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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
Twenty-fifth session

Helsinki, Finland
11 – 16 December 2001

Item 4b of the Provisional Agenda: Acts constituting "crimes against the common heritage of humanity"

Background:

In March 2001, the Taliban forces wilfully destroyed the Buddhist statues of Bamiyan and other cultural heritage in Afghanistan. The Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, at its 25th session, discussed at length the protection of Afghan cultural heritage and the need to strengthen the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (see paragraph I.4-I.29, WHC-01/CONF.208/3 Report of Rapporteur of the Bureau).

Decision required: The Committee is requested to:

1. **take note** of the information presented in the document; and
2. **consider:**
 - a) ***ways and means by which the implementation of the World Heritage Convention can be reinforced***, especially in relation to the other relevant UNESCO Conventions for the protection of cultural heritage;
 - b) ***measures*** for enhancing the promotion of education, awareness raising activities and communication concerning the irreplaceable values of the cultural heritage of humanity;
 - c) ***improved mechanisms for promoting the scientific documentation*** of potential and existing world cultural heritage properties.

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Executive Summary

The General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, at its 13th session (Paris, 30-31 October 2001), invited the Director-General of UNESCO to inform the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session on the chronology of events related to the nomination for inclusion on the World Heritage List of the statues of Bamiyan and other Afghan cultural heritage properties by the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan currently in exile. Following this invitation and for the information of the World Heritage Committee, the chronology of events related to the nomination for inclusion on the World Heritage List of Afghan cultural heritage has been synthesised in **Part I** of this document, which includes other relevant UNESCO and UN actions taken for the protection of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan.

Moreover, the General Assembly invited the World Heritage Committee, at its 25th session, to consider:

- (a) ways and means by which the implementation of the World Heritage Convention can be reinforced, especially in relation to the other relevant UNESCO Conventions for the protection of cultural heritage;
- (b) measures for enhancing the promotion of education, awareness raising activities and communication concerning the irreplaceable values of the cultural heritage of humanity; and
- (c) improved mechanisms for promoting the scientific documentation of potential and existing world cultural heritage properties.

Finally, the General Assembly invited States Parties to inform the World Heritage Committee, at its 25th session, on any steps they have taken to protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan. **Part II** of this document presents the full text of the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. Since the 13th session of the General Assembly, no information has been transmitted by States Parties to the World Heritage Committee on steps taken to protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan.

Commission IV for Culture of the UNESCO General Conference at its 31st session discussed an agenda item concerning *Acts constituting "crimes against the common heritage of humanity"*. The General Conference adopted a Resolution which is presented in this document as **Part III**.

Copies of nomination dossiers and other background documents will be available for consultation upon request to the World Heritage Centre staff at the time of the 25th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Part I. Chronology of events related to the nomination for inclusion on the World Heritage List of the statues of Bamiyan and other Afghan cultural heritage properties

Date	Action	Reference document if any
19 November 1946	Afghanistan becomes a Member State of the United Nations.	
4 May 1948	Afghanistan becomes a Member State of UNESCO.	
20 March 1979	UNESCO receives the instrument of accession to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.	Letter 79-97156 dated 15 March 1979
21 December 1981	Nominations signed by the Minister of Information and Culture of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan transmitted to UNESCO for the following properties: - The city and monuments of Herat; - The monuments of Bamiyan Valley (including Fuladi, Kakrak, Sharr-i-Ghulghular, and Sharr-i-Zuhak); - The archaeological site of Ai Khanum; - The site and monuments of Ghazni; - The Minaret of Jam; - The Mosque of Haji Piyada or Nu Gunbad; - The Stupa and Monastery of Guldarra; - The site and monuments of Lashkari Bazar-Bust; - The archaeological site of Surkh Kotal.	C-207 C-208 C-209 C-210 C-211 C-212 C-213 C-214 C-215
April 1982	Receipt by UNESCO Sector for Culture, Division of Cultural Heritage of the following nominations: - The city and monuments of Herat, 14 April 1982; - The monuments of Bamiyan Valley (including Fuladi, Kakrak, Sharr-i-Ghulghular, Sharr-i-Zuhak), 14 April 1982; - The archaeological site of Ai Khanum, 14 April 1982; - The site and monuments of Ghazni, 14 April 1982; - The Minaret of Jam, 14 April 1982; - The Mosque of Haji Piyada or Nu Gunbad, 14 April 1982; - The Stupa and Monastery of Guldarra, 28 April 1982; - The site and monuments of Lashkari Bazar-Bust, 28 April 1982; - The archaeological site of Surkh Kotal, 28 April 1982.	C-207 C-208 C-209 C-210 C-211 C-212 C-213 C-214 C-215
1982	Transmission of nominations to ICOMOS from UNESCO.	

Date	Action	Reference document if any
1982-3	ICOMOS evaluates the nominations of the following 4 properties and recommends the following: - <u>The city and monuments of Herat</u>: inscription to be deferred until a supplementary file including recent documentation and a precise delimitation of the property are received. - <u>The monuments of the Bamiyan Valley</u>: to be inscribed on the World Heritage List after the definition of a sufficiently broad zone of protection. - <u>The archaeological site of Ai-Khanum</u>: to be inscribed on the World Heritage List following a more precise delimitation of its perimeter of protection. - <u>The Minaret of Jam</u>: Inscription postponed until supplementary details on the zone of protection and on the state of preservation of the monument are obtained.	
June 1983	Examination of nomination dossiers of the following 4 Afghan properties by the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee at its 7th session (27-30 June 1983, Paris, France): - <u>The city and monuments of Herat</u>: The Bureau defers examination of this nomination until the conclusions of an expert mission to be sent to the area to report on the state of preservation and the safeguarding conditions of the site, are made available. - <u>The monuments of Bamiyan Valley</u>: The Bureau recommends the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List to the World Heritage Committee, on the condition that the authorities define a large perimeter of protection which would include the cliffs and the valley, and provide a map indicating the delimitation of this zone. - <u>The Minaret of Jam</u>: The Bureau defers examination of the nomination dossier and requests the authorities to redefine the limits of the zone of protection and to provide precise information on the present state of conservation of the monument. - <u>The archaeological city of Ai Khanum</u>: The Bureau recommends the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List to the World Heritage Committee, on the condition that the authorities provide a safeguarding plan for the structures brought to light by the excavations of 1965-78, and in particular the earthen wall.	CLT-83/CONF.021/8

Date	Action	Reference document if any
December 1983	The World Heritage Committee, at its 7th session (5-9 December 1983, Florence, Italy), considers the recommendations of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, and additional information available at the time of its 7th session and decides on the following: - <u>The city and monuments of Herat</u>: The Committee defers examination of this nomination until it receives the necessary information requested by the Bureau. - <u>The Minaret of Jam</u>: The Committee defers examination of this nomination until it receives the necessary information requested by the Bureau. - <u>The monuments of Bamiyan Valley</u>: The Committee defers examination of this nomination since the conditions under which the Bureau had recommended their inscription on the World Heritage List had not yet been fulfilled. - <u>The archaeological city of Ai Khanum</u>: The Committee defers examination of this nomination since the conditions under which the Bureau had recommended their inscription on the World Heritage List had not yet been fulfilled.	SC/83/CONF.009 /8
1990	World Heritage Fund Preparatory Assistance for preparing additional information for the nomination dossier of Herat (US\$ 7,369) is allocated.	
1994-1997	Various UNESCO efforts are made in co-operation with UNOCHA, SPACH, and other relevant IGO and NGOs to protect and inventory the cultural heritage of Afghanistan in spite of increasingly difficult security conditions. Included in the efforts are: - Feasibility Mission to inventory and protect adequately the collection of the National Museum in Kabul; and - World Heritage Fund Emergency Assistance to consolidate the Minaret of Jam (US\$ 17,200) 1995.	
4-9 December 1995	At the 19 th session of the World Heritage Committee (Berlin, Germany), the Observer from Afghanistan (Representative of the Islamic State of Afghanistan) thanks the Committee for the emergency assistance granted by the Chairperson for the Minaret of Jam. Referring to the cultural properties of Afghanistan on the Tentative List which continue to be threatened by war and illicit traffic, he expresses his hope that these sites could one day be inscribed on the World Heritage List and appeals for international protection for their safeguarding.	WHC-95/CONF.203/16
17 April 1997	The Taliban declare that they will destroy the Bamiyan Buddhas with dynamite.	

Date	Action	Reference document if any
18 April 1997	UNESCO Director-General urges the Afghan people to safeguard their cultural heritage, following press reports that Taliban leaders intend to destroy the 2,000 year-old Buddhist statues in Central Bamiyan Province. According to press reports, the Taliban threaten to destroy the treasures (at the time under the control of the minority Shiite Muslims) as “these statues are not Islamic and we have to destroy them”.	UNESCO Press Release No. 97-61
22 April 1997	The Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to the United Nations requests the UNESCO Director-General to take necessary action to inscribe the Bamiyan Buddhas on the World Heritage List as a matter of extreme urgency, in particular, by asking Professor C. Adle at CNRS (France) to prepare an adequate nomination dossier.	
24 April 1997	UN Secretary General appeals to political and military commanders in Afghanistan to ensure that no harm comes to the Bamiyan Buddhas.	
28 April 1997	The Taliban Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, states that the Taliban would not destroy the Bamiyan Buddhas.	
7 May 1997	The Ambassador of the Permanent Delegation of Pakistan to UNESCO informs the UNESCO Director-General that Pakistan has been in touch with the Taliban leadership. Accordingly, the Taliban’s spokesman, Mullah Wakil Ahmad, informs BBC on 24 April 1997 that they respect all religions and have no intention of destroying the Buddhist statues in Bamiyan. The Taliban representative in Islamabad, Mufty Masoom Afghani, also issues a statement to this effect.	No. 9/20(1)/97
May 1997	The Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre advises the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to complete the nomination dossier of Bamiyan by providing the information requested by the World Heritage Committee in 1983.	
30 November – 5 December 1998	The World Heritage Committee, at its 22nd session in Kyoto, Japan, discusses issues related to the possible inscription of outstanding sites of universal significance located in Afghanistan as World Heritage.	WHC-98/CONF.203/18
9 December 1998	At its 85th plenary meeting, the UN General Assembly adopt Resolution A/RES/53/165 in which it: "Expresses its deep concern at reports of attacks on and looting of cultural artefacts in Afghanistan, Emphasizes that all parties share the responsibility to protect their common heritage, and requests all Member States to take appropriate measures to prevent the looting of cultural artefacts and to ensure their return to Afghanistan";	A/RES/53/165 Page 4 Paragraph 16

Date	Action	Reference document if any
17 December 1999	At its 83rd plenary meeting, the UN General Assembly adopt Resolution A/RES/54/185 in which it: "Expresses its deep concern at reports of attacks on and looting of cultural artefacts in Afghanistan, Emphasizes that all parties share the responsibility to protect their common heritage, and Requests all Member States to take appropriate measures to prevent the looting of cultural artefacts and to ensure their return to Afghanistan."	A/RES/54/185 Page 5 Paragraph 16
4 December 2000	At its 81st plenary meeting, the UN General Assembly adopt Resolution A/RES/55/119 in which it: "Expresses its deep concern at reports of attacks on and looting of cultural artefacts in Afghanistan, Emphasizes that all parties share the responsibility to protect their common heritage, and Requests all Member States to take appropriate measures to prevent the looting of cultural artefacts and to ensure their return to Afghanistan."	A/RES/55/119 Page 5 Paragraph 19
26 February 2001	UNESCO appeals for the preservation of cultural heritage landmarks in Afghanistan, following press reports of the deliberate destruction by the Taliban of over a dozen ancient statues in the Afghan National Museum in Kabul and of an order by the Supreme Leader of the Taliban to destroy all statues in Afghanistan which, as human representations, the Taliban view as non-Islamic.	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-27
28 February 2001	UNESCO Director-General sends a telegram to Mullah Mohamed Omar, Supreme Leader of the Taliban, urging him to reconsider the decision to destroy all the statues of Afghanistan.	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-28
28 February 2001	UNESCO Director-General describes the decision to destroy all the statues of Afghanistan as "a real cultural disaster" and strongly urges the Afghan people to take action to prevent the destruction of this heritage, which is valuable to all.	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-28
1 March 2001	Former French Ambassador to Pakistan and Founding Member of SPACH (Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage), Mr Pierre Lafrance, meets UNESCO Director-General.	
1 March 2001	UNESCO Director-General requests the Ambassador of Pakistan to UNESCO to "do everything possible to rally Islamabad's support for our efforts to stop this destruction."	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-30
1 March 2001	UNESCO Director-General contacts Representatives of other Islamic Countries – Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates,	UNESCO Press Release No.

Date	Action	Reference document if any
	Qatar, Iran and Tajikistan – as well as the President and the Secretary of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, who all express their unconditional support, and who all pledge to do all that they can to put a stop to the destructions of the statues in Afghanistan.	2001-30
1 March 2001	Mr Pierre Lafrance travels to Islamabad as Special Envoy for the UNESCO Director-General to deliver a message to the Taliban authorities, urging them to reverse their decision to destroy the ancient statues of Afghanistan's cultural heritage.	
1 March 2001	UNESCO Director-General convenes Emergency Meeting with Ambassadors to UNESCO from 54 Member States belonging to the Organization of the Islamic Conference.	
2 March 2001	Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, Mr Peter King, expresses profound distress and voices full support in the name of the World Heritage Committee, for the Director-General's initiatives.	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-31
2 March 2001	Arrival of Mr Lafrance in Islamabad.	
4 March 2001	Mr Lafrance arrives in Kandahar and meets with the Taliban Minister of Foreign Affairs. As 5-6 March 2001 were religious holidays, he follows advice to return to Islamabad after consultations.	
5 March 2001	UNESCO DG tries to contact Pakistan's Chief Executive	
5 March 2001	UNESCO DG gathers opinions from Muslim experts on the interpretation of Islam, as a means of convincing the Taliban Supreme Leader to reconsider his interpretation that Islam does not tolerate any representations respected by other religions.	
6 March 2001	UNESCO ADG/CLT and ADG/ODG meets the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in Paris UNESCO Headquarters.	
6 March 2001	President Mubarak of Egypt accepts request of UNESCO DG to try to dissuade the Taliban Supreme Leader from destroying all cultural heritage properties in Afghanistan.	
7 March 2001	UNESCO ADG/CLT transmits UNESCO DG's request to WHC to examine the feasibility of convening an Extraordinary Session of the World Heritage Committee for examining the possibility of inscribing Bamiyan and related cultural heritage properties as World Heritage in Danger.	
8 March 2001	UNESCO Special Envoy Mr Lafrance travels to Kabul.	

Date	Action	Reference document if any
10 March 2001	UNESCO DG conveys a letter, through his special envoy in Afghanistan Pierre Lafrance, to Mullah Omar demanding that he suspends his edict to destroy pre-Islamic Afghan statues until the arrival of an important religious delegation. In the letter, the Director-General noted his consultations with numerous Ulemas (Islamic religious leaders) and proposed that the Taliban edict be suspended and re-examined by Afghanistan's Supreme Court upon a hearing with the delegation of specialists of Islamic law, which this morning left Doha, Qatar, and has arrived in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The religious delegation of some 15 members is led by Doctor Nasr Farid Wasil, Mufti of Egypt and includes, notably, Ibrahim Baker, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference; Sheikh Yousef Al-Kardawi of Doha; Sheikh Mohammad Al-Rawi, Ulema of Al-Azhar; the well-known Islamic author, Fahmi al-Hwadi; along with other judges of the Sharia (Islamic law) and professors. They are expected to meet with Afghan religious leaders and Mullah Omar. Mr Matsuura expresses gratitude to the Emir of Qatar-the country that is currently presiding the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the largest organization in the Muslim world for making an aircraft available for the delegation.	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-37
12 March 2001	<u>UNESCO condemns the Taliban's destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan which has been confirmed by UNESCO Special Envoy Mr Pierre Lafrance.</u> The UNESCO DG states that in destroying the Buddhas of Bamiyan, "the Taliban have committed a crime against culture. It is abominable to witness the cold and calculated destruction of cultural properties which were the heritage of the Afghan people, and, indeed, of the whole of humanity. The Buddhas of Bamiyan were not inscribed on the World Heritage List but deserved to be and their destruction represents a true cultural crime. This crime against culture was committed while people throughout the world raised their voices to prevent it. The Taliban heeded neither the unprecedented scope of international mobilisation, nor the advice against their decision, spontaneously issued by the highest religious authorities of Islam. The loss is irreversible. Everything possible must be done to stop further destruction. I have asked my Special Envoy to continue his mission and explore all avenues that may allow for the safeguarding of the other treasures of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic heritage. As inexcusable as this action is, I hope that it will not provide fanatics elsewhere with an excuse for acts of destruction targeting Moslem cultural properties. The senseless violence of a	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-38

Date	Action	Reference document if any
	few should not be met with further acts of violence, which would be equally intolerable.”	
13 March 2001	UNESCO DG welcomes the fact that the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia included the destruction of historic monuments in its 16-count indictment of February 22 relating to the 1991 attacks on the World Heritage site of the ancient port city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Mr Matsuura states that: “This sets a historic precedent as it is the first time since the judgements of the Nürnberg and Tokyo tribunals that a crime against cultural property has been sanctioned by an international tribunal. This indictment concerns a breach of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, a global agreement on the protection of cultural heritage during hostilities, which is administered by UNESCO. It shows that the international community will not sit idly by and condone crimes against cultural property.” Mr Matsuura draws a parallel between the attacks on Dubrovnik and the action by the Taliban to destroy Afghanistan’s pre-Islamic heritage by stating that “This important precedent shows the international community can take action to protect cultural property and apply sanctions for its protection.”	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-40
27 March 2001	UNESCO DG announces that he is determined to pursue the mobilization in favour of Afghanistan’s heritage, despite the destruction of the Buddha statues of Bamiyan by the Taliban, focusing its future action on the safeguarding of Afghanistan’s remaining Islamic and pre-Islamic heritage, maintaining dialogue, pursuing discussions of a religious nature favourable to heritage protection and working to develop legal standards pertaining to the concept of cultural crime. Mr Matsuura refers to the wave of indignation raised by the destruction of Afghanistan’s pre-Islamic heritage, stressing that “this general mobilization in favour of cultural heritage has transcended the boundaries between nationalities and religion”. He also highlights the fact that many Moslem states refused “to see their religion associated to this fanatical gesture.” The DG, however, particularly emphasizes the future and declares, regarding other pre-Islamic cultural objects in Afghanistan, that “efforts to bring the Taliban to respect these archaeological riches will be maintained. To save what can be saved, we also need to fight against the traffic in Afghan cultural properties,” Mr Matsuura adds, saying that he planned to appeal to dealers and collectors “so that they contribute from their side, and in relation with UNESCO, to the safeguarding of Afghanistan’s cultural heritage.” To contend with such traffic,	UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-48

Date	Action	Reference document if any
	outlawed by the 1970 Convention, steps are being taken with the support of the Swiss authorities and the Hirayama Foundation, to regain possession of endangered Afghan goods and “place them in safe-keeping until they can be returned to Afghanistan.” Welcoming the recent decision by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia to include the destruction of historic monuments in its indictments relating to attacks on the city of Dubrovnik, he adds: “A study is being undertaken to examine, within the framework of the various existing conventions, notably those of 1954 and 1972, all the means available to prevent and punish such crimes against cultural properties.” Expressing concern for the “distress experienced by the population of Afghanistan,” Mr Matsuura joins the appeal launched by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for a mobilization of funds for emergency humanitarian aide. Mr Lafrance, a former French Ambassador to Pakistan, echoes this. He reiterates recommendations for dialogue and assistance to the people of Afghanistan and says: “We must not meet stupidity with stupidity, taboo with taboo.”	
14 June 2001	At its 161st session, UNESCO’s Executive Board adopts a resolution concerning the protection of the cultural heritage of humanity which <i>Invites</i> the World Heritage Committee, the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property and the other competent bodies to identify the means of ensuring better protection of the common heritage of humanity, notably through the development of new mechanisms, within the framework of the Conventions, in particular by exploring ways and means of better enforcing the provisions of the aforesaid conventions; <i>"Invites the Director-General to give full support to the World Heritage Committee and other competent bodies with a view to formulating proposals aimed at establishing mechanisms to strengthen the protection of the heritage;</i> <i>Invites</i> the Director-General to commission a study on the endangered heritage in the 21st century; <i>Decides</i> to include the item “Acts constituting crimes against the common heritage of humanity” in the agenda of its 162nd session and in the provisional agenda of the 31st session of UNESCO’s General Conference. Members of the Executive Board strongly condemned the acts of destruction committed against historical and cultural monuments in Afghanistan and some even considered the possibility of imposing sanctions. The examination of means to prevent such	161 EX/54 Pages 4-5. UNESCO Press Release No. 2001-78

Date	Action	Reference document if any
	acts, qualified as “crimes against the common heritage of humanity”, will figure on the agenda of the next General Conference in autumn 2001."	
25-30 June 2001	The Bureau of the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session discusses as length the protection of Afghan cultural heritage and proposes a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention at its 13th session 30-31st October 2001.	WHC-01/CONF208/3
2-12 October 2001	At its 162nd session, UNESCO's Executive Board takes note of the discussion of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee concerning Afghan cultural heritage.	162EX/Dec.3.5.1
27 October 2001	Commission IV for Culture of the UNESCO General Conference, during its 31st session discusses "Acts constituting a crime against the common heritage of humanity" and adopts a Resolution (see Part III).	31C/64 paragraphs 23-25 and PART III of this document
30-31 October 2001	The General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, at its 13th session discusses the protection of Afghan cultural hertitage and adopts a Resolution (see Part II).	PART II of this document

Part II. Resolution on the protection of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan adopted by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention at its thirteenth session (Paris, 30-31 OCTOBER 2001)

Recalling the invitation of the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 161st session to the World Heritage Committee to identify the means of ensuring better protection of the common heritage of humanity;

Noting the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954) and its Protocols, the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970), the World Heritage Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the UNIDROIT Convention and other relevant international legal instruments;

Appreciating the attempts made by the Director-General of UNESCO, UNESCO Member States and various organizations and individuals to convince the Taliban forces to protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan;

Condemns the wilful destruction of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan by the Taliban forces, particularly the statues of Bamiyan, as “crime against the common heritage of humanity”;

Appeals to all States Parties to the World Heritage Convention to become signatories to the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, its Protocols, the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the UNIDROIT Convention and other international legal instruments protecting cultural heritage, if they have not yet done so;

Invites the Director-General of UNESCO to inform the World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-fifth session, on the chronology of events related to the nomination for inclusion on the World Heritage List of the statues of Bamiyan and other Afghan cultural heritage properties by the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan currently in exile;

Invites the World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-fifth session, to consider:

- a) ways and means by which the implementation of the World Heritage Convention can be reinforced, especially in relation to the other relevant UNESCO Conventions for the protection of cultural heritage;
- b) measures for enhancing the promotion of education, awareness raising activities and communication concerning the irreplaceable values of the cultural heritage of humanity;
- c) improved mechanisms for promoting the scientific documentation of potential and existing world cultural heritage properties;

Invites States Parties to inform the World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-fifth session, on any steps they have taken to protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan;

Invites the Director-General of UNESCO to inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations when the common heritage of humanity is threatened with wilful destruction so that he/she may propose necessary actions to protect this heritage.

Part III. Resolution adopted on 27 October 2001 by Commission IV on Culture for final adoption by the UNESCO General Conference at its 31st session (15 October-3 November 2001)

Item 5.5 - Acts constituting “crimes against the common heritage of humanity” (31 C/46)

Having examined document 31 C/46, the Commission recommends that the General Conference adopt the following resolution contained in paragraph 7, as amended during the debate.

The General Conference,

Thanking the Director-General for his report on his continued activity to protect threatened cultural heritage,

Noting the recommendations of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee to the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention at its thirteenth session for follow-up action in this respect,

1. Calls on all Member States and all other States of the world which are not yet party to the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict to join that Convention and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999, as well as the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illicitly Exported Cultural Objects, and the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in order to maximize the protection of the cultural heritage of humanity, and in particular, against destructive acts;
2. Notes the fundamental principles included in these instruments to prevent the destruction of the cultural heritage including looting and illicit excavations;
3. Wishes to reiterate the principles set out in these conventions in relation to the protection of the cultural heritage to which all Member States of UNESCO are committed and to serve as principles for the guidance of governments, authorities, institutions, organizations, associations and individual citizens; and
4. Invites the Director-General to formulate, for the 32nd session of the General Conference, a Draft Declaration against the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage based on those existing principles and on the debates on this item discussed at this 31st session of the General Conference.