Report by the Secretary of the World Heritage Committee

Introduction

I wish to welcome the members of the World Heritage Committee, the representatives of the advisory bodies, and the numerous observers and UNESCO colleagues, to this nineteenth session of the World Heritage Committee. Allow me to begin by expressing, on behalf of my colleagues of the Secretariat and myself, our gratitude to the German authorities and the staff of the "House of World Cultures" for their generosity in hosting this meeting and for the many months of hard work in the preparation of this international gathering. The selection of this venue, here in the heart of Berlin, in this magnificent centre devoted to promoting the cultures of the world is especially apt in reminding all of us of the universal mission we have in protecting the cultural and natural properties of the world beyond any interests we may have as individuals or as representatives of a particular nation.

In giving you an overview of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat since the eighteenth session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Phuket, Thailand last December, I shall highlight not only the achievements and also the problems encountered by the Secretariat in implementing your decisions.

I wish to begin by reporting to you on the outcome of the 28th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO and the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, both held in Paris in November this year. As some of the Committee members and the observers present here can attest, two issues dominated the discussions on the World Heritage Centre and its activities at the Executive Board and General Conference. The first was the debate surrounding the Director-General’s proposal to grant the Centre a "financial allocation", composed of staff and programme costs amounting to US$ 3.5 million from UNESCO’s regular programme budget for the biennium 1996-97.
As a result of the extensive discussions on this item by the 147th Executive Board and the 28th General Conference, the staff cost of the Centre, some US$ 2.6 million for 13 posts, will be incorporated in the overall UNESCO staff cost budget. However, the Centre's approved programme budget for 1996-97 of US$ 1,100,300 will now stand on its own as a transversal, inter-sectoral activity to reflect better the Centre's programme for the preservation of natural properties and its educational activities as well as its work in the cultural domain.

The second issue of considerable debate, both at the General Assembly of States Parties and the UNESCO General Conference, was on the question of "systematic monitoring and reporting", which was a subject of a recommendation of the 146th Session of the Executive Board. In compliance with the Executive Board, this issue was discussed at the Tenth General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention held from 2-3 November 1995, the report of which is submitted to you as Document CONF.203/INF.6. The General Assembly decided to defer its decision on this matter until the next session. The General Conference confirmed its strong support for the Organization's activities to promote the establishment of national mechanisms in systematic monitoring and reporting on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties. Monitoring of the state of conservation, as a whole was adopted as one of the principle activities under the Major Programme III, Cultural Development: The Heritage and Creativity, of UNESCO's 1996-97 Programme.

Cooperation with other Conventions

With the recent accession of Latvia, Dominica and the Kyrgyz Republic in 1995, the World Heritage Convention now has 143 States Parties including some that are currently not Member States of UNESCO. As reported to the Bureau in July of this year, the World Heritage Convention, in comparison with other international legal instruments in the broad heritage conservation field, has become the most international in scope. Thus, the 1954 Hague Convention has been ratified or adopted by 87 countries, the 1970 Illicit Traffic Convention by 82, the Ramsar Wetland Convention by 89, the Cites Convention by 130, and the Biodiversity Convention by 134.

Close cooperation is maintained with the secretariats of these conventions, in particular with our UNESCO colleagues in charge of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague Convention) and the Convention on Illicit Traffic of Cultural Properties. States Parties that have adhered to both the World Heritage and the Hague Convention are invited to enter their World Heritage properties on the "International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection".

As the recent meeting on the Hague Convention held in Paris in November noted, closer links between these conventions must also be built at the national level. I wish to draw your
attention on this occasion that we submit for your consideration in the proposed budget for 1996, a proposal to organize a photographic exhibition and seminar tentatively entitled "World Heritage and Armed Conflict" which the Centre and the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Division would undertake jointly in collaboration with other UN agencies and the media, at the 1996 international photographic fair, Visa pour l'Image, held annually in Perpignan, France.

The Centre's staff, either directly or through its colleagues in the Science Sector and Field Offices of UNESCO, are also actively collaborating in the implementation of the Biodiversity Convention.

Tentative lists and nominations to the World Heritage List

At its seventeenth session in Cartagena, December 1993, the Committee expressed its concern regarding the small number of Tentative Lists that meet the requirements as stipulated in the Operational Guidelines, and confirmed the importance of these Lists for planning purposes and comparative analyses of nominations. These Lists constitute an inventory of the properties situated within the territory of each State Party, and which it considers suitable for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

As of October 1995, out of the 143 States Parties only 50 had submitted Tentative Lists in accordance with the format specified in the Operational Guidelines; 38 countries had submitted Tentative Lists which do not meet the requirements. 55 countries have not at all submitted a Tentative List despite repeated requests to do so. I draw your attention to Document CONF.203/6 on this matter.

New Nominations

The number of new nominations to the World Heritage List this year is 36, out of which half come from Western Europe and North America. This year, the Arab States have no nominations at all, while there are 2 from Eastern Europe, 3 from Africa, 6 from Asia and 7 from Latin America. The current imbalances between regions as well as in the types of properties still have a long way to be corrected. Almost 3/4 are cultural sites in this year's nominations. Among the new cultural nominations is the Rapa Nui National Park in Chile, a country that nominates for the first time. Other newcomers in terms of nominations to the World Heritage List are the Republic of Korea, Laos, Uruguay and the Netherlands. Document CONF.203/6 contains the details on this.

Global Strategy

As approved by the Committee, several meetings linked to Global Strategy with a view to improving the representative
nature of the World Heritage List, were held in 1995. From 28 March to 3 April, the Philippines National Commission for UNESCO hosted a "Regional Thematic Comparative Study Meeting on Rice Cultivation and Rice Terraces Landscapes." (See Document 203/INF.8). This meeting was followed by a Comparative Study Meeting on Identifying and Assessing World Heritage Cultural Landscapes especially with regard to associative landscapes, held in Australia on 27-28 April, which permitted experts to debate on the definition, evaluation, management and monitoring of associated values of cultural landscapes. The meeting recommended a broader application of cultural criteria (vi) in view of the particular importance in the Asia-Pacific region of the linkage between the spiritual and physical aspects of landscapes including aspects such as oral traditions (See Document 203/INF.9).

I might also mention that the International Forum on Mount Fuji Conservation held in Japan in September, organized by Shizuoka and Yamanashi Shimbun which I had the pleasure to attend was also instrumental in advancing the concept of associated cultural values of high mountains as a motif for fine arts and literary works, including poetry.

The Centre also participated in the first hearing organized by the Council of Europe on the proposed "European Landscape Convention". In 1996 a meeting on "European Cultural Landscapes of Outstanding Universal Value" will be held in Vienna.

In Africa, the Centre organized jointly with ICOMOS and with support from the World Heritage Fund, a Meeting on African Cultural Heritage and the World Heritage List from 11-13 October 1995. This first regional meeting which took place in Harare gathered experts from central and southern Africa. Results of this meeting include the identification of new categories of cultural properties eligible for World Heritage inscription which emphasize the important associated cultural values and their linkage with nature characterizing the heritage of many African cultures. It also encouraged African states to play an active role in enhancing the representativity of the World Heritage List through the ratification of the Convention, the establishment of Tentative Lists and, the nomination of properties.

On Geological and Fossil Sites, it is recalled that the Committee, at its 18th Session discussed a new approach for this category of natural heritage. Subsequently, the Centre organized two preparatory gatherings at UNESCO Headquarters jointly with colleagues of the Division of Earth Sciences, specialists of the International Union for Geological Sciences (IUGS), and the so-called Malvern Group. At the International Congress of the International Union of Geological Sciences, to be held in Beijing in 1996, a special session on geological World Heritage will be organized. Moreover, at the kind invitation of the French authorities, a symposium on the notion of integrity for natural heritage properties is now scheduled for March 1996. I draw your attention to Document CONF.203/8 of this session for further details on "global strategy".
World Heritage in Danger

Seventeen sites, eight cultural and nine natural, are inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is to be recalled that the Operational Guidelines in paragraphs 86 to 90 prescribe that the Committee, at the time of inscription, 'define the programme of corrective action to be taken', and that a significant portion of the World Heritage Fund be allocated to finance possible assistance to these sites and furthermore, that the Committee review at regular intervals the state of these properties.

I am pleased to inform you that the Secretariat, together with the States Parties concerned and the advisory bodies, has worked towards the regular observation of the properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Under the corresponding agenda item you will be informed of the state of practically 17 sites in danger (From Angkor to Dubrovnik, from Virunga/Zaire to Srebana/Bulgaria), as well as of the actions that have been taken or are foreseen for their safeguarding. Unfortunately, the conditions of none of the sites have significantly improved to permit their deletion from the List in Danger.

For the List of World Heritage in Danger to be meaningful and conducive to remedial measures, concerted action is needed to mobilize the international community in a strategic matter for each of these sites in danger.

Reporting on the state of conservation of World Heritage sites

The Committee at its 18th session in Phuket last year, adopted a decision to implement one of the major goals of the World Heritage strategy it launched in 1992, that is, to promote systematic monitoring and reporting of the state of conservation of World Heritage sites. As indicated earlier in my report, the background and details on the 12-year process leading to the adoption of this important activity was provided in a working document which is attached as an annex to the Report on the General Assembly, Document 203/INF.6.

As the States Parties to the Convention have been informed through a circular letter of 13 March 1995, as well as in the Committee report of the previous session, a clear distinction is made in the Operational Guidelines between systematic monitoring and reporting: systematic monitoring, being the assessment of the state of conservation of the World Heritage sites by the States Parties themselves, and reporting, which is to bring forward the results of this assessment to the World Heritage Committee. It should be emphasized that the Committee in its decisions explicitly underlined the sovereignty of the States Parties and that external advice would only be made available by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre with the agreement of the States Parties.
Allow me to recall with emphasis once again, that the ultimate goal of the World Heritage work is to contribute in a constructive manner to the preservation efforts of the States Parties. The new stipulations in the Operational Guidelines should be seen in this light and are meant to identify, at an early stage, threats to the sites and to promote preventive conservation actions. They are also meant to make World Heritage collaboration better targeted and more efficient and to assist the Committee in its decision making on priority actions.

Training

At the request of the World Heritage Committee, the Bureau, at its 18th session in July 1994, examined the expenditures incurred under training assistance from 1988 to 1992 and analysed their trends. As reported to the Bureau this July, the Centre and the advisory bodies have initiated the preparation of a strategy for training of specialists in both cultural and natural heritage conservation. The first draft of this strategy for cultural heritage, produced by ICCROM, was made available to the Bureau members in July.

Concerning natural heritage, a comprehensive assessment of training was carried out by a consultant in March - April 1995. A small expert workshop, held in August-September of this year at the Albright Training Centre of the United States Parks Service, reviewed the strategy document for natural heritage training.

I draw your attention to Documents CONF.9, INF.11A and INF.11B on the training strategies for natural and cultural heritage specialists providing you with the outcome of these consultations.

International assistance

As you can see from the budgetary documents CONF.203/12 all international assistance projects approved by the World Heritage Committee have been completed or are in the process of being implemented. I would like to mention that the overwhelming number of requests received this year will lead to the total commitment of the approved budget by the end of this year. With the increased recognition of the importance of cultural and natural properties protection and preservation and the growing universality of the Convention, a new strategy, in my opinion, is called for to optimize the use of the limited financial resources available to the Fund.

In this regard, I would like, once again, to suggest to the States Parties and the Committee to use the Fund increasing for catalytic purposes such as for the training and technical input necessary in the identification and development of project proposals for funding by bilateral and multilateral development cooperation agencies as well as by international and regional
financial institutions. With the concept of "protected areas" and their management fast becoming an integral component of sustainable development, and cultural sites as the "built environment" now considered a category of the protected areas in many countries, official development assistance of some donor governments are now granted for World Heritage protection and development. The Centre's successful cooperation with the World Bank and the European Union in eastern Europe; with the Inter-American Development Bank in Latin America; and with the Asian Development Bank in Asia, attests to the great potential of future activities in this regard.

Emergency Assistance

As for emergency assistance, you will recall that the Committee at its 17th session, held in Cartagena in December 1993, established a special Emergency Reserve of one million dollars. At the same time, the approval authority of the Chairperson was increased to US$ 50,000 and that of the Bureau to US$ 75,000. In 1994, fourteen requests for emergency assistance were approved for a total amount of US$ 542,910. Since the 18th session of the World Heritage Committee, the Chairperson approved eight requests for emergency assistance from eight States Parties for the total amount of US$ 170,250 leaving a balance of US$ 316,840 in the Emergency Reserve Fund. Here again, the large funding requirement to redress the damage inflicted on properties on the World Heritage List or on the Tentative List indicate the need to reflect on how best to use the Emergency Reserve of the Fund.

Highlights of regional implementation

Without entering into the information which will be provided to you under the State of Conservation reporting, allow me to provide you with some highlights on major activities in the implementation of the Convention by geographical regions.

Europe

The single most important event is that the Director-General of UNESCO and the Government of Norway, after having consulted all Nordic countries, signed in June 1995, an agreement by which the World Heritage Office for Nordic Countries will be established with staffing and funding from the Nordic countries. The Office will help to establish cooperation between these countries and other regions of the world in the implementation of the Convention. This is likely to strengthen considerably the international system of World Heritage co-operation.

Cultural heritage (Europe):

A number of new initiatives were taken in Eastern and Central Europe for World Heritage conservation and protection. With the assistance of the Centre, a substantial grant was
provided by the World Bank to the City of Vilnius in Lithuania for the preparation of a "Revitalization Strategy" - an action plan for the upgrading of Vilnius Old Town. I wish to thank the Governments of Denmark and Norway for the support given to the Centre in this activity. A Conference of Donors and Investors is planned for Summer 1996 in order to assemble international financing for the rehabilitation programme.

In the Republic of Georgia, at the City Museum reserve of Mtksketa and Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery complex, a series of activities were carried out and others are under plan for 1996. These include the preparation of a restoration master plan for Mtksketa and an exhibition, with conferences and concerts to be organized at UNESCO Headquarters in 1996.

Natural Heritage (Europe):

Activities concentrated on two European natural World Heritage sites, which are on the World Heritage in Danger List: Srebarno Nature Reserve (Bulgaria) with several projects carried out in 1994 and 1995 and Plitvice Lakes National Park (Croatia) which was reopened in August this year.

Asia-Pacific

Cultural heritage (Asia-Pacific):

Let me first mention that the voluntary contribution of US$ 20,000 from the Republic of Korea, earmarked for the promotion of the Geographical Information System (GIS), has enabled the Centre to commission the preparation of a Manual on the use of GIS for site planning and management. Another earmarked contribution of US$ 29,500 from a Japanese NGO, Soka Gakkai, has enabled the establishment of a GIS for the World Heritage site of Hue in VietNam.

In Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, the International Technical Adviser (ITA), financed under the Fund, has taken up his function in October to assist the authorities in setting up a "development control unit" within the Department of Archaeology.

The Centre's work in Asia focused this year on improving the information base of the inscribed cultural sites. Since the nomination dossier for many of the sites inscribed in the early years did not contain sufficient information, "desk-research" on sixteen sites in five countries was carried out. Joint international/national teams for on-site assessment work in Pakistan, Iran, Indonesia and VietNam were conducted to add to the 1994 UNESCO/ICOMOS monitoring work in China, as well as the ICOMOS-organized monitoring of cultural sites in Sri Lanka initiated in 1994. With on-going permanent monitoring of Kathmandu Valley in Nepal and reporting on the two cultural sites in Uzbekistan currently underway, by the end of 1995, draft reports on 22 cultural properties in 8 of the 15 States Parties of the region with World Heritage cultural properties would be
completed. A regional meeting on the evaluation of the systematic monitoring and reporting exercise is scheduled to be in January 1996 in cooperation with the Vietnamese and Thai authorities and the regional cultural organization, SPAPA (South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization’s Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts).

Natural Heritage (Asia-Pacific):

Following the monitoring schedule approved by the Committee at its 18th session, systematic monitoring of natural sites in the Asia-Pacific region started with the sites in Indonesia. I wish to express on this occasion our profound concern for the four Indonesian officials missing at sea after the tragic accident in June of this year during the monitoring mission to the Komodos Island. We wish also, to express our deep condolences to the family of Mrs Hartati Soegarjito who lost her life in this accident and pay tribute to her dedicated service to the cause of World Heritage preservation.

A meeting with World Heritage site managers is planned for the CNPPA’s South Asia session in spring 1996 which will involve awareness-building, training and monitoring procedures and aim to further strengthen the cooperation between site managers.

The meetings on the rice terraces held in the Philippines and on Mount Fuji in Japan, which I referred to earlier were most useful in underlining the necessity of protection and management of cultural landscapes and natural resource use in the densely populated regions of Asia.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Implementation of the Convention continues to be given high priority by the States Parties in the Latin American region. In the past year, increased interest has also been noted from the English, French and Dutch-speaking countries and island States of the Caribbean as well as from the Spanish-speaking countries of the region.

You will recall that from 1991 to 1994, this region undertook the first systematic monitoring programme for cultural sites and that the final report of this programme was presented to the Committee at its session in Phuket last year. The success of this programme is shown by the fact that most of the requests for technical cooperation received from the region are in direct response to the recommendations made in the monitoring reports and that the States Parties’ wish to continue the monitoring programme was clearly expressed at two major meetings on cultural and natural heritage held this year.

The first is the Meeting of Directors of Cultural Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean which was held, at the initiative of the Colombian Institute for Culture COLCULTURA in May in Cartagena, Colombia at which representatives of twenty-two
countries of the region met to discuss the implementation of the Convention in the region. We feel that this meeting was extremely productive in that it strengthened networking and regional cooperation, and formulated a number of guidelines and specific recommendations for the Convention's implementation.

Secondly, I should mention the meeting of site managers of natural World Heritage sites organized in collaboration with FAO in October of this year at the La Amistad World Heritage site in Costa Rica. This meeting reinforced the direct links between the site managers to promote the Convention and to define the framework for the preparation of a regional report on the State of the Natural World Heritage by the end of 1996.

As almost half of the cultural sites in Latin America and the Caribbean are cities or historic urban centres, many of the activities undertaken in 1995 and those planned for 1996 focus on urban rehabilitation, planning and development, in cities such as Lima, Cartagena, Olinda, Ouro Preto and Puebla. Activities are also being developed for some vulnerable archaeological sites such as Joya de Ceren in El Salvador and Tierradentro in Colombia.

For natural heritage in this region, activities focused on sites facing threats such as Rio Platano, affected by population pressure and unsustainable landuse. At the request of the Minister for Environment, the Centre arranged for a mission to be carried out by IUCN in November 1995.

**Arab States**

**Cultural heritage (Arab States):**

Several activities of particular importance were implemented at sites in this region this year. The seminar "Heritage and Urbanism", organized at Fes from 16 to 20 January 1995, was instrumental in addressing the problems caused by certain road projects in the Medina, among other issues related to heritage conservation and development.

In Jordan, our attention focused on the site of Petra, as well as on emergency assistance in order to control and prevent further flood damage at the site of Quseir Amra.

In Oman, earth architecture preservation needs were addressed in the context of the restoration of Bahla Fort which should enable the site to be withdrawn from the List in Danger in the near future.

Another success to report on resulted from the expert mission to Egypt to assist the Egyptian authorities in defining a new route which will completely avoid the World Heritage site of the Pyramids from Guizeh to Dahshur instead of cutting through the site as had originally been envisaged.
Natural sites (Arab States):

One of the highlights of the Centre’s work in this region was the third training seminar for natural heritage preservation in the Arab region. Managers and experts from 16 Arab States participated in the training seminar held in May–June this year at Cairo University (Egypt) supplemented by field visits. The Centre and IUCN presentations to the seminar focused on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and its links with other international Conventions, as well as on monitoring procedures. The objectives of regional cooperation to enhance protected area management and to promote the World Heritage Convention through networking and identification of sites for potential nomination featured in this seminar will be further strengthened by follow-up seminar to be organized by the UNESCO Office in Cairo and through the fourth training seminar scheduled for 1997.

Africa

Cultural heritage (Africa):

In sub-saharan Africa, the Centre has been more active than ever in the past. To add to the 29 States Parties to the Convention at present, efforts have focused on the ratification process and the preparation of Tentative Lists.

Two Tentative Lists, abiding to the criteria set out in the Operational Guidelines, were submitted in 1995 by Gambia and Nigeria. In 1996, 16 more Tentative Lists, 13 from those countries who took part in the Harare meeting and from Burkina Faso, Ghana and Cap Vert are expected.

In addition, projects for the two African World Heritage Sites in Danger are underway and progressing satisfactorily. These are, the pilot project for the restoration of the 3 mosques of Timbuktu, Mali, for which complementary funds are being requested from this Committee; and the conservation and management of the Royal Palaces of Abomey, Benin. These projects are laying the foundations to enable the national authorities and the site managers to define conservation and management plans for these sites.

I might also add that the Government of Mozambique, has expressed its willingness to enter into partnership with UNESCO in order to safeguard the human and cultural heritage of the Island in a sustained manner.

Natural heritage (Africa):

In 1995 the promotion of regional monitoring for natural heritage focused on the African region following the meeting for protected area and World Heritage site managers which gathered 140 site managers at Kruger National Park (South Africa) in October 1994. A regional training seminar for protected area
managers from West Africa was organized by the School of Wildlife Specialists in Garoua, Cameroon in February 1995. Building on the experience of these meetings, a meeting for site managers on "Biodiversity and World Heritage Sites" is scheduled to be held in December 1995 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire for the francophone region in cooperation with the UNESCO Dakar Office.

Virunga National Park in Zaire, a World Heritage in Danger site, was the main focus of monitoring reports and follow-up actions this year. The problems of this site affected by the armed conflict in neighbouring Rwanda were prominently featured in the press and media with considerable public information input from the Centre.

A seminar on management of Simen National Park in Ethiopia was held in February 1995. As a follow-up, cooperation with the Ethiopian Wildlife Organization and a research project on this site by University of Zurich of Switzerland is envisaged to strengthen the management of the site.

In 1995, activities for the promotion of ecologically-sound tourism were also carried out in Manova Gounda St. Floris in the Central African Republic and Malawi National Park.

Budgetary and financial issues

The Committee, under item 14 of the Agenda, will be examining the World Heritage Fund, and to this end an interim statement of account for the current biennium is provided in Working Document CONF.203/12. This document also lists all activities for which financial obligations have been made.

A final statement of account for the biennium 94/95 will be presented to the 20th session of the Bureau in July 1996, since this Committee session is held before the end of the calendar year and such financial statements are not prepared by UNESCO's Bureau of the Comptroller until end-March of the following year. This is, I wish to recall, in line with the Financial Regulations for the World Heritage Fund which stipulate that the final accounts be prepared for the biennium as a whole.

As the interim financial statement shows, the non-payment of contributions under the World Heritage Fund gives rise to considerable concern. To add to the arrears of US$ 1,357,507 in obligatory contributions for previous bienniums is an amount of more than US$ 731,508 for the present biennium, resulting in total outstanding payments of US$ 2,089,015.

For States Parties which have opted for voluntary contributions, I wish to stress that paragraph 2 of Article 16 of the Convention calls for the sum to be at least at the level of the obligatory contribution. For the current biennium ending in December 1995, an amount of US$ 1,029,241 in voluntary contributions is still outstanding, calculated at the minimum level of an obligation contribution.
Outstanding obligatory and voluntary contributions to the World Heritage Fund therefore reach more than US$ 3 million, a sum equivalent to about one year of the World Heritage budget. Allow me to reiterate the appeal by the Chairperson of the Committee at its previous sessions that the global challenge of World Heritage protection and conservation and the moral force of this important Convention cannot be met and be heard without financial means.

As far as the expenditures for the current biennium are concerned, by the end of December 1995, close to 100% of the authorized budget will have been reached, making it the first time that this level of implementation is attained. This, I can assure you, does not come from a "spending spree" but even after frugality. Every expenditure, as my colleagues can attest, is committed after looking into the possibilities of external funding. Some of the monitoring activities and even expert consultancies were funded this year from extrabudgetary contributions or in-kind contributions of services from donor governments or institutions and on co-financing arrangements, even from developing countries.

In mentioning our partners from the developing countries, especially those from the LDCs, I must pay special tribute to their efforts in meeting the many crises and emergency situations affecting their cultural and natural sites. The limited resources of the Emergency Reserve of the Fund have enabled the granting of catalytic funds to assist the States Parties in mitigating the damages caused by natural and man-made disasters but the US$ 1 million Emergency Reserve created by the World Heritage Committee in Cartagena in 1993, is now down to a balance of US$ 316,840. The Emergency Fund requires urgent replenishment within the next few months, and voluntary contributions of any amount would be most welcomed.

As mentioned earlier, the number of requests for international assistance has risen sharply during this biennium, as can be expected with the increasing number of States Parties and sites on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Fund is not growing but rather stagnating, given the non-payment of dues by many States Parties. Even in case of full payment by all States Parties the annual budget under the World Heritage Fund would not increase substantially above the level of US$ 3 million per year. I therefore request the Committee to map out a strategy and new policy directive on how best the World Heritage Fund can be used in a catalytic manner to optimize the benefits. As suggested earlier, the Centre's recommendation is to use the Fund's resources for upstream work to prepare projects which would then be presented to donors for bilateral or multilateral funding.

I would like to conclude this part of my report with special thanks for the voluntary contributions, over and above the assessed amount, and the extrabudgetary contributions provided by the Republic of Korea for US$ 20,000; Thailand for US$ 13,200; China for US$ 20,000; Norway for US$ 10,000 in addition to their
pledge of US$ 600,000 for extrabudgetary activities in China; to Japan and Sweden for the two Associate Expert posts; Austria for the funding of a programme specialist for natural heritage.

Appreciation is also due to the non-governmental and private sector donors, namely the Soka Gakkai of Japan for US$ 25,900; American Express Foundation for US$ 35,000; Kobi Graphics of Japan for US$ 74,000; Rhone Poulenc for US$ 103,960, among others who have donated in-kind services of experts. I also wish to record gratitude for the financial and in-kind contributions from other UN and intergovernmental organizations.

Last but not least is the extraordinary contribution of funds, both from the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, being provided by UNESCO for the World Heritage Convention. With the additional impetus given by the Director-General, Dr Federico Mayor, UNESCO’s commitment to the Convention has grown beyond the provision of the Committee’s Secretariat to the mobilization of all Sectors, services and field offices of the Organization in activities to promote the Convention. I can assure you that the coordinating function for this in-house mobilization entrusted to the Centre by the Director-General will be carried out with even greater vigour in the next biennium.

Staff Resources

The staff of the World Heritage Centre comprises those financed under UNESCO’s Regular Programme budget, those by States Parties and the World Heritage Fund. UNESCO provides 10 professional and 3 general service posts. Since among these professional posts, there is only one P-3 Regular Programme post for Natural Heritage, which is insufficient to serve the natural part of the World Heritage Convention, you will recall that as an intermediate solution, the Committee approved the financing from the World Heritage Fund of one senior specialist (P-5 level) for Natural Heritage for one year until end-December this year.

The Centre also gratefully acknowledges the provision of an associate expert from Sweden working in the field of World Heritage education and exhibits; one associate expert for a duration of four months provided by The Netherlands who worked on the development of the World Heritage Convention in Latin America and the Caribbean; and another associate expert provided by Japan for one year has joined us in July this year to work on the Asia and Pacific region. Thanks is also due to Austria which has seconded a P-3 level specialist on natural heritage for 12 months.

There remains, however, a serious imbalance between the number of professional staff servicing the cultural heritage part of the Convention and the natural heritage. Especially in view of the growing demand for cooperation on natural property protection, it is urgent to establish a senior professional post for natural heritage. The need to strengthen the administration of the Centre is also pressing as more and more offers and
opportunities of joint-funding and cooperation with external bodies arise, requiring more sophisticated financial and personnel administration.

With regard to the General Service staff, as only three posts are financed under the UNESCO Regular Programme the seven General Service staff members financed under temporary assistance from the World Heritage Fund are essential to the effective functioning of the Centre. Despite efforts made by the UNESCO Secretariat to identify additional GS posts for the Centre, the current staff cost deficits of UNESCO has not yet permitted this.

In summary, UNESCO covers under its Regular Programme approximately 60% of the total staff costs of the World Heritage Centre, the World Heritage Fund covers about 25% and the remaining 15% are financed from other sources. Continuing support under the World Heritage Fund to meet part of the staff costs will remain indispensable for the future.

**Promotion and Education**

In the area of promotion and education, the most successful undertaking in the past year was certainly our work with the Education Sector on *Young People's Participation in World Heritage Preservation and Promotion* - a project, the highlight of which was UNESCO's first World Heritage Forum, held in Bergen, Norway in June. A detailed report is given in Annex 1 of the working document CONF.203/11.

Let me underline only that the project received much praise during the debate in Commission IV at the 28th session of the General Conference. The vast majority of the delegates endorsed the project's six-year outline, as presented in the draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997, which figures in Annex 2 of the above-mentioned working document on promotion and education. Consequently, the Centre and the Education Sector have already started working on the basic *World Heritage Teaching Kit* (in English, French, Spanish and Arabic), and the organization of two regional youth fora in 1996: one in Europe, and the other in Latin America.

As for new promotional materials, among the numerous items produced are the itinerant exhibit and a CD-ROM presenting 103 cities with World Heritage properties.

Regarding audio visual activities, several major achievements can be reported. Under contract with a German group, led by Sudwestfunk, 104 television films under the theme "Treasures of the World", are being produced. The German Stuttgart Verlagshaus as well as by the Spanish-Italian publishing house Planeta are presently publishing a series of World Heritage books. The book, "Treasures of the World" published by Frederking & Thaler is also to be noted for its great success in Germany.
A contract has also been concluded between SONY, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan and UNESCO for the production of a series of films on World Heritage.

Products such as the World Heritage map, the agenda and the tourist guide will continue to be made by the Spanish Incafo. National Panasonic, a Japanese company has also agreed to illustrate its promotional calendar with World Heritage images for the second year in a row.

UNESCO and the Caixa Foundation will continue the Patrimoine 2001-project, which has become an indispensable source of high quality photographs of World Heritage properties, vital in constituting not only a photographic archive but also in meeting free of charge, UNESCO's need for images for its publications and photo exhibitions.

Some of these products, such as examples of films from the "Treasures of the World" series, the photo exhibit of cities with World Heritage sites and others are on display at this meeting for you to appreciate.

Another achievement that merits to be singled out is the progress made in the use of the electronic media (e.g. INTERNET) for World Heritage promotion. Following the Committee's request at its eighteenth session, the Centre held preparatory consultations with the advisory bodies in early February and a technical meeting with a number of experts in September on Information Management. The meeting discussed the concept and development of an information system, in which each State Party is to make available information on the sites in their country and to link these databases as a "World Heritage Information Network" rather than to centralize the vast data entries on a single central computer. The World Heritage List, the text of the Convention, the Committee's Operational Guidelines, reports of experts meetings, and even the newsletter are now available on INTERNET with on-line search tools and links to other organizations with World Heritage databases.

The technical meeting debated extensively on the importance of continued distribution of information by traditional means since not all parties will be able to participate immediately in the electronic network. The steps taken towards setting up a comprehensive World Heritage Information Network as well as future plans are detailed in Document CONF.203/INF.10.

Currently under preparation by the Centre is an information brochure on how all parties can use this new information technology.

Involvement, participation, these are the key issues in all aspects of world heritage protection and preservation. Our efforts to enhance participation is not only targeted for students and teachers, site managers and government officials but also extend to the local community, international and national business concerns. Through extrabudgetary funding support from
the Netherlands Government, the Centre and the UNESCO Office in Bangkok will be launching in 1996, a project on local community participation in world heritage preservation in several sites in Asia.

Tourism

With regard to partnership with the private sector I would like to report on the Centre's proactive work in the promotion of sustainable tourism for the protection of World Heritage sites. To obtain the collaboration of the tourism industry in this regard, the Centre initiated contacts with the Tourism Working Group of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). At its Sixth Session, held in New Zealand in May this year, the APEC Tourism Working Group unanimously adopted the preservation of World Heritage as one of its objectives and requested the Centre to provide them with guidelines on "best practices" in sustainable tourism for World Heritage sites. Thanks to a financial contribution from the American Express Foundation, the Centre was able to produce a booklet on this issue, targetted for the national tourism authorities, tour operators and other members of the tourism sector. The Tourism Working Group meeting held in Kanazawa, Japan in October 1995 further requested the Centre to prepare a workshop at the next APEC Tourism Working Group to be held in Beijing in May next year. I am happy to inform you that the APEC Summit Conference this November endorsed the Tourism Working Group's support for World Heritage.

Linked with the above mentioned initiatives with APEC, the Vietnamese Government, the Centre and the UNESCO Office in Bangkok, organized in May this year, an on-site workshop in Hue, VietNam on World Heritage preservation in the face of rapid tourism development. The workshop brought together conservation experts, tourism operators, international and national private sector investors and representatives of the local community. I wish to record our thanks to UNDP and the Norwegian Development Agency, NORAD for the funding of this workshop.

The Centre's proactive stance in the development of sustainable tourism for world heritage is certainly not to "commercialize" or "market" the world's cultural and natural properties but, to protect them and for the profits from tourism to contribute to the maintenance of the sites and the development of the unique living culture that makes these sites exceptional. The report of the Hue Workshop as well as the booklet prepared for the APEC Summit Conference, underpinning these concerns are on display here at the meeting and available in limited numbers for those interested.

In Europe, the Centre was involved in the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism which took place in April 1995 in Lanzarote (Spain) organized by the Spanish authorities in close cooperation with UNEP, UNESCO and the World Tourism Organization (WTO). In 1996, we will be participating in the Milan Tourism
Exchange, one of the world’s largest in this field, by organizing workshops and exhibitions on world heritage, in cooperation with the Italian Government as well as the European Union and WTO.

Conclusion:

As you have noted from this report - the length for which I apologize - the Centre, after only a little more than a biennium’s existence is making great strides in many areas and the potential grows by the day. As any new entity, it has undergone its teething problems but the results have been more than positive. The eager welcome we have been receiving from throughout the world indicates the importance of our work. I am convinced that the Centre, under the guidance of, and on behalf of the Committee and UNESCO, can play the lead role in meeting the challenge of heritage protection and through its activities, contribute to the promotion of environmentally sustainable and culturally sensitive socio-economic development.

I thank you for your attention.