cultural heritage of the people of Afghanistan.

V.2. The Seminar participants noted with appreciation the contribution from the Government of Greece for the rehabilitation of the National Theatrical Company, Music Centre, and the National Gallery.

VI. *ILLICIT TRAFFIC OF CULTURAL PROPERTY*

VI.1. The Seminar participants expressed deep concern over the continued and systematic illegal looting of cultural heritage properties in Afghanistan, in particular in well known archaeological sites which have been researched in the past by national and international scholars. It was noted that the Government of Afghanistan has the first and foremost duty to ban all illegal excavations within Afghanistan and to control strictly its borders to prevent smuggling of illicitly acquired movable cultural resources.

VI.2. The Seminar participants requested that neighboring countries of Afghanistan co-operate in controlling their national borders to prevent further illicit traffic of Afghan cultural heritage.

VI.3. Noting the significant constraints faced by the Afghan authorities to control illegal excavations within the country and transport of cultural heritage, the Seminar participants requested UNESCO to appeal to the international community, in particular to those countries where Afghan cultural heritage material is sold, to provide co-operation to prevent illicit traffic of such property.

VI.4. The Afghan Government was urged to become signatory to the 1954 UNESCO Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, its Protocols, the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention, and other international legal instruments protecting cultural heritage.

VI.5. The Seminar participants were informed that UNESCO is ready to undertake, in co-operation with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), similar actions that have been effective in similar situations (Angkor World Heritage site, Cambodia).

VII. FUTURE CO-ORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION BENEFITING AFGHANISTAN'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

VII.1. The Ministry of Information and Culture expressed deep appreciation to the donor countries and organizations for the financial and technical support pledged during the Seminar. Reiterating this appreciation, the Seminar participants recommended that UNESCO continues to mobilize international technical and financial support for the conservation and rehabilitation of Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

VII.2. UNESCO was called upon to advise the Afghan authorities on the progress of realization of the various proposals in this document in order to avoid duplication of efforts or conflicts of any kind. To this end, the Seminar participants recognized the need for an International Co-ordinating Committee to be established under the auspices of the Government of Afghanistan and UNESCO, which should meet on a regular basis to review various on-going activities supporting the national cultural heritage rehabilitation efforts together with the Afghan authorities, to ensure that international assistance be carried out to the highest international standards. A study will be carried out by UNESCO in close co-operation with the Ministry of Information and Culture in order to set up the modalities of this International Co-ordinating Committee.

VII.3. Convinced of the important role that both tangible and intangible cultural heritage can play in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan, the Seminar participants affirmed the need to maintain the momentum for the national and international efforts to conserve and rehabilitate Afghanistan's cultural heritage. To this end, it called upon UNESCO, Governments, NGO's and experts to continue to publicize the great challenges facing the Afghan cultural heritage and to define ways and means to support the national efforts for enhancing the protection and revitalization of this heritage.