



UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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

Unesco Headquarters, Paris, 2 November 1991

Item 8 of the provisional agenda: Means of ensuring an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world on the World Heritage Committee

1. The seventh General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (November 1989) to which the above-mentioned subject was submitted adopted a resolution by which it reasserted the importance of a rotation of the Committee members, inviting States Parties whose mandates on the Committee had just expired to consider not standing for re-election during an appropriate period of time, but nonetheless remaining closely associated with the Committee's work. It also invited the World Heritage Committee to give further consideration to additional procedures, such as regional quotas, to ensure an equitable distribution of the different regions and cultures of the world.
2. During its thirteenth session (December 1989), the Committee did not consider it suitable to apply rigid mechanisms for the election of its members so as to ensure an appropriate balance in the equitable representation of geographical regions and cultures. It requested the Secretariat to submit proposals for guidelines which could be submitted for consideration to the General Assembly at its eighth session.
3. The basic principle, i.e. "equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world", follows from the rule as mentioned in Article 8.2 of the Convention. Since the first session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage held in Nairobi in 1978, the question as to the application of this rule has been regularly raised both by the General Assembly and the Committee. Various suggestions have been made both by States Parties and by the Secretariat, but none of them met with a consensus, in particular with respect to regional quotas.
4. During its fourteenth session in Banff, Canada (December 1990), the Committee noted that the last election had already brought some improvement. The Committee expressed the wish that two charts be submitted to the eighth session of the General Assembly, one presenting for each State Party the periods during which they have been members of the Committee, the other showing the participation of Member States to the Bureau of the Committee. These charts are attached as Annex to the present document.

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CLT/91/CONF/013/COL/8

The Committee, futhermore, expressed the wish that an appeal be launched again to States Parties so that they be invited to present their candidatures to the World Heritage Committee, bearing in mind the importance of having specialists to regularly take part in meetings, and of ensuring a balance between experts in cultural and natural heritage. The importance of the regular participation of such specialists in statutory meetings has been underlined by the Committee's decision to finance the costs of participation in the Bureau and Committee sessions of specialists in cultural and natural heritage conservation representing the States Members of the Committee which appear on the United Nations List of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

5. The General Assembly might wish to consider to request the Secretariat to present it regularly with the afore-mentioned charts and to invite States Parties to bear in mind the wish of the World Heritage Committee.