



UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee

Third session

Luxor, 23 - 27 October 1979

Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda : Procedure for the eventual deletion
from the World Heritage List of properties in case of deterioration
leading to the loss of the characteristics which determined their
inclusion

1. At its second session (28 - 30 May 1979), the Bureau considered that a procedure for the deletion of properties from the World Heritage List should be developed and it requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft text. The present document is submitted in response to the Bureau's request.
2. Article 11(2) of the Convention stipulates that the World Heritage Committee "shall establish, keep up to date and publish, under the title "World Heritage List", a list of properties forming part of the cultural heritage and natural heritage which it considers as having outstanding universal value in terms of such criteria as it shall have established", and that "an updated list shall be distributed at least every two years". Although the Convention does not explicitly refer to the possibility of deleting items from the World Heritage List, the stipulation that the List should be kept up to date would appear to imply that the List should be regularly reviewed and that only those properties which continue to meet the Committee's criteria should be maintained on the List and consequently that properties which no longer satisfy those criteria should be deleted. It will be recalled, in this connection, that the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the Convention foresee that "When a property included in the World Heritage List has deteriorated to such an extent that it has lost those characteristics for which it was inscribed thereon or when further research has shown that the property is not, in fact, of outstanding universal value, that property shall be deleted from the List."
3. In accordance with the request of the Bureau, the following proposed procedure, which is submitted to the Bureau and the Committee for consideration, refers exclusively to the deletion from the World Heritage List of properties which have deteriorated to the point where they have lost those characteristics which determined their inclusion therein :

A. Information is received by the Secretariat of the Committee from a reliable source that a property has seriously deteriorated.

B. When the Secretariat has not been informed of the deterioration of the property by the State Party concerned, the Secretariat will transmit to the State Party the information received and request its comments. At the same time, the Secretariat will request the comments of the competent advisory organization(s) (ICOMOS, IUCN or ICCROM).

C. The information received on the deterioration of the property, together with the comments of the State Party and of the advisory organization(s) will be brought to the attention of the Bureau of the Committee. The Bureau may take one of the following measures :

- (a) it may decide that the claim that the property has seriously deteriorated is unsubstantiated and that no further action should be taken;
- (b) when the Bureau considers that the property has seriously deteriorated but not to the extent that its restoration is impossible, it may recommend to the Committee that the property be maintained on the List provided that the State Party takes the necessary measures to restore the property within a reasonable period of time. The Bureau may also recommend that technical co-operation be provided under the World Heritage Fund for work connected with the restoration of the property, if the State Party so requests;
- (c) when there is evidence that the property has deteriorated to the point where it has irretrievably lost those characteristics which determined its inclusion on the List, the Bureau may recommend that the Committee delete the property from the List; before any such recommendation is submitted to the Committee, the Secretariat will inform the State Party concerned of the Bureau's recommendation; any comments which the State Party may make with respect to the recommendation of the Bureau will be brought to the attention of the Committee, together with the Bureau's recommendation;
- (d) when the information available is not sufficient to enable the Bureau to take one of the measures described in (a), (b) or (c) above, the Bureau may recommend to the Committee that the Secretariat be authorized to take the necessary action to ascertain, in consultation with the State Party concerned, the present condition of the property, the dangers to the property and the feasibility of adequately restoring the property, and to report to the Bureau on the results of its action; such measures may include the sending of a fact-finding mission or the consultation of specialists. In cases where emergency action is required, the Bureau may itself authorize the Secretariat to take such measures.

D. The Committee will examine the recommendation of the Bureau and all the information available and will take a decision. Any such decision shall, in accordance with Article 13(8) of the Convention, be taken by a majority of two-thirds of its members present and voting.

The Committee shall not decide to delete any property unless the State Party has been consulted on the question.

E. The State Party will be informed of the Committee's decision.

F. If the Committee's decision entails any modification to the World Heritage List, this modification will be reflected in the next updated list that is published. The reasons for the deletion of any property from the List will also be given in the publication.