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World Heritage

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-first Session

Christchurch, New Zealand
23 June – 2 July 2007

Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda: Sixteenth session of the General Assembly of States Parties (UNESCO, 24-25 October 2007)

Report of the World Heritage Committee on its activities for the 16th session of the General Assembly of States Parties (UNESCO, 24-25 October 2007)

SUMMARY

Article 29.3 of the *World Heritage Convention* stipulates that "the Committee shall submit a report on its activities at each of the ordinary sessions of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization".

This document provides the Committee with the draft report to be presented to the General Conference. The report contains information concerning the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 15th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* held on 10-11 October 2005. Information relating to the 31st session of the World Heritage Committee will be included after the closure of this session.

The Committee is asked to note that the Secretariat of the General Conference has requested that the report (which will be made available in the six official languages of UNESCO) not exceed six pages. The report will be included as one of the "statutory reports of UNESCO's intergovernmental committees and councils submitted to the General Conference, and the reports of governmental, regional and international conferences" (33 C/REP/____) and will not require a decision on the part of the General Conference.

Draft Decision: 31 COM 6, see Point III

I. Overview and structure of this document

1. This document is intended to provide the UNESCO General Conference with information regarding the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 15th General Assembly of States Parties (10-11 October 2005) in the implementation of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (hereinafter referred to as the *World Heritage Convention*).
2. In order to better present the varied information contained in this document, the main activities and decisions of the Committee have been grouped according to the Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Committee. The Strategic Objectives, adopted by the Committee at its 26th session (Budapest, 2002), are the following:
 - a) Strengthen the **Credibility** of the World Heritage List
 - b) Ensure the effective **Conservation** of the World Heritage properties
 - c) Promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** in States Parties
 - d) Increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through **Communication**¹

II. Background information

A. Number of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

3. As of May 2007, there are 183 States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*². The States that have joined the *World Heritage Convention* since the 15th General Assembly (10-11 October 2005) are: Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe and Swaziland.

B. Current Members of the World Heritage Committee and Bureau

4. 21 members: Benin, Canada, Chile, Cuba, India, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Spain, Republic of Korea, Tunisia and United States of America. Their terms of office are:

Until the **end of the 34th session of the General Conference of UNESCO** (2007): Benin, Chile, India, Japan, Kuwait, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand and Norway.

Until the **end of the 35th session of the General Conference of UNESCO** (2009): Canada, Cuba, Israel, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Peru, Republic of Korea, Spain, Tunisia, United States of America.

¹ See Decision **26 COM 17.1** (Budapest, 2002).

² The list of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* is available at the following Web address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties>

5. Composition of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee since July 2005:

JULY 2005 – JULY 2006	JULY 2006 – JUNE-JULY 2007	JUNE-JULY 2007 –
Lithuania (Chairperson Mrs. H.E. Ina Marčiulionytė)	New Zealand (Chairperson, Mr Tumu te Heuheu)	[Column to be completed after the 31st session of the Committee]
New Zealand (Rapporteur, Prof. Alexander Gillespie)	Canada (Rapporteur, Mr John Pinkerton)	
Benin	Benin	
Chile	Cuba	
India	Japan	
Kuwait	Morocco	
Netherlands	Norway	

C. Number of seats in the World Heritage Committee reserved for States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List

6. Following Rule 14.1 of the *Rules of Procedure* of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*, a certain number of seats may be reserved for States Parties who do not have properties on the World Heritage List, upon decision of the World Heritage Committee at the session that precedes the General Assembly (see *Draft Decision*, point III).
7. Under this rule, the States Parties of Saint-Lucia, Kuwait and Mauritius were elected to the reserved seat respectively at the 13th (UNESCO, 2001), 14th (UNESCO, 2003) and 15th (UNESCO, 2005) sessions of the General Assembly.

D. World Heritage Statutory meetings since the 15th General Assembly (10-11 October 2005)

MEETING SESSION	VENUE	DATES	DOCUMENTS PREPARED
30th session of the World Heritage Committee (30 COM)	Vilnius, Lithuania	8-16 July 2006	38 working / 14 information documents (WHC-06/30 COM/)
31st session of the World Heritage Committee (31 COM)	Christchurch, New Zealand	23 June-2 July 2007	42 working documents / 11 information documents (WHC-07/31 COM) ³
TOTAL	80 working / 24 information documents		(104 documents in total)

E. Strengthening the CREDIBILITY of the World Heritage List

Nominations to the World Heritage List:

8. Decision **28 COM 13.1** (Suzhou, 2004) (“Cairns-Suzhou Decision”) established, on an experimental and transitory basis, the mechanism to set at 45 the annual limit on the number of nominations to be examined each year and to examine up to two complete nominations

³ To be updated after the conclusion of the 31st session of the World Heritage Committee.

per State Party, provided that at least one of these nominations concerns a natural property. This mechanism was applied at the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee (Vilnius 2006) and was evaluated at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007) *[To be updated after the conclusion of the 31st session of the Committee]*.

Inscription of properties on the World Heritage List since the 15th General Assembly (10-15 October 2005): [To be updated following the 31st session of the Committee]

Region	New cultural properties	New natural properties	New cultural and natural properties	Total
Africa	5			5
Arab States	2			2
Asia/Pacific	2	1		3
Europe/North America	5			5
Latin America/Caribbean	2	1		3
TOTAL	16	2		18

9. The total number of properties on the World Heritage List as of May 2007 is 830 (644 cultural, 162 natural and 24 mixed)⁴. These properties are located in 138 States Parties (i.e. 45 States Parties do not have properties inscribed on the World Heritage List). 157 States Parties have submitted Tentative Lists of properties they may decide to nominate in future years.

Inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger since the 15th General Assembly (10-11 October 2005)

Committee Session	Number of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger	Number of properties removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger
30 COM (Vilnius, 2006)	2 (Dresden Elbe Valley, Germany; Medieval Monuments in Kosovo, Serbia)	5 (Tipasa, Algeria; Cologne Cathedral, Germany; Groups of Monuments at Hampi, India; Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary, Senegal; Ichkeul National Park, Tunisia)
31 COM (Christchurch, 2007)	<i>To be updated after 31 COM</i>	<i>To be updated after 31 COM</i>

10. The total number of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger as of May 2007 is 31 (18 cultural and 13 natural)⁵. These properties are located in 26 States Parties *[To be updated after the conclusion of the 31st session of the Committee]*.

⁴ The World Heritage List is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

⁵ The List of World Heritage in Danger is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/danger>

State of Conservation reports of World Heritage properties examined by the Committee since the 15th General Assembly (10-11 October 2005)

30 COM	LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	WORLD HERITAGE LIST
Africa	13	17
Arab States	6	14
Asia/Pacific	8	23
Europe/North America	3	35
Latin America/Caribbean	4	10
TOTAL	34	99
31 COM	LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	WORLD HERITAGE LIST
	<i>To be updated after 31 COM</i>	<i>To be updated after 31 COM</i>
TOTAL		

Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List:

11. International, Inter-regional and Regional meetings and workshops have been carried out for the implementation of the Global Strategy (many of these activities are included in documents *WHC-06/30.COM/6* and *WHC-07/31.COM/5*).

F. Ensuring the effective Conservation of World Heritage properties

Approved International Assistance (IA) from the World Heritage Fund since the 15th General Assembly (10-11 October 2005)⁶:

REGIONS	NUMBER OF STATES PARTIES TO REQUEST IA	NUMBER OF REQUESTS	TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED (in USD)
Africa	10	11	316,934
Arab States	3	3	75,833
Asia & Pacific	12	14	399,945
Europe and North America	1	1	27,100
Central and Eastern Europe	1	1	17,620
Latin America & Caribbean	9	13	296,258
TOTAL	36	43	1,133,690

Periodic Reporting:

12. In the context of the Periodic Reporting Reflection Year (Decision **7 EXT.COM 5**), and following the World Heritage Committee's decision to suspend for two years the commencement of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting in order to study and reflect on the

⁶ As of 30 April 2007.

first cycle (Decision **30 COM 11.G** paragraph 5), the World Heritage Centre organized at UNESCO Headquarters two meetings on the Periodic Reporting Reflection Year (9-10 November 2006 and 24 January 2007), and two workshops on the simplification of the questionnaire and the establishment of indicators (6-7 November 2006 and 22-23 January 2007). A full report of the outcomes of such meetings is included in document *WHC-07/31.COM/11D.1*).

International conferences and symposiums:

13. A number of international conferences and symposiums focused on various World Heritage issues were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance. A full inventory of these activities is included in documents *WHC-06/30.COM/6* and *WHC-05/29.COM/5*.

G. Promoting the development of effective Capacity-building in States Parties

Global Training Strategy:

14. The World Heritage Centre continued to promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** measures with training courses, seminars and other technical cooperation activities and on-site conservation workshops (a full inventory of these training and activities is included in documents *WHC-06/30.COM/6* and *WHC-07/31.COM/5*).

Education Activities:

15. A number of International and Regional workshops and training courses were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance to develop educational activities related to World Heritage (a full inventory of these training and activities is included in documents *WHC-06/30.COM/6* and *WHC-07/31.COM/5*).
16. The World Heritage in Young Hands Educational Resource Kit for Teachers was produced in Hungarian, Lithuanian and Spanish (2nd edition) bringing the number of language versions to 29. Translations have also been made in Portuguese, Latvian and Amharic.

H. Increasing public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through COMMUNICATION

Awareness-raising:

17. In 2006, the World Heritage Website <http://whc.unesco.org> received an average of 16,295 visitors per day. Traffic to the World Heritage Website increased by 5.2% visits per month, from 480 940 visits in April 2006 to 506 069 visits in April 2007.
18. Articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published through work with numerous international and national well-known media.

Publications:

19. Following Decision **26 COM 8.3** (Budapest, 2002) and thanks to the support of the Italian Funds-in-Trust, a new publication, *World Heritage: Challenges for the Millennium*, was published in English and French. The book provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of more than three decades of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*.

20. A special publication on *Case Studies on Climate Change and World Heritage* was also produced.
21. Four new publications (nos. 19-22) were issued in the *World Heritage Paper Series: American Fortifications and the World Heritage Convention; Period Report and Action Plan, Europe 2005-2006; World Heritage Forests: Leveraging Conservation at the Landscape Level; Predicting and Managing the Effects of Climate Change on World Heritage*.
22. 100,000 copies of the World Heritage Map were published in partnership with National Geographic and Hewlett Packard in English, French and Spanish. A further 120,000 copies were diffused in the USA through the November/December 2006 edition of the National Geographic Traveler magazine, with the participation of the Mexican and Peruvian Tourist Boards.

Bi-lateral Agreements with States Parties and Partnerships:

23. Bi-lateral agreements in favour of World Heritage have been signed with a number of National Governments. An inventory of bi-lateral agreements with States Parties together with a full report on the evaluation of the World Heritage Partnerships for Conservation initiative (PACT) is included in document *WHC-07/31.COM.15*.

III. Draft Decision

Draft Decision 31 COM 6

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/6,
2. Takes note with appreciation of the Report;
3. Requests the Director of the World Heritage Centre to transmit the Report, as amended, to the Secretariat of the General Conference, so that it can be submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO at its 34th session (UNESCO, 24-25 October 2007);
4. Decides in accordance with Rule 14.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, to reserve [one] seat in the World Heritage Committee to be elected by the General Assembly at its 16th session (UNESCO, 24-25 October 2007), for a State Party which does not have any properties on the World Heritage List.