



editorial

With around half of the world's population living in urban areas today, in addition to the projected growth of urbanization for the coming decade, the pressure on historic cities and their historic urban landscape will continue to mount. Urban and landscape conservation are thus likely to become one of the most dynamic and daunting tasks of our time. Subsequently, in recent years the debates at World Heritage Committee sessions involving high-rise constructions and contemporary architectural interventions at World Heritage sites have increased dramatically.

With some 200 historic cities or city centres inscribed on the World Heritage List (and the numbers are rising each year), the Committee expects in the near future that more and more time will be needed to discuss cases where urban development and contemporary architecture are threatening existing cultural-historic values - most importantly the outstanding universal value for which the property was included on the World Heritage List.

During its 27th session in 2003 in Paris, the Committee called for the organization of an international conference to discuss how to properly regulate the needs for modernization of our daily urban environment, while at the same time safeguarding the irreplaceable heritage that our historic cities constitute. In response, the WHC, in co-operation with the City of Vienna and ICOMOS, organized the international conference 'World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture - Managing the Historic Urban Landscape' which took place in Vienna, Austria from 12 to 14 May and was hosted by the Austrian Government.

Over 600 experts and professionals from 55 countries attended the Conference and discussed 70 case studies involving high-rise or contemporary architectural interventions in historic cities and urban landscapes of heritage value. There was widespread agreement that criteria and guidelines for conservation management of the historic urban landscape are urgently needed and that existing charters and recommendations in this regard are no longer sufficient.

For this reason, a Draft Memorandum outlining such criteria and guidelines was developed prior to the conference by the WHC, ICOMOS and ICCROM, as well as partner organizations: Organization of World Heritage Cities, International Federation of Landscape Architects, International Union of Architects and International Federation for Housing and Planning. The debates and comments during the Conference refined this document into what is now labelled as the *Vienna Memorandum*, to be presented to the Committee at its 29th session in Durban, South Africa this coming July.

UNESCO welcomes and promotes contemporary cultural expressions, including modern architecture. However, there are obviously limits to what to plan, design and build when working in valuable historic environments which were selected for inclusion on the World Heritage List. A World Heritage site is not just any other site and it requires special treatment. Therefore, high-rise constructions should be positioned sufficiently away from historic areas where they cannot disturb sensitive balances in the built environment, or obstruct views to historical landmarks and landscapes.

The Committee, in its pro-active role to prevent possible future problems, asked for this Conference to facilitate public debate, bring different viewpoints to the fore and reach consensus about minimum requirements to be taken into account when dealing with complex urban environments subject to change. If it decides to adopt the *Vienna Memorandum*, we will have an additional tool to discuss, evaluate and assess future cases involving high-rise constructions and contemporary interventions in urban environments of heritage significance. The individual countries will then be invited to use this new tool and make it operational within their own policies and strategies for conservation management.

Francesco Bandarin, Director, World Heritage Centre

contents

Towers are projecting a corporate image, more than anything else, pursued by developers and companies. A need for density, as has often been put forward, can also be achieved by other urban forms in a low-rise volume.



Jade Tabet, member of the World Heritage Committee from Lebanon, at the World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture Conference in Vienna, Austria

High-rise buildings constructed opposite Cologne Cathedral, Germany had a harmful impact on the visual integrity of the site, leading to its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2004

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East Rennell at a Crossroads

The WHC and IUCN organized a joint mission to East Rennell, Solomon Islands (30 March – 5 April) to assess and report on the state of conservation of this property, examine its draft resource management plan and the draft national World Heritage Protection Bill, as well as document and assess the effectiveness of the customary protection of the property.

The property, located on the south-eastern part of Rennell Island, is a stepping stone in the migration and evolution of species in the western Pacific, and an important site for the science of island biogeography, as well as a natural laboratory for scientific study. It is among those World Heritage sites that are under customary ownership and subject to sustainable resource issues.

Following the outbreak of civil unrest in the Solomon Islands in June 2000, World Heritage management virtually came to a standstill. The government became essentially dysfunctional and World Heritage was dropped from the agenda.



Lake Tegano on East Rennell, Solomon Islands

Although the country is now slowly returning to normality, government administration has been badly affected and a much diminished capacity relies heavily upon external funding and support.

Whatever the messages conveyed at the time of inscription in 1998, the people of East Rennell were firmly of the opinion that attaining World Heritage status would result in

immediate material benefits to the local community and increased wealth. This view was encouraged by the commencement, immediately after inscription, of a substantial project funded by a regional donor to develop tourism and other small sustainable business enterprises. Unfortunately, these projects were suspended a year-and-a-half later due to the civil unrest.

This mission has been a catalyst for re-establishing contact and communication between the WHC and the State Party, which had lapsed over a period of some seven years since the site was inscribed on the World Heritage List. Despite the difficulties of the past, the resilience of the local people and their desire for progress, together with a return to stable government, provide an opportunity for re-establishing an effective collaborative partnership between the Solomon Islands and the WHC and to build on the promising start made seven years ago.

Towards an African World Heritage Fund

A workshop to discuss further the feasibility of the establishment of an African World Heritage Fund was held in Cape Town, South Africa (16-17 March), bringing together an experienced group of leaders and practitioners from governments, NEPAD, development agencies, foundations, Advisory Bodies, UNESCO's Africa Department, the World Heritage Centre, as well as site managers and consultants. A parallel meeting of African World Heritage Experts was also held.

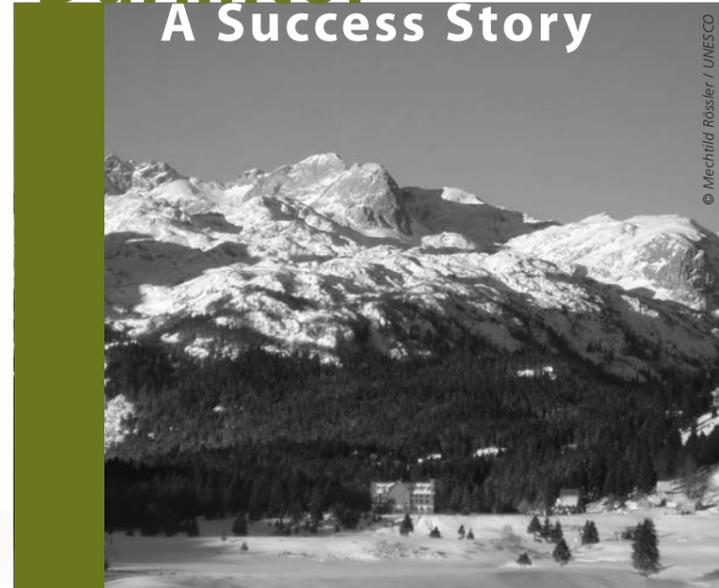
The proposed African World Heritage Fund would take the form of an independent pan-African institution firmly rooted in the mission of the *World Heritage Convention*. The Periodic Report for Africa, adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 26th session in Budapest, Hungary in 2002, included a recommendation to establish an 'African Heritage Fund' as a tool for increasing the financial resources needed to deal with the challenges that face the preservation and protection of African World Heritage sites.

The Experts' meeting, held in Cape Town, addressed challenges in the implementation of the *Convention* in Africa. It also drew up a position paper outlining a ten-year action plan for African World Heritage, which is to be presented for endorsement to the World Heritage Committee, NEPAD and the African Union in 2005. The African World Heritage Fund would be incorporated as a tool for the implementation of the plan.

The workshop looked into ways of developing such a fund as well as examining possible structures and long-term strategic partnership approaches.

The challenge, as expressed at the meeting, would be to increase resources available by enlarging the circle of actors cooperating to support World Heritage conservation in Africa. The goal is to enhance States Parties' efforts to improve the representivity of African World Heritage on the List and to reduce the number of African sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Durmitor A Success Story



Durmitor National Park

The Government of the Republic of Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro, has cancelled a project to build a dam that would have flooded part of the Tara River in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve next to Durmitor National Park, a World Heritage site since 1980.

Montenegro's decision to stop the project follows a mission to the area by a joint UNESCO-IUCN group of experts dispatched by the Director-General of UNESCO. The team recommended to the World Heritage Committee that Durmitor National Park be put on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the dam were built, and concluded that the project would have threatened a wide range of flora and fauna and migratory fish at the site.

The expert mission encouraged further collaboration between the Republic of Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to coordinate activities on both banks of the Tara River Canyon. They recommended joint protection activities and cooperation in any potential World Heritage extensions. The mission also emphasized long-term sustainable development for the protection of the site and the Biosphere Reserve adjacent to it.

This decision, taken two months after the agreement between Lithuania and the Russian Federation to protect the Curonian Spit World Heritage site, illustrates once again the success of the *World Heritage Convention* as an instrument for international cooperation and heritage protection.

Interview with the President of the UNESCO General Conference and Permanent Delegate of Nigeria to UNESCO Professor Michael Abiola Omolewa

Professor
Michael
Abiola
Omolewa

You attended the meeting of African World Heritage Experts in Cape Town, South Africa in March, which was held in parallel with a workshop to discuss the feasibility of an African World Heritage Fund. Why were these meetings important?

The meetings were partly in response to the NEPAD initiative, which over the past four years has identified issues that are important to Africa. The leaders of Africa have asked for partners to help carry the development load of the region. I see this initiative in that context. Africa is defining its needs for heritage promotion and conservation. More countries in Africa are becoming increasingly interested in the preservation of heritage and are now engaging with UNESCO, the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Centre. The Chairperson of the African Union, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, and the World Heritage Committee seek to draw attention to the needs of Africa.

What is Africa's role in the evolving concept of World Heritage?
The concept of intangible cultural heritage is being promoted. Africa has begun to appreciate its enormous wealth in such areas as folktales, songs and proverbs. We are not talking about monuments per se, such as skyscrapers, but heritage of the heart and mind. There is a wealth in languages and linguistic usages here. Africa is now associating itself with people all over the world

who see culture in this diverse and comprehensive way – people in developed countries who have respect for culture and artistic expression.

What are your views on the Special Experts Meeting on the concept of outstanding universal value, held in Kazan, Russian Federation in April?

The Kazan meeting tried to define the rules of the game. What is outstanding universal value? Who defines it? What elements should be taken into consideration? All regions were represented. There was a genuine interest and openness shown at the meeting, whose report will be presented to the 29th session of the Committee for further consideration.

The 29th session of the Committee will be the first ever to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa. What comments does that inspire?

I am really very happy. The World Heritage Committee is proving that culture should be seen as universal material, that it is not the monopoly of one region. Holding the meeting in Durban also allows for those in Africa who cannot travel long distances to attend and see for themselves. What unites us all, with a minimum of misunderstanding, is culture. Culture is our common language, and the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO's Culture Sector are responding to this subject with professionalism.

Outstanding Universal Value: the Kazan Meeting

At the request of the World Heritage Committee at its 28th session, a 'Special Expert Meeting of the World Heritage Convention: the Concept of Outstanding Universal Value' was held in Kazan, Tatarstan, Russian Federation (6-10 April), attended by some thirty experts from around the world and representatives from the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. The Mayor of Kazan, Kamil Iskhakov, as well as Yuri Fedotov, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, spoke on the opening day of the meeting.

The World Heritage Committee requested the meeting, following increasing concern that outstanding universal value may be interpreted and applied differently in different regions and by different stakeholders.

The working groups first discussed 'Understanding the concept of outstanding universal value under the World Heritage Convention'.

Three main themes were then considered in smaller groups. One group dealt with ways to better identify properties of potential outstanding universal value and the preparation of Tentative Lists. They discussed how the process of preparing the Tentative List is handled in different regions and who is involved in it.

Another group considered how nominations of properties of potential outstanding universal value could be improved. They discussed not only what action needs to be taken to improve nominations, but also what the difficulties are in determining and demonstrating outstanding universal value.

A third group examined the sustainable conservation of World Heritage properties and what ideal management requirements in different regions are, in order to maintain the integrity and/or authenticity of the different categories of World Heritage properties.



Themba Wakashe, Chairman of the World Heritage Committee; Kishore Rao, Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre; Kamil Iskhakov, Mayor of Kazan; and Grigory Ordzhonikidze, Secretary General of the National Commission of the Russian Federation

Following these substantive discussions in both the plenary session and the working groups, detailed recommendations were drawn up, which are to be presented to the 29th session of the Committee.

The Second International World Heritage Forests Meeting

The World Heritage Centre's Nature Section organized the Second World Heritage Forests meeting (9-11 March) at the National School of Forestry in Nancy, France. Forty representatives of the major conventions, donors, non-governmental organizations and training institutions worldwide, along with conservation professionals working at the site level, attended.

This meeting recommended that supporting ecosystems in the landscape beyond the boundaries of World Heritage forest sites must be considered for new and existing sites. It also called on the WHC to work closely with the Convention on Biological Diversity's Secretariat to implement the programme of work on protected areas following the ecosystem approach.

Participants noted that the work of the UNESCO Ecological and Earth Sciences Division and the evolving World Heritage forest strategy have significant overlaps. The meeting therefore recommended that they should work closely together to develop joint projects. It was proposed that major NGOs should also be partners to such projects, and that training institutions could equally exchange expertise in developing mutual projects.

In 1998, the WHC organized the inaugural meeting on World Heritage Forests in Berastagi, Indonesia. This meeting was successful in achieving inclusion of identified priority forest sites on the World Heritage List, attracting significant additional sponsorship and promoting the World Heritage Convention as a tool for global forest and biodiversity conservation.

Partly as a result of this meeting, tropical forest areas in 'biodiversity hotspots' are now generally well represented on the

World Heritage List. The focus should now be on consolidating the conservation gains in these sites, and supporting management effectiveness so that their protection can be better assured, according to the recent IUCN analysis of natural site gaps.

The World Heritage List currently includes approximately 17% of the global forest area under protected status. Eighty-seven World Heritage sites include significant forest cover, totaling around seventy million hectares of protected forest (20% greater than the surface area of France). The WHC is involved with the management of projects supporting forest conservation in twenty-one of these sites and in an additional four potential World Heritage sites around the globe, with a total budget of more than US\$25 million.

Considering these statistics it is apparent that the World Heritage Centre, alongside key partners, has a significant role to play in the conservation of the world's forests, but to be most effective the actions of the various groups must be coordinated. The World Heritage Centre is now working towards building the necessary partnerships to ensure the Convention fulfills its potential in contributing towards reducing the loss of global biodiversity.



Participants in the Second World Heritage Forests Meeting in Nancy, France

World Heritage in Danger

Bam after the earthquake of 26 December 2003
© Mourir Bouchenaki / UNESCO



Bam and its Cultural Landscape, Iran

'Bam and its Cultural Landscape' was inscribed on both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger after the devastating earthquake on 26 December 2003 that levelled Bam, killed an estimated 30,000 - 40,000 people and left 75,000 homeless. The site has an extraordinary cultural significance in that it represents an outstanding example of the interaction of man and nature in a desert environment. Its defining characteristics include the remains of the earthen citadel and fortified settlement at its centre (known as Arg-e-Bam), and a vast agricultural area irrigated by a complex system of underground channels called *qanats*, dating sometimes from the Achaemenid period and still in use today.

The World Heritage Centre, in cooperation with the Italian and Iranian authorities and with the participation of numerous international experts and institutions, organized a technical meeting in Rome (10-11 May) to examine proposals on the next steps for the rehabilitation of Bam and its cultural landscape. Representatives of ICOMOS, ICCROM and CRATerre also attended.

Since the earthquake, and under the umbrella of UNESCO, Iranian officials and international experts have worked together with the local community for the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of Bam. However, the scale of the problems, especially in relation to the humanitarian needs of the population, and the complexity of the conservation issues posed by the site, have so far prevented major progress.

The Rome meeting, funded by the Italian Government, was therefore organized to both stimulate reflection on the most appropriate approach to the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage, and to mobilize further support and renewed cooperation between Iranian and international partners. The discussion, involving experts from a wide spectrum of disciplines, covered a number of topics, including the need to better define the values of the World Heritage property to guide the elaboration of a clear vision for its future use. Options included the prospect of maintaining the property strictly as an archaeological site, or committing to partial or total restoration. Several pilot projects were presented and discussed. The meeting helped clarify the nature and complexity of the questions related to the recovery of Bam and its Cultural Landscape, preparing the ground for future work on the site.

Archaeological Discoveries at Aksum



The Aksum Obelisk returned to Ethiopia in April

Major archaeological vestiges have been discovered at the World Heritage site of Aksum, Ethiopia by the experts UNESCO sent to survey the World Heritage site and to prepare for the elevation of the Aksum Obelisk at its original location. The last segment of the 160-tonne 24.6-metre high stela has arrived in Aksum. It had been in Rome since 1937.

The archaeological discovery, according to the experts, is the site of a royal necropolis used by several dynasties before the Christian era. It stretches beyond the perimeter of the present archaeological site at the foot of Mount Saint George and Mount Mariam.

'Underground chambers and arcades have been found in the vicinity of the original location of the obelisk,' declared Elizabeth Wangari, Chief of WHC Africa Unit. 'Geo-radar and electrotomographic prospection – the most advanced technologies for underground observation – revealed the existence of several vast funerary chambers under the site's parking ground which was built in 1963,' said Jim Williams, of UNESCO's Culture Sector, who, along with Ms. Wangari, took part in the mission.

The team of UNESCO experts, headed by archaeologist Rodolfo Fattovich, an expert on Aksum at the Istituto Universitario Orientale of Naples, Italy, conducted a 'non-invasive archaeological prospection' of the site. The data collected through geo-radar and electrotomographic prospection are being processed at a laboratory at La Sapienza University in Rome and will be used to create 3D models of the royal tombs. The processed data will be communicated to the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy.

Last November, the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy signed a bilateral agreement on the return of the Aksum Obelisk, in keeping with the World Heritage Convention, and asked for UNESCO's cooperation in implementing the return.

An International Symposium '**Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: the Role of Sacred Natural Sites and Cultural Landscapes**', an activity of the EXPO 2005 Aichi, Japan held at the United Nations University, Tokyo (30 May - 2 June), was organized by UNESCO and UNU, in partnership with IUCN, the Secretariat of the CBD, the Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (SPFII) and FAO. At the Symposium, aimed at highlighting the interrelationship of biological and cultural diversity of our planet, nature conservation experts and indigenous and local communities presented case studies on sacred natural sites and cultural landscapes. The Symposium also reviewed linkages between nature and culture interactions which assist protected-area managers and decision-makers.

At the Summit of Heads of State from South-East Europe in Varna, Bulgaria (20-21 May), the **Varna Declaration** was adopted in order to promote cultural heritage and cultural corridors in the region. The meeting was organized by the Bulgarian President, Georgi Parvanov, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe. The Varna Declaration pledges to take urgent measures to protect cultural heritage in danger in the region, and take action to stop the illicit traffic of cultural goods.

The 'Days of Mauritanian World Heritage Cities', held at UNESCO Headquarters (11-14 April), celebrated the cultural heritage of Mauritania and its ancient cities. The event was organized by the WHC, the Mauritanian Government's Cultural Heritage Project Unit and the World Bank, in co-operation with the Permanent Delegation of Mauritania to UNESCO and with the support of France. On 11 April, the President of Mauritania, Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and World Bank Vice President for Europe, Jean-François Rischard, opened the event and the exhibition '**Cities of Remembrance - Ancient Ksour of Mauritania**', which then traveled on to the Adrar Museum at Atar, Mauritania. The conference was opened by Assistant Director-General for Culture, Mounir Bouchenaki; and Mauritanian Minister of Culture, Ahmedou Ould Ahmedou, presented the results of international co-operation in implementing the pilot project 'Safeguarding and Development of the World Heritage of Mauritanian Cities'.

A sub-regional **Teacher-Training Workshop for the World Heritage in Young Hands Education Kit in Swahili language**, organized by the UNESCO Dar es Salaam and Harare Offices and the WHC, was held at the Centre for Research and Oral Tradition and African National Languages (EACROTANAL) in Zanzibar, UR Tanzania (14-16 March). The workshop was convened to familiarize teachers from eight countries in the sub-region (DRC, Uganda, UR Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Comoros, Rwanda and Kenya) with the Education Kit and to develop knowledge and awareness about World Heritage. Experiences were exchanged about working with students on the subject of World Heritage, and possibilities explored for introducing the Kit into school curricula. One of the principal recommendations from the Workshop requested that national authorities appoint coordinators for World Heritage education programmes and formulate clear policies to mainstream World Heritage education into school curricula.

What Are They Doing ?

■ **Francesco Bandarin**, WHC Director, was in Ecuador (10-17 April), to attend the Fifth Expert Meeting on the process of nomination of the *Qhapaq Ñan* (Main Andean Road), and to visit the Galapagos to learn about conservation challenges there. He was accompanied by **Nuria Sanz**, Programme Specialist, Latin America and Caribbean Unit, responsible for the *Qhapaq Ñan* program, and **Marc Patry**, Programme Specialist, Nature Section. Mr Bandarin also went to Rome (May 10-11) to attend the International Technical Meeting on the Rehabilitation of the Cultural Heritage of Bam, and to Vienna (May 12-16) to attend the international Conference on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture. Ms. Sanz attended a meeting in Lima (18-19 April) called by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru on the state of conservation of Machu Picchu to discuss the Vilcanota Project presented by the World Bank. ■ **Giovanni Boccardi**, Chief, Asia and Pacific Unit, and **Hidetaka Kinami**, Associate Expert, were in Lahore, Pakistan (10-17 April) to attend a follow-up meeting to the Periodic Reporting exercise for South Asian countries, and assist in the process of developing a cultural heritage action plan for the sub-region (18-19 April). ■ **Herman van Hooff**, Adviser for World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean, was in Caracas and Coro, Venezuela (12-19 April), along with **Juan Luis Isaza**, ICOMOS, for a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to assess the state of conservation of the site of Coro and its Port. ■ **Guy Debonnet**, Programme Specialist, Nature Section, was in Kinshasa, DRC (6-16 February) to attend a meeting on the Information Management System for the ICCN. Mr Debonnet also attended the World Heritage Forests Meeting in Nancy, France (9-11 March), organized by Mr Patry and **Steven Ripley**, Consultant, Nature Section. ■ **Ron van Oers**, Chief, a.i. Latin America and Caribbean Unit, and **Grazia Piras**, Associate Expert, were in Guatemala (8-16 March) to discuss the implementation of the Mesoamerica Action Plan. Prior to this they went to Belize (28 February-2 March) to organize an interactive training seminar to assist the Government of Belize in developing a five-year World Heritage national strategy. Mr van Oers, as Coordinator of the World Heritage Cities

Programme, provided assistance in the organization of the Vienna International Conference. He was also in Quebec, Canada (1-4 May) to discuss the strengthening of the partnership between the WHC and the Organization of World Heritage Cities. ■ **Art Pedersen**, Consultant on Tourism and Visitor Management, and **Salamat Ali Tabbasum**, Associate Expert, Asia and Pacific Unit, attended as trainers the South Asian Regional Training Workshop (24-29 April) in Kandy, Sri Lanka, resulting in an Action Plan for the next biennium which aims at addressing tourism management issues in South Asia including Iran. ■ Mr Pedersen and **Kerstin Manz**, Consultant, Europe and North America Unit, participated in the International Tourism Fair (ITB) in Berlin, Germany (11 March), giving presentations on 'Linking Conservation and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites'. ■ **Vesna Vujicic-Lugassy**, Chief, Promotion, Publications and Education Unit, **Carmela Quin** of the same Unit and **Livia Saldari**, Programme Specialist, Division for the Promotion of Quality Education, Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), attended the 'International Workshop on World Heritage Educational Multi-media Resource Material' organized in collaboration with the French National Commission for UNESCO in Pont du Gard, France (21-23 March). ■ **Marielle Richon**, Focal Point for the Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage Network, was in Quebec, Canada (23-29 May) to attend the first international seminar on World Heritage for French-speaking journalists organized at Laval University. She also attended a meeting in Sydney, Australia (24-30 April) of universities participating in the Share Our Heritages project. ■ **Fumiko Ohinata**, Associate Expert, Europe and North America Unit, participated in the International Training Workshop on the preparation of Section II Periodic Reports for Central and South Eastern Europe (14-17 April) in Levoca, Slovak Republic.

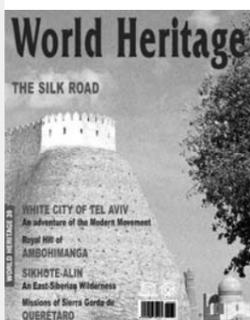


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International Conference on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture. Vienna, Austria



Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

- 13 to 17 June**
Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas. Montecatini, Italy.
Information: k.rao@unesco.org
- 20 to 22 June**
Caribbean sub-regional training meeting on the Development of a Statement of Significance for the Fountain Cavern in Anguilla. This activity is framed in the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme and is jointly promoted by UNESCO and the UK Government. The Cove, Anguilla.
Information: p.piras@unesco.org
- 22 to 23 June**
Second Plenary Session of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Iraq. UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France.
Information: a.paolini@unesco.org
- 23 June**
Launching of the proceedings of the Seventh Conference of DOCOMOMO. UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.
Information: r.vanoers@unesco.org
- 26 June**
Inscription ceremony for the Dresden Elbe Valley World Heritage site. Dresden, Germany.
Information: welterbe@dresden.de
- 26 to 28 June**
HERMES project symposium I 'Between the Seas - In Search of Common Cultural Roots in Central and Eastern Europe'. Weimar, Germany.
Information: sebastian.schroeder@archit.uni-weimar.de or www.swkk.de/hermes
- 26 to 29 June**
42nd IFLA World Congress 'Landscape Leading the Way'. Edinburgh, Scotland, UK.
Information: www.l-i.org.uk/ifla/index.php
- 10 to 17 July**
29th Session of the World Heritage Committee. Durban, South Africa.
Information: a.lemastre@unesco.org
- 28 to 31 July**
Sustainable Development and World Heritage: Preservation of the Environment Workshop within the framework of the Great Volga River Route World Heritage Education Project. Bucharest, Romania.
Information: l.saldari@unesco.org or v.vujicic@unesco.org
- 1 to 3 September**
Conference on 'The Conservation and Presentation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage in the Islands of the Mediterranean'. Rhodes, Greece.
Information: p.piras@unesco.org



World Heritage of March 2005, No. 39, dedicates its feature article to The Silk Road. In this issue you will also discover: the Royal Hill of Ambohimanga in Madagascar, an ensemble of sacred places, a royal city and a burial site of kings; the White City of Tel Aviv, built by architects trained in Europe and a true museum of the Modern Movement in architecture; the extraordinary natural site of Central Sikhote-Alin in the Russian Federation, which hosts one of the richest forests on Earth and is a refuge for many endangered species such as the Amur tiger; and the Franciscan Missions of Sierra Gorda de Querétaro, whose magnificent buildings are a symbiosis of the creative efforts of the Indians and the missionaries.

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