

# **PERIODIC REPORTING ON THE APPLICATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION**

## **SECTION I: APPLICATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION BY THE STATE PARTY**

### **I.1 Introduction**

a. State Party

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

b. Year of ratification or acceptance of the Convention

July 21, 1998

c. Organization(s) or entity(ies) responsible for the preparation of the report

Korean Cultural Preservation Center

d. Date of the report

January 29, 2003

e. Signature on behalf of State Party

Kim Sok Hwan,  
Director, National Bureau for Cultural Property Conservation, DPRK

### **I.2. Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties**

a. National inventories

In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the preparation and keeping up-to-date of the national inventories are performed by the Korean Cultural Preservation Center under the guidance of the National Bureau for Cultural Property Conservation.

The cultural and natural properties of national significance identified within the territory of the DPR Korea are registered and kept by the NBCPC and KCPC, and the properties of local significance by the local management offices. The properties in the inventories are classified into the National Treasure sites and Conservation sites according to the historical,

archaeological, artistic, scientific or aesthetical value of the property in question. In the inventories every property has an entry of its geographical location and historical background, archaeological or aesthetical features, present state of conservation, etc.

#### b. Tentative List

After the entry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1998 to the World Heritage Convention, the first tentative list of the seven cultural and natural properties of national significance was prepared and submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Center in April 2000.

The identification of the World Heritage value, preparation and revision of the tentative lists are performed by the KCPC under the guidance of the NBCPC.

The KCPC is in charge of the selection of the cultural and natural properties registered in the national and /or local inventories based upon the articles of the World Heritage Convention and the criteria set in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention to make up the tentative list of the properties to be nominated to the World Heritage List for the coming 5 to 10 years. The identification of the World Heritage value for a property has been done taking into account its historico-cultural value, state of conservation, the level of conservation and management and the capacity of the management staff.

The revision of a tentative list is only done when it becomes clear that a property included in the tentative list underwent a change in its value due to artificial and /or natural impacts on it. The change in the value of heritage of importance is assessed by the KCPC in collaboration with other institutions concerned.

#### c. Nominations

The first nomination of the Koguryo Mural Tombs was submitted to UNESCO in January 2002. The nomination file comprises more than 40 Koguryo Mural and non-mural tombs built between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries that represent the architectural and artistic level of the Koguryo dynasty (227 B.C. – 668 A.D.) during the middle age.

The preparation of the nomination of the Koguryo tombs to the World Heritage List, the most important part in implementing the World Heritage Convention, began in May 2000. The nomination process comprised several steps such as data collection, identification on the site, drafting of the nomination and management documents, assessment, finalizing of the draft documents. In the course of the data collection and on-site identification the working group in charge of the preparation of the World Heritage nomination encouraged the local people around the Koguryo tomb sites to actively participate in its work in close collaboration with the local authorities like the provincial people's committees. Experiences gained during the preparation of the nomination files of the Koguryo tombs showed the involvement of the local people helped a lot the World Heritage experts in their work.

There were some obstacles and difficulties in the course of preparing the nomination documents of the Koguryo mural paintings. Since it was the first time for the DPR Korea to prepare the serial nomination document of the Koguryo tombs after its accession to the World Heritage Convention, the experts in charge had little experience but a lot of work to do, e.g. collection and process of great amount of data concerning some 40 tomb sites located in the middle and west part of the Korean peninsula. Well aware of the importance of the World Heritage nomination as one of the major approaches to improve the conservation and management of the invaluable Koguryo tombs, the Government of the DPR Korea has taken several measures to promote this work. In May 2001 the government gave financial supports to taking aerial photographs of all the Koguryo mural tombs to be nominated to the World Heritage List.

Lessons learnt in the process of nominating the Koguryo tombs are;

First, more attention should be paid to the enhancement of public awareness with a view to involving broader strata of people in the process of the World Heritage nomination,

Secondly, training of the experts in charge of the nomination should be strengthened to improve their capacity to prepare the nomination documents at a higher level.

### **I. 3. Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage**

#### **a. General policy development**

Before its accession to the World Heritage Convention, the Government of the DPR Korea has adopted the laws concerning the protection of the cultural and natural heritage such as the *Law of the DPRK on Protection of Cultural Property* (adopted on April 8, 1994), the *Law of the DPRK on Protection of Scenic Spots and Natural Monuments* (adopted on December 13, 1995), the *Law of the DPRK on Protection of the Environment* (adopted on April 9, 1986) and the *Land Law of the DPRK* (adopted on April 29, 1977). These laws stipulate that the cultural and natural heritage are invaluable national treasures which represent the long history and brilliant culture of the nation and that they should be given a function of educating people from all walks of life so that they love and take good care of the properties with a higher sense of national pride and confidence on the basis of clear understanding of the time-honored history and homogeneity of the nation as well as its brilliant culture and beautiful nature.

The Law of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Protection of Cultural Property stipulates;

“ ...  
Article 45. The central cultural property preservation guidance agency and other relevant institutions may open museums in the areas concentrated with cultural relics. When necessary, they may also build in such areas traditional villages which preserve and vividly demonstrate the traditional life style of our people.

Opening of above-mentioned museums and traditional villages shall be approved by the Cabinet.

... ”

Article 48. Local power organs, cultural property preservation agencies and other relevant institutions should endeavor to promote, through the cultural property, education of people from all walks of life including young students so that they love and take good care of it with a higher sense of national pride and confidence on the basis of clear understanding of the time-honored history and homogeneity of the nation as well as its brilliant culture.

...”

The laws also have provisions of integrating the protection of the cultural and natural properties into the national land development master plan, urban development plans or agricultural development plans and.

At present, the government of the DPRK prepares adoption of additional legal provisions to re-establish the protected zones of the properties nominated to the World Heritage List so as to improve the conservation and management for them. Recently, efforts are focused on improving the national management system and recruiting the staff of the site management institutions with competent specialists.

b. Status of services for protection, conservation and preservation

In February 2002, the Government of the DPRK established the National Bureau for Cultural Property Conservation (NBCPC) under the Cabinet, independent from the Ministry of Culture with a view to improving the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural properties located within its territory.

The NBCPC has the departments in charge of the immovable property conservation, museum practices, scientific and technological research works, protection of scenic areas and natural monument, presentation of the cultural and natural properties, etc.

Address: Tongsong-dong, Central District, Pyongyang, DPR Korea

The Korean Cultural Preservation Center (KCPC) has the staff of about 100 archaeologists, conservation scientists and other experts and undertakes the archaeological research works, application of conservation technology to the sites, research works on the scheduled scenic areas and natural monuments, publication and dissemination of the knowledge on heritage conservation, documentation, etc.

Address: Jinhung-dong, Moranbong District, Pyongyang, DPR Korea

Both the NBCPC and the KCPC supervise, control and execute the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural properties of the country with the laws concerning the cultural and natural properties mentioned in the above a. and their operational regulations and guidelines as the legal means.

At present, the Government of the Republic is focusing its efforts on training of young conservation experts as well as on the provision of up-to-date laboratorial apparatuses and equipment necessary for the heritage conservation.

c. Scientific and technical studies and research

Since the adhesion of the DPRK to the World Heritage Convention, a series of achievements have been made in the scientific and technological studies on the protection and conservation of the cultural and natural properties.

For the last five years, the technological research works in the conservation field of the DPRK have been concentrated on the properties included in the tentative list, in particular on the Koguryo wall painting tombs.

Main technological studies and research projects that have been done are as follows:

<b>Properties on which the research works have been done</b>	<b>Main technological studies and research projects</b>	<b>Date of commencement</b>	<b>State of procedure</b>
Koguryo mural tombs	Study on the technical problems to ensure the optimal circumferences for the tomb conservation	August 2002	80 % complete
	Study on the ways to meet the requirements for conservation and visitors	January 2001	In procedure
	Study on the measures to reinforce the detached parts of the mural paintings	May 2002	Completed
	Study on the measures to prevent scaling of the surface layer of the mural paintings	May 1997	Under lab test
	Study on the measures to remove dew formation on the glass walls in the Koguryo tombs	January 1998	Under lab test
	Study on the measurements to protect Yaksu-ri tomb from water infiltration	September 2000	In procedure
	Wooden architecture (temples, pavilions, etc)	Research work to find effective approach to rainwater infiltration through the roof tiles	August 1997
Research work to find the environmentally-sound wood preservatives		January 2000	Under lab test

A large scale of archaeological study has been made on the Honam-ri tomb group nominated to the World Heritage List from April to May 2001 in order to identify the relationship between the fabric of the Honam-ri tomb and its peripheral tombs, the result of which was carried in the “National Cultural Heritage”.

Improvements desirable in the scientific and technological research works are;

First, the lack of staff capable of undertaking the technological research works at the specialized level and,

Secondly, the lack of adequate laboratory equipment and apparatuses

The Government of the Republic established a special program to recruit the staff in charge of conservation of the cultural and natural heritage of the country in 2000 and has since increased the budget to improve the conservation field of the country.

d. Measures for identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation

Since its accession to the World Heritage Convention in 1998, the government of the DPRK has taken practical administrative measures to improve protection and conservation of the Koguryo mural tombs that are nominated to the World Heritage List based upon the laws and guidelines concerning the property protection such as the DPRK Presidential Decree No. 35, “Law of the DPRK on Protection of Cultural Property”, Cabinet Resolution No. 24, “Operational Regulations of the Law of the DPRK on Protection of Cultural Property”.

In 2000 and 2001 measures were taken to re-establish the protective and preservative areas for the nominated Koguryo to meet their conservation and protection requirements in the process of preparing nomination documents of the Koguryo tombs. In July 2002, the Ryonggang Great Tomb, which was nominated to the World Heritage List, was scheduled in the list of the National Treasure sites and re-establishment of the protective areas for the Anak Tomb nos. 1 and 2, Yaksu-ri Mural Tomb, Tokhwa-ri Tomb nos. 1 and 2 has been done in close contacts with the institutions concerning the environment protection and agricultural development.

During the period from May to October 2001 field examination work has been done for all the scheduled cultural and natural properties on a national scale with a view to assessing their present state and taking measures as appropriate.

From 2000 to 2002, new regulations were adopted in relation to camera shooting and presentation of the open tombs.

In April 2002 a new department in charge of management of visitors to the scenic areas was organized in the NBCPC with a view to protecting their aesthetic value. In February 2002 the department in charge of conservation science and technology, the aim of which is to guide the protection and conservation of the cultural and natural properties of the country in a

scientific and technological way, was replenished with more staff and a system of organizing training courses concerning the conservation technology once a year was established.

Well aware of the significance of the presentation of the cultural and natural properties, the Government of the Republic has been allocating lots of fund to this work. In 2002 the Korean Cultural Preservation Center began to issue “National Cultural Heritage”, a quarterly magazine specialized in the conservation issues and public awareness building and from 2001 to 2002 multimedia products concerning the Anak Tomb No. 3 and the Tomb of King Tongmyong were made.

#### e. Training

In the DPRK, training of the professionals in conservation techniques has been performed by the institutions concerning the conservation such as the KCPC. Recently, efforts have been made to integrate specialized conservation training courses into the educational programmes of the universities and as a result, in August 2002 an important decision was adopted by the government to establish a course specializing in painting old buildings with decorative patterns. It is planned to enlarge its scope to other areas of conservation technology as this course proves effective during its exercise, and it is under discussion by the relevant institutions to establish a permanent education center for the systematic training of the conservation experts.

### **I. 4. International co-operation and fund raising**

The government of the DPRK has always paid great attention to developing international cooperation and collaboration in the conservation field.

The process of preparing the World Heritage nomination and management plans provided a platform of the new waves of commitments by the government in developing co-operation with the international bodies such as UNESCO and ICOMOS. As an example, the visit of the mission from the UNESCO World Heritage Center in August 2000 has been one of the significant opportunities for the national experts to exchange with the international experts from the various countries the experiences gained in the conservation field and acquire advanced conservation technologies applied in other States Parties. And the visit of the national experts to the World Heritage sites in the United Kingdom, France and Thailand in April and November 2000 was another important opportunity in acquiring conservation strategies and techniques having been applied to those sites by the institutions responsible for their conservation and management.

In the DPRK, the government provides the funds needed for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in a coordinated way.

For further development of the international co-operations in the conservation field, it is important to develop other States Parties to the Convention as well as the international bodies.

## **I. 5. Education, information and awareness building**

Well aware of importance of education in encouraging people actively participate in the conservation and management of the national properties, the Government of the DPRK has paid great attention to its development. Education on historico-cultural value of the outstanding cultural and natural properties of Korea was integrated into the educational curricula of all the senior and middle schools and universities in the DPRK. In recent years, this subject has been particularly emphasized in conformity with the government policy of giving priority to the independent and national character of the country.

At present, the Government of the Republic pays particular attention to the propaganda to the world of the outstanding value of the Koguryo mural tombs nominated to the World Heritage List. Typical example is the photo exhibition of the nominated Koguryo Mural tomb held in the Korean Central History Museum in August 2000, which was honored by the participation of the Director-General of UNESCO in its inauguration ceremony.

The Korean Cultural Preservation Center recently made the multimedia products on the Anak Tomb no.3 and the Tomb of King Tongmyong nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List with a view to strengthening of appreciation and respect by the public. The Koguryo tombs and other cultural and natural properties are also widely introduced through the “National Cultural Heritage”, a magazine published by the KCPC.

Future activities should focus on the promotion of the awareness building of the decision-makers and the local people living near the sites, as well as on education of young generation so as to encourage them to love the invaluable national heritage and actively participate in its protection and conservation.

## **I. 6. Conclusions and recommended action**

### **a. Main conclusions**

The main conclusions summarized from the above-mentioned points in this report are:

First, participation of people including those living near the sites in the process of preparing the tentative lists and nomination documents should be more encouraged and improvements should be made in this work, based upon the experiences gained in the preparation of the first tentative list and the nomination of the Koguryo tombs.

Secondly, more attention should be paid to the training of the staff responsible for the conservation and management of the properties as well as to the provision of appropriate administrative and material means for the bodies with conservation and management authority to discharge their function.

Thirdly, links and co-operations should be strengthened not only with the relevant international organizations but also with the individual State Parties to the Convention



and active participation in the UNESCO's various programmes concerning this work should be encouraged.

Fourthly, more efforts should be directed to the awareness building for the local people, decision-makers and, in particular, for the young generation. To this end, it is recommended to organize a national association or commission responsible for the public activities concerning the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

b. c. d.

Following actions have been planned for the coming 5 to 6 years.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Proposed future action(s)</b>	<b>Responsible implementing agency(ies)</b>	<b>Timeframe for implementation</b>
1	Enlargement of national inventories	NBCPC, KCPC	2003-2006
2	World Heritage nomination of the Kaesong Historic Area	NBCPC, KCPC	2003-2004
3	Development and adoption of the additional legal provisions for the protection of the sites inscribed in or nominated to the World Heritage List	NBCPC	2003-2004
4	Training workshop for the professionals in charge of the conservation of the cultural and natural properties	NBCPC, KCPC	Every year
5	Multidisciplinary studies for the protection and conservation of the Koguryo mural tombs including the waterproof project for the Yaksu-ri Mural Tomb	KCPC	2003-2008
6	Establishment of training center in the KCPC	NBCPC, KCPC	2003-2006
7	Establishment of an association/ national commission for the World Heritage activities	NBCPC, KCPC	2003-2005
8	Production of multimedia programs concerning the World Heritage sites	KCPC	2003-2004
9	Provision of enough staff and equipment for the on-site management offices	NBCPC	2003-2008

e. Needs for international assistance

International assistance is needed to put the above-mentioned actions into practice. Particularly, training of the professionals in the conservation field to strengthen their capacity in the heritage conservation and management and provision of adequate equipment for the on-site management offices (actions 4, 6, and 9) call for active international assistance from UNESCO and other State Parties.