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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
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联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## Culture Sector World Heritage Centre

**To: All States Parties to the World Heritage Convention**

**Cc: Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee (ICOMOS, ICCROM, IUCN)**

Ref.: CL/WHC-20/03

**25 FEB 2020**

**Subject: First meeting of the open-ended working group of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in conformity with Resolution 22 GA 10**

Dear Sir/Madam,

As you may know, by its Resolution **22 GA 10** (attached herewith) the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* emphasized "the collective responsibility of all stakeholders – States Parties, World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies – to uphold the integrity and the credibility of the *World Heritage Convention* and, as such, expecting all stakeholders to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards of professionalism, equity and transparency".

Consequently, the General Assembly decided to establish an open-ended working group of States Parties to the *Convention* with the mandate to develop a Code of Conduct, or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text, to be submitted for consideration at its 23rd session, in 2021.

In order to achieve this goal, and in conformity with this Resolution, I am pleased to inform you that the first meeting of this open-ended working group (open to all States Parties to the *Convention*) is scheduled to take place on **28 April 2020 from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at UNESCO Headquarters, Room XI.**

During this first inception meeting, it is proposed that the open-ended working group proceed to the election of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur, and prepare and adopt its own timetable.

You will remember that the General Assembly, as indicated in Paragraph 9 of Resolution **22 GA 10**, encourages States Parties to provide extra-budgetary funding for the open-ended working group. Please note that the Secretariat will bear the cost of the first inception meeting. However, States Parties are invited to contribute with extrabudgetary resources to meetings that the open-ended working group will schedule after the inception meeting. The Secretariat will provide a budget estimate corresponding to the holding of meetings once the open-ended group has decided on their length and frequency.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Frédérique Aubert (f.aubert@unesco.org) or Mr Gabriel Grancher (g.grancher@unesco.org) should you require any further information.

Thanking you for your continuous collaboration and support in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Rössler', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mechtild Rössler  
Director

Enc.

**POSSIBILITY OF ELABORATION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE STATES PARTIES, THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE AND THE ADVISORY BODIES**

**Resolution: 22 GA 10**

The General Assembly,

1. Having examined Document WHC/19/22.GA/10,
2. Recalling Decisions **42 COM 12** and **43 COM 13** of the World Heritage Committee adopted respectively in 2017 and 2018,
3. Recalling also the need to respect the highest standards of integrity and transparency of working methods within the process of decision-making of the Governing bodies of the *Convention*,
4. Emphasizing the collective responsibility of all stakeholders – States Parties, World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies – to uphold the integrity and the credibility of the *World Heritage Convention* and, as such, expecting all stakeholders to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards of professionalism, equity and transparency,
5. Also recognizing the important reforms of the nomination process and state of conservation review process currently underway,
6. Noting the informal consultations between the States Parties to the *Convention* and also noting the debates held at the 22nd session of the General Assembly of States Parties,
7. Further recognizing that a Code of Conduct or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text is not legally binding, but stakeholders are called upon to honour its contents,
8. Decides to establish an open-ended working group of States Parties to the *Convention*, with the mandate to develop, for consideration by the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties, a Code of Conduct, or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text;
9. Encourages States Parties to provide extra-budgetary funding for the open-ended working group;
10. Also decides that the open-ended working group shall:
  - a) elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur at its first meeting,
  - b) prepare and adopt its own timetable at its first meeting,
  - c) prepare and submit, in view of consideration by the General Assembly of States Parties, a draft Code of Conduct or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text,
  - d) determine how best to engage the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in the process at the appropriate time;

11. Requests the World Heritage Centre in order to assist the work of the open-ended working group, to compile a comprehensive list of existing, binding and non-binding elements which could be referenced in a Code of Conduct, or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text;
12. Finally requests the open-ended working group to submit to the General Assembly of States Parties at its 23rd session a report on its work, including a draft Code of Conduct, or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text.