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### REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE ON ITS ACTIVITIES (2014-2015)

#### OUTLINE

**Source:** Article 29.3 of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage stipulates that “the Committee shall submit a report on its activities at each of the ordinary sessions of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization”.

**Background:** The Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the World Heritage Committee, was established by the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference at its 17th session on 16 November 1972.

**Purpose:** This document presents the report concerning the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 19th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention held from 19 to 21 November 2013. Selected information related to the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee (28 June-8 July 2015, Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany) is included.

## I. Introduction

1. This document is intended to provide the UNESCO General Conference with information on the main activities undertaken by the World Heritage Committee since the 19th General Assembly of States Parties (19-21 November 2013) in the implementation of the *Convention*. In order to reinforce coherence in the reporting exercises, these information have been grouped according to the five Strategic Objectives adopted by the Committee at its 26th session and at its 31st session : (a) strengthen the credibility of the World Heritage List; (b) ensure the effective conservation of the World Heritage properties; (c) promote the development of effective capacity-building in States Parties; (d) increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication; (e) enhance the role of communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Information on statutory meetings

(a) Current number of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

2. As of July 2015, there are 191 States Parties to the *Convention*<sup>2</sup>. Since the 19th General Assembly in 2013, Bahamas has joined the *Convention*.

(b) Current members of the World Heritage Committee

3. The Committee is composed of 21 members: Algeria, Colombia, Croatia, Finland, Germany, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Serbia, Turkey, Viet Nam. Nine members complete their mandate at the end of the 38th session of the General Conference (2015): [Algeria](#), [Colombia](#), [Germany](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Qatar](#), [Senegal](#), [Serbia](#) and 12 members complete their mandate at the end of the 39th session of the General Conference (2017): Croatia, Finland, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Viet Nam.

(c) Composition of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee

4. For the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee (June 2013-June 2014), the Chairperson was H.E. Sheika AL MAYASSA BINT HAMAD AL-THANI (Qatar). Algeria, Colombia, Germany, Japan and Senegal were the Vice-Presidents and Mr Francisco J. Gutierrez (Colombia) was appointed as the Rapporteur.

5. For the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee (June 2014-July 2015), the Chairperson was H.E. Prof. Maria BÖHMER (Germany). Croatia, India, Jamaica, Qatar and Senegal were the Vice-Presidents and Mr Hicham Cheaib (Lebanon) was appointed as the Rapporteur.

6. For the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2015 to July 2016), the Chairperson is H.E. Ambassador Gürçan TÜRKÖĞLU (Turkey). Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland and Senegal (until the 38th session of the General Conference in November 2015) are the Vice-Presidents and Ms Eugene Jo (Republic of Korea) will be the Rapporteur.

(d) Election of members of the World Heritage Committee

7. Following Resolution 1 EXT.GA 3 by the 1st Extraordinary session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention* (13-14 November 2014), Rule 13 on Procedures for the presentation of candidatures to the World Heritage Committee and Rule 14 on Election of members of the World Heritage Committee of the *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of*

<sup>1</sup> See Decision 26 COM 17.1 (Budapest, 2002) and Decision **31 COM 13B** (Christchurch, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> The list of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* is available at the following web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/>

*States Parties to the Convention* have been amended. As per paragraph 13.2 of Rule 13, members of the World Heritage Committee may stand again for election after a gap of **6 years** after the expiry of their mandate, instead of 4 years previously.

As per paragraphs (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) respectively of the Rule 14.1 of the *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention*: (b) The election of the members of the World Heritage Committee shall be conducted on the basis of the composition of the electoral groups of UNESCO, as determined by the UNESCO General Conference at its most recent session, it being understood that 'Group V' shall consist of two separate groups, for the African States and Arab States respectively; (c) Seats shall be allocated for each electoral group as follows: two (2) seats for Group I, two (2) seats for Group II, two (2) seats for Group III, three (3) seats for Group IV, four (4) seats for Group Va, two (2) seats for Group Vb. An additional seat shall be allocated for Group III and Group IV on a rotational basis; (d) Notwithstanding, at each election, due consideration shall be given to the election of at least one State Party which has never served as a Member of the World Heritage Committee; (e) In case the above formula cannot be practically applied, an exceptional arrangement may be made to accommodate such special circumstances; (f) Ballot(s) for allocated seat(s) shall precede the ballot(s) for the remaining seats to be filled. Unsuccessful candidates in a ballot for any allocated seat shall be eligible to stand for election in subsequent ballot(s).

(e) Statutory meetings

8. For the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Doha, Qatar from 15 to 24 June 2014, 30 working documents and 12 information documents were prepared (WHC-14/38.COM).

9. For the first Extraordinary session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention held at the UNESCO Headquarters, Paris on 13 and 14 November 2014, four working documents and 2 information documents were prepared (WHC-14/1 EXT.GA).

10. For the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Bonn, Germany from 28 June to 8 July 2015, 33 working documents and 13 information documents were prepared (WHC-15/39.COM).

11. In total, 94 documents were prepared, of which 67 were working documents and 27 were information documents.

### **III. Information related to the Implementation of Strategic Objectives**

#### **(a) Strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List**

- Inscription of properties on the World Heritage List since the 19th General Assembly

12. The total number of properties on the World Heritage List as of July 2015 is 1031, among which 802 are cultural, 197 natural and 32 mixed.<sup>3</sup> These properties are located in 163 States Parties. Twenty-eight States Parties remain without any property inscribed on the World Heritage List. One hundred and seventy five States Parties have submitted Tentative Lists of properties they may decide to nominate in future years.

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<sup>3</sup> The World Heritage List is available online at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>.

Region	New cultural properties	New natural properties	New mixed properties	Total
Africa	0	1	0	1
Arab States	5	0	0	5
Asia and the Pacific	14	2	1	17
Europe and North America	21	1	0	22
Latin America and the Caribbean	4	0	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>50</b>

- Inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger since the 19th General Assembly

13. At the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee (38 COM), three sites were inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger: Palestine, Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine), City of Potosi (Plurinational State of Bolivia) and the Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania). One site was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger: Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara (United Republic of Tanzania).

14. At the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee (39 COM), three sites were inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger: Hatra (Iraq), Old City of Sana'a (Yemen) and the Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen). One site was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger: Los Katíos National Park (Colombia).

15. The total number of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger as of July 2015 is 48 (30 cultural and 18 natural).

16. No properties have been deleted from the World Heritage List since 2009.

17. In addition, international, interregional and regional meetings and workshops have been organized for the implementation of the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List. Details of all these activities have been included in documents WHC-14/38.COM/5A and WHC-15/39.COM/5A.

#### (b) Ensuring the effective conservation of World Heritage properties

- Number of State of Conservation reports of World Heritage properties examined by the Committee since the 19th General Assembly

38 COM	List of world heritage in danger	Word Heritage List
Africa	16	26
Arab States	12	9
Asia and the Pacific	4	26
Europe and North America	5	26
Latin America and the Caribbean	7	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>106</b>

<b>39 COM</b>	<b>List of world heritage in danger</b>	<b>Word Heritage List</b>
Africa	16	17
Arab States	13	16
Asia and the Pacific	4	27
Europe and North America	5	23
Latin America and the Caribbean	8	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>95</b>

- Approved international assistance (IA) from the World Heritage Fund since the 19th General Assembly, as of July 2015

<b>REGIONS</b>	<b>Number of states parties which requested IA</b>	<b>Number of requests</b>	<b>Total amount approved (in USD)</b>
Africa	14	16	<b>341,830</b>
Arab States	1	2	<b>59,660</b>
Asia and Pacific	6	6	<b>193,583</b>
Europe and North America	2	2	<b>99,864</b>
Latin America and the Caribbean	5	7	<b>214,339</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>909,276</b>

- Periodic reporting

18. The final report on the results of the second cycle of the periodic reporting exercise for North America and progress report for the Europe region as well as the progress report on periodic reporting in all other regions were presented to the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee (Doha, 2014).

19. The final report on the results of the second cycle of the periodic reporting exercise for the Europe region and action plan has been presented to the 39th session of the Committee (Bonn, 2015). The follow-up of the second cycle of the periodic reporting exercise for the other regions as well as a general reflection on periodic reporting have been also examined by the same session of the Committee.

- Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism

20. As per Decision 31 COM 5.2, the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism (RMM) is a constant cooperative process with the State Party concerned. At its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), the Committee decided to continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism to the following properties: Manovo-Gounda Saint-Floris (Central African Republic); Virunga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Salonga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo);

Timbuktu (Mali); Tomb of Askia (Mali) and the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan).

21. In addition, the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism continues to apply to the Temple of Preah Vihear (Cambodia) and to the Medieval Monuments of Kosovo (Serbia).

- International conferences and workshops

22. International conferences on thematic programmes and workshops on nominations' preparation, tentative lists, upstream process and sustainable development, were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance, especially for small island developing States (SIDS), least developed countries (LDCs) and countries that are currently underrepresented on the World Heritage List or with no site inscribed. They have contributed to the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan and Vision adopted by the 18th General Assembly. A comprehensive list of these activities is included in documents WHC-14/38.COM/5A and WHC-15/39.COM/5A. Furthermore, in view of the escalating conflicts in the Arab region, the World Heritage Centre organized in June 2015 a meeting which gathered a group of multidisciplinary international scholars and professionals to initiate a reflection on an elaborated approach to post-conflict reconstruction in the Middle East context.

### **(c) Promoting the development of effective capacity-building in States Parties**

- Global training strategy

23. Over the past biennium, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in close cooperation with States Parties and relevant category 2 centres, have undertaken activities which contributed to the implementation of the World Heritage for Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS), since its adoption by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session (Paris, 2011). It should be noted that all conservation activities conducted in the framework of the *Convention* are mostly associated with and include a training and/or capacity-building component. Capacity-building activities aimed especially at strengthening regional and national institutions responsible for heritage protection, training initiatives targeting professionals and youth and the development of new guidance materials. Since the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee, 42 capacity-building workshops were organized with at least 980 people trained, providing them with relevant expertise to better protect and conserve the sites they manage.

- Education activities

24. Two international World Heritage Youth Fora were organized prior to the 38th and 39th sessions of the WH Committee. The 7th edition of the World heritage Volunteers campaign was launched in 2014 and initial steps were implemented for a regional coordinating structure for Europe in 2014 and for Asia, starting in 2015. The list of educational activities related to World Heritage and organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance is included in documents WHC-14/38.COM/5A and WHC-15/39.COM/5A. The World Heritage Education Programme is one programme in which effective mainstreaming of gender-equality is possible due to the upstream monitoring of gender participation. Consequently, in 2014, youth forums and capacity-building activities related to youth mobilized 141 young people, of which 57.4% were women.

25. Adaptation and production of the interactive DVD version of the World Heritage in Young Hands Kit in French was undertaken. One new episode of the *Patrimoinito's World Heritage Adventures cartoon series* was produced on the theme of biodiversity with the World Heritage Site of the Sundarbans National Park (India).

**(d) Increasing public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication and enhance the role of communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention**

- Awareness-raising

26. In 2014, the World Heritage website (<http://whc.unesco.org>) received an average of 33,125 visits per day. Traffic to the World Heritage website has increased by 28%, from 9,796,892 visits in 2012 to 12,623,553 in 2014.

27. E-mail newsletters “World Heritage Information” were sent in 2014 and 2015, in French and English to some 20,000 World Heritage Centre website members. However, over 100,000 members are registered with the World Heritage Centre website. Articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published in response to requests by numerous national and international media, especially on the threats and damages affecting world heritage in conflict areas.

- Publications

28. In 2013-2014, 100,000 World Heritage Maps were produced and disseminated in English, French and Spanish in partnership with Qatar and *National Geographic* (as well as 2,200 copies in Arabic). The Korean version was prepared (50,000 copies) by the Korean National Commission. In 2014-2015, 70,000 copies were produced in partnership with Germany and National Geographic. The Korean version was also prepared (80,000 copies) by the Korean National Commission.

29. Five new publications were issued in the World Heritage Papers Series: No. 36: Earthen Architecture in Today’s World; No. 37: Climate Change Adaptation for Natural World Heritage Sites – A Practical Guide; No. 38: Safeguarding Precious Resources for Island Communities; No. 39: Human origin sites and the World Heritage Convention in Asia; and No. 40: Engaging Local Communities in Stewardship of World Heritage. Nine issues of the quarterly magazine *World Heritage* (issue 69 to 76, plus a Special Issue on Iraq in June 2015) were published between June 2013 and June 2015. Since issue No. 71, the Review exists also as an i-app for iPad, Android and Kindle Fire tablets.

30. The World Heritage Resource Manual Series continues with a new title, translations of manuals and some printed versions. *Managing Cultural World Heritage* was issued in November 2013 and is available in French and English as printed publications and in Spanish as PDF online version. A Russian version (text only) was provided by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. *Preparing World Heritage Nominations* (2011) was translated into Portuguese, Spanish and Arabic. A Russian version (text only) was provided by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation – printed versions exist in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic. *Managing Natural World Heritage* was translated into Spanish – printed versions exist for French and English. *Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage* was translated in Spanish and Portuguese.

- Bilateral agreements with States Parties and partnerships

31. Since 2013, bilateral agreements have been concluded or continued with 17 States Parties and the European Commission. In the period 2013-2015, the World Heritage Centre has established and/or extended 19 partnerships with private-sector companies and foundations, all of which are managed in close consultation with UNESCO’s Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP). Inventories of ongoing and envisaged partnerships with the private sector and foundations were presented to the Committee in documents WHC-14/38.COM/5A and WHC-15/39.COM/5A.

**(e) Follow-up to the Director-General's initiative on "The World Heritage Convention: Thinking Ahead"**

32. By Resolution 19 GA 11, the General Assembly requested that a follow-up report to the Director-General's initiative on "The World Heritage Convention: Thinking Ahead" be presented to the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee and can be found in document WHC-15/39.COM/5C.