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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirtieth Session

Vilnius, Lithuania  
8-16 July 2006

**Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda: Report of the Rapporteur of the 15th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 2005)**

**Summary Record of the 15th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 2005)**

**Draft Decision : 30 COM 5**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-06/30.COM/5,*
2. *Takes note with satisfaction of the Report of the Rapporteur of the 15th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2005).*



Distribution limited

**WHC-05/15.GA/10**

**Paris, 26 April 2006**

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

**FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES  
TO THE CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION  
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**UNESCO Headquarters  
Room IV  
10-11 October 2005**

**SUMMARY RECORD  
OF THE 15TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES  
TO THE *WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION* (UNESCO, 2005)**



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## DAY 1

### FIRST MEETING

10 October 2005

10h00 – 13h00

#### 1.A OPENING OF THE SESSION BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO

1. At the opening of the 15th session of General Assembly of the States Parties to the *Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (hereafter called the *World Heritage Convention*), **Mr Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO**, welcomed the representatives of States Parties and acknowledged that the promotion of cultural diversity and the conservation of both tangible and intangible heritage is the priority of the Culture Programme for the next biennium. He mentioned that the Convention of 2003 for the safeguarding of intangible heritage could soon enter into force, and called for strong cooperation between the Committees of the two instruments. He recalled some of the major changes in the Committee's working methods over the past two years, due to the success of the *World Heritage Convention* that created a need for adjustments, considering them as very positive steps for the implementation of the *Convention* and for the conservation of the World Heritage properties. He remarked that although new States Parties now appeared on the World Heritage List for the first time, regrettably, there was still need to ensure a more representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List and focus efforts on the properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. He welcomed the involvement of Africa in the creation of an African World Heritage Fund, to be discussed at the present session. He stated that the General Assembly was taking place at a crucial moment following two important international meetings. These were the Special Expert Meeting on the concept of outstanding universal value (Kazan, 6-10 April 2005) whose results will be considered this summer by the World Heritage Committee in Vilnius and the International Conference on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture (Vienna, 12-14 May 2005), which led to the drafting of a declaration to be submitted to the present General Assembly. He announced that, to ensure better monitoring of the 812 properties on the World Heritage List, all of equal importance, a retrospective inventory of nomination dossiers of World Heritage properties inscribed between 1978 and 1998 had also been launched. He concluded by thanking the World Heritage Committee and its recent Chairpersons, Mr Zhang Xinsheng (China) and Mr Themba Wakashe (South Africa), as well as the Advisory Bodies. He congratulated Mrs Ina Marčiulionytė (Lithuania) for her election as Chairperson of the Committee. In recalling the importance of geographical representation and rotation principles, he also wished every success to each State Party candidate for membership to the World Heritage Committee. He expressed his appreciation to all candidates who had declared their intention to voluntarily reduce their term of mandate from six to four years (the speech of the Director-General is attached as Annex 2).

## **1.B ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENTS AND RAPPORTEUR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Document *WHC-05/15.GA/1B*

2. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture**, Mr Mounir Bouchenaki, announced to the General Assembly that the Islamic Republic of Iran had informed Mr Francesco Bandarin, Director of the World Heritage Centre, in writing, of its intention to withdraw its candidature as President.

3. The Delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** confirmed the withdrawal of its candidature.

4. The Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, recalling the principle of equitable rotation among the different regions of the world, proposed to the General Assembly the candidature of France for the Presidency of the General Assembly.

5. His Excellency Mr Jean Guéguinou, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of France to UNESCO, was elected President of the 15th General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*.

6. After having thanked States Parties for the honour accorded to him, and after having paid homage to his predecessor, H.E. Mr Ahmad Jalali, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran to UNESCO, as well as to the Presidents of the 9th and 13th sessions of the General Assembly of States Parties, Mr Leventis and H.E. Mr Fernandez, the **President of the General Assembly** recalled that during this session, the General Assembly would proceed with the renewal of a large number of Committee members (to which he referred as being the mainstay in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*) who will have to carry out their tasks in a context of reforms and new approaches, with responsibility and lucidity. He then expressed his heartfelt wish that all the candidates for election to the Committee would voluntarily reduce their mandate from six to four years. He remarked that, although the *Convention* was a huge success in terms of visibility, with 180 States Parties and 812 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, the ultimate objective remained the conservation of the properties already inscribed. He reminded States Parties that the *Convention* was a tool for cooperation and international assistance and not only a « mechanism to produce inscriptions ». He urged Committee members to take courageous and oriented mid- and long-term decisions, necessary for the viability of the *Convention*, especially with regard to properties that had lost their outstanding universal value (the speech of H.E. Mr Jean Guéguinou is attached as Annex 3).

7. The **President of the General Assembly** then informed the States Parties that the Delegations of the Russian Federation and Namibia had submitted their candidatures for election as Vice-Presidents, and that the Delegation of Switzerland had submitted its candidature for the position of Rapporteur.

8. The Delegations of the **Russian Federation, Namibia and Switzerland** were elected by acclamation.

9. The **President of the General Assembly** declared Resolution 15 GA 1B adopted.

## RESOLUTION 15 GA 1B

The General Assembly,

1. Elects H.E. Mr Jean Guéguinou (France) as President of the 15th session of the General Assembly ;
2. Elects Mr Nicolas Mathieu (Switzerland) as Rapporteur of the 15th session of the General Assembly ;
3. Elects the Russian Federation and Namibia as Vice-Presidents of the 15th session of the General Assembly.

### 2.A ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Document *WHC-05/15.GA/2A*

10. Before the opening of the meeting, the Delegation of **Algeria** requested clarification on the following matter: can two countries share the same candidature as member of the World Heritage Committee, one covering the first two years of the mandate and the second country ensuring the last two years ?

11. The **President of the General Assembly** indicated that, even if this solution was adopted in the framework of the elections of UNESCO's Executive Board, the provisions of the *World Heritage Convention* did not permit that a candidature be treated in such a manner as described by the Delegation of Algeria, as there would be no guarantee of the election of the candidate country for the second half of the mandate due to the absence of an established geographical distribution providing the electoral groups with an agreed procedure.

12. After presenting its condolences to the earthquake victims in Pakistan, the Delegation of **Afghanistan** informed the General Assembly that its candidature would be for a four-year period, as suggested by the President.

13. Following the homage of the Delegation of Afghanistan, the **President of the General Assembly** presented, on his behalf and in the name of the General Assembly, his condolences to the States Parties affected by the recent earthquakes, particularly Pakistan and India. He then thanked the Delegation of Afghanistan for having indicated its intention of reducing its mandate, if elected, from six to four years following the recommendation made in 2001 (paragraph 86 of the Summary Record of the 13th General Assembly, document *WHC-03/14.GA/INF.1*). In concluding, he noted that the General Assembly did not propose an amendment to the provisional agenda of the session.

14. The Delegation of **Sudan** informed the General Assembly of the withdrawal of its candidature.

15. The **President of the General Assembly** declared the agenda of the session, as presented in document *WHC-05/15.GA/2A*, adopted.

## **2.B ADOPTION OF THE TIMETABLE OF THE ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

Document *WHC-05/15.GA/2B*

16. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre**, Mr Francesco Bandarin, proposed to the States Parties that one hour of the session be dedicated to an information meeting for Committee members to present the next key dates and planned activities. He then explained the new procedures for the election of the members of the World Heritage Committee which will take place simultaneously with the plenary meetings, as proposed by New Zealand, to leave more time for discussions.

17. The Delegation of **Greece** thanked the Delegation of New Zealand for the proposed change in the voting procedure. Remarking that voting should already have begun, it requested that the afternoon voting begin an hour later than planned to allow States Parties to attend other events.

18. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** informed the Delegation of Greece that the time constraint was a real issue and that the timetable proposed had been prepared to assist the States Parties in this regard. He said that even if voting had started earlier, the results of the timetable of the voting schedule would not be altered. The World Heritage Centre would be open until late that evening and the results would be published on the Centre's Web site and posted on the doors of both the Plenary Room and the polling station.

19. The **President of the General Assembly** suggested that all States Parties do their utmost to ensure that the discussions take place according to the adopted agenda and in a timely manner. He announced the opening and closing hours of the polling station (10h30-12h30 and 13h30-15h30) and declared the timetable for the elections to the World Heritage Committee adopted as amended.

### **RESOLUTION 15 GA 2B**

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined document *WHC-05/15.GA/2B*,
2. Adopts the timetable for the elections to the World Heritage Committee as amended.

## **3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

20. The **President of the General Assembly**, recalling that nine States Parties remained as members of the Committee and that twelve seats were to be filled, noted that all the candidates, except Iraq, had indicated their intention to reduce their mandate to four years instead of six, if elected.
21. The Delegation of **Iraq** informed the General Assembly that its candidature would be for a four-year period.
22. The Delegation of **Grenada** reminded the General Assembly that the Delegation of Bahrain had not stated its intention to reduce the duration of its mandate if elected, and that it would sit for six years.
23. The Delegation of **Bahrain** informed the General Assembly that its candidature would be for a six-year period.
24. The Delegation of **Norway** asked whether any candidates were not eligible.
25. In responding to the Delegation of Norway, the **President of the General Assembly** informed the States Parties that UNESCO's Bureau of the Comptroller had confirmed that all the candidates for election to the Committee had paid their dues to the World Heritage Fund and were therefore eligible.
26. The **President of the General Assembly** informed the session that the Delegations of South Africa and China and submitted their candidatures for the position of tellers for the elections to the World Heritage Committee.
27. No objection was raised, the representatives of the Delegations of **South Africa** (Mme Louise Graham) and **China** (Mr Su Xu) were appointed as tellers.
28. The **President of the General Assembly** declared open the elections for the round concerning the seat reserved for a State Party with no property inscribed on the World Heritage List, namely Barbados, Gabon, Mauritius, and informed that the results would be announced following the lunch break.

#### **4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE ON ITS ACTIVITIES**

Documents of the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO:

*33C/REP/14,*  
*33C/REP/14 Add*

29. The **Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee**, Her Excellency Mrs Ina Marčiulionytė, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Lithuania to UNESCO, presented the report to the States Parties on the activities of the Committee since 2003. After having informed the General Assembly about the new States Parties to the *Convention* (Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Trinidad and Tobago) and the composition of the new Bureau, she presented the major activities implemented and publications produced during the last biennium. She made special mention of the entry into force of the revised *Operational Guidelines* on 2 February 2005. She added that the "Basic Texts to the 1972 *World Heritage*

*Convention*” had also been published in June 2005. As a follow-up to the Global Strategy, she recalled that at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004), the Committee had adopted the “Suzhou-Cairns” Decision, setting at 45 the annual number of nominations the World Heritage Committee could review. She then briefly presented the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, and the regional distribution of the properties, also stating that their conservation had become a real challenge. In concluding, and while recalling that 294 State of Conservation reports were examined and 58 new properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List since the 14th General Assembly, she stressed the point that the Committee had taken some important decisions with regard to its working methods, especially to cope with its large agenda and the need to have more time in future to examine the state of conservation of the properties and nominations (the full presentation is attached as Annex 4).

30. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her detailed presentation of the report, already presented in Durban during the last session of the Committee and warmly welcomed by its members. He gave the floor to those States Parties wishing to make comments regarding the report.

31. The Delegation of **Chile** congratulated the President of the General Assembly on his election. Referring to the report of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, it noted that the annual growth in the number of World Heritage sites presented an increased risk with regard to conservation and management issues. It stated that many sites known to be in precarious situations should be considered for In-Danger listing, pointing out that the responsibility of States Parties was not always well assumed and that the deterioration of the properties inscribed on the List questions its credibility. It stressed the need for more international assistance for countries without resources. The Delegation deemed that certain potential sites for World Heritage listing had not yet been identified, and that the criteria needed to be applied in an up-to-date, modern and flexible manner, as they have evolved during the past decades. It mentioned nevertheless that the revised *Operational Guidelines* brought an improvement by defining the conditions to respect, in favour of the credibility of the work achieved. The Delegation then called for the development of mixed sites and for the promotion of transboundary sites. It supported World Heritage workshops and seminars conducted in Latin America and the Caribbean which had been instrumental in capacity-building and raising awareness of local stakeholders. However, it stressed that these activities should be conducted more efficiently. It expressed thanks to the Spanish Government for its financial support through its Funds-in-Trust to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It noted that the workload of the Secretariat had grown due to the annual increase in the number of sites. It congratulated the Secretariat on dealing efficiently with crucial and sensitive matters and regretted that this had never been acknowledged. It addressed its best wishes for success to the Chairperson of the Committee.

32. The **President of the General Assembly** agreed to the comments made by the Delegation of Chile with respect to the issues that the Committee should consider, and acknowledged the heavy workload falling on the World Heritage Centre.

33. The Delegation of **Norway** regretted the imbalance of the World Heritage List, with fewer natural sites. Referring to the number of sites inscribed on the List during the last two years, 52 cultural, 12 natural and one mixed, it expressed its concern that the gap between natural and cultural sites was widening every year. Noting that Europe remained over-represented and that a large number of the new proposals for inscriptions were still European, the Delegation stressed the need to increase efforts in addressing these natural versus cultural

nominations, but also geographical imbalances. Regarding In-Danger listing, it noted that some, but still insufficient, progress had been made to date in reducing the number of sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger, some of them being in great danger. It appealed to all States Parties for help when necessary. Referring to the Kazan Meeting, it noted that the concept of Outstanding Universal Value had not been clarified and that a lot more work would be necessary to clearly define Outstanding Universal Value for implementation. It commended the report of the Chairperson of the Committee. Without increasing its length, it suggested including some of the main challenges for the Committee in the next report, which would be presented during the 16th session of the General Assembly in 2007.

34. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Delegation of Norway for having raised the problem of imbalance of the World Heritage List. He explained that some properties had not been inscribed on the World Heritage List because their inscription dossiers were incomplete or were not well prepared. There was a real need for bilateral and/or multilateral cooperation in this field. He then referred to the France-UNESCO Convention that had provided both expertise and financial assistance to developing countries in the preparation of their inscription dossiers.

35. The **Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee** reiterated that States Parties should adhere to the deadline of 1 February concerning the submission of nominations and State of Conservation reports.

36. The Delegation of **Egypt** praised the report of the Chairperson of the Committee and thanked the World Heritage Centre for its efforts in the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage. It noted, however, that her report made no mention of the previous report concerning the Arab States on the decision by the Israeli authorities to implement a plan to install a Jewish settlement, which would result in the destruction of houses in the Muslim quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. It indicated that this measure was contrary to the commitments of Israel as a signatory to the *Convention*, and to the decisions taken by the Committee in Durban. Furthermore, the Old City of Jerusalem is on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

37. The Delegation of **Canada** thanked the Chairperson for the report. It supported Norway's comment on outstanding universal Value. It stressed that there should be a methodology to remove sites from the World Heritage List and asked States Parties to develop a comprehensive methodology, in addition to benchmarks, in this regard. The Delegation noted that there was a need to better balance time management in future meetings of the Committee. It stressed that listing sites and examining precise reports takes too much time compared to conservation matters, which are at the heart of the *Convention*, such as periodic reports, whose preparation required an important involvement by States Parties. The Delegation asked that the contributions from the Fund should in priority be allocated to sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, as enacted by the *Convention*.

38. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Delegation of Canada for its remarks that concerned important subjects on the Committee's agenda. He recalled that the work of the Committee needed to be done before that of the General Assembly.

39. The Delegation of the **Republic of Korea** congratulated the President on his election to the General Assembly session. It denied rumours that the Republic of Korea was not standing for election and confirmed its candidature to the Committee. The Delegation thanked the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her report. It commended the work of the

Committee and regarded the revised *Operational Guidelines* as a highly valuable document. Regarding the credibility of the List, it emphasized the importance of having a balanced List by inscribing more natural sites. The Delegation stressed that under- and non-represented countries should be supported and encouraged to prepare nominations. It observed that 46 States Parties had no sites on the World Heritage List, and welcomed the resolution of the Committee to reduce the number to 30 by 2007. It supported Chile concerning the workload of the Secretariat and asked for a limitation of 30 new inscriptions of properties on the List per year so that the Centre could be more active. The Delegation referred to the natural disasters and their impact on World Heritage sites and asked that preventive strategies be developed to address them.

40. The **President of the General Assembly** confirmed the candidature of the Republic of Korea for election to the World Heritage Committee.

41. The President of the General Assembly gave his seat temporarily to the **Vice-President**, the representative of the Delegation of the Russian Federation. In the name of the Russian Federation, the Vice-President congratulated the President on his election to the General Assembly session, and thanked the Assistant Director-General for Culture for his support to the Russian Federation concerning the protection of World Heritage. He also congratulated the Chairperson of the Committee, as well as the Director of the World Heritage Centre and his staff for the huge amount of work accomplished.

42. The Delegation of **Benin** congratulated the President and Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly for their election, as well as the new Chairperson to the World Heritage Committee for the quality of her presentation. It continued by remarking that the Committee should reflect upon how to develop working methods that would guarantee the quality of its actions. It also insisted upon the Committee's need to pursue reflection on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value. Referring to the problem of imbalance of the List, the Delegation noted that the question had been frequently discussed, among others, during the meeting on Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, but that the problem remained unsolved. It supported the bilateral agreements which were essential to ensure capacity-building in the African region.

43. The **Vice-President of the General Assembly** thanked the Delegation of Benin. He reiterated that the root problem was the preparation of documents for inscription that required an important amount of work. But it was still the only way to reduce imbalances and it could be addressed by bilateral agreements in terms of exchange of expertise.

44. The Delegation of **Portugal** congratulated the President of the General Assembly, the Vice-President and the new Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee on their election. It thanked the former South African Chairperson of the Committee and recalled that Portugal would leave the Committee after intensive involvement in its work. It indicated that the work of the Committee was becoming increasingly political. It stressed that the work should be qualitative with no double standards. It mentioned the excellent analysis of reports made by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies, stressing that more time should be allocated for their examination and for conservation issues. The Delegation suggested that different approaches should be applied in preparing Periodic Reports and State of Conservation reports and supported Canada concerning the allocations from the Fund that should be linked to the results of these reports.

45. The Delegation of the **Netherlands** congratulated the Vice-President and the President on their election to the General Assembly session. It also congratulated the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for the quality of her concise report, wishing her every success. The Delegation stated that the system of the World Heritage is an international assistance system and the Tentative Lists should be a tool for management of sites, which was usually ignored. Regarding double standards, it supported Portugal.

46. The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** supported Chile, Norway and Canada with regard to the need to pursue discussions on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value. It noted that the Committee had already made numerous improvements, and once again requested the Committee not to reinvent the wheel. Referring to the Durban meeting of the same year, she recalled that an Ambassador, Head of a Delegation of a State Party, had granted an interview to a journalist who had published an article criticising the Committee and offending its members, using false information. It underlined that that type of shameful action was an attack on the independence and quality of the work of the Committee.

47. The **President of the General Assembly** supported the intervention made by the Delegation of Saint Lucia regarding the important work already accomplished by the Committee. The Committee, in its new composition, should not consider that it was starting from scratch. It should draw upon work already accomplished.

48. The Delegation of **Italy**, after congratulating the President of the General Assembly, as well as the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her excellent report, expressed its solidarity with the Delegation of Pakistan regarding the recent earthquake. It stressed the role of World Heritage in UNESCO as a flagship programme. It noted that more than USD23.5 million had been allocated for World Heritage conservation and up to USD20 million had been received through voluntary contributions. It stated that conservation problems had multiplied due to the increasing number of sites. It pointed out that the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005) had revealed that the definition of heritage had broadened and that it was increasingly difficult for the Committee to fulfill the tasks on its agenda. The Delegation expressed its concern that neither the concept of Outstanding Universal Value nor the evaluation of International Assistance were discussed in detail during the 29th session, and called for a revision of the working methods.

49. The Delegation of **Belgium**, associating itself with the congratulations already expressed, supported Canada, Benin and other States Parties on the questions of methodology and time management. Referring to the problem of the imbalance of the List, it mentioned that Belgium did not possess a natural property answering the criteria of the *Convention*. However, Belgium devoted particular attention to natural heritage. It emphasized the need for balance between the natural and cultural sites should also be reflected in monitoring and conservation and in the allocation of funding from the Fund. The Delegation encouraged nominations from the countries of the South and suggested applying a moratorium for the better represented countries, at least for the States Parties members of the Committee. It informed the General Assembly that Belgium supported the protection of World Heritage in African countries and particularly the natural properties inscribed in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

50. The Delegation of **Lebanon** congratulated the President of the General Assembly and the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for their election, recalling that it would be leaving the Committee after an active involvement over four years, and joined Saint Lucia in calling upon the new Committee to take into account the work of the preceding Committee. It

noted the increasing politicising of the work of the Committee and the dangers involved therein. It supported Saint Lucia with regard to the press article that had been modified and falsified by journalists, and requested an explanation from the Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Delegation recalled that the timetable foreseen for the examination of the State of Conservation reports at the Durban session had not been respected, and emphasized that the new Committee should give priority to improving its work methods and time management. It supported Egypt regarding the question of Jerusalem; it noted that new dangers were emerging at the site and requested that a new report be submitted to the Committee in this respect.

51. The Delegation of **Madagascar** began by congratulating the President and the Bureau of the General Assembly, as well as the outgoing Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee and its new Chairperson. It thanked the latter for her clear and concise report which gave a global overview of the Strategic Objectives of the Committee. It underlined the importance of the adoption of the revised *Guidelines* and supported the other States Parties who called for a strengthening of the Committee. The Delegation thanked Norway and Benin for their remarks concerning the representivity of the List, with only 65 properties inscribed in Africa, which did not reflect the reality of its natural and cultural heritage. Regarding bilateral cooperation, it thanked the Delegation of France, recalling that the failed African proposals for inscription at Durban demonstrated that the need for capacity-building, human and institutional, was essential. It stressed that the Committee should be more dynamic in promoting cooperation with NGOs. The Delegation then noted that the outstanding universal value should not be regarded as a static notion. In remarking that inscription on the World Heritage List was only a beginning, it noted that rigorous monitoring by competent persons at the national level was required. It mentioned the creation, important in the context of governmental action for poverty eradication and sustainable development, of the Madagascar national World Heritage Committee.

52. After congratulating the President of the General Assembly and the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for their election, the Delegation of **Israel** commended IUCN and ICOMOS for developing clear approaches in addressing under-represented countries and imbalance of categories. It supported the idea of developing themes to bring people together, giving the example of the Geodetic Arc and the Inca Routes. It noted however the difficulty to identify what kinds of properties were under-represented in the field of culture and that the work of the Centre had increased with the transition to thematic listings. Regarding the Tentative List, it supported the Netherlands that management issues should be addressed during this process. It supported Chile and the Chairperson regarding time management for conservation and inscription of sites and insisted on having more time for conservation matters. It noted that, a year after the meeting in Kazan, it would be a good opportunity to evaluate the present status of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value. The Delegation supported bilateral agreements, and in this regard welcomed Professor Lamei, of Egypt, to Israel to protect Jerusalem. It indicated the support of its National Committee for the initiative of the Director-General and the missions of the Centre to the Middle East.

53. At the request of the President of the General Assembly, the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**, Mr Mounir Bouchenaki, brought an answer to the issue of Jerusalem and read the appeal of the Director-General pronounced during the 172nd session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, asking that any action which would affect the characteristics of Jerusalem be avoided: *“Nevertheless, I am keenly aware of the concern regarding the proposed new Jewish settlements in the Muslim quarter (...) This is why I appeal to all the parties concerned to refrain from anything that may jeopardize the distinctive character of*

*the Old City of Jerusalem, which is inscribed on the World Heritage List*". Mr Bouchenaki explained that he had to recall the Director-General's statement that was taken into account by consensus in the decision of the Executive Board of UNESCO because most of the States Parties were not able to attend the Executive Board meeting. He suggested that there should be a Plan of Action by International Experts for Jerusalem. The Assistant Director-General for Culture also referred to the mission of the Director of the World Heritage Centre to Jerusalem.

54. After having associated itself with the previous congratulations, the Delegation of **Barbados** supported Canada, Lebanon, Saint Lucia, Netherlands, Norway, Benin, Portugal and others regarding methodology and time management for quality debates. It stressed the need for continuous management of sites included or not on the World Heritage List. It noted with satisfaction that the Secretariat and Committee had made progress in addressing the imbalance issue in recent years. The Delegation noted that the venue of the Committee meeting provided a good opportunity for local experts and authorities to understand the *Convention* and its procedures. It supported Canada regarding the need to pursue the debate on outstanding universal value. The Delegation further stressed that the debate on outstanding universal value should not only be brought up when under pressure, but examined continuously by the Committee in light of the Periodic Reports.

55. The Delegation of **Afghanistan** expressed the view that all Pre-Islamic and Islamic sites have outstanding universal value. It thanked the Director of the World Heritage Centre, as well as the Assistant Director-General for Culture, for their support to Afghanistan in preparing nominations and inscribing sites. Recalling the Durban session, it commended the Chairperson for preparing a good report. It stressed that the Secretariat should not only help States Parties in the preparation of nominations, but also with the conservation and management of sites through capacity building programmes in addition to liaising with States Parties.

56. The **President of the General Assembly** also addressed his sympathies to the victims of the recent catastrophes that had affected Afghanistan, Mexico and Guatemala. He gave the floor to the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee.

57. The **Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee** declared that this debate would be very useful for the discussions during the 30th session in Vilnius in 2006. She indicated that the issue of the outstanding universal value was already on the Agenda. She urged newly-elected Committee members to read all the documents of the 29th session (Durban, 2005) and to further read the text prepared by Mrs Cameron in this regard, as some difficult cases would be discussed. As for the next session in Vilnius, she shared the view of Ms Cameron that more time should be allocated to the analysis of Periodic Reports, as well as for the examination of the World Heritage properties' State of Conservation reports. Finally, she supported the Delegations of Saint Lucia and Lebanon on the issue of the press article, which formed an attack on the Committee's work.

58. The Delegation of **Slovenia** congratulated the President and the Vice-Presidents on their election to the General Assembly session and stressed that management plans were crucial for the conservation of the sites. It noted that there was need for cooperation between countries as well as between sites themselves. It supported other States Parties that the number of natural sites should be increased in the coming years. Concerning cooperation agreements, it supported cooperation among conventions, e.g. Convention on Biodiversity, RAMSAR, should be enhanced to further improve the protection and management of World Heritage

properties. The Delegation stressed the importance of raising awareness with regard to World Heritage in general.

59. The Delegation of **Ukraine** expressed every wish for success to the President of the General Assembly and congratulated the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her excellent report. It warmly welcomed the tendency of candidates to the World Heritage Committee to reduce their mandate to four years, if elected. In favour of a policy of rotation that provided the opportunity for States Parties to serve on the Committee, it enquired about the possibility of legalising this procedure.

60. The Delegate of **Jordan** noted that the safeguarding of sites was a weighty task. It expressed fears that the recent earthquake in Pakistan may have affected World Heritage sites in that country. It thanked the Centre for its efforts and reiterated that listing was not a sole function, but was a beginning towards safeguarding sites. The Delegation deemed that the Centre should help the States Parties in day-to-day management and technical and practical problems. It stated that ICCROM, IUCN and ICOM could assist in addressing practical and technical problems and should be given a clear role in this regard through stronger agreements with UNESCO. In the Arab Region, certain countries lack expertise in preparing nomination files. It recalled the recent UNESCO regional workshop for capacity building in preparing nominations for the Arab States. It also mentioned conservation actions hurriedly undertaken but without expertise, and stressed the need to improve technical support.

61. The Delegation of the **Russian Federation** thanked the States Parties for electing the Russian Federation as Vice-President of the General Assembly. It congratulated the President on his election to the General Assembly session and welcomed the new Chairperson of the Committee. In leaving the Committee after four fruitful years, it stated that the Russian Federation would intensify its efforts in the preservation of heritage. It stressed that the legislative and legal systems in States Parties should be strengthened to ensure long-term conservation and management of World Heritage sites. It added that all States Parties should in priority support efforts for the constitution of nomination files and announced it was prepared to provide expertise. The Delegation supported bilateral agreements. It supported States Parties in the need for a risk preparedness strategy to deal with natural disasters.

### 3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (Cont'd)

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

62. The **President of the General Assembly** interrupted the meeting to announce the results of the ballot for the seat reserved for a State Party with no property inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Number of votes :	145
Number of invalid votes :	1
Number of valid votes :	144
Majority required :	73

Barbados	53
Gabon	31
Mauritius	60

63. The **President of the General Assembly** informed the States Parties that 73 votes were required to be elected but that no candidate had obtained this number of votes. He indicated that in the event of the withdrawal of two candidates, the election may be held in the form of a vote of raised hands. As no candidate indicated the wish to make this choice, he announced that a second ballot for the reserved seat would be held from 13h30 to 15h30, instead of the first open ballot, and adjourned the session.

The meeting closed at 13h15.



## DAY 1

### SECOND MEETING

10 October 2005

15h00 – 18h00

#### 4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE ON ITS ACTIVITIES (Cont'd)

Documents of the 33rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO :

*33C/REP/14,*

*33C/REP/14 Add*

64. The **Vice-President of the General Assembly** (Namibia) re-opened the session and warmly congratulated its President, the second Vice-President (Russian Federation) and the Rapporteur (Switzerland). He also offered his congratulations to Mr Mounir Bouchenaki, Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO. While recognizing that Namibia has yet to have a site inscribed on the World Heritage List, he announced that his country had prepared a nomination and was in the process of submitting its first application.

65. In commenting on the Report of the World Heritage Committee to the General Assembly, the Delegation of **Bahrain** thanked UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee for having inscribed its first property, the archeological site of Qal'at al-Bahrain, on the List in 2005. It also clarified that Bahrain would only run for four years, and not six, if elected to the World Heritage Committee this year.

66. The Delegation of **Venezuela** congratulated the President and the members of the Bureau of the General Assembly. It continued by underlining the link between tangible and intangible cultural heritage and indicated that Venezuela was very active in the field of protection of its cultural heritage, with 80% of it benefiting from efficient protection. Nevertheless, it was more difficult for developing countries to ensure that the level of protection and international assistance, of which they are often in need, was available upon request. To face these difficulties, Venezuela has associated tangible and intangible heritage and transformed the strict policy for heritage protection into a collective development policy. Venezuela's wealth also resided in the diversity of its traditions, feasts, and beliefs that deserved to be valorised and protected in the same way as tangible heritage.

67. After having congratulated the President and the members of the Bureau of the Assembly General, the Delegation of **Cameroon** thanked the Chairperson of the Committee for the presentation of the report on activities. It emphasized, in particular, the importance given to the need for local capacity-building. It called upon greater international solidarity in this respect.

68. The **Vice-President** thanked the Delegation of Cameroon for having raised the question of Africa.

69. The Delegation of **Colombia**, in addressing the Vice-Presidents, the President and the Bureau of the General Assembly, congratulated them and thanked the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her report. In its capacity as outgoing member of the Committee, having learned much through participation in the work of the Committee, it supported the comments expressed by the Delegation of Canada concerning notably time management and especially the time devoted to the examination of the State of Conservation reports of inscribed properties that it considered too short in comparison to the level of importance given to the inscription of new properties. Regarding methodology, the conditions under which the Committee may decide to remove a property from the Danger List and the World Heritage List if, for various reasons, the property has lost its outstanding universal value, required clear and precise clarification. Conservation must remain at the heart of the Committee's concerns.

70. The Delegation of **Kenya** congratulated the President, Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur for having been elected to the General Assembly. Congratulations were also offered to the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee and a reference made to an African proverb about women leaders, thanks to whom "good things will follow". The Delegation placed considerable importance on the issue of capacity building and referred to the relevance of the Africa 2009 Programme in this context. Empowering people by increasing their knowledge of conservation would make better use of the World Heritage in poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development. It thanked the Committee for continuing to work towards this end. Kenya mentioned its expertise in indigenous knowledge, which could be shared notably in the field of natural heritage conservation. Stressing the importance of representivity, it specified the need for the List to be more inclusive in order to be global and complete. Increased inscription of African sites would inevitably bring additional value to the conservation issue.

71. The Delegation of **Gabon** congratulated the Bureau of the General Assembly for its election and thanked the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her report. It stressed the importance of international cooperation in the field of heritage preservation, particularly with regard to training of professionals and the development of expertise. It expressed satisfaction with the Training Workshop in Libreville (4 and 5 October 2005) on the preparation of Tentative Lists which demonstrated the benefit of shared experiences.

72. After having congratulated the President, Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur of the General Assembly, as well as the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for her excellent report, the Delegation of **China** presented its condolences to the people and Government of Pakistan for the loss of life due to the recent earthquake. Recalling that it had hosted the 28th session of the Committee (Suzhou, 2004), it emphasized its commitment to the protection of World Heritage. Although an outgoing member, it expressed its wish to continue to support the efforts of the Committee, especially in the field of capacity-building.

73. The Permanent Observer Mission of **Palestine**, after having congratulated the President, Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur of the General Assembly, indicated its wish to intervene with regard to the question of the site of Jerusalem, raised by Egypt, Lebanon and Israel earlier in the debate. It recalled the decisions of the World Heritage Committee adopted during the sessions in Budapest (2002) and Durban (2005) and the encouraging discussions between all the parties concerned aimed at protecting the whole property. It recalled with satisfaction the support of Mr Michael Turner (Israel) for the implementation of the decision taken in Budapest, but deplored that numerous cultural and natural sites in Palestine had since been affected by the construction of a separating wall by the Israelian authorities. During the

29th session (Durban, 2005), the decision adopted by the Committee after lengthy debate had given new hope that heritage conservation would be accorded due consideration. However, two months after that session, the Municipality of Jerusalem decided to proceed with new demolition in the Musulman quarter to build houses and a place of worship. As Mr Mounir Bouchenaki mentioned, the Director-General of UNESCO had expressed concern in his opening speech at the 172nd session of the UNESCO Executive Board. Recalling that these actions constituted an interference with the agreements concluded, and should be respected by all, the Permanent Mission called for the respect of the agreements established within the World Heritage Committee, indicating that this heritage is the concern of all humanity and that no one should destroy or alter it.

74. The **President of the General Assembly** invited the Director of the World Heritage Centre to respond to the questions posed by the States Parties regarding this item on the agenda.

75. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** thanked the States Parties for their contributions to the debate and for their warm words of support. He underlined the degree of professionalism and dedication of the World Heritage team and thanked all the staff for its hard work. Referring to the intervention of the Delegate of Norway about the imbalance of the List, he recalled that this particular debate had been going on for at least the past twelve years. The emphasis placed on this portion of the Committee's work by the Secretariat was, in fact, well reflected in the recent decisions of the Committee. Visible results were reflected in the increase in both the number of States Parties to the *Convention* and the new categories of sites being inscribed. There was still scope for improvement and additional support and technical inputs are essential if better results were to be expected. He also drew attention to the statement made by the Delegation of the Republic of Korea regarding catastrophes, such as the recent ones in Guatemala and Pakistan. He mentioned that the Centre was actually working on this issue, developing a Risk Preparedness Strategy with the Advisory Bodies, which would be ready for review by the Committee in 2006. Concerning comments by the Delegation of Benin and other speakers relating to the quality of nomination files submitted each year, the Director confirmed that the system of verification of the contents of each nomination file had been improved. This had helped generate proposals of higher quality, the overall success rate in the inscription process having increased (previously, one third were refused). This work of improvement would be pursued. On the questions raised by the Delegation of Slovenia about the need to reinforce the links between the *World Heritage Convention* and other International Biodiversity Conventions, the Director explained that this had been achieved through the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG). Through the BLG, the five major biodiversity conventions had produced a joint declaration to demonstrate international cooperation for biodiversity protection. The BLG, a working group and a pillar of the Centre, would continue working in this direction. Responding to the request from the Delegation of Ukraine regarding the institutionalization of the reduction of the mandate of Committee members to four years, the Director explained that this would be very difficult as it would require a modification of the text of the *World Heritage Convention*. This would activate a re-ratification process of all the current signatories. Instead, as a way of addressing the balance and rotation factor within the Committee, a recommendation was made to encourage States Parties to voluntarily relinquish the six-year term in favour of four years.

76. The **President of the General Assembly** asked Delegations whether they wished to debate further on this item of the agenda.

77. The Delegation of **Guatemala** thanked all the speakers for their solidarity and welcomed the proposal by the Republic of Korea to work towards the elaboration of preventive measures for catastrophes.

**5. EXAMINATION OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND, INCLUDING THE STATUS OF THE STATES PARTIES' CONTRIBUTIONS**

Documents     *WHC-05/15.GA/5*,  
                  *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.5*

78. Passing to item 5 of the agenda, the **President of the General Assembly** briefly introduced the working and information documents (*WHC-05/15.GA/5* and *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.5*) before giving the floor to the Comptroller for a more detailed presentation.

79. The **Comptroller** evoked the key points contained in the information document, in particular the decrease in income of USD 1.2 million for the World Heritage Fund during the last biennium and the excess in expenditure for Emergency Assistance that required the deduction of USD 1.1 million from the Reserve to make up the deficit. He also presented the financial statement for the present cycle 2004-2005 as at 31 August 2005.

80. The **President of the General Assembly** submitted the draft Resolution **15 GA 5** for examination by the States Parties. There being no observation, he declared Resolution **15 GA 5** adopted.

**RESOLUTION 15 GA 5**

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined the accounts of the World Heritage Fund for the financial period ending 31 December 2003 (see Section I of document *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.5*) in conformity with the Financial Regulations of the World Heritage Fund that stipulates that the accounts of the Fund shall be submitted to the General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention* (Article 6, paragraph 6.4);
2. Approves the accounts of the World Heritage Fund for the financial period ending 31 December 2003;
3. Takes note of the accounts of the World Heritage Fund for 2004-2005, approved by the Comptroller (see Section III of document *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.5*).

**6. CALCULATION OF THE AMOUNT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 16 OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION**

Documents     *WHC-05/15.GA/6*,  
                  *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.6*

81. The **President of the General Assembly** proposed item 6 of the agenda for examination concerning the determination of the amount of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund, and briefly introduced document *WHC-05/15.GA/6*.

82. He then submitted the draft Resolution **15 GA 6.1** for examination by the States Parties. There being no observation, he declared Resolution **15 GA 6.1** adopted.

**RESOLUTION 15 GA 6.1**

The General Assembly,

1. Decides to set at 1% of the compulsory contribution to UNESCO the percentage for the calculation of the amount of contributions to be paid to the World Heritage Fund by the States Parties for the financial period 2006-2007.

83. After having requested the Comptroller to introduce document *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.6* that showed that all the States Parties candidate to the World Heritage Committee were up-to-date with their contributions, the **President of the General Assembly** submitted draft Resolution **15 GA 6.2** for examination by the States Parties. There being no observation, he declared the Resolution **15 GA 6.2** adopted.

**RESOLUTION 15 GA 6.2**

The Assembly General,

1. Recalling decision **29 COM 15B** of the World Heritage Committee which urges States Parties in arrears to pay their overdue contributions to the World Heritage Fund and invites the Director-General to encourage the States Parties to make voluntary donations to the World Heritage Fund in addition to their contributions as well as encouraging other partners to make similar donations;
2. Takes note of document *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.6* on the Statement of compulsory and voluntary contributions to the World Heritage Fund.

## 7. ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES

Documents     *WHC-05/15.GA/7,*  
                  *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.7*

84. The **President of the General Assembly** opened item 7 of the agenda, and requested the Director of the World Heritage Centre to recall the context of the draft Resolution referring to decision **29 COM 5D** of the Committee for the adoption of the Declaration concerning the conservation of historic urban landscapes.

85. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** indicated that it concerned the results of a discussion held over many years in the Committee regarding the issue of urban development within historic centres, given that roughly 200 cities are inscribed on the World Heritage List. They constitute the most represented category of properties and are often faced with the problem of new constructions. The major development project in Vienna was a case examined by the Committee following the inscription of its historic centre in 2001. The objective of the project is the rehabilitation of a large part of the buffer zone of the city which foresees the integration of new vast constructions. As the visual balance was threatened, the World Heritage Committee expressed its concerns during its 26th and 27th sessions. After having reviewed its project, the City of Vienna, supported by the Committee, proposed that a conference be organized on this theme, and a meeting was held from 12 to 14 May 2005 in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Austrian Government. The Director thanked the authorities for their remarkable commitment. In view of the positive results of the Conference, the Committee recommended that the Vienna Memorandum – established on the basis of a working document previously prepared by the World Heritage Centre in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies (ICROM and ICOMOS), the International Union of Architects, the International Federation of Landscape Architects, the Organization of World Heritage Cities, the International Federation for Housing and Planning and the City of Vienna – also be examined by the General Assembly and that a declaration be approved to demonstrate the support of the international community. The Director emphasized the basic principles of the document. Notably, to ensure, through dialogue between the decision makers and the actors, the management of changes within the City, its development dynamics, the evolution of the quality of city life, in the light of conservation, authenticity and integrity principles for the site with regard to its historic environment. He stressed the need to place contemporary architecture in a balanced urban context and invited the States Parties to integrate these principles into their urban development policies and to take into account the criterion of complementary evaluation for the new proposals for inscription under preparation.

86. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Director of the Centre for his presentation and stressed the importance of the document for all States Parties. He requested the General Assembly to comment on this item.

87. The Delegation of **Canada** mentioned the importance of this reflection on contemporary architecture insertion. It considered that the current Declaration proposed for adoption was not as inclusive as the text of the Memorandum adopted during the Vienna Conference, which called for larger considerations such as studies on soil, vegetation, etc. It underlined the need to consider new forms of impact studies and to incorporate the need to examine the associated values of sites into the proposed text for adoption.

88. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** proposed an amendment in response to the Delegation of Canada (draft Declaration, point c).

### 3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (Cont'd)

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

89. The **President of the General Assembly** interrupted the session to announce the results of the second round of voting for the seat reserved for a State Party having no properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. He indicated that none of the candidates had obtained the required majority to be elected.

Number of votes :	153
Number of invalid votes :	1
Number of valid votes :	152
Required majority :	77
Barbados	56
Gabon	25
Mauritius	71

90. The Delegation of **Gabon** thanked the President of the General Assembly for announcing the results as well as all the countries who had voted for his country, Gabon being the only Central African candidate, region unrepresented within the Committee. Given the level of abstention for the first round, it had judged necessary to participate in the second ballot. However, it announced the withdrawal of its candidature so as not to further delay the election procedure, indicating that it would not participate in further rounds.

91. The **President of the General Assembly** welcomed the gesture of the Delegation of Gabon.

92. The Delegation of **Barbados**, underlining the close results, announced the withdrawal of its candidature for the reserved seat and proposed to give the round to Mauritius. It confirmed its willingness to be a part of the next voting rounds.

93. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Delegation of Barbados for its gesture and indicated the need to confirm the election of Mauritius by a vote of raised hands.

94. The General Assembly unanimously expressed its approval, the **President of the General Assembly** declared Mauritius elected to the World Heritage Committee.

95. The Delegation of **Mauritius** thanked the Chairperson of the General Assembly, congratulated him on his election and immediately offered its condolences to Pakistan, India and Afghanistan with regard to the disastrous earthquake that had recently affected those countries. It also thanked all the States Parties of the General Assembly for their support, as

this election was a success for the Government and the population of Mauritius. The Delegation also thanked the Delegations of Gabon and Barbados. As a newly elected member of the World Heritage Committee, the Delegation highlighted its country's and its people's commitment to heritage protection. It underlined the fact that Mauritius is a multi-cultural society and informed the General Assembly that Mauritius was the second country to ratify the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. It mentioned that the first proposal for inscription of a Mauritian site on the List would be presented next year. It stressed that Mauritius was deeply involved in the UNESCO Slave Route project and confirmed its intent to work on supporting small island states. It declared that it would do its best to respond to the high hopes placed in its election.

96. The **President of the General Assembly** congratulated Mauritius and announced that the first round of the open ballot for all candidates would be held between 18h00 and 20h30. The results would be announced the following morning at the opening of the 3rd meeting.

97. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** indicated that once known, the results could be consulted in advance at the Polling Station, the World Heritage Centre which would remain open until midnight, or also the World Heritage Web site. They would also be communicated by electronic mail to all the Permanent Delegations.

98. The **President of the General Assembly** read out the list of candidate countries, namely : Afghanistan, Bahrain, Barbados, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Korea (Republic of), Macedonia (former Yugoslav Republic), Madagascar, Morocco, Peru, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tanzania (United Republic of), Tunisia, Ukraine, United States of America, Vietnam and Yemen.

## 7. **ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPES (Cont'd)**

Documents      *WHC-05/15.GA/7,*  
                         *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.7*

99. After having offered its congratulations and words of welcome to Mauritius on its election to the World Heritage Committee, the Delegation of the **Netherlands** stated that it considered the Vienna Memorandum to be a very important and useful document whose worth had been proved during rich discussions at the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005). Thanking the City of Vienna, Austria, and the World Heritage Centre for the work accomplished, it called upon the States Parties to execute its implementation. It believed that the Memorandum's strength lay in its interdisciplinary approach, and therefore wholeheartedly supported the suggested amendment by Canada. The Delegation also proposed an amendment to broaden paragraph d) of the draft Declaration, to the effect that States Parties be invited to integrate the principles expressed in the Vienna Memorandum into all relevant policies.

100. The Delegation of **Norway** extended words of welcome to Mauritius upon its election. It noted that the Vienna Conference had been an important step forward and welcomed the ensuing Memorandum, particularly its integrated approach to the management of historic cities. It fully supported the principles of the draft Declaration, with the amendments suggested by the Delegations of Canada and The Netherlands. It sought clarification from the

Secretariat as to the status of the decision by the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee that the General Conference of UNESCO adopt a new recommendation to complement and update the existing ones on the subject, with a special reference to the need to link contemporary architecture to the urban historic context. The Delegation would support such a development.

101. At the invitation of the President of the General Assembly and responding to the Delegation of Norway, the **Director of the World Heritage Centre** explained that, as the Committee had already adopted Decision **29 COM 5D**, and in order to avoid repetition, it was not necessary to mention it in the present document and draft Resolution.

102. The Delegation of **Jamaica** asked States Parties to reflect on the question of whether the General Assembly was fully acknowledging the role of history. While not all places on Earth could meet the criterion of outstanding universal value, many places did embody the history of a particular country – a history that deserved recognition. There was especially a need to reflect on the historical relationship between continents and move away from a Euro-centric vision of history. Consequently, considering the importance to go beyond the visual and cultural impact, it therefore fully supported the amendment proposed by the Delegation of Canada.

103. The Delegation of **Portugal** congratulated Mauritius on its election to the World Heritage Committee and welcomed the gestures of Gabon and Barbados. The importance of the Vienna Memorandum had already been demonstrated during discussions on the state of conservation of numerous properties at the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005). It fully supported the amendments proposed by the Delegations of Canada, the Netherlands and Norway.

104. The Delegation of **Japan** congratulated Mauritius on its election to the World Heritage Committee. It considered the Vienna Memorandum to be an important step forward since the balance between preservation and development was an increasingly sensitive issue. It urged policy makers and planners to adopt a cautious approach to heritage interventions according to the specificity of particular sites. The exchange of experiences and best practices was important.

105. The Delegation of the **United Kingdom** welcomed Mauritius to the World Heritage Committee and recognized the noble gestures of the States Parties of Barbados and Gabon in withdrawing their candidatures at this point. In the last year of its term as member of the Committee, United Kingdom had participated in the preparation of the Vienna Memorandum, noting that its strength lay in its breadth. As such, it considered that the Memorandum needed to be interpreted with due sensitivity. It supported the amendments suggested by Canada and The Netherlands.

106. The Delegation of the **Republic of Korea** joined previous speakers in congratulating Mauritius on its election to the World Heritage Committee. It considered that the Vienna Memorandum provided a comprehensive set of guidelines for all relevant policy makers and planners to balance history and development and hoped it would be widely promulgated amongst Member States. It supported the draft Resolution as well as the amendments proposed by the Delegations of Canada and The Netherlands.

107. The Delegation of **Brazil** extended its congratulations to Mauritius who would be an excellent member of the Committee, and to the President of the General Assembly on their

respective elections. The Vienna Memorandum was a serious and welcome contribution to the debate on the urban historic environment. It suggested amending the language of paragraph 3 of the draft Declaration so that the term “high quality” be omitted. This posed problems of definition, as were not all cultural expressions of high quality?

108. In reply to the Delegation of Brazil, the **Director of the World Heritage Centre** explained that the term was intended to imply modern architecture of high quality and suggested keeping the same wording as in the Vienna Memorandum.

109. At the invitation of the President of the General Assembly, the **Rapporteur** indicated the various modifications suggested by several Delegations.

110. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** suggested that the word “Vienna” be removed from paragraph 3 of the draft Resolution, as it was superfluous in this instance.

111. The Delegation of **Canada** suggested that the words “as amended” needed to be added at the end of point 3 of the Resolution.

112. The **Rapporteur** reread the Resolution with all the amendments included.

113. No observations being made, the **President of the General Assembly** declared Resolution **15 GA 7** adopted as amended (the Declaration on the Conservation of Historic Urban Landscapes, as amended by the General Assembly, is attached as Annex 5).

#### **RESOLUTION 15 GA 7**

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined documents *WHC-05/15.GA/7* et *WHC-05/15.GA/INF.7*,
2. Takes note of the report and warmly welcomes the Vienna Memorandum adopted by the International Conference “World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture” (Vienna, 2005);
3. Based on the Vienna Memorandum, adopts the Declaration on the Conservation of Historic Urban Landscapes, as amended by the General Assembly.

#### **8. PRESENTATION OF AFRICA’S POSITION PAPER (29 COM 11C.2)**

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/8*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.8*

114. The **President of the General Assembly** opened the examination of this item.

115. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** summarised the context of this document recalling that it referred to an autonomous procedure initiated by African States Parties. Africa’s Position Paper stems from the analysis of the 2002 Periodic Report and successive discussions within the Africa Group, which led to a proposal to create an “African

World Heritage Fund”, and reflection on capacity-building. Since that meeting, the Position Paper has been presented to the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005) and would be presented to the Ministers of Culture of the Member States of the African Union which will be held on the 15 and 16 December 2005 in Nairobi (Kenya).

116. Speaking on behalf of the Delegation of **South Africa**, Mr Wakashe, Chairperson of the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee, congratulated the President, Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur of the General Assembly upon their election, as well as the new Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee and Mauritius. The Delegation also presented its condolences to India, Pakistan and Guatemala, and recalled the importance of risk preparedness. It provided a background to the origin of the initiative aimed at identifying a common approach by the African continent for its heritage, which was launched when the decision to hold the next session of the Committee, for the first time, in sub-Saharan Africa – in South Africa – was adopted during the 28th session of the Committee (Suzhou, 2004). The Africa Group brought together four countries – Nigeria, Benin, Zimbabwe and Egypt – to study in depth the problems linked to the conservation of African heritage and sustainable development. The idea of a fund was borne of the need to establish a road map to respond to the identified challenges. The Africa Group met in Cape Town (South Africa) in March 2005 to prepare the submission of Africa’s Position Paper to the Committee; it was unanimously adopted, as well as the principle of the Fund. The Delegation indicated that the feasibility study for the African World Heritage Fund was at an advanced stage and thanked the Governments of Norway, China, India and the Netherlands who had already provided support for this initiative. It added that South Africa had received the mandate of the Africa Group for the implementation of the Position Paper, work that it was carrying out with Benin, Egypt, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Indicating that South Africa was ending its mandate in the Committee, it thanked the States Parties, the Director-General, the Assistant Director-General for Culture, the Assistant Director-General for Africa, as well as the Director of the World Heritage Centre for their support, and indicated that it would request that the World Heritage Centre has observer status within the Steering Committee of the African World Heritage Fund.

117. The **President of the General Assembly**, expressed his satisfaction with the past and future activities of South Africa, and invited the delegates to share their comments.

118. After having thanked the Chairperson of the Durban Committee session for his presentation and his hospitality, the Delegation of **Norway** congratulated South Africa for its excellent work. It recalled the imbalances linked to the under-representation of African properties on the World Heritage List in contrast to their over-representation on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and underlined the link between culture, sustainable development and poverty eradication. Support from industrialized countries must be able to respond to the need for development in Africa without being contingent on the management of the Fund. Welcoming the benefits provided by this initiative, and wishing it every success, the Delegation emphasized the importance of maintaining a link between the World Heritage Fund and the African World Heritage Fund, the creation of which represented a flicker of hope to be exploited.

119. After having welcomed the election of Mauritius, the Delegation of **Benin** congratulated South Africa for having proposed the creation of this Fund for Africa that offered a new potential in attaining the objectives of balance, representivity and credibiity of the List. It called upon support from the international community as a whole, emphasizing the proactive nature of the actions proposed by Africa for Africa, thanking the countries who

had already contributed so that the List of World Heritage in Danger becomes the List of hope and no longer that of shame.

120. The Delegation of **Italy** congratulated South Africa and the Director of the World Heritage Centre for this initiative responding in particular to the need for capacity-building in Africa for the safeguarding of the sites in danger. Since 2001, Italy had already signed a joint declaration with UNESCO with the objective of focusing specifically on under-represented categories. In this framework, it had mobilised experts and allocated an amount of USD 3.3 million. It also indicated its support for the Fund.

121. After having welcomed the election of Mauritius to the Committee, the Delegation of **China** congratulated South Africa and its representative, Mr Wakashe, for the idea of creating a Fund for the safeguarding of African sites in danger. China had already supported the creation of this Fund to the extent of US\$ 30,000 and would continue its in capacity-building efforts.

122. The Delegation of the **United Republic of Tanzania** congratulated the President of the General Assembly and Mauritius for their election, then acknowledged Gabon and Barbados for their gesture. Recalling its participation in the meeting of African experts that was held in Cape Town, it invited the General Assembly to support this proposal, underlining the importance of raising awareness of governments, partners and stakeholders with regard to conservation problems.

123. The Delegation of the **Netherlands** thanked South Africa for its initiative that demonstrated the efforts made with regard to under-representation of the African continent on the List, and with regard to the large number of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It supported the remarks made by the Delegation of Norway concerning the work towards sustainable development - the “4Cs” - and the need to maintain a link between the African Fund and the World Heritage Committee. The results of the feasibility study are awaited.

124. After having addressed its condolences to Guatemala, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, the Delegation of **Kenya** expressed the hope that the Kobe Conference would put forward solutions to respond to such catastrophes. It also presented its congratulations to Mauritius for its election, and acknowledged the spirit of cooperation displayed by Gabon and Barbados. The Delegation also thanked all the countries that had supported and assisted in the procedure for defining a strategy for Africa, an investment for youth and cultures.

125. The Delegation of **Portugal** thanked South Africa and the Chairperson of the last session of the Committee, stressing that it had learnt much regarding African heritage and the determination of its representatives to protect this heritage themselves, as had been indicated by the Delegation of Benin – an effort that deserved support.

126. The **President of the General Assembly** recalled, in turn, the memory of the last session of the Committee in Durban, and the importance it had held.

127. The Delegation of **Jordan** thanked the authors of the African Position Paper, an excellent example of international cooperation. It noted that it would also be appropriate to remember the properties in danger that were not inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

128. In congratulating South Africa for its presentation and the creation of the Fund, the Delegation of the **Republic of Korea** announced that it would make a contribution to the Fund, without mention of the amount, once it was established.

129. In referring to the Periodic Report, the Delegation of **Barbados** emphasized the unacceptable situation of African heritage and welcomed the present proposal. It welcomed the strategic orientation that had been adopted and in this respect, thanked the Chairperson of the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005).

130. The Delegation of **Sudan** thanked the authors of this proposal that would encourage African countries to act and assist them in regrouping around common activities.

131. The Delegation of **Algeria** associated itself with the congratulations for Mauritius for its election and in support for Africa.

132. In congratulating South Africa, the Delegation of **Afghanistan** supported the creation of the African World Heritage Fund that encouraged a better representation of this continent on the List.

133. The Delegation of **Namibia** congratulated South Africa for the work accomplished, and which it learnt about with interest, and also welcomed the election of Mauritius to the Committee.

134. Congratulating Mauritius on its election, the Delegation of **Yemen** supported South Africa's initiative, welcoming the promotion of African heritage.

135. The Delegation of **Uganda** congratulated the President of the General Assembly and voiced its support. It then congratulated Mauritius for its election to the Committee, and thanked Gabon and Barbados for their gesture. It also presented its condolences to Pakistan, India and the other countries affected by the recent catastrophes. The Delegation thanked South Africa for having brought together the African countries through this initiative that would help to avoid the destruction or the looting of their heritage. It invited all the countries to contribute to the recently created Fund.

136. The Delegation of **Japan**, in congratulating the Chairperson of the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005) for the work achieved, felt that the creation of the Fund was an encouraging and important element that should become functional as soon as possible.

137. After congratulating the President of the General Assembly and welcoming Mauritius, the Delegation of **Tunisia** indicated its support for the creation of an African World Heritage Fund. It also conveyed its sympathies to the countries that had suffered from the recent catastrophes.

138. The Delegation of **Croatia** underlined the importance of international assistance for properties affected by catastrophes, whether they were of a natural or human nature. It also thanked UNESCO for the support provided to Croatia and supported the Fund that would help Africa to protect its heritage.

139. The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** expressed his satisfaction regarding the adoption of a resolution concerning this subject by the General Assembly. He added that the Resolution would be presented to the African Ministers of Culture who would meet on 15 and

16 December 2005, in Nairobi, then to the Summit of the Heads of State of the African Union in January 2006.

140. The **President of the General Assembly** then submitted the draft Resolution **15 GA 8** to the General Assembly. In the light of discussions and in the absence of objections, he declared Resolution **15 GA 8** adopted, and closed the meeting.

#### **RESOLUTION 15 GA 8**

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined document *WHC-05/15.GA/8*,
2. Takes note with satisfaction of Africa's Position Paper and encourages the implementation of its recommendations ;
3. Supports the creation of an African World Heritage Fund and invites the States Parties to the *Convention* to contribute voluntarily to this Fund.

The meeting was closed at 18h00.

## DAY 2

### THIRD MEETING

11 October 2005

10h00 – 13h00

#### 3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (Cont'd)

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

141. The **President of the General Assembly** opened the session and announced the results of the first round of the open ballot for the 11 remaining seats:

Number of votes :	160
Number of invalid votes :	2
Number of valid votes :	158
Required majority :	80
Afghanistan	53
Bahrain	32
Barbados	58
Bulgaria	37
Canada	103
Croatia	60
Cuba	79
Cyprus	69
Iraq	30
Israel	81
Jordan	51
Kenya	71
Korea (Republic of)	101
Macedonia (Former Republic of Yugoslavia)	20
Madagascar	92
Morocco	83
Peru	72
Spain	90
Syrian Arab Republic	36

Tanzania (United Republic of)	56
Tunisia	99
Ukraine	64
United States of America	81
Vietnam	59
Yemen	68

142. The required majority to be elected being 80 votes, the **President of the General Assembly** declared Canada, Israel, Madagascar, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Spain, Tunisia, and the United States of America elected to the World Heritage Committee.

143. He congratulated the newly elected members and asked the remaining candidate States Parties if any of them wished to withdraw their candidatures before the preparation of the second round. As no candidate responded to this request, the President of the General Assembly suspended the session for half-an-hour to allow delegations to reflect upon the follow-up of the vote.

The session was suspended for 30 minutes.

144. In re-opening the session, the **President of the General Assembly** launched a new appeal to States Parties, requesting whether certain amongst them wished to withdraw their candidature.

145. The Delegation of **Bulgaria** announced the withdrawal of its candidature in support of the candidature of Croatia, an eastern European country with a rich heritage as well as a democratic and European orientation, and invited support. It took the occasion to wish every success to the next Mostar Conference, a follow-up to the Varna Conference and the Declaration signed by the eight Heads of State of the region.

146. In thanking the countries that had voted for it, the Delegation of the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** also withdrew its candidature in favour of Croatia, which remained the only candidate from South-East Europe.

147. The **President of the General Assembly** expressed his regret that other States Parties had not withdrawn their candidature in order to render the voting procedure more efficient, indicating however that the General Assembly functioned in a democratic manner and must respect the positions of the States Parties, sovereign in their choice. He recalled Article 8, paragraph 2, of the *Convention* that stipulated that “Election of members of the Committee shall ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world”. He also cited the Resolution adopted during the 13th General Assembly: “... before each election of Committee members, the President of the General Assembly of States Parties will inform States Parties of the situation of the representation of regions and cultures in the World Heritage Committee and World Heritage List”. He also informed the General Assembly of the geographical distribution of the 18 members of the Committee at that stage, including the members elected during preceding sessions with an ongoing mandate, as well as those already elected during the present session:

- 3 Western European countries (Spain, The Netherlands, Norway),
- 2 North American countries (Canada, United States of America),
- Israel (Group I),

- 1 Central-Western European country (Lithuania),
- 1 Latin American country (Chile),
- 3 Asian countries (India, Japan, Republic of Korea),
- 1 Pacific country (New Zealand)
- 3 African countries (Benin, Madagascar, Mauritius)
- 3 countries from the Arab region (Kuwait, Morocco, Tunisia).

148. Noting that the Latin American region was under-represented, the **President of the General Assembly** recalled the importance of equitable representation of the regions. The credibility of the Committee was based upon this premise.

149. The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** supported the remarks of the President of the General Assembly and indicated that the other region that was under-represented within the Committee was the Caribbean.

150. The Delegation of **Colombia** thanked the President for quoting Article 8 paragraph 2 of the *Convention*. It reminded the General Assembly that three countries from Latin America and the Caribbean were leaving the Committee, and indicated that the region had agreed in advance to present a consolidated list of three candidates. The Delegation called upon the international community present at this Assembly to agree to the words of the President of the General Assembly and to ensure an equitable representivity of the Latin America and the Caribbean region in the Committee.

151. The Delegation of **Panama** agreed with the President of the General Assembly and the Delegation of Colombia. It expressed concern for a necessary equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee, even if not clearly defined by status, as it gave credibility to the Committee and reinforced the spirit of the United Nations system. It called upon the States Parties to vote for Cuba, Peru and Barbados, the candidates of the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

152. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Delegation of Panama which presently presided the Latin American and Caribbean Group of countries and assumed that it spoke on behalf of the countries it represented.

153. The Delegation of **Zimbabwe** agreed and underscored the need to keep the balance among African members on the Committee, stating that Mauritius was in a special category [reserved seat] and two African countries [Nigeria and South Africa] were outgoing members of the Committee.

154. The **President of the General Assembly** indicated that the State Party elected for the reserved seat was a full member of the Committee, the same as the other members, and did not have a different status.

155. The Delegation of **Spain** endorsed the statements of Colombia and Panama.

156. The Delegation of **Albania** thanked the President for having recalled the rule concerning equitable representation within the Committee. It remarked that South-East Europe was not adequately represented and thanked Bulgaria and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for having withdrawn their candidatures in favour of Croatia, and called upon the support of the General Assembly for this region.

157. The Delegation of **Cyprus** stated that it was useful to have countries with small populations on the Committee.

158. The **President of the General Assembly** reminded voting countries of their responsibility in the next round of voting. He read out the list of candidates still running (Afghanistan, Bahrain, Barbados, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Peru, Syrian Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Ukraine, Vietnam, Yemen) and indicated that the vote would start at 11h30, one hour being sufficient to complete the second round of voting.

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS

159. The **President of the General Assembly** briefly introduced this item and invited the World Heritage Centre to present the future statutory meetings.

160. The **World Heritage Centre** presented the timetable and the agenda as foreseen for 2005 and 2006. It also gave an overview of the major sections of the *World Heritage Convention* (international cooperation, integrated site management) and the Centre's work following the adoption of the new *Guidelines*. In particular, it cited the suspension of the Periodic Reporting cycle for a year to provide time for reflection and improvement, the granting of international assistance, the List of World Heritage in Danger and corrective measures to be envisaged, partnerships, training, World Heritage youth education, as well as the working methods of the Committee (including time devoted to the examination of the state of conservation and financial and administrative questions). Furthermore, it mentioned the analysis of progress achieved with regard to the Strategic Objectives of the 2002 Budapest Declaration (4Cs: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building and Communication), a balanced World Heritage List, quotas, criteria and the nomination procedure (presentation of the World Heritage Centre diagram in Annex 6).

161. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the World Heritage Centre for this information and called upon the General Assembly to make their observations.

162. The Delegation of **Greece** expressed its agreement with the reforms to be undertaken within the Committee concerning the working methods, recalling that UNESCO ran the risk of becoming the victim of its great success in the field of World Heritage. The inflation of the List, with 812 properties already inscribed and nearly 1 500 properties on the Tentative Lists, posed a risk to the credibility of World Heritage values. A redefinition of the nomination criteria was required. It regretted that at its 29th session (Durban, 2005), the Committee did not have sufficient time to devote to the conclusions of the Kazan meeting on outstanding universal value, as already mentioned by the Delegation of Benin. Despite the efforts of some members to improve the work of the Committee, much time was lost in unnecessary and repetitive discussions. The Chairperson of the Committee should be firm. The Delegation also stressed the need to be alert to political influence on the work of the Committee. A reform of the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies should also be envisaged, because the weakness of the present system was becoming evident. Finally, all Committee members should work towards achieving better results.

163. In thanking the Delegation of Greece and assuring it of his intention to be firm, the **President of the General Assembly** remarked that it was certainly important to have experts

as Committee members, but it was also just as essential that the representatives of newly elected countries become acquainted with the background of the Committee and the decisions taken by it since 1972, sometimes a missing element. The work of the Committee could only be profitable if the members understood the present situation with regard to the historical context of the *Convention*.

164. The Delegation of **Pakistan** congratulated the President of the General Assembly and thanked those who had expressed sympathy for the victims of the recent earthquake in his country. It also expressed its commiseration for the victims of the recent natural disaster in Guatemala. The Delegation agreed that the Committee was not a “sites’ inscription mechanism”. It reiterated that the List of sites should be considered from a global point of view and not become a collection of nationalistically-driven initiatives by those who considered they had been left behind in the matter. It wondered what the final classification would be if all the sites were noted. It also recommended that on-site missions meet with the corresponding Ministry during the mission so that accomplishments are duly noted. It specified the role of the National Heritage Committee recently formed in Pakistan.

165. The Delegation of **Israel** wished to know why the network Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage was not mentioned in the Centre’s presentation. It also requested that elaboration and harmonization of Tentative Lists be included in the general timeline as presented in both the Kazan and Durban meetings. Acknowledging the importance of the Periodic Reports, it would like more consideration to be given to the major importance of conservation in comparison with considerations given to inscription. Finally, it asked whether only States Parties could request In-Danger listing, or if this decision could be taken solely by the World Heritage Committee. It supported the Delegation of Pakistan, in stressing the importance of the dialogue with States Parties.

166. Noting the richness of the agenda for the coming years, the Delegation of **Chile** insisted on the fact that capacity limits for efficient work had been reached. The closure of the List had been discussed, but was not a solution *per se*, since being more restrictive would demotivate States Parties who could consider such a measure as unjust. The development of nomination files should be further supported. Standards should be developed and applied in a flexible manner. Some exceptional sites may have yet to be discovered. If the “4Cs” Strategic Objectives were to be useful, an appropriate adaptation by the institutions could provide a response that has nonetheless important financial implications. The Delegation considered that voluntary engagement of experts should only be solicited on the understanding by States Parties of their limitations in providing technical assistance. The process of inscription of the sites on the List should also be simplified, leaving the Committee to deal only with controversial submissions. Ideally, an increase in the infrastructure would be better than rigid and rigorous limitations. The Delegation concluded by stressing the fact that as there is no institutional memory of the Committee's history, frequent erroneous understanding of the consequences of inscription occurred.

167. The **President of the General Assembly** invited the World Heritage Centre to respond to the observations of the States Parties.

168. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** recalled the huge efforts involved during the long process of reform. All the strategies and all the tools are clear, the “4Cs” being a simplification, but the problems remained: the will to improve representivity had not yet given results. The nomination process would remain a priority even if it appeared that conservation had taken over. It was a difficult subject: do we have the means to guarantee

conservation and thus the quality of the List? This is where the system is limited and remained a challenge for the coming years. But the *Convention* was not the only existing system for sustainable conservation of the sites. In recalling that the responsibility belonged in the first place to States Parties, the Director indicated that the World Heritage Centre would attempt to build, together with them but also with potential partners from the public or private sector, “sister” networks or structures capable of undertaking some conservation tasks. In this respect he cited the African World Heritage Fund. The Centre should develop links with civil society, the media, and research to increase the visibility of the *Convention*, principally known for its List. At present, the Centre had very limited scientific knowledge regarding World Heritage and its socio-economic, legal or conservation impacts.

169. Agreeing with all the interesting ideas expressed by the Delegations, the **Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre** responded to the Delegation of Pakistan by informing the General Assembly that a debriefing was organized upon completion of every mission, in the presence of representatives of the State Party. He agreed with the Delegation of Israel that Tentative Lists should be elaborated and harmonized into the inscription timeline, since no inscription can take place without a previous listing of the property on the Tentative List. The World Heritage Centre presentation would be amended accordingly. He also agreed with the need to give more emphasis to the issue of protection. Concerning In-Danger listing, he pointed out that the main criterion was the threat assessment carried out by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Nonetheless, the States Parties had the possibility to formulate their remarks. With regard to the Delegation of Chile's question on representivity, he was convinced that there would never be a balance since natural sites are large and correspond to different criteria. It is the outstanding universal value that should determine the inscription of a site, not an ideal number in a category, and the question of a rigid approach had to be discussed in that context. Stressing that the issue of limitation would have to be addressed sooner or later, he recalled that IUCN had already expressed its view that a maximal number of 300 natural sites should be inscribed on the List.

170. The Delegation of **Pakistan** emphasized the fact that correspondence about any mission undertaken with regard to World Heritage should be addressed to the National World Heritage Commission instead of the National Commission for UNESCO. It should be announced not only to the National Commission for UNESCO, but also to the Ministry for Culture and to the World Heritage National Committee.

171. In responding to the Delegation of Pakistan, the **President of the General Assembly** indicated that it concerned a bilateral question between the World Heritage Centre and each State Party who decided upon its own internal organization in this respect.

172. After congratulating the President of the General Assembly for his election, the Delegation of **Hungary** welcomed the professional approach of the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre who did not look for a numerical balance between natural and cultural sites, impossible to achieve. Rather, an approach by category and sub-region was more appropriate, avoiding the automatic solutions such as the artificial definition of regions by UNESCO. On the other hand, it wished that the results of the Periodic Reports be exploited through a strategic approach and questioned the follow-up that was given to them. In conclusion, in the name of many of the participants, it expressed its disappointment to see the General Assembly working in such difficult practical conditions, notably with regard to space, and hoped that it would not be the same in the future.

173. In response to the Delegation of Pakistan, the **World Heritage Centre** recalled the typological, chronological, regional and thematic frameworks of the Global Strategy evaluations carried out by ICOMOS and IUCN, the follow-up of which would be studied during the next session of the Committee in Vilnius. It listed the first gaps noted by IUCN in the framework of this evaluation (prairies and tropical savannas, lake systems, tundra and polar systems, etc...). In response to the Delegation of Israel, it acknowledged that due to lack of time the Centre's presentation had omitted reference to the Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage Network that, with 400 universities, held an international seminar in Argentina in 2004, and one in the United Kingdom in 2005 on the themes “World Heritage Management: Centre and Periphery” and “Cultural Landscapes of the 21st Century: laws, management and public participation – Heritage as a challenge of citizenship” respectively. To respond to the Delegation of Chile regarding the issue of “Committee memory”, the World Heritage Centre recalled that it had published 13 World Heritage Papers, very useful communication tools. In response to the Delegation of Hungary, it confirmed the importance of the follow-up of the Periodic Reports that had already highlighted the need for a retrospective inventory, presently ongoing, to assist in establishing “Declarations of outstanding universal value”, but also stressed that it was the responsibility of States Parties to ensure its signification. In conclusion, the World Heritage Centre expressed its apologies for the inconvenience of the meeting place, no other space being available due to the holding of the 33rd General Conference of UNESCO.

174. The Delegation of the **United Kingdom** was of the view that a study of the history of the Committee was important. Since the Delegation's first participation as an observer in 1988, the Committee had undertaken constant reforms. It was important for newcomers to know about this history in order to be able to go forward. For example, one piece of history the Committee might like to look at was the issue of the necessity or not to obtain the agreement of the State Party concerned for the inscription of a site on the In-Danger listing, which was more complicated than it would appear.

175. Thanking the Director and the Secretariat of the Centre for their continued support, the Delegation of the **United Republic of Tanzania** wished to clarify the differences between the Periodic and the State of Conservation Reports. Finally, it noted with satisfaction the publication of the “World Heritage in Young Hands” kit in Kiswahili.

176. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** explained the differences between the cyclical regional Periodic Report and the State of Conservation Report established upon request by the Committee or in case of extraordinary events. The next Periodic Report for Africa was foreseen for 2009 and would be officially announced in 2007.

177. The Delegation of **Israel** reiterated its question about In-Danger listing and the role of the States Parties, which was also referred to by the Delegation of the United Kingdom.

178. Given the importance attached to the examination of reports and the nomination procedure for the sites on the World Heritage List, the Delegation of **Belgium** asked whether the Committee would have sufficient time for an in-depth discussion on unresolved questions at its next session in Vilnius, such as relations with the Advisory Bodies or the working methods of the Committee. It suggested the holding of an extraordinary session of the Committee devoted to this theme.

179. The Delegation of the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** congratulated the World Heritage Centre and its Director for the assistance provided for the inscription of the

Complex of Koguryo Tombs during the last session of the Committee (Durban, 2005), as well as for the follow-up efforts towards the strengthening of capacities in the field of wall painting conservation. It also indicated its support to the General Assembly's decision for the creation of the African World Heritage Fund.

180. The **President of the General Assembly** invited the World Heritage Centre to respond to the Delegations.

181. After having thanked the Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the **Director of the World Heritage Centre** informed the Delegation of Belgium that the progress of the European Periodic Report was positive and that the Centre was organizing a meeting of experts on 8-9 November 2005 in Berlin to facilitate the discussions in Vilnius. He also indicated that the meeting's planning had already been established. To respond to the Delegations of the United Kingdom and Israel, he stressed the fact that In-Danger listing was one of the most difficult and controversial inherited issues. A moratorium of five years on this issue had been decided and it was not yet time to discuss it. He read paragraphs 183 and 187 of the new *Operational Guidelines* which show that practical solutions have to be found and that States Parties would be informed of the decision of the Committee. Even if it was not very precise for the time being and grey zones remained, it was still the best response at the moment. He underlined the fact that In-Danger listing was not a sanction but that it was based on cooperation.

182. The Delegation of **Hungary**, in supporting the Delegation of Belgium, also indicated its wish for the holding of an extraordinary session to discuss the working methods of the Committee and not only a meeting on the progress made in Periodic Reporting in the European region.

183. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** informed the States Parties that the theme of working methods of the Committee had been entrusted to a Working Group created in Durban, whose recommendations would be presented in Vilnius.

184. Talking about the memory of the work, the Delegation of **Canada** wished to know whether the new *Operational Guidelines* represented a change compared to the old ones concerning the In-Danger listing (par. 177 (d) of the new *Operational Guidelines*), namely that "*assistance may be requested by any Committee member or the Secretariat*".

185. Stating his understanding of the sensitivity of the issue, the **Director of the World Heritage Centre** replied that, to his knowledge, there had not been any change in this paragraph in the new *Operational Guidelines*.

186. The Delegation of **Norway** raised a question about the election process that appeared cumbersome, extremely complicated, lengthy and disruptive of the work of the General Assembly. The General Assembly was more focused on elections rather than on issues and this process had to change. It requested the World Heritage Centre, with the support of the Chairperson of the Committee, to launch a process in Vilnius that would last until the next General Assembly, to examine this issue and identify alternative solutions to secure the geographical balance for election to the Committee. This process should examine the guidelines and principles of the Committee.

187. Expressing his doubts on the possibility of finding an ideal solution, the **President of the General Assembly** agreed to the intervention made by Norway and invited the Chairperson

of the Committee and the World Heritage Centre to reflect upon this question between now and the next meeting in Vilnius.

188. Congratulating the President of the General Assembly on his election and the way he was leading the session, the Delegation of the **United States of America** supported the Delegation of Norway's request.

189. The **President of the General Assembly** suggested the drafting of a Resolution.

190. The Delegation of **Norway** acknowledged that introducing changes was sometimes difficult but stressed the importance of trying. It agreed to draft a resolution.

191. The Delegation of **Kenya** congratulated the President of the General Assembly. It agreed with the Delegations of Norway and the United States of America about the difficulty of the methodology adopted for elections, pointing out that Gabon had not been elected and Africa disadvantaged. It stressed the fact that networks, power and position did make a lot of difference in these elections.

### 3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (Cont'd)

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

192. The **President of the General Assembly** interrupted the discussions to announce the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the open ballot for the elections.

Number of votes :	153
Number of invalid votes :	4
Number of valid votes :	149
Required majority :	75

Afghanistan	14
Bahrain	3
Barbados	32
Croatia	33
Cuba	80
Cyprus	36
Iraq	7
Jordan	10
Kenya	56
Peru	56
Syrian Arab Republic	7
Tanzania, United Republic of	16

Ukraine	29
Vietnam	15
Yemen	29

193. The required majority to be elected being 75 votes, the **President of the General Assembly** declared Cuba elected to the World Heritage Committee.

194. After congratulating the Delegation of Cuba, the **President of the General Assembly** reminded that according to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly (Article 14.8), when there remained two seats to be filled, only the four States Parties having obtained the most number of votes after Cuba could present their candidatures for the third ballot, namely Cyprus, Croatia, Kenya and Peru.

195. The **President of the General Assembly** indicated that the third ballot for the elections would take place from 13h30 to 14h30 and closed the session, announcing that the results would be given at the afternoon session at 15h00.

The meeting closed at 13h00.

## DAY 2

### FOURTH MEETING

11 October 2005

15h00 – 16h30

#### 3. ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (Cont'd)

Documents *WHC-05/15.GA/3*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3A*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3B*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3C*,  
*WHC-05/15.GA/INF.3D*

196. The **President of the General Assembly** announced the results of the third open ballot:

Number of votes :	105
Number of invalid vote:	0
Number of valid votes :	105
Required majority :	53
Croatia	32
Cyprus	37
Kenya	57
Peru	60

197. The required majority to be elected being 53 votes, the **President of the General Assembly** declared Kenya and Peru elected to the World Heritage Committee and congratulated them upon their election.

#### 9. OTHER BUSINESS (Cont'd)

198. The **President of the General Assembly** re-opened discussions on item 9 of the agenda, and informed States Parties that a draft resolution proposed by the Delegation of Norway for the establishment of a new electoral procedure would be submitted to all Delegations for their information.

199. Prior to this, the **President of the General Assembly** invited States Parties to comment on the draft Declaration regarding the recent natural calamities, prepared by the Secretariat, that reflected the concern, sorrow, emotion and worry expressed by the General Assembly.

200. The Delegation of **Norway** supported the proposed Declaration.

201. The Delegation of **Algeria**, whilst supporting the adoption of the Declaration, wondered whether, in the French version of the text, it would be possible to use a more judicious term than “rehabilitate”.

202. Supporting the proposed Declaration, the Delegation of **Canada** proposed an amendment to the English version of the text by suggesting that the first sentence read “Within a few days” instead of “Within few days”.

203. The Delegation of the **Seychelles** fully supported the proposed Declaration.

204. As no improved wording regarding the suggestion made by the Delegation of Algeria was forthcoming, the **President of the General Assembly** declared the Declaration adopted with the amendment proposed by the Delegation of Canada.

**Declaration of the 15th General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage***

*Within a few days, from one side of our planet to the other, terrible disasters struck Afghanistan, India and mainly Pakistan on the other hand, and Guatemala and Mexico on the other. The human loss is unfortunately considerable, as is the material damage.*

*The States Parties to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, meeting in UNESCO for their 15th General Assembly, under the Chairmanship of the Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of France to UNESCO, H.E. Mr Jean Guéguinou, declare their profound sadness regarding these events which have caused great distress to these countries, and express their sincere condolences to all the peoples affected.*

*Moreover, they unanimously express the wish that the Director-General of UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee rapidly find the means to rehabilitate as much as possible the heritage of humanity affected by the catastrophes in these countries.*

205. The Delegation of **Mexico** thanked the General Assembly and expressed its solidarity with the other countries that were affected by the recent natural disaster. Mexico was prepared to cooperate with all the countries of the region for immediate action to rapidly rehabilitate the respective heritage affected.

206. The Delegation of **Guatemala** thanked all the countries who had expressed their heartfelt sympathy and solidarity. The Delegation informed the States Parties that more than 6,000 persons had been victim to the disaster, and that 5,000 houses and 316 schools were badly damaged by the floods and that numerous archaeological sites (particularly in the Archipelago) had been seriously affected.

207. The Delegation of **Jamaica** commented on the issue of disasters as it had been worded in the draft Declaration of the 15th General Assembly. It evoked a Jamaican saying, alluding to the management of the Fund in relation to disasters: “Sometimes you are penny wise and pound foolish”. It wondered whether enough attention was being paid to the sites in Danger with regard to the limited resources available. From its point of view, money seemed a

problem relating to the subject of risk preparedness. The Delegation expressed its support for the idea of a one-off contribution of 1 to 2% to a reserve Fund to be specifically earmarked for exceptional circumstances and emergency actions at World Heritage properties located in disasters areas and that had suffered damage. This would help in ensuring the sufficient protection of these sites.

208. The Delegation of **Kenya** supported the Declaration as adopted and expressed its deepest condolences to those affected by the recent events. It was important to acknowledge the wonderful progress made by the 15th General Assembly in electing four African countries to the World Heritage Committee for the first time. The Delegation congratulated the African countries elected to the Committee. By letting Africa participate, it was confident of the contribution these countries would make to the work of the Committee and quoted a Kenyan saying “If you want to catch a big fish you have to add something to the stream”.

209. In response to the issue raised by the Delegation of Jamaica on risk preparedness, the **World Heritage Centre** recalled that the World Heritage Committee, at its 29th session (Durban, 2005), had requested the Centre to prepare a strategy on this particular issue for the 30th session. The World Heritage Centre also pointed out that risk preparedness definitely included all other risks, along with those posed by climate change. The World Heritage Centre referred to the interesting conclusions of the meeting on the development of policies for World Heritage properties organized by the World Heritage Centre during the Kobe Conference (Japan) on Disaster Reduction, January 2005. Finally the World Heritage Centre clarified the fact that in the context of World Heritage, the focus was more on preparedness and prevention than on immediate response after the disaster.

210. In providing further clarification, the Delegation of **Jamaica** affirmed that its intervention was made on the basis of an analysis of budget information provided by the World Heritage Centre. In its opinion and after looking at the balance sheets with the financial experience available within the Delegation, it seemed obvious that it would be appropriate that funds are set aside, so that World Heritage properties located within earthquake areas be financed properly.

211. Taking note of the concern expressed by the Delegation of Jamaica, the **President of the General Assembly** indicated that present funds were limited and recalled that States Parties to the *Convention* had always attempted to achieve the maximum within this restricted budget and it was not possible to resolve this here. He referred to UNESCO’s actions in Iraq and Iran, in relation to the vast destruction of natural and cultural heritage.

212. The Delegation of **Jamaica** insisted on the need for States Parties to look particularly at this question since the Declaration recognized the impact of natural disasters on the loss of life and cultural heritage. It reiterated the proposal of a one-off contribution of 1 to 2% of the whole budget to set aside funds in this regard, insisting on the fact that this should remain a one-off procedure.

213. The **President of the General Assembly**, in recalling several exceptional activities that had already been threatened, closed discussions on this item and invited States Parties to provide their comments with regard to the proposal made by the Delegation of Norway for the establishment of a new electoral procedure.

214. The Delegation of **Gabon** remarked that it was not in a position to comment about the proposal, as it had only been distributed in English.

215. The Delegation of the **Netherlands** supported the Norwegian proposal. It nonetheless alerted States Parties to the risk of overburdening of the World Heritage Centre with a request to initiate a process to discuss alternatives to the present election system by 2007. It reiterated that equitable representation of the regions of the world in the Committee should be the aim.

216. The Delegation of **Cameroon** supported both the inclusion of the question of geographical representation and that of the renewal of the electoral procedure in Norway's draft resolution, even though it might have expected a more concrete proposal. As other Delegations, it supported the previously adopted Declaration, and suggested that the Committee envisaged the establishment of short-, medium- and long-term national strategies on how interventions should be undertaken with regard to catastrophes, within the framework of the *World Heritage Convention*. In conclusion, the Delegation expressed its satisfaction upon the election of Kenya and recalled that African heritage, both tangible and intangible, was threatened.

217. In response to the Delegation of The Netherlands, the **President of the General Assembly** indicated that the proposal of the Delegation of Norway only raised problems linked to the election process so that the next two years could be used to prepare a clear study to be submitted to the General Assembly in 2007, during its 16th session.

218. The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** supported the Delegation of Norway, but showed some concerns about the proposal. It said that the process of election was long and complicated precisely to ensure the geographical distribution, since States Parties needed time to analyze the geographical distribution and to consult in between ballots. For now, the only way to correct the balance could be an intervention by the President, still non-binding. The only real way would be to establish a clear regional distribution of the seats of the Committee.

219. Regretting that Group III was very much under-represented in the World Heritage Committee, the Delegation of **Chile** supported the Norwegian proposal without anticipating the conclusions of the process, since the issue would raise new problems. The challenge should nonetheless be undertaken. It also noted that only 105 States Parties had voted in the last round and that participation was much less than when the elections took place in the plenary room. The Delegation suggested that a roll-call be announced for the vote to ensure wider participation. Finally it congratulated the newly-elected countries to the Committee and expressed its wish for full cooperation within the Committee.

220. Supporting the Norwegian proposal, the Delegation of **Canada** commented on the evolution of the Committee which could have an impact on the *Convention*. It suggested reflecting on the possibility of increasing the number of members of the Committee from 21 to 26, as an important number of States Parties had joined the *Convention* since 1972. It suggested that the World Heritage Centre's archives be revisited in order to understand how the geographical balance had been debated during the past General Assemblies. It supported the Delegation of Chile regarding reconsidering the voting mechanism.

221. The **President of the General Assembly** recalled the importance of the memory of the Committee's work.

222. Agreeing with Canada, the Delegation of **Colombia** welcomed the resolution concretizing the Norwegian proposal to improve the voting mechanism for the election of World Heritage Committee members. Even if the election process was better organized, it regretted, like the Delegation of Chile, the high rate of abstention in voting. It stated that

delegations were all informed but were involved with other issues relating to the 33rd session of the General Conference taking place at the same time, a difficulty for smaller delegations.

223. The Delegation of **Israel** remarked that there was a consensus on a reduction of the period of term to four years in case of election to the Committee. It indicated that thinking of increasing the number of members of the Committee would re-open the issue of the cycle of terms.

224. Thanking the Delegation of Norway, the Delegation of **Japan** stated that it would be important when discussing the proposal to share the content of Article 8 - paragraph 2 of the *Convention* which stipulated not only the need to ensure regional balance but an equitable representation of cultures of the world. It noted that the debate on representation had been going on for many years and, as suggested by Canada, insisted on the need to revisit the World Heritage Centre archives.

225. The Delegation of the **United Kingdom** added that it might also be useful to share Article 3 – paragraph 9 on the importance for elected States Parties to nominate as “their representatives persons qualified in the field of cultural or natural heritage”.

226. In reponse to the Delegation of Gabon, the **President of the General Assembly** requested the World Heritage Centre to translate the Delegation of Norway’s proposal. In the interim, he read the final list of 21 members of the World Heritage Committee, specifying those who had been elected during the present session (underlined), namely:

Benin,	<u>Canada,</u>
Chile,	<u>Cuba,</u>
India,	<u>Israel,</u>
Japan,	<u>Kenya,</u>
Kuwait,	Lithuania,
<u>Madagascar,</u>	<u>Mauritius,</u>
<u>Morocco,</u>	New Zealand,
Norway,	<u>Peru,</u>
<u>Republic of Korea,</u>	<u>Spain,</u>
The Netherlands,	<u>Tunisia,</u>
<u>United States of America.</u>	

227. An ad-hoc translation in French of the Norwegian proposal was then read out by the **Assistant Director-General for Culture** and in the meantime the French version was distributed to the States Parties.

228. The **President of the General Assembly** thanked the Assistant Director-General for Culture for the translation and suggested, on the recommendation of the Director of the World Heritage Centre, that the word “cultures” be added after “balanced geographical representation” following the intervention by the Delegation of Japan.

229. Whilst supporting this proposal, the Delegation of **Saint Lucia** underlined the difficulty that the introduction of the term « cultures » would represent.

230. While understanding the concern of the Delegation of Saint Lucia, the Delegation of **Japan** indicated that regions and cultures are not equal but suggested its amendment be specified “taking into account Article 8, paragraph 2” instead of “cultures”.

231. The **President of the General Assembly** indicated that it would be much easier to retain the word “cultures” rather than make reference to Article 8 of the *Convention*, and declared the Norwegian proposal adopted with the amendment initially proposed by the Delegation of Japan.

**Proposal by the Delegation of Norway on the voting mechanism**

*The General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention asks the Secretariat, in cooperation with the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, to initiate a process until the General Assembly in 2007, to discuss possible alternatives to the present election system to the World Heritage Committee.*

*The alternative(s) presented to the General Assembly in 2007 should ensure balanced geographical and cultural representation in the Committee, a less time-consuming and less complicated voting system, and better focus on important issues in the proceedings of the General Assembly.*

232. The **President of the General Assembly** thus closed items 3 and 9 of the agenda.

## 10. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

233. The **President of the General Assembly** indicated that he had already read out the names of the members of the Committee foreseen under this item of the agenda. He then gave the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre.

234. The **Director of World Heritage Centre** thanked the President of the General Assembly for his style and his effectiveness in conducting the debates during the 15th General Assembly. He also thanked the Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur. He recalled that the Secretariat was at the service of all States Parties and would continue to be so in an effective way. He took the opportunity to thank the members of the Committee for their continuous support and stressed that all his colleagues would work very closely with the newly elected members, whom he warmly welcomed. A new style was emerging with regard to future expectations concerning the achievements of the *Convention*, based on the solid work carried out in the past. As the agenda of the next meeting of the Committee had already been presented, he thanked the staff of the World Heritage Centre and the interpreters and the technicians for having contributed to the success of the General Assembly.

235. The Delegation of **Spain** conveyed the thanks of all the newly elected members to the Committee, expressing their gratitude to the outgoing members for the remarkable work accomplished. It also thanked the World Heritage Centre for the excellent organization of the General Assembly.

236. **His Excellency Mr Jean Guéguinou**, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of France to UNESCO, thanked the States Parties for having elected him to the Presidency of the 15th session of the General Assembly, mandate that he had carried out with great interest and pleasure. After congratulating the newly elected members of the Committee and reminding

them of their responsibilities in the face of difficult and urgent problems, he encouraged the unsuccessful candidate States Parties to persevere and have confidence for future elections. Referring to the catastrophes in India, Pakistan and Central America, as well as the fire that devastated the Vredefort Dome in South Africa, inscribed on the World Heritage List three months ago, he reminded everyone that the World Heritage properties were fragile and how hugely important it was to pursue the mission of the *World Heritage Convention* for their protection. He once again reiterated his congratulations to the World Heritage Centre, its Director and his team, to the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, as well as to the team of interpreters.

237. The **President of the General Assembly** declared the 15th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* closed.

The meeting closed at 16h30.