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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
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THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL
AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room XII
30 –31 October, 2001

Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda: Equitable Representation in the World Heritage Committee (follow-up to the Resolution adopted by the Twelfth General Assembly of States Parties, including amendment to *Rules of Procedure* 13.1 and 13.8).

Action requested:

The General Assembly is requested to examine and approve the Draft Resolution (including amendments to *Rules of Procedure* 13.1 and 13.8 adopted by the Committee at its twenty-fourth session (Cairns, 2000)).

I. BACKGROUND

I.1 In October 1999 the twelfth General Assembly of States Parties

- adopted by consensus a Resolution¹ underlining the importance of an equitable representation of the World Heritage Committee and the need to increase the number of its members
- requested the World Heritage Committee to submit proposals on this matter to the thirteenth General Assembly of States Parties and to inscribe an item on the agenda of the thirty-first General Conference in 2001.

I.2 On 30 March 2001, the World Heritage Centre requested that this item be inscribed on the agenda of the thirty-first General Conference. The Secretary of the General Conference replied on 6 April 2001 that this subject did not justify inclusion on the General Conference agenda².

I.3 In 2000, a Working Group on Equitable Representation within the World Heritage Committee was established under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador J. Musitelli (France). The report of the Working Group was discussed at the June and October 2000 sessions of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee (WHC-2000/CONF.204/INF.9 and WHC-2000/CONF.204/6).

¹ ***“The General Assembly of States Parties:***

Underlining the importance of an equitable representation of the World Heritage Committee and the need to increase the number of its members,

Taking into consideration the intervention of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee on this subject,

Requests the World Heritage Committee:

- a) *to set up a working group to study this question and to submit proposals to the thirteenth General Assembly of States Parties,*
- b) *to request the inscription of an item on the agenda of the thirty-first General Conference concerning this issue.”*

² The Secretary of the General Conference commented that: “The equitable representation within the World Heritage Committee is a question (issue) which (rests) at the competence of the bodies established by the World Heritage Convention. Only one possible revision to the text of the Convention will call for examination of this point by the General Conference. At the present time, it does not appear to me that the Assembly of the member States has decided (resolved) to recommend such a revision. Furthermore, the draft resolution transmitted by the World Heritage Committee to the Assembly for adoption during its 13th session does not propose (recommend) any revision of the Convention. There is, therefore, no decision to be submitted for the approval of the General Conference, thus adding this point to its Agenda is not justified.”

I.4 The Bureau's recommendations to the twenty-fourth session of the Committee aimed to achieve implementation of the intent of the Resolution of the 7th General Assembly of States Parties (1989)³, and the recommendations of the Working Group on Equitable Representation in the Committee and specifically to:

- encourage State Parties to voluntarily reduce term of office on the Committee from six to four years;
- increase the rotation of States Parties on the Committee;
- discourage consecutive terms by States Parties;
- enhance the involvement of, and rotation within, all regions in the work of the Committee;
- encourage the participation of States Parties that are under-represented on the World Heritage List;
- define a number of seats for under-represented States Parties while leaving a certain number of seats open to election on a free basis; and
- take into account the potential of other options that may arise after consideration of the feasibility study into the proposed sub-committee system.

II. DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION (CAIRNS, 2000)

II.1 The Committee noted the proposals on the equitable representation of the Committee developed following the Special Session of the Bureau (October 2000) (WHC-2000/CONF.204/6) and decided to recommend the following Draft Resolution for adoption by the 13th General Assembly:

³ "The General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage,

Recalling Article 8, paragraph 2, of the Convention which stipulates that 'Election of members of the Committee shall ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world';

Considering that for this purpose it is important to observe the practice of rotation in the representation of States Parties on the Committee;

Invites the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, whose mandates on the Committee expire, to consider not to stand for re-election during an appropriate period;

Requests the Chairman, at each election, to invite States Parties to take account of this Resolution:

Invites the President of the World Heritage Committee to do everything in his power to encourage the States Parties, whose mandates on the Committee have just expired, to remain closely associated with its work for a period of four years, in conformity with Article 8.1 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure;

Invites the World Heritage Committee to give further consideration at its meetings in the next two years to additional procedures, such as regional quotas, to ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world, as required by Article 8, paragraph 2, of the Convention;

Invites furthermore the World Heritage Committee to formulate proposals in view of financing, in whole or in part, travel and sojourn expenses for the members of the Committee representing the least developed countries."

II.2 *The General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage,*

Recalling Article 8, paragraph 2, of the Convention which stipulates that “Election of members of the Committee shall ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world”;

Recalling Article 9 of the Convention which stipulates that “The term of office of States members of the World Heritage Committee shall extend from the end of the ordinary session of the General Conference during which they are elected until the end of its third subsequent ordinary session”;

Recalling the Resolution of the 7th General Assembly of States Parties (1989);

Considering the representivity of the World Heritage List could be enhanced through the increased participation in the work of the Committee of States Parties whose heritage is currently unrepresented in the List;

Considering that the strong interest of States Parties in participating in the work of the World Heritage Committee could be addressed by a more frequent rotation of Committee members;

Invites the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, to voluntarily reduce their term of office from six to four years;

Encourages States Parties that are not members of the Committee to make use of their right to participate in meetings of the World Heritage Committee as observers;

Discourages States Parties from seeking consecutive terms of office in the World Heritage Committee;

Decides that 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;

Decides to amend its Rules of Procedure as follows:

New Rule to be inserted after Rule 13.1

A certain number of seats may be reserved for States Parties who do not have sites on the World Heritage List, upon decision of the World Heritage Committee at the session that precedes the General Assembly. Such a ballot for reserved seats would precede the open ballot for the remaining seats to be filled. Unsuccessful candidates in the reserved ballot would be eligible to stand in the open ballot.

Amendment to existing Rule 13.8 (new text in bold)

13.8 Those States obtaining in the first ballot the required majority shall be elected, unless the number of States obtaining that majority is greater than the number of seats to be filled. In that case, the States obtaining the greatest number of votes, up to the number of seats to be filled, shall be declared elected. ~~If the number of States obtaining the~~

~~majority required is less than the number of seats to be filled, there shall be a second ballot, followed by a third and, if necessary a fourth, to fill the remaining seats. If the number of States obtaining the majority required is less than the number of seats to be filled, there shall be a second ballot. If the number of States obtaining the majority required is still less than the number of seats to be filled there shall be a third and, if necessary a fourth ballot, to fill the remaining seats. For the third and fourth ballots, the voting shall be restricted to the States obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, up to a number twice that of the seats remaining to be filled.~~

Decides that this resolution should be implemented immediately.

II.3 The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly organize the agenda of its thirteenth session so that the measures foreseen by these amendments may enter into force at that same session.

II.4 In order to implement the new rule to be inserted following Rule 13.1, the Committee decided that one seat be reserved for a State Party not having a site inscribed on the World Heritage List at the date of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly.

II.5 The Committee requested the Secretariat to inform all States Parties of the implementation of the new electoral procedures, particularly those States Parties which may fulfill the conditions to be candidates for the reserved seat⁴.

II.6 The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare with the involvement of interested States Parties and the advisory bodies, a proposal for the twenty-sixth session of the World Heritage Committee for further amendment to Rule 13 of the *Rules of Procedures of the General Assembly* relating to the election of members of the World Heritage Committee in order to ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world. This proposal is to be based on a thorough analysis of the consequences of the proposed changes and the adjustments that would be required to the election procedures.

II.7 The Committee also decided to revise the *Rules of Procedure of the World Heritage Committee*⁵ as follows:

New Rule 4.3

“In determining the place of the next session, the Committee shall give due regard to the need to ensure an equitable rotation among the different regions and cultures of the world.”

New Rule 20.4

“In appointing consultative bodies, due regard shall be given to the need to ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world.”

⁴ At the time of preparation of this document, the World Heritage Centre was preparing to inform all States Parties of the implementation of the new electoral procedures by Circular Letter.

⁵ The World Heritage Centre has revised the *Rules of Procedure of the World Heritage Committee*. Copies are available from the Centre on request and at www.unesco.org/whc/rules.htm

New Rule 21.3

“In appointing subsidiary bodies, due regard shall be given to the need to ensure an equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world.”