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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters
23 – 28 October 2009

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda: Report of the Intergovernmental Committee for the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage on its activities (2008-2009)

SUMMARY

Article 29.3 of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (hereinafter referred to as the *Convention*) 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".

This document provides the General Assembly with information concerning the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 16th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention* held on 24-25 October 2007.

The report will be included as one of the "statutory reports of UNESCO's intergovernmental committees and councils submitted to the General Conference, and the reports of governmental, regional and international conferences" (35C/REP/13) and will not require a decision on the part of the General Conference.

I. Overview and structure of this document

1. This document is intended to provide the UNESCO General Conference with information regarding the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 16th General Assembly of States Parties (24-25 October 2007) in the implementation of the *Convention*.
2. In order to better present the varied information contained in this document, the main activities and decisions of the World Heritage Committee have been grouped according to its Strategic Objectives. The Strategic Objectives, adopted by the Committee at its 26th session (Budapest, 2002), are the following:
 - 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**¹.
3. To the existing 4 Strategic objectives mentioned above (also called “4 Cs”), the Committee, at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007), decided to add a “Fifth C” for **Communities** which reads as follows: “To enhance the role of communities in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*” (Decision **31 COM 13B**).

I. Background information

A. Number of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

4. As of April 2009, there are 186 States Parties to the *Convention*². The State that has joined the *Convention* since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007) is: Cook Islands.

B. Current Members of the World Heritage Committee and Bureau

5. 21 members: Australia, Bahrain, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, China, Cuba, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia and United States of America.

Their terms of office are:

Until the **end of the 35th session of the General Conference** (2009): Canada, Cuba, Israel, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Peru, Republic of Korea, Spain, Tunisia and United States of America.

¹ See Decision **26 COM 17.1** (Budapest, 2002).

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

Composition of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee since July 2007

JULY 2007 – JULY 2008	JULY 2008 – JULY 2009
Chairperson: Dr Christina Cameron , Canada	Chairperson: H. Exc. Mrs María Jesús San Segundo , Spain
Rapporteur: Mrs Alissandra Cummins , Barbados	Rapporteur: Mr Antonio Otavio Sá Ricarte , Brazil
Israel	Australia
Kenya	Barbados
Peru	Kenya
Republic of Korea	Tunisia
Tunisia	United States of America

C. Number of seats in the World Heritage Committee reserved for States Parties with no property on the World Heritage List

6. Following Rule 14.1 of the *Rules of Procedure* of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention*, the World Heritage Committee decided to reserve **one** seat in the Committee to be elected by the General Assembly at its 16th session (UNESCO, 24-25 October 2007) for a State Party with no property on the World Heritage List (Decision **31 COM 6.6**).

D. World Heritage Statutory meetings since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007)

MEETING SESSION	VENUE	DATES	DOCUMENTS PREPARED
32nd session of the World Heritage Committee (32 COM)	Quebec City	2 - 10 July 2008	36 working / 18 information documents (WHC-08/32.COM/)
33rd session of the World Heritage Committee (33 COM)	Seville	22 - 30 June 2009	33 working documents / 13 information documents (WHC-09/33.COM/)
TOTAL	69 working / 31 information documents		(100 documents in total)

E. Strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List

Nominations to the World Heritage List

Inscription of properties on the World Heritage List since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007)

Region	New cultural properties	New natural properties	New mixed properties	Total
Africa	4	0	0	4
Arab States	1	1	0	2
Asia/Pacific	10	2	0	12
Europe/North America	12	6	0	18
Latin America/Caribbean	3	1	0	4
TOTAL	30	10	0	40

7. The total number of properties on the World Heritage List as of July 2009 is 890 (689 cultural, 176 natural and 25 mixed)³. These properties are located in 148 States Parties (i.e. 38 States Parties have no property inscribed on the World Heritage List). 166 States Parties have submitted Tentative Lists of properties they may decide to nominate in future years.

Inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007)

Committee Session	Number of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger	Number of properties removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger
32 COM (Quebec City, 2008)	None	None
33 COM (Seville, 2009)	3 Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize) Los Katios National Park (Colombia) The Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia)	1 The Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower (Azerbaijan)

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

8. The total number of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger as of July 2009 is 31 (16 cultural and 15 natural)⁴. These properties are located in 24 States Parties.

Deletion of properties from the World Heritage List

9. For the second time in the history of the *Convention*, the World Heritage Committee decided the deletion of a property, **Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany)** from the World Heritage List because the State Party failed to fulfill its obligations defined in the *Convention*. The building of a four-lane bridge in the heart of the cultural landscape meant that the property failed to keep its "outstanding universal value as inscribed." (Decision **33 COM 7A.26**)
10. The Arabian **Oryx Sanctuary (Oman)** was the first property delisted in 2007 (Decision **31 COM 7B.11**).

Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List

11. International, Inter-regional and Regional meetings and workshops have been organized for the implementation of the Global Strategy such as:
- Meeting on the Future of the *Convention* (UNESCO HQ, 25-27 February 2009),
 - Meeting on Prehistory and the *Convention*: Towards an Action Plan and the related thematic studies (UNESCO HQ, 3-4 November 2008),
 - Meeting on Human Evolution and the *Convention* (Burgos, Spain, 21-25 March 2009),
 - Meeting on Rock Art and the *Convention* (Drakensberg Park, South Africa, 3-8 April 2009),
 - Meeting on Prehistoric Sites (Manama, Bahrain, 9-13 May 2009),
 - International Expert Workshop on Natural Serial Transnational properties organized by the German Agency for Nature Conservation (Vilm, Germany, November 2008),
 - National Information Workshop on the *Convention* for the preparation of a nomination file for the dry forests (Tuléar, Madagascar, September 2008),
 - Training on the preparation of Draft Statement of OUV in Tanzania (March 2009),
 - Workshop on World Heritage nominations preparation (Lesotho, November 2008),
 - Sub-regional workshops on the Silk Roads serial World Heritage nomination organized (Xi'an, China, June 2008 and Almaty, Kazakhstan, May 2009),
 - Scientific methodology workshop held for the proposed Central Asian Rock Art serial World Heritage nomination (Samarkand, Uzbekistan, March 2009),
 - Sub-Regional World Heritage Consultative Workshop for the Promotion of Transboundary Co-operation in Asia organized (Ulan Bator, Mongolia, September 2008),

⁴ The List of World Heritage in Danger is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/danger/>

- National Workshop on the Tentative List of natural and mixed World Heritage properties (Beijing, China, January 2009),
- International Expert Meeting organized by UNESCO on "Climate Change and Arctic Sustainable Development: scientific, social, cultural and educational challenges" (Monaco, March 2009),
- Meeting on the revision of the Tentative List of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, October 2008),

12. Details of all these activities are included in document *WHC-09/33.COM/5A*.

F. Ensuring the effective conservation of World Heritage properties

State of Conservation Reports of World Heritage properties examined by the Committee since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007)

32 COM	LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	WORLD HERITAGE LIST
Africa	12	14
Arab States	5	12
Asia/Pacific	6	27
Europe/North America	3	54
Latin America/ Caribbean	4	21
TOTAL	30	128
33 COM	LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	WORLD HERITAGE LIST
Africa	12	19
Arab States	5	14
Asia/Pacific	6	31
Europe/North America	3	61
Latin America/ Caribbean	4	22
TOTAL	30	147

Approved International Assistance (IA) from the World Heritage Fund since the 16th General Assembly (24-25 October 2007)⁵

REGIONS	NUMBER OF STATES PARTIES TO REQUEST IA	NUMBER OF REQUESTS	TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED (in USD)
Africa	6	7	198,632
Arab States	2	2	48,650
Asia & Pacific	9	10	344,992
Europe & North America	0	0	0
Central & Eastern Europe	2	3	64,960
Latin America & Caribbean	7	8	323,389
TOTAL	26	30	960,623

Periodic Reporting

13. In the context of the Periodic Reporting Reflection Year (Decision **7 EXT.COM 5**), and following the World Heritage Committee's decision to suspend for two years the commencement of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting in order to study and reflect on the first cycle (Decision **30 COM 11.G** paragraph 5), the World Heritage Centre organized at UNESCO Headquarters a meeting on the Periodic Reporting Reflection Year (28 November 2007), in order to present to States Parties the revised Periodic Reporting Section I and Section II questionnaires, as drafted by the Working group on the simplification of the Periodic Reporting questionnaires. States Parties were then requested to participate in the field testing of the revised questionnaires.
14. The field testing took place between January and March 2008, involving 32 World Heritage properties in 19 States Parties. In order to integrate within the revised questionnaires all comments put forward by States Parties, a last meeting of the Working group on the simplification of the Periodic Reporting questionnaires and the establishment of indicators took place at UNESCO Headquarters (31 March - 4 April 2008). The final consolidated version of the questionnaires was presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session in July 2008 and was approved on that occasion (Decision **32 COM 11E**).
15. At that same session, the World Heritage Committee launched the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting Exercise. The Arab States represented the first region involved in the process. A First Regional Meeting on Periodic Reporting in the Arab States took place in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, from 14 to 17 December 2008. Three sub-regional meetings, funded by the Government of the Netherlands, took place respectively in Amman, Jordan, from 6 to 9 April 2009, Doha, Qatar, from 27 to 30 April 2009 and Meknes, Morocco, from 2 to 5 June 2009 in order to answer the questions by States Parties on filling-in the Periodic Reporting Questionnaires and drafting retrospective

⁵ International Assistance approved between 24 October 2007 and 27 July 2009.

Statements of Outstanding Universal Value. Draft retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value, as well as filled-in Section I and Section II questionnaires are due by all Arab States Parties by 31 July 2009.

16. In order to prepare the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting in the African Region, a Workshop on the preparation of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for the African Region, funded by the Government of Switzerland and by the African World Heritage Fund, was organized in Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, from 2 to 4 March 2009. The World Heritage Committee, at its 33rd session in June 2009, launched the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting Exercise for the African Region (Decision **33 COM 11C**).

Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism

17. The World Heritage Committee at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007) adopted with immediate effect the reinforced monitoring mechanism proposed by the Director-General to ensure the proper implementation of its decisions concerning the state of conservation of properties. The Committee underlined that reinforced monitoring is a constant cooperative process with the State Party concerned (Decision **31 COM 5.2**).
18. At its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), the Committee has decided to apply (or to continue applying) this reinforced monitoring mechanism to the following World Heritage properties:
 - (i) Virunga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (ii) Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (iii) Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (iv) Salonga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (v) Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (vi) Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany) - Continuation
 - (vii) Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) - Continuation
 - (viii) Bordeaux, Port of the Moon (France) - New application
 - (ix) Timbuktu (Mali) - New application
 - (x) Machu Picchu (Peru) - New application
 - (xi) Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures (Uzbekistan) - New application
19. Following the 32nd session, but prior to the 33rd session (Seville, 2009), the reinforced monitoring mechanism was also applied by the UNESCO Director-General to two other properties:
 - (i) Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia) - New application
 - (ii) Preah Vihear (Cambodia) - New application

20. At its 33rd session (Seville, 2009), the Committee decided to apply (or to continue applying) this reinforced monitoring mechanism to the following World Heritage properties:
- (i) Virunga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (ii) Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (iii) Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (iv) Salonga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) - Continuation
 - (v) Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) - Continuation
 - (vi) Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia) - Continuation
 - (vii) Preah Vihear (Cambodia) - Continuation
 - (viii) Manovo Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) – New application

The Committee decided not to continue applying it to the following properties:

- (i) Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany) (deletion from the World Heritage List)
- (ii) Machu Picchu (Peru)
- (iii) Bordeaux, Port of the Moon (France)
- (iv) Timbuktu (Mali)
- (v) Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures (Uzbekistan)
- (vi) Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

International conferences and symposiums

21. A number of international conferences and symposiums focused on various World Heritage issues were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance. A full inventory of these activities is included in documents *WHC-08/32.COM/5* and *WHC-09/33.COM/5A*.
22. A Workshop to reflect the Future of the *World Heritage Convention* was held at UNESCO Headquarters from 25 to 27 February 2009. At its 33rd session (Seville, 2009), in conformity with Rule 20 of the *Rules of Procedure* of the World Heritage Committee on the creation of consultative bodies, the Committee established a Working Group on the Reflection on the Future of the *World Heritage Convention* as a Consultative Body (Decision **33 COM 14A.1**). The Committee decided that the **Draft Vision** for the implementation of the *Convention*, which reflects and builds on the objectives of Credibility, Conservation, Capacity building, Communication and Communities (Annex 1) and Document *WHC-09/33.COM/14A* should be presented to the General Assembly and the next session of the Committee as a basis for further discussion (Decision **33 COM 14A.2**)⁶.

⁶ Document *WHC-09/17.GA/9* (Future of the *World Heritage Convention*).

G. Promoting the development of effective capacity-building in States Parties

Global Training Strategy

23. The World Heritage Centre continued to promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** measures with training courses, seminars and other technical cooperation activities and on-site conservation workshops. A full inventory of these training courses and activities is included in documents *WHC-08/32.COM/5* and *WHC-09/33.COM/5A*.

Education Activities

24. A number of international and regional workshops and training courses were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance to develop educational activities related to World Heritage (an inventory of these activities is included in documents *WHC-08/32.COM/5* and *WHC-09/33.COM/5A*).
25. The World Heritage in Young Hands Educational Resource Kit for Teachers was produced in Amharic, Arabic (2nd edition), Bulgarian, Latvian and Portuguese bringing the number of language versions to 33.
26. The 6th, 7th and 8th episodes of the cartoon series *Patrimonito's World Heritage Adventures* were produced and disseminated to schools and out-of-school audiences.

H. Increasing public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication

Awareness-raising

27. In 2008, the World Heritage website <http://whc.unesco.org> received an average of 18,015 visits per day. Traffic to the World Heritage website has increased by 15%, from 5,723,429 visits in 2007 to 6,593,710 in 2008.
28. Three e-mail newsletters "WH-Info" were sent between October 2008 and June 2009 to over 60,000 registered members of the World Heritage website.
29. Articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published through work with numerous national and international well-known media.

Publications

30. 100,000 World Heritage Maps were produced and disseminated in English, French and Spanish with National Geographic and Hewlett Packard in 2007-2008 and with National Geographic and UNF in 2008-2009. In addition, local-language editions of the National Geographic Magazine (in Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Romanian, Serbian and Swedish) ensured the dissemination of over 200,000 copies of the 2007-08 and 2008-09 versions of the Map.
31. Three new publications (number 23 to 25) were issued in the World Heritage Paper Series: *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit*; *Rock Art in the Caribbean*; *World Heritage and Buffer Zones*.

32. Publication of seven issues of the quarterly magazine *World Heritage* (number 47 to 53).
33. An inventory of World Heritage publications is included in documents *WHC-08/32.COM/5* and *WHC-09/33.COM/5A*.

Bi-lateral Agreements with States Parties and Partnerships

34. Since 2003, an inventory of agreements focusing on World Heritage was established to provide a consolidated report of support granted to World Heritage sites by States Parties, national and international governmental agencies, universities, foundations and other civil society stakeholders. 112 agreements are registered, of which 22 are bilateral agreements with States Parties. Seven are still being implemented while the others are now completed. The Centre manages all the agreements in cooperation with UNESCO central services and reports to the World Heritage Committee and the Executive Board on each of the active partnerships.