



**WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
PARALLEL EVENT  
ON  
WORLD HERITAGE IN AFRICA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**THE JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION ON WORLD HERITAGE IN AFRICA  
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Adopted on the occasion of the meeting of African experts on heritage management held in Johannesburg from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2002, as a parallel event to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

We, the delegates representing the sub-Saharan States Parties to the World Heritage Convention and partners listed below, gathered in Johannesburg, South Africa, on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to discuss World Heritage in Africa and Sustainable Development,

*Being conscious* that the year 2002 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage; and

*Being conscious*, also, that the United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2002 as the United Nations' Year of Cultural Heritage,

*Being aware* of the commitment by African heads of states and government to eradicate poverty among their people through the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD),

*Hereby declare* as follows:

1. We recognise that:

- the management of heritage is an important tool for the promotion of sustainable development and poverty alleviation;
- World Heritage status can make a distinct and valuable contribution to the sustainable development in African countries, both because of the recognition given to the world-class status of the sites in question, and also as a typology and best practice for heritage management generally; and
- considerable progress has been made by UNESCO in taking account of the link between nature and culture in all aspects of heritage management during the designation of sites.
- NEPAD also recognises the importance of culture in sustainable development.



2. We regret to note that:

- African heritage is still underrepresented on the World Heritage List;
- many African countries still do not have a single site on the World Heritage List;
- World Heritage sites in Africa form almost 25% of the World Heritage sites in danger and face threats arising from war, environmental degradation, poor or even lack of management among others;
- African countries continue to face severe hurdles and constraints arising from a lack of resources and capacity in their quest to obtain World Heritage designation for sites;
- designated sites often lack proper management plans; and
- policy, legal and institutional frameworks in many African countries are not yet sufficiently adapted to the reality of the central role of communities in the management of heritage and, therefore, continue to pose constraints in the involvement of local communities in the management of local heritage.

3. We urge African governments and regional organisations to:

- reaffirm political commitment to the promotion of heritage management through acceding to the Convention, and ensuring the implementation of its provisions;
- as a priority, reinforce efforts to tackle the issues threatening heritage sites and heritage management in Africa, including wars, famine, disease, and lack of education, and to introduce integrated management frameworks which can provide holistic solutions to heritage management;
- embark on an active programme of policy, legal and institutional reform with a view to placing communities at the centre of heritage management, and to introducing legal and policy frameworks which link nature and culture; and
- strengthen structures and procedures for the management of recognition and cross-border heritage.

4. We resolve to:

- intensify efforts to raise awareness among decision makers in-and-out of Africa of the crucial role of heritage in promoting sustainable development and poverty alleviation, and of the need to devote resources to heritage management;
- work towards increasing the number and diversity of African sites on the World Heritage List, as well as the range of African countries with World Heritage sites;
- continue to highlight and promote the recognition of the inextricable link between nature and culture, and of the crucial role of local communities in the management and ownership of heritage, and we shall continually explore



ways to empower communities to remain at the centre of heritage management;

- explore and give effect to heritage management systems that acknowledge the uniqueness of the African context;
- give effect to traditional heritage management and knowledge systems that sustain heritage in a community context; and
- forge networks and partnerships among African institutions and like-minded institutions abroad in order better to promote the management of African heritage.

5. We urge development partners to:

- consider the level and nature of funding available for African heritage management, and in light of the acute need to improve technical and administrative capacity for heritage management in African countries;
- continue to support through financial, technical and administrative measures the efforts of African countries to achieve World Heritage status for sites; and
- support efforts to link heritage, culture and sustainable development and to review the conditions and procedures of funding to ensure that such linkages are appropriately provided for in the funding frameworks.

6. We call upon heritage organisations at national and international levels to implement the recommendations of this declaration in the interest of furthering the sustainable development of the heritage of Africa with specific reference to its role in alleviating poverty and stimulating economic development.

Done in Johannesburg, South Africa, on the twenty-third day of August 2002.

Delegates representing the sub-Saharan States Parties to the World Heritage Convention and partners gathered in Johannesburg:

Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

and:

Ecole du Patrimoine Africain (EPA), International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), The World Conservation Union (IUCN), Nordic World Heritage Foundation (NWHF)