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

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters

13-14 November 2014

Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda: Revision of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

3. Revision of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly: Follow-up to Resolution 19 GA 4

INF.3: Chairperson' summaries of the meetings of the open-ended working group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention

SUMMARY

This document contains the Chairperson' summaries of the 3 meetings held by the open-ended working group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention

*This document should be read in conjunction with Document WHC-14/1
EXT.GA/3.*

First meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

UNESCO Headquarters, Room XI

23 – 24 January 2014

Chairperson summary

The first meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly took place on 23 January (afternoon) and 24 January 2014. The Group elected H. E. Mr Jean-Frédéric Jauslin, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Switzerland as Chairperson of the meeting and Mr Francisco Javier Gutierrez Plata, from the Permanent Delegation of Colombia, as Rapporteur.

The meeting was attended by a high number of States Parties representatives which participated actively in the debate, with more than 50 delegations taking the floor at least on one occasion. The Open-ended group discussed extensively its mandate as defined by **Resolution 19 GA 4**. While some delegations called for the discussion to focus strictly on the Rules of Procedure concerning the election process, other delegations stated that the debate should also include broader measures to ensure equitable representation. Further, the Open-ended group discussed possible options to ensure an equitable representation with a view to amending the Rules of procedure.

Issues discussed: Possible mechanisms to ensure equitable geographical distribution of seats in the World Heritage Committee

A high number of delegations considered the **proposal by the Delegation of Brazil** made during the 19th General Assembly of States Parties as an adequate starting point for revision of the Rules of Procedure. This proposal foresees a distribution of seats at the Committee at each election among the electoral groups of UNESCO, as determined by the General Conference, in proportion to the number of States Parties from each group, with a minimum of three seats attributed to each electoral group. Some delegations expressed a concern that this procedure could lead to a “clean-slate” distribution of seats and thus, compromise the efficiency and expertise of the Committee.

Proposals for two or three reserved seats per electoral group, which would leave a number of “free seats” for candidates from different electoral groups, were also put forward.

In addition or instead of a guaranteed minimum of Committee seats for each electoral group, a number of delegations expressed their support for the “**safety net**” mechanism, suggesting, in case equitable representation may not be achieved through the standard election process, to increase the current number of reserved seats for each electoral group from 1 to 2.

Many delegations further supported the proposal of one **reserved seat for a State Party having never served in the Committee** as means to enhance rotation and membership of a higher

number of States Parties in the Committee. Other delegations pointed that one reserved seat could hardly ensure meeting the requirement for “equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the World” as defined by Art. 8 of the World Heritage Convention.

To the question whether an **increase of the number of Committee members** could be envisaged, the Legal Advisor clarified that this would require a revision of the *World Heritage Convention* - an option which was clearly not favoured by the delegations.

Issues discussed: Other measures

A number of other measures were also proposed by some delegations, with the aim to ensure that Committee decisions are based on sound expertise and to avoid conflict of interests. Those included a possible restriction for submission or examination of nominations **during the mandate as a Committee Member**. However, other delegations found this proposal to be of disadvantage to States Parties that have no World Heritage property inscribed on the World Heritage List and for which, in the current situation, one seat was reserved in the Committee.

It was further proposed to establish a **longer gap for States Parties after each mandate** as a Committee member. Other delegations underlined that such rules would be very disadvantageous for small States parties and developing countries.

Several delegations expressed their support for a **limitation and standardization of the election campaigns** and the establishment of a **standard procedure for the presentation of candidates with a strong focus on their expertise, as indicated in the Convention**, notably via the publication of their CVs, the purpose being to ensure a level-playing ground for all candidates and to minimize the politicization of the Committee. Others stated that the political character of the Committee elections should not be denied.

Follow-up

While no consensus was reached at the end of the meeting as to the choice of option to ensure equitable representation, some delegations stated that it might be worth exploring whether some of the proposed options can be modified and merged, with a view of achieving a reasonable compromise suitable to all States Parties. The Chairperson concluded the meeting by proposing that a second meeting of the Open-ended Working group be convened at the end of March, with tentative dates 20-21 March 2014.

Second meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties

UNESCO Headquarters, Room II

20 – 21 March 2014

Chairperson summary

N.B: This summary should be read in conjunction with the Chairperson' Summary of the first meeting of the OEWG (see Annex II)

The second meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group took place on 20 and 21 March 2014 under the chairmanship of H. E. Mr Jean-Frédéric Jauslin, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Switzerland and Mr Francisco Javier Gutierrez Plata, from the Permanent Delegation of Colombia, as Rapporteur.

This meeting was the continuation of the first meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group that took place on 23 and 24 January 2014. The Open-Ended Working Group continued its discussions on equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee as requested by Resolution **19 GA 4** and took into account the discussions and proposals put forward during the first meeting with a view to the revision by the General Assembly of its Rules of Procedure.

More than 200 participants representing more than 90 States Parties attended the meeting and actively contributed to the debate.

A. Issues discussed

• **Safety net mechanism**

States Parties agreed on the importance of a Safety Net mechanism to ensure a minimum representation of each electoral group on the Committee, underlining that the mechanism is already in place in the current electoral system as stated in Rule 14.1 (b) by ensuring one seat reserved per electoral group that might have no State Party in the composition of the Committee.

However, a number of States Parties expressed concern that some electoral groups may de facto be limited to this minimum number of seats and that this could lead to underrepresentation of those groups.

Concerns were also raised that a high number of minimum seats would favor “clean-slate” and that the principle of open elections for all seats should be ensured to avoid compromising the efficiency and expertise of the Committee.

The importance to ensure a minimum of 4 seats to Group V(a) was stressed by a number of Delegations.

- **Floating seat(s)**

An extensive debate took place on the principle of floating seat(s) to be allocated alternatively between several groups. However, no consensus could be reached on this matter and which electoral Groups should benefit from this principle.

- **Reserved seat**

A majority of Delegations expressed their support for the principle of a reserved seat to a State Party that has never served on the Committee. The importance of this principle was underlined and some Delegations stressed that it should be taken into account as part of the “Other measures”. The question of deducting this seat from the minimum seats per Group was also raised but not yet decided.

- **Number of open seats**

The number of open seats was also intensively discussed. Some Delegations considered that as many seats as possible should be open to competitive election as this would, in their view, ensure the requirements of expertise and avoid “clean-slate” while others were of the opinion that several open seats would be sufficient.

- **“Other measures”**

Several Delegations underlined the importance of considering the “Other measures” together with the proposals on equitable geographical representation, as a “package”. Due to time constraints, the list of others measures to envisaged could not be discussed. Some Delegations suggested that this issue be discussed in-depth during the next meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group.

B. Proposals presented during the meeting to ensure an equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee

During the first meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group, a number of proposals to ensure the geographical representation emerged (see list of proposals attached in Annex II). During the second meeting, several proposals were put forward on the basis of the existing proposals from the first meeting (see list of proposals attached in Annex I). The Open-Ended Working Group did not reach a consensus; but agreed on the idea that the « Turkey proposal » and the « Belgium proposal » were the best basis of discussion and that they deserved to be retained and refined to only retain one.

C. Agreement of principle

The States Parties agrees on the necessity to be in a position to propose a solution to the General Assembly which shall be held at the end of the year 2014. Obviously, it is the General Assembly who will decide finally on the adoption of new rules for election of members to the World Heritage Committee.

D. Conclusions and Follow-up

To fulfill its mandate, the Open-Ended Working Group decided to convene a third meeting, to be financed under Extrabudgetary resources. The dates of this meeting have been fixed to Tuesday 20 May (afternoon) and Wednesday 21 May 2014 all day.

ANNEX I

List of proposals examined during the Second meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties

- **Norway proposal modified (during the second meeting)**

This model foresees a minimum of 2 seats per electoral Group with 2 additional seats attributed to Group V(a) and 1 additional seat for Group IV. Furthermore, 1 floating seat among Groups III and IV. This model also foresees a 1 seat reserved for a State Party having never served in the Committee to be deducted from the minimum number of seats, thus leaving 5 open seats.

	G I 27	G II 25	G III 32	G IV 41	G Va 45	G Vb 19	Total
minimum	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
attributed				1	2		3
floating			*	*			1
[reserved-not yet served]	*	*	*	*	*	*	
open							
Total Min	2	2	2,5	3,5	4	2	

- **Norway/ GRULAC proposal (Norway proposal as modified by GRULAC)**

This proposal foresees a minimum of 2 seats for Group I, II, III and V(b) and 3 seats for Group IV and V(a); 3 floating seats among all 6 electoral Groups; 3 open seats as well as 1 seat reserved for a State Party having never served in the Committee. This proposal was considered as an adequate starting point for revision of the Rules of Procedure by many Delegations.

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
minimum	2	2	2	3	3	2	14
floating	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
reserved-not yet served	*	*	*	*	*	*	1
open	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
Total Min	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.5	

- **Turkey proposal**

This model foresees a minimum of 2 seats per electoral Group with 1 additional seat for Group IV and 1 additional seat for Group V(a); 1 floating seat among Groups III, IV and V(a) and 1 seat reserved for a State Party having never served in the Committee. This model would leave 5 open seats.

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
minimum	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
attributed				1	1		2
floating			*	*	*		1
reserved-not yet served	*	*	*	*	*	*	1
open							5
Total Min	2	2	2	3	4?	2	

- **Belgium proposal**

This model foresees a minimum of 2 seats per electoral Group and 1 additional seat for Group IV and 1 additional seat for Group V(a), 2 floating seats among Groups III, IV and V(a). This model also foresees a 1 seat reserved for a State Party having never served in the Committee to be deducted from the minimum number of seats, thus leaving 5 open seats.

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
	27	25	32	41	45	19	
minimum	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
attributed				1	1		2
floating			*	*	*		2
[reserved-not yet served]	*	*	*	*	*	*	
open							5
Total Min	2	2	2.66	3.66	3.66	2	

Furthermore, the Chairperson presented, **for information**, a strict pro rata calculation of the number of seats for each electoral group.

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
Minimum	2	2	2	3	3	2	14
Strict prorata	3.00	2.77	3.55	4.56	4.99	2.10	
Difference	1.00	0.77	1.55	1.56	1.99	0.10	
Total Min	2	2	2	3	4?	2	
Difference	1.00	0.77	1.55	1.56	0.99	0.10	

Third meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the revision of the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention

UNESCO Headquarters, Room II

20 – 21 May 2014

Chairperson summary

N.B: This summary should be read in conjunction with the Chairperson' Summary of the first and second meeting of the OEWG available at the following address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/election-reflection2014/>

The third and last meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group took place on 20 and 21 May 2014 under the chairmanship of H. E. Mr Jean-Frédéric Jauslin, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Switzerland and Mr Francisco Javier Gutierrez Plata, from the Permanent Delegation of Colombia, as Rapporteur.

This meeting was the continuation of the first two meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group that took place on 23 and 24 January and on 20 and 21 March 2014. The Open-Ended Working Group continued its discussions on equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee as requested by Resolution **19 GA 4**, and took into account the discussions and proposals put forward during the first two meetings and developed variations of solutions that should be submitted to the General Assembly with a view to the revision of its Rules of Procedure.

More than 130 participants representing more than 85 States Parties attended the meeting and actively contributed to the debate.

A. Other measures

During the first part of the meeting, the participants considered the “other measures” that had been evoked during the first two meetings. They agreed to keep the following measures and to submit them to the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly in conjunction with the proposed models:

- Increase the gap from 4 to 6 years before a new election to the Committee
- Possibly re-introduce a multiple rounds voting system (this will be subject to the voting model adopted by the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly)
- Introduce a standard candidature format for the presentation of experts (model to be developed by the Secretariat)
- Ensure that the voting system maintains a choice during all stages of the process by avoiding “Clean Slates” (this will be subject to the voting model adopted by the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly)

- Ensure that the voting system retained reserves one seat for a State Party that has never served in the Committee instead of the seat currently reserved for a State Party with no property on the World Heritage List (agreement in principle but implementation modalities to be defined)

The Working group also proposed under “other measure” the possible suspension of the examination of nominations by Committee Members during their mandate as Committee Member. Knowing that this issue is partially addressed in the agenda of the 38th session of the Committee, the Working Group decided to recommend to the General Assembly to take into account the Committee's decision on this matter.

The questions about an increase of the number of Committee members (requiring a revision of the World Heritage Convention), or the introduction of a new type of non-voting members within the Committee were also the subject of interventions. It was decided not to discuss this important matter in the framework of the present Working Group while noting the need to address this issue in the near future.

B. Proposal for the establishment of a new system designed to ensure equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee

Over the first two meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group, a number of proposals aiming at ensuring geographical representation were developed. At its last session, the Open-Ended Working Group did not reach a consensus on one proposal but agreed on the idea to submit three proposals to the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly:

1. The GRULAC proposal
2. The Estonian proposal
3. The modified Norway proposal

A detailed description of those proposals is annexed to the present document.

C. Conclusions and follow up of the procedure

State Parties were informed of the next steps to follow and of the holding of the First Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly, provisionally scheduled for Thursday 13 and Friday 14 November 2014.

Annex

Proposal for the establishment of a new system designed to ensure equitable geographical representation on the World Heritage Committee

The GRULAC proposal

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
prorata	3	2	3	4	4	2	18
addition min		1				1	2
open	*	*	*	*	*	*	1
Total Min	3	3	3	4	4	3	

The Estonian proposal

	G I	G II	G III	G IV	G Va	G Vb	Total
minimum	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
open	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
Total Min	2	2	2	2	2	2	

The modified Norway proposal

	G I 27	G II 25	G III 32	G IV 41	G Va 45	G Vb 19	Total
minimum	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
attributed				1	2		3
floating			*	*			1
[reserved-not yet served]	*	*	*	*	*	*	
open							5
Total Min	2	2	2,5	3,5	4	2	