



UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,  
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

MEETING OF EXPERTS TO CO-ORDINATE, WITH A VIEW TO THEIR  
INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION, PRINCIPLES AND SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL  
AND LEGAL CRITERIA APPLICABLE TO THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL  
PROPERTY, MONUMENTS AND SITES

Unesco House, Paris, 26 February-2 March 1968

CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING OF EXPERTS

The meeting of experts held at Unesco Headquarters in Paris from 26 February to 2 March 1968 to co-ordinate, with a view to their international adoption, the principles and scientific, technical and legal criteria which would make it possible to establish an effective system for the protection and presentation of monuments and sites,

Considering,

that monuments and sites constitute an essential part of man's heritage, a source of enrichment and harmonious development for the civilization of today and tomorrow;

that the preservation of monuments and sites in various countries encourages a knowledge of the past and facilitates mutual understanding between the nations of the world;

that our age should endeavour with all the means at its disposal to ensure the protection of monuments and sites against all the dangers to which they may be exposed;

that under modern conditions, monuments and sites should be able to receive increasing protection thanks to the latest scientific and technical achievements;

that this protection needs to be planned at both national and international level, which means that it should be devised in accordance with co-ordinated rules, based, as far as possible, upon common fundamental principles;

that monuments, historic localities and sites are, moreover, among the main facilities and factors for economic expansion and the development of tourism;

Recommends the adoption at national level of an effective system for the protection of monuments and sites based on the following principles:

## I. NATIONAL PROTECTION SYSTEM

### 1. Nature of the heritage to be protected and developed

The main categories of cultural property to be considered are:

- (a) Historic and artistic localities or "urban sites". These consist of groups of buildings forming an architectural unit or environment which makes their protection desirable. Such areas may include monuments of the highest quality surrounded by more modest buildings which together give a particular character to the urban fabric.
- (b) Rural sites. Natural sites of aesthetic, picturesque or ethnographic value or with associations in history, literature or legend, the preservation of which is of definite interest from a general point of view. This category includes both isolated features (caves, rocks, look-out points, etc.) and extensive sites hillsides, (mountains, valleys, etc.).
- (c) Mixed sites. These are the result of the combined work of nature and man. They may consist of groups of buildings, the value of which is enhanced by their natural or artificial setting, or of landscapes of aesthetic value including human artifacts which enhance their interest.
- (d) Scientific and archaeological sites. This refers to zones in which discoveries of scientific or archaeological interest have been or may be made.
- (e) Prehistoric or protohistoric monuments or remains. These consist of traces of human industry of civilization from the earliest times to the appearance of writing.
- (f) Historic monuments - from the beginnings of civilization until our own times.

### 2. Threats to sites and monuments

In order to determine what measures States shall be advised to take as part of their overall policy for ensuring the protection in perpetuity of their monuments and sites, it has been necessary to identify those phenomena which, whilst inherent in our civilization and indeed sometimes beneficial, nevertheless, in some of their aspects, represent a threat to sites and monuments. Among these phenomena might be mentioned:

1. The population increase and social development.
2. Economic development - industrial or commercial.
3. The increasingly rapid deterioration of monuments and sites.
4. The inadequacy of aesthetic and technical protection.
5. Administrative inadequacy and shortage of funds.

### 3. Protection measures

These include the organization of services as well as scientific, legal, administrative or financial protection procedures or methods.

Organization of services for the protection of sites and monuments

It is essential that each State should have a central or regional specialized administrative organization responsible for devising and implementing measures for the protection of sites and monuments.

This service should be empowered to deal with the new tasks devolving upon it in conjunction with the other public services, in particular those connected with town and country planning, whose activities also affect the protection of cultural property.

This service should have the help of qualified advisory bodies so that it can pass on to the executive its opinions on questions affecting sites and monuments.

Powers of central, federal or local bodies

It seemed that any formula whereby responsibility for monuments and sites of national importance were entrusted to federal or central authorities and, for monuments and sites of less importance, to local authorities would present serious disadvantages, since in some cases it might be prejudicial to the preservation of monuments and sites of secondary importance. From another angle, it seemed essential to give various powers to local communities and authorities so as to make them alive to their responsibilities with regard to monuments and sites that primarily belong to them.

Lastly, in view of the fact that the preservation of monuments and sites raises all manner of awkward problems, that it involves specialized knowledge and the making of sometimes difficult choices and that the supply of highly qualified people is not unlimited, it seemed desirable to recommend a sharing of powers between central or federal authorities and local authorities. The former should be able to decide on the necessary laws and regulations to ensure the protection of monuments and sites, and to choose those to be protected. They should further, in agreement with local authorities, establish programmes of work and ensure the consistency of restoration work, assume overall authority for rules relating to protection, grant building and demolition licences or licences for clearing trees in the vicinity of monuments, historic localities and sites, as well as in places that may be scheduled as specially protected areas in order to preserve cultural property.

The implementation of protective measures, on the other hand, the upkeep of monuments and sites and the framing of regulations regarding posters and signs might be left to local authorities.

The necessary measures should be taken to ensure that major public works or private projects do not interfere with monuments and sites. To this end, consultations should be held regularly and at every phase between appropriate ministries and departments to ensure that known monuments and sites or suspected remains are not sacrificed before studies have been carried out in liaison with the preservation services.

Close co-operation between the appropriate ministries and public departments and private enterprise should result in an active policy for the preservation of monuments and sites.

Town planning and regional planning should result from close co-operation between the central or federal authorities and local authorities. To this end, existing laws should be amended or, if necessary, new laws should be framed for the protection of monuments and sites, and to cover town planning and regional development as well, so as to ensure effective overall co-ordination.

Right from the initial study stage, it is essential that all departments and disciplines concerned with the drawing up of development plans in all countries should get together in order to integrate the protection and enhancement of monuments and sites with national, regional or local planning.

It should be brought home to all appropriate departments that monuments and sites are productive property, both from the cultural and economic point of view.

One of the things that regional development must take into account is the protection and enhancement of its cultural property. It is for this reason that permanent and constant liaison must be established between preservation experts, architects and town planners, so that once the need to preserve a monument or a site has been recognized in accordance with the definition given in point above, preservation should be an essential and basic ingredient in the preparation and execution of any development plan.

#### Specialized technical personnel

States should make a special effort to train and recruit specialized scientific and technical personnel, including historic monument curators, architects and technicians, to draw up and supervise protection programmes.

#### Architects

Special care should be devoted to the recruitment, amongst these technicians, of architects specialized in the conservation of historic monuments and groups. To this end, young architects could receive post-university training, national or international, to ensure that no one might undertake monument and site work without the necessary training and qualifications.

#### Protective measures for monuments and sites

##### Inventory, legal protection, register

An inventory of its monuments and sites should be made by each State to ensure that protective measures can be taken in good time. This inventory should allow legal protective measures to be taken, to apply to the monument irrespective of owner. Specific measures could be taken on these lines to protect isolated monuments or sites, historic groups, extended sites.

The protective measures should be compiled in printed catalogues easy to consult and kept regularly up to date.

##### Respect for protective measures

It is to be hoped that protective measures (prohibition of any demolition, restoring, repairs, modification or removal of a monument without the prior authorization of the public authorities) will be strictly respected by the owners

of the property protected, not only in the case of individuals but also in the case of public bodies, as the latter have unfortunately all too often failed to observe those very rules they themselves should be the most scrupulous in applying.

#### Penal penalties

- (1) It is recommended that the penalties imposed on anyone who intentionally destroys, mutilates or injures a protected monument or site should include fines and imprisonment.
- (2) Heavy fines should be imposed on anyone responsible for other violations of measures for the protection or presentation of a monument or protected site, such as the violation of a constraint, the modification of a monument or site without authorization, the construction of a building adjoining a protected monument without authorization or in defiance of the constraints imposed, and so on.

#### Civil penalties

It is recommended, in order to ensure the indispensable material protection of a protected monument or site that, in case of penal sentence as indicated above, the court should be obliged to order that the whole be restored to its original state or in conformity with the instructions prescribed by the competent services.

The judge should also be entitled to impose any daily fines for non-performance that he may consider necessary.

#### New protective measures

Existing regulations usually include certain prohibitions to protect monuments and sites. Certain serious dangers, however, demand new measures to counteract them - as for example:

- (a) the effects of shocks and vibration caused by heavy vehicles and supersonic aircraft;
- (b) the accelerated deterioration of the constituent materials of ancient monuments;
- (c) the consequences of natural disasters and calamities.

#### Default of owner

Because of their great importance, cultural property should be protected, in the case of default of the owner, by measures laid down by the public authorities. These should include:

- compulsory execution of works at the owner's expense if necessary;
- expropriation of the threatened cultural property.

### Financial participation by public collectivities

Collectivities should offer encouragement by undertaking to bear part of the cost of maintenance and repair works.

It is recommended that a National Monuments Fund be set up as a legally-established public agency; this would get over the disadvantages of the annual budget rule in carrying out works spread over several years in States which have no equipment budget for the purpose.

Contributions would be made to the Fund from public authorities, including the State, in addition to extraordinary resources which might include certain taxes and charges directly or indirectly derived from monuments and sites.

### Tax exonerations and loans

Individual owners of monuments and sites should be encouraged the better to conserve their property by tax exemptions and, possibly, low-interest or interest-free loans. A special fund might be established for this purpose.

### Rehabilitation of historic groups

The rehabilitation of historic groups is not subject to the same rules in all cases. A sociological survey should if possible be made for each type in order to find out the socio-cultural needs in the community in which the particular group is located. Far from saving a group, badly-planned rehabilitation is more likely to help ruin it.

The rehabilitation must pay due regard to the new rôle of the historic group. Apart from crafts, industry will probably be excluded, but housing, universities, and tourist, commercial, cultural and other activities may be perfectly reconcilable with its historic character.

Except for any necessary excision, care must be taken to see that the rehabilitation does not completely upset the character of the residential area.

### Allowances for the inhabitants of rehabilitated historic groups

The rehabilitation of historic groups, culturally and socially to be desired, involves excision, restoring and, possibly, renovation that is often costly.

If the rents of rehabilitated buildings are higher than for the same buildings before, social upheaval may result, wealthy tenants replacing the modestly-remunerated shopkeepers, artisans, workers and clerks who previously lived there.

To avoid certain regrettable changes, compensatory housing allowances should be paid if possible to allow tenants to remain and be able to meet the increased charges.

### Scientific measures to protect monuments and sites

#### (a) Laboratories

All historic monument conservation and restoring must be preceded and accompanied by scientific and technical studies and, for this purpose, each country

should be able to call upon the services of specialized laboratories. In the case of certain fundamental problems, including the alteration and the conservation of component materials, co-ordinated studies should be carried out and encouraged through national, regional and international collaboration.

If a laboratory cannot be provided, countries should at least have a high-class technical workshop.

Specialists should be informed of experiments and research results through publications in widely-known languages.

(b) Conservation and restoring

It was agreed that the principles incorporated in the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, known as the Venice Charter, (1964), were perfectly adequate and should be strictly applied.

II. The meeting of experts further suggests:

the establishment of an international system for the protection of monuments, localities and sites of universal importance and interest based on the following principles:

This protection, which harks back to historical precedents - the Constitution of Unesco, the Convention for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict (1954), the Recommendation on international principles applicable to archaeological excavations (1956), the Recommendation concerning the safeguarding of the beauty and character of landscapes and sites (1962), the International Charter for the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites (1964) - will aim to extend international co-operation, to the benefit of the cultural inheritance.

International protection must encourage Member States to make efforts to prepare and put into application an efficient system for their protection of monuments and sites within their territories, in line with the provisions of the international instruments mentioned above.

NATURE OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The protection of monuments, localities and sites of universal importance and interest does not imply the internationalization of such cultural property or any form of extra-territorial status. It is a moral and philanthropic enterprise, scientific, technical and practical in its nature, and will be carried out by the international community for the benefit of all countries.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY

An international protection body, or possibly Unesco, should be made responsible for seeing that the necessary protection measures are carried out. Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned will supply it with experts and technicians in addition to its permanent staff.

The international body will only step in to protect monuments, localities and sites of universal importance and interest if an exceptional situation exists, whereby the cultural heritage is seriously threatened.

CASES WHERE ACTION MAY BE TAKEN

In order to enable the international protection body to take effective action, the Member States must specify the nature of the threat to their monuments, localities or sites, stating whether it results:

from an advanced state of deterioration in the structure or fabric thereof;

from natural causes and acts of God;

from the carrying out of major public or private works made necessary by economic development and modern technical expansion;

from the outbreak of armed conflict;

etc.

It is desirable that the international authority should be empowered to act rapidly and effectively any time that a monument, locality or site is exposed to great danger.

WAYS IN WHICH ACTION MAY BE TAKEN

The international authority will have powers in the fields of research and financial and administrative assistance.

(a) Research

This will be a very broad field. The international body will, however, have to give priority to a comparative study of legislation concerning the protection of monuments, localities and sites, to the preparation of draft legislation to strengthen existing international legal protection, to action with the aim of securing revision of international rules so as to preserve sea coasts, to the establishment of international rules to govern supersonic flights so as to reduce their harmful effects, to the establishment of a common terminology, and to the promotion of research on the deterioration of building materials and on new methods of conservation of old materials etc.

(b) Technical assistance

Technical assistance would be essentially a matter for international co-operation. It might involve the technical study of a project relating to a monument or site of universal interest and value, the dangers that may constitute a threat to its preservation, the assistance of technicians to supervise and carry out work, or the setting up of teams from various countries to carry out archaeological excavations on sites of major historical importance.

(c) Financial assistance: an international fund for monuments

Under exceptional circumstances, the international body would have to participate in operations designed to protect and preserve monuments and sites of universal value and interest. The proportion of its participation would vary according to the project and what it involves. The beneficiary State would have to make a substantial contribution.



Only exceptionally would the participation of the international body take the form of a subsidy, in most cases that of a low-interest or interest-free loan. States could be given ample time to repay loans.

An "international monuments fund" could be set up to provide the financing. Arrangements would have to be made for the financing of the fund.

It would also benefit from the financial contribution of Member States to projects for which they requested the assistance of the international body, as well as from that of international financing institutions like the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the United Nations Special Fund.

#### CONCESSIONS GRANTED IN RETURN FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

As the protection of monuments and sites of universal value and interest would involve sacrifices on the part of the international community, special concessions might possibly be granted on a voluntary and provisional basis by the beneficiary State either to the international community or to a State having made a substantial contribution. Concessions might take the form of exemption from fees and taxes, facilities of various kinds or privileges granted either to experts or, more generally, to nationals of one or more States.

III. Lastly, the meeting of experts invites Unesco:

- (a) to continue its action aimed at establishing an effective system for the protection of monuments and sites at national level and at implementing an international system for the protection of monuments and sites of universal value and interest;
- (b) to communicate to the National Commissions for Unesco in Member States the conclusions and suggestions of this meeting and to consult them as to the desirability of preparing an international instrument; and, for the adoption of the following two projects:
- (c) to plan, as part of its Regular programme, a series of activities aimed at:
  - studying the structure of bodies concerned with the protection of monuments and sites;
  - examining financing arrangements for projects designed to protect the cultural heritage of States;
  - arousing public interest in monuments and sites by holding symposia, publishing material and producing films on the subject, and organizing campaigns to safeguard monuments and sites.
- (d) to provide the necessary means for encouraging and supporting the scientific and technical research (relating to the deterioration of building materials and fabrics, the improvement and revival of localities of historic interest, training professional and operative personnel, etc.) carried out by the Rome Centre, ICOMOS and ICOM with a view to the preservation and presentation of monuments.