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World Heritage Convention

Convention du
patrimoine mondial

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

**ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR L'ÉDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE**

**TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**VINGT-QUATRIÈME SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES ÉTATS
PARTIES À LA CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION
DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL CULTUREL ET NATUREL**

**Paris, Siège de l'UNESCO / Paris, UNESCO Headquarters
22-23 novembre 2023 / 22-23 November 2023**

**DRAFT SUMMARY RECORDS
PROJET DE RÉSUMÉ DES INTERVENTIONS**

The text contained in the present document is a transcription of the debates of the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties (UNESCO, 2023). It is therefore to be considered as a verbatim and will need to be approved at the opening of the next session of the General Assembly.

Le texte contenu dans le présent document est une transcription des débats de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale des États parties (UNESCO, 2023). Il doit donc être considéré comme un verbatim qui sera approuvé au début de la prochaine session de l'Assemblée générale.

N.B: *The languages used for the verbatim of the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties are English and French.*

Les langues utilisées pour le verbatim de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale des États parties sont l'anglais et le français.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening of the session <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1A. Opening of the General Assembly 1B. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur of the General Assembly 2. Adoption of the Agenda and of the Timetable of the 24th session of the General Assembly <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2A. Adoption of the Agenda of the 24th session of the General Assembly 2B. Adoption of the Timetable of the 24th session of the General Assembly 3. Report of the Rapporteur of the 23rd session of the General Assembly (UNESCO, 2021) 4. Report of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee on the activities of the World Heritage Committee 5. Elections to the World Heritage Committee 6. Examination of the statement of accounts of the World Heritage Fund, including the status of the contributions of States Parties 7. Determination of the amount of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the World Heritage Convention 8. Updating of the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage 9. Proposed Revisions to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention 10. Closure of the session | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ouverture de la session <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1A. Ouverture de l'Assemblée générale 1B. Élection du Président, des Vice-Présidents et du Rapporteur de l'Assemblée générale 2. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2A. Adoption de l'ordre du jour de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale 2B. Adoption du calendrier de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale 3. Rapport du Rapporteur de la 23^e session de l'Assemblée générale (UNESCO, 2021) 4. Rapport du Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial sur les activités du Comité du patrimoine mondial 5. Élections au Comité du patrimoine mondial 6. Examen de l'état des comptes du Fonds du patrimoine mondial, y compris du statut des contributions des États parties 7. Fixation du montant des contributions au Fonds du patrimoine mondial conformément aux dispositions de l'article 16 de la Convention du patrimoine mondial 8. Mise à jour du Document d'orientation sur l'action climatique pour le patrimoine mondial 9. Proposition de révision du Règlement intérieur de l'Assemblée générale des États Parties à la Convention 10. Clôture de la session |
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FIRST DAY

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

FIRST MEETING

10:06 am – 1:10 pm

Chairperson:

H.E. Ms. Paula Alves de Souza

(Brazil)

PREMIER JOUR

Mercredi 22 novembre 2023

PREMIÈRE RÉUNION

10h06 – 13h10

Présidente :

S.E. Mme Paula Alves de Souza

(Brésil)

1. OPENING SESSION // SESSION D'OUVERTURE

1A. OPENING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // OUVERTURE DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

No document // Aucun document

No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution

The Secretariat:

Good morning to everyone in this room, we are ready to start. I would like to give the floor to the Assistant Director General for culture for his welcome remarks. You have the floor.

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

Excellences,

Distingués délégués,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Chers ambassadeurs,

Je souhaite chaleureusement la bienvenue à la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale des États parties à la Convention du patrimoine mondial à toutes les délégations et aux Organisations consultatives. À cette occasion, je tiens à exprimer la profonde gratitude de l'UNESCO à chacun d'entre vous représentant les 195 États parties à la Convention du patrimoine mondial pour votre engagement continu et constant en faveur de la préservation et de la protection de notre patrimoine culturel et naturel qui est sans doute le plus précieux.

Cependant, comme l'ont montré les riches discussions lors de la 42^e session de la Conférence générale, en particulier lors du débat de politique générale et de la Commission Culture, notre patrimoine inestimable fait face à d'importants défis depuis plusieurs années. Ces défis, allant de la destruction intentionnelle du patrimoine culturel lors de conflits armés à des actions anthropogéniques non durables entraînant la perte de biodiversité et à l'augmentation de la fréquence de catastrophes naturelles dévastatrices exacerbées par le changement climatique, ont augmenté en nombre et en gravité. La nécessité de renforcer la coopération internationale en réponse à ces défis est plus cruciale que jamais.

En réaction à ces menaces et défis mondiaux, l'UNESCO a intensifié ses efforts en développant ou en collaborant à des initiatives concrètes au cours des dernières années. Vous connaissez tous notre initiative et programme phare Faire revivre l'esprit de Mossoul, axé sur la revitalisation des institutions éducatives et culturelles et bien sûr à la réhabilitation du patrimoine culturel pour promouvoir la tolérance. Ceci n'est qu'un exemple.

Je tiens également à souligner l'engagement de l'UNESCO à aborder une question cruciale de notre époque, à savoir le changement climatique, qui affecte tous les domaines de notre expertise. Dans ce contexte, le Document d'orientation sur l'action climatique pour le patrimoine mondial vous sera présenté pour adoption au cours de cette session.

Je comprends que ce document a suscité de longs et riches débats au cours des deux dernières années, mais qu'un texte consensuel a pu être obtenu par un groupe de travail non limité de tous les États parties à la convention et nous ne pouvons que nous réjouir vivement.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While the success of the World Heritage Convention is undeniable, safeguarding world heritage poses challenges for all of us. It requires us to uphold the obligations and highest standards that accompany this success, including credibility, ethics, transparency, cooperation, dialogue, and good governance. The importance of absolute credibility at all stages of the World Heritage Convention processes has been emphasized by many, and it is a shared responsibility primarily entrusted to the States Parties. The establishment of an Open-ended Working Group during the last session in Riyadh demonstrates the World Heritage Committee's commitment to addressing issues related to credibility, balance, and representativity of the World Heritage List.

[interpretation from Spanish] Dear Colleagues, before you embark on your deliberations, allow me first to extend my sincere thanks and congratulations to his Excellency. Mr Tebogo Seokolo (South Africa) who acted as Chairperson of our last session. Allow me also to extend my congratulations to the outgoing members of the World Heritage Committee. Your actions and reflections have significantly contributed to the protection and preservation of World Heritage.

To the members who will be elected today, I want to emphasize the weighty responsibility that awaits you. Safeguarding World Heritage is not merely about protecting sites of Outstanding Universal Value; it is about protecting a legacy. This immense responsibility will make you accountable to future generations.

I wish you every success in your deliberations.

Thank you for your attention. *[end of interpretation from Spanish]*

1B. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND RAPPORTEUR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // ÉLECTION DU PRÉSIDENT, DES VICE-PRÉSIDENTS ET DU RAPPORTEUR DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

Document: WHC/23/24.GA/INF.1B

No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de Résolution

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Assistant Director General. As per Rule 3 of the Rules of procedure, the General Assembly shall elect a Chairperson, one or more Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur. Information Document INF.1B related to the former Chairpersons and Rapporteurs has been made available.

I understand that the Delegation of Paraguay would like to present a candidature to the post of Chairperson. you have the floor your Excellency.

The Delegation of Paraguay: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. The Delegation of Paraguay would like to nominate the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil, Ms Paula Alves de Souza, who has a lot of experience and I think that we can entrust her to fulfil the role of Chair with every success. Thank you very much, Sir.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, can we consider this proposal unanimously approved?

Thank you very much. H.E. Ms Paula Alves de Souza, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Brazil to UNESCO, is thus declared Chairperson of the 24th session of the General Assembly. Congratulations, Excellency. *[applause]*
I would like to give the floor to Argentina.

The Delegation of Argentina:

Thank you, Mr President. Just that we wanted to support the candidacy of the Ambassador from Brazil. Thank you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. Because I was seeing lots of smiles in the room, I considered it unanimously approved. Her Excellency Ms Paula Alves de Souza, Ambassador and permanent delegate of Brazil to UNESCO is thus declared the Chairperson of the 24th session of the General Assembly. Congratulations, Your Excellency *[applause]*.

Madam Chairperson, allow me to invite you to take place on the podium and join us here. Now, I would like to move to the election of the Vice-chairpersons. Do any States Parties would like to make a proposal in this regard? I understand that we have a proposal from Group I. I see the United States and I see Greece.

The Delegation of Greece:

Thank you, Mr Chair. As Group I, we have the honour to propose the candidature of Norway to the position of the Vice-chair of the Bureau from Group I. Thank you.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We second that nomination on behalf of Group I.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you and this is well noted. I also understand we have a proposal from Group II. Group II, we will come back to you. I understand we have a proposal from Group Va. Your Excellency from Angola.

The Delegation of Angola:

Mr Chair, Group Va proposes Rwanda as Vice-chair. Thank you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you. This is well noted. I also understand we have a proposal from Group Vb. Your Excellency from Kuwait.

The Delegation of Kuwait:

Thank you, Ambassador, good morning to all colleagues. Group Vb would like to nominate His Excellency Ambassador of Iraq to be the Vice-chair. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Ambassador. I understand from Group II that you will come back to us on this later. I think we have elected already. Actually, China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Are we supposed to propose the Rapporteur now? Okay.

[Interpretation from Chinese] Group IV nominates the Councillor and Deputy permanent delegate from the permanent delegation of Mongolia, Ms Uyanga Sukhbaatar, to be the Rapporteur. Thank you. *[end of interpretation from Chinese]*

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, China. Of course, I was going to also start the election of the Rapporteur and I thank you for this proposal. For the Vice-chairperson, we have already a proposal to have Norway, Rwanda and Iraq and we have a proposal as Rapporteur for Ms Uyanga Sukhbaatar from Mongolia. Congratulations to all the elected members of the Bureau while we are still waiting for Group II to revert to us. Thank you.

Now, I would like to invite Madame Uyanga Sukhbaatar to take place to join us on the podium. We can give her a round of applause *[applause]*.

Dear delegates, Item 1 of the Agenda is closed. I will now give the floor to the Chairperson of the General Assembly who will proceed with the examination of Item 2 of the Agenda. Madame Chairperson.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE TIMETABLE OF THE 24TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // ADOPTION DE L'ORDRE DU JOUR ET DU CALENDRIER DE LA 24^E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

2A. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE 24TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // ADOPTION DE L'ORDRE DU JOUR DE LA 24^E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

Documents: WHC/23/24.GA/2A

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.2A.Rev

Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution : 24 GA 2A

The Chairperson:

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Representatives of States Parties,

First of all, I would like to sincerely express all my gratitude to you for your trust in electing me as your Chairperson for this session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention.

This is the first time that Brazil has the opportunity to chair the World Heritage Assembly and I hope to be able to fulfil Brazil's tradition of dialogue and conciliation. I am also counting on your support to make the discussion as fruitful as possible. We have important points to discuss along the meeting such as the update of the Policy on Climate Action for World Heritage, the election of the new Committee members, the harmonisation of the Rules of Procedure and the analysis of the World Heritage Fund.

These are issues that touch on the Convention's contemporary challenges such as the search for better geographical balance preserving its credibility and advancing its implementation.

I now invite you to adopt the Agenda of the 24th session of the General Assembly, contained in Document 2A that has been distributed to you. I shall now give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre who will present Document 2A. You have the floor.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Merci beaucoup Madame la Présidente.

Distingués délégués, l'ordre du jour de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale a été mis à disposition de tous les États parties le 20 octobre. Il s'agit du document WHC/23/24.GA/2A que vous avez.

Comme vous avez pu le noter, cet ordre du jour inclut les points traditionnels, tels que les rapports du Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial et celui du Rapporteur de la dernière session de l'Assemblée générale, ainsi que les points portant sur les aspects budgétaires.

À la demande de l'Assemblée générale lors de sa 23^e session en 2021, un point spécifique a été ajouté cette année : le point 8 sur la mise à jour du Document d'orientation sur l'action climatique pour le patrimoine mondial, et les résultats du Groupe de travail à composition non limitée établi par l'Assemblée générale à sa dernière session à cet effet.

De plus, dans le cadre de l'effort d'harmonisation des règlements intérieurs des assemblées des sept conventions culturelles, l'Assemblée générale examinera une proposition de révision du Règlement intérieur, basée sur le Règlement intérieur modèle, comme ce fut le cas pour toutes les autres conventions dans le domaine de la culture. Les documents WHC/23/24.GA/9, INF.9 et INF.9.Add contiennent toutes les informations pertinentes à l'examen de ce point, qui a par ailleurs fait l'objet, comme vous le savez d'une réunion d'information et d'échange le 6 novembre dernier, où la plupart d'entre vous étaient présents.

La liste des documents qui se rattachent à chacun des points de l'ordre du jour est disponible dans le document INF.2A.Rev, qui vous a aussi été mis à disposition.

Je vous remercie Madame la Présidente.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. Are there any comments on this provisional Agenda? I see none. Let us proceed then. Please.

La délégation de Géorgie :

Je suis désolée, j'étais sortie de la salle, je suis en retard. Je voudrais présenter de la part du Groupe II la nomination de la Pologne pour la vice-présidence.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. We will come back to this point after we conclude this discussion of the provisional Agenda. Thank you.

Now we invite you to the Draft Resolution **24 GA 2A**, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Resolution proposed.

The Rapporteur:

Madame Chair, I have not received any amendments on the Draft Resolution proposed. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I therefore declare Agenda Item 2A closed. Now, I give the floor again to you, Mr Eloundou, so that we can conclude the question of the Vice-chairs of the Bureau.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Madame Chair. This is just to inform the General Assembly that the Bureau has elected the following Vice-chairpersons: Norway, Poland, Rwanda and Iraq and as Rapporteur Ms Uyanga Sukhbaatar. Now, the Bureau is complete. Thank you.

2B. ADOPTION OF THE TIMETABLE OF THE 24th session OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // ADOPTION DU CALENDRIER DE LA 24^E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

Document: WHC/23/24.GA/2B

Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution : 24 GA 2B

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of States Parties,

We need now to adopt the Provisional Timetable of the 24th session of the General Assembly contained in Document 2B.

Allow me to precise that, to allow a smooth proceeding of the debates, a list of speakers will be established for the debates on each item and the time for interventions will be limited to 3 minutes for States Parties and 2 minutes for Observers. In this regard, please note that I am, as Chairperson, empowered to interrupt any speaker exceeding the recommended time limit.

Dear colleagues, I would also like to inform you that the details of the conduct of the elections to the World Heritage Committee will be presented to you by the World Heritage Centre at the time of the examination of Item 5 of the Agenda concerning the elections.

I therefore invite you to review and adopt the Timetable for 24th session of the General Assembly that will now be presented to you by the Director of the World Heritage Centre. Please, you have the floor.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Merci Madame la Présidente.

Le calendrier détaillé des travaux de la 24^e session de l'Assemblée générale a été mis à disposition de tous les États parties le 20 octobre. Il s'agit du document WHC/23/24.GA/2B.

Comme vous l'avez constaté dans ce document, la 24^e session se déroulera sur 2 jours, les 22 et 23 novembre, en Salle XI ce matin uniquement, puis en Salle II à partir de cet après-midi et jusqu'à demain soir.

Ce matin, vous examinerez notamment les rapports du Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial et du Rapporteur de la dernière session de l'Assemblée générale.

Le reste de la journée sera dédié aux élections des 9 nouveaux membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, avant de passer aux points de l'ordre du jour concernant les questions budgétaires. Notez que les élections auront lieu dans les salles III et IV, qui jouxtent la Salle II. Les résultats de chaque tour seront annoncés en plénière par la Présidente en Salle II.

Demain, 23 novembre, vous examinerez les points restants.

L'ordre d'examen des points pourrait toutefois être amené à changer en fonction de l'avancement du processus électoral. Des annonces seront effectuées pour vous tenir informés le cas échéant et en avance. En effet, comme indiqué dans le document 2B, si les élections se terminent plus tôt que prévu, l'Assemblée générale pourrait souhaiter avancer à aujourd'hui l'examen des points prévus après le point 5.

Je tiens également à souligner que la 19^e session extraordinaire du Comité aura lieu demain 23 novembre de 14h à 15h en Salle IV. Cette session, dédiée aux membres du Comité restants en poste et ceux qui seront élus cet après-midi, a pour but de définir les dates et lieu de la 46^e session du Comité du patrimoine mondial et d'en élire le Bureau.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. Are there any comments on this Provisional Agenda? I see none. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Resolution **24 GA 2B**, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Resolution proposed.

The Rapporteur:

Thank you, Madame Chair. I have not received any amendments for the proposed item. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I therefore declare Draft Resolution **24 GA 2B** adopted as not amended.

3. REPORT OF THE RAPPORTEUR OF THE 23RD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNESCO, 2021) // RAPPORT DU RAPPORTEUR DE LA 23^E SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE (UNESCO, 2021)

No document // Aucun document

No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution

The Chairperson:

Dear colleagues,

We are now getting to Item 3 of our Agenda, concerning the Report of the Rapporteur of the 23rd session of the General Assembly, which has been held at UNESCO Headquarters in 2021.

As you will all remember, the Rapporteur of our 23rd session was Mr Gytis Marcinkevičius from Lithuania who successfully assumed this important task. Mr Marcinkevičius can unfortunately not be with us today due to his current position, but he has provided us with a video message to present his Report of the last session of the General Assembly.

Please, can the Secretariat launch the video of Mr Marcinkevičius? Thank you.

The Rapporteur of the 23rd session (Mr Gytis Marcinkevičius, Lithuania): *[video]*

I would love to be with you there in Paris but the reality decided that I should be addressing you through the screen. Please, allow me to deliver my oral report to the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. The report goes like this.

I would like to thank the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention for having elected me as a Rapporteur of the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. I was and still am very honoured by the trust and grateful for the experience.

The 23rd session of the General Assembly was held from 24 to 26 November 2021 at the UNESCO Headquarters. It was notably the first meeting of a governing body of the World Heritage Convention to be held in presentia since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

His Excellency Ambassador Tebogo Seokolo, Permanent Delegate of South Africa to UNESCO, was elected Chairperson of the session, while Germany, Honduras, Syrian Arab Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran were elected Vice-Chairpersons.

11 Resolutions were adopted concerning the financial, administrative and strategic aspects of the Convention.

12 new members were elected to the World Heritage Committee for a four-year term, that is, until 2025: Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Zambia.

The session focused on various financial matters including contributions to the World Heritage Fund, on the follow-up to the Global Strategy, on the follow-up to the elaboration of a Code of Conduct, a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text, on the future of the World Heritage Convention, and on the Policy Document on Climate Action.

Within the field of financial matters, the General Assembly examined the determination of the amount of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the World Heritage Convention. The General Assembly expressed its concern about the financial difficulties facing the World Heritage Fund, and recalled that the payment of compulsory and voluntary assessed contributions is a legal obligation incumbent on all States Parties. I would like to recall that the percentage for calculating the amount of contributions to be paid by States Parties to the World Heritage Fund for the financial period 2021-2022 has been set at 1% of their contributions to the regular budget of UNESCO.

The General Assembly took note of possible measures concerning arrears and the possible ways for their implementation, including the difficulties their implementation would represent. It was agreed that the Secretariat would follow up on this matter under the appropriate Agenda items.

The General Assembly also recommended to the States Parties, when putting forward nominations to the World Heritage List, to contribute to financially sustain the system of their evaluation by the Advisory Bodies through the

mechanism for making voluntary contributions to a dedicated sub-account of the World Heritage Fund, with no prejudice to the payment of annual contributions.

At its 22nd session, the General Assembly decided to establish an Open-ended working group of States Parties with the mandate to develop a Code of Conduct, or Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text, under the leadership of His Excellency Ambassador Ghazi Gherairi, Permanent Delegate of Tunisia to UNESCO.

The outcome of the Group was the draft "Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage", which was endorsed by the General Assembly, recalling that the Declaration is not legally binding, but that stakeholders are called upon to honour its contents. This step has been identified as a positive milestone for the implementation of the Convention.

With regard to the future of the World Heritage Convention, the General Assembly welcomed the continued progress in the performance of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan and encouraged the World Heritage Centre, with the support of the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies, to continue, within the available resources, the activities that had been launched to implement the Plan.

The General Assembly took note of the status of preparation of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention and invited States Parties to mark this anniversary in collaboration with UNESCO.

The General Assembly recognized the importance of undertaking a reflection on how to strengthen the involvement and contribution of local communities and NGOs, taking into consideration the diversity of the expertise views, transparency and dialogue with the Advisory Bodies, to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of States Parties.

The World Heritage Committee had endorsed the draft "Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage". The General Assembly at its 23rd session took note of the Policy Document, as endorsed by the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, and decided to establish an Open-ended Working Group assisted by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, with the mandate to review and develop its final version, as well as proposals for its effective implementation, for consideration by the current 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties. I would like to recall the recommendation of the General Assembly that the mandate of the panel of experts requested through Decision **44 COM 7C** included a consideration of the revisions to the Policy Document and its unresolved policy matters, as well as reporting to the Open-ended Working Group.

I would like to express special thanks to the participants of the 23rd session of the General Assembly and to the Secretariat for its support.

Let me also wish you the best of success and very important breakthrough decisions during the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much for this comprehensive presentation.

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to congratulate you, Mr Marcinkevičius for your hard work.

I propose that the Committee takes note of the Report by the Rapporteur of the 23rd session.

Is there any comment or question on the report of the last session?

I see none. I propose that the Committee takes note of the report by the Rapporteur of the 23rd session if there is no objection it is so decided ^[gave]. I therefore declare Agenda Item 3 closed.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE // RAPPORT DU PRÉSIDENT DU COMITÉ DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL SUR LES ACTIVITÉS DU COMITÉ DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

No document // Aucun document

No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution

The Chairperson:

Dear colleagues,

We shall now examine Item 4 of our Agenda which concern the Report of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee on the activities of the World Heritage Committee.

To this end, I have the pleasure to turn to Dr Abdulelah AlTokhais, Chairperson of the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee held from 10 to 25 September 2023 in Riyadh. I take this opportunity to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the remarkable organization of this session and for its generosity.

In his capacity as Chairperson, Dr Abdulelah AlTokhais will now present the Report of the World Heritage Committee on its activities since the 23rd session of the General Assembly in 2021. This report is presented in Document 42C/REP/19, as it constitutes a Report which the UNESCO General Conference has examined very recently.

Please, allow me to indicate that this report does not require any decision on the part of the General Assembly, which is only taking note of it.

Your Excellency, you have the floor to present the report, please.

The Chairperson of the extended 45th session (Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia):

Thank you very much, Chairperson, for giving me the floor.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Dear friends,

I am very honoured be with you on the occasion of the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. I am pleased to address this Assembly and present my report in my capacity of Chairperson of the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee.

I will now present my report on the main activities and decisions taken by the Committee since the 23rd session of the General Assembly, which was held in 2021. This report is based on the Document 42C/REP19 which has been presented to the General Conference.

As of 2023, there are 195 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. Indeed, on 18 May 2023, Tuvalu became the 195th State Party to the Convention. With this new ratification, the UNESCO World Heritage Convention nears universal recognition, as one of the most ratified legal instruments in the world.

Dear colleagues,

As you know the present session of the General Assembly will elect 9 new members to the World Heritage Committee. In this regard, I would like to thank the 9 outgoing members – Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Thailand – and congratulate them for their service on the Committee and support in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Following a decision by the Bureau of the Committee on 21 April 2022 to postpone the 45th session of the Committee, the World Heritage Committee held its 17th extraordinary session in December 2022 and, considering that the conditions to hold its 45th session in 2022, were not met, subsequently decided to suspend Rule 2.1 of its Rules of Procedure for the 2022 ordinary session. It also decided to meet again in extraordinary session in the course of January 2023 to consider the provisional Agenda of its 45th session, among other matters. Hence, there has been only one ordinary session of the Committee since the last General Assembly in 2021.

During the 18th extraordinary session in January 2023, the World Heritage Committee decided to hold its extended 45th session in presentia from 10 to 25 September 2023 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report of the World Heritage Committee to the General Conference is structured around the 5 Strategic Objectives and I am therefore happy to recall that:

Regarding Credibility of the World Heritage List, a reflection has taken place notably concerning the nomination process. Credibility of the List which counts now 1,199 properties located in 168 States Parties is of the utmost importance. During the 18th extraordinary session in January 2023, 3 cultural sites were simultaneously on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, while during the extended 45th session of the Committee, 42 properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List (33 cultural, 9 natural) and 5 extensions of inscribed properties were approved. It should be noted that during the 18th extraordinary session in January 2023, the Committee had decided by consensus to lift the moratorium on the evaluation of sites of memory associated with recent conflicts, making way for their nominations to the World Heritage List to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. 3 such sites were inscribed on the World Heritage List during the extended 45th session.

Concerning effective Conservation of the World Heritage properties, it is to be noted that a total of 263 State of conservation reports, including 53 reports of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, were examined during the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee last September. These reports allowed for in-depth debates and considerable reflection on conservation matters which are the core of the World Heritage Convention. Since the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties in 2021, 5 properties have

been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and one property, the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi, in Uganda, has been removed from it. I wish to reiterate my heartfelt congratulations to Uganda for this achievement.

The promotion and development of effective Capacity-Building in States Parties was a major subject of our discussions. Over the past biennium, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in close cooperation with States Parties and World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres, have undertaken a number of activities which contributed directly to the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy. An independent results-based evaluation of the outcomes of the Strategy, based on close consultation and a participatory, transparent, and inclusive process with the States Parties and other capacity-building stakeholders and beneficiaries, has been examined by the Committee at its extended 45th session. During this session, the Committee decided to request the World Heritage Centre, in cooperation with ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS, to develop a new World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy for the decade 2025-2035.

With regard to Awareness raising and communication, it should be noted that in 2022, the visits to the World Heritage Centre website represented 39% of the total UNESCO page views, with an average of over 100,000 page views per day. Social media is a significant part of the communication and outreach activities of the Secretariat, with Twitter now X, Facebook and Instagram being used as platforms for disseminating information about World Heritage news, activities, competitions, calls for proposals, and capacity-building. Moreover, articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published in response to requests by numerous national and international well-known media.

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to mention also that during the last session, the World Heritage Committee discussed other key activities related to World Heritage.

The Committee had discussions regarding Governance, notably through the examination of the recommendations of its ad-hoc Working Group which has been meeting regularly since 2015. At its extended 45th session, the Committee decided to transfer the mandate of the *ad hoc* Working Group to an Open-ended Working Group, which will have also to consider how to start a fundamental reflection on the operations of the World Heritage Convention. The Committee will review the outcomes of this Open-ended Working Group at its 46th session.

Regarding the threat represented by climate change to World Heritage properties, I also would like to add that within the framework of the updating of the "Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage", the Panel of experts called for by the Committee at its extended 44th Session in 2021 has successfully met in March/April 2022. I understand that the work of the Panel has been greatly appreciated and taken into account by the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention established by the General Assembly at its last session, with the mandate to develop the final version of the Policy Document, which will be considered by the present General Assembly. I understand that a consensual text is being proposed by the Open-ended working group for adoption by this very Assembly and I can only but share my satisfaction to see such an important achievement after so many years.

Dear colleagues,

Before the end of this presentation, I would like to make some general remarks regarding my mandate as Chairperson of the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I was not only honored, but also extremely proud to take part in the overall reflection on the implementation of one of the most important normative instruments in the field of Culture. I was personally very impressed with the commitment of all States Parties, Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat to hold a successful extended 45th session.

During my mandate, I was able to witness the interest raised by World Heritage all around the globe and the commitment of all States Parties to protect and safeguard our common heritage. Heritage is certainly a matter of transmission, but it should be underlined that education for the safeguarding of World Heritage is also a cornerstone in building our future. In this regard, I cannot but insist on the importance of the World Heritage Young Professionals Forum, organized in conjunction with the World Heritage Committee sessions. Indeed, I was personally very impressed to witness the commitment of each and every young professional who actively participated in the Forum organized in Riyadh. This testifies the involvement of the young generation in activities aimed at conservation of natural and cultural properties building on the experience and knowledge of their elder colleagues. Similarly, the Site managers Forum also organized in conjunction to the sessions of the Committee, gives a unique opportunity to exchange and share good practices as well as innovative solutions aimed at continuing to empower World Heritage site managers on the international stage.

I am finally very pleased to note that we also collectively contributed - over the last years – to many improvements. Indeed, a series of actions have been taken to further enhance and facilitate dialogue, communication, transparency and accountability throughout both the Nomination and Reactive Monitoring processes. The members of the Committee also recalled on many occasions the necessity to have a more balanced, credible and representative World Heritage List, with an emphasis on the non-represented or less represented States Parties, notably in Africa. I cannot but concur with this, and I would like to underline once more that if nominations deserve special attention, conservation is and remains at the heart of the Convention.

I thank you for your kind attention.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much Excellency Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais. On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to congratulate you on the excellent results achieved during your presidency.

Dear colleagues, are there any questions from the Assembly on this report? Please, raise your plaque and just leave it so that we can note to the names. Thank you. I would like to ask the Secretariat to read the number of State members listed and as we tell your name, please, put down your plaques. Thank you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Madame chairperson. It is just for us to make sure that we have captured everyone. I will start reading those we have captured and you can put down your plaque. Palestine, Switzerland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Norway, Türkiye, Germany, South Africa, Japan, Colombia, the Netherlands. And then we have Brazil, Estonia, Azerbaijan, Mexico, USA, Mali, Egypt, Paraguay, Uganda, Togo, Lithuania. I think I have already read Colombia after Japan, so you can remove it. And then, we have the Dominican Republic, Ukraine, Vietnam, Kenya, China, Burkina Faso and Qatar. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr Eloundou. Now, we are going to give the floor to the States listed and at the third speaker we will close. We will again come back to you and then we are going to close the list. Thank you. I give the floor to Palestine.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

[Interpretation from Arabic] Good morning to all. Since I am the first speaker on the list, I wanted to congratulate you, Madame Chair, on your appointment as Chair of this session of the General Assembly and I wanted to congratulate the incoming members of the Bureau. My thanks to the Secretariat for all the documents that have been prepared for this Session. They have been prepared in an excellent manner. My thanks are also to the two chairs of the World Heritage Committee, firstly to Her Highness Haifa bint Abdulaziz bin Muhammad bin Abdulaziz bin Ayyaf Al-Mogri and secondly to Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais who successfully conducted our work in Saudi Arabia. I wanted to extend our thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the excellent organization of the session held there. *[end of Interpretation from Arabic]*

And now I will revert to English. I would like to highly appreciate the two fora that have been held in Saudi Arabia, the Youth Forum and the Site Managers Forum. I think that the Site Managers Forum could be extended based on the reactions from the site managers who participated and were very, very positive. Thank you so much and thank you to the Secretariat for its efforts in this regard.

We have noticed that since, let's say several sessions not only of the Committee but also of the General Assembly, we have talked about unbalance and credibility. Credibility of the List and credibility of the World Heritage Committee itself. I am happy that the Committee decided to create the Open-ended Working Group to replace the *ad hoc* Working Group and to add to its mandate something very important, which is how to deal with these two issues: the credibility of the List and the Committee.

As for the List, you notice in the document on this item that the number of properties inscribed in three regions does not even equal to those of one region. This is the real imbalance. You have it on the document, you can look at paragraph 9 and you will see the figures. It is so clear from the List. Here, maybe we need to reflect, but, of course, we will raise within the Working Group the number of files or nominations files to be submitted to the World Heritage. For the moment we have only one file per State Party without any distinction between States Parties who have already 10, 20 or 40 properties on the List.

The second thing is the credibility of the Committee. Regarding the credibility of the Committee, you notice that many, actually nine referrals and seven deferrals became inscriptions. And on this, maybe the future members of the Committee may think about an agreement like what we did in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee. I am concluding here. Maybe the elected members of the Committee and the new elected members of the Committee can think about what we called the "Gentleman Agreement", but now I think that we do not have the right to say "Gentleman Agreement", it is what it is a "Working Agreement". Thank you, Mr Director General.

I would encourage members of the committee to think about establishing a "Working Agreement" that will preserve the credibility of the Committee. And in that case, we would not experience something like what happened last time when we had 9 plus 7 so 16 recommendations for referral and deferral which became inscriptions.

The Chairperson:

I would like to ask you to conclude.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

That is it. Thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Since you were the first speaker, I was just allowing myself to be generous to you, but, please, I ask you to contain yourself to three minutes. Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

La délégation de la Suisse :

Madame la Présidente, nous vous remercions de nous donner la parole en reconnaissance de votre engagement pour la bonne conduite des travaux. Nous tenons, en premier lieu, à remercier le Royaume d'Arabie Saoudite pour avoir hébergé avec bienveillance la dernière session du Comité élargie. Nous félicitons son Président pour l'excellente gestion des discussions et nous le remercions pour son rapport.

Excellences, mesdames, messieurs, la Suisse reste très préoccupée par le fort décalage entre les décisions du Comité et les évaluations professionnelles, notamment s'agissant des inscriptions au patrimoine mondial et sur la Liste en péril. Nous savons bien que certaines déviations des analyses techniques peuvent être constructives et peuvent être justifiées, mais lorsque le Comité s'écarte de 17 recommandations sur 20, il y a un problème.

Ce problème ne réside pas dans une faiblesse de la qualité des évaluations des recommandations, mais dans les fortes pressions politiques pour faire inscrire les biens souvent proposés par les membres du Comité même. Nous observons ainsi une forte prévalence de l'intérêt particulier des États membres sur l'intérêt commun de la crédibilité de la Liste. Le Comité ne peut pas continuer de travailler de cette manière, si nous voulons que le système continue de nous aider de manière efficace et déterminée à préserver notre patrimoine culturel et naturel.

Nous saluons par conséquent la décision du Comité d'élargir les discussions sur les solutions à explorer et les réflexions encore à mener pour améliorer le fonctionnement de la Convention à un Groupe de travail à composition non limitée. La Suisse est prête à s'y engager et à soutenir ce travail par une contribution volontaire.

Deuxièmement, nous aimerions pour l'heure insister sur le plein respect par le Comité de son mandat et aussi surtout de la déclaration de principes que cette même assemblée à accepter il y a deux ans pour je cite : « Souligner les obligations au titre de la Convention et pour définir des principes déontologiques et de bonne conduite ».

Un peu plus tard dans la journée nous élorons les nouveaux membres du Comité. Ceux-ci auront pour tâche d'y représenter les autres États et par leur propre intérêt. Nous soulignons ce point. Nous les appelons donc comme tous les membres du Comité à suivre les règles, les orientations et les principes déontologiques convenus. Je vous remercie.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Sweden the floor. Congratulations on your election as Chair and thank you for the way in which you are conducting this meeting.

Distinguished colleagues, in the last decade we have observed a notable shift in the decisions of the World Heritage Committee concerning inscriptions on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger. This has been reflected in premature inscriptions of nominated properties recommended for deferral or non-inscription. Furthermore, in danger listing in cases where the need was clear has been resisted which contradicts the original intent and spirit of the Convention. The Advisory Bodies form a fundamental part of the World Heritage system and their evaluations provide a basis for well-informed Committee decisions. Nevertheless, their expertise has often been dismissed which may in turn dilute the scientific quality of both inscriptions on the World Heritage List and result in added stress on the state of conservation reporting.

However, on a good note, Sweden anticipates that the new system the preliminary assessment, as a two-step nomination process, will help bridge the gap between the advice of the Advisory Bodies and the Committee decisions. We believe that it will contribute greatly not only to the qualitative nominations but also to the overall credibility of the Convention. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now we are closing the list of speakers. Are there any other Member States would like to take the floor? Please, Mr Eloundou, if you could read the name of the speakers.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Madame Chairperson. I think that the last speakers will be, after Qatar, Saint Vincent, Italy, Jamaica and Nigeria. Thank you, Madame Chair. And India, sorry. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Now that the list is closed, I would like to ask the representative of Czechia. Please.

The Delegation of the Czech Republic:

Thank you, Madame Chair for giving me the floor. Dear colleague, because it is the first time you give me the floor, I would like to congratulate you for your good and experienced leadership of this session. First of all, I would like to thank the Chair of the Committee for the presented report and also thank Saudi Arabia for organizing the 45th extended session and for their great Hospitality.

Let me remind you of the high importance of the Convention for the protection of cultural and natural Heritage around the world. The World Heritage Committee is the body that has the responsibility for the good implementation of this Convention. However, this year, we have once again witnessed how experts' evaluations and recommendations are diametrically opposed both in the case of nominations and state of conservation reports, which are intended to help States Parties ensure better protection of their World Heritage sites. Two years ago, we stated here that it was alarming how the Committee was treating the scientific assessment of its own Advisory Bodies.

Committee members often argue that they are serving the Committee, the body with decision-making powers, but they should not forget that they represent all States Parties to the Convention. The States Parties who have committed themselves to implementing the Convention and to protect cultural and natural heritage and their Outstanding Universal Values. It is therefore their responsibility to make decisions in accordance with the World Heritage Convention.

Unfortunately, the image of a country is more important than setting good management for inscribed properties. In vast majority, all the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies to defer or refer have been revised into inscriptions. A system that is not based on respect for its own rules is not credible. No matter what it concerns, not to mention the properties that symbolically belong to all of us.

The sessions and discussions of the Committee are not only monitored by the diplomatic representations of individual States Parties but above all by experts from all over the world, whose expertise and work to preserve the values of cultural and natural heritage is compromised in the name of results that please the political establishment.

We want to inscribe more and more sites. But in order to appear on this prestigious List, the sites have to meet the criteria and meet the conditions of good governance and management. This is not an easy condition but it is achievable because the Convention has international assistance mechanisms and no country is alone in its difficulties in preparing nominations or in meeting the requirements in the state of conservation report evaluation. There is a whole community of experts.

The Chairperson:

I would like for you to conclude your speech. We do not have the music anymore.

The Delegation of the Czech Republic:

Thank you very much. The List must remain a reference of expertise and good preservation of management otherwise it loses its status. Problems need to be addressed dealing with them and not swept under the carpet. Thank you, Madame.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I would ask again to please limit your interventions to 3 minutes. Thank you. Now, I give the floor to the representative of Norway.

The Delegation of Norway:

Norway would like to congratulate you as elected Chair. We would like to thank the Chair for the report and Saudi Arabia for the excellent management of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. We would also like to thank the Rapporteur, the Advisory Bodies and the dedicated staff at the World Heritage Centre for their continuous effort.

The world is facing immense challenges, the alarming loss of nature and climate change considered the most prominent. World Heritage Sites are instrumental to further strengthen the link between nature and culture. Ensuring effective and sustained protection of World Heritage Sites is crucial for maximizing their value as a part of the solution to tackle this crisis. This is essential if the coming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is to be achieved.

We wish to quote our Director General, Audrey Azoulay: "UNESCO World Heritage sites are some of the most biodiverse places on Earth, and it is our collective duty to protect them." The success of this Convention rests on its scientific nature allowing only sites of Outstanding Universal Values a place on the List. We observe a worrying trend to weaken decisions on conservation issues, nominations and in relation to the no-go policy. We fear that this undermines not only the Convention but also UNESCO. Precedence is built on our decisions. Humanity cannot afford to devalue this unique label of quality.

We take the opportunity to remind us all of the Declaration of Principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage endorsed at the 23rd session of the General Assembly in 2021. In line with ambitions and principles of the Convention, we strongly believe in the Declaration contribution to a more transparent

cooperative and fair decision-making. We look forward to continuing this work to strengthen the Convention within the Open-ended Working Group established at the Committee meeting earlier this year. We wish the expert candidates to the World Heritage Committee all the best in the elections and we thank them for taking on this very important task on behalf of 195 States Parties and our common heritage. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to give the floor to the representative of Türkiye. Ambassador, please.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and congratulations on your appointment. The 1972 World Heritage Convention serves as a beacon for the protection and preservation of our tangible natural and cultural treasures. Türkiye recognizes the imperative of safeguarding these invaluable assets and became a party to the Convention in 1983. As we celebrate the 140th anniversary of this commitment in 2023, it is essential to reflect on the pivotal role this Convention plays in shaping our collective responsibility toward our shared global heritage. Türkiye's unique history and geography provide us a wealth of cultural and natural wonders that resonate across civilizations and eras.

As a long-standing State Party to the Convention, we have tirelessly strived to uphold the principles outlined in this crucial document. Our commitment is not merely a legal obligation but a testament to our dedication to preserving the essence of our common cultural identity for future generations. Currently, Türkiye proudly hosts 21 World Heritage Sites. Türkiye's World Heritage Sites and those on the Tentative List reflect our diverse culture. These sites ranging from ancient archaeological wonders to natural landscapes not only showcase the diversity of our cultural heritage but also underline our unwavering commitment to the ideals of the Convention.

On this occasion, I would also like to congratulate Saudi Arabia on successfully hosting the 45th World Heritage Committee during which two sites from Türkiye were inscribed on the World Heritage List. Whether they are on the World Heritage List or not, our commitment to conserving cultural heritage is irrespective of beliefs. As a recent example, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan inaugurated the Syriac Orthodox Church of St. Ephrem in Istanbul just a month ago. The significance of this event lies in it being the first church open since the proclamation of the Republic.

In the face of contemporary challenges including conflicts threatening the existence of our shared cultural heritage, Türkiye calls for a global responsibility and solidarity pursued universally. The Convention provides us with a framework to address these issues collectively. We must work hand in hand to protect our shared treasures and prevent the irreversible loss of our common heritage.

Distinguished delegates, I would like to remind you that Türkiye stands today as a candidate to the World Heritage Committee for the 2023-2027 term. If entrusted with this responsibility, we pledge to contribute tirelessly to the Committee's vital work in safeguarding global cultural heritage. We will strive to further strengthen the role of the World Heritage Convention in protecting the world cultural heritage and will provide our expertise to help achieve the objectives of the Member States and UNESCO. We will also commit to achieving a more balanced representative List while simultaneously upholding the high standards of the World Heritage concepts.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you a successful meeting that advances our shared commitment to the protection and preservation of our global heritage. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Ambassador. I give the floor to the representative of Germany.

The Delegation of Germany:

Thank you, Ms Chairperson, for giving me the floor. This is the first time Germany is taking the floor. We congratulate you for the excellent leadership of the session. We also would like to thank the Chair for the report and Saudi Arabia for organizing the 45th extended session and the hospitality.

Now with 195 States Parties, the World Heritage Convention is the most successful legal instrument to protect and preserve our common Heritage worldwide. Germany welcomes Tuvalu who joined in May this year. Germany is deeply committed to upholding the credibility and enhancing the balance and representativity of the World Heritage List. To achieve this, we advocate for transparent evaluation process consistently applying criteria in impartial decision-making. We would therefore welcome a comprehensive consideration of the statement of ethical principles adopted at the last General Assembly by all Member States.

Today, we are facing increasing threats to our common heritage combined with decreasing financial resources. It is becoming increasingly challenging to manage protect and preserve our World Heritage Sites. Our new focus, as a global community, should address these challenges through collective implementation of appropriate measures. In this respect, Germany welcomes the extensive joint activities presented during the last World Heritage Committee meeting and the agreement that has been reached on the Policy Document on World Heritage and Climate Change. We believe that the introduction of the new preliminary assessment evaluation procedure can contribute substantially to the credibility and balance of the World Heritage List. It is therefore timely to consider further reforms in this context.

Germany therefore welcomes the latest decision of the World Heritage Committee to transfer the mandate of the *ad hoc* Working Group established in 2014 to an Open-ended Working Group. However, we would like to better understand the working method and who defines the term of reference and the exact timeline of this Open-ended Working Group. Germany is committed to engage with States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in an open dialogue and to actively support the work. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you very much, Madame chairperson. Since it is the first time South Africa is taking the floor, let me join other delegates and congratulate you on your appointment. We have no doubt that you will fulfil your role and responsibility adequately. Chairperson, we would like to also appreciate the work done by the Secretariat in putting together the report summarising the work of the World Heritage Committee since 2021, as well as the outcome of the 45th extended session of the World Heritage Committee. Without going into details of the report, we would like to register sincere gratitude to the government of Saudi Arabia for the exceptional work done in hosting the 45th extended session of the World Heritage Committee after being put on hold in 2022.

Chairperson, though we take note of the summarised report, South Africa has observed that there are other important key outcomes that needs to be emphasised in this report and these include amongst others the decision to strengthen dialogue between States Parties and Advisory Bodies when finalising evaluation reports pertaining to World Heritage Sites. This process will alleviate concerns raised by the Advisory Bodies that their recommendations are being overruled by the Committee.

Secondly, the recommendation that the UNESCO Category 2 Centres present their own reports in future World Heritage Committee sessions and this is in recognition that the work done by these institutions in implementing the 1972 World Heritage Convention is phenomenal and should also be recognised.

The third thing is around the adoption of the Priority Africa Strategy during the extended 45th session and this should be recognised as one of the major decisions.

Fourthly, for Africa, the removal of the in-danger List of the Tombs of Buganda Kings in Kasubi, Uganda, we consider it a major milestone.

Lastly, Chair, considering that 2023 marked the end of our tenure, South Africa recommit itself to protecting and managing cultural and nature heritage of Outstanding Universal Value in a balanced representative and credible way, so that future generations can inherit a rich and diverse World Heritage. I thank you, Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, Madame Chair. First of all, let me congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the Chair of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee for its professional manner of handling our discussion during the session and a comprehensive and excellent report. Also, Japan would like to once again express our warm congratulations for countries which succeeded in new inscriptions, especially African countries and other underrepresented regions which could lead to a more balanced List.

In the Committee, it became very clear that for the practical conservation of the sites we are required to value and respect both the professional technical knowledge provided by the Advisory Bodies and the actual environmental and economic situation in each Member State Party. In this regard, we think that closer communication between Advisory Bodies and States Parties is key and very crucial. We believe that newly established system to enhance dialogue between other Advisory Bodies and States Parties proposed by us and adopted by the Committee will work effectively in the future. Now what we, States Parties, can do to make most of this opportunity is to submit our state of conservation reports by the deadline properly which allow sufficient time to conduct dialogue between the Advisor Bodies and States Parties. Let us keep that line. Thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you. I now give the floor to Colombia.

The Delegation of Colombia: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you, Madame chair. Before anything else, I would just like to congratulate you on your election. Since this a first time we are taking the floor, Colombia recognizes the actions and decisions taken by the international Committee so as to protect all of the properties inscribed on the List. Particularly, we recognize the work done on capacity building and awareness raising and communication efforts, especially with the resources provided by the

funds in trust from Japan and the Netherlands to the World Heritage. We feel that this goes a long way towards ensuring the safeguarding and protection of some of the most vulnerable sites.

We can see this in particular in the Andean region with the Qhapaq Ñan property which will hopefully see progress made very shortly. We think that this work does need to continue. We would like to see it continued and we have been following with interest all of the efforts made to quantify the contribution made by culture to socioeconomic development. We do think that qualitative and quantitative statistics are also of vital importance when it comes to the contribution of heritage in creating jobs and fostering sustainable development. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Chair. Let me start in congratulating you with your election. The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank UNESCO for the clear report on the activities of the World Heritage Committee. We would also like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their excellent hosting of the Committee. In Riyadh, the Committee inscribed the Dutch Royal Eise Eisinga Planetarium on the World Heritage List. This inscription was an important milestone for our Kingdom. We have decided that this inscription will be the last for the European part of our Kingdom. Our Tentative List consists of two sites in the Caribbean Part and in the coming years we will work on the nomination of these sites.

Furthermore, we have presented our candidacy for the Committee for the term 2025-2029 and during our possible mandate of the Committee we will not submit any new files. The motivation for this decision is to support UNESCO's ambition for a representative balanced and credible World Heritage List and to remain neutral. We welcome the decision on having a new Open-ended Working Group. The Netherlands stands ready to be an active member on this Working Group. We share the concerns shared by previous speakers. We are looking forward to fruitful discussion that secures the future of the Convention.

With regard to this Working Group, we have four questions for the Secretariat. First, we would like to know if the Secretariat can share a road map for this Working Group and share the dates of the first meeting. Second, we would like to ask the Secretariat if they can share terms of reference for this Working Group and when it will be shared with the Member States. We know that the Working Group is established by the Committee and we assume it will report back to the Committee. However due to the broad mandate of this Working Group, we would also like to know how the General Assembly will be involved in the follow-up decision-making process and we would like the Secretariat to reflect on that. And my last question is that the Netherlands would like to have some facts and figures to be available for this Open-ended Working Group. We would like to have more insight in the relationship between the number of inscriptions, the endorsement by the evaluation bodies and the imbalance and the representation between the different regions. In our opinion, this would be helpful in the decision-making process in this Working Group and it would be helpful to have the numbers over the last ten years. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to Brazil.

The Delegation of Brazil:

First of all, I would like to congratulate all the incoming members of the Bureau and also to thank the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for his report as well as Saudi Arabia for hosting the last session of the Committee. Brazil would like to take the opportunity to flag some of our priorities.

Our greatest concern at the moment is the need to bring a geographical balance to the Convention. The most obvious element of this imbalance is the World Heritage List. At the last meeting of the World Heritage Committee, we saw one country including three sites on the World Heritage List the same number as all the 33 GRULAC countries combined. With these growing distortions, we note with concern that almost 50% of the sites inscribed on the World Heritage List are on just one continent. But the need to achieve a new geographical balance goes far beyond the World Heritage List. It also implies considering a better geographical balance between the staff of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN. It implies adopting regional perceptions when discussing the status of conservation of the World Heritage Sites as well establishing a comprehensive dialogue when discussing the Agenda of Category II Centres meetings.

Another issue that is of the utmost importance to us is the dialogue between World Heritage and intangible Heritage. This issue has implications for the mechanisms of the two Conventions. And also, for other areas of UNESCO, such as the Historic Cities recommendation and the Routes of Enslaved People.

Finally, we recall the importance of the issue of climate change and World Heritage and welcome the consensus reached with the Open-ended Working Group dedicated to this issue. Brazil believes that the implementation of the due Climate Action and World Heritage Policy should pay particular attention to the principle of equity, bearing in mind that developed countries bear most of the responsibilities for climate change and at the same time most of the World Heritage properties include old factories, mines, industries and other sites which despite having unequivocally contribute to climate change are today celebrated on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to Estonia.

The Delegation of Estonia:

Thank you, Madame Chair. Congratulations on your election. Estonia would like to thank the Centre for the report presented as it is stated in this report that it is one of the most ratified legal instruments in the world with its 195 States Parties. The work done by the Committee testifies to the great interest in the implementation of this Convention. Yet, there is no shortage of crisis and conflicts which continue to affect World Heritage and create challenges for our work.

We understand that it is our code of conduct that Committee members are expected to refrain from presenting nominations during their tenure on the Committee, in order to avoid conflict of interest. Yet, this year, 28% of the nominations to the List were presented by Committee members. While we fully welcome the balanced and representative List, we also expect it to be credible as a global strategy for States.

Since the last General Assembly, we have celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Convention. We have a shared obligation to uphold the credibility, integrity and high professional standards of the Convention and its implementation.

Additionally, we have a question to the Secretariat since this summer we submitted periodic reports for our region. We have a question regarding the future of the periodic reporting system for cultural conventions. We understand that the idea is to align the periodic reporting for recommendations and conventions and to pursue a single global report on cultural policies starting in 2027. As States parties know, the reporting of this Convention alone is a lengthy exercise and we would be grateful to receive more information on this proposed plan to pursue a single global submission deadline for periodic reporting and how it will affect our future work. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to Azerbaijan. Mr Ambassador, please.

The Delegation of Azerbaijan:

Thank you, Madame Chair, for giving Azerbaijan the floor and congratulations for your election. We very much appreciate the detailed and clear report delivered by the Chair of the World Heritage Committee and we would like to thank again the government, the King and the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the excellent organisation of the 45th extended session of the World Heritage Committee which was very fruitful to many of us including Azerbaijan. As you know, two sites, namely Hyrcanian Forests and the Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and "Köç Yolu" Transhumance Route submitted by Azerbaijan have been included on the World Heritage List and one SOC report on the Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace has been examined and approved by the Committee.

Excellencies, as a State Party to the 1972 Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and previous Committee member, the Republic of Azerbaijan with its rich cultural and natural heritage has always been committed to the values and principles of the Convention. In this sense, Azerbaijan has successfully submitted the third National Periodic Report and would like to thank the World Heritage Centre for their cooperation in this regard.

Azerbaijan actively supports programmes and initiatives for the effective conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage in different parts of the world through Azerbaijan's UNESCO funds-in-trust established in 2013. Thanks to this funds-in-trust, important projects in the field of safeguarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been implemented successfully and we are keen to continue assisting the countries in need with capacity-building activities.

Capacity building activities of the World Heritage Centre have a vital meaning in all regions. The decision of the Committee to develop a new World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy for the 2025-2035 decade in cooperation with ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS is highly appreciated. We pay special attention to these activities. Unfortunately, resources and the capacities of the States Parties are not the same. We want to have a balanced and fair geographical representation on the World Heritage List. In this regard Azerbaijan is ready to share its experience for the effective conservation of heritage sites.

The impact of climate change on World Heritage properties is another matter of importance and in this sense the work of the Open-ended Working Group to revise the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage is highly commendable and Azerbaijan not only participated in the Open-ended Working Group but also financially supported its work.

In conclusion, Madame Chair, I would like to inform you that the Republic of Azerbaijan has submitted its candidacy to the World Heritage Committee for the period 2025-2029. As a country who proudly and successfully hosted the 43rd Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2019, Azerbaijan has considerable potential knowledge and technical capabilities in the field related to conservation and protection of Heritage sites, and we would appreciate the valuable support of the Member States extended to the candidate of Azerbaijan. Thank you

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Ambassador. *[Interpretation from Spanish]* I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico. *[end of interpretation from Spanish]*

The Delegation of Mexico: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Madame Chair. Allow me, first of all, to extend my most sincere congratulations for your appointment as a Chair of this Session. We wanted to thank the Chair of the Committee for his report and thank all of the members of the Committee for their work in Riyadh. We also wanted to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their Hospitality during our work there.

We understand that there are various different levels of input from the Advisory Bodies and from the Committee members leading to the inscription. We feel that we need to place our trust in the members of the Committee. We reaffirm to this Assembly our commitment to continue working towards the objectives of our Convention. In particular, we take note of points 10 and 11 concerning the work done in the previous sessions of the Committee.

Having heard the previous speakers, my country also wanted to underscore that we have taken due note of the concerns expressed. Several of which are actually shared by my delegation and have been expressed in the past in the Committee, particularly as concerns the updating of the credibility and balance of the World Heritage List and the in Danger List, as well as the assessment concerning the state of conservation reports. We would like to see broader reflection on the importance that the Advisory Bodies work should be given during the sessions of the Committee.

We would like to call on those countries that have taken the floor to express these concerns and anyone else sharing these concerns to take part in the Open-ended Working Group, as has been described in Paragraph 12 of the report. And please, know that you can count on Mexico to support this most important and invaluable Convention. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, the United States. Madame Ambassador, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Madame Chair and congratulations on your election. Chair, we thank the World Heritage Committee for its report contained in 42C/REP/19. We welcome Tuvalu as the 195th State Party to the Convention. This is another step in the nearly universal recognition of the Convention and the value of cultural and natural heritage anywhere on the planet.

We would like to thank the government of Saudi Arabia for hosting the 45th extended session of the World Heritage Committee. We particularly appreciated the efficient and effective chairmanship of Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais and thank him for his comprehensive report this morning. We were very pleased that the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks were inscribed as a cultural heritage site, bringing our total number of inscriptions in the United States to 25. We were especially pleased that our Ambassador in Riyadh and Glenna Wallace, chief of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe and other members of the American indigenous community most closely associated with Hopewell were able to participate.

With regard to the World Heritage in Danger List and inscriptions on it, we would like to reiterate that this is an important element in the balance between preservation and evolving economic and commercial factors. We voluntarily submitted the Everglades for inscription on the in Danger List several years ago as the area is vast and is also adjacent to very populated and commercial areas with strong pressures for development and construction. We welcome as well the enlisting and inscription of Odessa in January of 2023, and Kyiv and L'viv in September of 2023 on the In-danger List.

The United States has remained a party to the World Heritage Convention even when we withdrew from UNESCO. And we remain committed to working with all members of this Committee. We also continue to cover the cost of a review of our nominations by the expert Advisory Bodies including for the Hopewell nomination and the upcoming Moravian site in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. This is a serial nomination in coordination with Germany and the United Kingdom who are also providing similar compensation.

We echo the concerns of some of the other distinguished delegates here and hope to work with our colleagues across the world to increase balance in the World Heritage List while also avoiding overpolitisation of the process.

We support the reinforcement of expert Advisory Bodies and review and support for countries in ensuring strong nominations of high quality. To this end, we have continued since 2001 to provide over USD40 million in bilateral assistance to help other member states with capacity building and training to develop and maintain cultural heritage.

We are pleased once again to be full members of UNESCO and look forward to working with all of you in the important work of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Ambassador, I now give the floor to representative of Mali.

La délégation du Mali :

Merci Madame la Présidente. Recevez nos très vives et chaleureuses félicitations, vous et l'ensemble de votre Bureau. Nous voudrions rendre hommage à votre prédécesseur S.E. Monsieur l'ambassadeur Tebogo Seokolo de l'Afrique Sud pour avoir conduit avec brio la dernière assemblée des États parties, la 23^e, et nous lui souhaitons bonne chance et bon vent pour la suite de sa carrière. C'est le lieu de remercier très chaleureusement le Secrétariat pour la qualité des documents soumis à notre examen. Permettez-moi d'associer à ces remerciements les Tuvalu et de les féliciter vivement pour leur adhésion à notre Convention contribuant ainsi à l'agrandissement de la belle famille que nous formons.

Mon pays, le Mali, se réjouit de la bonne tenue de la 45^e session élargie du Comité et réitère ses vives félicitations au Royaume d'Arabie Saoudite pour l'hospitalité généreuse dont ont fait l'objet des délégués ayant effectués le déplacement de Riyad au mois de septembre dernier. Cette session demeure historique de par le nombre considérable élevé des participants. La qualité et la sérénité des débats ont aussi permis d'aboutir à des résultats tangibles dans le sens du renforcement de la mise en œuvre de la Convention. L'arrivée du moratoire sur les sites associés aux mémoires de conflits récents a ouvert la voie à l'inscription des sites du génocide rwandais portant ainsi la présence de l'Afrique sur la liste à 103 biens inscrits. Il nous faut donc absolument continuer à encourager cette lancée pour parvenir à une Liste du patrimoine mondial équilibrée, représentative et crédible.

Toutefois, inscrire un bien n'est pas une fin en soi. Il faudra conserver sa vie. C'est là tout le défi qui se pose aux États africains dans un contexte de crise et d'exigences dues au développement durable. L'exemple des tombeaux des rois du Buganda retiré de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril montre, si besoin en était, que de par la synergie des actions les résultats les plus inespérés peuvent être obtenus. Nous encourageons également la collaboration entre le Secrétariat et les membres pour le mécanisme du suivi renforcé.

Le Mali dans ce cadre travaille d'arrache-pied à faire des cas de Tombouctou et du tombeau des Askia des exemples réussis. Pour ce faire, il importe de maintenir et renforcer l'action de l'UNESCO en matière de renforcement des capacités des États parties. À cet effet, le Mali se félicite de la décision de la dernière session demandant au Comité d'élaborer une nouvelle stratégie du patrimoine mondial pour le renforcement des capacités pour la décennie 2025-2035 en coopération avec l'ICCROM, l'UICN et ICOMOS.

Sans anticiper sur les propositions qui seront soumises aux États parties, nous recommandons que l'accent soit mis sur la formation et l'incitation des jeunes au thème du patrimoine en Afrique. Il nous fera concevoir en Afrique le patrimoine comme un véritable moteur du développement économique et social et travailler à la mise en place de mécanisme d'exploitation qui convienne tout à fait. Il nous faudra de même voix, au-delà de sa beauté et de son exotisme, promouvoir la valeur économique qu'il renferme.

Bien évidemment, la gestion doit s'accommoder des exigences d'un développement durable sur les orientations pour l'action climatique pour le patrimoine mondial dont nous soutenons la mise à jour ici proposée, lors de cette session. Je vous remercie.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Madame Chair. Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your elections. My delegation extends congratulations to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the successful hosting of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I thank the chairperson, Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais, for presenting his report and for his wise leadership of the Committee. We welcome the outcomes of the 45th Committee session and especially the inscription of eight African and three Arab sites on the World Heritage List. In addition, we welcome the removal of one African heritage site from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage site of Abu Mena in Egypt will benefit from the approval of the international assistance from the World Heritage Fund.

As an outgoing Committee member, Egypt stresses on the growing demand to enhance capacity-building activities in the African and Arab States, as well as in the Small Island Developing States to assist in implementing the Convention and realizing its objectives. We welcome the adoption of the World Heritage Strategy for Africa during the last Committee session in line with the flagship programme on culture and the new Operational Strategy for Priority Africa for the period 2022 to 2029. There is a dire need in our region to develop effective conservation and management frameworks for Heritage sites with the aim of removing the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger. In addition, achieving a balanced and representative World Heritage List requires extensive efforts to improve the quality of nomination files being prepared for the new sites.

Finally, Madame Chair, we commend the efforts of the culture sector and World Heritage Centre, as well as the capacity-building activities organised in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies and the Category 2 Centres in particular the African World Heritage Fund and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage. I thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. *[Interpretation from Spanish]* Now, the floor is to Paraguay, Madam Ambassador. *[end of Interpretation from Spanish]*

The Delegation of Paraguay: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Madame Chair, and congratulations on your election. We want to thank Saudi Arabia for this very thorough report and also for their generous Hospitality in Riyadh.

We place a great deal of importance on the 1972 Convention as part of our collective work in support of culture and nature. We feel that it is important to place a trust in the consciousness of the States Parties and we appreciate the work and efforts being done on the strategic objectives.

As we continue working towards a balanced and credible World Heritage List, we want to make sure that there is a continued effort towards consistency and coherence between the Committee and the Advisory Bodies. We understand that the List of World Heritage in Danger needs particular attention. And remember that it is not a punishment to have something inscribed on the List in Danger. Remember in Riyadh, we had this uncomfortable feeling that the List of World Heritage in Danger was being perceived in one way by some Parties and in another way by others. And this represents an inconsistency that we need to put away.

It is time to ensure that we are all working towards the same objective, the safeguarding of the inscribed properties and sites. We welcome the Open-ended Working Group to look at the substance of how the Convention will actually work and we want to make sure that everybody's voice is heard therein. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to give the floor to Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and I congratulate you upon your election to chair the session. I would like to thank the Committee for the report. I take this rare opportunity to thank the Committee for the reinstatement of the famous Kasubi tombs of Buganda in Uganda to the World Heritage List. Uganda, Madame Chair, has three sites on the World Heritage List: Bwindi impenetrable National Park, Rwenzori and the Kasubi tombs in Buganda under culture. And, as you know, in the case of Kasubi, it had been put under the in-Danger List but that now is history because Kasubi tombs were now reinstated as part of the World Heritage List. That was done in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.

Uganda would like to express our gratitude and congratulations and we shall always be indebted to the Committee I thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much, your Excellency, for your intervention. Now, I give the floor to Togo please.

La délégation du Togo :

Merci, Madame la Présidente. Permettez-moi de vous féliciter d'abord pour votre élection et pour la façon dont vous conduisez nos travaux. Félicitations également à tous les vice-Présidents. Madame la Présidente, nous voulons féliciter d'abord le royaume d'Arabie Saoudite pour l'organisation de la 45^e session du Comité du patrimoine mondial qui a eu un écho retentissant et très positif à nos yeux. Tout le monde s'en félicite.

Félicitations donc à Son Altesse Royale la princesse Haifa bint Abdulaziz Al-Mogrin et félicitations également à son successeur Monsieur Abdulelah Al-Tokhais. Madame la Présidente, je voudrais saluer tous les efforts du Secrétariat et en particulier le directeur du centre du patrimoine, Monsieur Eloundou et Monsieur Ernesto Ottone, pour tout le travail qu'ils font aux bénéfices de l'ensemble des conventions de la culture et en particulier pour la Convention de 72.

Nous nous réjouissons du fait que le nombre d'États parties à cette Convention a atteint 195 États membres ce qui est supérieur finalement au nombre d'États membres de l'UNESCO même. Donc, c'est un succès très important et très éclatant, nous nous en réjouissons. Nous nous réjouissons également par rapport à la page 2 du Rapport sur les extensions et les inscriptions, nous voulons nous féliciter de l'extension du Koutammakou qui est un site du Togo inscrit sur la liste, et nous nous réjouissons également de l'extension qui est faite jusqu'au Bénin, faisant en sorte que nous ayons plus d'espaces à protéger et à renforcer aussi la coopération entre les États membres.

Nous nous félicitons également du fait que la sensibilisation progresse si on se réfère à la page 4, 43 602 visites sur le site c'est très important et surtout je pense aux jeunes qui eux sont vraiment très friands d'internet. C'est un élément très important. Quand je pose la question, souvent les gens ne connaissent l'UNESCO, en tout cas dans mes proches amis, que par la Convention du patrimoine, donc c'est un signe très heureux. Un élément important aussi pour lequel nous félicitons le Secrétariat c'est finalement de reconduire les partenariats et aussi d'en créer de nouveau afin que la mise en œuvre de la Convention puisse se faire encore de manière plus efficace.

Nous avons en revanche quelques éléments, ce ne sont pas des critiques, plutôt des souhaits. On a les chiffres de tout ce qui a été fait. C'est excellent pour mesurer le chemin et pour essayer d'aller un peu plus loin. Mais nous pensons qu'il serait peut-être utile aussi de voir dans quelles mesures on peut voir l'impact réel de ces inscriptions. Voir également, dans quelles mesures les efforts de développement sont suivis. Que les personnes formées soient effectivement affectées à la préparation des dossiers par exemple. Parce que l'on sait qu'ailleurs les gens disparaissent et on est pénalisé. Il serait bien d'en faire un suivi à ce niveau. Dernier point, faire en sorte aussi que

l'on n'oublie pas les aspects juridiques pour essayer de protéger au maximum les sites déjà inscrits et qui sont sur la Liste indicative.

Je vous remercie Madame la Présidente. Je reviendrais sur d'autres sujets au moment opportun.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to give the floor to Vietnam. Ambassador, please.

The Delegation of Vietnam:

Madame Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen I would like to join our colleagues to congratulate Madame Chair, the Vice-chairs and the rapporteur. We wish to thank the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the wonderful organisation of the 45th extended session of the Committee.

Ladies and Gentlemen, heritage is not only a vital source for cultural diversity, creativity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion but also a driver for sustainable development and resilience. Vietnam is firmly committed to the implementation and the noble objectives of the World Heritage Convention.

Madame Chair, over the past five decades the World Heritage Convention has protected and promoted humanity's treasures and transformed the way we value and safeguard heritage. In this challenging time, its role is more critical than ever. It is necessary to continue to ensure the good governance of the Convention with better regional representation of sites, balance between preservation, development and sustainable tourism and effective implementation of the UNESCO priorities, such as Priority Africa, gender equality, seats and youth through enhanced knowledge and exchange for capacity building and cooperation in the field of Heritage.

In these endeavours you can count on Vietnam's strong commitment as an aspiring candidate to the World Heritage Committee for the term 2023-2027 to ensure cultural heritage as a vector for peace, resilience and sustainable development. We look forward to invaluable support from all Member States. I thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Vice Minister, for your intervention. I now give the floor to Lithuania.

The Delegation of Lithuania:

Thank you, Madame Chair. First of all, Lithuania would like to express its appreciation to the World Heritage Committee, the host country, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for the immense work and strong devotion to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Lithuania fully supports the efforts aimed at strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List and for ensuring better regional balance, though there are still 27 States Parties to the Convention which have no property inscribed on the World Heritage List. Lithuania encourages the States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat to continue advocacy and support technical expert efforts for unrepresented countries, as well as to keep strengthening the positive approach to the World Heritage List in Danger.

This year, Lithuania listed the fifth property on the World Heritage List, Modernist Kaunas: Architecture of Optimism, which presents the vibrant and explosive narrative of the capital city inspired by the Modern Movement. We acknowledge the importance of ensuring the long-lasting conservation and protection for all World Heritage properties inscribed.

In order to strengthen the national policy of its World Heritage, Lithuania has initiated legislative procedures for the integration of the World Heritage Convention into the national law. The main goal of this is to consolidate the systematic framework of World Heritage management, monitoring conservation and financing. It also includes such aspects as community involvement, education and establishes certain procedural conditions for the implementation of conventional requirements such as heritage impact assessment and application of Provision 172 of the Operational Guidelines of the Convention.

Madame Chair, let me conclude by congratulating the Committee's decision to develop a new World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy for the decade 2025-2035. It is of great importance to strengthen the skills and abilities, especially in conservation monitoring and climate change challenges. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. *[Interpretation from Spanish]* Now, the floor is to the Dominican Republic. *[end of Interpretation from Spanish]*

The Delegation of the Dominican Republic: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. We would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of our session, and our thanks also go to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their warm welcome in Riyadh for the World Heritage Committee.

We just wanted to reflect on our roles both individually and collectively when it comes to safeguarding World Heritage. Every action that we undertake, be it locally or in terms of promoting overall awareness, has a significant

impact on the safeguarding of our shared humanity heritage. This is a great responsibility incumbent on us, not only as individuals, but also as defenders of the World's Heritage and that means that we are active stakeholders. Now this deliberation should inspire us to take practical steps that are sustainable so that we can truly safeguard the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and pave the way for future endeavours in which such legacy will be accessible to one another.

The Dominican Republic is truly committed to this and that is why we are for the first time putting our candidacy forward for the 2025 -2029 period. We have the Santo Domingo Colonial City and Region in our country which might be given greater visibility. One of the aspects that is high on our priority is how to dovetail sustainable tourism with the growing awareness of the need to preserve the authenticity and integrity of our World Heritage, which I repeat is a shared heritage.

We would like to commend our members to think more deeply about the crucial role that is played in defending the wealth of our heritage and the need to predict and safeguard our emblematic properties as inscribed on the List. It is not only about safeguarding our historical aspects but also about promoting intercultural understanding and mutual respect for plurality for our shared heritage. That is why we think that by undertaking such a joint initiative, we really are taking a big step forward when it comes to protecting diversity because we want these to be preserved.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

The Delegation of Ukraine:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and congratulations to you and to the Bureau members on your election. First of all, let me express our gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the successful hosting of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in Riyadh. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Chairman of this session for his comprehensive report and also express our deep gratitude to the World Heritage Committee for its activities during the mentioned period of time, especially those that were aimed at supporting Ukraine. This time was very difficult to my country because, as you all know, in February 2020, the Russian Federation invaded the territory of Ukraine.

Among terrible consequences of this Invasion, there were destruction and damage to cultural heritage sites including those inscribed in the World Heritage List. For example, in 2023, as a result of a missile attack of the Russian Federation there were severe destructions and damages of two beautiful UNESCO World Heritage sites L'viv – the Ensemble of the Historic Centre and the Historical Centre of Odessa. The Historic Centre of the City of Chernihiv which is a site including in the Tentative List of Ukraine was also severely damaged by Russian missiles. At present the damage of 1,702 objects of cultural infrastructure and 853 cultural heritage sites were recorded. Among them, nearly one third have been destroyed.

These facts prove that Russia is not able to abide the UNESCO Convention of 1972 State Party of which it is. We attach great importance to the decisions of the 18th extraordinary session and the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee which inscribed the cultural heritage sites of the Historical Centre of Odessa, L'viv – the Ensemble of the Historic Centre, Ukraine, and Kyiv St Sophia Cathedral and related monastic complex of Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It should be emphasised that the only reason these sites have been listed in the UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger is Russia's aggression against Ukraine. These inscriptions have provided Ukraine with additional legal arguments to collect evidence of the Russian aggression against Ukraine's cultural heritage.

We note with great appreciation that as of November 2023 UNESCO mobilised more than USD43 million for programmes of assistance to Ukraine including the culture sphere. But the assistance of UNESCO is not limited to financial support, UNESCO has provided methodological assistance in the sphere of cultural site protection, conducted seminars and training for Ukrainian culture specialists. Besides, UNESCO deployed an international expert mission to assess damage to the cultural and religious sites in Odessa. The UNESCO/ICCROM mission attended Chernihiv to carry out an assessment to the damage to the cultural property of this ancient city.

On the eve of the election to the World Heritage Committee where Ukraine submitted its candidacy, I would like to stress that, once elected, Ukraine will make every effort to best promote and protect the principles and values of the 1972 Convention in order to save World Cultural Heritage in every corner of our planet for future generations. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you, Chair. Chair, the Republic of Kenya congratulate both you and the Bureau on your election and I personally wish you all the best. The government of the Republic of Kenya commends the Secretariat and the World Heritage Committee on the outcomes of its work. The extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee, for which we thank the kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting, marked a turning point in the nomination of African sites and properties on the World Heritage List. We appreciate the collaboration and work of the World Heritage Centre with States Parties towards the realisation of the flagship culture programme in the UNESCO global Priority Africa

Operational Strategy 2022-2029. And the drive towards bilateral agreements and partnership to achieve milestones in Heritage conservation and promotion.

We also wish to commend the support from Norway for the desired state of conversation and for Lake Turkana, as well as support from several States Parties to World Heritage projects and programmes in Africa.

The Republic of Kenya also recommends the continuation of the World Heritage Volunteers campaign geared towards the youth which our Kenyan properties and World Heritage and Tentative List of Fort Jesus Mombasa Oldtown, Eastern Arc forests, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Shimba Hills National Reserve, the historic and archaeological town of Gedi, Kakamega Forest and Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site have had the privilege of accommodating.

We wish to underscore the importance of increasing capacity development for the youth to appropriate and contribute to the valorisation and transmission of Heritage. I thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would now like to give the floor to the representative of China.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you, Madame Chair. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your election. I believe that under your able leadership we will have full discussions and we will also demonstrate solidarity among States Parties. The 45th session of Committee was the first Committee meeting to be held in *presentia* after the outbreak of the pandemic and the Committee meeting was a great success.

China would like to thank the government of Saudi Arabia and the UNESCO Secretariat for the meticulous preparation and organisation of the meeting and we also thank all the members of the Committee for their hard work and positive contributions. China appreciates UNESCO's efforts to promote capacity building in Africa and the SIDS in the field of heritage conservation.

China believes that it is of paramount importance to strengthen capacity and China also thanks and commends the Secretariat to support work in Asia-Pacific. China believes that capacity building and heritage education are of paramount importance and China is ready to work with UNESCO and the States Parties to conduct exchanges and cooperation and to provide support for capacity building in World Heritage, especially in Africa. So as to contribute to the promotion of the representativeness of a balanced and credible World Heritage List and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to give the floor to the representative of Burkina Faso. Thank you.

La délégation du Burkina Faso :

Madame la Présidente, ma délégation vous félicite pour votre élection à la présidence de la présente session ainsi que les membres du bureau. Nous nous réjouissons du nombre de ratifications qui témoigne de l'importance accordée par les États à la Convention de 1972 comme instrument à vocation universelle. L'Afrique particulièrement demeure sous représentée dans la Liste du patrimoine. Cependant, nous nous félicitons des activités menées qui s'inscrivent dans la stratégie globale pour une Liste du patrimoine mondial équilibrée, représentative, et crédible.

Le Burkina Faso a entamé l'élaboration de la proposition de la nomination de la Cour royale de Tiébélé sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Cette candidature a été élaborée en prenant en compte les recommandations de 2011 relatives aux paysages urbains historiques et conformément au point 1 du Plan d'action régional. S'agissant de l'état de conservation du bien complexe W-Arly-Pendjari que le Burkina Faso partage avec le Bénin et le Niger, les trois États parties ont convenu par un accord triparti signé en 2019 d'assurer une gestion concertée et harmonisée. Les actions conjointes de nos trois pays ont permis de réduire considérablement les activités illégales dans le complexe naturel du fait du phénomène de l'insécurité dans la région du Sahel.

La délégation du Burkina Faso prend à cet effet bonne note des recommandations contenues dans la décision de la 45^e session du patrimoine mondial sur l'état de conservation du complexe. Nous saluons les actions continues du Secrétariat et des Organisations consultatives pour répondre aux situations d'urgences et aux conflits qui menacent le patrimoine culturel et naturel y compris la Valeur universelle exceptionnelle à travers le fond d'urgence pour le patrimoine et le fonds d'intervention d'urgence. Dans le cas de la synergie entre les conventions, le Burkina Faso a entrepris de porter onze de ses biens culturels sur la liste de protection renforcée dans le cadre de la Convention de La Haye de 1954 et de ses deux protocoles additionnels. Il s'agit des biens culturels du patrimoine mondial situé sur son territoire et ceux de sa Liste indicative.

En termes de perspectives, le Burkina Faso envisage de conduire des actions suivantes avec le concours de l'UNESCO. La vulgarisation de la loi du 8 août 2023 portant protection sauvegarde et valorisation du patrimoine culturel du Burkina Faso qui prend désormais en compte les thématiques nouvelles et actuelles. La célébration du mois du patrimoine burkinabè institué depuis le 13 avril 2023. La période du 18 avril au 18 mai de chaque année est retenue pour la promotion de ce patrimoine autour des curiosités et des lieux de mémoires historiques du Burkina Faso. L'organisation d'atelier de renforcement des capacités des professionnels et acteurs intervenant

dans la protection et la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel. L'inspection régulière des sites et monuments en vue de l'élaboration d'une feuille de route pour leur gestion. Enfin, le Burkina Faso a soumis une demande d'assistance en vue de l'actualisation de sa Liste indicative.

Pour conclure, ma délégation félicite le Centre du patrimoine mondial pour son engagement à accompagner les États partis dans la mise effective de notre Convention. Je vous remercie.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

The Delegation of Qatar:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and congratulations for your election as Chair. Qatar would like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their successful organisation of the 45th session in Riyadh. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais for his role in leading the World Heritage Committee and his thorough report.

Qatar would like to echo the comments by Palestine. Reconsidering the nomination number of files to the World Heritage Committee. We recommend that this procedure should be evaluated and revisited for a better outcome. Qatar would also like to thank the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee and would like to appreciate all of their efforts for capacity building activities. Qatar would like to see broader chances for all States Parties and especially in the Arab region. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I give the floor to the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and congratulations on your election. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks the chair of the Committee for his report and Saudi Arabia for the organisation of the successful session. Madame Chair, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines makes echo to many interventions related to the credibility and representativeness of the List, the respect of the highly scientific standards of the Convention, the importance of the protection and the conservation of the World Heritage Sites and not only their inscription, as mentioned by the Ambassador of Mali.

Madame Chair, we heard many interventions mentioning the decision-making process at the last session and the changes made on the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies from deferral or referral to inscription. But this is not new Madame Chair. This process had already existed for several sessions and the statistics prove it. Given now the high awareness of this process, and we are now more than ever aware that the Convention must be saved, it is time to work and to benefit in the Open-ended Working Group to reflect in depth on the methods of work and on a proper implementation of the Convention. We have already many ways and tools as the working agreement mentioned by the ambassador of Palestine, the code of conduct adopted by the General Assembly and also the dialogue between the Advisory Bodies and the States Parties proposed by Japan and unanimously adopted by the Committee at its last session.

Of course, Madame Chair, we thank the Advisory Bodies for their commitment, but at the same time, we also invite them to take into account in their evaluation, and we can discuss this in the Open-ended Working Group, that the word is a perpetual change: the effects of climate change on the World Heritage properties, the economic and social crisis, the demography, the specificities of regions and sub regions which also affect the cultural and natural attributes of the sites. We also noticed, Madame Chair, that in the last session much information provided by States parties to the Advisory Bodies did not let them time to look at additional information provided by the States Parties to explain some questions raised by the Advisory Bodies. This problem of delays and deadlines should be fixed in the future. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the representative of Italy.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you, Madame Chair, and let us, first of all, join the congratulations on your election. We would also like to extend once again our warmest thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for successfully hosting the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. We believe that the members of the Committee four years after the last meeting in person and after all the crisis that had occurred in the meanwhile from the pandemic to the new international conflicts have succeeded in a task whose outcome was not at all obvious but certainly necessary.

We have succeeded in having a largely consensual and effective conduct of the session, pursuing and implementing a very important and very broad Agenda. We are proud to have decided on the inscription of several new African sites and we remain firmly committed to enhance the geographical balance of the List, in particular through capacity-building activities. Italy hopes to be able in the near future to provide specific additional funding for such activities.

We also welcome the creation of an Open-ended Working Group to reflect on the future of the Convention and we are ready to work to enhance its credibility and maybe to update its functioning in order to make it more suited to face all contemporary and emerging challenges.

Italy continues to attach the utmost importance to this Convention and we particularly commend improvements in the dialogue between Member States the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. We would finally like to thank the outgoing members of the Committee for the work done together and we look forward to continuing the fruitful cooperation with the new members who will be elected today. Thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to Jamaica.

The Delegation of Jamaica:

Thank you, Chair, and our congratulations on your election. Jamaica thanks the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the exceptional hosting of the extended 45th session and the Chair of the session for his report.

Jamaica notes along with many other colleagues the disparity in the numbers of sites associated with some electoral groups versus others. It is also noted with concern the variance with respect to decisions of the Committee when compared to the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies and its impact on a balanced and credible list.

In the Caribbean there is a site submitted for consideration generally every two or three years. This, chair, is among 16 Small Island Developing States in the region where now six years have passed between the Nelson's Dockyard Archaeological Site inscribed in 2017 by Antigua and Bermuda and the Jodensavanne Site of Surinam in 2023 during the 45th session. This highlights under representativeness in the region, the urgent need for capacity building in nomination development and updating of Tentative Lists for the Caribbean.

We appreciate the inclusion of the preliminary assessment in the nomination process and we are of the view that these early reviews of nomination files will produce stronger files which are more likely to be inscribed. This, we believe, along with increased dialogue among States Parties and Advisory Bodies will help to improve the balancing of the List. We too welcome the Open-ended Working Group for the reflection on the operations of the World Heritage Convention which will give all the opportunity to deliberate on this matter. Jamaica remains committed to the work towards preserving the World Cultural and Natural Heritage through this Convention and we have submitted our candidature for the World Heritage Committee for the period 2023-2027 and hope for the support of all States Parties present. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I give the floor to Nigeria.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you very much, Madame Chairperson and I join my colleagues to congratulate you on your election and also for the effective manner you are conducting the session. We appreciate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Chair for the hosting of the 45th extended session and the report. Nigeria notes the content of the report, in particular the effort by the Session to ensure a balance in the World Heritage List and ensuring inclusiveness by extending the mandate of the ad hoc Working Group. We hope to contribute our quota towards achieving the desired objectives.

Having also listened to the considerations of some Member States on sites that were inscribed based on movement from referral to inscription, Nigeria is still of the strong opinion that the purpose of inscription is to enhance conservation and is perfectly in line with the principles of the World Heritage Convention.

As we leave the Committee, we urge members to include in this category, to do everything to ensure that the conditional of the recommendation of the Advisory Bodies are taken seriously and implemented going forward. This will indeed ensure the integrity of the Committee who approved those files based on trust. I think this is a very important point and I hope this will be taken seriously. Thank you very much, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to the representative of India.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Madame Chair, for giving India the floor. Since India is taking floor for the first time, we would congratulate you and the Bureau for your elections to the 24th General Assembly. We also congratulate Dr Abdulelah Al-Tokhais for reading out his comprehensive report of the Extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. On behalf of the Indian delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to the organisers and the wonderful people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the extended 45th session and for their warm and generous Hospitality.

This 15-day Committee meeting, unprecedented in many ways, made the world richer by 42 properties on the List making it one short of 1,200. India too added to on the List stretching it also to 42 World Heritage properties. India

would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre, the Secretariat and the three Advisory Bodies for the crucial roles they have played and continue to play in the implementation of the Convention.

Madame Chair, this extended Committee session has also given us ample food for thoughts. While we celebrated the 50th year of the Convention and joyously looked back with all the achievements, we also have responsibility forward. We need serious reflections on the way the Convention is being implemented since the last 50 years with almost no procedural changes with the Committee meetings becoming more exhaustive and expensive wherein the World Heritage properties are facing more and more challenges, wherein finances for implementing the Convention are increasingly becoming a concern. We need a serious introspection and find out innovative sustainable solutions.

We also need to continue our collective efforts to ensure more and more properties with their deserving Outstanding Universal Values to be on the World Heritage List. This reflects the beauty of this Convention wherein the diversity of Heritage from all corners of the globe are discussed for universal celebrations.

However, with the celebration comes a serious responsibility to ensuring that they are maintained and preserved for posterity. Whether or not on the World Heritage Committee, India would nevertheless continue to support efforts in ensuring geographical and typological balance on the World Heritage List to align with the Sustainable Development Goals, to technically support the States Parties who either do not have a single site on the List or to technically support the States or nearly 100 of the States Parties with fewer than five properties. We need to continue our efforts for adequate representation and for capacity building which we believe is the crux of the matter and needs our collective sustained effort.

All these are challenges that the Committee, the Secretariat and the three Advisory Bodies are grappling with. India welcomes the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for taking the lead in establishing the Open-ended Working Group to discuss matters related to the future of the Convention, the simplification of the nomination processes and for devising innovative financial solutions. And we assure our fullest support and cooperation to address these concerns in coming years. Thank you, Madame Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. We have closed the list of speakers. I would like to give the floor to the Russian Federation who has asked for a *droit de réponse*. I will ask you, dear representative, just to limit yourself to the time that we have established to the other State members.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Madame Chair, I will keep this very short. I would like to congratulate you on your election and I wish you every success in your work. The Russian Federation would like to use its right to reply with respect to the unfounded accusations we have heard against Russia. Also, we would like to speak up against politicisation. Many times, we have said this. Let me repeat what I wish to say.

Russia strictly respects the provisions of the 1972 Convention and other international agreements. The Russian army is not carrying out any deliberate attacks against cultural sites. On the contrary, the Ukrainian army is using cultural sites as military targets and is subjecting these sites to considerable danger. This is a true threat to the cultural heritage of Ukraine. We have seen this in Odessa and in L'viv. By claiming that Russia is causing a threat to its cultural heritage, Ukraine is able to damage its own heritage whilst claiming that others are responsible. I am thinking in particular of the Lavra in Kiev.

We have also seen a number of threats and pressure placed on the Orthodox Church in Ukraine by the Ukrainian authorities and this persecution of these holy sacred sites and their personnel is unacceptable. We have not heard any reactions from our colleagues in response to this and yet we ought to be fighting to respect the rights of all sites and associated people covered by international conventions. Ukraine is pursuing its own selfish goals rather than trying to protect universal heritage across the world. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I will ask the Secretariat to please answer the questions that have been asked by Member States, thank you.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Madame Chairperson. Let me first start by thanking all the delegations that took the floor this morning to appreciate the results of the last World Heritage Committee following the presentation of the report by the Chairperson of the 45th session, but also who shared their important views as regards to the future of the World Heritage Convention. I also would like to particularly appreciate the interventions and the presence of the various ministers who are here in the room and who are representing their delegations and demonstrating that this meeting of the General Assembly is absolutely important for the future of the Convention and the work that we are doing.

A number of key points were raised and the majority of them concerned the credibility of the List and the working methods of the World Heritage Convention and the General Assembly itself. But also, the importance of continuing the dialogue for issues related to nominations and conservations. There were a number of interventions also on the necessity to take into consideration in the work the growing challenges that the World Heritage is facing like climate

actions and many others. Africa Priority was also raised as a very important step of the work of the Convention. You all consider that there is an opportunity with the Open-ended Working Group that was established at the last World Heritage Committee to consider some of these points and you specifically raised or asked a number of questions, which I would like to quickly answer. And the Director General for culture will specifically reply on the questions regarding the Global Report and the relation with the periodic reporting.

Madame Chair, on specific questions about the Open-ended Working Group, which was decided and established at the last World Heritage Committee and in particular on questions regarding the timeline, the mandate, how the General Assembly will be involved and also the importance of having figures. I specifically recall some of these questions asked by the delegation of the Netherlands but also of Germany and many others. I just want to say that, of course, Decision **45 COM 11**, which was taken is already what will guide the establishment of this Open-ended Working Group. And if you recall its Paragraph 6 was the one that decided to establish this Group with a number of points to consider in the discussion. Of course, the mandate is broad but I think the Committee decided to have this broad mandate because it was important to take into consideration the views of all the Committee members. The Open-ended Working Group itself will decide on the way to go about all this and how it is going to work.

We do understand that you would like to know the views of the Secretariat. The role of the Secretariat is to support the Open-ended Working Group. What we are trying to do is that like all Open-ended Working Group, you need to elect a Chair of the Working Group and the Rapporteur of the Working Group who will be leading the work of the Open-ended Working Group. And you recall, of course, that there was a consensus in favour of Saudi Arabia assuming the chairpersonship of this Open-ended Working Group but this will be discussed when we do this.

So, what we intend to do as a Secretariat will be, first of all, after this General Assembly to share with you a circular letter to all States Parties to recall the creation of this Working Group, but also something which is important and I would like to thank all the States Parties who took the floor to express their intention to financially support the Working Group. We will send you all this information by the end of this month in a circular letter.

The idea for us is to propose that this Open-ended Working Group starts end of January with an inception meeting and during this Inception meeting the Open-ended Working Group will elect its Bureau and will discuss the Road Map including the preparation, for example, of some of the background documents. Because I remember that one of the States Parties insisted on the figures and the background of what has happened in the past. This inception meeting will also agree on a timetable of work and what they would like to present to the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee.

This is in a nutshell how the Secretariat will be supporting. But again, as I told you, the functioning of this Working Group will need the support of all of you. And I think it is important that we get from all of you, like we heard today, financial support because you know we have to rent the room, we need interpretation for all of you, we have to prepare all the reports and we need this support. This is what I can say at this stage for this particular question.

For the question that was asked by Estonia, Madame Chair, I will leave the Assistant Director General to reply to it.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to the Assistant Director General.

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

I will try to be very short. Thank you, Ms Chairperson. If you remember, Decision **45 COM 10A** considered the proposed modification of the periodic reporting from a regional to a global approach and requested the Secretariat to use the reflection period to elaborate an analytical report and feasibility study to consider the practical modalities of this modification.

It is proposed that at the 46th Committee analytical report on the global approach for periodic reporting be presented including a proposal to adopt a 4-year cycle with a global submission deadline on the 30th of June 2027. Subject to the decision of the Committee, it is proposed at the 25th General Assembly an item be presented to introduce the new Global Reporting Cycle and the submission date according to the analytical report and the discussion that will be taking place at the 46th Committee.

You will remember during the discussion these two weeks at the General Conference that it was mentioned the One-Stop Shop. In English it means something else but One-Stop Shop is the name. And the idea is, how can we prepare this global analysis for the Global Report on cultural policies that include World Heritage. What has been done until now is that these recommendations adopted during the 2005 Committee and the 1970 Convention are aligned. During the next two weeks in Botswana, it will be presented for the 2003 Convention and in December that of 1954. So, what we hope is to find a way so that we can align it so that we can have this cycle starting in 2027 for the next report that will be in 2029.

There is a lot to work, we know, and we hope to count on each of you, so that we can have World Heritage also integrated in public policies as we want to advance in the Global Report that was asked by you as Member States. Thank you so much, Ms Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr Assistant Director General. I propose that the Committee takes note of the report of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee on the activities of the World Heritage Committee. If there is no objection, it is so decided ^[gavel]. I therefore declare Agenda Item 4 closed.

5. Elections to the World Heritage Committee // Élections au Comité du patrimoine mondial

Documents: WHC/23/24.GA/5

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.5.Rev.3

Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution 24 GA 5

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We now shall proceed with the Elections to the World Heritage Committee, Item 5 of our Agenda.

Dear Colleagues, before we proceed, allow me to recall that, according to Decision **7 EXT.COM 15**, the elections of World Heritage Committee members are organized in separate rooms from the main meeting room, equipped with voting facilities, and with ballots conducted on a pre-scheduled basis agreed by the General Assembly.

Allow me to also recall some important information.

1. As you know, for this election, 9 seats have to be filled; those left vacant by the following outgoing members of the Committee: Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Thailand.
2. The following 12 members will continue their mandate until November 2025: Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Zambia.

Dear colleagues,

In conformity with Rule 14.1 (b) of the Rules of Procedure, we will now proceed with the ballot for allocated seats.

Considering the current composition of the World Heritage Committee, 3 members representing Group I (Belgium, Greece, Italy) and 3 members representing Group III (Argentina, Mexico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) remain in office until 2025. Therefore, in accordance with Rule 14.1(c) of the Rules of Procedure, the number of seats allocated for these two groups has already been reached.

This ballot will therefore only cover allocated vacant seats for Groups II, IV, Va and Vb, as follows:

- Group II: 1 seat
- Group IV: 2 seats
- Group Va: 2 seats
- Group Vb: 1 seat

I would also like to inform the General Assembly that the ballots for the allocated seats for Groups II, IV, Va and Vb will take place simultaneously.

The ballots with the candidates for each of these 4 groups are printed on separate pages and will be distributed by the Secretariat immediately after this introduction.

Before I give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre, to explain the modalities for the elections, allow me to recall Article 14.1(d) of the Rules of Procedure which states “ (...) at each election, due consideration shall be given to the election of at least one State Party, which has never served as a Member of the World Heritage Committee”. Please note that information regarding membership of the Committee is included in Document INF.5.

I would also like to remind the General Assembly that the candidates for the allocated seats indicated on the ballot papers come from the list of candidates established in accordance with Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure. This list is contained in Document INF.5.Rev.3.

Furthermore, the Rules of Procedure do not limit the requirement for a formal vote only to cases where the number of candidates exceeds the number of seats to be filled. Therefore, even if there are cases of “clean slate”, the Rules of Procedure require that a vote take place.

I now wish to give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre, to provide us with the necessary information on the conduct of the election procedure.

You have the floor.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Merci Madame la Présidente. Je vais essayer d'aller vite pour cette présentation. Je demande aux collègues d'avoir le Powerpoint également prêt. Puis je demander simplement avec la gentillesse de de nos interprètes de nous donner encore à peu près 10-15 minutes maximum, on n'aura pas besoin de plus, s'il vous plaît.

Alors, pour ce qui concerne les élections au Comité. Comme la Présidente l'a dit, les informations sont dans les documents 5 et les documents INF.5.Rev.3, donc vous avez ces documents pour comprendre tout le système. Juste pour vous rappeler encore que les élections seront en salle III et salle IV et donc ces salles sont au-dessus et pas très loin de de la salle I que vous connaissez ou de la salle II. Maintenant, pour les bureaux de vote. La salle III accueillera deux bureaux de vote pour les États parties dont le nom commence par les lettres de A à K mais par ordre alphabétique en français. Et la salle IV quant à elle accueillera deux autres bureaux de vote classés par ordre alphabétique de L à Z.

Maintenant, juste un petit rappel sur le règlement intérieur, Madame la Présidente si vous le permettez. C'est juste pour attirer l'attention des délégations sur les articles intérieurs qui nous guident pour les élections, dont certains que vous avez déjà rappelés. D'abord sur l'ordre du scrutin. Nous débiterons les élections par le scrutin pour les sièges alloués qui précédera les tours de vote pour les autres sièges à pourvoir.

Maintenant, pour ces sièges alloués, le premier tour. Le premier tour aura lieu pour les sièges alloués où les candidats obtenant au premier tour le plus grand nombre de voix seront déclarés élus dans l'ordre séquentiel du nombre de voix obtenu du plus haut au plus bas, jusqu'au nombre de sièges à pourvoir. Ensuite, nous aurons un deuxième tour.

Si deux candidats ou plus obtiennent le même nombre de voix pour les sièges restants à pourvoir, ça, c'est pour le deuxième tour. Et pour les sièges attribués lors de ce second tour, les candidats ayant obtenu le plus grand nombre de voix à concurrence du nombre de sièges restants à pourvoir seront déclarés élus. Maintenant, s'il y a un troisième tour, dans le cas où il y en a un, où au second tour deux candidats ou plus obtiennent à nouveau le même nombre de voix et que par conséquent le nombre de candidats est supérieur au nombre de sièges à pourvoir, il y aura un tour de scrutin supplémentaire, mais qui sera strictement limité à ces candidats. Et, encore une fois, le plus grand nombre de votes permettra au candidat d'être élu.

Madame la Présidente, on peut avoir une situation de tirage au sort. Si à l'issue de ce troisième tour de scrutin supplémentaire, deux ou plusieurs candidats obtiennent le même nombre de voix, alors vous, la Présidente, vous déciderez par tirage au sort entre eux afin de répartir les sièges restants, mais bon, j'espère ça n'arrivera pas. Pour les candidats non élus, comme c'est prévu au titre de l'article 14.10(f), les candidats qui n'ont pas été élus lors d'un scrutin pour un siège alloué seront éligibles pour se présenter au scrutin suivant, de sorte qu'ils seront automatiquement inclus dans la liste des candidats pour les sièges ouverts. Et vous, Madame la Présidente, vous vérifierez bien sûr auparavant si certains d'entre eux souhaitent se retirer ou pas.

Maintenant pour le premier tour des sièges ouverts. Lorsque tous les sièges alloués seront attribués, nous procéderons aux élections pour les sièges ouverts comme je l'ai dit, et au premier tour de l'élection pour les sièges ouverts les candidats obtenant plus de la moitié des votes valides exprimés par les États parties présents et votants seront déclarés élus dans l'ordre séquentiel du nombre de voix obtenu. En cas de deuxième tour, s'il reste encore des sièges à pourvoir, ceux-ci seront attribués au plus grand nombre de voies, au plus petit à concurrence du nombre de sièges à pourvoir.

Et si au second tour, deux candidats ou plus obtiennent le même nombre de voix et que par conséquent le nombre de ces candidats est supérieur au nombre de sièges à pourvoir, il y aura un troisième tour de scrutin réservé uniquement aux candidats ayant obtenu le même nombre de voix. À nouveau, les candidats obtenant le plus grand nombre de voix seront déclarés élus. Là aussi, il peut y avoir une situation de tirage au sort, Madame la Présidente, si lors de ce scrutin de troisième tour deux ou plusieurs candidats obtiennent le même nombre de voix, vous déciderez par tirage au sort de l'attribution des sièges restants.

Maintenant pour parler du bulletin de vote. Je voudrais juste vous apporter quelques clarifications chers collègues. Vous savez que les élections sont basées sur la répartition des sièges qui sont alloués aux différents groupes électoraux et cette année uniquement quatre groupes bénéficient de sièges alloués, donc le Groupe II le Groupe IV le Groupe Va et le Groupe Vb. Il y aura donc quatre bulletins de vote distincts avec des couleurs différentes pour en faciliter la distinction et il vous sera demandé d'encercler le ou les candidats pour lesquels vous souhaitez voter sur chacun de ces quatre bulletins de vote dans la limite du nombre de sièges alloués à chacun des groupes.

Afin de faciliter votre tâche, on vous montre un peu rapidement quelques exemples de ce que nous considérons comme des bulletins valides. Dans cet exemple, vous avez deux sièges qui sont à pouvoir et un ou deux candidats ont bien été encerclés. Mais juste à titre informatif je voulais vous montrer quelques exemples de bulletins de vote jugés non valides dans le cas où plus de candidats sont encerclés qu'il n'y a de sièges à pourvoir, alors là, ce ne sera pas valide. Et dans le cas où aucune indication de vote n'est exprimée sur le bulletin. Ensuite, dans le cas où la délégation ayant voté s'est faite connaître sur le bulletin ou s'il y a une marque manuscrite particulière pouvant permettre d'identifier le votant. Et enfin, si le nom d'un candidat est porté plusieurs fois sur le bulletin, ils ne seront pas valides.

En ce qui concerne le scrutin pour les sièges ouverts. Un seul bulletin de vote sera préparé portant le nom de tous les candidats en concurrence sur ces sièges. Maintenant, juste pour vous donner une idée du calendrier. Les élections vont donc se dérouler selon un calendrier précis que je voudrais vous présenter.

Nous souhaitons commencer dans pas longtemps et sur une période qui va être de dès à présent jusqu'à 14 h 15. Comme je l'ai dit, ce tour sera dédié aux sièges alloués et les bureaux seront ouverts en salle III et en salle IV jusqu'à 14 h 15 précise. Donc, à 14 h 15, nous allons fermer le bureau de vote, il ne sera plus possible de voter une fois que les portes seront fermées et les résultats seront annoncés en salle II à 14 h 45. Rendez-vous en salle II à 14 h 45 afin de laisser suffisamment de temps pour le dépouillement des bulletins.

Des bulletins de vote et des enveloppes seront disponibles à la fois à l'extérieur de chacune des salles, donc de la salle III et de la salle IV. Le deuxième tour de vote aura lieu après que nous ayons annoncé les résultats du premier tour et se déroulera jusqu'à 15 h 45 et les résultats seront annoncés en salle II à 16 h 15. Nous allons nous retrouver d'abord à 14 h 45 en salle II et ensuite à 16 h 15 comme vous le voyez à l'écran.

Enfin, un troisième tour est prévu entre 16 h 15 et 17 h 15 pour une annonce des résultats à ce moment-là. Si des tours supplémentaires sont nécessaires, nous vous annoncerons le moment venu les horaires d'ouverture des bulletins de vote. Et je tiens enfin à préciser de nouveau que de nouveaux bulletins de vote seront distribués avant le début de chaque scrutin. Ne vous inquiétez pas dans l'entrée de chacune des salles il y aura des collègues pour vous réexpliquer tout cela. Merci, Madame la Présidente.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much for this very clear information.

Prior to the elections, we have to designate two tellers. In conformity with Rule 14.2 of the Rules of Procedure, I would like to propose to designate:

- Ms Emilia Furnes Hilt, Norway, and
- Mr Joshua Moshi Mwankunda, United Republic of Tanzania

Are you in agreement with this proposal?

I see no objection. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, I invite you to now go to Rooms III and IV to proceed with the first ballot of elections for allocated seats. As you have just seen, the polling stations will remain open from now on until 2:15 pm sharp.

Please note that, at this issue of every ballot, the results will be announced in Room II. For this first ballot for allocated seats, the announcement will be made at 2.45 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m. // La séance a été levée à 13h10

FIRST DAY

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

SECOND MEETING

2:52 pm – 5:09 pm

Chairperson:

**H.E. Ms Paula Alves de Souza
(Brazil)**

PREMIER JOUR

Mercredi 22 novembre 2023

DEUXIÈME RÉUNION

14h52 – 17h09

Président :

**S.E. Mme Paula Alves de Souza
(Brazil)**

5. Elections to the World Heritage Committee (Ct'd) // Élections au Comité du patrimoine mondial (suite)

The Secretariat:

Good afternoon, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I just wanted to update you. We have a few minutes delay and we are on it we are counting. We will be with you very shortly, so please, bear with us, hopefully in just a few minutes we should be able to complete everything. I just wanted to keep you updated. Thank you very much. Please, if you could stay in the room or just here because it is going to begin very shortly. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Good afternoon to everyone. I am now pleased to announce the results of the ballot that has just taken place.

Group II

Number of ballots cast 173,

Invalid votes 37,

Abstentions 2,

Number of valid votes 134:

Ukraine 134.

Ukraine is elected *[applause]*.

Group IV

Number of ballots cast 173,

Invalid votes 1,

Abstention 1,

Number of valid votes 171,

Kazakhstan 97,

Republic of Korea 115,

Vietnam 121.

Republic of Korea and Vietnam are elected. *[applause]*.

Group Va

Number of ballots cast 173,

Invalid votes 6,

Abstentions 2,

Number of valid votes 165:

Kenya 119,
Namibia 53,
Senegal 88.

Kenya and Senegal elected.

Group Vb

Number of ballots cast 173,
Invalid votes 11,
Abstentions 2,
Number of valid votes 160:
Lebanon 121,
Sudan 39.

Lebanon elected. *[applause]*.

Congratulations to all successful countries before we proceed to the next round of the election, I would like to check whether any unsuccessful candidate wishes to withdraw its candidature. I see none. The Secretariat will therefore print the ballot papers which will be available in the polling stations in a few minutes. the polling station will remain open until 4.30 p.m. and the results will be announced in this room at 5.00 p.m. Thank you and good luck to all candidates.

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen, if you could take your seats. We have already the results. I am now pleased to announce the results of the ballot that has just taken place.

Open seats

Number of ballots cast 170,
Invalid vote 1,
Abstentions 0,
Number of valid votes 169,
Majority required, absolute majority, 85:
Jamaica 98,
Kazakhstan 118,
Namibia 75,
Sudan 43,
Türkiye 137.

Elected members Jamaica, Kazakhstan and Türkiye. *[applause]*.

I would like to congratulate the new members of the Committee and reiterate the Assembly's confidence that you will act wisely and constructively in your responsibilities. The Convention is going through an important moment facing challenges such as the impact of climate change on World Heritage, the need for a better geographical balance, a greater dialogue between tangible and intangible heritage and a more representative World Heritage List. Congratulations to all new Committee members.

I now declare Item 5 of our Agenda closed. Considering that we have now finished our elections, dear colleagues, I wish you all a very pleasant evening and we will resume our session tomorrow morning as schedule in this room at 10.00 a.m. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 5.09 p.m. // La séance a été levée à 17h09

SECOND DAY

Thursday, 23 November 2023

THIRD MEETING

10:14 am – 1:00 pm

Chairperson:

Mr Ole S e Eriksen (Norway)

DEUXI ME JOUR

Jeudi 23 novembre 2023

TROISI ME R UNION

10h14 – 13h00

Pr sident :

M. Ole S e Eriksen (Norv ge)

The Chairperson:

Good morning, dear colleagues, I am happy to welcome you to the second day of the 24th General Assembly. Allow me to congratulate once again the States Parties who have been elected to the World Heritage Committee yesterday. We have a very heavy Agenda ahead of us today. However, due to unexpected circumstances, I will not be in a position to chair today's session. As per Rules of Procedure 4.2, I have asked Norway as Vice-chairperson to replace me in this task and act as Chairperson for the day. Allow me to invite Mr Ole S e Eriksen to join us on the podium. I wish you all a fruitful session and thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, good morning to you all. Before we start discussing Agenda Item 6, I see Palestine raised the flag. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Good morning, everybody, good morning, Mr Chair. Sorry to take the floor at this stage but it is in relation with Item 5 of yesterday. Let me begin by congratulating all elected members. I want to talk about the allocation of seats on the World Heritage Committee. As you know, at the session of the General Assembly in 2014, the General Assembly adopted on an experimental basis the current allocation. The first implementation of this allocation took place in 2015. At the next session, in 2025, we will have 10 years behind us and five cycles. Since it was on an experimental basis, I think it would be appropriate to have this Agenda item on the Agenda of the next session regarding the allocation. Just to evaluate the experience during 10 years of the current allocation and to assess whether we continue with it or we think about something else. That is all. I ask the Secretariat to include it on the Agenda and I thank you to include my intervention in the records Mr Chair. Thank you so much. *Takk*.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. I will pass the floor to the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr Eriksen. This is just to thank the distinguished Ambassador of Palestine. Next year, we will have an item on elections again and I think the States Parties wish to discuss the issue which will be in this particular item. In any case we will have this item in two years' time. The Secretariat has duly taken note of the intervention. Thank you.

6. EXAMINATION OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND, INCLUDING THE STATUS OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STATES PARTIES // EXAMEN DE L' TAT DES COMPTES DU FONDS DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL, Y COMPRIS DU STATUT DES CONTRIBUTIONS DES  TATS PARTIES

Documents WHC/23/24.GA/6

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.6

Draft Resolution // Projet de r solution 24 GA 6

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For Item 6 of our Agenda, I would like to invite Mr Ebrima Sarr, from the UNESCO Bureau of Strategic Planning, to take the floor to introduce Documents 6 and INF.6 that you have in front of you and which concerns the statement of accounts of the World Heritage Fund. Please, you have the floor.

The Representative of the Bureau of Strategic Planning:

Two sets of Financial Reports are presented under this item:

- the Financial Reports for the 2020/2021 biennium (for your approval) and
- the interim Financial Reports as at 30 June 2023 for the current biennium (for information).

These Financial Reports are presented, consistent with prior periods. Expenditure includes amounts for goods and services delivered in the financial period as well as outstanding legal obligations/commitments at the end of the reporting period.

On the first set of financial reports:

- For 2020/2021 biennium, total income amounted to USD 14.6 million, an increase of 14% compared to the previous biennium. With expenditure of USD 11.3 million, the fund recorded a surplus of USD 3.3 million for the period as of 31/12/2021. The cumulative reserve as at 31 December 2021 amounted to USD 13.4 million.
- With regards to the Implementation of the 2020/21 Biennium Approved budget, expenditure for the biennium amounted to USD 4.8 million, representing an execution rate of 85% of the Approved Budget (compared to an expenditure rate of 87% in the 2018/2019 biennium) which is very similar to prior periods as well.

In addition, the interim Financial Reports of the first 18 months to 30 June 2023 is also presented. It shows an expenditure rate of 65% of the Approved Budget. So, we are on track more or less to achieve similar level of execution at the end of the biennium December 2023. with those brief introduction, Mr Chair, thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. Do we have any comments on this matter? I see Russia. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor followed by the USA.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. We are very pleased to see that you are working as Chair today. I would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Financial Planning Office for these detailed documents and the report. This clearly demonstrates the situation of our fund as of today. I think that our colleagues will agree with me that there has been a great deal of work accomplished here but there is much that remains to be done in order to improve our financial situation.

As a result of illegal unilateral sanctions against the Russian Federation, these sanctions have been introduced by a number of States Parties to the Convention, our country has come up with some technical difficulties which have made it difficult for us to pay our annual contributions to the World Heritage Fund. This means that we have not been able to fully fund the protection of a number of sites and there has been a lack of funding for certain files and a lack of funding for certain priority areas. We need to try to ensure, however, that we have a balanced and effective World Heritage List and consequently funding should be fully provided. The responsibility for this lies on the shoulders of those who have introduced illegal restrictions. The Russian Federation regrets this situation and we would like to express our willingness to pay in a timely manner our contributions.

During the previous session of the World Heritage Committee at the Budget Group meeting, representatives of the Secretariat informed Member States that following the return of the United States to UNESCO it is expected that the financial situation of the World Heritage Fund will improve significantly. We were also pleased to hear yesterday during the intervention by the Ambassador of the United States that the USA is willing to finance some heritage related projects. The head of the American delegation at the General Conference also stated that a large sum will be paid, a voluntary contribution to fund some museums in certain countries. We would like in this connection to underscore to the US delegation which wishes to remain a member of the Convention and has been a member of the Convention, even when the US was not a member of UNESCO, will they be making voluntary contributions to the World Heritage Fund during this period and if so, how much? Also, if I am not mistaken payments had not been made since 2011, will there be some additional payments made to compensate for this?

We hope that projects will focus on priority Africa and also on funds towards the other priority groups such as UNESCO SIDS. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. The United States of America, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr President, and thank you for stepping in today. I appreciate your chairmanship of this important meeting. I think it is absolutely critical that we make sure that we are doing as we said we are going to do yesterday to make sure that there is a good support, especially for those States that have been less able to put forward their

dossier for World Heritage sites. It is something that the US remains very committed to as we said in our statement yesterday.

Since 2001, the US has provided over USD 40 million to 67 States Parties for conservation capacity building training and other preservation activities at their World Heritage Sites, including helping them submit their sites for inscription. We intend fully to continue doing so over the next coming years. As we said in our statement in the General Conference, the US has given USD 10 million in voluntary contributions as part of our package for our return which includes over USD 3 million for a Working Group on cultural preservation in Ukraine as well as a substantial portion for Priority Africa. We have also been very supportive of the Secretariat's proposition which has now been adopted in the General Conference for the use of our partial year 2023 funding to support Priority Africa, consistent with all of the priorities that have been laid out by the World Heritage Committee.

We appreciate very much the support of so many Member States on our return. And as I said yesterday in my statement, we look very much forward to working with all of you on the important issues that are for this Committee. As we have stated previously, our budget request for 2024 to the US Congress contains USD 150 million for UNESCO. This extremely large request continues to be negotiated with the US Congress because we are obviously not yet in 2024, but we have made this request. As we go forward, we will be in a better position to say the exact amount that we will be able to contribute to the World Heritage Fund once we finish those negotiations with Congress. Contributions to the World Heritage Fund, of course, would be consistent with our resumption of contributions overall to UNESCO and we look very much forward to working with the Committee as we go forward. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. The Netherlands, please, you have the floor, followed by China.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Mr Chair. The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank the World Heritage Centre for composing the final financial report of the World Heritage Fund. We are pleased to read that several States Parties had the opportunity to make a voluntary contribution to the World Heritage Fund. We would like to state that we have paid our compulsory contribution to the Convention in 2023 but the amount has been transferred after the statement of assessed contributions was established. Besides the voluntary and compulsory contribution mentioned in this report, a lot of States Parties have a special donor agreement with UNESCO.

The Netherlands is proud to announce that last week the World Heritage Centre and the Netherlands signed a new agreement for four years for the Netherlands Fund-in-trust. Through this fund, we support several projects related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. We focus on improving the regional balance and supporting Member States in the challenges they face concerning their World Heritage Sites and nomination files. In the past 20 years, the Netherlands and UNESCO have supported 55 States Parties, 170 projects for an amount of USD 10 million.

We are looking forward to continued cooperation with UNESCO on this. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. China, you have the floor followed by Togo.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese to French, as the English interpretation is missing for the beginning of this intervention] Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Chine remercie le Secrétariat pour ce rapport détaillé. Le bon fonctionnement du Fond du patrimoine mondial est la garantie fondamentale du bon fonctionnement de la Convention du patrimoine mondial. *[Interpretation from Chinese]* China has always fully supported the implementation of the Convention and the conservation of World Heritage generally. We pay our contributions fully in a timely manner. Also, China plans to provide support to the States Parties and is doing so. This includes African States who we are helping to build their capacities. China partners such as centres and UNESCO chairs have also been provided in various ways.

China is willing to work with all States Parties, so as to continue to contribute to the global work of preserving World Heritage. We particularly wish to focus on building capacities in SIDS and African countries. Thank you. *[end of interpretation from Chinese]*

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Togo, vous avez la parole.

La délégation du Togo :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous vous félicitons pour la façon dont vous avez commencé par gérer nos travaux, nous sommes sûrs d'arriver à bon port. Monsieur le Président, je voulais remercier d'abord le Secrétariat pour ce rapport financier qui nous a été fait. Il est tout à fait clair et nous voulons vraiment remercier le Secrétariat pour cela. Deuxième point, ce serait ce que nous avons vu ici dans le rapport avec des États qui ont doublé leur cotisation. Il y a également des États qui ont versé en sus des contributions volontaires. Nous voulons nous en féliciter et

remercier ces États d'avoir fait ces efforts qui ont permis de soutenir valablement le travail de la Convention et du Fond.

Nous avons par contre une inquiétude quand nous lisons au point 2.c que 60 pays n'avaient pas réglé leur contribution obligatoire. Il en est de même aussi quand nous regardons le point 2.f et la chute de 55,9 % des contributions consacrées au renforcement des capacités. Nous sommes un peu inquiets parce que nous au Togo, en Afrique, on est beaucoup plus demandeurs de renforcement des capacités et nous sommes inquiets de voir que cette partie est un peu descendante.

La question que nous posons sur la première partie : est-ce que le Secrétariat sait à peu près pour le 2.c quelles seraient les obligations ou bien les difficultés que certains États ont eues pour ne pas régler leur cotisation. Soixante pays restent encore redevables, est-ce que le Secrétariat sait à peu près quelles étaient leurs difficultés ? Et sur le point que je viens d'évoquer, concernant la baisse des du renforcement des capacités, qu'est-ce qui explique cette chute si brutale ? Donc, nous serons heureux d'avoir les informations du Secrétariat concernant ces points.

En dernier lieu, nous aurions voulu ajouter des amendements à la proposition du projet de résolution. Je vais vous l'exposer, si vous en êtes d'accord, et si c'est cohérent on pourra peut-être aller dans ce sens. Je vois que le titre du document que nous étudions c'est les comptes et vu qu'il y a des baisses de fonds, des cotisations qui ne sont pas versées et d'autres qui en donnent un peu plus, nous étions partant à l'idée de féliciter ceux qui ont donné plus et d'encourager ceux qui ont des difficultés. Mais nous nous rendons compte que ces éléments sont plutôt reversés dans le point suivant dans le document GA/7, notamment aux paragraphes 4, 5, 6, 7 et 8. Nous nous posons la question de savoir si n'est pas mieux de ramener ces paragraphes sous cette rubrique que nous étudions maintenant, sachant que le titre du Document 7 c'est plutôt fixation des cotisations. La fixation des cotisations ne demande pas forcément de revenir à ces éléments.

Je pense également pour terminer que les éléments qui sont proposés dans ce sens reposent fondamentalement sur les documents financiers et ceux sont les mêmes documents sur le point 6 et le point 7. La proposition c'est donc de voir s'il n'est pas possible de ramener plutôt ces paragraphes-là dans le document que nous allons étudier ici, maintenant. Je vous remercie Monsieur le Président et merci à tous de m'avoir écouté.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much for your intervention. Duly noted. Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair or *takk* as we say in Scandinavian. Sweden contributed in addition to our assessed yearly dues last year with voluntary contributions, something that we are very proud of and we do encourage other Member States to do the same.

We, however, have also noticed the same as was just brought up by the distinguished delegate of Togo that many Member States do not pay their compulsory fees in time and there are, of course, valid explanations for this such as *force majeure*, etc. but those who do not have this explanation we call on all Member States to pay their compulsory fees in time. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your interventions. We had a few questions asked so I will ask the Secretariat to answer those questions. Please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Just very quickly to reply to the questions that were asked by the distinguished delegates. You know when we are reminding States Parties to provide their contributions, they do it. We do not ask them the reason why they are not doing it. Our duty is to remind that is important according to their obligation to do it. So, we continue to encourage those who have not paid the dues to do it, so that we can continue functioning and implementing the World Heritage Convention. I believe there are different reasons that States Parties have and it is very difficult from the Secretariat's point of view to give you an explanation of the reason why they have these difficulties.

Also, the distinguished delegate of Togo asked another question regarding the human capacities. If you recall this sub account that was created, it is based on voluntary contributions. Of course, our call today is again to encourage you, and strongly encourage you, to provide us this voluntary contribution, so that we can reinforce the human capacities and then we can continue to provide you with the assistance that you need for reinforcing capacities in your respective countries to monitor your State of conservation of your World Heritage properties, to conduct training and everything and to be at your service every day in order for you to really implement the World Heritage Convention as you wish. We need your voluntary contribution. That is what I can say in order to reply.

We thank all the delegations and Her Excellency the Ambassador of the USA for I would say the commitment but also the good news that we might hear very soon and we are really looking forward to it. We thank the Netherlands also for renewing a four-year support to the World Heritage Convention and we thank China and Sweden for their

interventions. Thank you, Mr chairperson, I do not know if the colleagues would like to add on what I have said. Thank you.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much Mr Chair. Not much to add. I think we can only confirm that when we send out the bills these are expected to be paid, it is the obligation of the Member States to pay. However, we do inform of arrears. If we are requested to provide information, we do also provide advice on payments if any Member State has difficulties, then we provide options and we work closely and consult with all Member States to ensure that the technical ability is facilitated for payment. We do not go into the reasons for why payment is not made, of course. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for those clarifications. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Il y avait une suggestion de notre collègue du Togo et je souhaiterais savoir l'avis du Secrétariat. Parce qu'en effet les deux points 6 et 7 sont liés, mais d'habitude les paragraphes dont notre collègue a parlé de 4 à 8 sont toujours dans ce point-là, depuis les sessions précédentes. Maintenant, on doit savoir si vous allez suivre cette suggestion ou pas parce que cela change aussi le débat. Il y a des choses que j'allais soulever dans le point suivant. Si la décision va changer dans le point 6, on va le soulever maintenant. Donc, je souhaite savoir si la suggestion du Togo est acceptée ou pas. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for bringing up that important matter. I pass the floor to the Secretariat for clarification on that. Thank you.

Le Secrétariat :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je crois que de ce que j'ai compris vous êtes en train de discuter du point 6 de l'Agenda et vous discuterez du point 7 de l'Agenda. Et donc, à partir du moment où vous avez ouvert la discussion sur le point 6 de l'Agenda un projet de résolution vous a été proposé. Mais je prends le commentaire du distingué délégué du Togo et de l'État de Palestine comme une proposition pour que, à l'avenir, les deux points soient peut-être mis ensemble. Cela veut dire qu'à la prochaine Assemblée générale nous allons mettre les deux points ensemble. Nous allons discuter avec les la directrice de BFM aussi et BSP sur la manière dont peut traiter cette question. Nous le prenons dans ce sens-là. Merci beaucoup.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Just to try to clarify. Item 7 is the determination of the amount of contributions to the World Heritage Fund looking forward. The proposal under Item 7 is to set the 1% that is currently being paid as a number that will be applicable unless otherwise decided. Therefore, in my view, Item 7 and this paper will not be required in the future unless a change is proposed to be made. We will only have Item 6. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I suggest that we move forward discussing Item 6 and the Draft Resolution now. I see no more questions and comments, so I invite you to adopt the Draft Resolution **24 GA 6**, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Resolution proposed.

The Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I have not any received amendments for this Draft Resolution. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments or questions? I see Burkina Faso.

La délégation du Burkina Faso :

Merci, Monsieur le Président pour votre leadership en ce qui concerne la gestion des débats. Je voulais simplement réagir sur la question des contributions volontaires. Et déjà depuis hier les débats ont porté aussi sur l'inégalité, enfin le déséquilibre, en termes de représentativité des régions. Je tiens ici à saluer tout le travail aussi qui est fait pour pouvoir aider un tant soit peu les pays africains à avoir des sites inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Mais il est quand même assez triste de voir qu'en terme de contribution volontaire les pays africains sont souvent absents et même très souvent absents à l'appel.

Je ne me fais pas donneur de leçon, mais je pense que ce serait bien qu'au niveau africain il y ait une exhortation aussi de nos gouvernements à contribuer de façon volontaire à ce fond qui profite véritablement aussi à tous les pays et notamment aux pays africains. Je pense que c'est aussi une tribune où il faut qu'individuellement et collectivement on puisse inciter et exhorter nos gouvernements à aller vers une contribution. Ce qui va permettre

à notre institution de pouvoir réagir véritablement et puis aider tout le monde plutôt que l'on se retrouve dans des situations où l'on ressemble plus à des demandeurs que à des personnes qui participent véritablement à la vie de l'institution.

Donc, c'est un appel que je lance à tous et je pense qu'au sortir de ces travaux, chacun en retournant au niveau de son pays, peut essayer de voir comment faire du lobbying ou bien du plaidoyer auprès des différents gouvernements pour que l'on soit plus présent sur cette Liste et contribuer aussi à la vie de notre institution. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. And we recognize your important remarks. Ambassador of India, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving us an opportunity to speak. I was also present during the discussions that happened at Riyadh regarding the budget. There were two or three very interesting statistics because we are repeatedly talking about capacity building. Actually, if we look at the information which is available on the World Heritage Centre website, it says that as of now you have 26 States Parties who do not have a single site on the World Heritage List, 37 or 38 of them have only one and more than 100 have 10 or less. Which means about 167 States Parties have a considerably low proportion of the sites on the World Heritage List. Now, what it means is that there are several reasons behind it, but one of the fundamental reasons is the capacity building which is the point I think repeatedly other States Parties have also pointed out.

I think when the budget was being presented there was a very startling revelation that came across. Even though, as the report which was presented indicated, there is a marginal increase in the funds that we are receiving which is encouraging. But the point is that when the evaluator services are happening and the budget is allocated for them. The two Advisory Bodies which are evaluating are getting a substantial share. I think if I am not mistaken, I am saying out of my memory, USD 1.8 million is for ICOMOS and about USD 1.45 for IUCN, but it is only USD 260 or 270,000 which is actually earmarked for ICCROM, which is for capacity building.

I think this is where we need to substantially increase the share because if the Advisory Bodies are looking into the aspects of capacity building that is where we need to enhance the funds to be provided so that specific programmes whether it is for African nations, SIDS or other such Parties who need this kind of a hand holding, these programmes can be initiated for them. This is a comment basically for the Secretariat and the World Heritage Centre to note. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you and I will close the floor for further comments and move to the Draft Resolution. Do we have any comments on that? United Kingdom, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you, Chair. United Kingdom would like to support the recommendation made by the gentleman from India. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I suggest we go paragraph by paragraph and adopt the decision. So, paragraph 1. Actually, we have a proposal to adopt as a whole. So, please, can we proceed to adopt as a whole? Adopted ^[gave].

7. DETERMINATION OF THE AMOUNT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 16 OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION // FIXATION DU MONTANT DES CONTRIBUTIONS AU FONDS DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL CONFORMÉMENT AUX DISPOSITIONS DE L'ARTICLE 16 DE LA CONVENTION DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Documents: WHC/23/24.GA/7

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.7

Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution: 24 GA 7

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

We now turn to the examination of Item 7 which concerns the Determination of the amount of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund. You have the relevant documents in front of you.

I now invite the Director of the World Heritage Centre to take the floor and introduce Documents 7 and INF.7. Please, the floor is yours.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Merci Monsieur le Président.

Le point 7 de l'ordre du jour concerne l'Article 16 de la Convention du patrimoine mondial selon lequel l'Assemblée générale des États parties détermine le montant des contributions au Fonds du patrimoine mondial sous la forme d'un pourcentage uniforme applicable à tous les États parties.

Le point 7 traite également du suivi de la Résolution de la dernière Assemblée générale **23 GA 8**.

Si vous le permettez, Monsieur le Président, je souhaiterais donner la parole à la Chef du Bureau de la gestion financière, Mme Bona, afin qu'elle présente la première partie du document, celle relative à la détermination du montant des contributions des États parties.

The Chief Financial Officer:

Part one of Document 24/GA/7 deals with the determination of the amount of States Parties' contributions:

The amount to be paid by the States Parties to the Convention represents a percentage of their contributions to UNESCO. Since the first General Assembly of States Parties in 1976, this percentage has been fixed at 1%, which is the maximum figure allowed by the text of the Convention.

Insofar as all the discussions over the last 15 years on the viability of the World Heritage Fund have shown an interest in increasing the resources of the Fund, which makes a decision to lower the percentage unlikely at this stage, and in order to harmonise the approaches between the Conventions, it is proposed to this General Assembly to retain this percentage of 1% and to maintain it in the future, as has been the case for several years for the Intangible Heritage Fund under the 2003 Convention.

As I mentioned in the previous response that I gave this would mean that we do not have to come back regularly to confirm this unless there is a request from the members to change this percentage. Thank you.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

La Partie deux du document 24.GA/7 concerne le suivi de la Résolution **23 GA 8** prise par cette même Assemblée en 2021. Dans cette Résolution **23 GA 8**, l'Assemblée générale des États parties avait recommandé – je cite – que « les États parties, lorsqu'ils présentent des propositions d'inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, contribuent à soutenir financièrement le système d'évaluation des propositions d'inscription par les Organisations consultatives par le biais du mécanisme de contributions volontaires à un sous-compte dédié du Fonds du patrimoine mondial, établi par la Décision **43 COM 14**, sans préjudice au paiement des contributions annuelles ».

Le document fait donc état du nombre de pays à revenus élevés ou à revenus moyens-élevés, ou d'entités domiciliées dans ces pays, qui ont versé des contributions au sous-compte dédié à l'évaluation des propositions d'inscription pour les cycles d'évaluation débutant en 2022 et en 2023. Nous avons donc 8 contributeurs pour le cycle 2022 et 8 pour le cycle 2023.

Vous trouverez le projet de Résolution en Partie trois du Document 7.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. Do we have any comments on this Agenda item? Yes, I see Palestine. Please, you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Monsieur le Président, en effet, comme je l'ai dit les deux points sont liés. La première partie est aussi liée au point d'avant soit les contributions des États Parties. Je suis heureux de dire que nous avons deux années d'arriéré et cela a été payé hier, donc nous n'avons plus d'arriéré. Concernant la deuxième partie, l'idée et aussi la décision étaient bien négociées, mais pour les mesures concernant les arriérés on parlait à cette époque-là des arriérés volontaires.

I will continue in English. We were talking about voluntary arrears and that is why in the second part you see that we have a mention saying "without detriment to the protection of States that cannot pay for causes beyond their control" which means the arrears that are not voluntary they are not concerned by all these issues.

Now, the other issue. I would like to thank the distinguished delegate of the US for the clarification that she has given us and for the intention that the US will cover in the future their arrears. We thank them so much for this. We

note that there have been some contributions to the sub-account, but we are looking forward to see part of the arrears covered by the US as well as others concerned States Parties.

Now, I have a question maybe to BFM. In the figures for the World Heritage Fund, the contribution of States Parties, we notice strange things. When we look at the first part which is in theory compulsory contribution, just to remind everybody the assets contribution includes compulsory and voluntary contributions as you know, but here the first column is the total unpaid or advance, isn't it? Then, there are the contributions assessed for 2023 and then the payment received in 2023.

I would like to ask a question regarding one case in these figures. It is the case of Israel where we see in the total unpaid USD 131,513 and then when we look on the contributions assessed for 22-23 it is about 29 something, almost USD 30,000. Now, if we look at the end of the last column, we notice that the last payments have been made in 2011. Where is the total amount of arrears? We do not see it? Could you please explain this figure? This is the first question.

The second question is almost the same, but it is for the assessed voluntary contributions in the last page. You will see the case of the USA as well. Same remark. The first column it is the assessed contributions for 2018 and 2019 and the second for 2020-21 then 2022-23 and that's it. It does not cover the period 2011-2018. Could you please clarify this? Thank you so much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. I will pass the floor to BFM, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much for that question. I must say I am a little bit puzzled by the first question because for me the total amount that is unpaid, as at the end of last year for Israel, if you look specifically at that figure if you add that to the total amount that is unpaid billed, but unpaid for 22-23 the total unpaid is USD 161,000.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

USD 161,000. Tell me the contribution for one year? How much is it?

The Secretariat:

It is not a contribution for one year it is the total unpaid.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

The total unpaid since 2011?

The Secretariat:

The total unpaid to end 2021 is USD 131,000 the amount billed and as yet unpaid for the current biennium is USD 29,994.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Okay.

The Secretariat:

The sum of those two figures is USD 161,000.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

For this case it is clear. The second case.

The Secretariat:

The second case. You will recall there has been a lot of discussion on how we present these assessed voluntary contributions, especially the past contributions. We are not adding up the total amount that you see across different columns here. We are providing you with a biennium view of what has been paid and not paid. In this table that you have at the end of the document, it shows the amounts billed in 2018-19, 20-21 and 22-23, and the amounts received, if any, in the same Biennia. We are not providing a cumulative total. Of course, in previous biennia there have also been amounts that have been billed and may or may not have been paid by these 13 countries.

Since the beginning of time, this is a long accumulation to keep track of. Some of the data that we have, we discussed this at a previous session as well, is not as reliable as what we have today. But we do not have a timeline that provides you with the outstanding since the beginning of time. We bill on an annual basis and biannual basis we show you the arrears, discretionary arrears in this case, that are recorded against the 13 countries that pay assessed voluntary contributions. But we are not adding this up as a cumulative of the three biennia that we are providing a view of. This is just reported to you as three separate biennia.

The Chairperson:

Palestine, for a brief question, please.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Yes, very, very quickly. I understand fully that you present these three biennia and what about the others? This is the question as the due amount since 2011 is still due. So where can we see it? For all of the other cases we have the total amount finally. But, here, we do not have neither the total amount, nothing about 2011 till 2018. So, how can you explain this? Why this absence? This is my question. For the compulsory, you put everything and we know what is the total amount. Thank you.

The Secretariat:

It is my understanding of what we have agreed to report to you. There are other figures that can also be reported when it comes to a definition of whether they are discretionary or other arrears. This is for legal to take a view on. I have figures beyond 2018-19 and those can be shared.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Thank you for the explanation. I hope that at the next session we can see all the arrears covering the whole period which will be informative for States Parties. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions and comments. I therefore invite you to adopt the Draft Resolution **24 GA 7** but before doing so I wish to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

The Rapporteur:

Mr Chairperson, thank you. I have not received any amendments for this Draft Resolution. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Okay. Can we please put the Draft Resolution on the screen for adoption? Thank you. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Thank you. I have a very slight amendment on Paragraph 6. If you want to proceed by paragraph or if you want to go only to Paragraph 6 to find the amendment. It is very, very short, one word only.

The Chairperson:

Please, Palestine, can I ask you to explain your amendment?

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

It is very, very simple. In Paragraph 6 it reads "Recalls in this regard that the payment of asset contributions to the World Heritage Fund is [here we add] a legally binding obligation". I would like just to add the words "legally binding". It is already a legal obligation it becomes legally binding. This is the amendment. And just to make it clear that it is to insist, to emphasise on the character of obligation. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I propose that we adopt paras 1 through 5, first, and then we open for comments on para 6 thereafter. Are we ready to adopt paragraphs 1 through 5? I see no objections ^[gave].

And then paragraph 6, do we have any comments on the suggested amendment? I see none ^[gave].

Paragraph 7, do we have any comments on para 7? I see none ^[gave].

Finally, para 8, do we have any comments? I see none ^[gave].

I hereby declare **24 GA 7** adopted ^[gave]. And I declare Agenda Item 7 closed. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr President. We appreciate the adoption of this Resolution by consensus. The US dissociates from the changes made in Paragraph 6. Our position on voluntary assessed contributions is long-standing and well-known and we repeat and reiterate our long-standing position. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that and I will ask the Secretariat to make that clear in the report.

8. UPDATING OF THE POLICY DOCUMENT ON CLIMATE ACTION FOR WORLD HERITAGE // MISE À JOUR DU DOCUMENT D'ORIENTATION SUR L'ACTION CLIMATIQUE POUR LE PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Documents WHC/23/24.GA/8

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.8

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution **23 GA 8***

The Chairperson:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is now time for us to review Item 8 of our Agenda, which pertains to the updating of the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage, contained in Documents WHC/23/24.GA/8 and /INF.8 that have been distributed to you.

As a reminder, the updating of the 2007 Policy Document on the impacts of climate change on World Heritage properties was requested by the Committee at its 40th session in 2016.

After having been endorsed by the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session in 2021, the draft updated Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage was presented to the General Assembly at its last session in 2021, which decided by Resolution **23 GA 11** to establish an Open-ended Working Group, with the mandate to review and develop its final version taking into account Decision **44 COM 7C**, as well as proposals for its effective implementation, for consideration by the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties.

To this end, I have the pleasure to welcome Ms Carolina Diaz Acosta, who has been chairing the meetings of this Open-ended Working Group since January 2023, and who will now present the Report of the Open-ended Working Group.

Dear Ms Diaz Acosta, you have the floor.

The Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties on World Heritage and Climate Change (Ms Carolina Diaz Acosta, Colombia):

Dear Ambassadors and distinguished Delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I am delighted to address you today within the framework of the 24th session of the General Assembly of State Parties to the World Heritage Convention, regarding the work of the Open-ended Working Group of State Parties on World Heritage and Climate Change, established in accordance with Resolution **23 GA 11**.

As you all know, this Open-ended Working Group was established following the debates held by this General Assembly two years ago in November 2021, with a clear mandate: to develop the final version of the Policy Document and proposals for effective implementation of the Document.

The Open-ended Working Group formally commenced its work on 22 March 2022 and held a total of eight meetings throughout 2022 and 2023, both in-person and online to allow the participation of all experts worldwide and be as inclusive as possible on this crucial matter.

I have had the honour to preside over the work of this Open-ended Working Group since January this year after the appointment of our elected Chairperson H.E. Ms Yvette SYLLA, as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Madagascar. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for the conduction of the three first formal meetings of the group, that led to important advances in the discussion of the document.

I warmly thank my colleagues of the Bureau - my fellow Vice-Chairpersons - Australia, Madagascar, Lebanon and Poland; and our dear Rapporteur Ms Barbara ENGELS from Germany; as well as the Secretariat, for their constant support and collaboration throughout this lengthy process. I also wish to express a word of gratitude for the State Parties of Australia, Azerbaijan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their generous support to the organization of our meetings.

And last, but not least, I would like to highlight and express gratitude for the diligent efforts of all the diplomats and technical advisors of the Member States of the working group. They actively participated in the numerous informal meetings convened by our esteemed colleagues from the Netherlands and Chile, demonstrating remarkable compromise in the pursuit of consensus. The resultant text is poised to be of considerable utility to the international community in combating the deleterious effects of climate change on our world heritage sites.

Dear colleagues,

Today, I stand before you to provide an in-depth report on the development of the updated Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage. This document is a response to the ever-increasing impact of climate change on our World Heritage properties, that could undermine their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

Let's rewind to 2007 when a Policy Document aimed at addressing the impacts of climate change on World Heritage was initially adopted. It was an essential step in recognizing the growing challenge posed by climate change. However, the world of climate science and policy has evolved significantly since then, and it was recognized in 2016 by the World Heritage Committee that the time had come for a comprehensive review and update of the existing Policy Document. The aim was simple but crucial - to ensure that the Policy Document is in sync with the latest knowledge in order to empower the World Heritage community to make informed decisions and take effective action in the face of the impacts of climate change.

The process leading to the updated Policy Document brought to you today involved extensive consultations with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and the valuable input of international Technical Advisory Group of experts meticulously identified by State Parties through the UNESCO Electoral Groups. The commitment to an inclusive and thorough process was evident, culminating after a 2-year process in the endorsement of a draft updated Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage by the World Heritage Committee in 2021. However, this was not the end; it marked the beginning of another decisive phase in the development of the Document. Indeed, at its extended 44th session in 2021, the World Heritage Committee recognized the significance of the updated Policy Document and endorsed it, while also seeking further consultation with Committee members on three specific points.

The Committee emphasized the importance of aligning it with other relevant agreements and frameworks. At the same time, it was recognized that the Policy Document should not impose additional obligations on State Parties under these agreements, but rather serve as a non-binding "guiding document" to complement and enhance the implementation of climate action within the World Heritage framework.

As part of the process, at the end of March 2022, a Panel of experts was convened online. This Panel has been invaluable in its contributions, and its findings were brought forward to the Open-ended Working Group.

During its numerous meetings, the Open-ended Working Group reviewed the draft Policy Document text stemming from the Panel of experts. As the World Heritage Committee had endorsed the draft updated Policy Document, most of the paragraphs had not been subjected to any amendment during their examination by the World Heritage Committee. Therefore, they were all deemed relevant by both the Panel of experts and the Open-ended Working Group. Hence, the Group focused only on the paragraphs where Committee Members had proposed amendments and that had been identified by the Panel of experts as having significant implications for the Policy Document and on which it had made specific recommendations. I will come back to this matter later in my presentation.

Dear colleagues,

As many of you have witnessed, the process involved intense discussions and exchanges of ideas. It was also made very clear at the start of the discussions that this Policy Document would not be legally binding, and that nothing in this Document should be understood as an interpretation of any of the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC and of the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC.

The task of finalizing this Policy Document was made complex by the fact that while the Document needed to be aligned with international agreements and guidance regarding climate change, it needed to address, at the same time, its implications for World Heritage properties. Questions were raised regarding some of the proposed alignments of the Policy Document with relevant international climate agreements. Members of the Working Group debated whether it was necessary to include references to all the principles expressed in the Paris Agreement. Some expressed concerns about any potential misinterpretations of the international agreements, emphasizing the need to stay within the realm of the World Heritage Convention.

- Additionally, the Working Group grappled with the inclusion of references to CBDR-RC, "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities", and the appropriate place within the Policy Document for such references. Some argued for widespread inclusion, while others preferred a more limited reference.
- References to the precautionary approach were another topic of debate. Many members were in favor of including such references, aligning with the recommendations of the Panel of experts. However, discussions on the appropriateness of these references resulted in a consensus to include this approach in one of the Guiding Principles of the Policy Document as encouragement, and not as a firm request.
- The level of implementation of the Policy Document was also debated. While some members found it challenging to include references to the international level, the Working Group followed the recommendation of the Panel of experts, retaining references to this international level to ensure a comprehensive implementation of the Policy Document, in order to also acknowledge the importance to transnational and transboundary World Heritage sites.

- Moreover, the Working Group discussed the prospects of climate change. Some emphasized the urgency to act within this decade, citing growing evidence of climate change's impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties, while others questioned the certainty of these impacts and advocated for a more cautious approach.
- The Working Group also discussed the crucial enabling conditions that support the feasibility of adaptation and mitigation options. These included resource mobilization, technology transfer, institutional capacity, multi-level governance, and changes in human behavior and lifestyles.
- The Working Group finally recognized the necessity of a Glossary with the most up-to-date definitions to be made available on the World Heritage Centre's webpage as a valuable educational resource.

Dear colleagues,

I wish to warmly acknowledge the Working Group members who engaged in constructive exchanges and demonstrated deep commitment and interest in this Convention at every meeting. While our discussions were at times passionate, as is customary when addressing matters of principles and values, together with highly technical aspects, we always kept our mandate in mind and consistently sought a path to consensus.

As I mentioned earlier, some members of the Working Group had submitted amendments concerning paragraphs that were not under discussion, including some substantial changes. The review of such amendments being out of the scope of the Working Group mandate, it was agreed by the Group that the concerns raised by these amendments would be reflected in the supporting document and in my report to this General Assembly, as part of the contribution of the Working Group. I would like to express my gratitude to the State Parties concerned, for their trust and constructive spirit in agreeing with this process.

Numerous amendments proposed by these members of the Group on paragraphs not open for discussion aimed at better aligning the Policy Document with the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement adopted under it, to recall the principles, set out. The objective of doing so was also to encourage working in synergies and not in silos, especially on issues such as mitigation, adaptation, emissions, financing, and governance. The members proposing such amendments recalled that the language or terminology used in the Paris Agreement was most of the time pre-conditioned to other aspects and could not be only partly used in the Policy Document. They were of the view that this language or terminology should therefore be either replicated fully in the Policy Document or simply deleted from the paragraphs not to risk any contradiction between the Policy Document and the Paris Agreement. However, with the addition of a reference to an article of the 2017 UNESCO Declaration on the Ethical Principles in relation to climate change, many of these concerns have, in fact, been addressed. More detailed information can be found in the related supporting Document 24.GA/8.

While considering the sensitivity of the issues addressed, I took my responsibilities to heart and made every effort to facilitate and encourage consensus in every possible way, recognizing the difficulties and obstacles that lay ahead in developing this text. It became clear that achieving such a consensus could only be accomplished through the most open and inclusive approach possible, embracing all the opinions of the State Parties. With this approach in mind, the text remained flexible throughout the drafting process, and various contributions from Working Group members, including through numerous informal discussions between meetings, were always welcomed and encouraged. Throughout this process, the Working Group members collectively demonstrated flexibility in their positions, and explored all possibilities, throughout this extensive and thorough process, to favour consensus. This consensus was achieved.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants of the Working Group – the State Parties who worked so hard to consult with their experts to show flexibility to help us arrive at consensus.

As you are all well aware, the Open-ended Working Group has met eight times since our last General Assembly to fulfil its important mandate. Each of its successive 8 meetings has been the stage of more intense and richer debates than the previous one, leaving regretfully no time for the Open-ended Working Group to fully discuss and develop proposals for the effective implementation of the updated Policy Document.

As a discussion-starter, the State Party of Australia presented a non-paper on this matter to the members of the Working Group, and the Secretariat recalled the Policy Document implementation measures already adopted by the World Heritage Committee, in Decision **44 COM 7C**, at its extended 44th session in July 2021, which the General Assembly may wish to consider.

Dear colleagues,

Despite the humps and bumps that may have marked our journey, I am really pleased, in the name of the Open-ended Working Group, to announce that we agreed on a consensual text of the Policy Document, the result of constructing balances and compromises on all these highly sensitive issues. This text is presented to you in the Information Document 24.GA/INF.8.

I am the first to admit that the outcome of this work is not a perfect text from a literary perspective, nor will it fully satisfy everyone. However, it has the merit of representing the consensus of the many opinions expressed after long hours of debate and exchanges among State Parties. In this regard, I want to emphasize that this fragile

balance deserves to be recognized and preserved to avoid undermining the overall cohesion and the very existence of the text, which could disrupt the consensus reached. Consensus has been reached.

To conclude my report, I am confident that the General Assembly will see the positive outcomes of the work of the Open-ended Working Group and that the text recommended will remain as a cornerstone adopted by all State Parties to the World Heritage Convention. This updated Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage represents six years of work. Meanwhile, climate change is continuing its assault on World Heritage properties. I do hope that you will agree with me that it is time to adopt this Document finalized by the Working Group as a consensus text.

I believe that we can all take pride in this coherent text on which all actors of the World Heritage Convention can rely in the future to contribute to the protection and preservation of our World Heritage, especially at the start of the next 50 years of this flagship Convention.

Thank you for your attention.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Miss Diaz Acosta for this presentation. I also wish to thank you on behalf of everybody in the room for your considerable and committed hard work towards one of the most important issues in our lifetime. Thank you.

Now, dear colleagues, I would like to add that the Policy Document presented to you and that we are about, I hope, to adopt is the result of a consensus that has been built in the course of the eight meetings of the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties as clearly explained by Miss Diaz Acosta and testifies our collective commitment to safeguard the sites of global significance that have shaped the rich tapestry of human history and the breathtaking beauty of our planet's ecosystems. The urgency of the climate crisis cannot be overstated. The impacts of climate change threaten not only our environment but also the very essence of human civilisation. The time to act is now.

Colleagues, are there any comments on the draft updated Policy Document from the assembly? Please, Director of the World Heritage Centre will you read up the list that you have so far? Thank you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Mr Chairperson, I will read the list and those who have heard their name can put their plate down, so that I can get everyone. Brazil, Finland, Greece, China, Colombia, Norway, South Africa, Iceland, the United States of America, the Netherlands, Mexico, Togo, Switzerland, New Zealand, Kenya and Croatia.

The Chairperson:

Please, Director, will you continue the list of speakers?

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Chile, Jamaica, Madagascar, Belgium, Sweden, Nigeria, Barbados, Australia, Japan, Lithuania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ukraine, Tanzania, Mali, Grenada and Sweden. I think I have captured all the speakers.

The Delegation of Switzerland:

I am sorry to take the floor to interrupt you, Mr Chair, but the problem is that Switzerland never raised their flag, so Sweden would like to be placed where you said Switzerland because I know we are very easy to confuse and we are seated next to each other. But Switzerland never raised its plaque, so it is supposed to be Sweden right after a country I did not write it down but I think you have that. Wherever Switzerland is Sweden is supposed to be. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Your suggestion is to swap places?

The Delegation of Switzerland:

No. Switzerland never asked for the floor. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Sorry, thank you. Okay, thank you. We have a very long list of speakers, so I would strongly encourage that you respect the time limit of 3 minutes per intervention, please. We start with Brazil followed by Finland. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much. Ambassador, we want to congratulate you on your extraordinary results, your leadership and your dedication with all of these experts who ceaselessly and tirelessly worked to draft this document. And the result of the Working Group efforts under your leadership is really a triumph for dialogue. We

are also thankful and proud of the work undertaken by Colombia in this most important area and we are looking forward to working together in the future. *[end of interpretation from Spanish]*

We also express our thanks to the delegations of Chile and the Netherlands while acting as facilitators in this process of achieving a consensual document. Brazil believes that the climate emergency makes it urgent to correct the course of development and implement what has already been agreed. Many developed countries have grown based on a model with high rates of climate-damaging gas emissions. However, it is the vulnerable populations of the global South who are the most affected by the losses and damage caused by climate change. That is why we talk about common but differentiated responsibilities.

In the case of heritage, this imbalance is exacerbated by the fact that the countries of the global South are a tiny fraction of World Heritage Sites. That is why Brazil spends so much attention to this discussion because it has the potential to contribute to reducing the historical and geographical imbalances in both domains, climate change action and World Heritage List. In this regard Brazil welcomes the Draft Resolution and reiterates its willingness to work within UNESCO for a fair and equitable implementation of this policy. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Finland, you have the floor, followed by Greece.

The Delegation of Finland:

Thank you, Chair. The World Heritage Convention has raised the flag on this issue as early as in 2005 and has since then constantly worked to understand and mitigate the effects of climate change on World Heritage Sites. As a result of this hard work, we, today, have in front of us the updated Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage. It has been a huge task, and at this point, Finland would like to thank all involved stakeholders for their contribution to the work.

The Document is, as always in these circumstances, a well-balanced compromise carefully drawn up by the Working Group to reach consensus. As such, we have now reached the point when it is time to adopt the Document without further delays. Finland supports the Policy Document and the Draft Decision as it stands. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Finland. Greece, you have the floor, followed by China.

The Delegation of Greece:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, for giving us the floor. We would like to express our appreciation and satisfaction about the updated Policy Document as well as our sincere gratitude to the panel of experts, the Working Group and all those who have participated actively in the discussions held so as to provide with this well-structured and elaborated text on such a complex issue. It is already acknowledged in many different contexts and conventions that climate change constitutes one of the major factors that affect our cultural heritage both tangible and intangible. It is also commonly accepted that effective actions against the impact of climate change must be inclusive from a social point of view and should include new as well as traditional knowledge and technologies.

Towards this direction, the Policy Document provides the necessary framework for planning integrated approaches with the aim to improve cultural heritage resilience to climate change. It introduces a strategic shift towards an innovative and well-structured process on how to obtain information about climate risks, to develop coherent methodologies and most importantly on how to align strategies of different actors or parties, with a view to integrate cultural heritage issues into environmental sustainability and climate policy making at all levels.

At this point, we deem necessary to mention the pioneering role of the World Heritage Convention in highlighting the climate change parameter in regards to heritage protection. Within the Convention procedures, the climate change-related impacts have been recognised as a threat to heritage and as such it has been incorporated into the periodic reporting process already since the second cycle. The Policy Document advocates the need for collaborative approach and international engagement in developing and implementing tools and methodologies that can support climate action for World Heritage properties as well as for better using existing mechanisms such as reactive monitoring and periodic reporting to promote best practice and regional engagement opportunities for climate-related action. For the next stage of this Policy Document, we should reflect on the possible ways in which it will be operational and fully implemented so as to create inclusive and transformative climate actions.

It is a demanding yet inevitable challenge that all countries face including Greece. Our country actively participates in the international debate on the impact of climate change and monuments and has undertaken a number of initiatives in this context, such as the creation of a cultural heritage partnership to enable climate change action in 2019, which has since been adopted by the representatives of 144 countries and received the support of the United Nations, UNESCO, ICOMOS and other international organisations.

Greece has prioritised the need for adaptation efforts and implements a multi-level national programme for the development of adaptation plans and the improvement of resilience to climate change for the country's cultural heritage inscribed on the List or not. Please, note that we are willing to share this experience as well as to join all-

important efforts undertaken within the frame of the World Heritage Convention for the mitigation, adaptation, capacity building and knowledge sharing in the spirit of the Policy Document.

Finally, we would like to fully support the content of the updated Policy Document as well as the Draft Resolution presented to this item. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. China, you have the floor followed by Colombia.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you, Mr Chair. China commends the excellent work of the World Heritage Centre and the Working Group. We would like to thank both Chairs for your excellent leadership. China recognises the efforts made by all Parties to develop this document. We believe that this Document gathers the latest knowledge and consensus in the domain. This Policy Document will be a guide for World Heritage Sites to address climate impacts. Climate change is a serious challenge that we are facing together.

Although the Document does not impose mandatory or restricted requirements on World Heritage Sites, China hopes that all States Parties of the World Heritage Convention will actively implement this Policy Document. We will also take the lead in implementing the relevant requirements of the Document and promote the relevant practices at Chinese World Heritage Sites as an important key study for addressing the climate crisis. China is also willing in engaging, exchanging and cooperating with States Parties in order to safeguard World Heritage that belongs to all humankind.

We would like to reiterate that the main framework of international climate action is the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement which has specific requirements for all Parties. Under the Paris agreement, the goal is to stay below 2° Celsius and to pursue effort to stay below 1.5° Celsius. It does state the principle of CBDR and the concept of NDCs. These are the guiding principles of our climate action.

During the implementation phase of this Policy Document, we should uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Developed countries should provide financial, technical and capacity building support for developing countries in order to address the impact of climate change on World Heritage Sites. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, China. Colombia, you have the floor, followed by Norway.

The Delegation of Colombia: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Chair. Before anything else, we just wanted to thank Carolina Diaz for her excellent work and also for making Colombia proud with this excellent result. At the same time, I should also like to thank the World Heritage Centre Director, Mr Eloundou, and all of the team for all of their work in supporting this most important endeavour. The delegation of Colombia takes this opportunity to commend this consensus building from all parts of the States Parties and in the Open-ended Working Group on World Heritage and Climate Action.

We feel that the discussions have been so constructed that it has enabled us to focus on measures for mitigation and measures for protecting the Outstanding Universal Values of World Heritage Sites which culminates in this updated Policy Document presented here today.

However, we do need to keep working hand in hand. We need to ensure that we have indigenous and local community participation if we are going to have the most appropriate protected biodiversity ecosystem as well as the services they provide and also to have integrated risk assessment measures in place.

We would like to reinforce open access to scientific information which means that scientists from various disciplines need to be on board when it comes to working into policies for protecting World Heritage and climate resilient policies for World Heritage. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, you have the floor, followed by South Africa.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Norway also supports the adoption of the Policy Document as recommended by consensus by the Open-ended Working Group as well as the Draft Resolution as it now stands. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the Chair and the Rapporteur of the Open-ended Working Group for guiding us steadily towards reaching consensus. We finally agreed on an urgently needed and updated Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage.

We would also like to thank the experts panel and the Secretariat for their invaluable support and efforts in this process. It has not been an easy task and we commend all our fellow members of the Working Group for

constructive discussions and for reaching the compromises needed to agree on measures to respond to the effects of climate change, one of the most significant threats to World Heritage.

Let us hope that this lengthy and inclusive process has led to more awareness, stronger commitment and ownership to climate action within the World Heritage context. And that the Policy Document will indeed become an effective tool to guide States Parties, the Committee and the World Heritage properties to enhance protection of natural and cultural heritage through comprehensive climate action measures.

Norway looks forward to starting the implementation of this policy and we will do our very best to put it into action at all levels. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. South Africa, you have the floor, followed by Iceland.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair for giving South Africa the floor. Climate change experts from South Africa participated as members of this Group. By so doing, they have ensured that this policy is aligned to our national policies strategies in protection and conservation of our World Heritage Sites.

Chair, as we consider the option of this final Policy Document today, South Africa supports having a policy in place that deals with issues of climate change in World Heritage Sites. The Policy must be in line with the principles of equity and transparency in the provision of technological and financial capacity, as well as the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and capabilities. Furthermore, the Policy Document must be in line with the aspirations of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, and in our country's context this policy must not be in conflict with the prescripts of our National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy as well as the Climate Change Bill that was recently adopted by our National Assembly on the 24th of October.

Lastly, we consider this Policy Document to be one of the enabling tools for South Africa to more efficiently implement the coming Montreal GBF, the white paper of conservation and sustainable use of South Africa's biodiversity and the biodiversity and ecosystem sector climate change adaptation strategy. It is therefore in South Africa's interest to see how the Policy Document will be translated into practical operational procedures and guidelines for Member States and their experts. We hope that all capacity-building initiatives and training undertaken by the Centre will incorporate these guidelines into training modules.

We further look forward to working together with the centre and the AWHF in developing a handbook that can be handed out to African site managers as a guideline on how to practically implement this recommendation. I thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, South Africa. Iceland, you have the floor, followed by the United States of America.

The Delegation of Iceland:

Thank you, Chair. Iceland thanks the Secretariat for the preparation of the documents and we commend the members of the Working Group and its Bureau for the constructive spirit towards reaching consensus on the updated Policy Document. The current state of climate change, loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use of nature and natural resources put significant threats to our World Heritage. Ensuring sustained and climate aware protection of World Heritage Sites is critical.

Since the adoption of the original Policy Document, our knowledge and understanding of climate change and its impact has evolved in line with the growing urgency of responding to the threats posed. The revision of the Document was therefore necessary for it to clearly reflect the developments and changes made over the past 16 years.

We believe that the consensus text of the Policy Document as presented is well suited to assist us in responding to and mitigating the negative impacts of climate change on World Heritage. Iceland is therefore in favour of the adoption of the text and the Draft Resolution as it stands. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Iceland. The United States of America, you have the floor, followed by Netherlands.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor. United States would like to warmly thank the Chairperson, Ms Carolina Diaz Acosta for her hard work on this project over many years. We would also like to thank the Open-ended Working Group, the Rapporteur, the Secretariat and the World Heritage Centre for the work and invaluable support to help States Parties reach consensus.

This text is not perfect as the Chair has noted. However, the United States welcomes the fragile consensus that has been achieved and calls on all Parties not to reopen the text of the Document or the Resolution, nor to restart

the six-year-long debate on these documents. Nobody has gotten everything that they wanted but everybody has gotten what they need and that is the nature of consensus.

Finally, we would like to thank all the States Parties who took their time, brought their good ideas and participated fully in the informal sessions and discussions. This document was improved by your input and your sincere efforts. I urge everybody to support consensus on this Document and the Draft Resolution as they stand. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Netherlands, you have the floor, followed by Mexico.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor. Climate change is a far-reaching and unavoidable development we have to face as international Community and as guardians of 1,200 World Heritage Sites. It is happening now and it affects us today and it will affect the next generations of "safeguarders" of Heritage Sites. The kingdom of the Netherlands has great concern about the effects of the worldwide climate changes and the future of our heritage. This is why we have supported this project.

Our Kingdom that consists of six Small Island States in the Caribbean and a country in Europe that lies for 26% below sea level is like many others affected by the effects of climate change. Sea levels rise, drought, navigable waterways and heat exhaustion are very important facts of life in our Kingdom. The update of the World Heritage climate policy creates better possibilities to guide and cooperate for finding solutions to safeguard the 1,200 World Heritage Sites we have to take care of.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks UNESCO for preparing this Document and organising this complicated process of connecting climate change and heritage expertise. We would especially like to thank the Ambassadors of Madagascar and Colombia who chaired the Working Group in an excellent way and Ms Barbara Engels for taking up the role as Rapporteur and guiding us through this complicated process. We are glad that so many Member States participated in a positive and constructive way in the discussion we have had in the past year.

In closing, we would like to emphasise that the final version of this Document has been broadly discussed, first by a Panel of experts followed by eight sessions with all the interested Member States. The Netherlands would like to stress that we want to adopt this Document as it is and underlines the importance of consensus reached on this Document by the Working Group. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Mexico, you have the floor, followed by Togo.

The Delegation of Mexico: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, I would like to extend our thanks to the Chair of the Working Group for her hard work over these lengthy sessions that have come up with this final result. Similarly, we would like to thank the endeavour of all the participants particularly those who made special efforts to connect from various time zones around the world.

Mr Chairman, we understand the nature of this topic has led to hours and hours of debate not only here but also in international fora throughout the UN system. In Mexico we feel that it needs to be a key document in guiding our effort both our cultural and natural heritage. For example, building infrastructure is inadequate to cope with damper and more extreme weather events. We feel that the consensual Document that has been largely backed up by experts, including two Mexican experts, is of singular importance. That is why we think that when it comes to climate change and the effect of events such as pandemics is something that duly needs to be taken in consideration when we talk about World Heritage. We also appreciate the efforts made to work on solidarity and reciprocal assistance.

We want to thank the World Heritage centre in all of its efforts to make sure that thanks to this discussion we will finally have more resilient and climate ready public policies. We commend the Working Group on the consensus reached. We know that there is no such thing as a perfect document. Sometimes seeking perfectionism is the enemy of coming out with something very good and this is something very good. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Togo, you have the floor followed by Sweden.

La délégation du Togo :

Monsieur le Président, je voulais dans l'entame de mes propos féliciter le Secrétariat pour le rapport exhaustif qui nous est présenté. Nous avons participé aux débats, aux discussions pendant le groupe de travail. Je peux vous assurer que c'est un travail ardu, très technique qui a été fourni par le groupe de travail. Nous voulons remercier également les experts, le groupe d'experts, qui ont travaillé en amont et dont le soutien n'a jamais fait défaut au groupe de travail tellement ils ont été présents pour nous éclairer dans la suite des travaux.

Madame la Présidente de la commission, du groupe de travail, nous voulons vous féliciter tout particulièrement parce que vous avez géré de manière magistrale et magnifique ce travail complexe afin que nous puissions arriver tous ensemble sur ce sujet très technique à un consensus qui agréé à tout le monde. Monsieur le Président de la commission, nous voulons également remercier tous les pays qui ont facilité les discussions et le travail.

Nous pensons que le document qui nous est soumis est un document assez complet et qui tient compte de tout ce qui a de meilleur actuellement en termes de climat. Nous apprécions vraiment de concentrer sur le patrimoine mondial tous les aspects culturels et c'est ça qui nous intéresse et nous nous en félicitons. Nous soutenons pleinement le projet de décision qui nous a été soumis. Et nous souhaiterions si c'est possible d'applaudir chaleureusement après l'adoption de la décision du projet de Résolution le groupe d'experts, le groupe de travail, le Centre du patrimoine mondial et l'ensemble de l'UNESCO pour le travail fourni actuellement. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Merci beaucoup. Sweden not Switzerland, you have the floor, followed by New Zealand.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. And I think it is a bit reassuring that nothing within the UN system, not even adopting a climate policy, is harder than separating Sweden and Switzerland. We would like to thank the Chairperson also for her excellent stewardship of the Working Group before we start and we consider that the update of the 2007 Policy Document on climate action is long overdue. We pointed this out already at the 44th Committee meeting in Fuzhou. Two years later after two Committee meetings and an Open-ended Working Group with lengthy and fruitful deliberation, six years in total as we have heard many times already today.

Further reflections and continued debate have resulted in a consensual text. This was possible thanks to a constructive approach and great cooperation between Member States despite many dividing issues. This consensual text would not have been possible without the Technical Advisory Group in 2020 and the Panel of experts in 2021 who developed excellent original drafts. It is on their shoulders we stand today and it is to them we owe thanks. We are encouraged by the great number of participating Member States in all of our discussions and their experts in this Open-ended Working Group and we commend all Member States for the great cooperation, in particular the last one held this month.

We therefore firmly support the adoption of this consensual text including the Draft Resolution as it stands. As shown in a report published by UNESCO and IUCN last August, World Heritage properties play a vital role for the conservation of biodiversity. As climate change is accelerating, this Policy will be a significant piece in the puzzle on climate action in a World Heritage context. We look forward to the adoption of the Policy Document at this meeting and to fruitful cooperation in implementing the Policy as of today. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Sweden. New Zealand, you have the floor, followed by Kenya.

The Delegation of New Zealand:

Thank you, Mr Chair and good afternoon colleagues. New Zealand wishes to thank the Open-ended Working Group for its deliberations on this important work as well as those Parties who financially supported the process. New Zealand fully supports the adoption of the Policy Document.

As we know, a significant proportion of World Heritage Sites are affected by climate change. The priority now is for States Parties to implement the policy through adaptation and mitigation measures. We support the proposed guidance on implementation and the intention to amend the Operational Guidelines to translate the policy into operational procedures. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Kenya, you have the floor, followed by Croatia.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you Chair for giving the Republic of Kenya the floor. As this is the first time, we are taking the floor following the Committee election, we wish to express our deepest gratitude for the overwhelming support we received for the candidature of the Republic of Kenya to the World Heritage Committee. The government and people of the Republic of Kenya look forward to serving on the Committee and to working with other Committee members to contribute to striding in the development protection and promotion of World Heritage sites and the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Concerning the update of the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage, the item before us, the Republic of Kenya welcomes the report and outcome of the Working Group to which we were pleased to contribute. As global sea levels rise in addition to unpredictable inclement weather, the forces and effects of climate change are entering the narrative and practice we used to know in the preservation of coastal World Heritage Sites and monuments such as Fort Jesus. The World Heritage Convention therefore provides an avenue through which to take stock of the threats and damage of climate change to our heritage property, community livelihood and natural ecosystem.

Recently, Kenya successfully concluded the first ever African Climate Summit that was held in Nairobi, which demonstrates the effort that Kenya is putting into place to address climate issues globally. The difficulty of climate change could also be an opportunity also to invest in creative actions. Studying the implementation of the Convention provides evolutionary insight to inform our World Heritage practice build on multilateralism and to foster innovative solutions, knowledge sharing and collaboration for climate action and climate change mitigation.

Finally, the result of the Working Group and updates to the Policy Document provides a helpful compass and path through which to invest in solutions for protection of the World Heritage in the face of climate change. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Asante, Kenya. Croatia you have the floor, followed by Chile.

The Delegation of Croatia:

Thank you, Mr President, thank, you Ms Chair. We would like to thank you for your hard work in drawing this exhaustive report together with many Member States. In a globalised world that is constantly changing, humanity today faces unprecedented environmental socio-economic challenges. Along with increasingly rapid climate changes, we are witnessing the loss of biodiversity, extreme natural disasters, pandemics, as well as associated political challenges. Natural hazards compounded by the effects of climate change are causing increasingly impacts on the life of people as well as on our valued World Heritage. The same applies to human induced or anthropogenic hazards either intentional or unintentional that are posing serious threats on the shared cultural or natural heritage of humanity. Disasters do happen and while most cannot be avoided, preparatory measures can mitigate or effectively reduce their impacts.

Furthermore, it has been recognised through experience that heritage itself can contribute towards reducing the effects of disasters in various ways. For example, traditional knowledge systems embroiled in physical planning and construction can be useful for mitigation purposes, as can local weather and land management system and ecological solutions which not only prevent or mitigate the impacts of disaster but also provide coping mechanism to deal with post disaster situations. Cultural properties have also proved to serve as a safe haven for surrounding communities for their temporary relocation during emergency.

In this light, Member States have determined the need of understanding disaster risk to heritage and strengthening the disaster risk governance, enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better and recover, rehabilitate and reconstruct Heritage.

Croatia will continue to support the work of the World Heritage Centre in close dialogue with Member States and to find a holistic approach to sustainable World Cultural, Natural but also Living Heritage and the way how to transmit it to future generations in this context of climate action. Croatia will also make a voluntary contribution for this purpose and for Priority Africa to the World Heritage Fund. Thank you very much and congratulations to all new World Heritage Committee members.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Chile followed by Jamaica. Please, Chile you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, Chile would like to thank and congratulate the Chairwoman, Carolina Diaz Acosta, for her excellent leadership of this Working Group. This is an extraordinary document and we can all be proud that we have some guidance in how to address climate change and its impact on World Heritage.

I secondly wanted to say that Chile can fully endorse the text as it stands. We would like to leave on record that we think that within the principles on climate action, we would like to see the cultural aspect in particular and artists' contributions acknowledged. We do not want to modify the document, which is why we would like to be on record, but we can endorse the document as it stands with no amendments. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Chile. We will make sure that it is noted in the minutes of the meeting. Jamaica followed by Madagascar. Jamaica, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Jamaica:

Thank you, Madame Chair, for giving us the floor. Jamaica thanks the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties and panel of experts for all the work and effort to produce this Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage. As others have indicated, the work of this Group of which Jamaica was involved must be commended as it focused on the issues associated with the impacts of climate change which affects all States Parties globally.

Though the Policy Document is not meant to be legally binding, its value must not in any way be undermined, as its alignment with other international agreements to which Jamaica has been committed is noted.

Jamaica, like many other SIDS has cultural sites and repositories located on our coasts. These are very vulnerable to climate disasters which sometimes range from hurricanes to devastating winds. These threats impact our responsibilities to safeguard our cultural resources. We are thankful for the development of this document which will contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage of our world. We also appreciate the production of the glossary and other guidance tools produced to help us to integrate and implement this Policy in national plans and look forward to the development of other guides. We support the adoption of this Policy and look forward to its mainstreaming in our work for World Heritage. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Madagascar, followed by Belgium. Madagascar, you have the floor, please.

La délégation de Madagascar :

Excusez-moi, j'ai eu un problème de micro, merci, Monsieur le Président. À l'entame de ma prise de parole, je souhaiterais d'abord féliciter les membres du Bureau de cette session pour leur élection ainsi que les membres nouvellement élus du Comité du patrimoine mondial.

Monsieur le Président, la délégation de Madagascar souhaite transmettre les remerciements de Son Excellence Madame Yvette Sylla à l'endroit de Madame Carolina Diaz Acosta pour avoir repris le flambeau lorsqu'elle n'a plus été en mesure de présider les travaux, suite à sa nomination au poste de Ministre des Affaires étrangères de la République de Madagascar. Madagascar salue les efforts acharnés que Madame Diaz Costa a entrepris au profit des travaux du Groupe de travail à composition non limitée. Et par la même occasion, Madagascar adresse également ses remerciements à l'endroit de Madame Barbara Engels dont l'expertise a permis d'éclairer de manière conséquente nos discussions.

Madagascar a suivi avec grand intérêt les réunions. Un travail de longue haleine qui dépasse aujourd'hui le quinquennat et se félicite de l'aboutissement à un texte consensuel bien que fragile en faveur duquel Madagascar plaide pour une préservation.

Monsieur le Président, le changement climatique met aujourd'hui en péril le patrimoine mondial et ceci se fait ressentir dans plusieurs sites du patrimoine mondial à travers le monde. L'heure est désormais à l'action et pour cette raison Madagascar soutient l'adoption du Document d'orientation et du projet de Résolution y afférant et se réjouit déjà de sa mise en œuvre prochaine. Je vous remercie.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. Belgium followed by Nigeria. Belgium, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de la Belgique :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous voudrions également remercier la Présidente du groupe de travail pour avoir dirigé ces travaux de manière aussi efficace. La Belgique a contribué au groupe de travail avec l'un de ses experts. Et nous pouvons témoigner du sérieux, mais aussi de la difficulté de ce travail et nous considérons que ce Groupe de travail et le Document qui nous ait soumis est le résultat d'un bel exercice d'échange et de dialogue.

Comme d'autres l'on dit avant moi, ce texte n'est sans doute pas parfait, certains auront des regrets, peut-être des frustrations, mais c'est un texte de consensus autour duquel nous pouvons tous nous rassembler. Vous l'aurez compris, nous nous joignons à tous les soutiens qui ont déjà été exprimés par rapport à ce Document. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Nigeria followed by Barbados. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving us the floor. Nigeria commends the World Heritage Centre and thanks the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group for the presentation on the updated document. We recall the process starting from 2005 and the adoption in 2007 of the first Policy Document on the Impact of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties by this General Assembly.

While appreciating the experts involved for the huge work done on the consensual text, we are happy by the fact that the amendments took cognizance of the ever-increasing risk of climate change and growth in atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases, loss of biodiversity and other environmental challenges affecting the survival of our planet. It is evident that World Heritage, particularly natural sites and their enhanced conservation arrangements, could contribute ever more to solving part of the global challenge of climate change.

We therefore reckon with the guiding principles proposed in the updated Policy Document which encompasses the multidisciplinary four Ps of sustainable development: People, Planet, Peace and Prosperity. And detail how the four goals of climate risk assessment, climate adaptation, climate mitigation and knowledge sharing capacity building awareness could be complemented by States Parties by 2030 and beyond.

Indeed, we have before us a crucial document which, if properly and adequately implemented, can assure the sustainability and integrity of the principles of the 1972 Convention. The policy framework is indeed a renewed opportunity to explore the conservation as a veritable instrument to contribute sustainably to the planetary sustainable development.

We therefore ask the World Heritage Centre and this Committee of Member States to move beyond noting the updated policy but to appropriate this, the content for local climate action for our existing sites, while being mindful of future nomination to the List. Nigeria who participated in a Working Group hopes for its adoption and recommend its use as a normative guiding document for local operational procedures as prescribed in the Policy. I thank you, Mr Chair, again.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Nigeria. Barbados followed by Australia. Barbados, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Barbados:

Thank you, Mr Chair. At the onset, Barbados would like to commend the Working Group for what is actually an excellent Document. We think it is a path along a journey which began for many people a long time ago. We recall the Rio conference in 1992 and the compendium of multilateral environmental agreements which included climate change, plant degradation and the Convention on Biological Diversity. One must understand that if from 1992 till now it has been quite a long time, therefore the journey for this good Document is not very long in the context of time.

It is important to have these things integrated into laws, planning and development. This Document is at home in the socially human sense commission or the natural sense commission of the General Assembly. In addition to the Document being what we expect it to be, we will abide by the content of this Document. We seek to integrate these things into our planning.

It is important to keep sustainable development, climate change and biodiversity loss in the context of planning or in the context of designing. While we wait for the perfect document, Small Island States still have to develop and integrate and manage on a day-to-day basis. There are several things within this document which we will use to guide and enhance our development. It is not necessary to reach development agreement and documents like this in order for us to pursue things.

Another important point as far as this is concerned is the financial mechanism. Very often we talk about implementation and policy strategies with very little financial endorsement. Barbados and the government of Barbados recognize that and it is for that reason that our Prime Minister, Mia Amor Mottley, has tabled the Bridgetown initiative which seeks to look for a new architecture in financial management and financial planning. We want to earn our way. We are not looking for handouts and this Document will go a long way in complementing what we are trying to do at the international level. It coincides with all the agreements we have signed on to environmentally, and we welcome this document. We commend its acceptance without any amendments. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Barbados. Australia, you have the floor, followed by Japan. Please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. This is the first time I am addressing this General Assembly. On behalf of Australia, I would like to congratulate all new members elected to the World Heritage Committee this week. Australia would also like to commend States Parties for the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage Centre in finalising the updated Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage. We like to affirm the importance of reaching consensus on the text of the Policy Document on climate action, so it can be adopted today in this World Heritage General Assembly.

But like others, we would also like to thank very much all those involved in developing and agreeing this document.

In particular, our thanks to the Chair and Rapporteur of the Open-ended Working Group for climate change and World Heritage, Ms Carolina Diaz Acosta, and Ms Barbara Engels for their exemplary leadership and guidance that has allowed us to achieve this successful outcome.

We would also like to give our thanks to the World Heritage Centre and to the Secretariat for their constructive approach and consistency in supporting us to reach our objectives today. We would like to acknowledge all States Parties and their experts, including our own, often up at 2.00 a.m. over many, many years who have worked together to continue to guide us to support and actively participate in the development of this Document. And we would like to acknowledge their unwavering determination to reach a consensus text over those many long years. Australia has been there every step of the way and we look forward to continuing to be there on the next stage of the implementation of this Document.

We join with others in this room in understanding that no one site, no one country can be responsible for climate change. And indeed, no one site, no one country can stand alone as we work together to resolve the impacts on

our global heritage. We recognise the importance of this Document to that end. It provides much-needed guidance and a framework of practical steps and actions to address climate change impacts. And it provides the opportunity for us to go that next stage to work collaboratively on response.

In that regard, we particularly acknowledge the statements from our colleagues from Colombia, New Zealand and South Africa who recognised the importance of indigenous knowledge in our fight against climate change. The need for us to work together on the implementation and the need to work on capacity building and sharing of knowledge. And we remain engaged and committed to those ends.

We see that this provides much-needed guidance in a framework of practical steps. While the next text is not perfect, we ask States Parties to agree today to this consensus as proposed. Its successful adoption is vital for ensuring we can take strong action to address the significant threat of climate change that affects so many of our sites globally. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Japan, you have the floor, followed by Lithuania.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, Chair. I am trying to be very brief. Japan appreciates the achievement from Madame Ambassador from Colombia and all the people involved in the process. We understand that this Document has been elaborated through long extensive and exhausted discussion for the past several years and to put it in action as soon as possible is now crucial. In this regard, Japan fully supports its adoption as it stands.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Japan would like to underline the importance of interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach for effective implementation. Japan is now supporting the UNESCO project which is designed to develop the early warning system to protect World Heritage sites in Yemen which suffer from climate change-related natural disaster as well as conflict aiming to build more resilient cities. This project is a joint project between disaster risk reduction unit in science sector and cultural sector. This is just one example.

We do hope that the World Heritage Centre will enhance a cross-sectoral approach with other sectors in UNESCO and other organisations to make climate action much more effective in the future at the international level. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Japan. Lithuania, you have the floor, followed by Saint Vincent.

The Delegation of Lithuania:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Lithuania would like to express its appreciation of all the efforts and constructive work done by the Working Group and the emerging spirit of consensus during the preparation process of this Policy Document.

Indeed, it is a very significant tool responding to climate change on World Heritage properties. And the outcomes of this document no doubts will positively contribute to further perspective for the conservation and protection of World Heritage properties and their Outstanding Universal Values.

Lithuania supports the Draft Decision as it stands and we are looking forward to collaborating in disseminating this document as well as taking actions for further implementation of its goals and targets. We are also looking forward to strengthening the collaboration with the States Parties to stimulate development of national policies in the field of climate change for cultural and natural heritage while integrating climate actions and measures set in the document.

Lithuania already pursues its efforts in responding to the climate challenges by taking part in a bilateral initiative on applying the climate vulnerability index for World Heritage Sites in Lithuania. We are looking forward to collaborating with partners in Norway and the James Cook University in Australia developing ability to assess future climate vulnerabilities for cultural heritage-built data sets and take measures for climate change adaptation. We believe that a climate vulnerability index could serve as a very beneficial tool for assessing climate impacts on World Heritage Sites as we move forward to the next phases of implementation and preparation of Operational Guidelines. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Lithuania. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, followed by Ukraine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, first of all, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would like to thank Minister Yvette Sylla from Madagascar and our dear friend Carolina Diaz from Colombia for their courage in taking on the difficult task of chairing the Open-ended Working Group on the Policy Document on climate action on World Heritage properties and for your patience, dear Carolina, to finally reach a consensus. I would also like to thank the Panel of

experts, the Rapporteur and the Secretariat for their constructive contribution. As the President said in her report, the text is not perfect and many of us have made compromises to reach common ground.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the adoption of the Policy Document and the Draft Decision as in the document. Because we are more aware than ever that measures are needed at all levels to protect World Heritage sites from climate action. And the guidelines of the 1972 Convention largely underline this urgency to protect the Outstanding Universal Value and the attributes of the sites. Therefore, this non-binding Policy Document is an inspiring tool to guide and assist States Parties to implement climate actions such as mitigation, adaptation and other actions detailed in the document.

As we have heard from some interventions, States Parties are already committed to start implementing the Policy Document and we call on these States Parties to share their experience and best practices and to encourage establishing, as we now heard from the last speaker, bilateral and sub-regional mechanisms in providing capacity building and expertise. Climate action is a shared task on a global scale and we should all benefit from experiences implemented in a spirit of international cooperation. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Ukraine, followed by Tanzania. Please, Ukraine you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ukraine:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies, of course, Ukraine support updating of the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage. But today in the context of global climate change, I would like to present the Ukrainian part of the serial transnational UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site, Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe. Actually, Ukraine together with Slovakia stood at the origin of this site dedicated to the conservation of the old grove forest of Europe.

The Ukrainian Slavic property Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians inscribed in 2007 has now turned into a pan-European site which includes 93 component parts from 18 European countries, with a total area of about 100,000 hectares. In Ukraine are located 15 clusters which are protected within the seven protected areas. In general, Ukrainian component parts cover over 25% of the entire heritage site and thus Ukraine is the leader both in terms of areas and number of component parts. Global climate change is a huge threat including to pan-European heritage site which is extremely adaptive. But its resilience also has limits. By the way, during the last ice age this species was pushed to the periphery of Europe but after its end, it not only restored its range but also spread to new territory. Modern climate change may have completely different consequences for these species.

However, presently, it is not the climate change but Russian aggression that poses the greatest danger for the Ukrainian component part of the heritage site. The cruel war with the Russian invader is on and its main fighting activity are currently taking place in the east and south of Ukraine. During the last year a new trend of the aggressor has become the destruction of energy and other civil infrastructure near which a significant number of our component parts are located. The fact is that during the war, a large number of employees from the protected area were mobilised, among them dominate rangers which negatively affect the state of property protection. Russian aggression poses serious challenges to the conservation of the Ukraine part of the pan-European heritage site.

I would like to end my speech with words of gratitude. We sincerely thank everyone for their solidarity with the Ukrainian people for the enormous financial assistance, for moral support and constant readiness to help us. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Tanzania, followed by Mali. Please, Tanzania, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving us the floor. Since it is the first time to take the floor in this session, kindly convey our congratulations to Madame Chairperson for being elected and thank you for leading the session. We would also like to congratulate all members elected to the World Heritage Committee.

The United Republic of Tanzania aligns itself with other States Parties in expressing appreciation for the diligent and thorough efforts undertaken by the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties which was created by the General Assembly during its 23rd session. We would also like to express our gratitude to the States Parties of Australia, Azerbaijan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their significant financial contributions towards the revision of this Policy Document concerning the effects of climate change on World Heritage Sites.

Dear Chair, the United Republic of Tanzania expresses heartfelt acknowledgement of the importance of the Policy Document. Consequently, we are pleased to support the conception of formulating recommendations aimed at implementing specific modifications to the Operational Guidelines. These adjustments are important to effectively transfer the concepts outlined in the Policy Document into practical operational procedures.

The United Republic of Tanzania concurs with the suggestion put forth by States Parties and all relevant stakeholders of the Convention to incorporate measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation into policies and plans for risk preparedness. This integration is crucial for safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value of all

World Heritage sites. Moreover, we emphasize the importance of collective endeavours aimed at consistently supporting Africa Natural World Heritage Sites, as they play a significant role in reducing carbon emissions. I thank you, Mr Chair, for your time.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Tanzania. Mali, followed by Grenada. Please, Mali, you have the floor.

La délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Permettez-moi de saluer et féliciter très chaleureusement le Groupe de travail à composition non limitée pour la qualité du travail abattu ayant abouti à l'élaboration de la version finale du document d'orientation sur l'action climatique et le patrimoine mondial, ainsi qu'aux propositions pour sa mise en œuvre effective.

Soulignons que les impacts du changement climatique sur les biens culturels ont été durement ressentis dans les pays de l'Afrique subsaharienne y compris mon pays le Mali depuis années 1970. La perte considérable de l'équilibre écologique dans ces régions est due notamment, premièrement aux facteurs biophysiques, climat rigoureux, températures élevées, pluviométrie faible et erratique, longues périodes de sécheresse récurrentes, baisse de la fertilité des sols et j'en passe.

Deuxièmement, aux facteurs anthropiques exploitation anarchique et abusives des ressources botaniques et halieutiques, croissance démographique mauvaises pratiques culturelles, feux de brousse surpâturage, braconnage, entre autres. Ce facteur impacte lourdement sur la préservation et la protection du patrimoine culturel bâti au Mali en particulier et dans le sahel en général.

Cela se manifeste concrètement entre autres par : premièrement, la perte de la qualité des matériaux traditionnels de construction, l'ensablement rapide avec comme corollaire la perte rapide de l'élasticité de l'argile qui est indispensable à la préservation de toute architecture en terre battue. Deuxièmement, la raréfaction des ressources naturelles telles que le bois de construction ou pire encore le déplacement forcé des personnes ressources détenteurs de savoir-faire faire traditionnel qui ont permis la construction et la préservation des dits patrimoine bâti.

Au regard de ce paysage peu reluisant. Il était indispensable d'agir. Ainsi au Mali, nos autorités compétentes ont entrepris diverses initiatives relatives notamment à la mise en œuvre de politique en matière de paysage intelligent, l'exploitation intégrée optimisée des ressources naturelles dans les activités agro-silvo pastorale. De même il est important que l'ensemble de nos efforts, décision, et résolution s'inscrivent exclusivement dans le cadre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial. En tout état de cause, nous soutenons les recommandations incluant le transfert de technologie ainsi que la capacité institutionnelle la gouvernance à plusieurs l'échelle et les changements dans les comportements et modes de vie humains. Ce, dans des conditions qui facilitent la mise en œuvre des mesures d'adaptation et d'atténuation et qui accélèrent et amplifient les transitions systémiques.

En conclusion, nous soutenons le projet de résolution proposé tout en nos remerciements à leurs Excellences, Madame Yvette Sylla de Madagascar ainsi qu'à Madame Carolina Diaz de la Colombie pour avoir assuré la présidence de manière brillante du groupe travail à composition non limité et à l'ensemble des membres du bureau. Je vous remercie.

The Chairperson:

Merci beaucoup. Grenada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you Chair. We would like to thank the Chair of the Working Group, the representative from Colombia, the panel of experts, the team from the World Heritage Centre and the participating member countries for the work done on updating the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage.

Chair, we recognise that this Document is not perfect but it is a good step forward in pursuit of our overall objective. As a Small Island State that sees the effect of climate change on our heritage daily, we are very happy for this guide. And even though we do not have a World Heritage Site on the List, this will definitely help to preserve our biodiversity and cultural assets. We look forward to capacity building and support for SIDS in the implementation and we fully support the document as is without any amendments. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. With that, I see no further comments. I would like to ask the Director of the World Heritage Centre to make some comments. Please.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Je pense qu'il n'y a pas de question à répondre, mais l'ensemble des interventions a été un soutien très fort à ce travail qui a été réalisé par le Groupe de travail et un appui également très fort à l'adoption du projet de Résolution sans amendement.

C'est vraiment pour le Secrétariat, encore une fois, l'occasion de remercier les deux Présidents qui ont présidé à ce travail et notamment la Présidente, Madame Carolina Diaz, pour son grand professionnalisme, sa sagesse et son grand sens de la diplomatie qui a permis d'obtenir les consensus nécessaires.

Et surtout également du côté du Secrétariat, de remercier tous les pays qui ont apporté leur soutien financier qui a permis que ce travail puisse se faire. C'est extrêmement important. Je voudrais de nouveau tous les remercier ainsi que le panel d'experts qui ont travaillé. Avec aussi, une bonne pensée pour les deux premiers experts qui avaient rédigé ce premier document.

Ce travail est important. Il ouvre une voie pour une réflexion beaucoup plus importante sur cette question que vous avez encore mis en avant lors de la dernière session du Comité du patrimoine mondial et que vous avez considéré comme un des grands défis des 50 prochaines années sur lesquels il faudra que le système du patrimoine mondial se penche. Je pense que c'est ce que je voudrais dire ici et je crois que Monsieur le sous-directeur général va certainement ajouter un autre point.

Le Sous-Directeur général pour la Culture :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Seulement pour renforcer ce que le Directeur du patrimoine mondial vient de dire. Comme nous avons participé d'une manière très active en tant que Secrétariat, je voudrais seulement renforcer l'idée de la méthodologie même si ça prend plus de temps malheureusement. Mais d'intégrer et d'inviter les experts d'avoir des « Policy Paper » ou « White Paper » qui puissent vous donner des orientations sur la base de discussions de vos experts des États parties à la Convention, c'est le chemin que l'on voit pour pouvoir arriver un texte de consensus.

Bien sûr, remercier les deux Présidentes que vous avez eues pendant tous les processus de ce groupe de travail et pendant les discussions de ces deux dernières semaines où il n'y avait pas encore vraiment un consensus. C'est-à-dire qu'il y avait des points que certains États voulaient renforcer qu'ils prônaient en péril. Je dois remercier les États parties avec lesquels nous avons travaillé pour nous avoir permis d'arriver après toutes ces années à ce texte de consensus qui n'est pas parfait, vous l'avez dit.

Mais je crois que c'est un début, et surtout, la phase qui vient aujourd'hui c'est de voir comment un texte comme celui-ci peut faire avancer les choses face à un sujet qui a été repris, je crois, dans toutes les commissions, pendant toute la Conférence générale comme un sujet prioritaire, d'urgence sur lequel on doit tous ensemble travailler.

Voilà, je voulais remercier les États parties pour un effort multilatéral. Parce que, finalement, là, on parle de l'organisation multilatérale. Merci beaucoup à tous les participants

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. It feels like a very special moment this one, I can sense a very strong spirit of consensus in the room. I would invite you to adopt the Draft Resolution **24 GA 8** which has been drawn up on the basis of the elements that made it possible for States Parties to reach a consensus on the Policy Document. Consequently, I do hope that the same will be true for the Draft Resolution that is presented to you for adoption. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the proposed Draft Resolution.

The Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. There are no amendments to this Draft Resolution.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Rapporteur. I also understand that there is a broad consensus on the Decision itself in the room and with your indulgence I would propose that we move forward and adopt the Decision as a whole if you agree. I see no objections and with that I also would like to pick up on the encouragement by the distinguished colleague from Togo and bring out a big applause after adoption. I hereby declare decision **24 GA 8 adopted** [gavel and applause].

I can see Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor. I would also like to thank the Open-ended Working Group Chairperson for her excellent stewardship, the Vice-chairpersons, the Rapporteur, the Secretariat and all participating Member States for their efforts to develop the Document. Saudi Arabia compromised several times when drafting the Policy Document in order to not break consensus. And we would like to have our position reflected in the oral report. Saudi Arabia would like to emphasise that the decision to implement any of the recommendations outlined in the Document remains at the discretion of the relevant Parties and stakeholders. The implementation of the Policy Document should be viewed in the light of different national circumstances and the available technical and financial capacities of each State Party. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Saudi Arabia, duly noted. Argentina, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Argentina: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Chair. Thank you very much for the introduction made of this work and we want to thank the important and hard work that has been conducted over the course of this period and we are very satisfied with the results that this work has led to. Obviously, our thanks also go to the World Heritage Centre and to all of the team who have made this process possible. Similarly, and along the same lines as what my Saudi Arabian colleagues said, we did have one or two reservations and we did actually have one tiny amendment to make, but we did not want to stymie the consensus and open up Pandora's Box.

I think we have heard all of the different points of view across the eight working meetings of that Open-ended Working Group, but the proposal that we in the end did not submit, we would actually just like to see it reflected in the records of this meeting. It is in 10.a). We just wanted to suggest a small change here. We are talking about, and I am going to say it in English: "Elaborate proposals for specific changes to the Operational Guidelines necessary to translate the principles of this Policy Document into actual operational procedures". We are of the opinion that what needed to be done here was to take out the principles and we thought that the Secretariat's role there would be to apply the policy in its entirety, not just the principles in its Operational Guidelines.

In the discussions that we had in the Working Group on this, the idea was, did the Policy Document Guiding Principles actually reflect the principles of the original climate change documents? And so, we would have preferred to have gone a little bit broader in scope here and asked the Secretariat to have made whatever changes were necessary so that the Policy Document in its entirety could be mainstreamed into the operations. But in the name of consensus, we decided not to submit that amendment but we do want it reflected in the record. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Argentina. First of all, allow me to thank you for your consensual spirit on this matter and we will make sure that your remarks are noted in the minutes. Thank you. United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. The United States supports this consensus but regrets that this Document does not focus enough in our opinion on World Heritage. The United States is taking action to tackle the climate crisis at home and abroad to avoid the most catastrophic impacts. This includes for example efforts to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions to 52% below 2005 levels in 2030. To build global resilience through the prepared action plan which will help more than half a billion people in developing countries to adapt to and manage the impacts of climate change and to scale up climate finance.

We emphasise that the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are distinct international agreements. We also emphasise that the Paris Agreement does not contain "principles" as such contrary to what is asserted in the Policy Document. We will not treat language on the UNFCCC or Paris Agreement in this Resolution as a precedent or as having weight in this or any other forum. We also understand that this Policy Document is not legally binding.

Finally, the United States understands that the references to transfer of or access to technology are to voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and that all references to access to and/or sharing information and/or knowledge are to information or knowledge that is made available with the authorisation of the legitimate holder. We ask that this explanation of position be entered into the written record and the oral report for this General Assembly. I thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, and we will make sure that it is reflected in the report. Thank you so much. Dear colleagues, with the adoption of the Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage, our shared responsibility is now to ensure that these sites which are part of our global legacy remain for the benefit of current and future generations. Please, let us all be aware that this document is not just another piece of paper, it is a pledge to protect the irreplaceable.

I now declare Agenda Item 8 closed and I wish to pass the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. It is just a quick announcement to say, before you move on, to quickly recall every member of the Committee that we will have the 19th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee in Room IV from 2.00 to 3.00 p.m. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I now wish to give the floor to Chile. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Chair. Distinguished delegates of Member States, in celebrating the spirit of consensus here, we actually have a surprise. And we have actually got the Jorge Peña Hen Youth Orchestra from my country. And

we are proud to be able to introduce these talented youngsters. And I just wanted to extend a cordial invitation to you all to listen to this youth orchestra. Thank you very much.

The Secretariat:

Thank you. You can accompany the musicians outside they will continue to play. Please, go and encourage them. Thank you so much. It will take place at the bar of the conference and it will start now and you are all invited. Thank you. We will resume in this room at 3.00 p.m. for the continuation of our session. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 1.00 p.m. // La séance a été levée à 13h00

SECOND DAY

Thursday, 23 November 2023

FOURTH MEETING

3:05 pm – 7:59 pm

Chairperson:

Mr Ole S e Eriksen (Norway)

DEUXIÈME JOUR

Jeudi 23 novembre 2023

QUATRIÈME RÉUNION

15h05 – 19h59

Président :

M. Ole S e Eriksen (Norv ge)

9. PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION // PROPOSITION DE RÉVISION DU RÈGLEMENT INTÉRIEUR DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES ÉTATS PARTIES À LA CONVENTION

Documents WHC/23/24.GA/9

WHC/23/24.GA/INF.9

Draft Resolution // Projet de r solution 23 GA 9

The Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, welcome back, I hope you had an enjoyable lunch break. We are reaching the end of our Agenda but there is still a lot to be discussed. We have to now review Item 9 which concerns proposed revisions to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention. You have all the relevant documents in front of you Documents INF.9 and INF.9.Add. Without any further delay, allow me to give the floor to the UNESCO Assistant Director General for culture, Mr Ernesto Ottone, to introduce this very important item to us. Please, the floor is yours.

Le Sous-Directeur g n ral pour la Culture :

Excellences,

Mesdames, Messieurs,

Chers coll gues,

Comme vous le savez, ce point concerne les R visions du R glement int rieur de l'Assembl e g n rale des  tats parties   la Convention de 1972.

Ce point s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'harmonisation des R glementations int rieures des assembl es des Conventions de l'UNESCO en mati re de culture. C'est un point important dans la mesure o  l'exercice d'harmonisation a pour ambition d'accro tre et je cite « la transparence et le bon d roulement du processus d cisionnel des assembl es ». Un tel exercice permet  galement de garantir des modalit s de travail plus efficaces et plus pr visibles permettant une rationalisation des ressources consacr es   la mise en  uvre des conventions.

Vous le savez, l'UNESCO travaille sur l'harmonisation de ces r glementations depuis 2018 suite   la recommandation du Groupe de travail sur la gouvernance.

En 2021, au vu de l'int r t des diff rentes assembl es de poursuivre l'harmonisation des dispositions techniques de leur r glement int rieur, le Secr tariat a pr sent ,   la 41  session de la Conf rence g n rale, un R glement int rieur mod le pour les assembl es, dont la Conf rence g n rale a « pris note » dans sa R solution **41C/74**.

Suite   l'adoption de cette r solution, le Secr tariat a initi  des consultations avec les  tats parties des diff rentes conventions de l'UNESCO en mati re de culture. Ceci afin de permettre aux  tats parties d'examiner le contenu du R glement mod le dans sa substance et d'explorer les moyens possibles d'harmoniser quand il  tait possible le r glement int rieur de leur assembl e avec celui des autres assembl es.

Ces consultations ont  t  pr c d es de r unions d'information qui ont permis au Secr tariat d'expliquer chacune des r visions propos es et de r pondre aux questions des  tats parties.

Ces consultations ont conduit   l'adoption, par les assembl es des  tats parties aux Conventions de 2003 et de 2001   l'adoption d'un r glement int rieur r vis  sur la base du R glement int rieur mod le.

Les assemblées des Conventions de 1970 et de 2005 ont quant à elles considéré qu'elles devaient disposer d'un temps de réflexion plus long.

Quant aux assemblées de la Convention de 1954 et du Deuxième Protocole, celles-ci examineront ce point au cours des prochaines sessions des assemblées, qui auront lieu au cours des prochaines semaines.

Comme vous le savez une réunion d'information a été organisée le 6 novembre dernier. À la suite de cette réunion les États parties ont été invités le 7 novembre à transmettre d'éventuelles proposition d'amendement au Règlement intérieur et ont été encouragés à se réunir avant l'Assemblée générale afin de parvenir à un accord sur ces propositions avant la session.

À cet égard je tiens à exprimer notre gratitude envers son Excellence, Madame la Présidente de l'Assemblée générale qui a mené avec succès des discussions avec les États parties ayant amené des amendements aboutissant à avoir un consensus sur plusieurs dispositions. Mes remerciements vont également aux États parties concernés qui ont activement participé à ces discussions. Je pense notamment à la Chine, à la Fédération de Russie, à Saint Vincent et les Grenadines et à Türkiye entre autres.

Les amendements reçus ont donc été reflétés dans le Document INF.9.Add qui a été mis à disposition le 17 novembre dernier et qui reflète dans un tableau à trois colonnes les propositions du Secrétariat et les amendements des États parties. Pour les discussions d'aujourd'hui et pour plus de lisibilité. Il va être affiché à l'écran en comprenant seulement les révisions proposées par le Secrétariat aux différents articles en « track changes », suivie d'une version épurée en anglais et français des révisions proposées suivies des propositions d'amendement reçues de la part des États parties.

Seulement, il me reste à vous dire qu'au niveau des pourcentages., la grande partie du document n'a pas d'amendement, et peut être le Président va le mentionner, c'est seulement sur 12 ou 13 points où il y a encore des amendements de plusieurs États parties qui diffèrent peut-être dans le langage ou dans la forme. Mais je peux vous assurer vis-à-vis du processus que l'on a vécu dans les autres conventions que c'est un travail encore plus abouti puisque cela nous a permis de revoir et d'incorporer tout ce qui a été déjà discuté lors des différentes assemblées pour l'adoption de cette résolution du règlement intérieur des assemblées générales. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

The Chairperson:

Merci beaucoup. I would now like to open the floor for discussions before we move to the review of amendments on the proposed Rules of Procedure and then to the adoption of the Resolution. But before that I would like to highlight dear colleagues, as mentioned by the Assistant Director General, that a very large number of the proposed revisions of the Rules have not received any amendments. I would therefore suggest, if you agree, that those could be considered as acceptable and adopted as a whole. Meaning that we would only discuss the 12 provisions of the proposed Rules of Procedure for which the Secretariat has received amendments following the information meeting held on the 6th of November as recalled by the Assistant Director General. Do we have any comments on this matter? I see Palestine. Please, you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Monsieur le Président, permettez-moi tout d'abord de remercier le Secrétariat pour ce Document et de remercier Monsieur Ottone pour la présentation qu'il a faite et aussi les efforts qui ont été conduits pour arriver à ce Document. Cependant, comme cela a été mentionné par Monsieur Ottone, ce travail d'harmonisation concerne toutes les conventions. Et pour savoir si notre travail effectivement est fait correctement, il va falloir attendre et voir les autres qui n'ont pas été jusqu'à maintenant amendés.

Cependant, il y a quand même la proposition, comme cela a été dit, d'harmoniser les provisions techniques pour la majorité des provisions techniques, c'est le cas pour les conventions qui ont été mentionnées par Monsieur Ottone. Cependant, il y a une nouveauté qui est bienvenue, c'est le « Rule 28 entitled consensus » c'est quelque chose de nouveau. Alors, la question c'est : est-ce qu'on l'a inclus dans les autres ? C'est une question toute simple.

Maintenant, j'ai toujours une difficulté avec un texte que l'on retrouve partout il s'agit de la « Draft Resolutions and amendments ». And here, if we look at Rule 17.2, and we find it in the others, it starts "as a general rule" and then it continues with "the Draft Resolution and amendments and so on should be submitted to the Secretariat and circulated by the Secretariat sufficiently or reasonably in advance".

Maintenant on sait par la pratique qu'il y a des amendements qu'on présente dans la salle, cela depuis longtemps. Et d'ailleurs, la règle était comme ça. Est-ce que vous pouvez nous expliquer que veut dire « as a general rule ». Est-ce que ça veut dire que ça reste flexible de ce point de vue-là ?

L'autre remarque concerne la composition du Bureau, jusqu'à maintenant, il n'y a pas un format standard. Donc, si vous pouvez nous donner un peu de clarification concernant les autres. Ici, on sait qu'il y a la proposition « up to four Vice-chairs » or « four vice-chairs », donc, est-ce qu'on a une visibilité concernant la composition du Bureau ?

Et la dernière chose est, comme vous l'avez dit, que le but est d'augmenter la transparence, le « Rule 7.1 » concernant le « Provisional Agenda ». Ici, il est marqué que le « Provisional Agenda of the session should be prepared by the Director General », that is all. Dans d'autres conventions, par exemple la Convention de 70, elle dit

que l'Agenda provisoire sera préparé par le Bureau avec l'assistance du Secrétariat de l'UNESCO. Donc, ces points-là méritent une attention particulière, si vous pouvez clarifier si on a réussi à trouver un format standard pour toutes les assemblées. Merci Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Palestine. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair, and thank you for the presentation by the Assistant Director General, Mr Ottone, and the hard work that has gone into this. I would associate myself with some of the details that have already been mentioned. I will not repeat them.

We do have some questions about how you can adopt part of a document before going through the whole document, and so, we actually are able to accept the Secretariat's text without amendment. But, if we are going to do the amendments and consider those, then we suggest that we have to consider the document as a standard practice paragraph by paragraph because there are obviously going to be other issues that others have to raise, as has already been pointed out.

The harmonisation of Rules is really, really important. I would note that in a number of the proposed amendments, they are not in harmony with the general rules or practices either in this body or in other United Nations bodies. We reserve our right to make further comments on all of those. To this end, I would like to propose that if we are going to not have a huge long discussion, which we might decide we want to do that, we adopt without amendments the text as presented by the Secretariat and leave all amendments aside. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, followed by Argentina. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chairperson. Brazil would like to thank the Secretariat, especially the Legal Advisor for this important harmonisation exercise. We welcome the proposal made by the Secretariat with some minor amendments that perhaps could be considered by the Assembly.

We would also like to recall the concerns raised by the Ambassador of Palestine and to explain the rationale behind our amendments. On the one hand, we are concerned about the credibility of discussions and decisions taken within UNESCO. For this reason, we have proposed amendments to articles dealing with private meetings, voting procedures, linguistic accessibility and quorum.

On the other hand, we also want to ensure that the Assembly's responsibilities are carried out in a harmonious and balanced way between the Secretariat and the Delegations. Reasons why we have proposed some amendments seeking to reinforce the intergovernmental nature of the Assembly's work. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil. Argentina followed by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Please, Argentina, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Argentina: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. We would like to thank the Secretariat for the work and for this Document and everything they are doing to harmonise the Rules of Procedure across the assemblies of these conventions.

I actually just wanted to support the idea of going para by para. And I am sorry, but if this information is coming rather late for Paragraph 3, we have just received instructions from the Capital that we have got an amendment to submit for Para 3. I do not know how you actually want to proceed. If we are going para by para, then I can wait for us to reach that paragraph or whether you want me to actually tell you about it. Now, I am in your hands, Sir.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Argentina. We will take into account your amendments to Para 3 after. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to thank the Secretariat for the work undertaken on this document. I think it is time now to harmonise these Rules of Procedure. We cannot wait two years to harmonise the Rules of Procedure, especially that some amendments are really very minor and technical. Those presented by the Secretariat or some from some Member States, as has been suggested by the distinguished Ambassador of the USA and others. Also, we can maybe go paragraph by paragraph and see what could be accepted or not. Because it is the only way and the only space to work on this document thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. I would like to give the floor to the Secretariat. Assistant Director General, please.

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

As you know, Mr Chairperson, we are a couple with Santiago, so we are going to have to share explanations. A couple here, now, no confusion please.

First of all, it seems clear, as we have proceeded in other assemblies, we feel that there is a room for going paragraph by paragraph, but you will see most of the changes are numbers that are changing because they are following the Model Rules, so it will be very quick. It is only in the amendments that we can have some longer discussions.

On the specific question asked by the estimated delegate of the State of Palestine, I will give the floor to Santiago. Regarding the four questions you asked: the first is yes, the second is yes and the third is yes, but Santiago will explain, and the fourth on the Bureau he will respond. Thank you so much.

The Chairperson:

Please, Legal Advisor.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, in the improbable case that the Assistant Director General's wife or my wife are watching this, I want to specify that we are very good friends but that they remain the loves of our lives.

In response to the questions asked by the distinguished delegate from Palestine. There were three questions. I think as a preliminary matter, it is important for me to draw your attention, in case you have not seen it yet to Document 41C/55, which was submitted by the Secretariat already two years ago to the General Conference. 41C/55, which is the Model Rules upon which this exercise was done and on the basis of which these proposals have been made by the Secretariat. I often say that this Document is one of the ones I am most proud of in my work here at UNESCO since I arrived for two main reasons.

The first one is that it demonstrates the ability of the Secretariat to work transversally. It was the product of a very fruitful coordination between the culture sector and all the secretariats in the culture sector and the Legal Affairs Office. It really is a document that is the fruit of that collaboration. The second reason is that it is not just the Rules that we propose but there is a commentary that explains why we are proposing the harmonisation. And it stems from a review of the practice and rules existing in each Convention. And the answers to the question from the distinguished delegate of Palestine are actually given in that Document but I will draw your attention to them.

The first one is about the composition of the Bureau. The proposal is for it to have up to four Vice-Presidents. I have to say that currently, or before the harmonisation, the Rules of Procedure of the assemblies of the 1954, 1970, 1999 and 2001 conventions provided precisely that for four Vice-Chairpersons to be appointed. While the Rules of Procedure of the assemblies of the 1972, 2003 and 2005, in particular this Convention, provided that one or more Vice-Chairpersons be elected. Why four and not five or seven or eight is because if you add the four plus the Chair plus the Rapporteur that makes six and everyone knows that it is a magic number at UNESCO. It is the number of electoral groups, so that ensures geographical representation. This is the reason why this proposal is made. And in response to the question by the distinguished delegate from Palestine, whenever that has been submitted it has been accepted in the other conventions as far as we know.

The second question was with regard to Article 17, Rule 17.2, as a General Rule. What does that mean. First of all, I should point out that it is not a novelty, it is already there in the current rules and it is actually there in the Rules of Procedure, all, if not most, of all of the other assemblies. What it means is that it is not necessarily the case, as a General Rule means that there might be exceptions to that. And indeed, you are very well aware of this practice at UNESCO for amendments to be even submitted in the course of the meeting and that is something that in any event this harmonisation is not intending to change because very simply it is what already is provided in the Rules of Procedure. There is no change there.

Lastly, with regard to Rule 7.1, the Provisional Agenda and the preparation of it. I should point out that the conventions of UNESCO and the Assemblies of Conventions of UNESCO are divided in two groups, those that have a Bureau that sits intersessionally and those that do not. The 1972 Convention is a Convention that does not have a Bureau that sits intersessionally. The mandate of the Bureau ends with the session at which they are appointed and that is the reason why the Provisional Agenda needs to be prepared by somebody, so it is prepared by the Director General. Although this rule is not contained in the Rules of Procedure currently, it does reflect what the practice is which is that the Rules of the Provisional Agenda is prepared by the Director General, as was the case for this session on the basis, of course, of items that were already decided by the Assembly in the past. Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Sorry for the lengthy intervention.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Legal Advisor. Do we have any further comments from the Secretariat? No, and we have no further comments from the room. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Sorry, Mr Chair. I forgot to say in my first Intervention when that Resolution of the General Conference says that we “harmonise the Rules of Procedure as appropriate”. So, we are not really obliged to have the same paragraphs in all the conventions. Sometimes, an amendment is not suitable to a convention, but it is for another one. That is why I just want to say that. Maybe we had presented amendments existing already in the 2003 Convention but they are not suitable for this Convention. The decision of the Resolution said “as appropriate” and we should consider this in our work. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for making that clear. To my understanding it might be late in the afternoon but the distinguished delegate from the US suggested adopting the Document with the amendments as proposed by the Secretariat only. That is one alternative and then we have another suggestion to go paragraph by paragraph and look into the amendments by the States Parties. Is that correctly understood? Argentina, please.

The Delegation of Argentina: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

In my case, we do not need to go paragraph by paragraph. All that we are asking is, that in our case, our paragraph be mentioned just for the amendment that we would like to table. But, as for the rest, if no one else sees any reason to open up discussion para by para, far be it from us to suggest on that, but Paragraph 3, yes, we have received instructions to table an amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Just to clarify my proposal. The first half of it was correctly stated by you but if we are going to consider other amendments, then, I believe we should follow the Rules of Procedure and go paragraph by paragraph. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I see. Türkiye, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. When we say the amendments proposed by the Secretariat, which exact Document are we talking about? Is it INF.9.Add or the original INF.9, so to be clear on the Document. Because for the INF.9.Add we see the country names with the amendments. We would like to be sure of the exact Document. Maybe, if we can put on the screen the Document we are we talking about, it would be much clearer for everyone. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Türkiye, for this important question. Just to highlight that it is the INF.9, the Summary Document 24.GA/INF.9. That is the Document in question.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Sorry, so not 9.Add at this point.

The Chairperson:

That is correct INF.9, not the addendum.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Not the addendum, INF.9. Okay. We need a moment to check the Document before taking any decision. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I see Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, I need a clarification. Are we working on INF.9 or INF.9.Add where there are amendments presented by Member States? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your patience. I will pass the floor to the Director. Please, you have the floor.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

Monsieur le Président, c'est juste pour préciser que le INF.9 est un document que le Secrétariat vous a présenté à la réunion d'information le 6 novembre dernier. Le INF.9.Add est celui qui en plus contient les amendements qui ont été proposés depuis le 6 novembre par certains États parties. Ces amendements, ils apparaissent dans le document en couleur en vert avec les noms des pays. Voilà donc le INF.9 qui est le document qui ne contient que les propositions du Secrétariat et qui vous a été présenté le 6 novembre. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Türkiye, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Thank you, Mr Chair. After this explanation, I think we should move forward with INF.9.Add with the amendments introduced by the Member States because there are some amendments introduced by my country as well. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Canada, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you, Chair. Just to say that Canada would support the proposal by the US that we should adopt the whole text as prepared by the Secretariat originally, so INF.9 and not the INF.9.Add. And, if we go to INF.9.Add with the amendments proposed by other Member States, then yes, we need to go paragraph by paragraph. But given the time that we have left I just do not see how we will get through it. I just can tell you right now that there is at least on the first ones a few that we definitely cannot accept. I do not think we have much time to go over this discussion. Either we adopt the original one with only the Secretariat's amendments or another suggestion would be to, again, like we did in 2005, that we postpone the discussion. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Togo, please, you have the floor.

La délégation du Togo :

Merci. Monsieur le Président, ce n'est pas une suggestion nouvelle. En écoutant les uns et les autres, je m'aperçois que nous sommes en train de débattre beaucoup plus sur la façon dont on va procéder. Quoi qu'il en soit, je m'aperçois que des gens voudraient proposer des amendements. Et si j'ai bien écouté tout le monde, le temps est compté. Mais je crois que la meilleure formule serait d'aller paragraphe par paragraphe. Si, au moment où on examine chaque chapitre, chaque paragraphe, les amendements qui ont été suggérés viendront en partant du document du Secrétariat. Je vous remercie Monsieur.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Zimbabwe. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Zimbabwe:

Thank you very much, Mr President, for allowing us to have a bite at this discussion. We want to congratulate you and the Bureau for the work that you have done so far, since this the first time we are speaking. But on the matter at hand, we are of the opinion that we, as States Parties, have had enough time to look at this document even prior to the 6th of November and after that we have had enough time to look at it. Going through it paragraph by paragraph would really be cumbersome.

Zimbabwe is of the opinion that if there are any major amendments that any Member State has, they should rather be raised instead of us going paragraph by paragraph. We actually accept INF.9 as presented by the Secretariat, as well as understanding that INF.9.Add also has value but we really should not belabour ourselves after what the lawyer has explained to go paragraph by paragraph. I submit, Sir.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chair. I am sorry for taking the floor again. Just to reiterate what my colleague from Türkiye said. My country has also made some amendments. And perhaps we could go just to the paragraphs that have been amended by the States Parties because it is our right, it is the right of the States Parties to have to propose amendments so we would be undermining the intergovernmental nature of the assembly not allowing States Parties to make use of the right of amending this Document. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Switzerland, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de la Suisse :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Suisse partage la position du Canada aussi, parce qu'avec le INF.9, donc pas l'addendum, nous couvrons le souci d'harmoniser ces Règlements intérieurs selon la proposition du Secrétariat. Il nous semble que c'était ça l'objectif pour aujourd'hui et que c'est suffisant pour aujourd'hui. Toutes les autres révisions s'écartent en partie de cette idée d'harmonisation, introduisent de nouvelles choses qui peuvent être valables aussi, mais qui nécessitent plus de temps pour réfléchir à celles-ci. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Grenada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to thank the Secretariat for the proposal that was submitted for the Rules of Procedure and I am confident that the majority of Member States are agreeing with the majority of the amendments. But I think that we also have to look at the proposed amendments by Member States. So, I would be in favour of considering only the INF.9.Add and to go paragraph by paragraph to see what are the amendments that are proposed and which are acceptable for the room. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much. Chair, I would like to support the proposal made by Brazil and everything that was said likewise by Türkiye. We were provided the document by the Secretariat, the 9.INF and our capital has studied this Document. They have made some proposals which, in our view, should be reflected in the Document. Now, in response to what Switzerland said, I would recall that the Document of the 41st session submitted to Member States did not go through consultations with Member States.

This Document was prepared by the Secretariat. And by the way, we thank the Secretariat, the Legal Advisor and the culture sector for their work. We recognise that the work was enormous and we did study the Document. We did not have time to provide suggestions for the Document at the time during the 41st session and consequently a decision was taken that this Document would be provided to us for examination and that the assemblies of the culture conventions, as per their individual mandates, would then, on the basis of the so-called model Rules of Procedure, introduce some amendments if this was considered relevant.

Therefore, we would like to support Brazil's proposal, as I have said, and have a look at the amendments tabled by Member States. The Assembly will then be able to decide whether the amendments are appropriate or not. Thank you very much, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Türkiye, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

I am so sorry, Chair, I do not want to monopolise the discussion but I would like to bring an explanation. I mean we are working on the harmonisation of the Rules of Procedure. We already adopted two Rules of Procedure for the other conventions. And in those conventions, there were some amendments, especially regarding our amendment for instance for the voting during the online sessions. Our amendments actually harmonising this World Heritage Committee Rules of Procedure with the adapted Rules of Procedure already. So, if we go with the INF.9 the Rules will not be harmonised with the already adopted Rules of Procedure of the General Assemblies of the other conventions.

If we are really trying to harmonise the conventions and Rules of Procedure, definitely, we should go with the 9.Add, otherwise the harmonisation process will not be an harmonisation process it will be just the update of the Rules of Procedure for this Convention. It is not going to be harmonised with the others. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Venezuela. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I just wanted to support what several of the previous speakers have said in this very room, and that any Member State has the right to submit a proposed amendment, and that the other Member States might agree or disagree with that proposed amendment.

We want to thank the Secretariat for its work, as always, and we feel that as an organisation, we are always trying to work on consensus. That is why we need to go through the amendments, revise them, discuss them, because currently we are going around chasing our tail. But in any event, we are talking about Member States, right? And that is to discuss proposed amendments.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more request from the floor. I think I will pass the floor to the Assistant Director General for some further comments thank you.

The Assistant Director General: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I just wanted to put a couple of things out there on the table. Firstly, it's already 4.20 p.m. and we have got this room until 6.00 p.m. Now, we did not actually allow too much time for this because it only took 20 minutes in the other assemblies. That is my first point. Secondly, in the Assembly, we have already come a long way in our discussions and consultations on this. We are discussing amendments. And throughout months and months over the last year, we have been discussing 12 amendments. Not hundreds, just 12. But if we add Argentina's, that would make it 13. So, 12 plus one equals 13 amendments. It is not the end of the world.

Now, I might be wrong, but what I heard from the USA and from Canada, if you want to adopt the text as it is currently being worded by the Secretariat, then I think we have pretty much agreement on that. So, why open it up? All we need to do is look at the 12 items that we might want to discuss and I think that is the simplest way forward.

Now, some of these proposed amendments need to be decided upon by you. Do you find them appropriate or not? Some, for example, with the issue of voting online or having online sessions. This is a very practical issue, but many of the amendments that have been put through, they are actually about practical modalities or about logistics. Obviously, we are in your hands, but it is not as if we have hours and hours ahead of us. We are just trying to simplify the process and we are here to discuss the process. That is really all I had to say.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Do we have any comments from the floor following that? The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair, I am hopeful that we can find a way forward. I would just like to reiterate what the Assistant Director General said, we have a very simple way forward, we could adopt by consensus 24.GA/INF.9. If that is unacceptable and there is no consensus on that, then we have a procedure to go paragraph by paragraph on 24.GA/INF.9.Add. I would submit to you the faster and easier way would be the first way, but the second way is always open. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, in the information meeting, the Assistant Director General himself asked us to send amendments. We have sent amendments. There are 12 or 13 I do not remember. Can we go to INF.9.Add and see whether the amendments presented by some Member States are acceptable or not by the room? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Venezuela, please.

The Delegation of Venezuela: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much. Mr Chairman, forgive me, but I am afraid I disagree with what is being said by the United States again. One process does not actually preclude the other. Looking at INF.9 could actually move forward with an adoption and there is no amendment to that. I do not think that these are mutually exclusive. If you want to go and present amendments, the obvious way forward is to open discussions on those amendments. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Président, justement pour ne pas plus compliquer l'affaire on voit bien différents points de vue. Peut-être qu'en répondant à une question cela pourrait éviter à la Palestine de soumettre.

Je disais pour ne pas perdre du temps et peut-être que cela pourrait éviter à la Palestine de présenter les amendements que nous avons préparés. J'ai eu une question encore au Sous-Directeur général et peut-être au conseiller juridique.

At the same time regarding the Bureau again and the Agenda both together, which means in 11.2 what is suggested here is that the term of office of the Bureau runs until the end of the session, since the opening till the end. While in the 1970 for example and other Conventions, it is till the opening of the following one. You said you harmonised this with 2003 and 2001. My question is: is it the case for the term of office in 2003 and 2001? This is the first question.

If it is the case, indeed, then we cannot amend 7.1 which is the Agenda prepared by the Director General. Please, can we have an answer regarding the term of office of the Bureau with regard to the other conventions? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your questions. Before passing on to the Secretariat, I would like to give the floor to Cuba.

The Delegation of Cuba: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We wanted to thank the Secretariat and all of the colleagues who have put forward amendments in this regard. Our delegation is listening carefully to the discussion and we are ready to commence discussions of the Document with the addendum for this item. Because we understand that this is the universal organ of this Convention. We only meet once every two years. So, if there was any place where this was the appropriate discussion, it is here. This is the forum in which we can approve these amendments. It is up to us now to discuss it and approve them.

I would like to reiterate that we are listening to the discussions very, very carefully and I do not think we should spend any more time on this, but rather just get down to it and look at the proposed amendments. Because all of the consultations that have been held, the amendments that have been put forth by the Secretariat, I think everybody has already said that they agree with it. This is the highest sovereign decision-making body of the Convention. It is time for us to do our job. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much for your intervention. I think, again I will pass the floor to the Secretariat and this time the Legal Advisor. Please, you have the floor.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, first of all, I take note of the fact that apparently if there is a consensus on one thing in the room, it is the fact that the proposals that were made by the Secretariat in Document INF.9 do not seem to pose particular problems.

The discussion has focused rather on the additional proposed amendments made by Member States subsequently as appearing in the Add document. But there still remains a pending question from the distinguished delegate from Palestine with regard to the composition of the Bureau. This is a typical example of a case, as was mentioned by the distinguished delegate from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in which the Secretariat is respecting the specificities of each convention. And what you have here is that the bureaus of the 1972 and the 2003 Conventions as well as those of the 1970 and 2001 Conventions and 1970 Convention provided the Bureau ends its mandate at the session. There is no intercessional Bureau. There is no Bureau in between sessions and that is what is codified here. It is not specifically written right now in the 1972 and 1970 Conventions, but that was unequivocal, that is what the practice is in the 1972 Convention. The situation is different from the 2001. The 2001 Convention has an intersessional Bureau. But again, this is a typical example in which the Secretariat has been very careful to respect the existence of what is existing here. 1970 also has the same situation. I think this clarifies.

The Assistant Director General:

If you allow me. Because of this specificity, during the 2003 discussion of the Assembly, the Assembly decided not to touch this and the 70 decided not to touch it. They maintain them as they were. Here, it is the same. If you have a practice that has been put in place since the years, then you maintain it. Why do you want to change it? You want to change it? I do not see anybody who wants to change it. It is up to you. But if you go against the whole room, it is up to you, but that the specificity.

During all these works since 2020 when we started to think on how to proceed, we wanted to ensure that what Member States ask us is not to touch the specificity of each convention because there were created in different times. What we wanted is to give you some places where the practice has put yourself sometimes in some discussions without knowing what to do. If we have the practice in the Assembly and it is a practice that could be harmonised, well we present it.

In 12 articles, you have different points of view and that is the discussion. But once again the GA/INF.9 apparently what I hear from the room is okay. We do not have a discussion; we could adopt it right now but it is not. The

discussion is that some Member States want to go to the Add, so that they can see the amendments that were put forward by some Member States. Did I summarize well or not?

The Chairperson:

I think we should ask the room for their opinion on that one, Assistant Director General. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

I will try to help reach a consensus. There is a problem with the sound maybe we can tell the technicians to put the sound a little bit louder. I think maybe we can proceed this way. Even if we adopt at this session the INF.9 which means the amendments put forward by the Secretariat. In that case, in the decision we just keep in mind that at any moment the revision of the Rules of Procedure is possible. It is not something closed. In that case we can look back on the other Rules of Procedure of the other Conventions.

I am not convinced for example for the Term of Office. It is not a question of specificity. Here, it has nothing to do with the mandate of the Assembly. It could be applied for all of them. But since I am flexible, I will leave it as it is here and we will see with the other assemblies.

Why am I talking about this issue? It is for the preparation of the Agenda. But in any case, if we find a text together in adopting INF.9 saying that the Rules of Procedure may be amended at any time by the General Assembly which is in conformity with the Rules of Procedure. This will give us maybe a little bit more time, with the colleagues who have already submitted and other colleagues who would like to submit like Palestine and others, to discuss about it and maybe come back at the next session if we find it necessary, and if we find that it goes together with the other Rules of Procedure of the other assemblies. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Palestine, for this proposal. I see the Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. We have now spent one hour. One hour discussing the way in which we could adopt the Rules of Procedure. I suggest that we now examine the Document per se. We have been talking about the Bureau and the Rules of Procedure. We have still got time ahead of us to examine the Document, which is INF.9.Add, the Document has been published after the Secretariat's Document. I do not know why we would go back to an earlier Document. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, we do not want to waste time. We still have one hour and a half and we can see all the amendments presented by States Parties on this Document. If we adopt as proposed by the Ambassador of Palestine, if we adopt the Document of the Secretariat that means that we adopt all the articles when we have amendments. My delegation presented an amendment on Article 11. I cannot adopt the amendment in the Document proposed by the Secretariat because the Secretariat requested us to send amendments, so we should see this Document. Thank you. And if we can start, Mr Chair, it would be better. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. We also have Norway followed by Sweden on the list. Please, Norway, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We would, first of all, like to thank the Secretariat for its efforts in order to make the different Rules of Procedure comprehensible and aligned. We fully support the proposals made by the Secretariat, so we would actually like to adopt them as a whole. And I do not know if it is practically feasible but we could maybe adopt the proposal from the Secretariat and then maybe go to the discussion para by para for the proposals made by the States Parties. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that proposal. Sweden, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. We, I would like to echo the distinguished delegate from Norway by saying that Sweden is also prepared to adopt the text as proposed by the Secretariat, INF.9, and I would also like to support the distinguished Ambassador from Palestine in his suggestion. I think it is a very good, maybe consensual also,

hopefully, suggestion which will leave us with more time maybe until the next or whenever we find more time to discuss the amendments which I think is necessary even though it is only 13 amendments.

We would be happy to look at them individually para by para but it will require more time than we have today. So, we suggest that we adopt INF.9 but amend the decision so that we can still look at the other 13 paras. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Very well. We could have accepted this proposal that has just been made to go and adopt a Document INF.9 on one condition, and that is that all of the paragraphs for which amendments have been submitted would be held in abeyance in square brackets. In other words, they would not be adopted by the Assembly until we have looked at all the amendments. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Venezuela, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much. Mr Chairman. I think that here there is a need to not get into a problem that could be avoided. As the Assistant Director General said, we can look at any amendments that could be problematic, it might actually be beneficial, and it might actually be in line with what the Secretariat had proposed as an amendment. I do not think that if we are going to go through every time we discuss a document in this Assembly, if every country can put forward an amendment, well, this is our sovereign right, but essentially, then we should always look in an ordered manner at the document with its amendments. I do not really know why we are wasting time discussing which of the three documents we are going to look at. We already have a Document with proposed amendments. Surely that is what we should be looking at. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. And we wish to move forward with this. So, please, Türkiye.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

I mean if we are moving forward with 9.Add, we are okay, but we will not be in a position to adopt INF.9 and then go back to the amendments. We should move forward with the 9.Add maybe we can just deal with the amendments as the Assistant Director General proposed which is quite wise including the amendment to be introduced by the Delegation of Argentina. If I did not get it wrong including the distinguished Ambassador of United States agreed that we should move on with the 9.Add para by para. So, instead of having this discussion for another hour maybe we should move forward with 9.Add, with the amendments and finish with it hopefully as soon as possible. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. I agree with you it is difficult to see any other way out than going para by para as suggested by several. I think we need to move forward in that direction with your agreement? Yes.

Please. Let us then proceed with a review of the amended provisions of the proposed Rules. Secretariat, please can we have it on the screen? Thank you. Just to explain what we are now showing is the INF.9.Add with the blue text by the Secretariat, the red text is the deleted text from current Rules of Procedures and the green text is the amendments proposed by States Parties.

Let us then go para by para starting with Rule 1, chapter one.

Chapter one, **Rule 1** everybody is happy with the first amendment? I see no comments *[gavel]*.

We can move to the next chapter, **Rule 2**, Parties to the Convention. Do we have any comments on the proposed text? I see none *[gavel]*.

We can continue to **Rule 3**, Observers. That is where Argentina wanted to introduce, and Argentina, I remember you asked for the floor on that one. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Argentina:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. Yes. Forgive me once again for this very late submission of a proposed amendment. My apologies to the Member States and to the Secretariat, but we have received instructions and the members of the General Conference and our capital are currently, as you know, just still reeling from a very complicated electoral process. And we have got this inclusion at a very late hour. We are trying to keep up to date with all different fora in the UN.

In 3.3, I do not know if you can actually put it onto the screen. 3.3? In the draft, it is talking about the possibility of non-governmental organisations and other intergovernmental organisations as invited by the Director General to take part without voting. My proposal is to say that the Director General and then we are continuing in English. Yes. If you could follow this, I will dictate it. *[end of Interpretation from Spanish]* "The Director General proposes on a non-objection basis..." *[Interpretation from Spanish]* This is an idea that has been discussed at length in the other committees. I was able to discuss this with colleagues and even with members of the Secretariat. And they agreed that in the Convention of the 1970 Convention, there was this mention. We wanted to put this to the other countries. This is the proposal put forward by my country, Argentina. I just wanted to know if it could meet the approval of other States Parties. Thank you. *[end of Interpretation from Spanish]*

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I see the United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Secretary. We object to this proposal. We cannot support it. We believe that it would inhibit the ability of the Director General to invite intergovernmental experts who are necessary for the work of the Assembly, and that if you open up to States objecting to experts coming in giving their advice based on who knows what criteria, you create a complete hornets' nest on the ability to have intergovernmental conversations and discussions to further the work.

For instance, our colleagues who are working on very important cultural heritage issues, intangible cultural heritage, if somebody does not like somebody's music, a music expert cannot be invited. If somebody does not like the way a youth person has tweeted, they could be excluded from the Youth Forum. I think you end up opening up a Pandora's Box here and we strongly object to the inclusion of this amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, I am asking a question. Can we do amendments now? Because when the Secretariat sent to us a letter saying that they are waiting for our amendments, there was a deadline and we respected the deadline to send amendments. We cannot say anything on this amendment now. I mean we just received it and it is not really very clear. Maybe, Mr Chair, we do prefer not to have amendments now and to see just the amendments received in the deadline requested by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Very quickly just to echo what was just said by the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and also the USA. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I was wanting to ask the Legal Advisor if this is in line with the Model and the harmonisation with the other Rules of Procedure. Thank you.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. With your permission since the question was asked in Spanish, I will take the opportunity to respond in my mother tongue.

[Interpretation from Spanish] Mr Chairman, in response to the question raised by the distinguished delegate of Argentina, or should I say the proposal put forward by Argentina, I just wanted to underscore that on this item, the Secretariat is not changing the current Rules. The current Rule is exactly the same as what is being proposed in Article 3. The only difference is actually formal, and that is the division made between the two paragraphs instead of one. So as to add clarity. Therefore, the proposal put forward by Argentina is actually to add the non-objection methodology, it does constitute a change in procedure and a change in current practice in the Assembly. Currently, this non-objection basis does not actually exist. As the United States of America pointed out, this would be a change.

I should also like to point out that the Assembly of States Parties is different to the Rules of Procedure of the Committees, which do have a much more specific mandate, and their experts are in the room. But that is actually not what we are discussing here. The question essentially was, on the basis of Argentina's proposal, if the Assembly decides to maintain its current practice, then that is the Secretariat's proposal. But if you want to change the Rule or current practice, then the Argentine's proposal is actually adding a new requisite, which is this non-objection basis. And now it is in the hands of the Assembly to decide which way they want to go. Thank you. *[end of Interpretation from Spanish]*

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I see Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you, Chair. I would also like to echo what was said by the distinguished Ambassador of the USA and also Saint Vincent and Norway. After hearing the Legal Advisor, we are even more convinced that we cannot accept this addition by the distinguished delegate from Argentina. I think this also goes against the Convention itself because it is an expert-based Convention and we believe it is up to the Director General to invite whichever NGO or expert that she sees fit. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. The Holy See, please:

La délégation du Saint-Siège :

J'avais demandé la parole pour aller dans le sens de ce que le conseil juridique a déjà dit. C'est comme un élément nouveau quand même par rapport au règlement et je me demandais si c'était le moment d'adopter ou simplement de prendre note de la proposition, mais je ne pense pas que ce soit le cas. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. France, please, you have the floor:

La délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Simplement, nous allons dans le sens des États-Unis, de la Norvège, de la Suède, nous souhaitons le maintien du texte proposé par le Secrétariat. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. I was just going to say also before the Legal Advisor spoke that it is a significant change. So, for Canada this is not an acceptable amendment. I mean it goes beyond the simple harmonisation of the Rules of Procedure. Also, it is not very clear how this would work. We would also have questions, but for them we cannot accept it. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Grenada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Chairman. We would also like to keep the original text thank you.

The Chairperson:

Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

You know, we have no problem with maintaining the text as proposed, but the problem of NGOs was actually already discussed within the framework of the 2005 Convention. We felt that this Rule was the reason behind the proposal that was put forward.

As concerns the comment made by the Legal Advisor that we should not actually go ahead and overstep the bounds of what is being accepted by the other assemblies in the Conventions, then, yes, I agree that we are trying to harmonise, in fact, the Rules of Procedure across the assemblies. And if we are adding a new practice here, yes, we do see this as something that may not exist in the other assemblies, so we should be very wary. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Before moving forward with the list of speakers, I wish to just consult with Argentina. We have heard the Legal Adviser and a number of States Parties, if you have any further comments, thank you.

The Delegation of Argentina: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much for giving me the floor. Again, this terminology is not new because it is actually perfectly normal practice in other international organisations. There are various manners in which NGOs can take part in

commissions, assemblies and other fora. Sometimes they need to be invited by Member States. But my country's position is that there should be some mechanism.

Because in my country, civil society is able to participate at all different levels, in all different fora. We actually have no problem with opening the door to civil society. But what we do understand is that there are some States who are finding this difficult. But the idea is to at least have the right to propose, in certain circumstances, this possibility.

But since I see that there is no consensus in the Assembly right now, we are prepared to withdraw our proposal. We would like it to go down on the record that Argentina was actually expressing this proposed amendment in the name of openness to NGOs. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your very constructive approach on that. We will definitely make sure it is part of the records. Thank you. Barbados, Chile and Finland I had you on the list of speakers, but is it okay?

The Delegation of Barbados:

In light of Argentinean willingness to withdraw, we withdraw our need to speak. Thank you very much, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Returning to our Draft. We have looked at **3.1**, **3.2** and **3.3**. Are we ready to move forward to chapter 3? I see no objections.

We have Rule 4, **4.1**, do we have any comments on that? I see none *[gavel]*.

We continue to **4.2**. Do we have any comments on that? The United States of America please you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We support 4.2 as amended or as written by the Secretariat. We do not support the amendment proposed this would be a substantial change. This is a very significant change and is not in keeping in harmony with the conventions or with the consistent practice across multiple UN bodies. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Brazil, please, you have the floor followed by France.

The Delegation of Brazil: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you, Mr Chair. Well, as we read from the explanatory note there is no harmonisation with any other convention different to what that has been said by the Ambassador of the United States. The explanatory note says that we are harmonising with the UNESCO General Conference if I am not wrong. We believe that perhaps it would be wiser to harmonise with the Committee itself. Because the Secretariat proposed to allow our extraordinary sessions to be held by request of one of the States Parties and Brazil would like to propose a higher proposition in order to preserve the exceptional character of extraordinary sessions and avoid the banalization of the concept of emergency.

It should also be taken into account the fact that the World Heritage Committee meets every year and is also able to hold extraordinary meetings by request. It should be required that at least two third of the States members in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the World Heritage Committee I think 2.2. So, for the sake of the coherence from what has just been said in the point before, we believe that our amendment is not so far from what has been discussed in other points by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. France, please, you have the floor, followed by the Russian Federation.

La délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je vais à nouveau faire écho de ce qu'a dit la représentante des États-Unis. Tout simplement, nous souhaitons le maintien de l'original. Et pour répondre au Brésil, il se trouve que dans le règlement intérieur de l'Assemblée générale de la Convention 2003 il est mentionné un tiers, donc si on harmonise les conventions ensemble. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor, followed by Canada.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you, Mr Chair. The representative of Brazil explained the reasons why we tabled this amendment. Indeed, we wish to harmonise the Rules of Procedure, but we are not supposed to be harmonising with the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. Now, a decision was taken by the General Conference whereby

harmonisation of the Rules of Procedure should be based on the specificities of each Convention. So, as for the 1972 Convention, there is a specificity which is different from that of other cultural Conventions at UNESCO. Namely, we are supposed to be developing programmes and decisions through the Committee and not the General Assembly. Consequently, we thought that we should not be basing our practice on the General Conference, but rather on the practice of the Committee, the World Heritage Committee. So, as the representative of Brazil rightly said, the Rules of Procedure state that the World Heritage Committee should meet at the request of two thirds of Member States or States Parties.

We consider that introducing this practice, the calling of extraordinary sessions, is a major change. That is itself a substantial change, since it was not covered by the Rules of Procedure before. We think that the meeting of extraordinary sessions should be governed clearly in the Rules of Procedure. And again, what we decide for the reasons for calling such a session should be based on the Rules of Procedure of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Canada, please, followed by Chile.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you, Chair. Just to say that we agree with the USA and French representatives that we cannot accept two thirds. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Chile, please, you have the floor, followed by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Delegation of Chile: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you. We would also like to approve the original text proposed. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines followed by Switzerland. Please, Saint Vincent, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, we would like to maintain the original text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. And careful now, Switzerland followed by Sweden. Switzerland, you have the floor.

La délégation de la Suisse :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Ça va être tout simple, nous soutenons aussi la version du Secrétariat. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to echo what was said by Sweden, France, the USA, Canada and Chile amongst others. We also believe that it makes a lot of sense to look for inspiration not necessarily harmonised, but look for inspiration amongst other highest decision-making governing bodies where only one third is required. For example, the General Conference. We would like to maintain the original. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. China, followed by Lithuania. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you, Chair. China supports the opinion of our Brazilian and Russian colleagues. The Assistant Director General and other colleagues also mentioned that when we are adjusting the Rules of Procedure, we should think about the uniqueness of this Convention. Therefore, we believe that we should look at the Rules of Procedure of this Convention instead of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Lithuania, followed by the Netherlands. Please, Lithuania.

The Delegation of Lithuania:

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to echo the comments being made by the USA, France, Canada, Sweden and Chile and we would like to keep the original text.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Netherlands followed by the Czech Republic. Please, Netherlands, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We do not agree with the original proposal made by the Russian Federation of having a two-third majority for conveying a special session. We strongly favour to keep it as it is.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Czech Republic followed by the Philippines. Please, you have the floor, Czech Republic.

The Delegation of the Czech Republic:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. The Czech Republic supports the original wording by the Secretariat as France, Canada, Chile and other colleagues. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The Philippines followed by Venezuela. Please, Philippines, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Philippines:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We would like to keep the original formulation of the paragraph and we would like to stick with the one-third requirement. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Venezuela followed by Norway. Venezuela, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. We support the amendment tabled by the Russian Federation, Brazil and China. That is, we think that we should bear in mind the specificity of this Convention. We consider that the proposal should focus on, as I have said, the specificity of this Convention. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Norway, please, you have the floor, followed by Italy and Japan.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We would also like to keep it to one third. It corresponds to 65 States Parties so that is already a high number. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Italy and Japan and after that the floor is closed.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We would also like to support the original wording without the amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Japan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, Chair. Japan strongly prefers to maintain the original text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for all your valuable contributions. There seems to be a majority forming behind keeping the original proposal by the Secretariat. If you are in agreement with moving forward on that, I would suggest that we stick with the original voting as proposed by the Secretariat. I see China. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Chair, China does not want to destroy the consensus and solidarity here. But if you permit me, I would like our opinion to be reflected in your oral report. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your flexibility on this matter, China, and I will make sure that your opinion is reflected in the report. Thank you so much for your collaboration. We can close **4.2** [gavel] and we can move to Rule 5 and we start with 5.1 do we have any comments on **5.1**? I see none [gavel].

We move to 5.2. Do we have any comments on **5.2**? I see the United States. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I actually have a question more than a comment. Can I ask our distinguished delegate from Türkiye to explain their amendment because it has been a little bit confusing for us as we have been reading through it. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Türkiye, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to thank the distinguished Ambassador of the United States. Actually, with this amendment we would like to set a deadline for the extraordinary session to be convened. I mean, we think that it should not be an open-ended deadline for the Secretariat or the Director General to set the date of the extraordinary session. Actually, with the amendment maybe it would be better to say that it shall be set no later than 60 days. It means that the extraordinary session will be held within 60 days after the request of one third of the States Parties. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Türkiye. Is that sufficient for the United States?

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Yes. Thank you. That explanation clears up our confusion of “within” versus “no later”. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Do we have any further comments on this matter? Are we in agreement to accept the text as proposed by Türkiye? I see the Russian Federation. Is it a point of order?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you. Chair, I am not a native speaker of English or French, so I would just like to be clear about this. Does this mean that the session should be convened no later than 60 days after the request, but it could be called within three days following the request? Was it clear in Russian? Maybe not?

I repeat my question to clarify. Does it mean that if the request was made the 1st of December the session could be organized the 3rd of December?

The Chairperson:

Thank you for asking for that clarification. I am not a native English speaker either, so I think in this case maybe we should try to rely a little bit on some legal competencies and ask for a little clarification on this. Thank you.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, of course, it is not my intention to interpret a text that is proposed by one of the delegations, but my understanding is that, hypothetically, yes that would be the convening of the session once a request has been made. My understanding of what Türkiye is proposing is that within 60 days the Director General shall tell you what is the date of the session. It could be a very short deadline. Of course, there are other elements that come into place with regard to, for example, the distribution of the provisional Agenda, the documentation, etc., but that is handled in other provisions of the Rules of Procedure not this one. This one does not say that there is a minimal below which you cannot convene a session, but there might be other reasons not to convene the session and there are in in different provisions that come later in the text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Does that answer the question, Russian Federation? Thank you.

I see no further comments and we move to Rule **5.3**. Can we see it on the screen, please? No comments [gavel].

We move to Rule 6, **6.1** no comments? [gavel] **6.2**, sorry, the Russian Federation.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

My apologies, Chair. With respect to the venue so where the session would be held. I would like to have an explanation from the Legal Advisor. We are writing that the session must take place at UNESCO headquarters. Now, in the Convention, if I have understood correctly, it stated that the session is to take place during UNESCO's General Conference, in the framework of the General Conference. Now, if this General Conference were to take place in another place, not at headquarters, then how would our Assembly be organised? Where would it be organised? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that question. I will leave that to the Secretariat, the Assistant Director General and possibly the Legal Advisor. Please, you have the floor.

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

I recall that yesterday you took a decision in the General Conference. Do you remember it? It was in the afternoon. When you adopted this decision, on the third floor, we were very aware of the situation. As you can read in our text, we say that it says "during the General Conference". The General Conference has finished yesterday and we are continuing in the General Assembly. Somehow, we have been skipping a little bit the rules. We start with them but we do not finish with them. We are all here and the General Conference finished yesterday.

We have been a little bit queasy. But now with the decision that was taken it means that we have a little bit of a contradiction between where we should do our Assembly and this sentence that says unless the Assembly decides to meet elsewhere. But it is the Assembly, it is not the General Conference which has to decide on what this Assembly does. It means, and that is why you have extraordinary meetings, that we can decide if the decision in two years is to do the General Conference somewhere else, as it was somehow adopted. Well, this Assembly will have to have an extraordinary meeting or consultation to know if we accept to do what the General Conference has decided to have their meeting. I do not know if the Legal Advisor wants to tell us more in legal lingo.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I will say the same thing in more legal words. According to, notably, Article 8 of the Convention, the Assembly shall meet during the ordinary session of the General Conference. During tends to give a reference that is in terms of time but not necessarily in terms of places. Right, it says during the ordinary session not in the margins on or in the same place as. It could have said so, so there is a little bit of an ambiguity there.

There are two things to be said there. The first one is the last time the General Conference met elsewhere than in Paris, this General Assembly also met in the same place. It was in Sofia in 1985 and this Assembly met in Sofia also in that year. The Secretariat may be able to tell you what has happened before that. I know the case of 1985, I have not checked the prior ones. What this means is that 5.3 says that it would be at headquarters but you may decide to hold it somewhere else. And the very good thing about this is that you actually usually meet after the General Conference has made a decision on where it shall meet next time. So, you can decide. For example, you could decide right now where you are going to meet in two years. Whether you are going to meet in Paris or in Sofia.

If I may very quickly mention the logic of this. Think about the fact that we were in 1972 it was another world in which transportation was not as obvious as it is right now. The idea was probably at the time to take the opportunity of the fact that everyone was in Paris for the General Conference for this General Assembly to meet at the same time.

Today, maybe things have changed. But once again practice has been, at least last time, that you have met in the same place where the General Conference has met. And you may decide what to do in two years from now, given that, as you well know, yesterday the General Conference has made the decision to meet elsewhere in 2025. Thank you, very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. You complement well each other you two. Kenya, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving us the floor. I was just seeking clarification after the information by the Legal Advisor. Just to understand why the Assembly holds its meeting together with the General Conference. I envision it is because the delegates are already here attending the General Conference and by virtue of that we want to save on the cost and utilise all the expertise.

I also noticed that how the General Conference, Secretariat and experts get involved directly in the Assembly. For example, the item today we discussed regarding the budgets where BFM and Madame Bona's Office was involved. Maybe that is the reasoning behind. Mentioning the General Conference will not in any way alter the functioning of the Assembly. Maybe some clarification from you would be necessary. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I will ask you to be brief, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I do believe that it is for that reason that in the 1972 the decision made was in order to take opportunity of synergies and the fact that the people were there. I should point out, however, that it is very clear that it is for this General Assembly to decide where it meets and not for the General Conference to decide in the place of this Assembly. That is absolutely clear too. Even if you may remember that yesterday the resolution of the General Conference took into consideration the fact that if it were to meet elsewhere arrangements would need to be made also for this General Assembly, indeed, in case you decide to meet elsewhere too. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much, Chair. Thank you to the Legal Advisor for the very detailed explanations. Given what has been said, we think it might be sensible to strengthen this rule in such a way as to ensure that ordinary sessions, at least ordinary sessions of the General Assembly, take place in the same place as where the UNESCO's General Conference is held. That would resolve all of issues as far as we are concerned. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

The United States, please, you have the floor. Thank you.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We support the original as written by the Secretariat and as gavelled, through it gives the necessary flexibility for us as the General Assembly to make a decision about what makes the most sense for us, for the holding of our Assembly and we do not support changing the text further. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Canada to be followed by Chile. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. We also do not support the Russian suggestion. The way we read it from the Convention it just says "during". And "during" for me is the time not the place. To me, the Convention does not mention that it has to be held at the same place. Therefore, we would not accept the Russian amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

We also wanted to support the original wording, which we think gives us a flexible solution when it comes to the location where the General Assembly is held. So, yes, let us stick with the original wording. Thank you. ^J

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Do we have any other comments on this matter? I see none. Could I ask the Russian Federation please?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you, Chair. This was just a proposal. If nobody supports it, if nobody else agrees, then, of course, we will go with the consensus on this. Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. We consider **5.3** closed *[gavel]* and move to 6.1.

Any comments on **6.1**? I see none *[gavel]*.

Moving to **6.2**, any comments? I see none *[gavel]*.

6.3, any comments on **6.3**? I see none *[gavel]* and then we come to **6.4** where we have several proposals. Do we have any comments or interventions on these proposals? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you, Chairperson. We believe that at this point you have very similar proposals. It is just a matter of emphasis, so we would be in a position to withdraw our proposal for the two other options that are on the screen. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your flexibility on this. We are left with the two remaining proposals. Do we have any comments or interventions on those? I see the United States of America. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. For legal clarity, we believe that the amendment proposed by France and Türkiye which appear to be the same are more legally clear and we would support that amendment if this amendment has support from the general floor. We could join consensus on that but we are not insistent on this amendment at all and are happy to stick with the original text as well.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Merci, Monsieur le Président. As a matter of fact, the two amendments are very close. But I think logically that any secret ballot whether elections or otherwise cannot take place online. It is a fact; it is a fact. We should mention it.

I think in that case it is the second amendment or we take the first amendment and we add other voting and that is all. If we take the France and Türkiye's amendment, it should read "elections and other voting" and it continues and it is okay. Or the other one. I think legally talking maybe the Legal Advisor can help us. It is impossible to hold other secret ballots online, it should be mentioned as it is in the Russian amendment or we amend like this. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I am very glad for giving me the opportunity to again ask the Legal Advisor.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Thank you for this other opportunity. I should point out that this provision has been included in other assemblies because States Parties have expressed similar concerns with regard to elections by secret ballot. I should actually say that a secret ballot online is technically possible. I cannot say otherwise because there are other organisations that have done so. But this organisation has decided not to do so and has taken a very clear stance not in favour of it. But I really cannot say it is not technically possible because in my contacts with other organisations, they have found the technical ways to do so. But, once again, UNESCO is not in that position.

Actually, when looking at the Proposal from France, Türkiye and the Russian Federation, they are quite similar. The only question that arises here is about this Assembly holding elections by secret ballot. That is, for example, the elections for the members of the Committee. I am not sure this Assembly holds voting by secret ballots for other kinds of voting but on this I would defer to the Secretariat. I am not sure whether this Assembly has any practice, the rules do not mention whether this Assembly has any practice of making any kind of other votes that is not an election by secret ballot. But in that case, it might solve by itself. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I think I saw South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you very much, Chair. As South Africa, we want to support the proposed amendment that distinguished delegates from France and Türkiye have made for the elections to be conducted in person where the General Assembly hold session virtually. That is what we wanted to support. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. France, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Effectivement, les deux sont à peu près similaires, donc je pense que l'on va pouvoir arriver à un accord. La proposition que nous avons faite avec Türkiye correspond exactement au libellé qui a été adopté lorsque l'on en a discuté au moment du Règlement intérieur de l'Assemblée générale de 2003, également celle de 2001.

Pour des raisons de cohérence, il nous semble qu'il est utile de pouvoir utiliser exactement le même libellé. D'ailleurs, il me semble que la partie en jaune correspondait à l'amendement qui a été proposé par la Russie et qui a été adopté à l'époque.

The Chairperson:

Merci beaucoup. United Kingdom, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Just to say that the United Kingdom supports the amendment proposed by France and Türkiye, if possible, without the latest amendment by Palestine because we feel that it actually reverts to the other amendments which are below and we do not agree with those amendments below. We agree with the amendment proposed by France and Türkiye as it was proposed. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Very quickly, just to make it clear. It is true the practice in this Assembly is that there is no secret vote on decisions but we never know because the Assembly is sovereign. It is also true that in other assemblies the secret ballot is only for election not for adoption of decisions. But again, we never know, maybe even for the chairmanship, if there is a difference and there are two candidates, in that case usually whenever there are nominative persons then it should be a secret ballot. Just in case we never know. For the moment it is true until now there have never been such cases. But who knows, and the Legal advisor can develop. Thank you

The Chairperson:

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to consult the Legal Advisor. I am not sure he wishes to express any opinion on that but, please, feel free.

The Legal Advisor:

My understanding, and I would really need confirmation from the colleagues from the Secretariat on this, is that in this Assembly, the only case in which secret ballot is used is for elections. The case that was just mentioned by the distinguished delegate of Palestine is also an election, it would be an election. Now, you never know with the current rules which are deficient. You do know once you have adopted these. Because if you look at Rules 30 and 31, they are clear about the fact and the way of doing a simple majority voting by show of hands and roll call and they do not mention secret ballot. Secret ballot is only provided for elections in the Rules. And this is a typical case in which the new Rules will actually improve and give more clarity to the procedures here. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Is that a quick reply?

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

A quick reply and just to make it simpler for the Assembly. I would like to withdraw the amendment in that case on the amendment of France and Türkiye. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your flexibility. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you, Chair. Thank you to the Legal Advisor for the explanations provided. If we consider that in the framework of this General Assembly, secret ballots are only used for elections, then we would agree that it is appropriate to remove our amendment to go along with what was suggested by France and Türkiye. One thing I would add, however, is that Russia is not party to the 2003 Convention. We did not propose the amendment as France had suggested, but we do like the proposed text.

Also, a technical question for the Legal Advisor. Do we perhaps need somewhere in the text separately, within the Rules of Procedure, to state that decisions are not adopted through a secret ballot? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that, Russian Federation. I will quickly pass the floor to the Legal Advisor, again.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, I believe that Rule 30 as it appears right now in the new text, the new Rule 30 proposed, 31 I am sorry, 31, by saying that "Except as otherwise provided for in the present Rules voting shall be by a show of hand" and then it says "the conditions under which roll call may be used" but there is no provision for a secret ballot that would mean that it would not be possible to use secret ballot. Of course, there remains Rule 14.a, which says that "the elections of members of the World Heritage Committee shall be conducted by secret ballot". That, of course, is an exception that is maintained. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I saw France before. Vous avez la parole.

La délégation de la France :

Pardon, c'est juste une confusion aussi peut-être de ma part. En fait, c'était celle de 70 qui n'a pas été adoptée au final parce que les États membres ne se sont pas mis d'accord. On était reparti sur la même discussion effectivement.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much for all your interventions. It seems that we are approaching an agreed text. I would propose that we adopt as it is presented on the screen if there are no objections. Adopted *[gavel]*.

We move to Rule 7 starting with 7.1. Any comments on 7.1? I see none *[gavel]*. Palestine, please you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Thank you, Mr Chair. Non, ne vous inquiétez pas, je ne vais pas présenter d'amendements même si c'était l'intention. Mais je souhaite que l'on garde cette intervention dans le rapport. C'est à dire pour moi, l'harmonisation passera aussi par la préparation de l'Agenda et pour l'instant, dans d'autres Conventions, dans leur Règlement intérieur, l'Agenda se prépare par le Bureau et le Secrétariat. Et pour cela, pour ne pas reprendre la parole, le 7.1 ici est connecté également à 11.2. Donc j'ai des réserves sur 7.1 et 11.2 jusqu'à que l'on voit l'image totale. Ensuite, on avisera. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that and we reflect that opinion, of course.

We move to 7.2. Any comments on 7.2? Can we see the whole text please? We have an amendment proposed and I see the United States of America. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We do not believe that a further amendment, beyond what the Secretariat has already put on the screen and their proposed amendment, is necessary because we obviously would not adopt an Agenda that is for the Assembly functionally unable to accomplish or that is outside of its scope of work. We think that this level of addition is not necessary and we would ask to go back to the proposed text by the Secretariat staff which is very clear. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Any other comments on that subject matter? Maybe I should ask Russia to comment on that, please, thank you.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you. Just so as to go along with the consensus and with the greatest respect that I have for the competence of my colleague, the distinguished delegate of the USA, we are prepared to withdraw this. We understand, of course, that the Assembly, in the future, when they adopt their provisional Agenda, will only adopt items that really do fall directly under its remit. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. With that we are ready to close 7.2 *[gavel]* and move to 7.3.

Do we have any comments on 7.3? I see none *[gavel]*.

Moving to 7.4. I see Brazil. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chair. Just to explain our amendment. The idea is, as proposed in my first intervention, to find a proper balance between the work and the responsibilities of the Secretariat and the delegations. We would like to have the

proper time to analyse the documents, so we believe that perhaps this moment that gives some flexibility to the Secretariat to have their proper work, could be considered by the Assembly as written. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. The problem with this amendment is that it is basically very difficult to have an extraordinary session within less than 30 days. I do not think we can agree to this amendment because for us if it is an extraordinary session, it could possibly need to happen in a few days. We need that flexibility. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. The United States agrees with the comments from my colleague of Canada that we need to maintain the flexibility so that the organisation can actually hold extraordinary sessions as and when needed. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see the Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much. Mr Chairman, we understand the concerns of Canada and the United States of America and the rationale of being able to convene an extraordinary session of the General Assembly swiftly. In all of the 51 years of its existence, we know that the extraordinary session has actually only occurred once, which really does show how important this body is.

I am just wondering if my learned colleagues could actually explain to me which kinds of questions would need an emergency and urgent convening of the extraordinary session and the role that it would be fulfilling. What kind of question could it possibly be that would make it impossible to circulate the documents of this session at least 30 days prior? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Do you wish to reply? Yes. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I, of course, cannot speculate about all the possible future reasons why this Convention might want to call an extraordinary session. My concern is simply that we not tie the hands of the ability of this body to actually function and to hold such an extraordinary session. One can envision especially with climate change and all of the very difficult weather implications for that. Where for instance a typhoon comes forward and you actually need to have an extraordinary session and we cannot wait 30 days to respond to the needs to very quickly safeguard some of the cultural heritage that is being threatened by that typhoon. It is just one example, but, of course, I would not speculate about all the possible scenarios. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. China, please, followed by Palestine.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you, Chair. I hope that everybody can be understanding of Brazil's proposal. Here, we are amending the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the 72 Convention with this 30-day rule proposed by Brazil to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. I do not know if I am mistaken, but I really hope that everybody can think about it. Here, we are revising, amending the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, but at the same time, maybe, we can also make them coherent with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. And also, I want to ask my colleagues if this narrative or this way of writing the text is also in line with the General Conference of the UNESCO Rules of Procedure or where they come from. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that and thank you for your question. I think that this will be addressed to the Secretariat. I will quickly ask the Assistant Director General to follow up on that one.

Le Sous-Directeur général pour la Culture :

Deux choses que l'on voudrait vous expliquer. La première, c'est que je ne peux pas expliquer 30 jours c'est aussi au Brésil d'expliquer. Mais la seule chose qu'on peut vous expliquer c'est que quand l'on s'est basé effectivement sur les autres assemblées et « as soon as possible » c'est le langage qui est utilisé. « If possible » ça peut être utilisé, mais on n'a pas vraiment un commentaire sur ça. Si vous mettez « if possible » ça n'empêche pas qu'on va pouvoir le faire avant les 30 jours. Donc ça ne va pas affecter la décision de l'Assemblée de l'avoir en cinq ou dix jours. « If possible » c'est ce qui est dans beaucoup de nos textes des assemblées. Nous utilisons « if possible ».

Donc, je ne vois pas vraiment le problème parce que ça ne limite pas le sujet. Si l'Assemblée décide de faire en trois jours, en trois jours vous pouvez le faire. Enfin, en trois jours on va voir des problèmes nous, comme Secrétariat, mais on pourrait le faire effectivement. Rien d'autre à apporter.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

I do fully agree with the clarification of the Assistant Director General and that is why I think the amendment could be made a little bit clearer even if I am not an anglophone. Maybe the anglophone people can help. When we say "as soon as possible", after the "as soon as possible," here there should be a comma and if possible "not less than" to make it flexible. There is no constraint of time, it is only if possible and if it not possible it is not possible that is all. I think we can go along with it. There is no constraint and there is no obligation with it no obligation. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Great, thank you. I actually somewhat agree with my Palestinian colleague but I do not understand the rationale for having 30 days. The original text says as soon as possible. I think that that gives us enough flexibility, as was already outlined by the Assistant Director General, and I stand by my original position to maintain the original text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to maintain the original as was said by the distinguished Ambassador of the US. I believe as a general point of view Sweden always trust the Secretariat to give us enough time to view the Agenda. We trust the Secretariat and want to give them the flexibility, and also ourselves as a General Assembly, to hold meetings when we have the possibility. We believe that maintaining the original is the best way forward. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation: *[Interpretation from Russian]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. For our amendment, I think that Brazil had the same starting point as us and we are flexible thereupon. We had suggested the addition of the words "if possible", and "if possible, not less than 30 days in advance". Should I explain that when we receive the General Assembly Agenda, we send the Agenda to our ministries? Remember that this is a Convention based on experts and the experts take part in the meeting. Our experts.

Indeed, a moment ago, we just adopted an amendment about meetings of the General Assembly which might be able to take place other than at headquarters. For those experts to arrive here in France, they are going to have to travel, let us say 24 hours, and get a visa sorted out, if they get the visa. But it takes several days sometimes to get a visa. So, what we are insisting on is to maintain this proposed amendment, because it should be able to guarantee the participation at the General Assembly of experts from countries that are a long way from Paris. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Do we have any further comments on this matter? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Just one more thing to add. We are talking on the provisional Agenda not the definitive Agenda, we believe it is not a big deal to the Secretariat when we are organising a meeting to define what is the provisional Agenda. We are not asking for the definitive Agenda. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see Norway. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We would like to echo Canada, United States and Sweden and maintain the original text and leave it as flexible as possible. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Giving the time for preparation and also logistic, we echo our colleagues from Brazil and the Russian Federation to give at least 30 days before the session. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have just been looking at the Committee's Rules of Procedure, and it says under 3.2 "members of the Committee, the date, gender of each session, no less than 60 days in advance in case of an ordinary session and if possible, not less than 30 days in advance in the case of an extraordinary session". Therefore, I get the impression that the Committee, with its 21 Member States, do actually require 30 days of preparation if they are having an extraordinary session. I think that the States Parties, the General Assembly, should align itself with that. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Venezuela, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you for giving me the floor. Perhaps the issue that we are discussing is actually to do with methodology and governance and the relevance, meaning that our experts needed to have time to peruse the documents and know what is going to be addressed so that they can give the very best recommendations thereupon.

In this regard, perhaps instead of saying "as soon as possible", what we could put would be a time saying with sufficient time in advance or sufficiently in advance. And maybe that would be language that everybody could agree on. Because what we really want to do is to say, and I think this is what some people around the room have already expressed, is that we just need to give our experts time to peruse the documents. That is the main point, is it not?

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Before moving forward with the list of speakers, I have Lebanon, Chile, and Poland on the list, I wish to inform you that it is now 5.50 p.m. very soon, time flies when having fun, and we still have a lot to examine. I would like to inform you that we have the possibility to prolong our session until 7.00 p.m., but in that case we will only benefit from interpretation in English and French. I wish to ask the Assembly if that is appropriate. The United States, please.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

No. This is not appropriate.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. I will continue with the list of speakers. We are starting with Lebanon followed by Chile. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you, Chair. We approve the original wording of the text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Lebanon, please, you have the floor. Poland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Poland:

Mr Chair, thank you for giving me the floor. We strongly support the original version of the text.

The Chairperson:

Chile, I see your flag is up, do you still want to take the floor? No. United Kingdom, please.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The UK would like to also support the original version as indicated on the screen by Canada, United States, Sweden, Norway, Poland and Chile. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Finland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Finland:

Thank you, Chair. Finland also wants to stay with the main original text.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Cuba, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Cuba: *[Interpretation from Spanish]*

Thank you, Chair. I would like to thank the distinguished delegate of China for having drawn our attention to what is in the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. And it does seem to align better with what is being proposed for this Assembly. We would like to support what is being proposed that the members of the General Assembly have 30 days to peruse the documents. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Lithuania, please, followed by Palestine.

The Delegation of Lithuania:

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to join other colleagues, Canada, United States, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Chile and others in supporting the original text.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I was thinking about a way out. As I mentioned the amendment by Brazil and Russia is absolutely flexible, but the idea is just to stress the necessity to have sufficient time. Maybe we can keep the original text and at the end only have "as soon as possible in the case of an extraordinary session and in sufficient time in advance". Just to add this thing "sufficient". It stresses the need to have the Agenda in advance without mentioning 30 days or whatever.

Amending the original text: "as soon as possible and sufficiently in advance", yes, here, "and sufficiently in advance in the case of an extraordinary session". Maybe it is a middle way between both of them. Knowing that I am still convinced that the Russian Federation and Brazil's amendment keeps it flexible. But here, it is a little bit even more flexible. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that contribution. Is this something we can move forward with? The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr Chair, I apologise but this is now all kinds of where we did not want to be which is drafting from the floor. I do not know what the definition of "sufficient" is on a legal basis, so maybe the Legal Adviser can tell us what that means. Because what is sufficiently in advance?

What I do not want to do is write a Rule of Procedure that is then going to open up a whole bunch of arguments later on for somebody saying I did not have sufficient time. My definition of "sufficient time" may be very different than somebody else's definition of "sufficient time". I have a raft of lawyers. I have to run things fast. I may need

more time than others who do not have to do that. And what I am concerned about is I do not understand how we would define that. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. And I fully understand your sentiment but I am also very much in favour of middle grounds, but maybe we should ask the Secretariat for some advice on possible middle grounds. Thank you.

Le Secrétariat :

Si vous me permettez, cette discussion nous l'avons eu lors de la Convention de 2003 et le *middle ground* qui a été trouvé par la salle est le suivant et je vous le lis. Ils ont eu exactement la même discussion. « Et dès que possible de préférence dans les 15 jours avant l'ouverture de la session extraordinaire ». C'est juste au milieu. Je répète, « Et dès que possible de préférence dans les 15 jours avant l'ouverture de la session extraordinaire ». C'est ce qui a été adopté à la 2003 et c'était après 35 minutes de débats tels que vous venez de le faire et ils sont arrivés à un point d'union. C'est vous-mêmes, c'est les États parties.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. Palestine.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Just a very quick question. It has been adopted the wording that you said has been adopted by 2003. In that case, we are harmonising. Let us adopt it, let us adopt it. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Before going there, I see China. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China: *[Interpretation from Chinese]*

Thank you. Mr Chairman, we would like to support the proposal made by the distinguished delegate of Palestine. We do think that the Assistant Director General has come up with a very good compromise text and it is an excellent idea.

The Chairperson:

I will carefully look at the room and see if there are other colleagues agreeing with that type of approach, but we need to see the text of course.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Are we looking at the proposal from the Assistant Director General or what are we looking at here?

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

It was not mine, it was Member States proposal. I am reading what you decided. If you wish I can repeat it, I have it in French. "*Et dès que possible, de préférence dans les 15 jours avant l'ouverture de la session extraordinaire*". Now English: "And as soon as possible, and preferably 15 days, before the opening of an extraordinary session". That was the middle ground that was found by Member States.

The Chairperson:

In a very harmonious voice that was transmitted as well. Thank you. United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Sorry, I apologize, Mr Chair. This is the problem with drafting from the floor I do not have time to run this past my lawyers; I do not have time to actually seek legal counsel. It is a major US holiday and the US government is closed. I am not able to even reach back via text to anybody at this point. I am quite concerned about this drafting from the floor and would actually propose we go back to the original. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Libya, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Libya: *[Interpretation from Arabic]*

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. We are of the opinion that the proposal submitted by the Secretariat is absolutely perfect. It is not binding and yet at the same time it gives enough time to everybody. We do think that this wording was already accepted by the 2003 Convention after lengthy discussions. I do think that we could go with this wording as we have just heard. Thank you.¹

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. I would just like to remind everyone that unfortunately we are not all party to the 2003 Convention, so some of us were not involved in the discussion. They said the language could work but I think we would need a bit of time to look at it and make sure it works. Just as a point like when we refer back to discussions that were held in conventions where we are not all party to, we cannot be bound by those discussions. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I will just make you aware that the translation will from now on only be in English and French. I also think I would like to pass the floor to the Legal Advisor for some clarification.

The Legal Advisor:

Mr Chair, just to help the room in resolving any doubts they may have. None of the provisions or proposals that have been put on the table up to now restricts the possibility to circulate the provisional Agenda in fewer than 30 or even 15 days. None of the provisions because all of them contain wording like "if possible, preferably, etc." which is flexible enough and has been applied with that kind of flexibility in other settings at UNESCO. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I see Türkiye followed by Ukraine. Please, Türkiye.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to thank the Assistant Director General and the Legal Advisor for their explanations and we can go with the text proposed, I mean offered, by the Secretariat. I think it is quite flexible and we know the capabilities of the Secretariat, they did so well in the last couple of years. I think they can even make the Agenda available even in 15 days. But I think this wording right now gives enough flexibility for the Secretariat. We support this language. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Ukraine followed by Venezuela. Please, Ukraine.

The Delegation of Ukraine:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. We support the original variant and especially Ukraine has already an experience of initiating an extraordinary session, so we know how urgent circumstances might be. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Venezuela, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

Thank you, Mr President. We support the text of the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Very quickly, just to make it simpler and clearer. I would like to withdraw my amendment, the amendment of Palestine, and to join the Secretariat's amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China

Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Considering that our colleague from Palestine has already withdrawn, China will join the consensus raised by the Secretariat and so on. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see Saudi Arabia. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to support the amendment or rather the proposed text by the Secretariat.

The Chairperson:

Please, I will ask the Russian Federation if this is agreeable.

La délégation de la Fédération de Russie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Avant de donner ma réponse. Est-ce que j'ai bien compris que la distinguée déléguée des États-Unis a dit qu'elle ne pourrait pas accepter les propositions qui ont été proposées par la salle. Parce qu'indépendamment de mon avis, si un État membre ne peut pas accepter quoi que ce soit qui a été présenté dans la salle, est-ce que cet exercice devient un peu inutile ?

The Chairperson:

Do you wish to respond to that the United States? Togo, please, you have the floor.

La délégation du Togo :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. C'est une suggestion que je voulais faire, mais je me rallie à la proposition qui nous a été faite sur la Convention de 2003. C'est vrai que tout le monde n'est pas membre de cette Convention. Mais nous nous trouvons dans une situation de blocage. Il y a des pays qui ne peuvent pas avoir de retour de leur administration avant un certain temps. En tout cas pas avant demain. Dans cette condition qu'est-ce qu'on fait. C'est difficile.

Je voulais proposer que nous nous penchions et adoptions la solution qui nous a été proposée et que beaucoup d'États aussi ont contribué à adopter. Donc je me rallierai à ce que le Secrétariat nous a rappelé tout à l'heure sur la convention de 2003 « Dès que possible et de préférence dans les 15 jours ». Nous ne serons pas sur les 30 jours initialement proposés et nous ne nous laissons pas non plus largement le temps. Ce serait vraiment une proposition de compromis.

Et j'ajouterais qu'il serait bon pour que les délégués qui ont soutenu des positions qui n'aient pas pu permettre d'avoir le consensus qu'on puisse noter leur intervention dans le rapport de manière à les protéger d'une certaine façon. Ils ont fait leur boulot, mais nous avons besoin de trouver une solution de compromis pour évoluer. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention and the proposal. I see the United Arab Emirates. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Arab Emirates:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We would like to support the proposal by the Secretariat and thank the Assistant Director General for this proposal.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Egypt also supports the proposal of the Assistant Director General. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see Azerbaijan. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Azerbaijan:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We will also support the Secretariat's proposal. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Azerbaijan and Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We would like to add as well our support to this, as we see a consensual proposal. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

North Korea, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Korea:

I am from the Democratic Republic of Korea.

The Chairperson:

My apologies.

The Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Korea:

My country also supports the text with the amendments submitted by the Secretariat.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. My wise colleague from Togo is enormously sage in his advice. I always try to listen to my African friends because I have found them to be great conveners of consensus over time. And I appreciate his spirit of conciliation and his recommendation that while we do not block consensus our concerns are reflected in the record in both the written and the oral record. And with that I will not block what appears to be a somewhat emerging consensus. But I would also like to hear from others who have supported the original text if they can live with this text, and if so, then we will not block consensus. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your flexibility on this and we will certainly give the floor to other Member States. Cuba, please.

The Delegation of Cuba:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Thank you to the Secretariat for the proposal. After this long debate and knowing the importance of arriving to this kind of agreement, we support the proposal supported by many colleagues and suggested by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines followed by Canada. Please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, we support the proposal of the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. Looking at it a bit more closely, and thank you for the time, I think we can also agree to it. I think reading it helped to realise that it can work. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. I see Finland and Norway. Finland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Finland:

Thank you, Chair. Just to say that we can also live with the proposal by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Norway would also like to join the consensus on this. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Barbados, please.

The Delegation of Barbados:

Thank you, Mr Chair. The consensus is growing. We will support this proposed amendment. I also want to note though that this does not tie hands completely. We have the ability if it is absolutely fundamental to support a

temporary suspension of Rules in order to be able to address certain situations. We accept this proposal from the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Time is running fast. Unless we have any objections, I would propose that we adopt this as it is now approaching what seems to be a consensus. Are we in agreement with that? Thank you so much for your cooperation, so adopted *[gave!]*.

Let us move to Rule 8 and we will try to be fast now. The United States.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Sorry, Mr President. I note that we are now well past 6.00 p.m.. I would like to understand what the calendar for our session is. I was quite clear in my objections to extending a session as I have noted it is a national holiday in the United States. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Just to reiterate, we have the translation and the Secretariat until 7.00 p.m. and that is the time we have to finalise today. With your permission, we can continue until 7.00 p.m. Palestine, please.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

7.00 p.m. without the other languages, we will have only English and French. This is also a precedent and we are not in agreement with it. I am sorry, I am really sorry it is following the Rules also. I suggest closing the session and to adjourn the remaining items. There is no other way out. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Well, we have a request for an adjournment of the debate so I need to consult with the Legal Advisor on the process.

The Legal Advisor:

Mr Chair, as per current Rules, contrary to the one that the Secretariat is proposing to introduce, the Secretariat proposes introduction of Rules in a few minutes from now that explain what is the adjournment of debate and how it works; the current Rules do not say anything but the fact that there may be a proposal for an adjournment of debate. I am at a loss as to tell you how this is to be done because the rules as they currently are might change in a few minutes. The Rules to decide to continue do not say how to do. However, the possibility is there and I am reading Rule 9.1 "that during a discussion any delegation may move to suspension or adjournment of the meeting or the adjournment or closure of the debate". The possibility is there, it would be for the Assembly to decide. If the Assembly needs to decide, it would need to decide either by consensus or probably, but I have no clue, because there is no rule about that, through a vote that would be by a simple majority.

Mr Chair, I do confirm that the working languages of the Assembly are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. I do confirm though that there have been precedents in which assemblies have accepted to suspend the Rule on the basis of similar reasons as the ones here. You may decide to do so. If that were the case, I am afraid that here again the current Rules do not have a provision about that. The new Rules that the Secretariat is proposing would have Rules about that. But I believe that there have been precedencies in this Assembly of suspension of the Rules in the past. Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I hope this will help the Assembly to move forward. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification and the optimism. I see Russia.

The Delegation of the Federation of Russia:

Thank you, Mr President. I would propose to continue our work until 7.00 p.m. and just maybe one small suggestion to the distinguished delegates from the United States. When it was the matter of the extraordinary session of the General Conference of UNESCO concerning the return of the United States, this session was held during a national holiday in many Arab States. So, maybe the distinguished delegate of the United States could make a small favour for us to continue the work till 7.00 p.m. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, we still have just four or five amendments and minor amendments. Can we continue if it is possible for all States Parties? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

We want to support that we can continue even if we do not have the Spanish translation, so we can finish this. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Palestine, please.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Since there is a majority, we will go with the consensus. I am not against but I am convinced that we will not finish our business tonight. Let us go forward. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Okay. There seems to be an agreement in the room to move forwards. I suggest we move to Rule 8. Any comments on Rule 8? I see none [gavel].

Rule 9, any comments on Rule 9? I see none [gavel].

Rule 10.1, are there any comments? I see none [gavel].

Rule 10.2, are there any comments? I see none [gavel].

Rule 10.3, are there any comments? I see none [gavel].

Rule 11.1 with an amendment, do we have any comments on that? The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

It is a question to our colleagues in Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Brazil if they can explain their amendment, please, because I do not understand what they are trying to do. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Saint Vincent, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, it is very simple. It is just to clarify the paragraph. Why we should put "up to four", just to clarify and to precise "four Vice-chairs". That is all. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that explanation. Is that sufficient? The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

My concern here is that we do not always have four Vice-chairs that are put forward. If you restrict it and say you have to have four Vice-chairs, then the Assembly could not meet. So, the "up" is to give the flexibility if there is not a Vice-chair from one region for instance. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I will quickly ask the Secretariat for the wording in the other Rules of Procedure on that one. Please.

The Secretariat:

The issue is that in this one it was written like this. But it is up to those who have put the amendments. In this Assembly we never have this problem. In other committees sometimes we have this problem. In this one in the past, we have never had this problem. And since you are working with regional groups normally it's up to you to propose other names. It has never happened but it is up to you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Do we have any further comments on this? Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, when we say "up to four", we could have three Vice-chairs. It is just to clarify to put "four Vice-chairs" to have all regional groups represented. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Now, we understand the rationale behind the amendment. It is just that we agree with the distinguished ambassador of the US that this might make us not open the General Assembly if, let us say, we only have three candidates and we, of course, all have the objective to always have all electoral groups represented. But sometimes to have Vice-chairs coming with their candidacy a few hours into the meeting and we want to keep this flexibility open. We believe that we could maintain the original language to keep the flexibility. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Thank you, Mr Chair. But I think our exercise is harmonisation, so we should take into consideration what has been adopted in other assemblies. Nowhere it has been adopted like this. So "up to four" or "four", it is appropriate, but maybe Mr Assistant Director General can help us and tell us what has been adopted in this regard in the other assemblies. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Please, Legal Advisor, you can have the floor.

The Legal Advisor:

Mr Chair, I should mention that the Rules of Procedure of the Assemblies of the 1954, 1970, 1999 Protocol and the 2001 Conventions say that the "Assembly elects four" not "up to four", it says "four Vice-chairpersons". The Rules of Procedure of the Assemblies of this Convention, 2003 prior to the change and 2005 said "one or more". So as of today, it is one or more in this Assembly. If it were to be four, I do get the point that was mentioned by a few delegations.

I have to say that even in those bureaus in which there is no such possibility of saying "up to" it says "four" and if one of the regional groups was not able to agree to a candidature. What has happened is that the session has started with a Chair appointed and these delegations were called, these groups were called to continue their consultations with a view of appointing their Vice-Chairperson later in the session. It has not impeded the body concerned from continuing even with a Bureau that was not completely constituted at the time of the starting of the session. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Canada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you and thank you for the explanation. But I think the "up to four" means you can have four. I am not quite sure I understand. You can have four it does not prevent it from us from having four but then as explained by others if there is less than four, we cannot. I mean with your explanation we can go ahead but it is still a bit more complicated. Our preference would be to keep "up to four", but if there is a consensus to go the other way we will follow.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to confirm what was just mentioned by the Legal Advisor and that we recall what happened yesterday at the opening of the session for Group II that we did not have a Vice-chair and we started the session and then few minutes after we got a confirmation from their Group. So, we already had this occurred yesterday.

The Chairperson:

Thank you very much. The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

With the explanation from the Legal Advisor, and I ask that his explanation be entered into the record, so that it is very clear, there is no restriction on starting if one Group is unable to get their Vice-chair in, as our esteem colleague

from Egypt has said has occurred just yesterday. So that we do not run into a circumstance where we need to have it clear in the record.

The intent was as Saint Vincent said for regional groupings to all be represented not to inhibit the work of the conference. And so, if one Group is unable to get a representative for the start for the first couple of hours it will not inhibit the start as my esteemed colleague from Egypt said and as did the Legal Advisor. I ask that this explanation be entered into the record so the intent is very clear. And with that I do not have objections to this.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much for that and we will make sure it is reflected in the minutes of the meeting and in the report. With that, are we ready to adopt as proposed? I see no objections *[gavel]*.

Moving to 11.2, do we have any comments on **11.2**? I see none *[gavel]*.

11.3, we have an amendment from Brazil and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Please, the United States, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr Chair, I would like to have an explanation of what the current practice is because these are two very different things. It is changing the terms of reference from after completing two consecutive terms to only being eligible for one term and we are trying to make an attempt to harmonise rather than to change rules. I would like to understand what are the current practices across other conventions and these conventions. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that important question. I think I will pass that to the Assistant Director General, please. Legal advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I can help the room on the practice of other conventions. I would defer to the Secretariat to explain what is the practice of this particular Assembly with regard to this.

The draft Model Rule was based on provisions that are present in the Rules of Procedure of the Assemblies of the 1970 and the 2001 Conventions. But there are no similar provisions found in other Rules of Procedure including that of the current one. Now, also the 2003 Convention has that after the change. And the Rule can also be found in the Rules of Procedure of certain committees, for example the one of the 2005 Convention. As to the practice of this specific Convention I would defer to the Secretariat. Thank you.

Le Secrétariat :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Juste, très rapidement, pour dire ce que nous savons. Le fait que le Bureau de cette Assemblée a été élu pour la durée de cette Assemblée. Quand on regarde un peu les précédents, il n'y a pas eu de réélection. Il y a régulièrement un changement et le Secrétariat a encouragé ce changement. Donc, au niveau de la pratique on n'a pas eu cela. Merci beaucoup.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for these clarifications. Was that sufficiently answered? The United States of America.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

No. I apologise, I do not understand what the Legal Counsellor was saying. If you could be very specific about what it is. I just did not follow it. I apologise. It is getting late and it is getting very hard to follow this.

The Legal Advisor:

This provision in the Model Rules that were proposed two years ago was put in brackets for consideration by the different assemblies. It is based on similar provisions that are present in the Rules of Procedure of the Assemblies of the 1970 and the 2001 conventions but not in this Assembly, nor in that of the other conventions 1954, 1999, etc., so we would defer to the Assembly whether it wishes to retain it or not. As for the practice of this Assembly, again, I defer to the Secretariat of the Assembly who just gave its explanation. Thank you very much. I hope this helps.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. I will pass the floor to Lebanon followed by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Lebanon, please, you have the floor.

La délégation du Liban :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Comme c'est la première fois que nous prenons la parole, nous vous félicitons pour votre élection et pour la manière par laquelle vous menez nos débats.

Monsieur le Président, j'ai un problème avec cet article parce que je ne le comprends pas du tout indépendamment des amendements et je suis sûr que j'aurai une explication s'il y a déjà une pratique dans d'autres conventions. D'après ce que je comprends, le Président de l'Assemblée et le Rapporteur sont élus à titre personnel. Les vice-Présidents sont donc les États. Sommes-nous en train de dire que des États ne sont pas immédiatement rééligibles ou est-ce que c'est uniquement la personne qui représente l'État qui n'est pas rééligible ?

Pour vous dire la vérité si cet article n'existait pas dans notre Convention peut être qu'il ne vaut mieux pas le ramener d'une autre Convention. Mais je voudrais d'abord entendre l'explication du Secrétariat ou du conseiller juridique. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I will pass the floor to the Legal Advisor.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, once again I should point out that this provision is for your consideration. It is a novelty, it would be a novelty. As to the practice I would defer to the Secretariat what the practice has been in this Assembly. I am not aware precisely of what it is.

The Model Rules said that the opportunity of including a provision on this topic is a practical matter with political implications which requires consideration by each Assembly. We are in your hands as to whether you consider this as being advisable or not. And there is no particular preference in that regard.

However, I would clarify what each provision means. Currently there is nothing. So, there is no limitation whatsoever. A Chairperson may be elected forever as a permanent Chairperson and there would not be any limitation in the Rules. The practice might differ, is, of course, different, but technically speaking, legally speaking the Chairpersons, Vice-chairpersons and Rapporteurs may be re-elected forever without limitations. The proposal of the Secretariat is to limit that to two terms either the Chair and the Rapporteur who are elected in the personal capacity or the Vice chairpersons which are States that are elected. They can do two mandates and after that they cannot be re-elected anymore immediately.

And finally, Brazil and Saint Vincent and Grenadines are proposing an even more restricted limitation which is that the Chairperson, the vice Chairperson and the Rapporteur can only be elected for one term and cannot be re-elected.

Three options here. First option you keep it as is, in that case there is no limitation in the rules that is fine. Second option what the Secretariat had proposed which is twice two mandates and then you have to let the position for somebody else. The proposal by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Brazil would be one mandate and you have to leave and someone else needs to take your position. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Actually, we are a little bit surprised by this article proposed by the Secretariat because we are always following a sort of rotation or availability of a Member State Party to present a President or a vice Chair or Rapporteur. We find especially that in 11.2 we said that the term of office of the Chairperson, the Vice-chairperson and the Rapporteur will run from the opening of the session of the Assembly in which they are elected until the closing of the session. And here, we are proposing they are eligible for two terms and we find this not really acceptable to have two terms for a Chairperson. After two years to have the same President of this General Assembly or another General Assembly.

We have to follow some diversity, some rotation. This was the spirit of our mandate to ensure that each regional group will have the opportunity to chair a General Assembly. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Grenada followed by Palestine. Please, Grenada, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, in fact the question is the mandate of a Bureau because the president, the Vice-president and the Rapporteur constitute the Bureau. As the Legal Advisor mentioned, this was a practice or a Rule accepted for the 1970 Convention and the 2001 Convention. Because these two Conventions do not have an intergovernmental Committee and it appeared that for continuity and efficiency of the work it could have been useful to have the same Bureau continuing for another mandate. But this is not needed I think for this General Assembly

because we have a very efficient and powerful Committee. And I think that it would be good to keep the possibility to have a rotation and to re-elect new Presidents and new Vice-presidents.

I strongly support the amendment of Brazil and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Palestine, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de l'État de Palestine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je pense que notre collègue de Saint Vincent et des Grenadines et notre collègue de la Grenade ont dit ce que j'allais dire sur la question de la logique de cet amendement, c'est la rotation. Autre chose que l'on doit garder en tête, c'est que c'était aussi la pratique, et le Secrétariat aussi fait attention à la rotation des Présidents entre les groupes électoraux. Ça, c'est déjà la pratique, je ne vois pas de mal à le mettre sur papier. Ça, c'est une chose.

La question des rotations a été mentionnée, mais tout le monde se souvient de l'amendement qui concernait la rotation sur d'autres organes plus sensibles. Donc, je pense que là on perd du temps. Ce qui est mis en texte c'est la pratique et la pratique ne va pas changer d'ici demain même si on enlève le texte et on la laisse telle qu'elle est maintenant. Cela ne change rien à notre pratique. Peut-être que le Secrétariat va confirmer que c'est le cas. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. I will quickly ask for that confirmation from the Secretariat.

Le Secrétariat :

Oui, la pratique c'est celle que vous avez mentionnée et là vous avez deux options. Soit, vous arrivez à un accord, mais comme il n'existe rien aujourd'hui, si vous le supprimez on ne met rien du tout on continue comme on le fait. C'est une option qui facilite un consensus de ne rien mettre et on continue comme on le fait. Soit, vous vous mettez d'accord et on met quelque chose qui soit la représentation de la pratique actuelle.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. We still have Barbados, Türkiye, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America on the list. I will ask you to be very brief. Barbados, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Barbados:

Chair, thank you. Chairperson, I think that between the explanations of Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Grenada we are actually arriving at what is the scenario which both amendments are trying to address. However, it would seem to me to be quite inconsistent with ourselves if we did not understand and appreciate the need for geographical rotation within the Groups that would become Vice-President. And the Vice-Chairs may serve in the capacity supporting the Chair that we are talking about. It is not the issue of the Chair which practice has been established sufficiently that we know we have a new Chair every two years.

Amongst the Vice-Chairs this amendment would not really make sure that there is sufficient rotation within the geographical Group as to whom or which State Party would represent them every two years in the General Assembly. And that is what we are trying to deal with now. I would like to support the amendment as proposed by Brazil and Saint Vincent. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Türkiye, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Türkiye:

Just to be short. We are supporting the amendment proposed by Brazil and Saint Vincent and Grenadines. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Switzerland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Switzerland:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. As we have an acknowledged practice, we would actually propose not to amend at all the Rules of Procedure in this case. But if the General Assembly thinks that it is needed to rule on something that is acknowledged anyway, then we would also go for the amendment with Brazil, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines because one year is enough to agree on a rotation in this case. Thanks.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I agree that we have an accepted practice that there are a lot of questions that others have raised about rotation, etc. The Assistant Director General has been very clear that this is a can of worms which, given the late hour, I do not think we necessarily need to open. And the Legal Advisor has made clear that this is a novelty and a new proposal and is actually not in keeping with our practice of what we are trying to do here which is harmonising, it is new.

I would suggest we set this aside in the interest of moving forward and just leave this and continue with our existing practice and ask for some of those questions about rotation, etc. to be addressed in conjunction with this and we can consider that later. But I do not think it is needed right now. We have a good practice and we should set aside this so that we can keep up with our task of actually harmonising our Rules of Procedure. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. I do not see any more requests for the floor. Sorry, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Since there is no existing pre-rule, we are flexible with both proposals either one term or two terms. However, if it is more a standing procedure across the multilateral forums one term could be enough to allow geographical distribution and rotation between Groups. Yet, it is not that big deal for us but we are flexible. But still, since there is no pre-rule we should move forward. We already have an applied practice here which is the rotation. We are flexible although we are more preferable of the one term. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. And I will close that as the last speaker. Sorry, Palestine.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

Just to say that Palestine has supported the amendment by Brazil and Saint Vincent and it is not reflected; that is all. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

I think the challenge we see is that there is not really a consensus on the floor, it is going in all directions, so my proposal would be that we do not take this amendment in order to move forward. If that is acceptable to the room. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair what do you suggest? To remove this paragraph?

The Chairperson:

Yes. To stay with the established practice.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, we prefer to keep it. It is better to keep it. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. Cuba, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Cuba:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Just to support the proposal of Brazil and Saint Vincent after the explanations that have been given up to now. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

I think that we cannot delete it. We should adopt something. Are we harmonising our Rules of Procedure or not? If we delete it, it will be inconsistent with the other Rules of Procedure. Maybe the Legal Advisor may help. There is a provision regarding the re-election of members of the Bureau in the other conventions. In that case, we need to

have something and this thing should be in conformity with the other assemblies. I think the proposal by Brazil and Saint Vincent covers this issue. Thank you so much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Before giving the floor to the Legal Advisor, I would want to hear France followed by Venezuela. Thank you.

La délégation de la France :

Si j'ai bien compris, il n'y a pas de consensus. Et je comprends aussi les explications données par le Secrétariat que l'on n'était pas obligées de rajouter un paragraphe qui apparemment ne recueille pas de consensus. Donc, pour avancer effectivement, on peut, peut-être se passer de ce paragraphe supplémentaire.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Venezuela followed by Libya.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

Thank you, Mr President. We support Brazil, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Libya, please, you have the floor.

La délégation de la Libye :

La Libye est en faveur de la rotation dans les bureaux et aussi dans les comités. Et nous pensons que mettre ceci dans les textes est une chose importante. C'est pour cela que nous appuyons la proposition du Secrétariat dans un premier temps ou la proposition du Brésil et Saint Vincent. Donc, nous pensons qu'il est important que l'on ait une limitation de nombres de mandats. Deux mandats c'est bien, un mandat c'est mieux. Il faut que l'une des deux propositions à notre avis soit présente dans les textes. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I see Grenada followed by Jamaica. Grenada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I do agree that as long as in the other conventions we have a similar paragraph, we should keep the paragraph here with the amendment of Brazil and Saint Vincent and others. Thank you. We need this paragraph.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Jamaica, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Jamaica:

Thank you, Chair. We are adding our voice as well to the Brazil, Saint Vincent and other amendments.

The Chairperson:

The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr Chair, I agree with your suggestion that there is clearly no consensus on this. This is not a paragraph that is in other conventions. The Legal Advisor very clearly said that this was a new paragraph. I agree with my colleague from France and from other countries which are not reflected up on the board that we should just leave this aside in the interest of moving on, so that we can try and get through as much of this as possible this evening. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Do we have any further interventions? Venezuela, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

Mr President, the name of Venezuela was not included in the Brazilian amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I agree that there is no consensus but I sense that there is a major movement to support the amendment of Brazil and Saint Vincent. Maybe it is the only way forward that we have to continue with this. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Poland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Poland:

Mr Chair, we support not to include this proposal. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. I also think I would want to ask the Legal Advisor for any further clarifications that he may have on this topic.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Maybe just an answer to the question that was asked by the distinguished delegate from Palestine. If you choose not to include anything, you would keep the situation as is with regard to this Convention and you would also be following the same situation as the 1954, 1999 and 2005 Conventions. I should, however, point out that 1954 and 1999 have not yet had the opportunity to make the harmonisation. They will do that next month and the 2005 Convention has decided to postpone its harmonisation later on. You would be following what was before.

If you follow what the Secretariat is proposing that is the no immediate re-election after two consecutive terms, you would be following in terms of harmonisation purely what is contained in the Rules of Procedure of the 1970, the 2001 and the 2003 Conventions. If you follow the proposal made by Brazil and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that would be a new thing that is not contained in any other Convention. This is, of course, without prejudice about me on the merits of that proposal but in terms of harmonisation this would be the sole Convention that contains such a provision. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification, which is important in terms of understanding the harmonisation between the conventions here. I still feel that we are in a bit of gridlock in this room. I have to admit I am fully in your hands to try to find a way out of this I have made my proposal. Palestine, please.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

It is unfortunate that we do not hear all our colleagues, only a few colleague names are on the screen. Can we listen to the room maybe this will solve the problem? It is always the same interventions and this is unfortunate. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Malta, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Malta:

Thank you, Mr President. I think that between no regulation as it is and the proposal by Brazil and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, there is a halfway through, which is the midway which is what the Secretariat originally proposed. I think we should go by that.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that constructive proposal. I see France. Vous avez la parole.

La délégation de la France :

Il est vrai que si on va assurer que dans le règlement il y ait une rotation, ce qui correspond à la pratique, on peut le noter effectivement. À ce moment-là dans un souci d'harmonisation, on pourrait retenir la proposition du Secrétariat.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that proposal. Do we have any further comments on this? Kenya, please, you have the floor, followed by Japan. Kenya, please.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I think for Kenya we are open to a consensus in the room but we are leaning towards the Secretariat's proposal. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Japan, please, you have the floor, followed by Italy.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, Chair. In the spirit of the consensus, the original proposal by the Secretariat would be a good compromise. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you, Japan. Italy followed by Canada. Italy, please.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We share what has been stated by Japan and the other colleagues just before. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Canada, please.

The Delegation of Canada:

Thank you. We also agree that we should go with the original Secretariat proposal. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The Philippines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Philippines:

Mr Chair, we are going with the original text. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Finland, please.

The Delegation of Finland:

Thank you, Chair. We would prefer this suggestion from the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

Mr Chair, I do not understand how we can accept to have the same Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur after two years for another General Assembly. I mean, the aim of our proposal is to avoid having two consecutive terms. This was the purpose of our amendment. And in this case, Mr Chair, I do prefer to remove all the articles. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United Kingdom, please.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you. The UK would like to support the suggestion by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Well, having listened to you all and still realising that we are far away from being in agreement, it does seem that the proposal by the Secretariat could be a potential middle ground. I see Palestine, I see Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

I am sorry, Mr Chair, it is not a middle ground, it is against the practice. We admit all of us that the practice is only one term. In that case, I agree with my colleague from Saint Vincent, if there is no agreement on the amendment submitted by Brazil, then let us delete everything because the practice is there. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, please.

The Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

The same comment, Mr Chair. The purpose was not to have two consecutive terms. And now if there is no consensus, we remove all the articles. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Malta, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Malta:

Sorry, do I understand correctly? If we remove the whole article that means there is no restriction for anyone to do two, three, four, five or six consecutive terms. Now, with the original proposal at least you can only do two consecutive terms. Is that so? If we agree to delete everything it means that anyone could do two, three or whatever.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. What we could suggest is that we delete everything and we keep on the record that we will continue the established practice and that is what we do for now. But before doing that, I would like to hear Kenya. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you, Mr Chair, once again for giving us the floor. We will go with your proposal. And also, as we listen to the distinguished Ambassador of Palestine and the representative of Grenada, as Kenya we have a feeling that the rationale behind the proposal was to ensure that there is a rotation and a balance because that is what is already happening and many delegates have been speaking about practice. With your proposal we are okay. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Grenada please and I ask you to be brief.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Grenada also agrees with your proposal. Thank you. To put it very clearly in the report, in the summary. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Barbados, is it the same Statement?

The Delegation of Barbados:

Mr Chair, I believe I can be you know a little bit different. But I want to be very clear, I would not go with the existing statement of the Secretariat. It is simple. It is not that they have not done their job. It is simply that in terms of the practice we need to enhance rotation. I will go with the deletion completely of this and perhaps over the intervening years we will find a different way to approach it. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for a constructive approach and I will ask you to be very, very brief now and we will close the floor for further discussions. I have the Democratic Republic of Korea please.

The Delegation of Democratic Republic of Korea:

Our country supports your proposal.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Libya and Netherlands and then we close the floor.

La délégation de la Libye :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Notre but est d'appuyer la rotation donc nous appuyons votre proposition de supprimer l'article. Merci.

The Chairperson:

Netherlands, please.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

We are in favour of the proposition made by the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Having heard you now, I think we are sort of in an agreement to delete it for now and to keep in the record that we will continue established practice and this can always be revisited. Thank you [gavel].

So, Rule **12.1**, **12.2**, **13.1** and **13.2** have no amendments proposed. I suggest we agree on those on block? I see no objections. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chairperson. Due to the repetition of she or he here many times I believe that it is better to make it shorter like to have the initiative as for "s/he".

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that proposal. I am certain the Secretariat can accommodate that very quickly and we can move forward to adopt this. The Netherlands, please.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I was notified that we were not correctly mentioned in the notes of the previous intervention.

The Chairperson:

I am sure the Secretariat will follow up on that.

The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

Right. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. So, **12.1**, **12.2**, **13.1**, **13.2** I see no further comments [gavel]. Sorry, Oman, it will be changed.

The Delegation of Oman:

The one that I proposed which is supposed to be only for "s/he" not the whole word. We cannot keep it short to have "she/he".

The Chairperson:

Excellent, thank you. I am very much in favour of efficiency so that shortens the text and everything is okay. I think I already did the hammer but I will do it again [gavel].

Let us move now to rule **14.1**. with no changes [gavel].

14.2, we have an amendment from the Russian Federation and Brazil which is stroked out. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr President, I am just noticing the time. Are we going to start another long discussion here or are we going to wrap up; it is 7.00 p.m.?

The Chairperson:

Thank you for making us aware of that. According to the Assistant Director General, we have four amendments left that we need to work on. I will ask for your advice on those.

The Secretariat:

It will depend on how much time you need to discuss. We have time. Do we have time? Okay, yes, as we have done in many meetings during all these years that we want to finish. Because if we do not finish what is happening is that we are not adopting anything. It is like investing our time, your time especially. But it is up to you if you want to stop here as there are only four amendments left to be discussed. But it is up to you. You are the one who have to decide.

The Chairperson:

I will be in your hands on this and I will seek your advice. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Secretariat, Mr President, we have all worked very hard to accommodate each other. We have all worked very hard for compromise here. We are all tired, our translators are now going to be leaving because they have already left, excuse me, for the most part.

I understand that the Secretariat wants to press on with this, but we have been promised first that we were finishing at 6.00 p.m. then that we were finishing at 7.00 p.m. I would like to understand when we are actually going to be finishing because these are substantial amendments that we have coming up and it is now past 7.00 p.m. and I propose that we adjourn. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Do we have any other interventions from the floor on this topic? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

I have some interventions on the substantive discussion on the amendments that you will start now, but it would be wise to listen to the floor to see if you have further discussions or not. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I wish to clarify whether there is a willingness to continue the discussions or whether it should be adjourned. I see Cuba. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Cuba:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am really sorry that we have to continue first in English or only in French and we allow to do it and to continue without the language because we feel that we were putting all an effort to get to the end of the work of this Assembly. Watching what was advised from the Secretariat, it seems that we still have a little bit room to make an extra effort. My Delegation believes that we should at least give the first reading to this proposal and try to get to the end. I think that if we all put together you know goodwill on this we will get into the end of this paper. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. I think I will seek some clarification from the Secretariat on what kind of time we actually are talking about here. We all wish to finish this.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson I think we just managed to make another extra effort. The interpreters can stay with us until 8.00 p.m. but no more than that. I will not be able to make it later than 8.00 p.m. Thank you and I would like to thank them for their availability. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Do we have any more comments from the floor on this matter? Do we wish to continue until 8.00 p.m. sharp? I see no objections. Congo, please, you have the floor.

La délégation du Congo :

Je voudrais juste poser la question de savoir si les discussions ne se poursuivent pas, quel serait alors le statut de ce texte. Il est renvoyé à la prochaine session ou il peut être adopté alors que justement la suite du dispositif n'a pas été discutée ? Merci.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that very important question. I will pass the floor to the Legal Advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, that would be in the hands of the Assembly at the end of the day. One thing to say is because you have been adopting things you may decide to adopt, there must be a Draft Resolution that accompanies this. You adopt up to the article here and you cash on what you have done.

Another possibility is for you to decide to accept provisionally everything that the Secretariat has proposed because as a matter of fact there seems to be agreement with that on the understanding that you will come back to the three or four amendments that are there. I see some delegations that said that they do not agree with that but that is a possibility that is in front of you if you so wish to do.

The other thing is to throw everything away and you restart in two years from now. And that would imply basically adjourning the debate. You do not make a decision now. If you adjourn the debate now, you are not making any

decision which means that all your work here would have to be maybe confirmed, of course, in two years. But you would not be making a formal decision.

To recapitulate, Mr Chair. First Option, you have to adjourn the debate on the matter. In that case, you are not making any decision on this matter at this session and you will continue, for example, at the next session. Next session might decide to restart over or to continue from when you stop but there will not be any record of that.

Second option, you have is to decide to accept provisionally what or to accept actually what the Secretariat has proposed in the Document that was a proposal at the beginning, and to return to the amendments proposed by Member States which were not considered up to now. That is a second option.

Third option is that you stop here, so you have adopted. You take a decision by which you adopt all the amendments that you have taken up to our Rule 14 and then you leave the consideration for this later on. That means that you will have part of the Rules of Procedure that will have been updated and part of the Rules of Procedure which will not have been updated. I think those are the three options that are open to you, Mr Chair, at this stage.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much for giving us those three options. It is a very interesting 'catch 22' and I have already lost my flight back to Oslo. I would be inclined to go with your middle option and stay with what we have adopted so far and agree on adopting what has been proposed by the Secretariat so far and continue the deliberations in 2025 or at another time when the General Assembly sees fit. And there is also the last option then of adopting what we have adopted today and stop it from here. But I am in your hands on this. I have seen the Russian Federation and Chile. The Russian Federation, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you very much, Mr President. We would be inclined to continue our debate. I think it would also be useful then to adopt everything that was agreed upon. But not everything that was proposed by the Secretariat on the basis of the Document that was not discussed by the Member States and it was just to take note for the General Conference. This is our proposal.

If for some reason, the Member State delegates cannot stay for another hour. We can stop here, adopt everything that we discussed and what we agreed upon but not adopting the proposals that were proposed by the Secretariat. I think it was clear. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I will prefer the middle one. The one that we approve everything that was proposed by the Secretariat and then we continue the discussion of the other ones after. I am for the consensus. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I agree with my Chilean colleague, but in the spirit of compromise I will agree with the position of my Russian colleague that we adopt everything that we have adopted so far and we leave the rest for later consideration.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that intervention. Can we agree to land on that proposal that was just made? Palestine, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the State of Palestine:

I think this is a very reasonable suggestion. Let us go to the Draft Resolution and in the Draft Resolution we adopt all the paragraphs till 14 and that is it. Then, it will come back at the next session. Maybe the Secretariat can help for the drafting of the new paragraphs for the Draft Resolution. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that proposal. Chile, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

A clarification. Is it possible to quickly adopt all the paragraphs that have no amendments before to pass to the Draft Resolution?

The Chairperson:

Yes, that should be possible.

The Delegation of Chile:

So then, we have more paragraph to include. I do not know. Thank you.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

I would propose we stick with what we have gone through paragraph by paragraph and have adopted. I agree with my Russian colleagues for clarity it is better to put a line. Everybody knows what has been adopted what has not. Bits of rules that are adopted and not.

The Chairperson:

I take notice of that. Would that be acceptable for you Chile?

The Delegation of Chile:

I am for the consensus but I think it will be much better for everyone to have as much possible adopted in our Resolution.

The Chairperson:

Do we have any other voices on the floor here? The United Kingdom, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I would like to agree my distinguished colleague from Chile please. I think his proposal is excellent. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr President. Mr President, due to the nature of the document in front of us, the Rules of Procedure, they tend to cooperate with each other. Normally, we have a Rule which coincides with the other Rule and the other Rule. The proposal at hand now and coming from the floor is a half proposal. We will adopt half of the Rules of Procedure we are not 100% sure that will coincide with the other half of the Rules of procedure. As the Assistant Director General just said, this will take two years to amend.

We now have a chance to extend our work for only one hour, discuss five amendments and finish this and call it a success for the General Assembly. Personally, I have been in some negotiation process where I have been stuck in the basement of New York till 4 or 5.00 a.m. I do not tend at all to stay this late here. We all want to enjoy a good night at Paris, but maybe in 30, 45 minutes. We shall continue our discussion. We owe it to ourselves and we owe it to the Assembly, rather than wasting two years of time and adopting Rules of Procedure that will not coincide with each other. We are not 100% sure what we will adopt and how it will impact the other half of the Rules of Procedure. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Kenya, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kenya:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I equally join the sentiments of the distinguished delegate of Egypt because a lot of work has been put into making sure that these Rules of Procedure are adopted. Various other Member States have been very willing to allow us to continue in two official languages. We should utilise that time to finish. I kindly seek the indulgence of our fellow delegates just to consider, even if it is just 30 minutes so that we can finish. Because I am just thinking and I am looking at it when we will have official meetings what will happen with the previous adopted paragraphs?

Maybe the Legal Advisor could guide. When you have adopted partially how do you implement partial implementation of the same Rules of Procedure? I kindly seek the Indulgence of the Ambassadors and distinguished delegates in this room to allow us to proceed for 30 minutes and we also utilise the interpreters because in any way they will be paid and the expenditure will still be incurred. Thank you kindly.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Before passing the floor to Barbados, I will just say that I am happy to hear that we want to keep what has already been adopted. We just need to figure out how we work with the rest. I will pass the floor to the Legal Advisor first. Actually, I will give the floor to Barbados first. Barbados, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Barbados:

Mr Chair, in other contexts and at other times we have continued practice as suggested by Chile where we are prepared where there has been no amendment proposed and clearly there is support to adopt those on block understanding that we then need to deal with the others that have been amended. So that yes, we have enjoyed going through paragraph by paragraph, but in this context where we have that understanding I see no harm in agreeing with Chile's suggestion.

I am going to adopt those paragraphs that have not attracted any problem and then turning your attention to how you treat the rest. My government did not send me here not to finish the business. I would like to make sure that we do that. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Switzerland, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Switzerland:

Thank you, Chair. Switzerland also supports the proposal of Chile and we would like to echo what Barbados just explained. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Legal Advisor, please, you have the floor.

The Legal Advisor:

Mr Chair, just to explain what the situation is once again here. I think it is clear to everybody that it might be useful to do so. Up to Rule 13, this Assembly has come to an agreement, there is no doubt about that. From Rule 14, all the amendments proposed by the Secretariat are accepted because up to now each time that there were amendments proposed at the Secretariat with no further amendments by Member States, you have been able to gavel that without problems.

So basically, up to now, until Rule 13, you are done, you have already made a decision. For the ones that continue, up to Rule 38, you seem to all be in agreement with the exception of five provisions which are 14, 17.2, 25, 37 and 38. Those are the provisions on which there are alternative, competing if you wish, amendments from Member States. On that basis it is in your hand.

One first option is to try to solve these. My impression is that they are not as complicated as the ones that were done before. That is the first option and you could finish this in the 45 minutes that come. Another possibility you could have, which I mentioned before, is, you accept all the agreements of all the amendments proposed by the Secretariat that do not raise problems because there is no competing amendment by Member States. That is all the whole set of rules with the exception of rules 14, 17.2, 25, 37 and 38. It is a little bit strange because you will have for next session something, let us say, half-cooked rules, that I have to say from a purely legal point of view is not my preference. I do not like half-cooked rules. I like full cooked rules, as I like my turkey on Thanksgiving.

And the last option you have is to put everything in brackets. That means you keep your Rules as they are. You find a way of let us say recalling what you have done up to now but you do not adopt the Rules. You do not adopt the Rules, you are keeping the prior Rules. It is the same options I mentioned before but that is what you could decide. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. It is an intriguing option to follow your advice and adopt what we have not been in disagreement on and ensure that everything that has been adopted today is followed through. There are also strong voices to continue discussion and try to land the remaining issues.

As I said before, I Am very happy that we are in agreement to keep what we already have agreed. So, we have agreed on something and that principle should be retained for the future process on what we actually choose to do now.

We have 40 minutes. We can try to do this very efficiently; we can try to again thank the Legal Advisor for the optimism on possibly these items not being too complicated to agree on. I am not that optimistic by nature, but I would have to rely on the colleagues in the room to ensure sufficient progress for us to get through and try to finalise this by 8.00 p.m. I would like to hear final considerations trying to guide me on how we resolve this matter.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr President, I will withdraw my objection and we can continue until 8.00 p.m. I would just like a hard stop time that does not change.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. We agree to continue. Thank you for that. Now, I need to find out where we are so I will try not to waste time.

Rule 14, **14.1** is kept so that's no differences [gavel].

14.2 is the next one and there we have amendments. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chairperson. At this point we would need some clarification from the Secretariat regarding the concept of private meetings. This is what we are most concerned on this provision. We are not sure if there are other conventions that have already adopted this concept of private meetings. We would like to have some clarification on that because this concept seems to us that it contradicts multigenerational efforts towards increased transparency and participation in international affairs but perhaps it is our perception. If you could please elaborate a bit more what you mean by private meetings would be helpful for us.

The Chairperson:

Thank you. Legal Advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Just to clarify what the situation is. The current Rule that you have now says meetings shall be held in public unless decided otherwise by the Assembly. That is the existing Rule. That is what is now and that is what you have in 14.1. The proposal by the Secretariat was to clarify something that is useful in other areas which is that when you make decisions in private meetings then the announcement of what had been decided in the private meeting, not what happened in the private meeting, but what the deliberations of the private meeting were, just what was decided, is announced in a public meeting later on. You may have seen that for example in the Executive Board. It happens quite often in the Executive Board. That is something that the Secretariat thought could improve your processes and methods.

The Russian Federation and Brazil seem to have hesitations about it and prefer to take that away. The Secretariat at least from the legal point of view would not have a problem a serious problem with that. In particular, taking into account that the actual practice has been that you have not held, as far as I know, private meetings in general assemblies which usually take a couple of days. That is what your options are. You keep the Secretariat option which has proven useful in other settings or you simply take it out considering that there has not been any practice in this regard. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Would we be in agreement to take it out? I see no objections [gavel].

And we are moving to 15.1 including **15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3** and **17.1**. Sorry, I cannot hear you.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Sorry, you are going so fast we cannot see the screen. I ask that you scroll at a reasonable pace so that folks can follow.

The Chairperson:

Sorry about that. It is just my Germanic timekeeping that kicks in once in a while. We will take it a little bit slower.

15.1, if we can have that on the screen. No comments on **15.1**? I see none [gavel].

15.2, are there any comments on **15.2**? I see none [gavel].

15.3, any comments? I see none [gavel].

15.4, are there any comments? I see none [gavel].

16.1, any comments? I see none [gavel].

16.2? I see no comments [gavel].

16.3, I see no comments [gavel].

17.1, are there any comments on **17.1**? I see none [gavel].

17.2, we have an amendment from the Russian Federation and Brazil. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Just to explain the rationality behind our proposal. We perfectly understand all the technical constraints from the Secretariat but we believe that the proposal is going against the principle of multilingualism

and the implementation of multilingualism that we observe in this year's discussions. Although Portuguese is not a working language, we have to extend our solidarity to the other working language at the Assembly. This is why we propose this amendment. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The United States of America, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We have concerns about the proposed amendment in that it would be inhibiting the emergency session of the Rules of Procedure. Excuse me, sorry, I am very tired. It would be prohibitive if somebody were to try and put forward a draft resolution or an amendment as we are doing right now from the floor because it would not have been distributed in advance in all six languages in written format. Unless we are going to completely change the way we are working, including what we are doing right now, I think that this is really problematic this amendment that requires a distribution in all the working languages. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. I think I will ask the Assistant Director General for comment on that.

Le Sous-Directeur général pour la Culture :

Oui, là il faut être très clair. Ce que le Brésil et la Fédération de Russie demandent c'est de revenir au texte que nous avons actuellement. Ce qui a été proposé par le Secrétariat c'était de le supprimer. Donc, aujourd'hui, ce qu'ils sont en train de proposer c'est de revenir au texte intégral original sur lequel vous travaillez. Cela ne veut pas dire que vous recevez dans les six langues les amendements. C'est pour vous faciliter la tâche. Ce qu'ils sont en train de nous demander c'est de ne pas changer le mot « raisonnable » au lieu de « suffisamment » et d'enlever les « working languages ».

Aujourd'hui dans le texte de cette Convention de cette Assemblée c'est dans les six langues. Bien sûr, dans la pratique ce qui se passe dans d'autres assemblées c'est que l'on suspend une règle. Ici, on a une pratique, mais ils sont en train de revenir au texte original. Malheureusement, en tant que Secrétariat nous ne pourrions qu'être d'accord avec eux puisque l'on voit qu'il y a une entente pour essayer de garder au maximum le texte original. Mon explication est un peu bizarre, mais c'est ça. Je suis fatigué aussi.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. United Kingdom, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom:

Thank you, Chair. Whilst we welcome clarification of Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure, we recognise that in practice a draft resolution and revisions are provided to this General Assembly in the two working languages of the Secretariat. This allows for more expeditious circulation of the documents and curtails costs. A point expressly made in the model Rules of Procedure.

In fact, this is the case for these amendments in Document INF.9.Add that we are currently looking at. We encourage continuing the current practice. This could be usefully clarified to which we propose and this reads "in the working languages of the Secretariat" and alternatively we could also revert to the original language proposed by the Secretariat without amendment. But we like the fact that we want to specify the working languages of the Secretariat. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. The Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you very much. Just to echo what has been said by the Assistant Director General. This is not an amendment in a strict point of view, this is an existing Rule of procedure. Until now, it was the case and it works and it is working now. We do not see the necessity to change it and we do not see the necessity why the General Assembly has to align with the working languages of the Secretariat if it has its own working languages and there are six working languages of the organisation. We propose to keep the original Rule of procedure. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for your interventions. Could it be proposed to keep the original text and the current Rules of Procedure without changing at all? Would that be agreeable? I see no objections to that. We keep the original text *[gavel]*.

And then we have Rule 18.1. Do we have any comments on Rule **18.1**? I see none *[gavel]*.

Rule 18.2. Thank you, it is now on the screen. Do we have any comments on Rule **18.2**? I see none *[gavel]*.

Rule 19. Do we have any comments on Rule **19**? I see none [gavel].

Rule 20, do we have any comments on Rule **20**? I see none [gavel].

Rule **21**, important Rule. Do we have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **22**, do we have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **23**, do we have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **24.1**, no change to the text under the original Rule. Any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

And the same goes for Rule **24.2**. Any comments? I see none [gavel].

Rule **24.3** is on the screen do we have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **24.4**, do we have any comments on that one? I see none [gavel].

Rule **25**, we have an amendment from Brazil. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Once again to explain our amendment. The language proposed by Brazil has the objective to allow States Parties to properly evaluate issues submitted to the Assembly and to consult with their respective capitals and other States Parties responsibly in advance. But we understand that perhaps other States or there is a sentiment in the room that the delegations do not need so much time, so we would be in the position to withdraw our proposal if there is a consensus on this regard.

The Chairperson:

United States, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Mr Chairman, I ask the Secretariat to assure that we have quorum in the room.

The Chairperson:

Yes, can we please confirm that we have quorum in the room? Would it be agreeable that we continue while they are counting for time efficiency? No. Thank you. Egypt, I have seen you, I will just quickly pass the floor to the Legal Advisor first.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, I should recall the current Rule that is Rule 6. It says that "A quorum shall consist of a majority of the States referred to Rule 1 which are basically the States Parties to the Convention and represented at the Assembly". For that purpose, the Secretariat would need to actually check how many of the States Parties have actually registered for the current session of the Assembly. I believe they would need time in order to go back to the records and see exactly how many have.

Basically, you have to compare not 195 but the number of States Parties that are represented at the current Assembly and the number of States Parties that are currently in the room. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification.

The Secretariat:

We have 149 States Parties at the meeting registered, the quorum is 75, we have 84 people staying at 7.37 p.m., so we have quorum, we can continue. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification and it is tempting to lock the doors until 8.00 pm, but I will not do that. Where were we? Rule **25**, the amendment by Brazil that was also proposed to be withdrawn. And you still stand by that? Thank you. Withdrawn. Is that acceptable for the room? I see no further comments or objection. Thank you so much, Brazil [gavel].

We are now at Rule 26? Do we have any comments on Rule **26**? I see none [gavel].

Rule 27, do we have any comments on Rule **27**? I see none [gavel].

Rule **28**, do we have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule 29, any comments on Rule **29**? I see none [gavel]. Sorry, Cuba, I can see you have your flag raised. Do you wish to make an intervention?

The Delegation of Cuba:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I just want, when you finish at the end, just to jump into an article that I did not see very clear dealing with the documents. It can be done at the end.

The Chairperson:

Okay, thank you for that. So, **29** adopted.

Rule **30.1** [gavel]. Are there any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

30.2, do you have any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **31**, any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

Rule **31.2**, any comments on that? I see. Okay, I will hold it for two seconds. Thank you [gavel].

Rule **31.3**, are there any comments on that? I see none [gavel]. The United States, please.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

I just want to ensure that the procedures for roll call vote are the same as the roll call votes elsewhere i.e., you go through and then there is a second calling for those who are absent, etc. I just want the Legal Advisor to comment so everybody knows what they are voting on.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that question. Legal Advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much for the question. The answer in Rule 31 is that "As otherwise provided in the rules, voting is by show of hands, when the result of the vote by show of hands is in doubt, the Chairperson may take a second vote by roll call". It is the same thing as in the Executive Board, for example. "Vote by roll call shall also be taken if it is requested by not less than two States Parties and the request shall be made before voting takes place or immediately after a vote by show of hands". It is more or less the same rules as in the Executive Board for example or the General Conference. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Are we happy to adopt **31.3** as well?

Rule **32.1**, any comments on that? I see none [gavel].

32.2, are there any comments on **32.2**? The United States, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

I am sorry. Can you scroll back? You are again going very fast on very important pieces, thank you. I think these merit everybody taking a look and just making sure they are okay on this. Can I ask the Legal Advisor if this is the normal order of voting on proposals? Because the General Assembly Rules actually say something very different than this.

The Chairperson:

Yes. Legal Advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

I am just double checking, Mr Chair, just give me one minute. What we can already say is that if this is based on the Model Rules and there is no reason why it should not, it is exactly what it is the practice elsewhere. I am just double checking not to provide legal advice that is wrong. But my answer would be yes, this is in conformity with the normal practice.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that clarification. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr President. Just to make it very clear for all of us and I think this will help us scroll the Document. Whatever is in blue and in black is actually proposed by the Secretariat and this was what was initially suggested 3 hours or 4 hours ago to adopt cleanly. Whatever is in green is the amendments, whatever we see in blue and black it is okay, it is what was proposed by the Secretariat, as far as I understand. Can the Secretariat confirm my understanding, please? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Yes. Can you please confirm Assistant Director General?

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

Yes.

The Chairperson:

You are still waiting.

The Legal Advisor:

Mr Chair, after having reviewed I confirm that this is in conformity with the practice and the Model Rules that were submitted to the General Conference two years ago. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson:

So, United States, is that acceptable? The Legal Advisor, please.

The Legal Advisor:

Maybe I may clarify something. You are just seeing Article 32 but then there is Rule 33 that comes later which is the order of voting on amendments. That might be the reason why there is this misunderstanding. You are just looking at the first one Rule, Order and Amendment but then you have voting on amendments which have what you are probably expecting about the order.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

This is correct because when I was looking at the Rules of Procedure, okay, that is clarified I am fine with 32. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. so, **32.1, 32.2** adopted *[gavel]*.

Moving to Rule **33.1**, any comments on that? I see none.

33.2, any comments on that? I see none *[gavel]*.

33.3, no change to the original text so I assume that is okay to adopt. I see no comments *[gavel]*.

Rule **34**, any comments on that? I see none *[gavel]*.

I would also suggest that we adopt Rule **35** as a whole without going through it individually. But we would take note of the distinguished delegate of Oman considering the "he" and "she" language matter and ask the Secretariat to make sure that it is consistent with what was adopted previously, if that is agreeable. I see no objections to that, so adopted *[gavel]*.

And the same goes for Rule 36 as long as we take into account the consistency as proposed by the delegate of Oman. Do we have any comments on Rule **36.1, 2, 3, 4**? Please, allow people to see. Please, move up to 36.3 ready for that, 36.3 please. Do we have any comments at all on Rule 36? I see none *[gavel]*.

Moving to chapter 10, we go to Rule **37** on amendments. We have an amendment here from the Russian Federation and Brazil. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chairperson. Just to have some clarification from the Secretariat. Our intention here is to be sure that the suspension and the amendments could be present just in statutory meetings of the Assembly. Is that the original text proposed? That statutory meetings, just statutory Meetings, could amend and suspend the Rules of Procedure. That is it.

The Chairperson:

Please. Can we ask the Legal Advisor to clarify on that one?

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, on Rule 37, the current Rule says that an amendment of the Rules of Procedure can only take place in a plenary meeting of the Assembly. The proposal from the Secretariat was intended to provide more flexibility, not to provide for that thing, but we understand that there might be a strong interest from delegations to maintain the requirement that it would be in a plenary meeting which is what is currently the case. And we would have no objection that it be kept as it is right now. Therefore, that the terminology "in a

plenary meeting" be kept. That would mean that what you are doing right you would not be able to do it by correspondence, for example. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Do we have any further comments on that or can we agree that we retain this amendment? I see no objections [gavel].

Moving to Rule 38 on suspension. We have amendments from the Russian Federation and Brazil. It is the same. Is the Russian Federation also in agreement? No further clarifications needed and I see no objections to adopt that. Thank you [gavel]. So, we can move to adopting the actual decision on Item 9, if we can put that on the screen, please?

I would now invite you to adopt the Draft Resolution 24 GA 9, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if any further amendments on the Draft Resolution have been received.

The Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr Chair. There are no amendments to this Draft Resolution proposed. Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that. Do we have any further comments or questions? Thank you for that reminder from the interpretation. We have a very quick technical amendment proposed from the Secretariat. Lazare, please.

The Secretariat:

I promise it takes one second. It is on Paragraph 4. Mr Chairperson, it is just to technically add that, as foreseen in the Document, we saw document INF.9. but INF.9.Add as amended, if agreeable. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that important clarification. Are we ready to adopt Resolution 24 GA 9? I see no objections so adopted [gavel]. I thank you all for your very strong effort, committed work and your flexibility on this difficult matter. I hereby declare Agenda Item 9 closed. Please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you. It is just for one second. Just to thank our interpreters who stayed with us until now and of course to thank all the States Parties and to thank all the team of the Secretariat for staying also late for the wonderful work. I just want to just finish by saying this before I will give the floor to the Assistant Director General.

As some of you know, I just wanted to recall that today we lost one of our great professionals who has inspired many of us, Professor Jukka Jokilehto, who has influenced many and who did a lot to advance conservation, not only at ICCROM but in many places. He taught many people. and I think it is also time, since we are all here, to remind you all what he did for the World Heritage. I just wanted to inform everyone and then to think about him in this special moment. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

10. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION // CLÔTURE DE LA SESSION

No Document // Aucun document

No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution

The Chairperson:

Thank you for those remarks. Now, dear colleagues, we are arriving at the closure of the 24th session and I would like to know if you have any other comments before we close the session. Grenada, please.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for giving me the floor. I would like to ask if we have to decide on the venue of our next Assembly now or not? Do we need to do so? When do we have the new Rules of Procedure entering into course? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that and I will be more than happy to pass the question on to the Secretariat. Legal Advisor, please, you have the floor.

The Legal Advisor:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, you just adopted the new Rules of Procedure. Indeed, they are now in force and you might want to decide where to hold the next session of the General Conference. You may also decide to do that at a further date in an extraordinary session for example if you so wish. Thank you very much. I do note that there are a number of pending things with regard to the organisation of that. Thanks.

The Chairperson:

Well, I heard earlier the notion of opening the Pandora's Box, which I have a feeling this might be with 5 minutes to go before we definitely need to be out of this room. On this matter, are we meeting each other in Paris in two years' time? Grenada, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Grenada:

Sorry, Mr Chairman, are you asking a question? What was the question? Thank you.

The Chairperson:

Having heard the Legal Advisor just saying that the Rules of Procedure have now been adopted and they are in force, we are in a position to decide where the next General Assembly will be or it can be in an extraordinary session. That is up to you. We have four minutes left and everybody seems to be just as tired as I am. Too big a decision to make at this point of time. Please, Director.

Le Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial :

C'est juste pour dire que vous n'êtes pas obligé de le décider aujourd'hui parce que maintenant vous avez un cadre qui vous permet de décider même en session extraordinaire. Donc, à partir de ce moment-là, puisque dans cette décision il y a des choses sur lesquelles il faudrait plus d'informations, en tout cas pour le Secrétariat, cela pourrait se faire à l'occasion d'une session extraordinaire à un autre moment. Merci beaucoup.

The Chairperson:

The clock is ticking. Two minutes to go. Is it to be decided at the extraordinary session?

The Assistant Director General for Culture:

It can be proposed at a later date so that we can finish and use our two minutes, but it can also be proposed via correspondence, consultations via correspondence. We do not have to take a decision right now and we can go see our girls that are waiting for the last three weeks to see me. It is a joke. It is up to you. But we have many, many possibilities; it does not end here. It gives us all the possibilities and the Secretariat can reach you to decide when we can ask for the place and the date.

The Chairperson:

Thank you for that and we appreciate the availability of the Secretariat. I think it sounds very sensible to perform some consultations on this matter. With your Indulgence, I would like to move towards closing this session unless we have more interventions coming from the floor. Mexico, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Mexico:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Just to commend you on your extraordinary job you have done today. You have guided us well. We are very late. We are very tired but we completed a very important task. We want to also thank the Secretariat, the World Heritage Centre and particularly the Legal Advisor for giving us all that necessary advice to finish today's work. Thank you so much.

The Chairperson:

Thank you so much. It is my great pleasure now, we still have a minute and a half, to declare the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention closed. Thank you very much.

The meeting rose at 7.59 p.m. // La séance a été levée à 19h59