



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

MINISTER

Mrs. Mechtild Rössler
Director
World Heritage Centre
Secretary, World Heritage Convention
UNESCO

Budapest, 8th of June 2021

7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris CEDEX 07
France

Dear Madame Director Rössler,

With reference to the Consolidated Nomination to World Heritage List of the „Frontiers of the Roman Empire - The Danube Limes (Western Segment)“ submitted by Hungary on behalf of the States Parties Austria, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia on the 29th of January, 2020 (hereafter: Nomination), particularly to the section „Part E - The Name of the Property and the Future Danube Limes Nominations“ of the Cover Letter to the Consolidated Nomination, Hungary informs the Secretariat as follows.

First and foremost correspondingly to the Article 6 of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereafter: Convention), whilst fully respecting the sovereignty of the States Parties on whose territory the cultural and natural heritage protected by the Convention is situated, and without prejudice to property right provided by national legislation, Hungary recognize that the protection -inclusive of identification, conservation and presentation- of our common heritage is the duty of the international community as a whole to co-operate.

Furthermore Hungary is conscious of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire - The Danube Limes and is committed to preserve and transmit this exceptional archaeological heritage to future generations.

In the context of the preparation of extensions to the transnational, serial World Heritage property 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire' and in order to provide the necessary documentation to allow the development of a World Heritage Nomination Strategy for the Roman Frontiers as a whole and in detail for Europe at the suggestion of ICOMOS the Thematic Study and Proposed World Heritage Nomination Strategy regarding The Frontiers of the Roman Empire (hereafter: Thematic Study) has been prepared in 2017. As an element of the Thematic Study, a Nomination Strategy for the Frontiers of the Roman Empire has been developed, comprising an overall vision for the Frontiers, outlining how future

nominations may be presented to the World Heritage Committee, and how they might demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value. Thus the Thematic Study the past years provided solid framework for the States Parties to ensure the preparation of better quality Tentative Lists, optimize success of World Heritage nominations related to Frontiers, achieve sustainable World Heritage properties in the sense of on-going protection, conservation and management, and to agree on common management principles in order to harmonize approaches for the protection, conservation, management, interpretation and promotion of the overall Frontiers and of its individual component sites.

According to the Thematic Study the Danube frontier which runs for 2400 km along the river Danube and is located within the territories of Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Hungary is one single property, which distinctiveness stand out most prominently when viewed as a whole. (Thematic Study 8.3.2, 8.4.2) As it is defined, as a whole, the Danube frontier outstandingly demonstrates the evolution of the Roman military responses to external pressure resulting from unremitting migration. The remains of the various military installations, which in many cases survived astonishingly well to the present day, are the most impressive testimonies of a large-scale external war and the longest surviving river frontier section. (Thematic Study 8.3.2, 8.4.2) Furthermore the Thematic Study set forth that the property as a whole will be able to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value. The additional attributes of the eastern segment are contributory rather than sufficient for nominations as a separate property. (Thematic Study 8.6.3)

During the ICOMOS Advisory Process of the Nomination ICOMOS raised the issue of reconsidering both the name of the property and the method of submitting the second phase of the Danube Limes. In view of what has been proposed in the Final Report of ICOMOS from 17th of January 2020 -individual nomination of the eastern segment- the Danube Limes States Parties agreed on carefully examining this proposal and deciding how to proceed.

For this reason on the 1st April of 2021 the focal points of Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Hungary and the representatives of WHC and ICOMOS held an online meeting. The question of an individual nomination of the eastern segment raised by the Final Report of ICOMOS was supported only by the States Parties Austria, Germany and Slovakia and it created a division between the Danube Limes States Parties. Hungary and the States Parties of the eastern segment pointed out that the separate nomination is contrary to the Thematic Study resulting an indeterminate future for the Danube frontier. In order to reach unanimous consensus Hungary proposed that all eight States Parties should consider all nomination options and make an official statement by the end of May.

Serbia's official position on the nomination strategy supported by Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania and the declaration of Austria reflecting on Hungary's official position, furthermore the absence of Slovakia's and Germany's official statement strengthened Hungary's concerns for both the chances of the eastern countries' nomination and the integrity and authenticity of the whole Danube frontier.

In the light of the joint declaration of the States Parties attached to the Thematic Study and also in accordance with the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (hereafter: Operational Guidelines), the States Parties must agree

unanimously in any proposal for extension to WHS Frontier of the Roman Empire before a nomination is formally submitted to UNESCO. (Thematic Study 5.2.1)

Hungary believes that in absence of a nomination strategy supported and followed by all of the eight countries affected by the Danube frontier it is not allowable to go on with the nomination process of the western segment of the Danube Limes.

For the reasons above in order to find the nomination strategy which may ensure the inscription of all the Danube frontiers sites of all eight States Parties, in accordance with article III.F 152 of the Operational Guidelines Hungary hereby withdraws its nomination.

Hungary is committed to further strengthen its cooperation with the Danube Limes States Parties and the World Heritage Centre and remains open for dialogue.

Yours sincerely,



Gergely Gulyás