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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,  
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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE  
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Eighteenth session  
Phuket, Thailand

12-17 December 1994

Item 10: Progress report on the preparation of Global Strategy  
for a representative World Heritage List

A. Progress report for 1994

For several years now, the Committee has constantly stressed the importance of completing the identification of world heritage and ensuring a truly representative List, and thus its credibility. Consequently, it has also stressed the necessity of implementing the "Global Study" of the List and the associated thematic studies on the different types of cultural properties which could be proposed for inscription, including those which are at present little or not at all represented.

In July 1993 in Colombo (Sri Lanka), ICOMOS organized a meeting of six experts to prepare a framework for this Global Study. However, the absence of a conceptual and methodological consensus on this matter within the scientific community was afterwards confirmed.

During its seventeenth session at Cartagena (Colombia), the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to continue their efforts in this direction.

The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS therefore jointly organized a first expert meeting at UNESCO Headquarters from 20 to 22 June 1994, representing the different regions of the world and the different disciplines concerned (cultural heritage specialists, anthropologists, art and architecture historians, archaeologists, etc.) with the objective of reviewing the issues and considering all the different approaches, and especially all the work and contributions made to date, in an attempt to define a conceptual framework, a methodology and common goals.

The Vice President of ICOMOS, Ms Joan Domicelj, presented to the Bureau at its eighteenth session the report of the expert

meeting and a summary of its recommendations for the World Heritage Committee, as they are set out "in extenso" in the working document WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.6.

A) The principal objectives of the meeting were to:

- 1) examine the present representative structure of the World Heritage List with regard to cultural properties;
- 2) carry out an in-depth study of all the studies and earlier contributions to the "Global Study" and in particular the proposals presented in Mr. H. Cleere's report of 23 November 1993 and in Mr. Léon Pressouyre's publication *La Convention du Patrimoine mondial, vingt ans après*;
- 3) integrate the international scientific community's most recent findings and ideas on the content and concept of cultural heritage over the past twenty years.

B) The experts were in full agreement on the following points:

- 1) that there is a serious imbalance in cultural heritage on the World Heritage List in its present form with regard to regions of the world, types of properties and the periods represented. Living cultures, especially those of "traditional" societies, are largely under-represented;
  - 2) earlier proposals and the work carried out from 1984 to 1993 on the "Global Study", in particular the three-dimensional space-time-human achievement grid, have been found invaluable to the process of reflection in this complex and difficult domain. Thus, they were indispensable steps towards the new anthropological and multidimensional approach proposed by the experts in the more dynamic, continuous and evolutive form of a "global strategy";
  - 3) the development of knowledge and the process of reflection within the international scientific community over the past twenty years has led to an evolution in the content and the extension of the concept of cultural heritage, and to the abandon of a basically "monumental" vision for a far more anthropological and global conception of material evidence of the different cultures of the world. This material evidence is no longer considered out of context, but in its multiple relationships to its physical and non-physical environment.
- C) The conclusions of the expert meeting are formulated in seven recommendations which are proposed to the World Heritage Committee (see Document WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.6).

The Bureau warmly welcomed these recommendations. The Delegates of China, Senegal, Spain, Thailand and the United States of America, as well as Observers of Australia and Germany, congratulated the experts for their excellent work and the new orientations being proposed, which appeared to be of a kind which would greatly advance the process of reflection.

In the short-term, three initial actions are proposed to the Committee to continue the work already begun and commence an active phase:

- 1) Examine the proposals for revision of certain of the cultural criteria of the Guidelines, in accordance with the experts' Recommendation No 7 (Document WHC-94/CONF.003/9).
- 2) Make full use of certain thematic and regional meetings, which were already held in 1994, such as the **Heritage Canals** (WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.10) and the meeting on **Routes as a part of our Cultural Heritage** (Madrid), as well as meetings already scheduled or envisaged in 1995 (Sri Lanka, Philippines, Australia...) by arranging for a member of the Centre or ICOMOS to attend and present the problematic of the Global Strategy, place the discussions in the wider framework of current scientific thought concerning the concept of cultural heritage, and identify potential partners for future regional meetings of a specific nature.
- 3) In 1995, organize a first regional scientific meeting to discuss the place of African cultural heritage within the World Heritage Convention.

Presently, African cultural heritage is very under-represented on the List (17 inscribed sites under at least one cultural criterion, located in eight States Parties, several of which having only an indirect relation with the traditional African cultures themselves), in spite of its vast archaeological, technical, architectural and spiritual wealth, its modes of occupying and using the land and space, its networks of exchange for commerce and ideas, etc... This meeting, scheduled to take place in 1995, year of the Assises of Africa at UNESCO, could associate about thirty States Parties or not yet Party to the Convention, with members of the international scientific community. Its preparation and organization should be financed from the World Heritage Fund in 1995.

In view of the high number of African States Parties (27) or those not yet Party to the Convention which are likely to participate, of the difficulty that many of them will have in financing travel and daily subsistence expenses of their experts to attend, and at the same time, the necessity of having high-level scientific expertise in order to identify the main lines of a specific problematic for such a rich and diverse cultural heritage, an amount of US\$40,000 for the organization of the meeting and US\$5,000 for its preparation should be foreseen.

## B. Proposals for 1995

### Pursue the implementation of the Global Strategy and of thematic studies:

- Action 1.:** Complete the identification of the different partners dealing with the implementation of the Global Strategy and thematic studies, and organize consultations with them
- Action 2.:** Pursue, with ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN and the other partners, the improvement of theoretical and methodological frameworks, and prepare work and action plans
- Action 3.:** In accordance with the recommendations of the expert meeting on Global Strategy held in June 1994, organize with ICOMOS on a regional basis, a first scientific meeting with States Parties or not yet Parties. This meeting will concern the types of cultural heritage not at all or scarcely represented on the List (this first regional meeting could be organized in Africa). Publication and diffusion of a report
- Action 4.:** Organize with National Commission of Philippines, ICOMOS, IUCN/CNPPA and UNESCO regional offices a regional meeting on Asian and Oceanian rice terraces cultural landscapes, and publication and diffusion of a report
- Action 5.:** Contribute to organize with Australian authorities and ICOMOS/Australia a meeting on cultural landscapes (particularly of associative character) and publication and diffusion of a report
- Action 6.:** Contribute to the implementation of a first thematic study on industrial heritage; and to the preparation, publication in two languages (French/English) and diffusion of a report in 1995
- Action 7.:** Contribute to the implementation of a second thematic study on contemporary architecture and to the preparation, publication in two languages (French/English) and diffusion of a report in 1995
- Action 8.:** Contribute to the preparation of a report on selective geological sites which would meet World Heritage criteria with a view to much stricter application of World Heritage criteria

**Action 9.:** Contribute to the preparation of reports on the Global Strategy and thematic studies for the World Heritage Committee during its session in 1995

**Partners:** ICCROM, ICOMOS, IUCN, States Parties

**Budget:** Regular Programme (RP): \$ 30,000

World Heritage Fund (WHF): \$ 60,000 (in particular for Actions 3 and 4).