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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-fifth session

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters

19-29 June 2011

Item 13 of the Provisional Agenda: Revision of the *Operational Guidelines*

INF.13B: Report of the progress in the preparation of a new Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes

SUMMARY

At its 29th session the World Heritage Committee recommended “that the General Conference of UNESCO adopt a new Recommendation to complement and update the existing ones on the subject of conservation of historic urban landscapes, with special reference to the need to link contemporary architecture to the urban historic context (Decision **29 COM 5D**). 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 Historic Urban Landscape (**35 C/Resolution 42**).

This information document presents the Report of the progress in the preparation of a new Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, a second draft of which will be discussed at an intergovernmental meeting of experts, to be held from 25 to 27 May 2011 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. The outcome of this meeting will be made available through the Internet at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>.

A. BACKGROUND

1. At its 29th session (Durban, 2005) the World Heritage Committee recommended “that the General Conference of UNESCO adopt a new Recommendation to complement and update the existing ones on the subject of conservation of historic urban landscapes, with special reference to the need to link contemporary architecture to the urban historic context (Decision **29 COM 5D**).

2. 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 Historic Urban Landscape (**35 C/Resolution 42**).

3. In accordance 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*, the General Conference with its **35 C/Resolution 42** also set a working method for the preparation of the new Recommendation in two stages. It decided to convene a meeting of experts invited in their personal capacity (category VI), as stage one, to compile a first draft of the proposed Recommendation to be sent to Member States for comments.

4. The meeting of international experts was held from 17 to 19 February 2010 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. The discussions and recommendations by the expert group provided a solid basis upon which the Secretariat prepared a first draft text of the proposed new Recommendation, which was included in a preliminary report setting forth the position by UNESCO with regard to the issue of the Historic Urban Landscape. In conformity with the *Rules of Procedure*, on 23 August 2010 this first draft text and the preliminary report were submitted by the Director-General to the Member States of UNESCO and to the Associate Members, requesting them to submit by 25 December 2010 any comments they might have on the text.

5. As stage two and after receipt of comments from the Member States by 25 December 2010, an intergovernmental meeting of experts (category II) would be organized with a view to approving a draft to be submitted to the General Conference at its 36th session.

B. PROCESS

6. In response, a total of 30 comments and observations from Member States of UNESCO were received on the draft text of the proposed Recommendation, including its Action Plan.

7. In alphabetical order, the Secretariat has received comments from the Governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Mauritius, Monaco, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, and Venezuela.

8. All welcomed the draft Recommendation and its Action Plan and were supportive of the process to prepare the proposed Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. The full text of these comments is available at the following web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>.

9. Some comments included concerns on the scope and the role of the Recommendation itself in terms of general procedure and related to legal and administrative

matters; a number of comments also raised specific issues and expressed observations on the content of the draft text of the proposed Recommendation. Most of the comments received proposed the insertion of alternative specific terms in replacement of others suggested for deletion, for each of the sections of the proposed draft text of the Recommendation.

10. ICOMOS also reviewed the first draft through an extensive consultation process within its constituency. The Secretariat has taken due note of its observations in the preparation of the revised, second draft.

C. WORKING METHOD AND TIMETABLE

11. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the second, revised draft has been sent out by the Assistant Director-General for Culture on 24 March 2011 to the Ministers of Member States responsible for relations with UNESCO and, in conformity with **35 C/Resolution 42** and pursuant to **185 EX/Decision 46**, it will be submitted to the intergovernmental meeting of experts (category II) which will be held at UNESCO Headquarters from 25 to 27 May 2011.

12. The purpose of such a meeting is to consider the revised draft text of the Recommendation in light of the comments and observations received by Member States, with a view to approving a draft to be submitted to the General Conference at its 36th session (25 October–11 November 2011), for consideration and possible adoption.

D. CONCLUSION

13. The Secretariat will inform the World Heritage Committee of the outcomes of the intergovernmental meeting of experts (category II) to be held from 25 to 27 May 2011 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and of the progress in the preparation of a new Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape and its possible adoption. The outcome of this meeting will be made available through the Internet at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>.