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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**

**Forty-third session**

**Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan  
30 June – 10 July 2019**

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

**INF.8: Outcomes of the Reflection meeting on reforming the World Heritage  
Nomination Process (Tunis, 23-25 January 2019)**

**SUMMARY**

This document presents the report and recommendations of the Expert meeting "Reflection on reforming the World Heritage Nomination Process", (Tunis, 23-25 January 2019).

**Reflection on reforming the World Heritage Nomination Process**  
**Report and Recommendations of the Expert meeting**  
**Tunis, 23-25 January 2019**

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## **1. Background**

At its 42<sup>nd</sup> session, by Decision **42 COM 12A**, the World Heritage Committee took into account the recommendations of the 2017-2018 ad-hoc Working Group and **decided to review the nomination process**, bearing in mind the Global Strategy, and to consider other possible measures, such as a Code of Conduct of the World Heritage Committee. In the same decision, while mandating the 2018-2019 ad-hoc Working Group to examine different possibilities of reforming the nomination process, the Committee also made reference to the Recommendation N°3 of the IOS Comparative Mapping Study of Forms and Models for Use of Advisory Services by International Instruments and Programmes, which addressed deviations between recommendations of the Advisory Bodies and decisions made by the World Heritage Committee.

The Committee considered that a reform would benefit from further reflection by a representative panel of experts drawn from the ad-hoc Working Group, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other experts, to feed into the work of the ad-hoc Working Group. In this regard, the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre to organize, by March 2019, a reflection meeting to examine different possibilities for reforming the nomination and evaluation process (including evaluations) and to propose recommendations for consideration by the World Heritage Committee with a view of increasing the balance and credibility of the World Heritage List.

In addition, and in view of providing this reflection with the widest possible range of comments and suggestions, the Committee also requested the Secretariat to “consult with States Parties and other relevant stakeholders of the Convention on the matters that should be addressed at the reflection meeting”. A survey on the nomination process was prepared by the World Heritage Centre in consultation with the Advisory Bodies and was launched online on the World Heritage Centre’s website.

## **2. Outcome of the online consultation survey on the reflection concerning the nomination process**

The Secretariat received **replies** from **73 States Parties (37.8%** of the 193 States Parties to the Convention). With regard to Category 2 Centres and civil society, **4** replies were received, bringing the overall number of replies to **77**.

The replies to the 7 questions of the survey showed that the reflection should look at the nomination process in a holistic way while clearly indicating that the Upstream Process is the most critical area on which the reform should focus and is overwhelmingly believed to be a valuable tool towards achieving the goals of the Global Strategy.

Replies also indicated that, if a reform is to be successful, this should be based on high quality nominations for Committee review, and that the mechanisms to achieve this outcome should include **advice provided to States Parties in the early stage** of the nomination process with regard to possible nominations and the establishment and/or revision of Tentative Lists, as well as **improved dialogue** between States Parties and the Advisory Bodies.

Furthermore, a clear majority of the respondents considered that a **preliminary assessment** of the potential for Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a site or sites on the Tentative Lists by the relevant Advisory Body(ies), before a full nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List is developed and submitted, and should be **mandatory**. The **preliminary assessment** was addressed in at least half of the open comments provided and appears to be considered overwhelmingly a key element of the reform.

A very large majority of respondents indicated that critical measures to be taken would be: **support to least represented States Parties** and **capacity-building** for the preparation of nominations.

### **3. The expert meeting**

The meeting was held in Tunis from 23 to 25 January (Agenda of the Meeting in Annex I), further to the invitation of the Tunisian Government and with financial support from the Australian Government. The meeting brought together 24 experts from different constituencies and backgrounds from all regions of the world, including an indigenous peoples expert and a young heritage professional, as well as representatives of the Advisory Bodies, Category 2 Centres and the World Heritage Centre (List of participants in Annex II). The meeting was opened in the presence of the Ambassador of Tunisia, Mr Ghazi Gherariri and by Mr Faouzi Mahfoudh, Director General of the National Institute for Heritage in Tunisia. The Director of the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), Mr Souayibou Varissou, was chosen as Chairperson of the meeting and Ms Haifaa Abdulhalim, from the Category 2 Centre ARC-WH in Bahrain, as Rapporteur.

In preparation of the meeting, the World Heritage Centre (WHC) had shared the outcomes of the online consultation survey with all the invited experts, as well as other relevant documents and links, including Committee decisions, UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS) recommendations and reports of the ad-hoc Working Group.

The debates of the Experts meeting took into consideration the overarching objective of the reform, as defined by the Committee, which specifically referred to the balance and credibility of the Convention. The group considered that remaining true to the spirit of the Convention was very important for the nomination process, as for all other statutory processes of the Convention. The meeting acknowledged that the mandate given to the expert group was potentially wide in scope and far-reaching in its implications covering aspects of balance and credibility which are issues requiring different, yet integrated responses. While the nature and timeline of the discussions of the group did not allow to discuss the operational and financial implications of potential changes to the process, these will have to be carefully considered and relevant estimates will need to be made at later stage, in view of achieving the best possible cost-efficiency, and most importantly, considering the relative investment made in nominations and for effective conservation of heritage. Finally, the meeting also noted that

the notions of “representativity” and “balance” within the Global Strategy lack a clear definition and this might deserve further reflection in the future.

It was also recalled that local communities and relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, play or could play a major role in the conservation, preservation, and management of sites proposed for inscription or already inscribed properties on the World Heritage List, for both cultural and natural properties. The meeting recalled that participation in the nomination process of local communities, indigenous peoples, governmental, non-governmental and private organizations and other stakeholders is essential to enable them to have a shared responsibility with the State Party in the conservation of the property. Experts highlighted the importance to encourage States Parties to prepare nominations with the widest possible participation of stakeholders and to demonstrate, as appropriate, that the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples has been obtained, through, inter alia making the nominations publicly available in appropriate languages and public consultations and hearings.

#### 4. SWOT Analysis<sup>1</sup>

The experts undertook a SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses relating to the current nomination process and its related elements, and the opportunities and threats that a reform of the nomination process may bring in.

In terms of **strengths**, the experts considered that crucial points such as the three pillars sustaining the Outstanding Universal Value (namely criteria, integrity/authenticity and protection/management) and the related comparative analysis, the high standard of scientific and intellectual input by States Parties in the nomination files, the independent expert, scientific, rigorous and objective approach by the Advisory Bodies, as well as the consistency of practice and, to the extent possible, the continuity of the actors at the institutional level (ensuring coherence) are among the strong and credible elements that need to be absolutely maintained. The capacity to evolve and adapt in line with current notions and needs (for which the introduction of the Upstream Process is an excellent example), was also recognized as another strength that should be maintained and enhanced.

The **weaknesses** of the current nomination process include elements of different nature that need to be addressed at a number of levels in the reform process. At the level of decision-making, these include politicization, non-compliance of decisions by the Committee with the provisions of the *Operational Guidelines* and in some cases with those of the Rules of Procedure, increasing disregard for the technical advice of the Advisory Bodies, as well as insufficient involvement of experts in the decision-making of Committee Member delegations, potential conflicts of interest which occur when Committee Members have their own nomination files examined during their mandate. On a more technical and procedural level, it was considered that the length and volume of the nomination files (sometimes more than 2000 pages) is a reason for making their preparation too expensive and at the same time results in lack of sufficient time both for the Advisory Bodies and the Committee members to properly review them and make informed recommendations and/or decisions. The experts also agreed that the current timeline of the evaluation process does not always allow enough

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<sup>1</sup> SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis.

time for a meaningful engagement and dialogue between Advisory Bodies and States Parties. Furthermore, the experts noted that the Convention continues to invest more time and energy on nominations than on the state of conservation of existing properties in the World Heritage List. Another important element highlighted by the meeting was the poor quality and/or ineffective use of Tentative Lists by the States Parties.

With regard to the **opportunities** to improve the situation that the reform of the nomination process can bring, the experts agreed that strengthening the Upstream Process in a more systematic and practical way can result in the development of quality nominations for sites having a strong potential of demonstrating OUV. Such a process can minimize the chances of failure to comply with the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines* and offers opportunities to engage in more meaningful and earlier dialogue between stakeholders, including States Parties and Advisory Bodies. The experts also pointed out that the reform brings an opportunity to modify/extend the current timelines of the nomination process, including the possibility of envisaging a nomination-focused Committee session to alternate with a state of conservation-focused session thereby reducing the time pressure. Building capacity among underrepresented countries to develop credible and quality nominations was also brought forward among the opportunities. Reverting to a more technical expertise-based decision-making process by the Committee was highlighted as another opportunity. The regular update of Tentative Lists and their regional/sub-regional harmonization was seen as one of the possible opportunities and targets of the reform. Experts also noted that the reform provides an opportunity to modify the decision-making process in such a way that, in cases where nominations are recommended for non-inscription and are not withdrawn, any Committee decision should be unanimous or, if unanimity could not be reached, the decision should be postponed. The experts agreed that there should be consistency in the use of these mechanisms. On a more general and strategic level, the reform also offers the opportunity to mainstream the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy in a more systematic and structured manner in the nomination process.

Finally, experts discussed the **threats** that could possibly lead to continuing or exacerbating the current situation. In this context, weakening the evaluation system and namely its independent, expert, scientific, rigorous and objective approach evaluation (considered by the experts as one of the main strengths of the Convention and of the current practice) was considered a possible threat which needs to be avoided at all cost. Attention should be paid to not over-simplify the process as this may jeopardize the scientific/expert analysis required for a rigorous evaluation. A further threat identified was when States Parties have sites that received favourable recommendations through the Upstream Process and could view the process as an automatic inscription. Finally, the meeting agreed a key threat to the opportunities of reform would be if the World Heritage Committee failed to adopt a far reaching, bold and innovative package of integrated reforms which were operationally and financially feasible.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The meeting acknowledged the complexity of the nomination process and recommended that all of its stages must be considered in an integrated and holistic way, from the development of Tentative Lists, through the selection of sites to be nominated and the preparation of nominations by States Parties, to the evaluation by the Advisory Bodies and the final decision-making by the World Heritage Committee. The meeting also noted that any change to one part of the nomination process would impact on other parts of the process, and could also impact on other processes as well, and therefore recommended that any changes proposed be carefully considered within the broader context of the Convention. In this respect, the meeting acknowledged that once the main lines of the reform are agreed, the next phase should focus on making the changes operational, aligning them with existing processes and ensuring consistency.

The meeting also took into account the 2017 IOS Study<sup>2</sup> Recommendation N°3 which requested the “World Heritage Committee to identify the root cause(s) for Committee decisions deviating from Advisory Bodies advice, procured at a significant cost to the World Heritage Fund, and take action to address them.”

## **6. REFORM OF THE NOMINATION PROCESS**

### **6.A PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE REFORM**

Following consideration of the results of the online survey and after having undertaken the SWOT analysis exercise, the experts identified a set of overarching principles that they recommend should guide the reform of the nomination process to address these root causes, while maintaining the credibility of the Convention.

The suggested principles to guide the reform are as follows:

- Respect the three pillars of OUV, notably criteria, integrity/authenticity and protection/management;
- Ensure independence, collegiality, confidentiality, and consistency within the overall nomination process;
- Maintain high standards and a scientific-based approach throughout the overall evaluation process, bearing in mind that an evaluation is not a negotiated outcome, rather a rationale independent and evidence-based assessment;
- Streamline the standard of nomination files through improving their efficacy in terms of content and length;
- Strengthen Tentative List processes;
- Promote meaningful engagement, consultation and dialogue with all stakeholders, keeping in mind that effective dialogue requires listening and mutual trust;

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<sup>2</sup> Comparative Mapping Study of Forms and Models for Use of Advisory Services by International Instruments and Programmes, May 2017.

- Ensure that practices are rule-based;
- Avoid conflict of interest through respecting procedures and/or adhering to Standards of Conduct;
- Manage the reform process in a transparent way and by a participatory approach.

## 6.B RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE REFORM

The meeting also agreed a set of recommendations. The following aspects are suggested as those on which the reform could build in order to produce highly positive benefits.

### 6.B.1 Preliminary Assessment

The meeting considered that developing quality nominations for sites which have a strong **potential** and thus will have a higher chance to succeed, is what the reform should be based on. The meeting, therefore, considered that a procedure of **Preliminary Assessment** providing indications as to whether a site is suitable for nomination is a useful and necessary mechanism that would ensure a more effective use of resources and help to bring forward higher quality nominated sites and reduce the number of nominations that are unlikely to succeed. This would ultimately contribute greatly towards maintaining the credibility and the spirit of the Convention.

In terms of financial implications, it could be expected that the benefits of introducing a Preliminary Assessment will involve reduced costs required for the preparation of nominations. On one hand, it is to be expected that nominations will not be developed for sites with little or no potential of demonstrating OUV (thus saving very substantial resources for States Parties and the World Heritage Fund). On the other hand, once the sites have undergone a Preliminary Assessment, States Parties would have received appropriate guidance and the respective nomination files could be streamlined. This would result in shorter, more concise and more focused files.

In terms of its application, the meeting considered that:

- a. The Preliminary Assessment should be a **mandatory procedure** for all nominations to maximize results and equity in the nomination process;
- b. If a mandatory Preliminary Assessment procedure does not gather full support, a voluntary Preliminary Assessment exercise coupled with clear incentives for those who would wish to undergo such an assessment could be an option as well, even though a mandatory one would be definitely a more all-encompassing, credible and thus, preferred option. In such cases, and where the preliminary assessment finds favourably that a site is suitable for nomination, incentives might include for example a more streamlined format, shorter timelines upon submission of nomination, etc.;
- c. The Preliminary Assessment would be undertaken in response to a **request by the State Party** concerning a specific site on their Tentative List (as it is not realistic to expect that a proper Preliminary Assessment can be done for all sites on the Tentative List);

- d. The format for Preliminary Assessment should not be particularly complex and could represent an **enhanced version of the Tentative List submission format, including some more details** necessary for the Preliminary Assessment, but much lighter than the current nomination format;
- e. The Preliminary Assessment would be done by the Advisory Bodies on the basis of, at a minimum, a **desk study** and through a standard format report that would be endorsed by their Panels taking into consideration the OUV pillars, and further to the overarching principles outlined above;
- f. The Preliminary Assessment is not meant to replace the evaluation of the nomination file to be developed in the second stage;
- g. Dividing the preparation of a nomination into two phases, through a Preliminary Assessment at an early stage, and an evaluation of nomination at a second stage, will expectedly make the process **more efficient and possibly less costly**;
- h. More time and therefore more possibility for **dialogue** and engagement between States Parties and Advisory Bodies would be available before starting the development of nominations;
- i. In terms of **timelines**, the Preliminary Assessment (stage 1) should precede, by at least one year, the submission of a nomination for stage 2 evaluation (according to a new and more streamlined format than the current one);
- j. In case of sites for which the potential has been negatively assessed through a Preliminary Assessment, States Parties will still have the possibility to submit nominations, but in view of the coherent implementation of the process and the overarching importance of the credibility of the Convention, they should be encouraged to refrain from submitting such nominations and rather focus on other sites on their Tentative Lists which have stronger potential (a disincentive would be that the evaluation process will take longer to complete – see next point);
- k. A rule concerning the **periodicity of examination of nominations** could be introduced to provide further incentives for States Parties in case of voluntary Preliminary Assessment. For example, nominations with a positive assessment could be examined every year, while nominations without Preliminary Assessment or with a negative Preliminary Assessment could only be examined every second year;
- l. Further to a standard Preliminary Assessment, **additional upstream advice and guidance** could be provided to States Parties upon request and tailored to their needs. The costs of any elaborated upstream advice of this nature would need to be fully covered by the concerned State Party or Parties.
- m. The Preliminary Assessment procedure should not be seen as excluding well-working and very useful mechanisms such as the Upstream Process, but these two should rather be seen as complementary.
- n. The Committee would be **informed annually** on the ongoing Preliminary Assessments, similar to the Upstream Process.

- o. As noted above, the **financial implications** relating to the introduction of a Preliminary Assessment require further detailed analysis. Such a process should arguably lead to a reduction of costs for the States Parties through a more effective investment of resources at an earlier stage in the process. However, for the World Heritage Fund, the costs involved in the process could be expected not to differ significantly, but the resources would be used more effectively. Furthermore, the potential application of a cost-sharing model (see proposal by Norway to the 2017-2018 ad-hoc Working Group) may reduce the financial pressure on the World Heritage Fund, allowing more resources to be directed to conservation of sites already on the World Heritage List.

## 6.B.2 Formats

Further to the agreement that the Preliminary Assessment was considered a key mechanism for achieving better quality nominations and maintaining the credibility of the List and the Convention, the meeting reflected on revising the existing nomination format and introducing a possible format for the submission of Request for Preliminary Assessment.

The meeting considered that the **Preliminary Assessment format** should:

- be relatively **light** (e.g. “an enhanced” Tentative List submission format);
- include sufficient details, including research and documentation, necessary for undertaking an assessment of the potential of the site and, in case of favourable finding, to facilitate further evaluation;
- be **limited in length/volume**;
- not be seen as a “preliminary nomination” format, but rather as information that will be complementary and instrumental for the preparation of the nomination file (2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the process).

The Nomination format, as it currently stands, is rather lengthy, includes repetitions and needs to be reviewed in view of streamlining and shortening, in the interest of all stakeholders, including States Parties, Advisory Bodies, and the Committee. The current **Nomination format** should possibly:

- have a limit of the overall number of pages;
- have a limit of pages/words for each separate chapter (especially description and history).

This would possibly save costs both for States Parties and for the evaluation process and would allow for more coherence, efficiency, and better understanding, including with regard to the evaluation by the Advisory Bodies, as well as the examination by Committee members.

Consistency between all relevant existing and future formats would need to be ensured. It was suggested to explore the possibility of creating an interconnected online/semi-online platform for the submission of Tentative Lists, Preliminary Assessment requests and Nomination Files. Nonetheless, this is to be carefully considered in view of the need of an official cover letter by the concerned State Party, for each of the above mechanisms.

### 6.B.3 Evaluation process

The meeting considered that the current evaluation process by the Advisory Bodies will have to undergo some adjustments, in line with the changes that might be introduced to the nomination process. For example, if the Preliminary Assessment procedure is introduced in the process, the involvement of the Advisory Bodies will be required at two different stages. Whatever the changes could be, the experts group considers of primary importance that these should in no case compromise the **quality** and **credibility** of the process. The expert group also noted that if the Preliminary Assessment is undertaken, it should not be viewed by the States Parties as a decision or preliminary decision by the Committee.

**Dialogue** with States Parties should be further enhanced as much as possible, with the Preliminary Assessment providing a new opportunity for a deeper engagement between Advisory Bodies and States Parties at an early stage.

While the **timelines** of the evaluation of nominations are currently very tight, especially between the two Panel meetings of the Advisory Bodies, the group considered that it might not be necessary to extend them, if Preliminary Assessment is introduced (based on the efficiencies that would be gained) and prove effective in pre-screening nominations. In this case the dialogue between States Parties and Advisory Bodies would start much earlier in the process.

### 6.B.4 Tentative Lists

The experts meeting recalled that Tentative Lists are an important planning tool in the nomination process and that the credibility of the World Heritage List and of the World Heritage system starts at the national level, with the selection of sites which should have a strong potential for justifying OUV.

As highlighted under weaknesses, the meeting considered that there was ineffective use of Tentative Lists by States Parties and that not all lists contained sites that had strong potential to justify OUV.

The experts meeting also recalled that the *Operational Guidelines* do not prescribe a specific process or methodology to be followed by States Parties concerning inclusion of sites on the Tentative List, but that they include some important recommendations to States Parties in this regard.

The experts considered that the role of establishment and/or revision of Tentative Lists is crucial and that:

- States Parties should be encouraged to develop sound and robust processes for the **selection of sites** to include in their Tentative Lists, with widest possible participation of stakeholders;
- **Guidelines/Manual for sharing good practices** be developed and examples regarding the establishment or revision process of Tentative Lists should be encouraged;

- In view of improving Tentative Lists, States Parties should be strongly encouraged to **harmonize** their Lists at regional and thematic levels, as well as review, with the assistance of the Advisory Bodies, any gaps, site configurations and identify common themes (para 73 of the *Operational Guidelines*). The implementation of such practice would foster international cooperation and reduce the chances of developing and submitting nominations unlikely to succeed;
- **Upstream advice** provided by the Advisory Bodies as early as possible, at the stage of regional and/or thematic gap studies and establishment or revision of Tentative Lists, is crucial for the process and States Parties should be encouraged to make use of the Upstream Process as much as possible in this regard (para 71 and 122);
- In order to enhance the overall quality of the Tentative Lists, these should be **reviewed and updated regularly**;
- **Capacity-building** needs to be strengthened and efforts should be made by all stakeholders, with particular emphasis on engaging indigenous peoples and rights holders.

With regard to the **overall process** related to Tentative Lists in the *Operational Guidelines*, the meeting did not consider that any changes were necessary to the respective provisions of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Finally, in case of sites without potential for justifying OUV or not falling under the definition of heritage provided by the Convention, the meeting considered that States Parties should be encouraged as early as possible in the process to seek other types of listing, beyond World Heritage, such as national or regional levels, or other international recognition (i.e. Geoparks, Man and Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar sites, Memory of the World, 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, etc.).

#### **6.B.5 Decision-making procedures**

Although the meeting considered that all of the above recommendations could be seen to be relevant to addressing concerns relating to deviations of the Committee's decisions from recommendations made by the Advisory Bodies, the experts also discussed potential measures to alleviate this situation related to the decision-making procedure of the Committee.

The experts considered that:

- Decision-making should be based on an expert, **scientific-based approach and verifiable technical evidence**;
- **More heritage experts**, both nature and culture, should be included in the delegations of the Committee Members, in compliance with Article 9 of the Convention;
- The **heritage experts** in the delegations to the Committee should play a **key role** in the debates of the Committee;
- Committee Members should abstain from having **nominations of their own country examined during their mandate**, in view of avoiding potential conflict of interest;

- A **Code of Conduct for Committee Members** should be introduced to which they should abide, and which should be re-stated every year at the beginning of each Committee session; possibly a pledge could also be introduced, recalling the main principles of the Convention;
- A rule should be introduced requiring a **unanimous decisions by the World Heritage Committee** (this may involve an amendment of the Rules of Procedure) in cases where the Committee Members may wish to inscribe on the List a site with a recommendation for non-inscription, and which has not been withdrawn by the State Party ;
- Alternatively, another solution to deal with sites recommended for non-inscription and not withdrawn before the session, could be the introduction of a rule according to which the **decision by the Committee** (unless it decides not to inscribe) **cannot be made during the same session in which the nomination is examined**, and that the nomination should go through a new full evaluation process.

#### 6.B.6 Review of the referral procedure

The Committee in its Decision **42 COM 8** decided to include the review of the referral procedure and its application for examination in the framework of the revision of the *Operational Guidelines* at its 43rd session in 2019.

However, in view of ensuring a holistic approach and consistency with other elements of the process that will undergo changes, the experts considered that the review of the referral procedure should be postponed in order to be done at the same time as the reform of the nomination process. The experts considered it premature and risky to recommend amendments in isolation of a full package of integrated reforms, all of which are interlinked.

#### 6.B.7 Other measures

Among other measures discussed by the experts meeting, the following should be noted:

- Enhance/build the capacities for States Parties, especially underrepresented countries, and other stakeholders concerning all stages/elements of the nomination process, namely the establishment and revision of Tentative Lists and the preparation of nominations, including by organizing training courses involving heritage practitioners from several countries, on the model of the African World Heritage Fund's Nomination Training Courses;
- Further involvement of more regional experts by Advisory Bodies and enhancement of their regional networks;
- In some exceptional cases, a possible examination of an option of seeking a second opinion concerning the recommendation of the Advisory Bodies, – where this could help avoid Committee decisions deviating from Advisory Bodies advice;
- In addition to a Code of Conduct for Committee members, possible development of similar Codes or Standards of Conduct could also possibly be developed for the other main stakeholders in the process, i.e. the Advisory Bodies, based on the

overarching principles identified above, in addition to their already existing own Standards of Conduct/ethics. As far as the World Heritage Centre is concerned, its staff is already bound by the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, however an option to create some specific rules of conduct might also be envisioned;

- Making available more comprehensive description of the Advisory Bodies' methodology for assessing criteria, for selection of experts visiting the sites and for the regional representation of the experts in their Panels.

## Reflection meeting on reforming the World Heritage Nomination Process

Tunis, 23-25 January 2019

With the financial support of the governments of Australia and Tunisia

### Agenda

#### TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2019

Arrival of the experts and registration at the Ramada Palace in Gammarth, Tunis

#### WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 2019

##### 09.00 – 09.30 **Welcome speeches**

Mr. Mohamed Zine el Abidine, Minister of Cultural Affairs of Tunisia

Ms Mechtild Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO

##### 09.30–10.30 **Session 01. Introductory Session**

Introduction by the World Heritage Centre

Background information and general issues (incl. Recommendation of UNESCO Internal Oversight Service, World Heritage Committee decisions, outcomes of Ad-hoc working group discussion etc.)

Objectives of the meeting

Questions & Answers

##### 10.30–10.50 **Coffee break**

##### 10.50–12.50 **Session 2a. Establishing a common ground of work**

Presentation of the results of the online survey

Debate: Experts on the issues at stake and expectations

##### 12.50–13.00 **Session 2b. Preparation of group work in Session 3**

##### 13.00-14.30 **Lunch break**

##### 14.30–15.30 **Session 3. Group work on SWOT<sup>3</sup> analysis of the current nomination process**

##### 15.30–16.30 **Session 4a. Plenary: Presentation of the results of the SWOT analysis by the rapporteurs of each of the four groups.**

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<sup>3</sup> SWOT = Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

16.30-16.50 **Coffee break**

17.00-18.00 **Session 4b. Plenary: Conclusions of the SWOT analysis exercise**

Discussion and defining of principles that should guide the reform

Identifying the aspects that need to be reformed and defining the themes for group work in session 5, on the basis of the results of the online survey and the outcomes of the SWOT analysis.

#### **THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2019**

09.00 – 11.00 **Session 5. Group work on the themes identified in session 4 (four working groups)**

11.00–11.20 **Coffee break**

11.20-13.00 **Session 6. Plenary: Presentation of the results of the group work by the rapporteurs of each of the four groups**

**General discussion. Establishing a common agreed approach**

13.00-14.30 **Lunch break**

14.30-16.00 **Session 7. Continuation of the discussion**

16.00-16.20 **Coffee break**

16.20–18.00 **Session 8. Discussion of draft recommendations by the experts**

#### **FRIDAY 25 JANUARY 2019**

09.00–10.30 **Session 9. Finalization of the recommendations**

10.30–10.50 **Coffee break**

10.50-13.00 **Session 9. Finalization of the recommendations (continued)**

13.00 **Departure of participants**

**Reflection meeting on reforming the World Heritage Nomination Process**  
**23-25 January 2019**  
**Tunis, Tunisia**

**Provisional List of participants**

**Experts from World Heritage Committee members and States Parties**

Australia

**Ms Susanna Lindeman**

World Heritage Coordinator  
Parks & Wildlife  
Finland

**Mr Lyu Zhou**

Director  
Tsinghua University  
China

**Mr Oliver Martin**

Head of Section  
Federal Office of Culture  
Switzerland

**Mr Albino Jopela**

([Mozambique](#))  
Head of Programmes  
African World Heritage Fund  
South Africa

**Mr Tamás Fejérdy**

Doctor of Liberal Arts  
Architect, conservator  
Hungary

**Mr Pascall Taruvinga**

([Zimbabwe](#))  
Chief Heritage Officer  
Robben Island Museum  
South Africa

**Ms Špela Spanžel**

World Heritage Focal Point  
Cultural Heritage Directorate  
Ministry of Culture  
Slovenia

**Ms Haifaa Abdulhalim**

Coordinator  
ARC-WH/IUCN Tab'e'a Programme  
Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage  
(ARC-WH)  
Bahrain

**Mr Nelson Acosta Reyes**

Architect  
Consejo Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural  
Cuba

**M. Faouzi MAHFOUDH**

Directeur Général de l'Institut National du  
Patrimoine  
Tunisia

**Ms Debra Kay Palmer**

Director of World Heritage and  
Cultural Conventions  
Ministry of Culture, Gender,  
Entertainment and Sport  
Kingston  
Jamaica

**Ms Ilse Wurst**

Director Statutory Planning & Heritage  
National Capital Authority

### **Other experts**

**Mr Souayibou Varissou**

Director  
African World Heritage Fund (AWHF)  
UNESCO Category 2 Centre  
South Africa

**Mr Vinod B. Mathur**

Dean, Faculty of Wildlife Sciences  
Wildlife Institute of India  
India

**Ms Chrissy Grant**

Indigenous Issues Expert  
Australia

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