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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-fourth session

**Brasilia, Brazil
25 July – 3 August 2010**

Item 7.1 of the Provisional Agenda: Historic Urban Landscape

INF.7.1 Progress report on the preparation of a UNESCO Recommendation on the conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape

SUMMARY

This document provides information on the preparation of the UNESCO Recommendation on the conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape, following **35 C/Resolution 42** adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 35th session (October 2009).

I. Background

1. After the discussions at the World Heritage Committee sessions to debate on the Historic Urban Landscape, and the relevant decisions adopted on the need to prepare a new UNESCO Recommendation on the conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape, both by the World Heritage Committee and the Executive Board (see, in particular, Decision **181 EX/29** adopted by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 181st session in April 2009), the General Conference of UNESCO decided at its 35th session (October 2009) that existing UNESCO standard-setting instruments relating to urban heritage should be supplemented through a new recommendation on the conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape (**35 C/Resolution 42**).
2. The General Conference also set a working method for the preparation of the new Recommendation, in conformity with the *Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution*. In particular, it decided to:
 - a) convene a meeting of experts invited in their personal capacity (category VI) to compile a first draft of the proposed recommendation to be sent to Member States for comments;
 - b) further convene an intergovernmental meeting of experts (category II) to reconsider the draft in the light of the comments received, and to submit a final report and, if appropriate, a revised draft to the General Conference at its 36th session (2011).

II. The preparation of the Recommendation

3. In conformity with **35 C/Resolution 42**, a meeting of international experts invited in their personal capacity was held from 17 to 19 February 2010 in UNESCO Headquarters, with the mandate to discuss the elements of the proposed recommendation and to compile a first draft of the text.
4. All regions of the world were represented by the invited experts, who are leading figures in the field of urban heritage conservation, as well as representatives of leading institutions, academics and practitioners who brought both their theoretical and practical interdisciplinary experience to the debate (see list of participants, attached in Annex I).
5. The framework for the discussion was defined by the previous series of debates on the Historic Urban Landscape that were held at all World Heritage Committee sessions since its 29th session (Durban, 2005), at the General Assembly of States Parties since its 15th session (UNESCO, 2005), as well as by the relevant decisions of the Executive Board at its 179th and 181st sessions (April and October 2009, respectively), and by the debate held at the General Conference at its 35th session (October 2009).
6. In their work, the experts took into consideration the outcomes and recommendations of the previous workshops and expert meetings which were held on this topic. In addition, immediately prior to the February 2010 expert

meeting on the UNESCO Recommendation, an international workshop focusing on the application of Historic Urban Landscape in the African context was held in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, from 30 November to 3 December 2009. The outcomes and recommendations of this workshop provided a solid basis from which the February 2010 expert group was able to build upon and elaborate¹. Moreover, it should be noted that the expert meeting on the inclusion of Historic Urban Landscape in the relevant sections of the *Operational Guidelines* which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 7 to 11 December 2009, focused exclusively on World Heritage (See *Document WHC-10/34.COM/7.1*).

7. The experts debated the multitude of issues related to the conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape. These ranged from the impact of urban growth to development pressures; from the opportunities and challenges brought about by global economic growth, as well as the new approaches to urban heritage which have risen from concerns for the environment.
8. Following the procedure set up by the General Conference, and on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre will send to Member States of UNESCO the draft text of the proposed Recommendation 14 months prior to the 36th session of the General Conference, asking the Member States to provide their comments on it, in conformity with the *Rules of Procedures* referred to above.
9. In conformity with 35 C/Resolution 42, an intergovernmental meeting of experts (category II) will be convened in spring 2011 at the UNESCO Headquarters to reconsider the draft in reflection of the comments received and to submit a final report with a revised draft of the Recommendation for consideration by the General Conference at its 36th session (2011).

¹ The main outcomes and full reports of these meetings are available at the following web address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities>