



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

# World Heritage

# 33 COM

**Distribution Limited**

**WHC-09/33.COM/8E**  
**Paris, 29 May 2009**  
**Original: English/French**

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Thirty-third session**

**Seville, Spain**  
**22-30 June 2009**

**Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Establishment of the World Heritage List  
and of the List of World Heritage in Danger**

**8E: Adoption of retrospective Statements of Significance and of  
Outstanding Universal Value**

## **SUMMARY**

This Document presents the Draft Decision concerning the adoption of six Statements of Significance and one Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for properties which had no Statement approved at the time of their inscription on the World Heritage List.

**Draft Decision: 33 COM 8E, see Point II**

## I. Background

As a follow-up to the first cycle of Periodic Reporting in Europe, the States Parties of Bulgaria, Poland and Serbia have drafted Statements of Significance/Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage properties located within their territories. These draft Statements are presented to the World Heritage Committee for approval.

## II. Draft Decision

### ***Draft Decision 33COM 8E***

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/8E,*
2. *Adopts the retrospective Statements of Significance, as presented in the Annex of Document WHC-09/33.COM/8E, for the following World Heritage properties:*
  - *Poland: Cracow's Historic Centre; Wieliczka Salt Mine; Historic Centre of Warsaw; Old City of Zamość; Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork;*
  - *Serbia: Medieval Monuments in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>.*
3. *Adopts the retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value, as presented in the Annex of Document WHC-09/33.COM/8E, for the following World Heritage property:*
  - *Bulgaria: Srebarna Nature Reserve.*

---

<sup>1</sup> **Note:** The Secretariat was informed by the Legal Advisor that "The UNESCO Secretariat follows the practice of the United Nations, which considers that the Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be applicable to the territory of Kosovo until a final settlement be achieved".

## ANNEX: Retrospective Statements of Significance/Outstanding Universal Value

### STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Property	<b>Cracow's Historic Centre</b>
Id. N°	<b>29</b>
State Party	<b>Poland</b>

*The historic layout of Cracow, with Wawel and Kazimierz, is one of the most outstanding examples of European urban planning, characterised by the harmonious development and accumulation of elements representing all architectural styles from the early Romanesque phase up to Modernism. The importance of the city is evident in the urban layout, numerous churches and monasteries, monumental secular public buildings, the remains of medieval city walls, as well as urban palaces and town houses designed and built by high-class architects and craftsmen. The value of the ensemble is determined by the extraordinary accumulation of monuments from various periods, preserved in their original form, with authentic fittings, which combine to create a uniform urban ensemble in which the tangible and intangible heritage is preserved and nurtured to the present day.*

*The dominant point of the urban ensemble, Wawel Hill, is the symbol of the crown, a necropolis documenting the dynastic and political links of medieval and modern Europe. Cracow, one of the largest administrative and commercial centres in Central Europe, was a centre of arts and crafts, a place where Eastern and Western culture and art met. The importance of Cracow as a cultural centre of European significance is reinforced by the existence of one of the oldest universities of international renown, the Jagiellonian University. The picture of the city's cultural richness is supplemented by Jewish monuments of Cracow's Kazimierz.*

**Criterion (iv):** *Cracow is an urban architectural ensemble of outstanding quality, in terms of both its townscape and its individual monuments. The historic centre of the town admirably illustrates the process of continuous urban growth from the Middle Ages to the present day.*

Property	<b>Wieliczka Salt Mine</b>
Id. N°	<b>32</b>
State Party	<b>Poland</b>

*The salt mine in Wieliczka is a unique development in the history of mining, because the rock salt deposits were mined without*

*interruption from the 13th to the end of the 20th centuries. The scale of excavation in this mine is very large, with corridors, galleries, and chambers, as well as underground lakes, totalling more than 200km in length on seven levels between 57m and 198m below ground. The largest collection of original tools and mining equipment illustrating the development of mining technology from the Middle Ages to modern times has been preserved here.*

*Not only was the Wieliczka salt mine a valuable economic raw material was mined, it also inspired the creation of exceptional works of art, such as chapels with altars and figures made of this atypical material.*

*Wieliczka attracted visitors because of its uniqueness and beauty almost from the beginning of its existence. The first tourist route was opened in the middle of the 19th century.*

**Criterion (iv):** *The Wieliczka salt mine reflects all the historic stages of development in mining techniques from the 13th to the 20th centuries, while the devices and tools preserved there document the old systems of working the deposits, drainage, lighting, and ventilation of the mine in a unique manner by world standards.*

Property	<b>Historic Centre of Warsaw</b>
Id. N°	<b>30</b>
State Party	<b>Poland</b>

*Warsaw was deliberately annihilated in 1944 as a repression of the Polish resistance to the German occupation. The capital city was reduced to ruins with the intention of obliterating the centuries-old tradition of Polish statehood. The rebuilding of the historic city, 85% of which was destroyed, was the result of the determination of the inhabitants and the support of the whole nation. The reconstruction of the Old Town in its historic urban and architectural form was the manifestation of the care and attention taken to assure the survival of one of the most important testimonials of Polish culture. The city – the symbol of elective authority and tolerance, where the first democratic European constitution, the Constitution of 3 May 1791, was adopted – was rebuilt. The reconstruction included the holistic recreation of the urban plan, together with the Old Town Market, the town houses, the circuit of the city walls, as well as the Royal Castle and important religious buildings. The reconstruction of Warsaw's historical centre*

was a major contributor to the changes in the doctrines related to urbanisation and conservation of urban development in most of the European countries after the destruction of World War II. Simultaneously, this example illustrates the effectiveness of conservation activities in the second half of the 20th Century, which permitted the integral reconstruction of the complex urban ensemble.

**Criterion (ii):** The initiation of comprehensive conservation activities on the scale of the entire historic city was a unique European experience and contributed to the verification of conservation doctrines and practices.

**Criterion (vi):** The historic centre of Warsaw is an exceptional example of the comprehensive reconstruction of a city that had been deliberately and totally destroyed. The foundation of the material reconstruction was the inner strength and determination of the nation, which brought about the reconstruction of the heritage on a unique scale in the history of the world.

Property	<b>Old City of Zamość</b>
Id. N°	<b>564</b>
State Party	<b>Poland</b>

Zamość is a unique example of a Renaissance town in Central Europe, consistently designed and built in accordance with the Italian theories of the "ideal town," on the basis of a plan which was the result of perfect cooperation between the open-minded founder, Jan Zamoyski, and the outstanding architect, Bernardo Morando. Zamość is an outstanding example of an innovative approach to town planning, combining the functions of an urban ensemble, a residence, and a fortress in accordance with a consistently implemented Renaissance concept. The result of this is a stylistically homogeneous urban composition with a high level of architectural and landscape values. A real asset of this great construction was its creative enhancement with local artistic architectural achievements.

Located on the trade route linking western and northern Europe with the Black Sea, the town was conceived from the beginning as an economic centre based on trade.

The community of this town, which from the outset was planned to be multinational, had a high level of religious tolerance.

Zamość is the tangible reflection of the social and cultural ideas of the Renaissance, which were strongly accepted in Poland. This can be exemplified by the establishment of a university

(Zamość Academy) by the founder and owner of the town.

**Criterion (iv):** Zamość is an outstanding example of a Renaissance planned town of the late 16th century, which retains its original layout and fortifications and a large number of buildings of particular interest, blending Italian and Central European architectural traditions.

Property	<b>Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork</b>
Id. N°	<b>847</b>
State Party	<b>Poland</b>

Malbork Castle is the most complete and elaborate example of the Gothic brick castle complex in the characteristic and unique style of the Teutonic Order, which evolved independently from the contemporary castles of western Europe and the Near East. The spectacular fortress represents the phenomenon of the monastic state in Prussia, founded in the 13th century and developed in the 14th century by the German communities of military monks who carried out crusades against the pagan Prussians on the south Baltic coast. The fortified monastery on the River Nogat represents the drama of Christianity in the late Middle Ages, stretched between extremes of sanctity and violence.

Over a span of two hundred years, since the 18th Century, the Malbork Castle has remained one of the major objects of European fascination with medieval history and its material remains. It also became a sign of the tendency to treat history and its monuments as instruments in the service of political ideologies.

From the 19th century onwards Malbork Castle has been the subject of restoration that contributed in an exceptional way to the development of research and conservation theory and practice. At the same time many forgotten medieval art and craft techniques were rediscovered. Extensive conservation works were carried out in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Following the severe damage that it incurred in the final stage of World War II, the castle was restored once again.

**Criterion (ii):** Malbork Castle is an architectural work of unique character. Many of the methods used by its builders in handling technical and artistic problems greatly influenced not only subsequent castles of the Teutonic Order but also other Gothic buildings in a wide region of north-eastern Europe. The castle also provides perfect evidence of the evolution of modern philosophy and practice in the field of restoration and conservation. It is a historic

monument to conservation itself, both in its social aspect and as a scientific and artistic discipline.

**Criterion (iii):** Malbork Castle, a symbol of power and cultural tradition, is the most important monument to the monastic state of the Teutonic Knights, a unique phenomenon in the history of western civilization. The Castle is at the same time the major material manifestation of the Crusades in eastern Europe, the forced baptism of the Baltic peoples, and the colonization of their tribal territories, which played a vital role in the history of Europe.

**Criterion (iv):** Malbork Castle is an outstanding example of the castles of the Teutonic Order, which evolved in the frontiers of medieval western Europe. It is a unique, perfectly planned architectural creation, with no equivalent in Gothic architecture. It was built with the use of the rich repertoire of medieval constructional methods; these were applied on an exceptionally large scale and resulted in the magnificent seat of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights.

Property	<b>Medieval Monuments in Kosovo</b>
Id. N°	<b>724bis</b>
State Party	<b>Serbia<sup>2</sup></b>

The Serbian mediaeval monuments in Kosovo constitute a unified group of churches built within the Byzantine spiritual domain, but strongly reflecting the unified spiritual and secular authorities of mediaeval Serbia, which faced both the Orthodox East and Catholic West, not only in the geographical and political sense, but in cultural, as well.

Two styles developed simultaneously in Serbian mediaeval architecture, and their final accomplishments, have been preserved in Kosovo. The complex architectural unit of churches and exonarthex of the Peć complex, serving numerous both religious and secular functions, reflects the so-called Ras style, representing a special synthesis of Byzantine and West European architecture, a combination of an Orthodox ground plan and

<sup>2</sup> **Note:** The Secretariat was informed by the Legal Advisor that “The UNESCO Secretariat follows the practice of the United Nations, which considers that the Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be applicable to the territory of Kosovo until a final settlement be achieved”.

spatial building construction with Romanesque and Gothic exterior decorations. The greatest and most imposing expression of this style is manifest in the church of the Dečani monastery.

The second style, taken from Byzantium – cruciform plan with five domes – characteristic of the of Palaiologos renaissance style, is manifested in its initial stage in the church of the Virgin of Ljeviša, whereas in the Gračanica monastery the style reached its peak, with ideal rhythm of proportions and volumes and an extraordinary harmony accomplished in its cascading façades.

Frescoes in all the four churches represent an outstanding testimony to late Byzantine painting. Gračanica, Patriarchate of Peć, and Dečani manifest all the leading style tendencies; the church of The Virgin of Ljeviša displays unique examples of the Palaiologos Renaissance style, and the best preserved treasury of Byzantine iconography is at Dečani. The wall paintings and largely preserved interior elements of these churches (coloured stone floor paving, church furniture) yield exceptional information on all the aspects of mediaeval life in Byzantium.

The churches were closely related to many of the most prominent people and events in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Balkans, and these four monuments had a direct influence on art and architecture in this part of Europe throughout the Ottoman period.

**Criterion (ii):** Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša played a decisive role in the development of ecclesiastical building and mural painting in the Balkans, between the 14th to the 16th centuries, and reflect in the discrete Balkan Ras and Palaiologian Renaissance styles, a fusion of eastern Orthodox Byzantine with western Romanesque styles.

**Criterion (iii):** The wall paintings in the four churches are an exceptional testimony to the manifestations of the cultural tradition of the Palaiologian Renaissance of Byzantium in the Balkans. They show the height of the development of Balkan art from the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Gračanica and Ljeviša, similar only to the church of the Holy Apostles in Thessaloniki and the Monastery of Protaton at Mount Athos, while the paintings at the churches at Peć, dating from around 1300 until 1673/4, are a powerful demonstration of the emergence of this style and its aftermath. At Dečani the paintings are the best preserved treasury of Byzantine iconography.

**Criterion (iv):** The Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć Monastic Church, the

Gračanica Monastic Church and the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša reflect the development of a discrete style of architecture and mural decoration in the Balkans in the 14th century, when the combined forces of Church and State were harnessed to create a strong identity for Serbia, in line with its political orientations.

## STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Property	<b>Srebarna Nature Reserve</b>
Id. N°	<b>219bis</b>
State Party	<b>Bulgaria</b>

### Brief synthesis

Srebarna Nature Reserve protects a lake and wetland ecosystem of 638ha located near to the village of Srebarna on the west bank of the Danube River. The reserve includes the lake and the former agricultural lands north of the lake, a belt of forest plantations along the Danube, the island of Komluka and the aquatic area locked between the island and the riverbank.

Srebarna Nature Reserve is an important wetland on the Western Palaearctic bird migratory flyway. It provides nesting grounds for 99 species of birds and seasonal habitat to around 80 species of migratory birds. The property is surrounded by hills which provide a natural boundary and offer an ideal means for observing the waterfowl.

### Criteria

**Criterion (x):** Srebarna Nature Reserve protects an important example of a type of wetland that was widespread in Bulgaria in the past. It shelters a diversity of plant and animal species, which are increasingly threatened. The wetland is an important breeding, staging and wintering site for a large number of birds. Floating reedbed islands and flooded willow woodlands provide important bird breeding areas. In the lake's northern end the reedbeds gradually give way to wet meadows. In the north-western end of the lake and along the Danube there are belts of riverine forest with single old trees of White Willow.

The rich bird life supported by Srebarna Nature Reserve is the basis for its international significance. The property holds populations of birds that are considered critical to species survival. It hosts the only colony of Dalmatian Pelican in Bulgaria, as well as the largest breeding populations of four more globally threatened species: Pygmy Cormorant,

Ferruginous Duck, White-tailed Eagle and Corncrake. Srebarna is also of European value importance in supporting Little Bittern Night Heron, Squacco Heron, Little Egret, Great White Egret, Purple Heron, Glossy Ibis, Spoonbill and Ruddy Shelduck. Three species of terns also occur here. Globally threatened Pygmy Cormorant and Red-breasted Goose winter in the Reserve, and the wintering populations of White-fronted Goose, Greylag Goose and Fieldfare are also notable.

In total the property provides critical habitat that supports 173 bird species, 78 species of which are of European conservation concern, and nine being listed as globally threatened.

### Integrity

The property includes the largest lake left after drainage of the marshy zone along the Danube and was connected to the river until a dyke was built in 1949. Its current situation is therefore not completely natural and is maintained by water management measures. In 1994 a channel was constructed between the lake and the Danube river in order to ensure the annual flow of Danube waters into the lake during the spring months. The Reserve is a strictly protected area, and only carefully-controlled scientific research, and conservation management activities are allowed to take place within it. The site is relatively small, and only if other areas are also protected, in the region and on bird migration routes, can the key species of Srebarna Nature Reserve be expected to survive.

The property is protected by a 673 ha buffer zone which was created in 2008. This consists of a portion of the Srebarna Nature Reserve that is not part of the World Heritage property and 419 ha of land surrounding the Srebarna Nature Reserve, which is located within an adjacent protected area known as Pelikanite. The aim of this buffer zone is to prevent and reduce negative human impacts on the reserve.

### Protection and management requirements

Srebarna Lake was the first wetland in Bulgaria to receive legal protection status and also the first to achieve international recognition. The lake was designated as reserve in 1948 to protect the diversity of birds it hosts. According to the 1998 law dealing with protected areas in Bulgaria, the property is classified as a "Managed Reserve", being exclusively State property. Management and control are carried out by the Ministry of Environment and Water and its regional departments. The reserve falls under the jurisdiction of the Regional Inspectorate of environment and water for the town of Russe. Besides its inclusion on the World Heritage List, Srebarna Lake is also

*protected as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. In 1989 the lake was designated as an Important Bird Area by BirdLife International. Its values are also recognised and protected at the European level. The property is also included in two Natura 2000 sites: the Srebarna Special Protection Area and Ludogorie-Srebarna Special Area of Conservation.*

*The property requires active management, and a management plan needs to be maintained and updated to guide this work. Key objectives of the management plan are conservation management for the protection of its breeding bird populations, and the continued function of the property as a stopover site for migratory birds. Specific regimes are in place for a number of different zones in the reserve, according to their conservation value. Key management requirements for the lake are to maintain and restore its water system to as natural a state as possible. Vegetation management is also needed to optimize the conservation value of the property to birds. Control of human use and the active prevention of poaching and illegal fishing are also required on an ongoing basis. Monitoring of activities to ensure management plan implementation is required in relation to the achievement of clear targets that should be defined and updated in the management plan.*

*Protection of the values of the property also relies on measures outside its boundaries. The buffer zone of the property is important in preventing the introduction of non-local plant or animal species, pollution from domestic, industrial or other types of waste, hunting during bird nesting and breeding periods, burning of reeds, and other activities that could disturb the nesting and breeding bird colonies. Some of these issues also require measures beyond the defined buffer zone of the property. The linkage of the property with other reserves on the Romanian side of the Danube, and within the wider Western Palaearctic migratory flyway, would also enhance its integrity and the protection of its natural values.*