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联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

# World Heritage Patrimoine mondial

## 23 GA

**WHC/21/23.GA/INF.13**

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES  
POUR L'ÉDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE**

**TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF STATES  
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION  
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**VINGT-TROISIÈME SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES ÉTATS  
PARTIES À LA CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU  
PATRIMOINE MONDIAL CULTUREL ET NATUREL**

**Paris, UNESCO Headquarters  
24-26 November 2021**

**Paris, Siège de l'UNESCO  
24-26 novembre 2021**

**SUMMARY RECORDS**

**RÉSUMÉ DES TRAVAUX**

**FIRST DAY**  
**Wednesday, 24 November 2021**

**FIRST MEETING**

**3 p.m. – 6 p.m.**

**Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(South Africa)**

**PREMIER JOUR**  
**Mercredi 24 novembre 2021**

**PREMIÈRE REUNION**

**15h00 – 18h00**

**Président : S.E. M. Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(Afrique du Sud)**

**1 OPENING OF THE SESSION // OUVERTURE DE LA SESSION**

**1A. Opening of the General Assembly // Ouverture de l'Assemblée générale**

*No document // Aucun document*

*No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution*

**The Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO**, Mr Ernesto Ottone welcomed the participants to the 23rd General Assembly of States Parties of the World Heritage Convention. He opened the session with as speech, as follows:

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, nous sommes très heureux d'avoir l'honneur d'ouvrir cette 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale des États Parties à la Convention du Patrimoine mondial. Et je souhaite chaleureusement la bienvenue à toutes les Délégations, Observateurs, et Organisations consultatives présentes aujourd'hui. Permettez-moi aussi d'exprimer ma sincère gratitude à Son Excellence Monsieur le Vice-ministre Tian Xuejun pour sa présidence du Comité du Patrimoine mondial au cours de la période si particulière qui a marqué son mandat. J'ai également l'honneur de souhaiter la bienvenue au Président de la 45<sup>e</sup> session du Comité, Son Excellence Monsieur Alexandre Kouznetsov, Ambassadeur de la Fédération de la Russie auprès de l'UNESCO. Bienvenu, donc, Monsieur. Et Président. Et vous féliciter pour votre élection.

Chers collègues. Cette nouvelle session de l'Assemblée générale donnera l'occasion de discuter de débats des enjeux récurrents, mais aussi émergents après deux années que vous trouverez, comme moi, inédites. Parmi les enjeux émergents, la pandémie de la Covid-19 nous a rappelé l'importance de notre responsabilité collective pour la conservation et la préservation des biens culturels et naturels à travers le monde. Avec une baisse significative du tourisme, du fait des mesures sanitaires drastiques, qui a réduit de près de 70% au pic le taux de fréquentation des sites du Patrimoine mondial, la grande majorité des sites et des communautés environnantes qui en dépendent fortement pour leur subsistance ont été dépourvues de leur source de revenu. Cela a eu un impact important sur la continuité des activités dédiées à la protection et à la gestion durable de ces sites, comme en témoigne la publication de l'UNESCO "Patrimoine mondial face à la pandémie de Covid-19" qui présente les résultats d'une enquête auprès des gestionnaires des sites et des autorités locales.

D'autre part, le changement climatique, une menace dont les effets se font de plus en plus ressentir dans de nombreuses régions du monde et qui a été l'un des sujets majeurs débattus lors de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie du Comité du Patrimoine mondial, le document d'orientation sur l'Action climatique pour le Patrimoine mondial qui vous sera présenté dans les prochains jours décrit l'importance d'un renforcement de l'action collective en faveur de l'action climatique pour promouvoir notamment la résilience et l'adaptation.

Je saisis cette occasion pour remercier les membres du groupe technique consultatif pour leur contribution instrumentale à l'élaboration de ce texte ainsi que les États parties pour leur dévouement et leur soutien continu à cette fin.

Ladies and gentlemen, 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. I am fully convinced that the discussion over the coming days will not only allow to exchange on the achievement attained, but will also encourage deliberation on the challenge facing this global and almost universally ratified instrument, with a view to harness World Heritage as a source of resilience, sustainability and innovation for future generations.

During the 22nd General Assembly, an emphasis was made on the collective responsibility of all stakeholders to uphold the integrity and credibility of the Convention, resulting in the establishment of an Open-ended working group with the mandate to develop a Statement of Ethical Principles, Code of Conduct. After several fruitful meetings, the Declaration of Principles to Promote International Solidarity and Cooperation to Preserve World Heritage was agreed on and will be presented to you in the following days.

Dear colleagues, I don't want to let the opportunity go by without pointing out to you that 40 years after the first World Conference in 1982 and after the Stockholm Conference in 1998, the new World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development, MONDIACULT-22, which was organised by UNESCO together with Mexico in September 2022, will have as its goal to promote global reflections on the role and impact of cultural policies in reaching the objectives of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Growth, obviously with the idea of creating a more robust and resilient cultural sector. This historical event will present a great opportunity to enhance culture as a universal public good and to enhance also its contribution to tackling new challenges, such as protecting cultural and natural heritage, encouraging respect in cultural diversity, promoting social inclusion, and guaranteeing basic rights.

Before we begin our discussions, please allow me to congratulate and to express my gratitude to members of the Committee who are coming to the end of their mandate. Their actions and reflections have enormously contributed to the protection and preservation of World Heritage. I should also like to reach out to the new members who will be elected tomorrow, with whom we hope to be able to go on having open, inclusive and fluid dialogue. This last year-and-a-half has shown us the importance of designing common strategies via consensus and basing ourselves on coordination of resources and institutional synergies so as to face the crisis and its impact. There is no doubt that cooperation in the field of heritage for the coming years will be essential so as to manage to have recovery in the sector and to position culture vis-a-vis world policies.

Let me express to you all of my support as this Assembly unfolds and in the important debates which I will be following with great attention. Many thanks to everyone here.

**1B. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur of the General Assembly // Election du Président, des Vice-présidents et du Rapporteur de l'Assemblée générale**

*Document: WHC/21/23.GA/INF.1B*

*No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de Résolution*

**Le Sous-Directeur général pour la Culture** a rappelé que conformément à l'Article 3 du Règlement intérieur, l'Assemblée générale doit élire un Président, un ou plusieurs Vice-

présidents, et un Rapporteur. Vous avez à votre disposition le Document d'information INF.1B. Il informe avoir cru comprendre que la Délégation de la **Namibie**, Présidente du Groupe Afrique, aimerait présenter une candidature au poste de Président, et leur donne la parole. Un délégué de la **Namibie** informe que l'ambassadeur n'est pas encore présent en salle, et le **Sous-Directeur général pour la culture** suggère d'attendre 5 minutes. Il donne ensuite la parole au **Kenya**.

The Delegation of **Kenya** presents South Africa for the Chair.

The proposal was approved by acclamation.

Son Excellence Monsieur Tebogo Seokolo, Ambassadeur et Délégué permanent de l'Afrique du Sud auprès de l'UNESCO est ainsi déclaré Président de la 23<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale. Il est invité à prendre place sur le podium.

The Delegation of **Oman** conveyed the greetings of the Arab Group and proposed Syria as the candidate for the Vice-chair. The Delegation of **Belgium** congratulated the Chair on his election, and proposed Germany as candidate for Vice-chair. The Delegation of **Chile** proposed Honduras as Vice-chair. The Delegation of **Vietnam** nominated the Islamic Republic of Iran as the Vice-chairperson.

L'**Allemagne**, la **République islamique d'Iran**, le **Honduras** et la **République arabe syrienne** sont élus vice-présidents de l'Assemblée générale.

The Delegation of Azerbaijan proposes **Mr Gytis Marcinkevičius (Lithuania)** as Rapporteur.

Item 1 of the Agenda was closed.

## **2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE TIMETABLE OF THE 23RD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY // ADOPTION DE L'ORDRE DU JOUR ET DU CALENDRIER DE LA 23<sup>e</sup> SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE**

**2A. Adoption of the Agenda of the 23rd session of the General Assembly //**  
**Adoption de l'ordre du jour de la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale**

**2B. Adoption of the Timetable of the 23rd session of the General Assembly //**  
**Adoption du calendrier de la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale**

*Documents: WHC/21/23.GA/2A*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF/2A.Rev.2*

*WHC/21/23.GA/2B*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution: 23 GA 2A*

*Draft Resolution //Projet de résolution: 23 GA 2B*

The **Chairperson** thanked the Assistant Director-General for Culture for presiding over this first part of the meeting and thanked all for his election to preside over this important session. He stated that this session is very important because it takes place ahead of the 50th celebration of the Convention and informed of his determination to work together to recover



the lost time and to ensure all the issues are addressed efficiently and within the allocated time.

The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** (interim assured by the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**) presented Document 2A. Il a informé que l'Ordre du jour de la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale, a été partagé avec tous les États parties, le 21 septembre avec les lettres d'invitation. Il informe aussi qu'à la demande de l'Assemblée générale lors de sa 22<sup>e</sup> session en 2019, deux points spécifiques ont été ajoutés cette année. Le Point 8 sur les mesures possibles concernant les arriérés, y compris en ce qui concerne l'examen des propositions d'inscription soumises par les États parties concernées, sans nuire à la protection des États qui ne peuvent pas payer pour des causes indépendantes de leur volonté. Et le Point 10 sur le suivi de la Résolution **22.GA.10** portant sur l'élaboration d'un Code de conduite, une Déclaration de principes déontologiques ou un texte équivalent. Enfin, lors de sa 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie en juillet dernier, le Comité du Patrimoine mondial a décidé de transmettre le Document d'orientation sur l'Action climatique pour le Patrimoine mondial pour examen et adoption à la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale. À cet effet, le Point 11 a été inclus à l'Ordre du jour.

En réponse à un certain nombre de questions qui ont été soulevées au cours des derniers jours, il a clarifié le processus qui sera proposé pour l'adoption du Document d'orientation sur l'Action climatique pour le Patrimoine mondial comme suit: tous les paragraphes du Document d'orientation pour lesquels aucun amendement n'a été reçu au cours du processus de consultation à l'issue de la 44<sup>e</sup> session du Comité du Patrimoine mondial, c'est à dire tous les paragraphes qui ne sont pas soulignés, sont proposés pour adoption tels quels. Les paragraphes qui ont uniquement des soulignages en jaune, pour lesquels les amendements soumis sont conformes aux demandes formulées par le Comité, sont proposés pour adoption, tels qu'amendés. Les paragraphes qui ont des soulignés en gris et peuvent nécessiter d'une discussion plus approfondie, sont proposés pour ouverture, discussion par l'Assemblée générale. Tous les amendements ont été partagés aux États parties dans le Document INF.11 et n'ont pas nécessairement besoin d'être introduits par les États parties soumissionnaires pour des raisons de temps. De la même façon, la réponse du Secrétariat et des Organisations consultatives et leurs recommandations concernant chaque amendement proposé ont également été incluses dans des encadrés dans le Document INF.11 pour que les États parties soient informés bien avant la discussion. Il signale aussi deux petites erreurs dans la version en français du document qui vous avait été envoyé, notamment sur les intitulés du Point 8 où le mot "candidature" doit se lire "proposition d'inscription" et du Point 11 où "document de politique" doit se lire "document d'orientation". Les ajustements nécessaires ont été effectués dans les documents en ligne. La liste des documents qui se rattachent à chacun des points de l'Ordre du jour est disponible dans le Document INF.2A.Rev. Il rappelle par ailleurs que, bien évidemment, tout point relevant d'autres questions pourrait être abordé à l'issue de l'examen des points à l'Ordre du jour, juste avant la clôture de la session.

The Delegation of **Colombia** congratulated the Chairperson and suggested adding to the agenda, under Any Other Business, as well, in case there are any important points that we have to deal with at the end of the Assembly. The Delegation of **Venezuela** agreed with the above request, and requests to delegation of Colombia to be more specific on the item they wish to discuss. The delegate of **Colombia** specified that they wish to discuss further on the proposal of the Secretariat on the Conventions and the subjects that ill need to be dealt with as a result of the Conventions.

This proposal was accepted without debate. The Agenda was adopted as amended.

The **Chairperson** moved to the adoption of the Provisional Timetable of the 23rd session of the General Assembly contained in Document WHC/21/23.GA/2B. He indicated that in order to facilitate a smooth proceeding of the debates, a list of speakers will be established for the

debate on each item, and the time for interventions will be limited to only three minutes for States Parties and two minutes for Observers. In this regard, he added that as Chairperson, he is empowered to interrupt any speaker exceeding the recommended time limit. He informed the delegates that the conduct of the elections to the World Heritage Committee will be presented by the World Heritage Centre at the time of the examination of Item 5 of the Agenda concerning the elections. I therefore invite you to review and adopt the Timetable for the 23rd session of the General Assembly that will now be presented to you by the ADG, the Director of the World Heritage Centre. Please sir, you have the floor.

Le **Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial** (intérim assuré par le **Sous-directeur général pour la Culture**) informe que le Calendrier détaillé des travaux de la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale a été partagé avec tous les États parties le 4 novembre. Il s'agit du Document WHC/21/23.GA/2B Le premier jour, sera consacré à l'examen des rapports du Président du Comité du Patrimoine mondial et du Rapporteur de la dernière session de l'Assemblée générale. Le 25 novembre, sera dédié aux élections des 12 nouveaux membres du Comité du Patrimoine mondial, avant de passer au point de l'Ordre du jour concernant les questions budgétaires Enfin, le vendredi 26 novembre au matin sera pour l'examen des points restants. L'ordre d'examen des points pourrait être amené à changer en fonction de l'avancement du processus électoral. Des annonces seront effectuées pour vous tenir informé, le cas échéant. Il souligne également que la 16<sup>e</sup> session extraordinaire du Comité aura lieu le vendredi 26 novembre, de 14 heures à 15 heures, en Salle IV. Cette session dédiée aux membres du Comité déjà en poste et ceux nouvellement élus, a pour but d'élire les deux derniers Vice-présidents, le Groupe 1 et 3, et le Rapporteur de la 45<sup>e</sup> session du Comité du Patrimoine mondial.

The Delegation of Saint Lucia requested to look more carefully at the time that might be needed for the consideration the Document on policy on climate change, because there are lots of amendments and lots of comments. The **Director of the World Heritage Centre** (interim assured by the **Assistant Director-General for Culture**) responded that the Provisional Timetable indicates that the Room is available on Friday 26 November in the afternoon if necessary.

The Provisional Timetable was adopted.

### **3 REPORT OF THE RAPPORTEUR OF THE 22ND SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNESCO, 2019) // RAPPORT DU RAPPORTEUR DE LA 22<sup>e</sup> SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE (UNESCO, 2019)**

*No document // Aucun document*

*No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution*

The **Chairperson** gave the floor to **Mr Carlo Ossola (Switzerland)** to present the Report of the Rapporteur of the 22nd session of the General Assembly which has been held at UNESCO Headquarters in 2019. Il rappelle que la session s'est tenue du 27 au 28 novembre 2019, et qu'elle était présidée par Son Excellence Monsieur Adam Al Mulla (Koweït), tandis que l'Ouganda, Saint-Kitts-et-Nevis et le Bangladesh ont été les Vice-présidents. Au total, 10 Résolutions ont été adoptées concernant les aspects financiers, administratifs et conceptuels de la Convention. L'Assemblée a élu neuf nouveaux membres du Comité du Patrimoine mondial sur un mandat de quatre ans. L'Afrique du Sud, l'Arabie saoudite, l'Égypte, l'Éthiopie, la Fédération de Russie, le Mali, le Nigeria, Oman et la Thaïlande. Ces pays vont rester jusqu'en 2023 au Comité avec ceux qu'on élira ces jours.

Son Rapport continue comme suit : L'Assemblée générale s'est penchée sur son mandat sur des questions financières comme le Fonds du Patrimoine mondial ainsi que sur les discussions stratégiques liées à l'avenir de la Convention et à son application. Notamment, la 22<sup>e</sup> Assemblée a pris des décisions sur le suivi de la Stratégie globale et le suivi des recommandations du Groupe de travail sur la gouvernance de la Convention.

L'Assemblée a tout d'abord décidé d'avancer la discussion sur les principes d'éthique ou codes de conduite dans l'Agenda, parce qu'elle a considéré que ce point était crucial pour la crédibilité de la Liste et nécessitait une discussion approfondie avant les élections de nouveaux membres du Comité. Après un débat conséquent et constructif, l'Assemblée a souligné la responsabilité collective des États parties, du Centre du Patrimoine mondial et des Organisations consultatives de défendre l'intégrité et la crédibilité de la Convention, et a appelé à ce que toutes les parties prenantes fassent preuve d'une conduite conforme aux plus strictes normes déontologiques en termes de professionnalisme, d'équité et de transparence dans leurs actions et leurs prises de décision. Plusieurs États ont fait référence à la tendance préoccupante observée dans la dernière décennie dans la pratique et les méthodes du travail du Comité du Patrimoine mondial qui menacent la crédibilité du système du Patrimoine, notamment la tendance à s'écarter systématiquement de l'avis des experts et à ignorer les dispositions des orientations.

Pour mettre en œuvre cet appel, l'Assemblée a décidé d'établir un Groupe de travail à composition non-limitée d'États parties à la Convention chargé d'élaborer pour examen de cette session un Code de conduite, une Déclaration de principes ou un texte équivalent. Texte qui vous sera soumis dans les prochains jours.

La durabilité du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial a été aussi l'objet de discussions importantes. L'Assemblée a souligné comme la situation financière est extrêmement préoccupante et ne permet pas d'implémenter de façon satisfaisante la Convention. Cela, compte tenu notamment du Programme de développement durable Horizon 2030 et des menaces sans précédent tels que le changement climatique, les catastrophes naturelles, les attaques délibérées contre le patrimoine dans les territoires touchés par des conflits armés et par le terrorisme. L'Assemblée a examiné la fixation du montant de la contribution du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial et a rappelé que le paiement des contributions obligatoires et volontaires mises en recouvrement étaient une obligation juridique incombant à tous les États parties, conformément à l'Article 16 de la Convention. Le pourcentage pour le calcul du montant des contributions versées par les États au Fonds a été fixé à l'1% des contributions du budget ordinaire de l'UNESCO pour l'exercice financier 2022-21.

Suite à cette discussion et des interventions de plusieurs États sur l'importance et l'urgence de garantir le financement durable du Fonds, l'Assemblée a décidé, suite à l'initiative de la Palestine, d'inclure à l'Ordre du jour de la 23<sup>e</sup> session, le point intitulé Mesures possibles concernant les arriérés, y compris quant à l'examen des propositions d'inscription émises par les États parties concernées, sans préjudice de la protection des États qui ne peuvent pas payer pour des raisons indépendantes de leur volonté. Et vous discuterez ça aussi aujourd'hui.

L'Assemblée s'est ensuite penchée sur les recommandations du Groupe de travail sur la gouvernance qui, approuvées par la Conférence générale et rappelant les travaux déjà entrepris, en vue d'évaluer, d'améliorer et de rationaliser les méthodes de travail des organes directeurs de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial, notamment les résolutions des 20<sup>e</sup> et 21<sup>e</sup> Assemblées générales ainsi que les décisions du Comité du patrimoine mondial à ses 40<sup>e</sup> et 41<sup>e</sup> réunions. À cet égard, l'Assemblée générale a décidé de poursuivre la réflexion et les efforts visant à la mise en œuvre des recommandations pertinentes pour les organes directeurs de la Convention du patrimoine, et s'est engagée à travailler conjointement avec les autres organes directeurs concernés par la mise en œuvre des recommandations générales.

La discussion a poursuivi avec l'avenir de la Convention. L'Assemblée générale a accueilli avec satisfaction le progrès continu accompli dans l'exécution de la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action stratégique concernant l'avenir de la Convention, et a demandé que les efforts soient poursuivis en collaboration avec les organes d'organisation consultatifs, avec le soutien des États parties, en rapport d'avancement sur la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action stratégique qui va être examiné par la présente session.

L'Assemblée générale a enfin recommandé que le 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial en 2022 soit une occasion à saisir pour entreprendre une réflexion sur la Stratégie globale. Vous allez discuter de ce point aussi. Cette Convention est une référence au niveau mondial pour la recherche de solutions pour un futur dans lequel le Patrimoine mondial naturel et culturel sera sauvegardé tout en faisant face aux défis globaux auxquels nous sommes confrontés : le changement climatique et la perte de biodiversité, l'instabilité politique et les conflits armés. Nous discutons ici du best of the best, pour le dire en français. Cette qualité doit être garantie sous tous les angles. Nous avons la responsabilité de montrer l'exemple et la voie au niveau international et aux jeunes générations. Ce n'est pas une tâche facile, mais je vous souhaite d'ores et déjà un bon travail pour les prochains jours et les prochaines discussions à venir.

The **Chairperson** gave his thanks to Mr Carlo Ossola for the hard work.

The Delegation of **Oman** intervened to ask why this document was not included in the documents for this session. Le **Sous-Directeur général pour la Culture** informe que c'est un rapport oral et qui n'est jamais présenté en tant que rapport écrit.

The Delegation of **Saudi Arabia** made a comment referring to the Report of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of World Cultural Heritage and its activities, with regards to the Capacity-Building Strategy, recalling the suggestion and proposal by Saudi Arabia to audit and re-evaluate the World Heritage Capacity Development Strategy based, and thanked all countries who supported that and added that they are looking forward to work closely with all interested Member States and the World Heritage Centre to make sure that this program, and the Secretariat, to make sure that this program is fully evaluated based on results, and to make sure that it is built to ensure proper capacities being built in all regional groups and that hopefully it will lead to useful results.

The **Chairperson** took note of the Report of the Rapporteur and closed **Item 3** of the Agenda.

#### **4 REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE // RAPPORT DU PRÉSIDENT DU COMITÉ DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL SUR LES ACTIVITÉS DU COMITÉ DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL**

*No document // Aucun document*

*No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution*

The **Chairperson** reminded that the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee was held from 16 to 31 July 2021 and chaired by H.E Mr Tian Xuejun, Vice-Minister of Education and Chairperson of the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO. He thanked China for the remarkable organisation of the session, and indicated that H.E Mr Tian Xuejun will now present the report, which is also in Document 41/C/Rev/19 as it constitutes a report also submitted to the UNESCO General Conference. He informed that this

report does not require any Decision on the part of the Assembly and that it will be presented in the form of a video message. The Ambassador of **China**, present in the room, presented the video message of **H.E Mr Tian Xuejun**, as follows:

Assistant Director-General for Culture, dear representatives of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, dear colleagues. We're honoured to take the floor on the occasion of the 23rd session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. I'm pleased to address this Assembly and present my report in my capacity as Chairperson of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

As you all know, the report refers to the main activities and the decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 22nd session of the General Assembly, which was held in 2019. The unprecedented coronavirus crisis worldwide prevented us from organising an ordinary session of the Committee in 2020. Consequently, we had to hold an extended 44th session of the Committee in China and online from 16 to 31st July 2021. I take this opportunity to thank the UNESCO Secretariat and my colleagues in China for their remarkable coordination in the organisation and the smooth running of this very important Committee meeting.

As you know, the crisis has raised immense challenges, and China has spared no efforts to ensure the successful holding of this extended session and to overcome these difficulties. I'd like to thank all the 21 members of the World Heritage Committee: Australia, Bahrain, Bosnia Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Russian Federation, St Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Uganda, and congratulate them for their service on the Committee and their support in implementation of the World Heritage Convention. My sincere thanks also go to the members of the Bureau. The present session of the General Assembly will elect 12 new members to the World Heritage Committee. I wish all the best to the 12 outgoing members.

Dear colleagues, as of 2021, there are 194 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. I will now present my report, which is based on the Document 41/C/Rev/19, which has been presented to the General Conference.

The Report of the World Heritage Committee to the General Conference is structured around the five Strategic Objectives, and I'm therefore happy to recall that, regarding credibility of the World Heritage List. As you know, a reflection is ongoing, notably concerning the reform of the nomination process. Indeed, credibility of the List, which counts now 1154, including 897 cultural, 218 natural, and 39 mixed, located in 167 States Parties, is of the utmost importance. During the extended 44th session of the Committee, 34 properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List and one property has been delisted. Concerning effective conservation of the World Heritage properties, it is to be noted that a total of 255 State of Conservation reports, including 53 reports of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, were examined during the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

These reports allowed for in-depth debates and considerable reflection in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies on conservation, which is and should remain the heart of the Commission. The promotion and the development of effective capacity-building in States Parties, as well as the reinforced involvement of local communities, were also major subjects of our discussion.

Of the past biennium, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in close cooperation with States Parties and Category II centres, have undertaken a number of activities which contributed directly to the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy. These included programs aimed at strengthening regional and national institutions responsible for heritage protection, training initiatives targeting professionals and the youth, and the development of new guidance materials. An independent results-based evaluation of the outcomes of the WHCPS, based on close consultation and participatory, transparent and

inclusive process with the States Parties and other capacity-building stakeholders and beneficiaries, will be examined by the Committee at its 45th session.

Furthermore, a number of international and regional World Heritage Youth Forums were organised by the World Heritage Centre, all with the centre's assistance to develop educational activities, including by China, as host country of the last session of the World Heritage Committee.

With regard to awareness, reason and communication, it should be noted that the World Heritage website represents around 32% of the total visits to UNESCO's web page, demonstrating the high global interest in World Heritage.

Dear colleagues, allow me to mention also that during the last session, the World Heritage Committee discussed matters related to governance, notably through the examination of the recommendations of its Ad-Hoc Working Group, which has been meeting regularly since 2015.

The Committee also decided to adopt the reformed nomination process, which aims at restoring and enhancing the credibility and balance of the World Heritage List, and the development of high-quality nominations for sites which have a strong potential to succeed. The Committee also decided to extend the mandate of the Ad-Hoc Working Group in two subgroups. This was done to develop sustainable and innovative solutions for financing the reformed nomination process, as well as enable the consideration of concrete proposals to ensure long-term financial sustainability and potential cost savings on the use of the Convention's financial resources, mapping current and potential additional advisory service providers as well, to explore the conditions under which the Committee may cooperate with international and non-governmental organisations for advisory services. The Committee will review the outcomes of the Ad-Hoc Working Group at its 45th session.

Furthermore, the World Heritage Committee endorsed the draft updated Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage and requested the World Heritage Centre be in consultation with the Advisory Bodies to revise it, incorporating the views expressed and the amendments submitted during the extended 44th session, notably the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The draft Policy Document has been transmitted for your consideration at this very session of the General Assembly. In addition, in accordance with relevant resolution adopted by the 22nd General Assembly, an Open-ended working group of States Parties has been established with the mandate to develop a Code of Conduct or a Declaration of Ethical Principles or an equivalent text, after the need for such was recognised by States Parties.

The Working Group was chaired by His Excellency, Mr Ghazi Gherairi, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Tunisia to UNESCO, and has met nine times online to successfully come up with a consensual text, namely the Declaration of Principles to Promote International Solidarity and Cooperation to Preserve World Heritage, which has been shared for your consideration.

Lastly, as you all know, a comprehensive reflection on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts was requested by the World Heritage Committee in 2018 and has been undertaken through several working groups and a meeting since then. This important matter will be discussed within an Open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention that will meet regularly and will present its results for examination at the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2022.

Dear colleagues, in the past two years, we have been working hand in hand and scored quite a number of important achievements in promoting the World Heritage undertaking. Therefore,

I'd like to share with you some comments and the deliberations as the Chairperson of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

First of all, the Committee has upheld and implemented the spirit of the Convention to forge solidarity and the consensus, which I believe are the keys to addressing the challenges we are facing today. During the last session, although we have been working on some divisive issues, we managed to maintain the solidarity and reach consensus after extensive discussions. I'd also like to mention the Fuji Declaration, unanimously adopted by the Committee members, which reiterates the principle of the Convention and the importance of international cooperation for World Heritage Protection. It called for scaling up support to developing countries, especially African countries and small island developing states, to maintain an open, inclusive, adaptive, sustainable, resilient, clean and beautiful world for future generations. The Fuji Declaration embodies the consensus and actions of the members of the World Heritage Committee, and is emblematic of the solidarity of this session. Secondly, the Committee has demonstrated the spirit of responsibility. During the session, we have discussed matters of strategic importance. Here, I refer to the items related to climate change, the future of the Convention, etc. During the discussion, the Committee members have shown their professionalism and commitment by making their responsible decisions.

I'm pleased to note that we have registered many improvements in supporting Priority Africa. Two sites in the African region have been added at the World Heritage List during the session, and one African site was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Thirdly, although we have scored quite a number of important achievements, as Chairperson I have to admit that more reflections are needed to address more new challenges. For instance, the recently launched study on the prevailing perception of the List in Danger among States Parties, the concrete measures to establish a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, the discussion of the improvement of exchanges among States Parties, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies, just to name a few.

I believe that the future Committee session, in the capable hands of His Excellency, Mr Alexandre Kouznetsov, Chairperson of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee and Permanent Delegate of the Russian Federation to UNESCO and the members of the Committee, will definitely work in the same spirit of solidarity and responsibility, and address the new challenges.

Dear colleagues, allow me to recall the congratulatory letter from Chinese President Xi Jinping to the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, which stated, and I quote: "To well protect, inhabit and make good use of these precious treasures is our shared responsibility and is of vital importance to the continuity of human civilisation and the sustainable development of the world". The coming year of 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Committee. China is willing to work with all the States Parties across the globe and UNESCO to strengthening exchanges and cooperation, jointly safeguard the cultural and the natural treasures of humanity, and to promote the building of a community with a shared future for humanity. I thank you for your attention.

The **Chairperson**, on behalf of the General Assembly, congratulated once more H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun and the Government of China for the excellent manner in which they hosted the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

La Délégation de **Suisse** remercie le Président du Comité pour le rapport, et rappelle l'importance de cette Convention dans la conservation du patrimoine naturel et culturel de l'humanité. L'intervention de la Délégation est comme suit : Les rapports d'état de conservation ont touché des thèmes importants et ont donné des directives claires aux États afin de les aider à conserver les biens de la Liste et le patrimoine en général. Il est, par contre,

extrêmement préoccupant d'observer que la tendance du Comité à s'écarter des recommandations scientifiques des Organisations consultatives s'est encore accentuée. Toutes les recommandations pour différer ou reporter des dossiers ont été transformées en inscriptions par le Comité, à l'exception d'un seul cas. Il y a même eu pour la première fois une inscription sans évaluation définitive des Organisations consultatives. En un cas particulier, le Comité n'a pas pris en compte l'analyse du Haut-commissariat aux Droits de l'Homme. C'est une évidence que cette attitude mine la crédibilité du Comité et de la Convention. Les articles extrêmement négatifs qui ont été publiés partout dans le monde devraient tous nous alerter. Cela a aussi déçu les acteurs de la conservation des biens et les communautés locales qui s'engagent dans la préservation du Patrimoine mondial. Ils craignent que cette attitude remette en question tout le travail fait afin de préserver le patrimoine naturel et culturel de l'humanité pour les prochaines générations. Hélas, l'image du Comité est au plus bas. Être membre du Comité est une responsabilité très grande. Les membres du Comité ont le mandat de nous représenter tous et nous remercions les États qui prennent cette responsabilité à cœur. Il est en revanche choquant d'observer comment, parfois, les intérêts particuliers prennent le pas sur l'intérêt commun de la préservation du patrimoine.

La déléguée ajoute que cette Convention n'est pas un jouet pour diplomates. Elle incarne l'excellence dans la conservation du patrimoine. Elle appelle donc tous les membres présents et futurs du Comité à prendre cette responsabilité à cœur. Les communautés locales, les acteurs de la conservation et nous, les États, vont regarder comme un exemple de conduite exemplaire dans les décisions sur la préservation de notre patrimoine.

The Delegation of **Rwanda** was the next speaker, and the intervention is as follows: Mr Chairman, I wish first and foremost to congratulate you on the election of this session and Chairman of our General Assembly of the Convention. Mr Chairman, I wish also to congratulate all the members of the Bureau. Mr Chairman, Rwanda commends sincerely China for excellent organisation and coordination of the works of the 44th session of the Committee, in spite of unusual and uneasy conditions linked to the pandemic, the Covid-19 pandemic. Rwanda commends also the entire Committee for the open, dynamic, transparent deliberation, which produced such progressive outcomes, including the recommendation for an Open-ended group to ensure membership, ownership and leadership on the sensitive issue of sites of memory. Mr Chairman, indeed, Rwanda has always asked the following question: Who can qualify the memory of other people as negative? With which authority? Scientific authority, moral and ethical authority? Who hold such a prerogative? Mr Chairman, this is just unacceptable in a UNESCO forum. UNESCO is about tolerance and respect. It cannot be about intolerance and prejudices. Mr Chairman, Excellencies, we understand also that some events are considered as divisive, meaning that admitting them is equivalent for UNESCO to taking side for one among several controversial versions. More clearly said, in the case of the genocide against the Tutsi, for instance, which is part of mandatory UN memory for which there is a UN tribunal judgment which rules that that genocide is a matter of undeniable fact, promoting alternative versions equates to denialism. It is a crime under many jurisdictions. UNESCO cannot allow itself to become a forum of criminal denialism. In conclusion, Mr President, let's just agree simply that cases differ in nature, in background, in content, in objectives, and that is the reason why we strongly support the principle, simple principle, common sense principle, for each case to be evaluated based on its merit with no prejudice. I thank you very much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Norway would like to thank the Chair for the report and the excellent management of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. We would also like to thank the Rapporteur, the Advisory Bodies and the dedicated staff at the World Heritage Centre for the huge amount of work that they are doing, not only during the Committee meeting but throughout the year for the rest of the Convention. The world is facing immense challenges, the alarming loss of nature and climate change considered the most prominent. The World Heritage Convention's global



commitment for the conservation of the most exceptional places on the planet makes an invaluable contribution to address these threats. We are, however, concerned that the World Heritage Committee is not following its own rules of procedure and ignoring scientific advice, undermining the credibility of the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO, as well as the effectiveness of conservation strategies for the World Heritage sites. Norway believes that it is of utmost importance to bring the decision-making of the World Heritage Committee in line with the principles and standards of the United Nations and UNESCO. Good governance, a human rights-based approach are the aims of the World Heritage Convention. The 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention could be an important opportunity to take stock of the implementation and to give guidance for the future of the Convention. We wish all national expert candidates to the World Heritage Committee all the best in the elections, and we thank them for taking on this very important task on behalf of 194 States Parties and our common heritage. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Palestine** was the next speaker, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman, first of all, let me congratulate you for your election to the Chair of the session, of this session, of this body. I am sure that your leadership will cause us to meet all of our session's goals. I'd also like to thank all the members of the Bureau and the Rapporteur. Let me congratulate the Chair of the World Heritage Committee and the Government of China for hosting the 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee, and I would like to congratulate all the members of the Committee, despite the difficulties that they were facing. Unfortunately, we were not able to attend the session in China in person, and I hope that China will host the Committee again very soon, as soon as possible. It will be a pleasure to be in China again. Now it is unfortunate, Mr President, to hear some serious accusations to the Committee and its members. Saying that the members of the Committee were not or are not respecting the rules of procedure is a serious accusation. Second accusation, it has, we always hear it here and there, talking about the credibility of the Committee. I think the Committee is sovereign and all their decisions are very well studied. We maybe, for sure we do not agree with all the decisions of the Committee, but this is an inter-governmental democratic procedure. We should respect it. Now, if we insist on the credibility and the effectiveness, there is not only the question of inscriptions. There are many other obligations, legal obligations in the provisions of the Convention, that some and many member States do not respect. Let us start by this issue to give real credibility, not only to the Committee, but also to the Convention. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Delegation of **Estonia** made an intervention, as follows: Thank you very much Mr Chair. First, let me, of course, congratulate you on your re-election. And Estonia would like to thank also for the report presented. The work done by the Committee, including through its Ad-Hoc Working Group, testifies to a great interest in the implementation of our Convention and also to the fact that there are still numerous challenges that we are facing. And Estonia would like to make reference to one of them, namely Paragraph 10 of a report in front of us that tells us clearly that at this last session, the Committee decided not to endorse the Advisory Body's recommendations on nominations for 15 files out of 17 cases. This is indeed a very worrying trend that has already been said also by other speakers. We believe it really threatens the credibility of the Convention, as the Committee, who is the highest decision-maker on inscription, has to ensure that its decisions are based on the essential notion of outstanding universal value, but also includes management integrity and authenticity, making full use of existing evaluation system that is based on scientific knowledge and professional judgment. Geopolitical decisions as basis for inscription should not prevail over outstanding universal value, and it is of crucial importance that this fundamental principle is reflected through a World Heritage List. While I fully recognise the valuable work that is done by the Committee to enhance the dialogue between the States Parties and Advisory Bodies from a very early stage, we should also be mindful that an upstream process should not be viewed as a guarantee for inscription. And finally, we would like to welcome the fact that an independent evaluation of a

capacity-building strategy will be undertaken and we will look forward to its results. Thank you very much.

La Délégation de la **Tunisie** a intervenu, comme suit : Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président. Nous prenons la parole à ce moment-ci du début de nos travaux. Permettez-moi de vous féliciter de votre élection ainsi que tous les membres du Bureau et nous souhaitons plein succès à nos travaux. La Tunisie regarde les travaux de cette 23<sup>e</sup> session avec beaucoup d'intérêt, Monsieur le Président, pour différentes raisons. Tout d'abord, je me joins à tous ceux qui ont félicité la Chine d'avoir si bien accueilli la 44<sup>e</sup> session du Comité du Patrimoine mondial, même si nous aurions aimé être en mesure de nous déplacer tous sur place. Mais l'effort consenti par les autorités chinoises doit être, de notre point de vue, salué. La Tunisie, Monsieur le Président, entretient des rapports très particuliers avec cette Convention, particulièrement de l'ensemble de l'arsenal de l'UNESCO, pour des raisons qui sont liées à l'évolution même de notre perception et notre rôle par rapport à la protection du patrimoine. Cette Convention constitue aujourd'hui presque le témoin, c'est à dire le modèle à suivre, par son succès, par sa réussite, mais aussi par la somme de responsabilité qu'il lui incombe de protéger et d'embrasser l'ensemble des sollicitations et des demandes d'inclure des éléments au sein de la Liste représentative du Patrimoine mondial. La Tunisie, membre de la première heure, j'allais dire, est plus que cela, puisque c'est mon prédécesseur, le délégué de la Tunisie qui, à l'époque, entre 1971 et 1972, avait présidé le Comité de rédaction de cette même Convention. Nous continuons à accompagner cette évolution absolument exemplaire de notre arsenal juridique en direction de protection et valorisation de notre patrimoine. Dans cette direction, nous accueillerons dans quelques semaines la 30<sup>e</sup> Réunion du Conseil d'administration du Fonds africain pour le Patrimoine mondial à Tunis. Mais au-delà de cela, nous avons été très heureux à la demande de beaucoup d'États amis qui nous ont demandé de diriger les travaux du Comité qui s'est penché sur ce qu'on devrait appeler désormais la Déclaration afin de promouvoir la solidarité et la coopération internationale pour préserver le Patrimoine mondial. Et je sais que notre Agenda nous prévoit un autre moment dans nos travaux pour en discuter. Cela me permet, Monsieur le Président, de vous renouveler nos félicitations et l'engagement de la Tunisie de demeurer l'un des acteurs non seulement convaincu, mais engagé dans le cadre de cette Convention. Bonne session à nous tous.

The next speaker was **Czech Republic**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Let me congratulate you on your election. I am sure you will lead our Assembly very successfully. Our Delegation would like to thank the Chairperson of the 44th extended World Heritage Committee for its report and make a few comments. At the last World Heritage Committee session, our State Party did not feel represented by the Committee members and their decisions because of discrepancies between Advisory Bodies, recommendations regarding nominations, and the state of conservation reports and decisions made by the Committee. The scientific based approach of decision-making was not respected. The World Heritage List is not just an inventory of valuable world cultural and natural heritage. Inscription on the list should be a confirmation that the State Party concerned is able to take care of, manage, protect and promote the inscribed sites. Dear colleagues, if we are talking about UNESCO as a platform for international cooperation, we, the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, should stand together on the side of protecting the values of world culture and natural heritage, support the expert opinions of Advisory Bodies, and be coherent with the previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee. We are committed to respecting the Convention we, all States Parties and especially our representatives Committee members, and we should demonstrate to the global community that we can solve the problems arising today, especially in the context of good management and sustainable development, rather than minimising their impact. This approach was not respected at this year's Committee meeting, even though the whole world was watching us. Yet at the Culture Commission of the 41st General Conference, many countries spoke and stressed their support for this Convention. So, we would like to appeal to the current members of the Committee and to the countries seeking election to the

Committee to act accordingly in respect to the Convention and to protect its credibility. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Sweden**, and the intervention was as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving Sweden the floor, and as this is the first time I'm taking the floor, please let me congratulate you on your election. Further thanks are also due to the Distinguished Chairperson of the Committee meeting for, in such eloquent manner, presenting this report. We would like to touch upon the spirit of responsibility, as mentioned in the report, and echo what has been said by our distinguished colleagues from Switzerland, Norway, Estonia and the Czech Republic. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate some of the observations made by Sweden, the Netherlands, Iceland, Czech Republic and Finland as Observer States to the Committee meeting this summer, which we also shared during the meeting. We observed a worrying trend in a hesitancy in using mechanisms available on the Convention, such as danger-listing and sending reactive monitoring missions at an early stage, often against the advice of Advisory Bodies. We urge the Committee to help change the negative perceptions of these important tools and we all reminded everyone of the successful examples, bearing in mind the importance of respecting the rules that we have adopted and regularly revised. We would also like to emphasise that we all share a collective responsibility for the Convention, be as an Observer or as a Committee member. Finally, Mr Chair, we look forward to these coming days and hopefully very fruitful discussions. And I thank you, Chair.

La délégation du **Mali** a pris la parole, comme suit : Merci, Monsieur le Président. Étant donné qu'il s'agit de notre première fois de prendre la parole, je voudrais, au nom de la Délégation du Mali, vous adresser nos chaleureuses félicitations pour votre élection, ainsi que celle de l'ensemble des membres du nouveau Bureau. Monsieur le Président, le Mali pour sa part reconnaît la pleine réussite de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie du Comité du Patrimoine mondial et nous tenons à féliciter le Comité, le Secrétariat, ainsi que le pays hôte, la Chine, pour les efforts consentis dans un contexte dominé par la pandémie de la Covid-19. Nous nous réjouissons également de l'inscription de nouveaux biens sur la Liste du Patrimoine mondial et plus particulièrement des nouveaux biens Africains, continent qui, comme vous le savez, est sous-représenté sur cette Liste. L'inscription de ces nouveaux biens constitue un pas supplémentaire pour l'atteinte de l'équilibre géographique sur cette prestigieuse Liste. Le retrait également du Parc national de la Salonga de la Liste du patrimoine en péril démontre clairement que les efforts finissent toujours par payer et que les actions menées par nos États doivent être maintenues et appuyées pour une meilleure promotion, préservation et protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel. Par ailleurs, nous voudrions saluer la coopération constante, exprimée et concrétisée dans le cadre du mécanisme de suivi renforcé appliqué à Tombouctou et au Tombeau des Askia au Mali. De même, nous accueillons avec satisfaction la promotion des programmes de renforcement des capacités et d'accompagnement pour l'élaboration de l'état de conservation souhaité pour le retrait de la Liste du Patrimoine mondial en péril des trois biens du Mali inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine en péril. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président, et je souhaite à l'ensemble de l'Assemblée une bonne session. Merci.

The floor was given to the **United States of America**, as follows: First, Chair, I'm taking the floor for the first time, so congratulations on your election, and we look forward to working with you for a productive and cooperative Assembly in the spirit of this important Convention. The United States is deeply committed to World Heritage and we were pleased to see the 44th session take place despite the challenges that were presented by the Covid pandemic. With that said, I did want to address the Fuzhou Declaration that was issued by the host country for that meeting without the input and negotiations of all States Parties. It contained terminology that the United States and many delegations have made clear is inappropriate for inclusion in a multilateral text. For the host government to ask participants to adopt a document from the government that's not provided the opportunity to fully review is problematic and inconsistent with UN practices. For the PRC to use this language in a text that bears the UN and participants' seal of approval without full negotiation is highly concerning. We raised these

concerns about similar practices with the PRC and UN officials over the last few months in various venues. Thank you, Chair, and we look forward to working with you all.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair, and since this is the first time we take the floor, we would like at the outset to congratulate you for your nomination and all the members of the Bureau, and ensure you that you have our full support. We would also like to thank the Chinese presidency of the last World Heritage Committee meeting, which took place last July, and would like to raise the following comments based on some interventions that were preceding us. Chair, Egypt is honoured to be a member of the Committee of the World Heritage since 2019. We fully, we are fully committed to all the decisions that were taken during the last session. We do not believe that these decisions were wrong or, as some have said or mentioned in their statements, as against the rules of procedures. Quite the contrary. Chair, let me maybe state the following for all those who criticise the Committee and its decisions. I have four elements exactly. The first thing is that Advisory Bodies are, by definition, advisory. They are advising and they are not dictating bodies. The second thing is that member States have also their experts. Do not see member States as representatives who do not rely on any expertise. No, they have experts, they consult the experts and when they take decisions, it's based on their experts' point of view. The third thing is that the experts' recommendations are, by definition, Mr Chair, divergent. They could diverge based on varying professional, geographical and cultural perspectives. There is no monopoly in the truth. And I think we all agree on this. Maybe we can argue whether there is a monopoly on the advisory services or not. But when it comes to the truth and whether there is one, only one single right opinion, then no, we are sorry. We do not buy to this reading. Chair, also, the last element I would like also to mention here is that I would invite all of us here to have a look on how the Advisory Bodies take their decisions. They don't take their decisions based on one expert's point of view. They have deliberations with them. They have panels. They have divergent points of view. So, what we allow for the Advisory Bodies, we shall not prohibit it for ourselves. And so, based on this, Mr Chair, we totally refute reviews, all the allegations that are being said to the Committee that their decisions were taken from the credibility of the Convention or of the Committee itself. It's not about the credibility of the Committee, neither the credibility of the Advisory Bodies, because also this could be questioned at some point. We fully support the Advisory Bodies. We would like them to be fully aligned with the realities on the ground. We have seen in the last Committee some examples where some Member States relied on some experts from the Advisory Bodies, and they adjusted some of their projects only to see later on that the Advisory Bodies, when it went to the panel, they changed their point of view. So, you cannot, at some point when we are dealing with preserving natural heritage and cultural heritage, when we are dealing with countries in Africa and all other regions who have tremendous challenges in sustainable development, you cannot just impose them one expert's point of view, especially if we know quite well and we are fully all aware, and we are all adults here and know quite well the exact geographical repartition of the expertise in these Advisory Bodies. So, please do not accuse the Committee of having any wrongdoing. Let us, rather than this, unite, all of us, and use the 50th anniversary, the next anniversary next year, in order to reflect on this ecosystem and see what we can do better. Thank you, Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Zambia**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chairperson, for giving me the floor. Zambia wishes to congratulate you for being elected Chairperson for this very important General Assembly. We have no doubt that you will lead the meeting in an efficient and effective way. Chairperson, UNESCO showed its good character by helping Member States during the Covid-19 pandemic. The assistance, especially in education and culture, helped Member States get their World Heritage sites back to normal. Chairperson, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Convention next year, we hope there will be more visibility of the role culture plays in enhancing economic development. Zambia remains committed in implementing the Convention. I thank you.

The Delegation of **Denmark** made the next intervention, as follows: Thank you very much Mr Chairman. This is the first time Denmark takes the floor, so I'll take the time to congratulate you on your election. I'm sure you will lead us through this session with great success. I'll be very brief. Denmark wishes to support the interventions of Norway, Sweden and the Ambassador of Switzerland, and Estonia and other countries, and additionally would like to put a special emphasis on the element of inclusion mentioned by some of the countries. We think it is very important that, especially for a Committee of the size of the World Heritage Committee, that we, we remember to include all involved actors, especially Observers and civil society. And my good colleague from Egypt mentioned that it is indeed a big honour to serve on the Committee. It is. We agree with that. But that also means that it's quite difficult to enter the Committee with so few members. So just to emphasise that that is very important to remember to include also other actors, especially Observers and civil society. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. We would like also to congratulate you, which we should have done the first time around, for your election and to assure you that you will have all of Venezuela's support to have a successful leadership in the Chair. We would also like to congratulate China for their chairing of a previous session. We had some truly extraordinary moments, and China's leadership, I think, was necessary to bring this reality about. That being said, we would like to support Egypt, Palestine and some other members of this Committee and what they said. Not simply do we not wish to support the narrative that some Member States are putting forward concerning a lack of support for some recommendations made by Advisory Bodies, but really to roundly refuse this. We consider that the sovereignty of this Committee is paramount and we cannot always agree with decisions, but that the Committee has the capacity and expertise to be able to contemplate the different elements that may or may not be taken into consideration by the experts when recommendations are formulated here. We consider that this is a body which is not simply rubber-stamping the recommendations made by Advisory Bodies. And for that reason, we consider the discussion and debate here, it can lead to a different conclusion than some of the recommendations that have been made. That being said, we totally respect the work and the precious contributions that are made by the same Advisory Bodies, but we would like to emphasise that it is the Committee that has the possibility to either refer files or to make decisions that are different than those proposed by the Advisory Bodies. We regret that some people have validity of decisions made by the Committee in this way. For us, that's not the case. This is simply a part of normal multilateral work. Thank you.

The Delegation of **China** made an intervention, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Thank you for giving me the floor. Allow me to congratulate you on your election and that of the other members of the Bureau, the Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur. Mr Chair, China will support 100% your work during our session, and we believe that under your able leadership, our mission will be a successful one. I heard just now some critiques from some Member States vis-a-vis the Fuzhou Declaration and am very puzzled because this, the Fuzhou Declaration, is a result of thorough consultation, is a result of a democratic process, is a result of the work of the Committee, not a Chinese government document. And the Declaration underscores the importance of more support provided to African countries and SIDS countries, so as to address conventional and emerging challenges. I want to emphasise that the preservation of World Heritage is our shared responsibility of the humanity. The Fuzhou Declaration was widely recognised, and we think that this is a broadly recognised document, and I'm very disappointed that there is some critiques, and hope that every and each Member State will take on its responsibility to honour its contributions as to take on, its responsibility in a more efficient manner. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **South Africa**, as follows: Thank you, Chairperson. Also, since it's for the first time that I speak, it would be appropriate for me to congratulate you, but maybe to proceed, Chairperson, and then the Republic of China for hosting the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee meeting. Furthermore, South Africa would like

to thank the World Heritage Committee community for the constructive discussions on the subject of sites associated with memories of recent conflict during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. Most importantly, South Africa expresses gratitude for the Committee's decision on the establishment of an Open-ended working group, and we congratulate the States Parties of Saint Lucia as Chair, Kenya as Rapporteur, South Africa, Japan and Austria as Vice-Chairs, for being elected to serve as the office bearers for the Open-ended working group. We have confidence that the office bearers will undertake their mandate on this very important subject matter in a transparent, credible and most efficient manner. Chair, we do recognise the fact that the divergence of opinions should not necessarily mean antagonism, disrespect and conflict. Our view is that matters of heritage are sensitive, sometimes emotive. We are of the view that open discussions should always be done in order to establish common grounds, and that the power of this body and the strength will be tested by our ability to overcome whatever differences might arise as we debate very sensitive matters. Thank you, Chairperson.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Oman**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And we too would like to congratulate you. We also congratulate the members of the Bureau. I fully agree with what my Egyptian colleague said, he is a member of the Committee, and I would also like to support those who have defended our Committee. Certainly, we do respect the opinions of Advisory Bodies. However, they are advisory and the decision needs to be taken by the Committee members. Therefore, we regret what some countries have said in criticising or questioning, or doubting the credibility of our Committee, thank you.

The next intervention was the Delegation of **Cuba**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. First of all, we'd also like to congratulate you on your election and you know that you can count on Cuba's support for the management of this Assembly. We'd also like to congratulate the outgoing Chinese Chair that was able to lead the Committee's work in a masterly way in a very complex period when the pandemic was raging, but which allowed us, thanks to the political will of the Chinese government and UNESCO's cooperation, to successfully complete the Committee's work, which had been lagging behind in time because of pandemic-related considerations. We support the Fuzhou Declaration and we think that this Committee, which in recent years has been making great efforts to improve its dialogue between consultative bodies and Member States. This was an ongoing lengthy period from 2006-2007 to about 2019, improving this cooperation and information. The Committee has offered many times that the consultative bodies do not lose the spirit of independence that they have. I think that many countries are not always happy with the decisions that consultative bodies make, but I think it's very important to be able to safeguard not paying the balance of the List. And this is also part of a further ranging debate underway in UNESCO concerning governance, but we can understand that we need to have a look at this in different bodies and organisations, and some people who are not aware of this I don't think have the right to disrespect this ongoing process. Cuba will go on maintaining this constructive debate between consultative bodies. The WHC, which is doing incredible work so as to be able to bring together expert opinions and the needs of the States, often very motivated by certain candidacies in some countries. People, sometimes they are not able to have a broader view of the recommendations that are made. But I think that's the way we need to experience this and our opportunity to go on improving.

La parole est ensuite donnée à la Délégation du **Maroc**, comme suit : Merci, merci Monsieur. Merci, Monsieur le Président, de me donner la parole. Et évidemment, comme je prends la parole pour la première fois aujourd'hui, je voudrais d'abord, bien sûr, vous exprimer mes plus sincères félicitations pour votre élection à la tête de cette session, et puis à l'ensemble des membres du Bureau, remercier le Rapporteur représentant de la Délégation Suisse pour son rapport, remercier sincèrement le Centre du Patrimoine mondial, remercier également Monsieur Ottone pour l'excellent travail qui a été fait. Je joins évidemment ma voix à l'ensemble des collègues qui se sont exprimés avant moi pour féliciter sincèrement la République populaire de Chine pour la tenue de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie du Comité du

patrimoine, qui a été une vraie réussite compte tenu du contexte, compte tenu des difficultés, et nous sommes tous conscients. Nous avons, nous en avons tous discuté avant, et nous savons quelles ont été les difficultés en amont. Mais au bout, on a eu une session qui a été une véritable réussite. Ce qui me dérange un peu aujourd'hui, Monsieur le Président, c'est un peu la tonalité de certains discours. Et je rejoins ce que disait mes collègues de l'Égypte, du Sultanat d'Oman et d'autres collègues par rapport à une certaine tonalité qui a tendance à jeter l'opprobre un peu sur ce Comité, et je trouve que cela est extrêmement dangereux. J'imagine évidemment que tout le monde est conscient que ce Comité fait son travail dans le respect, et le strict respect, des dispositions de la Convention. Et je pense que cette tonalité un peu condescendante est dérangeante pour beaucoup d'États, et je souhaite qu'on revienne un peu à une plateforme consensuelle dans la manière d'appréhender les travaux de ce Comité. Ce Comité est effectivement extrêmement important et je pense que ce qui y est fait est extrêmement honorable. Je sais aussi, et je tiens à le dire, que les organes d'évaluation font un travail extrêmement important et à saluer, évidemment. Mais comme l'a souligné le Représentant de l'Égypte tout à l'heure, ça reste un organe consultatif et qui fait des recommandations. Le Comité est souverain dans ses décisions et je pense que l'essentiel, l'ensemble des États membres du Comité du patrimoine font leur travail en âme et conscience. Évidemment, on a le sentiment, à travers certains discours, que les pays membres du Comité et d'autres pays n'ont pas d'experts. Évidemment, nous avons des experts, nous avons de grands experts qui sont souvent mondialement reconnus, et je pense que cette posture un peu condescendante est à éviter à l'avenir dans l'approche du travail du Comité. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

The floor was given to the **Russian Federation**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. As this is the first time that we are taking the floor, we would also like to congratulate you on your election, and we hope that your great experience will help our Committee, our General Assembly, to carry out this work effectively. We would also like to thank China for its excellent management of the 44th session of the Committee, in spite of the difficult conditions caused by the pandemic. Thank you also to those members who expressed a support for the new Chair of the Committee, Mr Kouznetsov, and I would like to take this opportunity to invite all States Parties to the Convention to the next meeting of the Committee in Kazan in 2022. I would like to support those members of the Committee, such as Egypt, China, Oman and others. I'd also like to support Morocco's statement. We consider it is unacceptable to put into question the consensual decisions of the Committee, which have been taken in full conformity with the rules of procedure. The consensual decisions of the Committee, as many of you will know, respect an open, inclusive, consultative approach. And there are various debates that are carried out during the plenary meetings, but also during the elaboration group's work. Now, experts do take part in these various groups, including country experts and experts from Advisory Bodies, and also experts from Observers. Therefore, we support once again the statements made by the colleagues I have just cited, and I would ask Committee members not to doubt or reduce the level of respect, perhaps, for the Committee. It is very important for us to focus on the various items on our Agenda. These items are important and we look forward to discussing these important issues.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Kenya**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair, for giving Kenya the floor, and we warmly congratulate you on your election to the Chair, and we also congratulate the rest of the Bureau members. We also wish to congratulate China for a very successful 44th extended Committee session that was held under very, very difficult conditions. Mr Chair, we have listened keenly to the interventions that have been raised and wish to concur on the need for further dialogue with Member States for stronger inclusions of experts from States Parties within the composition of the Advisory Bodies. For a more holistic consideration of the cultural and scientific specifications of different regions and their sites, we really need to have a more inclusive composition of Advisory Bodies. A lot has been said about the compositions already, and so I shall not repeat that. But as long as Member States feel not heard, the divergent views and the lamentations we hear today will remain ongoing. Kenya

supports the Member States who have spoken, like Morocco, Egypt, Venezuela and others who have indicated that the States Parties do have experts. They do not grope around in the darkness without any light. They do have experts who look at these dossiers, and the experts also do advise them. I am not saying that the Advisory Bodies must not be respected. I am just reiterating that the States Parties do have experts in all of the specific areas which are looked at by the Advisory Bodies. Kenya, therefore, supports that the Assembly of the States Parties is sovereign. Their decision is sovereign, and we look forward to more inclusiveness to avoid the kind of, to avoid the kind of divergence we are witnessing today, and the building of a negative and almost condescending narrative we are witnessing today. We look forward, definitely, to a more constructive meeting in Kazan. Thank you very much.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Iran**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. First of all, I congratulate you on your election as the President and wish you the best, and also for all the members of the Bureau. Just I want to reiterate the very important issues raised previous by our colleagues regarding the expertise and the role of the Advisory Body. The Advisory Body is independent, scientific, technical, and all of the character we need to evaluate the documents and the files. But it is not a decision-maker, just the Member States are, who have the sovereignty, and our civilian and decision-makers. So, I join to my colleagues from Egypt, Morocco, Venezuela, Cuba, Russia, all the others that reiterate and emphasise on the important role of the Advisory Body. And during the 44th extended session of the WHC in China, they work based on the rules and procedures. And I also wanted to take the opportunity to congratulate the Government of China for well organising the meetings. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Guatemala** was the next to intervene, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman, for giving us the floor. This is the first time we are taking the floor, so we'd like to congratulate you and wish you success in your leadership of the Committee, and also congratulate the Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur. First of all, I'd like also to thank the Chair of the 44th extended session, to China for the report, and would also like to thank him for the work which he, his Delegation, his country and his Government all carried out in the Committee session, which happened in a very complex and difficult context indeed. And in fact, it was a great experience. We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the fabulous work that they did, and the administration and the structuring of all of the work that happened during and after the Conference, of the work done by the consultative bodies for their scientific analysis, and, at the same time, recognise and thank them for the value in the Committee itself. The Committee is an institution, is a body, which has sovereignty over its own decisions, which are made on a consensual basis after discussion, debate and consultation with drafting groups, which are open, with activities taking account of regional matters, of world events, of environmental and climate change considerations, equity and equality, and the criteria of evaluation locally, nationally and internationally, and attempting to bring about consensus by negotiation. For Guatemala and my Delegation, this was a very enriching experience, to be part of this dialogue. In the same token, all the States Parties to be part of this, to be more open to dialogue, to discussion and to arrive at this consensus, which is how we will be able to hold high the values of our culture, our heritage and our history. I thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Ethiopia**, as follows: Thank you, Chair, for giving the floor to Ethiopia, and since it is our first time to take the floor, we congratulate you for the election of the Chair, and we would like also to further extend our congratulation to the Bureau members, and we are sure that will be supporting you in your deliberations. First, I would like to also congratulate the Chinese government and the Secretariat for organising that wonderful 44th extraordinary session during the pandemic, fitting to the purpose. It was really challenging. However, it was managed perfect, and we expect that the Russian Government to do the same for the next session as well. To just reflect what has been said by the Distinguished Assembly Members. I think we have to bring to a balance, if there are lessons to be drawn and be learned, we have to pinpoint and be a lesson for the forthcoming sessions. However, the 44th extended session was managed, I think, as a Committee member, it was



managed properly, as it has been eloquently explained by the Egyptian Delegation, and other Delegations supported this idea. Yes, UNESCO is a house of believing in science and Advisory Bodies, expert knowledge and institutions ought to be properly listened. However, the ultimate decision was coming out from the Committee members. This has to be properly understood. And, at the same time, sorry to say, to explain this word. Your Committee is not a simple puppet, just deciding everything coming. Decisions, discussions, debates, and final agreement has been reached, to reach a consensus, and this has to be properly understood by the General Assembly. Thank you so much.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And Chair, may I also add Australia to those congratulating you on your election. Can I express very strong appreciation for China as host of the World Heritage Committee meeting number 44. Earlier this year, I thought the chairmanship of that meeting was strong and capable. And can I also thank the Secretariat for all the work that went into what was a very complex process, organising a meeting in the midst of the pandemic. Australia has been greatly honoured to have been a member of the World Heritage Committee and we hear with concern the issues raised in the course of interventions over the course of this afternoon. As a founding member of the World Heritage Convention, we remain strongly committed with all Member States to ensuring the World Heritage system remains robust and continues to support States Parties in their collective effort to protect the world's heritage and the World Heritage system. We welcome the comments from Egypt and South Africa that we should continue to work together to resolve differences through dialogue. Australia respects the work of the Advisory Bodies and the important role that the Committee plays in decision-making in the World Heritage system. We welcome opportunities to continue to work collaboratively and transparently with all States Parties, Advisory Bodies and the UNESCO's Secretariat to ensure that there are clear guidelines to guide the development of recommendations and consideration by the Committee in its decisions. In this regard, we look forward to participating in discussions on how the World Heritage system can best respond to the challenges that have emerged over the last 50 years, including the challenges presented by climate change, balancing development and conservation, and how the system should make recommendations regarding sensitive sites. Australia looks forward to working with all States Parties on clear guidelines to improve processes even further in the interests of our collective conservation efforts. And we take the view that it is inappropriate to call into question consensual decisions by an elected Committee. We reinforce the views of those who expressed the view that Advisory Bodies, of course, are expert and important, but by definition are advisory, not decision-makers. Thank you, Chair.

The Delegation of **Mongolia** was the next speaker, as follows: Thank you for giving Mongolia the floor, Mr President, and I congratulate you for getting elected to chair the 23rd session. We believe that we will complete this session successfully under your leadership. We wish to extend our appreciation to China for hosting the 44th extended session of the Committee successfully. Mongolia recognises the excellent work completed by the World Heritage Committee and the Secretary of the Convention in strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List, ensuring effective conservation of the World Heritage properties and promoting capacity-building for States Parties despite the difficulties we are facing during the pandemic. As we all know, climate change is posing a serious adverse effect for natural and cultural heritage sites around the world. We need to cooperate more closely than before in the framework of Convention and conservation. So, Mongolia actually encourages all States Parties to the Convention and the Committee members to draw valuable lessons from the nomadic cultures as lifestyle philosophy that emphasises and respects the environment and living in harmony with the nature while considering the Conventions, Conventions of conservation, and preservation strategies for the World Heritage sites. And I thank you and wish you a successful session.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Brazil**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Please, first allow me to congratulate you on your election to preside this meeting, and also to congratulate China for the organisation of the last Committee session. Well, just a brief intervention to add our support to what has been said by Egypt and many other Delegations about the decisions taken at the last Committee. The decisions were taken according to the Rules of Procedure, and it must be emphasised that the Advisory Bodies are advisory as the Rules of Procedure state. The decisions that were taken, were taken taking into consideration the diversity of views and opinions, including, but not limited to, the Advisory Bodies'. In this sense, I would like to say that the next Committee session, the 50th anniversary of the 1972 Convention, will be an opportunity for reflection on how we can improve the Committee's work, taking into consideration different perspectives from a broader cultural basis. Finally, let me express to Russia our wish for a very fruitful Committee session next year in Kazan. Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Nigeria**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving Nigeria the floor. I want to join others to congratulate you for your well-deserved election. I also want to thank China for the good work in organising the extended 44th session of the World Heritage, despite the adverse conditions. Nigeria also wants to recognise the good work that the Secretariat is doing towards the work, towards the Committee work. Nigeria wants to support Kenya on the constructive points raised, and Nigeria looks forward to working with other Committee members. Thank you, Mister Chair.

The **Chairperson** informed that there the remaining speakers are Thailand, Chile and Libya, but first gave the floor to **Saudi Arabia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor, and allow me to express my opinion about the debate that's been taking place today. I can feel the heat in the room. I know that almost every Member State came to this General Assembly today, some of them came flying 16 or 17 hours to get here with some jet lag, and this only shows how important this Convention is. We heard diverging opinions, but there was similarity in the passion. And that's what we should highlight today. We congratulate China for a very successful session in all counts, not only logistically but also programmatically. Not only was it done virtually, but also it encompassed two Committee sessions at once. Now, we all know how difficult that was, so we commend China for the tremendous work. No future without past. We all agree to this, and I believe what has been said by very eloquent Member States earlier, Egypt, Morocco, Oman, to name a few, is the right approach to see things. And I think 50 years require a comprehensive look at the whole ecosystem of the Convention, with human beings at the core of this re-evaluation and reassessment. We've had discussions regarding the Declaration of Principles, which will be reviewed hopefully in the next two days, and we think that this shall act as a platform to discuss these concerns, and not today, here and now. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Thailand**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. First of all, I'd like to thank, I would like to congratulate you for being elected as Chair of this session and also like to thank China and commend China, too, for having organised a wonderful 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. And we are also looking forward to the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee to be held in Russia. Mr Chair, Thailand would like to share the sentiment of colleagues from China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, Oman, Morocco and other colleagues. Thailand attaches great importance to the credibility of the Convention and work towards the preservation of the World Heritage as a whole. We value the excellent work and the role of the Advisory Bodies. However, we also would like to emphasise that the Committee is an inter-governmental body and remains the sovereign body with regard to the decision-making process. The opinions of experts and consultation with our stakeholders are also high priority for us. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next intervention was given by the Delegation of **Chile**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. Since it's the first time I'm taking the floor on behalf of my country, my electoral

group, I would like to congratulate you and the rest of the Bureau and the ADG of Culture, who chaired the meeting earlier and allowed us in that way to put together the Bureau very rapidly. Mr Chairman, I'd like to deeply thank China, and it's an advantage to take the floor after so many of the countries like Brazil, Australia, China, Morocco and Egypt, for the way in which they brought the meeting of the Committee to a successful conclusion. It was a difficult scenario. We were not Member of the Committee and we won't be a Committee Member in the immediate future either. But we were able to participate, debate and dialogue, and we were profoundly grateful for the way in which the debates were carried out and the wealth of national and international experts.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Libya**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I would like to congratulate you on the election and the Bureau members. I really heard concerted voices in putting doubts on the excellent work of the Committee. I do support what is expressed by Egypt, Oman, Palestine, Venezuela, Morocco, Cuba and others in supporting the successful work of the Committee and insisting on the advisory aspect of the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies. If we had to adopt the recommendation of the Advisory Bodies as they are, the *raison d'être* of the Committee would be questionable, at least concerning its role on the listing of World Heritage sites. We could say that what really undermines the credibility of the Committee is the geographical imbalance in the World Heritage sites. We congratulate China for organising the last Convention, which was really excellent and well done. Thank you very much.

Le prochain intervenant était de la Delegation de la **République arabe syrienne**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Je vous félicite pour votre élection, et l'élection du Bureau aussi. Je passe en Arabe. Thank you. And having congratulated you on your election, we'd also like to congratulate the members of the Bureau, and reaffirm our support to you so as to arrive at our results transparently. We also thank China for the excellent organisation of the 44th session of the WHC, which was very rich in debate, which was very successful in spite of the difficulties caused by the pandemic. I participated in the work done in that session and I can assure you that the quality of debate was very high. There was a lot of professionalism and transparency. Having followed the different interventions, I see that everyone wants the Committee to succeed. Our interests are shared. We all want to strengthen the known and unknown possibilities which exist to safeguard world cultural and natural heritage, and Member States would need to support the Secretariat of the 1972 Convention. We all need to work together to strengthen the role of the consultative bodies and also the World Heritage Centres by making national experts, competent experts, available to them. I would support Oman, Egypt, Palestine, Iran and Venezuela in what they had to say. They've all brought out difficulties and challenges that we must face, and we will need to continue working calmly because that's the only way to succeed. We need not speak out too harshly during this session. We would thank the consultative bodies for the work they do, and we would also like to recognise the important role played by the Tunisian Delegate, His Excellency the Ambassador, in the drafting of important documents for that meeting. Thank you.

La dernière intervention était de la Délégation de **France**, comme suit : Merci, Monsieur le Président, de me donner la parole, et félicitations pour votre élection. La France soutient évidemment la plus grande intégrité et la crédibilité de la Liste du Patrimoine mondial. C'est pour cette raison que mon pays soutient financièrement le Centre du Patrimoine mondial, en plus de ses contributions obligatoires et volontaires, donc pour certains projets, et soutient également les États membres qui ont des biens au Patrimoine mondial via sa coopération bilatérale. Concernant la tenue du dernier Comité, la France remercie la Chine et le Président Chinois Tian Xuejun, ainsi que les membres du Comité avec lesquels elle a mené un dialogue transparent et ouvert avant et pendant la session. La France n'est pas Membre du Comité et ne s'apprête pas à candidater dans un future proche, comme le savent les honorables délégués ici. Néanmoins, nous estimons que les opinions des experts sont certes de la plus haute importance et guident nos travaux. Toutefois, le Comité ne peut pas être une simple

chambre d'enregistrement des évaluations des Organisations consultatives, comme cela a été dit par un grand nombre d'intervenants. Il est nécessaire, bien sûr, d'avoir plus de dialogue et de transparence dans le processus des candidatures et c'est pour cela que nous tenons à en parler au cours de l'année à venir dans le cadre de la réflexion sur la mise à jour de la Stratégie globale. Je vous remercie.

The **Chairperson** thanked all the delegates for their interventions and assured them that these would be duly reflected in the Summary Records. He once again congratulated the People's Republic of China for an excellent, excellent meeting of the Committee.

The **Chairperson** closed **Item 4** of the Agenda.

The session was adjourned to the next day.

The meeting was closed.

**SECOND DAY**  
**Thursday, 25 November 2021**

**SECOND MEETING**

**10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(South Africa)**

**DEUXIÈME JOUR**  
**Jeudi 25 novembre 2021**

**DEUXIÈME RÉUNION**

**10h00 – 13h00**

**Président : S.E. Mr.Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(Afrique du Sud)**

**5 ELECTIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE // ÉLECTIONS AU COMITÉ  
DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL**

*Documents: WHC/21/23.GA/5*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.5A*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.5B*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution 23 GA 5*

The **Chairperson** announced the results of the ballot for the allocated seats for Group I, II, III and Group IV:

Results for the Allocated seats

**Group I** (Total votes: 177 - Valid votes: 174 – Invalid votes: 1)

Belgium: 78

Greece: 119

Italy: 143

**Group II** (Total votes: 177 - Valid votes: 166 – Invalid votes: 11)

Bulgaria: 166

**Group III** (Total votes: 177 - Valid votes: 173 – Invalid votes: 4)

Antigua and Barbuda : 29

Argentina : 104

Barbados : 66

Colombia : 62

Mexico : 121

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines : 103 *[due to an omission, this line was added on 22/05/2025]*

**Group IV** (Total votes: 177 - Valid votes: 173 – Invalid votes: 2)

India: 142

Japan: 141

Mongolia: 51

The **Chairperson** declared the following States Parties elected to the World Heritage Committee for **Group I: Greece and Italy**; for **Group II: Bulgaria**; for **Group III: Argentina, Mexico and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**; and for **Group IV: India and Japan**.

Results for the Open seats (Total votes: 164 - Valid votes: 163 – Invalid votes: 1)

Antigua and Barbuda: 17

Barbados: 53

Belgium: 103

Colombia: 65

Mongolia: 68

Qatar: 114

Rwanda: 90

Zambia: 100

The **Chairperson** declared the following States Parties elected to the World Heritage Committee: **Belgium, Qatar, Rwanda and Zambia**.

The Resolution **23 GA 5** was adopted as amended

The **Chairperson** closed **Item 5** of the Agenda.

**SECOND DAY**  
**Thursday, 25 November 2021**

**THIRD MEETING**

**3 p.m. – 7 p.m.**

**Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(South Africa)**

**DEUXIÈME JOUR**  
**Jeudi 25 novembre 2021**

**TROISIÈME RÉUNION**

**15h00 – 19h00**

**Président : S.E. M. Tebogo Seokolo**  
**(Afrique du Sud)**

**6 EXAMINATION OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND, INCLUDING THE STATUS OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF STATES PARTIES //**  
**EXAMEN DE L'ÉTAT DES COMPTES DU FONDS DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL, Y**  
**COMPRIS DU STATUT DES CONTRIBUTION DES ÉTATS PARTIES**

*Documents WHC/21/23.GA/6*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.6*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution 23 GA 6*

The **Chairperson** invited the delegates to examine Item 6 of the Agenda.

The **Representative of the Bureau of Strategic Planning** was given the floor to give a brief introduction on the financial statements of the World Heritage Fund. Two sets of financial statements were presented, the first one covering the 2018-2019 biennium, which required the approval of the General Assembly. The other document is presented for information purposes only, which is the current biennium, which is the first 18 months of the current biennium. The representative indicated that these financial statements have been presented in line with previous period, meaning consistent approach of presentation of financial statements. Expenditure includes goods and services delivered, as well as commitments entered into before the end of the financial period. When looking at the accounts for the last biennium 2018-19, the representative specified that the total income generated under the Fund amounted to 12.8 million, which is a very significant increase of almost 34% compared to the previous biennium. In terms of expenditure, it amounted to 9.1 million, thus generating a surplus of roughly about 400 000 for the period. The accumulated reserve, meaning the fund balance after income and expenditure and also funds carried forward, amounted to 10.4 million at the end of the year 2019. So as at 31 December 2019, the Fund balance amounted to 10.4 million.

In terms of the program expenditure, which is mainly the budget that the General Assembly has approved, of what was spent of 4.6 million, there was an implementation rate of 87% of the budget. So, in terms of approved budget, 87% were implemented compared to 82% in the previous biennium. So, there was a bit of an improvement of almost 5%. The representative informed the assembly that they have also provided an interim account, for informative purposes only, for the first 18 months. For the first 18 months of this year, expenditure stands at 77%. So, this is likely to go up as we finalise the implementation of the last six months of the current biennium.

The **Chairperson** opened the floor for questions and comments, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Palestine**, who requested the Secretariat to provide more readable documents, just a practical issue.

The **Chairperson** proceeded to the adoption of the Draft Resolution WHC/21/23.GA/6, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Kuwait**, who requested the Secretariat to read draft resolution paragraph by paragraph. This was supported by the Delegation of **Egypt**, who requested more clarity on the screen on the part of the Secretariat.

The **Rapporteur** read over the Decision paragraph by paragraph.

The Draft Resolution was adopted, and **Item 6** of the Agenda closed.

## **7 DETERMINATION OF THE AMOUNT OF THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 16 OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION // FIXATION DU MONTANT DES CONTRIBUTIONS AU FONDS DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL CONFORMÉMENT AUX DISPOSITIONS DE L'ARTICLE 16 DE LA CONVENTION DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL**

*Documents: WHC/21/23.GA/7*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.7*

*WHC/21/23.GA/7.Corr*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution: 23 GA 7*

The **Chairperson** moved on to the next Agenda item which was Item 7 which concerned the determination of the amount of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund.

Le **Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial** (intérim assuré par le **Sous-directeur général pour la Culture**) a présenté ce point en commençant par rappeler que le Point 7 concerne l'Article 16 de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial selon lequel l'Assemblée générale des États parties détermine le montant des contributions au Fonds du Patrimoine mondial sous la forme d'un pourcentage uniforme applicable à tous les États parties. Il informe que le Point 7 traite également de la viabilité du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial et du suivi de la Résolution 22.GA 7. La Partie 1 du Document 23.GA 7 traite de la détermination du montant des contributions des États parties. Le montant à verser par les États parties à la Convention représente un pourcentage de leur contribution à l'UNESCO. Il rappelle que depuis la première Assemblée générale des États parties en 1976, le pourcentage utilisé pour les calculs a été fixé à 1%, ce qui est le pourcentage maximum autorisé par le texte de la Convention. Il est proposé à cette Assemblée générale de conserver ce pourcentage.

La Partie 2 du Document 23.GA 7 fait l'état des lieux par rapport à la question récurrente de la viabilité du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial, une des questions les plus pressantes de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial depuis plusieurs années. Il rappelle que le nombre de biens sur la Liste du Patrimoine mondial a augmenté de près de 20% depuis 2012, alors que la diminution de 21% du Fonds en 2012 n'a pas été encore lamentablement compensée.

Il explique que parmi les solutions envisagées par le Comité au fil des ans, il y a eu l'adoption en 2017 d'une "Feuille de route pour la viabilité du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial". Un rapport de mise en œuvre pour les mesures à court terme sur trois ans a été présenté au Comité en 2021. Il rappelle que suite à l'adoption par le Comité en 2018 d'une stratégie de mobilisation de ressources et de communication, un rapport cumulatif de mise en œuvre pour 2018-2020 a été également présenté au Comité en juillet dernier. Ce rapport démontre que la levée de fonds classiques avec des donateurs bilatéraux, majoritairement des États parties et l'Union



européenne, est toujours efficace. Et cela montre également la préférence des donateurs pour des financements fléchés.

Pour terminer, il indique que la viabilité du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial a été une question clé au cours des discussions sur la mise en place de la réforme du processus de propositions d'inscription. Cette réforme, adoptée lors de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie en juillet dernier, passe par la mise en place d'une première phase appelée Analyse préliminaire, en plus du mécanisme actuel décrit au Paragraphe 128 des orientations, qui constituera ainsi la deuxième phase. Cependant, la question du financement durable de l'analyse préliminaire à partir de 2024 demeure ouverte. Elle sera abordée par le prochain Groupe de travail ad-hoc.

Il informe l'Assemblée que la Partie 3 du Document 23.GA/7 concerne le suivi de la Résolution **22.GA 7** prise par cette même Assemblée en 2019. En ce qui concerne les lettres de relance pour les plus gros retards de paiement, cinq lettres ont été envoyées par les services financiers. Aucune réponse n'a été reçue à ce jour. Pour ce qui concerne le montant total des contributions, il informe que les tableaux correspondants ont été inclus en annexe du Document 7.

Enfin, l'Étude de faisabilité sur les mesures possibles concernant les pays en retard de paiement fait l'objet du Document 23.GA/8 qui est le prochain point de discussion.

The **Chairperson** thanked the Assistant Director-general for Culture and suggested to move on to the Draft Resolution **23 GA 7**.

The **Rapporteur** went through the Resolution paragraph by paragraph. There were no objections or amendments.

The **Chairperson** declared the Draft Resolution **23 GA 7** adopted, and closed **Item 7** of the Agenda.

**ITEM 8: POSSIBLE MEASURES CONCERNING ARREARS, INCLUDING WITH RESPECT TO THE EXAMINATION OF NOMINATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE CONCERNED STATES PARTIES, WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO THE PROTECTION OF STATES THAT CANNOT PAY FOR CAUSES BEYOND THEIR CONTROL // MESURES POSSIBLES CONCERNANT LES ARRIÉRÉS, Y COMPRIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'EXAMEN DES PROPOSITIONS D'INSCRIPTION SOUMISES PAR LES ÉTATS PARTIES CONCERNÉS, SANS NUIRE À LA PROTECTION DES ÉTATS QUI NE PEUVENT PAS PAYER POUR DES CAUSES INDÉPENDANTES DE LEUR VOLONTÉ**

*Document WHC/21/23.GA/8*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution **23 GA 8***

The **Chairperson** moved on to Item 8 of the Agenda, which concerns possible measures concerning arrears, including with respect to the examination of nominations submitted by the concerned parties without detriment to the protection of States that cannot pay for causes beyond their control.

Le **Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial** (intérim assuré par le **Sous-directeur général pour la Culture**) a présenté ce point qui a été inscrit à l'Ordre du jour de la présente

session par la Résolution 22.GA 7 prise par l'Assemblée générale en 2019. Afin de couvrir l'ensemble des mesures possibles concernant les arriérés, nous avons répertorié les droits conférés par la Convention aux États parties et nous avons examiné ceux qui ne sont pas impactés par un retard ou un non-paiement des contributions. Il a expliqué que ces mesures possibles peuvent être séparées en deux groupes, en fonction de leur mode de mise en œuvre. D'une part, les mesures nécessitant une révision de la Convention en ce qui concerne : le droit de vote au sein de l'Assemblée générale du Comité, le droit de présenter un dossier de proposition d'inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine. Et d'autre part, par les mesures nécessitant une révision des orientations, comme c'est le cas de l'inclusion au Paragraphe 61c d'une priorité pour l'examen des propositions d'inscription par le Comité en lien avec le règlement des contributions ou le report de l'examen par le Comité d'un dossier de proposition d'inscription en cas de non-paiement de contributions. Il a expliqué que le Document 8, étant une étude de faisabilité, n'avait pas vocation à entrer dans les détails des aspects pratiques de la mise en œuvre de ces mesures et que ceci pourra être fait ultérieurement en fonction de ce que cette Assemblée décidera.

The **Chairperson** opened the floor for questions or comments.

The Delegation of **Austria** took the floor, with an intervention as follows: Yes, Mr President, because I understand that we will have a general debate, right? And I think it would be necessary that we make a couple of points, because that will be important for us to consider the Draft Decision before us. So, with your indulgence, I would like to make a statement because Austria and some 18 States Parties have moved for an amendment. And I would like to set out the rationale why we put forward that amendment. And I think we feel that that's quite important for framing the discussion and understanding what we're talking about. So, with your indulgence, I would like to, to make that statement.

I would like to speak on, on behalf of Albania, Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland. And if I have forgotten anyone, please raise your plate. Why did we set forth this amendment and why do we feel this amendment, our amendment, serves more the Convention, and why is this more, we feel, in States Parties' interest?

First of all, let me thank the Secretariat for a quite precise, legal and practical analysis of the options that are before us. And I think we all agree that the options that require a revision of the Convention are not an option because it's too cumbersome. This would leave us only with one possible option or one possible measure that we can reflect upon, and that is deferring the examination of the nomination of a State Party that is not paying its contributions. Examination of the nomination in the Committee, I should add. A decision that cannot be made by the General Assembly, but only by the Committee. So, we have read very carefully through the precise analysis prepared by the Secretariat, and one can conclude with quite some ease that there will be the need for developing a mechanism. And developing the mechanism just to punish even more all States Parties who cannot pay would necessitate a lot of efforts and a lot of resources. Such a process seems to be, in our view, completely disproportionate in terms of resources and political capital spent, with very little to be gained. We have already a provision by which States Parties that do not pay cannot be elected as a member of the Committee. We've seen how much is on our plate, and we have seen how much is on the plate of the Committee. The Committee has many, many tasks at hand. Scrutinising the reasons why some States Parties cannot fulfil their legal obligations will result in a naming and shaming of all States Parties that cannot pay, including those smaller States Parties that cannot pay for reasons beyond their control. We feel this politicisation does not help, and certainly will not bring about the results we want to achieve. However, the principle of the legal obligation and the question of fairness nevertheless remain very pertinent, and we need to address them. And we have to think about how best we can achieve our objectives. The objective of the

decision to be taken by us, by the General Assembly, should, in our view, be to ensure that States Parties contribute to financially sustain the system of evaluation of nominations when States Parties bring forward nominations to the World Heritage List. This is why we are proposing strong language that will reinforce the principle that the payment of the assessed contributions is a legal obligation. And we urge States Parties to comply with their obligations. We also make a strong plea for States Parties to use, among others, the newly established mechanism for making voluntary contributions to offset the costs of evaluation of nominations. This has been established in Baku two years ago, is a completely new mechanism that was explicitly designed to make sure that the costs for nominations are compensated and not taken out of the Fund. It is our understanding that, in particular, those States Parties that would be in a position to contribute financially, but don't do it right now, will avail themselves of these new mechanisms. We have received assurances to this effect: that they will find a way to make use of this new mechanism. We feel this is a more effective way of handling this question, and we don't feel that prolonging debate in the Committee will be of great help. I thank you, and I'm more than happy to explain the rationale of each of the paragraphs of our amendments when we come to the DR. Thank you very much for your indulgence, Mr President.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Please allow me, Mr Chairman, to congratulate the members, the new members who have been elected to the Committee. I would also like to thank the ADG for his introduction, and as he mentioned, it is only a legal study about the different possibilities regarding arrears. The first thing to note and to keep in mind is what has been said, that all this issue is related to arrears, voluntary arrears, and we should be aware that in this regard, we are very careful not to affect the protection of States that cannot pay for causes beyond their control. We are talking about discretionary arrears or voluntary arrears. This is the first thing. Second thing, in the background of the document, it is clearly stipulated that this issue started, I mean, the financial difficulties of the Fund, started since 2011 and was raised in the Assembly and the Committee since 2012. If we look back in the other decisions, we will find references to the financial difficulty and plea to States Parties who have arrears to pay as soon as possible. Well, the failure to pay does not prevent States from continuing to enjoy benefits. Indeed, it is mentioned clearly here. There are some rights that we can't touch unless we revise the Convention. This is not the purpose, of course, we do not agree on that. Nevertheless, the study gives other possibilities. Even if our legal advisers, legal experts, do not agree on the explanation given in Paragraph 15 to Paragraph 19 regarding the right of submission. But in any case, we are not going to open the debate on this issue. We agree with it. Let us say that it is acceptable. Nevertheless, we have some other possible measures, without necessity to revise the Convention, and they are included in Paragraph 22 and 23 of this Document. One regarding the priority for the examination of nominations. The other regarding deferral, deferring the examination of nominations.

Now, coming to the heart of the problem. The issue is that you adopted two resolutions right before, and in the decisions that we adopted, you will notice that the main issue is the financial difficulties. I don't know exactly when we adopted "There will be an amount to pay for each submission". And this happened because of these financial difficulties again. Well, there is a matter of principle that we should keep in mind. In the text and the resolutions, and in the study, it is mentioned clearly that the contributions is paying, the contributions is a legal binding obligation. Everybody agrees on it. But we forget that it is not only a legal binding obligation, but it is also a moral obligation. Remember, we worked on a document for ethics, principles and so on. It should have been named Code of Conduct. Well, the principles, the ethical principles before all relies on the moral obligations and the moral responsibility of States Parties to the Convention. So, there is a question of principle. This is the first thing. Second thing. Indeed, a State Party to the Convention has the right to request the respect of its rights under the Convention. But at the same time, they should respect their obligations under the Conventions, including the timely payment of the contributions. So, it is not a matter of legal obligation rather the moral obligation. Here is the issue. Since 2015, Palestine submitted

amendments on these items. You can look. It was Item 8 already in 2015. And after that, there was a Working Group who examined different possibilities, but there was no consensus on the issue. And then, in 2019, we discussed it again, and we included this item on the Agenda of this session. The amendments submitted by Austria and the other colleagues, we have no problem with them. We can support them and I can also co-sponsor their amendments. But unfortunately, this was not the purpose, because part of them has been already adopted in other resolutions, including the Resolution that we adopted right now. We have a similar paragraph in there. So, I have no problem with these amendments. But I have a problem if we do not go forward and make it clear that there are possible measures. I am not asking immediately to implement these possible measures, but we need to keep it on the table. My colleague from Austria talked about assurances that she received from some Parties or the concerned Parties that they will contribute differently. But the Assembly did not receive such information, neither formally nor informally, and we did not hear any intervention in this regard. So that is why Palestine submitted an amendment to this Resolution. And when we come to the wording in that case, I'll be glad to explain the rationale behind each paragraph. Again, it is not, there is no political issue in our amendment. I repeat it. It is not a political issue. It is purely a question of principles and respect of the provisions of the Convention, not only respecting our rights, but respecting as well our obligations. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. This being our second day of meetings, I would like to recognise and congratulate you on the work being done, and also those who have been elected today in our Committee elections. All that being said, the point we are discussing right now. We can follow to a certain extent what has been indicated by Austria. We do need to establish a mechanism which tends to incite countries that are in arrears to pay. We don't need punitive measures for those who can't, but we do need to have a dialogue on this in some way. For the countries that are in this room. I don't think there is any secret for anyone. I don't think it's hidden, that Venezuela is one of the countries that is being suffering from the application of forced coercive measures. And given that over time, the list of countries that have unilateral coercive measures applied to them that will affect their possibility of financing measures, participating in financial systems, having access to currencies, and they get longer. So, I don't know how many times we're going to have to defend ourselves before UNESCO, other bodies as well, to discuss these things over and over now. And we have the will and the desire, but our hands are tied in terms of participation. We do not have the capacity. I don't know how many times here, in the General Conference, we have to find a type of mechanism to deal with this problem. And I think that the Distinguished Delegate from Austria and others need to realize, in the proposal that's being put forward, in what space we're going to be evaluating and identifying the idea that a country is not up to date for reasons that are entirely beyond their control.

I think this is an additional heading when we present a file, it could be a parallel meeting. I don't know how that could happen. I think this is happening at a very difficult juncture and I think it would be dangerous to take a decision before we really understand all the implications of this, in particular for countries that have great difficulties in actually being able to be up to date in our contributions. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** thanked the delegates for their interventions, and reminded everyone of the time limit of three minutes allocated, since there is still the need to go through the Draft Resolution.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Argentina**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. Yes, I think that a few minutes before, getting down to vote would be useful. I think we all agree that there are financial difficulties in the Fund that create difficulties and that there is arrears in contributions. But we also have to see what the decision we're called upon to adopt is going to do. And I think we also need to learn from other organisations and other solutions that have been found elsewhere. Let us not forget that what we want to do here is to encourage

compliance and not to sanction. We should also not forget that heritage belongs to people, cultural and natural heritage, and that those who are behind on contributions are States and sometimes Governments, for reasons that do not have anything directly to do with the essence of people, or reasons for candidacies to be presented for cultural heritage. If we look at the Basel Convention, where it is suggested that there should be very strong sanctions taken against transboundary movement of cultural items. And this is a section that actually tries to encourage compliance and cooperation. And this was a very great success. And we understood why countries did not comply. It was because they were most often lacking the capacity to do so. And in this case as well. Before we get down to the document, I think we need to see why countries don't comply. Sometimes because they can't. But especially not to sanction peoples and their ability to be proud of and share their cultural and natural heritage, which belongs to humanity. It's not, doesn't belong to the country that is not in compliance on its contributions at a given moment in time. Thank you.

A Point of Order was raised by the Delegation of **Palestine**, qui indique à l'Assemblée qu'il y a un problème sérieux, comme suit : Je m'excuse, mais mes collègues du Venezuela et de l'Argentine, à priori, ils n'ont pas bien lu le document. Et ils n'ont pas bien entendu ce qui était dit. Le document est clair. C'est écrit noir sur blanc. I have the English version here "This document outlines possible measures concerning areas including arrears, including with risk"

The **Chairperson** asked clarity on what is the Point of Order, to which the Delegation of **Palestine** responded that the Point of Order is that we are talking about a mechanism regarding a specific category of arrears, and not the arrears that has been mentioned by, for example, the case of Venezuela, or what has been mentioned by Argentina. It is written clearly that this mechanism that we are looking on doesn't concern these countries who do not pay for reasons beyond their control. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Canada**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman, and congratulations on your appointment to this very esteemed role for this body today, on this very important issue. Let me begin by just saying I think, I thank you and the Secretariat for pointing out the Points of Order must relate to the proceedings and that we shouldn't be entering into a use of Points of Order to then have a back and forth that wouldn't respect the great number of participants' desire to take the floor. So, I thank you for that. As far as Canada is concerned, we look at this issue as one where we need to go back to first principles. We need to look at what is the World Heritage Convention and why do we have it. And here I think the Argentinean colleague was very eloquent when he said, we're talking here about humanity and the protection of culture, of universal value, of natural heritage, of universal value that is to be protected. And that's what has resulted in having more States than any other Convention assembled in this room here today, because we are joined together in this desire to protect that heritage. I think this is a moral obligation that supersedes any other obligation. And when we look at this text and at the considerations that we're taking with regard to arrears, what needs to be in the forefront of our minds is the fact that we will not do anything that will inhibit the protection of heritage for the peoples in those places, regardless of arrears.

We need to see full payment. It is an obligation. But where it isn't being made, we can't punish the peoples whose heritage is at stake and whose countries still have the right to nominate and should be considered. I would add to that we have a new mechanism that has been decided and we have that mechanism. It hasn't been invoked yet because there haven't been nominations for countries in arrears. And so this is why we would like, as Canada, to take the most positive approach to this process, to have in the forefront of our mind something that is a positive incitement to ensure that no one else is punished and that we have the ability for all States, regardless of arrears, to still be able to submit in conformity with the project that we're embarked on, which is to protect the cultural and natural heritage of humanity. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Brazil**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. We agree that sustainability of the World Heritage Fund is a matter of concern and shared responsibility, and that States Parties should fully comply with their obligations under the 1972 Convention. But we do not support the idea of different examination of nomination submitted by States Parties in arrears. The penalty for non-payment of assessed contributions was established by the Convention itself in its Article 16, and that is the non-eligibility to the World Heritage Committee. To establish an additional penalty for the same breach would amount to *ibis in idem*: a second punishment for the same fact, which goes against legal principle, especially when the second punishment is to be established by a norm of inferior hierarchy, which purports to exceed what was determined by the 1972 Convention. We would also find it highly problematic to try to restrict the right of States Parties to have their nominations examined, a right established by the Convention, when this matter has not been thoroughly appraised by the legal office, as indicated by the language used in the legal opinion mentioned in the Working Document: “appear to be possible”, “could potentially justify”, and so on. Besides the pending legal issues, there are also practical issues that would need to be addressed, as stated in the Working Document. In order to render this proposal applicable, additional provisions would be needed, such as new rules, timetables and deadlines, all of which would require amending the Operational Guidelines to the Convention. We would also need to take into account the request made in 2019 that restrictions be applied in the case of States that cannot pay for causes beyond their control, which would require the creation of other criteria, mechanisms and bodies to ascertain if non-payment results from such causes. For this, I would like to go to the conclusion expressed in the Working Document prepared by the Secretariat, quote: “This would risk substantially increasing the complexity of the existing processes. The expected benefit of arrears collection appears to be limited when compared to the staff costs that could be incurred in setting up and applying such a procedure” end quote. This, considering that the proposed measure would be legally questionable, cumbersome to apply, and likely to result in costs that exceed its benefits, we cannot support the amendments submitted by the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine. On the other hand, we believe that States Parties should be encouraged to do their utmost to stand up to their responsibilities and reinforce the sustainability of the Fund by means of all kinds of contributions, whether voluntary or compulsory, direct or indirect, budgetary or extra-budgetary, in general, or when putting forward nominations. We thus welcome and support the amendment presented by Austria and 17 other Delegations in this sense. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next intervention was from the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman. This is an important issue and I would like to reaffirm Australia's support for the intervention made by our Austrian colleague on behalf of the identified co-sponsors. We agree with the proposition this Assembly should reinforce the principle that the payment of assessed contributions is a legal obligation, and we certainly urge all States Parties to comply with this. But the objective of today's decision should be to ensure that States Parties contribute to sustain the system of evaluation, which is so fundamental to the World Heritage System. Australia reinforces the plea for States Parties to use the newly established mechanism for making voluntary contributions in appropriate circumstance. And as I mentioned, and I reaffirm the comment made by our Canadian colleague to this effect. I confirm Australia's view that identifying a positive way forward is the most effective response of handling the question before us. And I think, I reaffirm the proposition made by our Austrian colleague. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Italy**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr President, and thank you to the Secretariat for this document and to Palestine for this proposal, which raises a number of legal issues which are really important and which, as other colleagues have already rightly underlined, needs to be addressed. And will require time to be addressed and to open a debate which is very important for this Assembly. We would like, I will be very short, we would like to express our support for the arguments already explained and raised by our Austrian colleague and for the amendments proposed by a number of Member States, which we think are a good step in the right direction to find a solution to this problem. And I fully

support the positions expressed in this debate already by Argentina and Canada in particular, when they underline that the purpose of this Convention should be to protect the universal value of cultural and natural sites, rather than to punish and isolate Member States, which, for whatever reason, have arrears in their payments. This should be, I think, the aim of this debate, we should be an orientation point, to try to find a solution to the problem. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Lithuania** was next to intervene, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. First, I would like to congratulate the States Parties that have been elected new members of the Committee. Lithuania supports the amendment proposed by Austria. We believe that this proposal is a good solution. Not to impose financial burden or punishment related to the evaluation of the nominations. Also, as have been mentioned, the new mechanism created in 2019 allows those States Parties that did not pay, to make their contributions. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Honduras**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman. I would like to congratulate you on your election and your leadership in the very positive discussions we are having this afternoon. Honduras would also like to express its satisfaction in being able to review this proposal made by Austria. It seems to us that we need to return to the values and principles which guided the development of all of our works throughout this Organisation. It seems to us that visualising a possibility of an alternative mechanism some way out that won't limit the work being done or the interests, not just the States Parties, but, as has been said here in this room, of our societies, our institutions and our communities. I think that UNESCO's language has always been inclusive and not restrictive. I would recall at this point other very important debates, and interesting debates, we've had in recent years, where it was also claimed that the exercise of the work being done by UNESCO, via its Convention, should be restricted in some ways. And so, an exit solution, a solution of restriction, is something that I think will never go with the inclusive language that we have used, the values we have upheld in this Organisation. As has already been said, heritage belongs to everyone, and in UNESCO we cannot and should not exclude anyone. I think we need to remember UNESCO's motto this afternoon: "Don't leave anyone behind". So, I think, Mr Chairman, UNESCO's leadership cannot be renounced in any way. We are obliged to think of mechanisms, ways and means for our States, our societies, and has already been said, our communities, may take responsibility for contributing to the protection of heritage. Thank you very much.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Hungary**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor. And first, let me sincerely congratulate you for your election. And also let me congratulate the new elected members of the Committee, as well. As co-author with Austria and others, let me assure you that Hungary takes very seriously the issues of arrears. And referencing the Convention text, as Brazil rightly pointed out, our wise predecessors also took into account such an eventuality, and it was decided in Article 16.5 that the Member State in arrears should not be eligible as a Member of the World Heritage Committee. At that time, this measure was found to be sufficient, with which we are satisfied. The question raised here, that is "What more can be done with Member States in arrears?", is multifaceted, as we could hear in the interventions. Everything depends on what we want to achieve and how much effort we are willing to put in it, and what would be the end result. That is, we don't want to make our lives more difficult along the process. We thank the Secretariat for the excellent document produced and elaborated extensively on the different possibilities. Regarding the conclusions, we agree that engaging at this time in the process of amending the Convention is not really realistic. Regarding the process of nomination, it is rather complex already. It would then be necessary to determine the procedure for applying such a mechanism, including a deadline for reviewing payments, and how many times should deferral occur, possibly a verification mechanism to examine the reasons of arrears, possibly determine a list of criteria, have in accordance with the existing timetable, modify it. I mean, I could go on. Engaging in a lengthy, delicate examination process, especially in this time of Covid, when we even do not know if next week we can have a physical meeting or not, don't seem very feasible for us. Basically,

there are two ways of approaching the question. The amendment we introduced has an approach which keeps in mind the interest of every Member State. And instead of a purely punitive approach, we are trying to finding ways that would not further complicate our focus on the betterment of the financial stability of the system of variation of nominations. Thank you.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Japan**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. We support the amendment. We support the amendment submitted by Austria regarding the issue of arrears. There is already a provision by which States Parties who have arrears lose eligibility for the Committee Member. As Canada pointed out, we need a positive approach for protection of heritage, and the objective should be to ensure the financial contribution by States Parties. In this sense, we believe that the effective way to deal with this issue is to utilise the newly established and now available mechanism for voluntary contribution agreed in 2019. Thank you.

The next speaker was **The Netherlands**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. Let me first of all congratulate you with your election as President, and I also would like to congratulate all the new Committee Members elected today. The Netherlands would like to reaffirm the support for the amendment presented by Austria. And I think it was worded before, a few times, but I think the inclusiveness of the Convention and the spirit, the positive spirit, needs us to look for positive solutions, and I think the amendment of Austria really works on that. And so, we would like to reaffirm it. And thank you for that.

The next intervention was delivered by the Delegation of **Slovenia**: Thank you, Mr President. First of all, I would like to thank you for presenting a very good document, which was, that we are discussing today with regard to the fact that it is of extreme importance. Slovenia would like to support the amendment presented by Austria because we believe it is very balanced. And I would like to add as well that we wish to be added as a co-sponsor on this amendment. And at the same time, I would like to congratulate all the Member States that were elected today. Thank you. Mr President.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **China**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. China has taken note of these amendments and considers that those who are able to pay contributions but who have not done so, ought to do so. We are concerned by this situation. China thinks that paying contributions fully is the duty and basic responsibility of each State Party. Sufficient financial resources are essential in order to conserve sites and carry out evaluation of nominations. We hope that countries in arrears will be able to honour their engagement and pay their contributions. And we hope that they will accept their responsibility to protect World Heritage through concrete action. China understands Palestine's amendment. However, we also support attempts to find positive measures to resolve this issue. We hope that we will be able to work together to ensure the feasibility of the World Heritage Fund. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Poland**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your election. And I also would like to congratulate all the new members of the Committee elected a couple of minutes ago. Secondly, Mr Chair, I would like to underline that, of course, the idea of the World Heritage Convention is to protect and safeguard the most important sites which have the outstanding universal value. And this is the duty of the international community and all the States Parties which signed the World Heritage Convention. I fully agree with all the States Parties who mentioned that it is our common responsibility to safeguard and protect those sites, especially Australia, Canada and Argentina before me, who very strongly said what are the duties of the Member States of the World Heritage Convention. Then of course, we have another duty. Not only to safeguard and protect, but also to fulfil our duties as the Member States of the same party and to pay the contributions to the World Heritage Fund. And we feel that we can struggle with this obligation in many ways and for many reasons, there are delays for the payment to the World Heritage Fund. And just to study the document that you have presented us before, several countries already are



struggling with the delay and with the arrears of the regular contributions. So, in this sense, Mr Chair, we do have a fear that the Palestinian proposal and the postulates that were raised in the amendments, in our view, will also require the amendment to the Convention. And because it regards the obligations of the States Parties and will definitely need a further consultation, we need to look back and to see that this is all about to be clear and this is all about to be fair to each other. The rules and the provisions, as the colleague from Brazil mentioned very, very clearly, needs to be also established when it comes to all the solutions presented by the Secretariat in the document. We are always committed to identify the positive way forward and to find a solution which will be very suitable for all the States Parties. So, in this sense, Mr Chair, Poland would like to reiterate our support to the amendments proposed by Australia and several other colleagues. Thank you, Mr Chair. By Austria. Sorry, sorry. I said Australia. Sorry.

The **Chairperson** informed the delegates that he still has ten more speakers on his list, and that he will close it in order to move to the Draft Resolution afterwards.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Estonia**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Estonia welcomes this helpful document, the Working Document that we have, that clearly outlines the legal possibilities available to deal with a situation concerning arrears of assessed contributions, the payment of which is an obligation. That is clear. We also conclude from a paper that the possible measures restricting the right to vote and the right to submit nominations to a World Heritage list would require revisions to the Convention itself. And this is not the way we would like to go. We also very well understand the pragmatic reasoning. But should the Committee establish priorities for examination linked to the payment of assessed contributions, it would require setting up a complicated verification system to protect both countries, that cannot pay for causes beyond their control. This system would come with a cost and increase the complexity of a current process. Therefore, we believe that this is also not the way to go. We hope that all States Parties will be able to settle their arrears and that the new cost-sharing model for the evaluation of nominations will also prove to be a useful tool for supporting evaluation of nominations. Thank you.

The next speaker was the **Republic of Korea**, as follows: Thank you Chair. We would like to express our support for the amendment proposed by other Delegations, including Austria. In our view, limiting rights of States Parties in arrears needs to be approached with caution. According to the legal opinion suggested by Secretariat on this matter, these limitations do not affect the fundamental right of States to have their nomination examined by the Committee. Despite their legal explanation, however, we are still afraid that there is a possibility of infringement on the right of States Parties for nomination, because this measure can be used as a de facto measure against the States Parties in arrears by delaying the examination process indefinitely. We would like to recommend alternative way out for financial difficulty of this Convention. This Convention opens the way for private bodies financial contributions. If we aim to resolve our financial problems surrounding these Convention, in our view, it is more productive to delve into how to encourage global private entities to financially contribute more, rather than adopting the measures which can be considered as politically motivated. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Portugal**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And this is the first time I'm intervening, let me express my congratulations to you and to the Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur for your elections. Let me also support all the Members of the Committee that have already been elected and reiterate that all of you can count with the Portuguese support. Concerning the item that we are talking about now. We think that the main aim of this exercise is to encourage States Parties to fulfil their obligations. We also believe, as Argentina, that the main aim of this Convention is the protection of the heritage. And we also agree with Brazil and with his thorough legal analysis. So, with these arguments, we believe that the amendment that it was presented by Austria is the best way forward and the best option for this draft resolution recommendation. Thank you, Chair.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Slovakia**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr President. And I would also like to congratulate you, the Vice-Chairs, the Rapporteur and also the Member States that have been elected to the World Heritage Committee. First of all, let me thank actually the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine for continue drawing our attention to this very important issue of financial difficulties of the World Heritage Fund. It is not only a matter of financial discipline, but also a matter, as we said, of the fulfilment of our legal obligations under the Convention and more importantly, a matter of the overall functioning and achievement of the objectives of the World Heritage Convention, which has approved the Resolution under Item 7. I would like to also thank ADG Ottone and the Secretariat for a very clear analysis on possible measures which could be taken with respect to arrears. I agree that it is actually necessary to take into consideration the protection of States that cannot pay for causes beyond their control. It is not enough to say that the proposal doesn't concern them, because somebody has to verify which Member States, which are States Parties are those. Consequently, we share the concerns relating to the cost-effectiveness of the arrears collection comparing to the staff costs when applying the procedure of verification of these causes. For these reasons, Slovakia is the main co-sponsors of the Austrian proposal. It makes use of a new mechanism created just two years ago. So, let's give it a chance to show its purpose. Thank you very much.

L'intervenant suivant était la Delegation de **Haïti**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Je salue les membres des États ayant accédé au Conseil aujourd'hui. J'appuie la proposition et, bien entendu, les ajouts du Canada, du Honduras, et je crois que nous avons quelque chose à protéger. Il s'agit de la valeur universelle. Parlant de la valeur universelle, il est question de la protection culturelle et des peuples à partager avec le monde. Donc je crois qu'il y a quelque chose à sauvegarder et à protéger. Donc comme l'UNESCO a toujours été vraiment créative, chaque choix de mécanisme intermédiaire et inclusif pour, justement, pour respecter l'Article 16 de la Convention, bien entendu, mais en même temps protéger les valeurs essentielles, la valeur essentielle, de cette Convention. Je vous en remercie.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Germany**, as follows: Thank you very much for giving me the floor, Mr Chair. Congratulations to your elections and to the new elected members of the World Heritage Committee as well. Indeed, it is a legal obligation of States Parties to contribute to the World Heritage Fund, and we do hope that this duty will be fulfilled by all the States Parties. The World Heritage List is about the world heritage of mankind, not about the ability to pay for the system. As mentioned before, States Parties could contribute to the evaluation of the nomination dossiers by voluntary contributions as well. Therefore, we support the proposal of Austria, seconded by many other Delegations. Thank you very much.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Bulgaria**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your re-election as President of this Assembly. I would also like to congratulate all the newly elected members of the World Heritage Committee and wish them successful work. We also recognise the importance of the issue we are discussing now. It means the financial situation and the difficulties of the Committee. The payment of the financial contributions is a very important legal obligation of every Member State. But at the same time, as many other colleagues have already said, the main obligation of this Committee is to protect the world heritage and not to punish or to introduce restrictions on fundamental rights like the right to have a nomination. So, from that point of view, I would like to say that we also support the arguments presented by Austria and already supported by a number of countries. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of **Kuwait** made an intervention, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I'll try to be as brief. Mr Chair, Kuwait believes that this Convention is truly for the preservation of culture. There is no doubt about it. And we are here to help Member States and to join Member States, the ones who are especially in need. Listening to my colleagues and the amendments from Palestine and Austria, to us, as Kuwait, there is a source of financial support coming. It doesn't

matter from which way and if it's voluntary, we welcome that. And I think, if that's happening, we are not discussing the paying or not paying, we're just discussing how it's being paid. So, Kuwait, as long as there is some contribution to the World Heritage, we are okay to continue with the nomination with Australia. Just by now, we know we don't have any data on that. So, my humble suggestion, Mr Chair, is to go with Austria's amendment, but in the 24th session where we might have more data about this voluntary contribution, it will be presented to the General Assembly, so all Member States who are saying there's other venues of paying, they'll rest assured that the contribution is continuing. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the **Syrian Arab Republic**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. In the name of the Syrian Arab Republic, I would like to congratulate the new members elected to our wonderful Committee. I'd also like to thank the Secretariat for the high-quality document that we are currently discussing. We also congratulate Palestine for the proposed amendment, which is excellent in our view, and that reflects a long series of debates that we have had on a number of occasions within our Assembly and within the Committee. The work, however, is not finished, and this is why the amendment is justified. Certainly, our Fund is currently suffering from an important lack of contributions. Our Convention is therefore in danger, in great danger even. For this reason, we support Palestine's amendment and we also support or approve of Austria's amendment because we think that it's important for us to find consensus, that's in all of our interests. Our colleague from Kuwait also had some interesting remarks, because contributions should be compulsory, well, are compulsory, they're imposed by Article 16 of the Convention. Voluntary contributions are also important. We also need to look for additional funds, certainly. But this does not mean that Palestine's amendment is any less important. Syria, which is suffering from coercive, illegal and unfair measures, has nonetheless never stopped paying its contributions over the 11 years of the crisis we have undergone. That is because my country is aware of the crucial importance of safeguarding cultural and natural heritage in Syria. And we also recognise the importance of our contribution, small as it may be, to the Fund, because this helps to support multilateral cooperation for the preservation and safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage, heritage that belongs to all of humanity. Thank you.

The floor was given to the **Czech Republic**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. First of all, we would like to congratulate all new elected Committee members. We do not want to extend this debate and to repeat what has been already said. But it is important for us to support the Austrian amendments which we co-sponsored. Thank you very much, Mr President.

The next speaker was the **Dominican Republic**, as follows: Many thanks, Mr Chairman, for giving me the floor. First of all, please allow me to congratulate you and the others who have been elected to lead the World Heritage Committee. We understand that even if it is clear that arrears and payments should be regularised, as other Delegates have said, this is a legal obligation. But we are also quite clear on the fact that the spirit of our Institution, UNESCO, is one of inclusion, protection and safeguarding World Heritage. And to that end, we would support the amendment proposed by Austria. Many thanks, Mr Chairman.

The floor was given to the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Contribution is the duty of all States Parties. And also finding and studying the ways how to addressing the situation that a number of countries could not pay their contribution and arrears is very important. As mentioned very well by Argentina and Honduras, we should see the difference between world heritage and the political situation and the international situation. We all witnessed several examples of sanctions, and the negative effects of this kind of works on the cultural, natural and all aspects of the people's ordinary life. So, avoiding of any kind of sanction and punishment is our obligation in this room. So please consider the positive aspects of the Convention, not referring to punishment and putting restriction on the right of all States Parties. Thank you.

The last speaker was the Delegation of **Guatemala**, as follows: Good afternoon, Mr Chairman. Thank you for giving me the floor. First of all, I'd like to congratulate you and the Committee members for their election. Secondly, I would like to state Guatemala's support to Austria's proposal.

The **Chairperson** gave the floor to the Rapporteur to summarise the proposals and amendments so that the Draft Resolution 23 GA 8 can be adopted.

After giving a brief overview of the amendments, the **Rapporteur** suggests going through the Draft Resolution paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 was agreed. The Delegation of **Egypt** requested the floor regarding Paragraph 2, asking whether it is appropriate to add Resolution **22 GA 7** since it is the source of the Document, which was agreed with no objections. Paragraph 3 was then approved. The **Rapporteur** suggests deleting Paragraph 4 saying it is very similar with Paragraph 5, which was explained by the Delegation of **Austria**, stating that the idea was to replace it because it's stronger. The Delegates wanted to reinforce the legal principles of the principle of the payment of the dues as a legal obligation. And it's directly taken from **43 COM 14**, a Decision that the World Heritage Committee adopted two years ago in Baku. So, this has been agreed language already, at least in the World Heritage Committee. The **Chairperson** approved Paragraph 4. The Rapporteur read over new Paragraph 4, and the floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine** who pointed out some wording that needed clarification, as follows: "Recalls that the payment of compulsory and assessed voluntary contributions". Here there is a problem because "compulsory and voluntary contributions" these are the assessed contributions. So, it should be "the payment of assessed contributions, compulsory and voluntary is" and so on. So, the word "assessed" is badly placed. Maybe the Secretariat could help, because "assessed" covers both categories of contributions, voluntary and compulsory. They are both assessed contributions, so the wording should be a little bit arranged. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Delegate of **Austria** thanked Palestine for this technical point and added as follows: It is up to the Secretariat to revise whether it's "assessed compulsory and voluntary contribution" or whether we leave it at this. "Assessed contributions. One, two, three." For me, that's a technical revision that I would leave to the Secretariat. The state of art of our wording. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Saint Lucia** who requested to add the word "legal" before obligations, to read "legal obligations". The Delegation of **Egypt** stated his understanding that legal obligations cannot be voluntary, therefore does not agree with the wording. He recalled that the exact wording of the last Decision was "recalls that the payment of assessed annual contributions to the World Heritage Fund is a legal obligation and also carries a moral character incumbent on all States Parties". And that the understanding of the word "voluntary" is that it is a legal obligation. He suggests using the same wording as in Paragraph 7 of the previous Decision. The Delegation of **Palestine** agreed with this suggestion, adding that "assessed contribution" covers both compulsory and voluntary contributions. He explained that the compulsory percentages are determined by the Assembly, whereas voluntary contributions the amount is left free to the State Party.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Canada** who agreed with the proposal from Egypt, as well as support the inclusion brought forward by Saint Lucia. The delegate also made some minor grammatical corrections. The **Assistant Director-general for Culture** briefly took the floor to make a correction in French stating "legal". In French should be "juridique", et pas "légal". The Delegation of **Egypt** responded that in the Decision from two years ago, the word "légal" is used in French and not "juridique".

The next speaker was the **Russian Federation**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like, first of all, to congratulate all the States which have just been elected to the Committee. I

hope that we'll have a constructive and fruitful time working together. We will have a question about the Canadian amendment. If we say that we're calling upon States that are in arrears, that have not paid on time, and we ask them to do this, in the first draft we saw in English "in the best of times", which should mean the most rapidly possible or as soon as possible. And now we've changed this to mean "on time". How is this possible? What does this mean? They didn't pay their contributions on time. Perhaps we could suggest some other term. Perhaps "as soon as possible"?

The Chairperson turned to **Austria** and gave the floor to **Canada** for inputs, who added that "in the best of times" isn't something that you can say and suggested "in a timely way" or "as soon as possible", to which the Delegation of the **Russian Federation** stated they preferred "as soon as possible".

The **Rapporteur** read the Paragraph 5, which was agreed. Regarding Paragraph 6, The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** requested to add at the end of it "with no prejudice to the payment of annual contributions", in order not to give the impression here that only Nominations are financed but arrears not paid, as the Convention is not just about inscriptions on the World Heritage List. This was agreed by the Delegation of **Austria**. Paragraph 6 was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read Paragraph 8, and the Delegation of **Austria** took the floor to make it more factual, correct, reflecting the content of the document, by adding "Takes note of the possible measures concerning arrears", containing documents and so forth "and the difficulties in their implementation".

The Delegation of the **Russian Federation** intervened, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I think that perhaps we don't need to assess these measures, but rather just say "the ways that they are implemented". Their means of implementation. Their way of implementation. Possible way of implementation, said the delegate. And we would take out the word "difficulties". And "possible way implementation". Ways, sorry. "Possible ways of the implementation".

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Chile** who pointed out that the document received from the Secretariat is problematic from a legal point of view. It imposes a procedure on the basis of the Convention, and here there is a problem. There is a need to recognise that it would be a little delicate to adopt the procedure set out in the document. The **Chairperson** requested to be more specific, to which the Delegation of **Chile** stated that they do not agree with the deletion of "difficulties".

The Delegation of **Austria** was the next speaker, as follows: In line with what Chile said, we would not be in a position to accept the deletion of "difficulties". While we thank the Russian Federation for their proposal, we would like to remind you that we had something like 27 or 30 countries who specifically pointed to the "difficulties" highlighted in the paper in implementing the possible measures. So, my proposal is either we take it out, the whole Paragraph 7, delete it altogether, or we keep being factual. And I would just like to add that, I would take, you know, really plead with the room that the Paragraph 7 proposed by Palestine is not the crunch of the matter. So, we should not lose another 10 or 15 minutes discussing it. So, either we stay with "difficulties". It's very factual. Some 28 or 30 States Parties referred specifically to these difficulties. Or we strike it out altogether.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Barbados**, as follows: Thank you to. I'm sorry, I have difficulties with the verbiage in Paragraph 7, in any case. But I'm tempted to follow what Austria has proposed because I don't wish to get into a debate about what other States Parties have verbalised as their issues and difficulties. And the measures. I would have said "measures" rather than "ways" for implementation. But this is, you know, semantics in a way.

The Delegation of **Palestine** was the next speaker, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. In fact, this paragraph is a very simple one. Here, we are not adopting in this paragraph anything. We are taking note. Taking note doesn't mean that we adopt or we agree on the arguments or whatever in the document. So, this is the first thing. Second thing, saying the "difficulties." In the document, it doesn't talk about difficulties. It talks about the complexity and the need to amend the operational guidelines and so on. So, I may agree with the amendment of the Russian Federation. Otherwise, we can keep it as it was originally. Very simple, taking note of something factual of the work of the Secretariat and the legal office. We take note, we don't adopt. So, either we keep it with the Russian amendment or we keep it as it was originally. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was **Hungary**, as follows: Thank you, Chair, and I, in this way and I'm going to be short and crisp, I hope. I think the paragraphs earlier and in the light of discussion, I would rather prefer to delete the whole paragraph altogether as it would, I think, save us from a long discussion. But if we keep it, then "difficulties" is rather important for us. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Australia** as well as **Poland** and **Brazil**, agreed with the suggestion to delete the whole paragraph.

The **Chairperson** informed the room that the list of speaker is very long, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Be sure, it will be a consensus solution. I understand the concerns and in order not to prolong the discussion, the debate on this paragraph, that is only taking note. The essential thing comes in the next paragraph. So for this one, maybe we can read it this way: "Takes note of the possible measures concerning arrears contained in the document so and so 8, and the possible"... well, no, no, let me read what was on the screen. Okay. "And the possible measures for their implementation, including the difficulties". "including" we add. So, we keep the word "difficulties". Yes. And we keep the proposal of Austria. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you very much. And I thank the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine for his good spirits in trying to forge a consensus. We definitely would like to help him here. If I read it well, "takes note of the possible measures concerning arrears contained in" blah blah blah blah, and, to understand it, which would be rather "and the possible ways of its implementation, including the difficulties therein"? Is that what Palestine is proposing?

The Delegation of **Palestine** agreed.

The amended text was cleaned up on the screen and the **Rapporteur** read it over. The Paragraph was agreed.

The **Chairperson** informed the delegates that the time is 6 p.m. and that the interpretation will now only be in French and English.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 8.

The Delegation of **Austria** intervened, as follows: Thank you. Thank you so much, Mr President. Well, again, lots of thanks to the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine for his first commitment to our Organisation. But I'm afraid we have said it, and some 30 countries in this room have said it, that they would prefer a positive way forward. And while we can totally acknowledge and appreciate what Palestine is trying to do, we feel very strongly that this is the wrong way to do it. It keeps prolonging a debate that should not be prolonged because it uses up so much of our resources. We alone spent a lot of time for something that is important. I don't want to diminish it. But we'll have to find a positive way, a way that works, where we can encourage States Parties to really pay. We feel quite strongly that this is not the way

forward and would therefore ask for its deletion and please have it reflected on the screen. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Palestine** responded, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Even if I don't fully agree with my colleague from Austria. But I want to simplify your business, Mr Chair, and maybe also for all our colleagues. I understand the difficulties for some States Parties with this paragraph, and I think that there is some misunderstanding in the room also regarding this paragraph. I would like to make, just, clarification first and then I'll make a consensus proposal. And it is to take or leave. Yes. I understand that this paragraph seems to be a kind of a sanction or punishment to States Parties with voluntary arrears. The purpose is not to punish anybody, to sanction anybody, with this paragraph. First, here we are urging or we are inviting the World Heritage Committee to consider this measure. I understand also the difficulty to send it to the World Heritage Committee. I will be very open and very simple. The group of sponsors who submitted the other amendments on the DR said that: let us see the outcome of this new language and the assurances that some States Parties received from some concerned States Parties. Unfortunately, all States Parties did not receive these assurances, but nevertheless, nevertheless, I would be in agreement to delete this paragraph, but to replace it with another paragraph. The Secretariat, could you follow? I will read it out very slowly. "Decides to include this item in the Agenda of its 24th session and asks the Secretariat to report to it on this matter". What is the scope behind this amendment? This is just to have a follow-up and to see the effect of all the arguments that we heard in the room. If there is a real effect, then we will be satisfied. If not, then we will discuss it again. This is my proposal. I hope it will be accepted, accepted by all. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: I just wanted to say thank you for putting me on the spot. I like to be put on the spot. And I'd like to react immediately. And again, I do appreciate the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine's really good efforts. He's trying his best, and I really want to like, to appreciate it. But I think this is a matter of choice, how we want to spend our time. There's been, I think, some 30 countries in this room who said: we don't want to prolong the debate. I understand that, you know, we will get a financial report like every two years where we can see how the money comes in. I would rather want us not to prolong this debate. This is exactly what we want to avoid, having this constant division and politicisation. We keep going on losing time to discuss what is important. We have a big document on climate change, but we've lost now two hours discussing something that doesn't bring us anywhere. I, we said we want to have a positive approach. We don't want to restrict anybody. It's about World Heritage. So, can we just stop with this naming and shaming? Can we stop with these games that we put people on the spot? I mean, I said I like to be put on the spot, but most of the people in this room don't. Can we just stop this debate? This is why we said we don't want to have it in the Committee neither. So, I would really plead that we just wait for the next two years. We'll see in the financial report how this new mechanism looks like, who's going to pay in in order to offset the costs for evaluation of nominations. And if you don't like it in two years, what you see in the financial report, well, bring it back on in two years. But let's not perpetuate this discussion where we have continuously. Thank you so much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of the **Netherlands**, who agreed to move on and to leave this new paragraph out as well, because when the financial report comes, you always can bring it back at the Agenda.

The Delegation of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** was given the floor, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. It is several times I'm trying to take floor, but there is just, between two members of this salon, there is a ping-pong, as in Palestine and Austria. Just want to take the opportunity for the others to share in the discussion. Thank you.

The Delegate also added that it would be better to strike out the whole paragraph.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Mr Chair, I would be very grateful if our colleagues could stop telling us what is important and what isn't and what should be given time and what shouldn't. Because I think we all have opinions in this room, and if we don't take the floor, it doesn't mean that we don't have opinions. Payment of arrears is an important issue, and spending time on making sure that this Convention is well funded is an important issue. And if it requires time, let it require time. What I agree with, with Austria, is that we do not need a new item, this item on the next Agenda. But we do need a report on how this mechanism and this constructive way of moving forward is working. And it could be done, as was said in the framework of the other reports on the contributions. We could fully agree to that. We don't need a separate item on the Agenda, but we do need to know how things are going and if the mechanism is working. And this was proposed by Kuwait at the beginning of the debate, and I wanted to support Kuwait on us getting feedback on how this is working in the future, without necessarily having a separate item on the Agenda. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Australia**, who supported the Austrian and Iranian delegates in deleting the paragraph. The Delegation of **Canada** added, as follows: Just to add my voice. I support fully what has just been said by Saint Lucia. I think there is ample scope for any update to be given within the context of the normal budgetary reporting that we receive in this body. And additionally, I would just want the Secretariat not to be burdened with another document, killing more trees, adding to climate change, without being able to report anything new on this issue two years from now. So as the title of the document is talking about possible measures, we have that information already. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Hungary** took the floor to support Saint Lucia and Canada.

The Delegation of the **Republic of Korea** aligned itself with the views expressed by Austria.

The Delegation of **Japan** agreed with Austria and Australia to delete the paragraph, which was also supported by the Delegation of **Poland**, who added they support what was said by Saint Lucia and Canada.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Kuwait**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Look, we said in our earlier intervention, I want to also support what our dear colleagues Saint Lucia and Canada and, you know, just reaffirm, from our positive and constructive attention. That's what we're thinking. We will go what's been giving information verbally, from the concerned Delegates, but we would like to see it in some sort of report, somehow. To us, doesn't matter, doesn't mean we add a new item. But we want to see information two years to assure those new mechanism was is working, and if it's, you know, working, how it's or any other information at that time. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The **Chairperson** informed the room that the two remaining speakers would be the Delegations of Egypt and Germany, The Delegation of **Egypt** intervened, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I was muting myself so. But, Chair, we have in this session, we have on Item 6 already a report that is being presented, all statements of account of the World Heritage Funds, which we had already adopted. In the two years, we are going to have normally the same document. So, what I would suggest as a compromise, and I think it could slide, that we put a paragraph, which would be that to request when presenting this item to put a separate annex on the sub-account of the World Heritage Fund that is created for this nomination. So basically, here we are not naming and shaming any country. We are just following up what will be the transaction flows coming or entering and exiting out from this sub-account. And I think by this, we would be reaching, I hope it could be compromised, if it's agreeable, I can have a text given to you. Thank you.



The **Chairperson** summarised that Saint Lucia had amplified what Kuwait had said, and Egypt also said it, which is to request that in the next Assembly of States Parties in the context of Item 6, that a separate section be inserted. Actually, Egypt said Item 6 and the ADG is saying Item 7. Regardless, is that a separate section be there to reflect on how the mechanism is saying. That seems to be an emerging practical way forward, that we don't have a separate Agenda item, but rather that in the statement of account that we learn to see some indication on how this mechanism progress on it, which is as it should be in the first place. With due respect to other speakers who wish to take the floor, the Chairperson asked the room to allow him to build on this consensus which is coming from the floor on this one, so that less time is spent on it.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Of course, I understand. And this was the purpose, as a matter of fact. The purpose is to have a report on this matter at the next Session, whether it is under Item 7 or 6. It doesn't matter. For us. The most important thing is to see what is the progress, what happened during these two years. So, I could go along with the proposal of Saint Lucia and Egypt. So maybe the wording could be, as our colleagues mentioned, "requests" or "asks" or whatever, "the Secretariat to report to it". "Requests the Secretariat to report to it on this matter at its next session under". "At its next session under Agenda Item". "Item 7" So, in that case, we don't add any item. And there is a report. We ask just to have a report included in the Agenda Item 7. That's all. Okay. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you so much. No, I think we can absolutely build on what Saint Lucia, Canada and Kuwait said. But my understanding is that we don't get it wrong, because what we don't want is, by way of that language, have another discussion on a very specific issue. I understand that the financial report contains already now information on that sub-account. And I would like to ask the Secretariat to confirm that. So, we don't need to create a new chapter or a new subdivision. I understand it's already there. So, for everyone who's interested in that information in two years' time can have a look, and if you're interested, can ask. But what I don't want is to have sort of a sub-item under Item 7 that we prolong the debate. You understand what I mean? I understand the need to follow up and transparency and all the rest of it. But what we don't want is a hook to keep discussing and prolonging a debate that is very divisive. And the room has been very clear. We don't want the division, we don't, we want a positive spirit. So that's my only thing. So, I want, I would like to say something, how we could get out of this. I think we don't need wording. I think you, as Chair, could just make it very clear in your report that this room wants to have a follow-up, and expect the information on the, on the sub-account to be included in the financial report. If it's not yet there, and Member States are free to discuss this, in two years' time, under Item 7. But I don't think we need a specific language on this. I think it would suffice if you make that point clear in your report. Because I think it's taken for granted. The financial report will have that information. Saying something that is superfluous appears as though we don't know what's in the financial report.

The **Chairperson** responded that he does not have any report, to which the Delegation of **Austria** replied there will be a record. The **Chairperson** asked clarification, saying that this discussion will be reflected in the Summary Record.

The Delegation of **Austria** asked the Secretariat to explain if the information of the sub-account is in the financial reports.

The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** responded, as follows: Yes. And if you allow me, I will also respond to the Egyptian Delegation. The report six, the Point 6, is made by GBS (Governing Bodies Secretariat) BFM (Bureau of Financial Management) and it is about financial issues. The Point 7 is the one that we analyse. And in this sense, in the Point 7, in the visibility du Fonds du Patrimoine mondial, we can include whatever you wish. So, is it

possible to do it? Yes. But it has to be in the 7, not in the 6. Because the 6 is only financial. And I assure you, BFM does not do anything that you are asking. They do other things. It is the Secretariat who does this. So, this time, please, allow me to tell in what point. Thank you so much.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows, Look. Point is, ADG, these colleagues are reflecting and they are going to reflect in a way that will help us to move. And I think I'm nudging here a consensus in a delicate way, and I'm appealing all of us that we build it so that we agree on this tough decision. And I think that's how I'm going to do. Egypt. I see you, you wanted to comment, build on this, Because I see it's written Palestine, but it's not only Palestine. I think it was Saint Lucia, Kuwait, on this point. I speak under correction. The last point which is written. It was Kuwait, Saint Lucia, and Egypt. But I saw Egypt wishes to take the floor. Egypt.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, who said that it is fine for the number of the item as long as it is there, adding that the Secretariat is much more knowledgeable. However, the delegate wants to have it written in a paragraph, clear in the Decision.

The **Chairperson** asked for clarification, whether the delegate wanted the Secretariat to clean the paragraph. The Delegation of **Egypt** responded yes and that this be added in the Decision and not only the oral report. The delegate reminded the room that the Delegation of Austria suggested to remove the paragraph and only have the oral report, which Egypt finds not agreeable.

The **Chairperson** turned to the Delegation of Austria, asking whether they agree with it, adding that what seems to be emerging, is that Paragraph number 8 is "Requests the Secretariat to report to it on this matter at its next session under Agenda Item 7".

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: I'm not sure if I missed something, but did that Assistant Director-General Mr. Ottone now say that we have already the information on the sub-account in the document, in the financial report, or not? Can you just explain. Do we have information already now?

The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** responded, as follows: Now we have, as you have been approved it, in the Point 7, the specificity on the accounts. So, if there is a question to do the follow-up of what we have seen, we can include a paragraph to tell you what is on. It's not, for the Secretariat it will be part of the job that we will have to do.

The Delegation of **Austria** took the floor, as follows: Okay. Maybe can we then, do we understand that it's not in there yet. But you, I understand, that you will be able to do that because it's another part of your report. Maybe then we should be more precise. "Requests the Secretariat to include information on the sub-account in its financial reports". Full stop.

The **Chairperson** asked the room whether there are comfortable with the modifications, "Requests the Secretariat to include information on the sub-accounts in its financial reports".

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Canada**, as follows: I just wanted to add my voice to say I actually prefer that, just because if we're making a reference to Agenda Item 7, it's unclear. I don't know if the Agenda Items will change in their order, etc. Here we're clearly putting it into the financial reports. We know what those are, and that way we have clarity in the text. Thanks.

The **Chairperson** decided to go back to the other colleagues, after reading over the paragraph "Request the Secretariat to include information on the sub-accounts in its financial reports". He asked if the colleagues are okay with this.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Frankly, I fail to understand what is the problem with the paragraph as proposed by Egypt. We're asking information on this mechanism. Is it working? Not working? And a paragraph under Item 7, and don't worry about the number of items they are always the same. So, I don't see why we shouldn't get this paragraph and what is the problem really? In getting a paragraph in a document? I don't see the problem. The ADG said they could do it and the paragraph was clear. It's not just information on the sub-accounts. We want to know whether this mechanism is working. Very simple, and nothing divisive, nothing problematic, it is just a follow-up, feedback. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: I thought that you can now entrust me to assist you. I get the sense to say whether you say "include the information in sub-accounts in its financial report" or whether you say "include this matter at its next session under Agenda Item", it's neither here nor there.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: I beg to differ. I'm very sorry that I need to. And this is an answer to my distinguished colleague of Saint Lucia. What is the problem with, to report to it on this matter is: what is the matter? Are we talking about arrears? Are we talking about legal obligations? I mean for us we need to be precise what the Secretariat should do. I have no problem following your great suggestion that we need transparency, and there should be information on this sub-account. I find it quite precise to translate what you just said into a proper wording which says "include information on the sub-account", not "accounts", we can even precise it, "on the new mechanism on making voluntary contribution to a sub-account of the World Heritage Fund, as established in its financial report". That's very clear and very precise. But to report on it, the matter, doesn't specify reporting in what way? What is the matter? It can be anything. For me, that's a backdoor of saying, let's have another Agenda Item where we prolong the discussion. That's my problem. And that's what I want you to understand. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Okay. Before I give the floor to Palestine, I think we are trying to nudge this to a conclusion. I've just asked the Secretariat, when we say mechanism, which mechanism are we talking about? One. But secondly, the ADG also said that they could add a paragraph. I think he said that to all of you. They could add a paragraph and you are comfortable with that, they could add a paragraph on the mechanism. Yes. You're fine. Okay, fine. Palestine, I see your hand.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Well, I'm not fine with it. Mr Chair. You noticed I've been very open. I agreed to the deletion of Paragraph 8. I gave a very simple paragraph. But here I think, more we give, more our colleague requests. The subject, the matter before us, dear colleague, is not a matter of the sub-account. The sub-account, you introduced it as a solution for this issue. The matter before us is how to deal with arrears, read the title of our item. So, I want a follow-up to see what is the effect of your proposal and this sub-account on the arrears, on the voluntary arrears. This is what we need to see: a follow-up regarding the voluntary arrears with this mechanism. So, we should say "this matter" and not only "the sub-account". The matter before us, the item before us, is not called sub-account. Read it very carefully. You will see it is "Possible measures regarding discretionary arrears". So that's why I insist that it should be "report to it on this matter". The matter is not the sub-account, it is the arrears. We were dealing with the arrears, and to see if there is an effect with your proposals, that I followed. Yes. So, you should recognise that we were open, and we agreed on your amendments and your proposal saying that your proposal will solve the problem. And I want to see a report follow-up saying here is the outcome and indeed it was effective or not. So, I'm sorry, we can't change the wording. Only information on the sub-account. This is not the issue. I'm sorry. And it's not serious. So, either we keep it or in that case we will go forward. Not only discussions. It will be unfortunately unacceptable for all. I insist on this last paragraph as it is. Thank you.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Well, thank you very much. Well, my understanding is the information on arrears is, we get it every two years. It's in the financial report. This is not something. What we said is that what we want to achieve is that the new mechanism will allow now when States Parties who don't pay, when they bring forward nominations to the World Heritage List, that they use this mechanism to offset the costs for the evaluation of nomination. Why do we even create that sub-account and that mechanism for voluntary contributions, specifically for the evaluation of nomination, is that we have lots of States Parties that are in a good position to pay for the evaluation of nominations. And the Fund is not only about evaluating nominations, the Fund should actually be for technical assistance to the countries of the South. But we have many, many, many nominations, of a lot of States Parties. We should not actually use the Fund for nominations. And that's the backdrop of why we created this account in the first place: to offset the costs of the evaluation of nominations. So, my understanding is now that people were quite unhappy about the situation two years ago, when it so happened that we had a nomination by a State Party that doesn't pay its assessed contribution. And that was considered to be utterly unfair. And I agree. Now we have a new mechanism in order to make a practical workaround, in order to find ways, creative ways, indirect ways, in order to fund and offset the costs of evaluations of nominations. That's what it's about, and that's what the solution is about. If, what Palestine was just saying, we want to report back on the arrears, well, it's in the financial report. We get the information on who has not paid and how many arrears have been accumulated every two years. It's on the website. You can even, I think, get it, a yearly update. If he tells me that he doesn't know, doesn't get this information, then I can send him a link. But what I don't want to do is having this arrears discussion. That's the whole purpose of why we sit here and why 30 countries said: Let's not use this in order to name, shame and punish people and to threaten them with punitive and restrictive, and restrictions in their right to be a State Party. That was what we discussed.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I want to try to find, maybe, a new wording that would allow a consensus. But I have to say, I really do not appreciate accusations. You cannot launch accusations at Member States like that. That is not acceptable. I would propose we could say "request the Secretariat to follow up, to follow up under the appropriate items". Which means under 7, it would be for the issue of contributions, financial information, and under Item 6, it could be about the contributions and arrears. Just to follow up under the appropriate items, without saying anything further. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: You know, sitting where I am now, and now reading what Saint Lucia has said, it has a potential to take us forward. If we do not continue to debate this matter further. And we find ourselves where we were when we started. And that was not the idea, the idea was to persuade one another in a particular direction. So, Saint Lucia is saying "Requests the Secretariat to follow up under the appropriate items". Could this be a compromise? Could this be a compromise that takes us forward?

The Chairperson gave the floor to the Delegation of **Austria**, who offered to give the floor to other delegations in order to avoid monopolizing the discussion.

The **Chairperson** thanked the delegate and stressed that he does not want to go back to where they had started. He reminded the room that many speakers have intervened on the same items, and that many views were heard, but it is now time to come up with something to go forward. He read over the last proposal "Requests the Secretariat to follow up under the appropriate items".

He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I wonder, this is obviously a difficult issue and I can see us potentially spending a very great deal of time on it to, I regret, little effect. I wonder whether we could look at the language. So, the Santa Lucia

language I think would be difficult for Australia. But I wonder whether we could look at something like "Requests the Secretariat to include information on the sub-account in its financial reports and report to it on this matter at its next session". So, the word "and" rather than the two forward slash marks. Would that assist anybody? Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson stated that he does not want to go back to Saint Lucia to ask if they are comfortable, he would rather hear what others are saying.

He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Hungary**, as follows: Thank you Chair, for giving me again the floor. This is the point where I rather didn't want to come, we are discussing a point since like, I don't know, two hours, imagine if we would like discussing or starting the discussing of measures on nominations. where would it take us? I mean, for me, this matter is very simple, actually. Without even this paragraph, Delegations, and we can check for ourselves without any paragraph, in two years' time, you know, the reports that we are going to receive and we can make up our mind about how to follow on this process that we have discussed here now for like length of time. So basically, I would rather not see this paragraph at all. Thank you very much.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Germany**, who supported what was said by Saint Lucia. This was also supported by **Egypt, Palestine, Kuwait, Norway, Switzerland, Slovakia, Oman** and **Austria**.

The **Chairperson** agreed that there is a consensus on this paragraph, which was the last paragraph, and thanked the delegates for their constructive inputs.

The Paragraph was agreed.

The **Chairperson** requested the Secretariat to prepare a clean copy of the text, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Argentina**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. It's only to say that it's not a problem for this Delegation, but the six languages of United Nations and UNESCO are compulsory. And we have finished this subject because it was very difficult. But we need to respect the participation of all the States. Spanish is a language, a working language, of this Assembly too. We will continue as a Delegation, but we think that this, we can establish a precedent to follow discussions if it is not necessary. Tomorrow, we have the possibility to continue too. Thank you very much. It's not a problem for our Delegation, is on defence of the languages that we always defend. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded as follows: Your Excellency, thank you for your input. When I started, I did ask you, I did apologise. I was very frank with all of you to say, do you allow me to proceed up to this time? And you gave me that permission. And I said, with due respect to other languages. But if there is a change of view from you, I welcome it. But let me be clear that I was very open from the very beginning. And on that note, what you are saying, I will not proceed with these, even though we had one more hour to go. I will cease the discussions today after adoption of this and then that tomorrow we deal with all the issues here. But I want to make it clear that I did apologise upfront on you. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of **Argentina** added, as follows: Only if you may put that in the report, that the Delegation asked the use of all the languages. Nothing more. And we will continue working. It's not a problem of the Delegation. It's only a question of principles. Put in your report and nothing will happen. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** thanked the delegate and stated that he has considered everything, and that once the item is adopted, he will adjourn the debate to the next day.

The Delegation of **Austria** took the floor requesting to adopt the Decision in its entirety, and added that she understand that Argentina just wants to have it reflected in the records, and that this is standard. We have it a million times. Argentina asks in other forums all the time, and they are right to do that, but we need to go ahead.

The **Chairperson** moved to adopt the Decision, as follows: Okay. Excellencies. Thank you so much. We have come to the end of this discussion on this Draft Decision. Do I take it that we agree to the adoption of this Draft Resolution 23 GA. It is so decided.

Thank you so much. Dear colleagues, before we part for today, I would like to remind all Committee members about the holding of the 16th extraordinary session of the Committee tomorrow from 2 to 3 p.m. This session will take place in Room IV. The aim of the 16th. extraordinary session will be to proceed with the election of the last two Vice-Chairpersons, for Groups I and III, and the Rapporteur of the Bureau of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. This session will be chaired by the current Chairperson of the Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Alexandre Kouznetsov, Permanent Delegate of the Russian Federation to UNESCO. Thank you very much. And on this, I wish you a nice evening. We'll meet tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. in this Room. The meeting is adjourned.

*Applause*

**THIRD DAY**

**Friday, 26 November 2021**

**FOURTH MEETING**

**10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tebogo Seokolo  
(South Africa)**

**TROISIÈME JOUR**

**Vendredi 26 novembre 2021**

**QUATRIÈME RÉUNION**

**10h00 – 13h00**

**Président : S.E. M. Tebogo Seokolo  
(Afrique du Sud)**

**9 FUTURE OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION: OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS  
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2012-2022 // AVENIR DE  
LA CONVENTION DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL, Y COMPRIS LE RAPPORT FINAL DE  
MISE EN ŒUVRE DU PLAN D'ACTION STRATÉGIQUE 2012-2022 ET 50<sup>e</sup> ANNIVERSAIRE  
DE LA CONVENTION DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL EN 2022**

*Document WHC/21/23.GA/9*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution 23 GA 9*

The **Chairperson** welcomed all colleagues in the Room, and invited them to wait for a few Delegations in order to constitute the quorum.

He opened Item 9, which concerns the future of the World Heritage Convention and its milestone 50th anniversary to be celebrated in 2022 and informed that the relevant document is. Document WHC/21/23.GA/9.

The floor was given to the Director of the World Heritage Centre (interim assured by the Assistant Director-General for Culture, Mr Ernesto Ottone) and to the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre, Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, for a joint presentation.

The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** made his presentation, as follows: Mr President, it is a great pleasure for me to present Item 9 on the future of the World Heritage Convention. Throughout this General Assembly, many States Parties have referred to our upcoming milestone, the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, in order to look to the future.

Let me first look to the progress made over the 10 years of the Strategic Action Plan 2012 to 2022. Let us recall that the vision of the future of the World Heritage Convention and the Strategic Action Plan were adopted by the General Assembly in 2011. This plan is based on a series of existing strategies and policies, including the strategy for capacity-building, the strategy for reduction of disaster risks, and the strategy, the Global Strategy and the evaluation of its implementation. Within that framework, in response to requests at the last General Assembly 2019, you will find in the last report, the last report in Document 9, presenting the state of implementation of the six goals and 17 priorities, as well as the key results. I would invite you to read this analysis in depth.

Since the Strategic Action Plan is reaching its end, we would like to take stock of the progress made over the past 10 years to consider the contributions and the necessities that we still need to fulfil. And this reflection has led to the concept of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, which I will discuss in a moment.

It is first a pleasure to announce the theme of the anniversary, which will guide us through the many activities which is: The Next 50 Years, World Heritage as a Source of Resilience, Humanity and Innovation. This theme reflects UNESCO's resolution to go beyond the celebration of our successes of the past, which are many, and dedicate this milestone to an interdisciplinary reflection on the coming 50 years of World Heritage. The recent reports of UNESCO, such as World Heritage Forests, or the carbon pressure, or the challenge of Covid-19, have shown that World Heritage sites face many threats. And this is why UNESCO would like to approach the coming 50 years strategically, by focusing on new and innovative approaches, broadening the group of experts in heritage and outside heritage, contributing to research and exploring inter-sectoral synergies.

The activities for The Next 50 will need to look at climate change and conservation, sustainable tourism, digital transformation, recovery after Covid-19, and a balanced representation of sites. These five fields are the main challenges, as well as opportunities, that can influence conservation of heritage over the coming years. At the centre of these reflections, we have priorities. The Next 50 were to generate a major impact and accelerate innovation, and this is the request of the Member States. This selection was based on a survey on the 50th anniversary, where over 200 site managers, national focal points and other interested stakeholders took part, and which took place over the year. The results of this survey will be briefly presented by the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre.

As you know, the 45th session of the World Heritage Centre will take place in Kazan from the 19th to the 30th of June 2022. In addition to the Committee Session, there are four major international events that are planned for the Forum of Site Managers, the Forum of Young Professionals organised by the University of St Petersburg, the World Heritage Committee Youth Model with the Adymnar Educational Centre, and a Special Session of the Child, the Russian Children's Centre Orlonox dedicated to World Heritage. The organisation of these events is under the theme of intercultural dialogue to safeguard World Heritage. The Next 50 will also lead us to Florence, Italy, with a major conference dedicated to the anniversary as a tribute to the adoption of the 1972 Convention on the 16th of November. The event will take place in November 2022. The Conference will look into the reflection throughout the year in the five major priority areas and will provide intellectual discussions and provide innovative ideas for decision making. The Conference will take place thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of Italy and the City of Florence, which will celebrate its 40th anniversary of its inscription on the World Heritage List.

Let me thank Russia and Italy for their support, for these major events. Let me highlight that The Next 50 is an open concept laboratory of ideas that can adapt to local contexts. And we invite Member States and States Parties to contribute actively to the reflection throughout 2022. Let me now give the floor to the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre to present the results of our 50th anniversary survey, which will also be accessible in a few weeks in the form of a report. Thank you. You have the floor.

The **Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre** made a presentation, as follows: Thank you very much, ADG. Thank you, Mr Chair. 2022 marks the 50th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. With near universal ratification by 194 States Parties, the Convention is now one of the most ratified international conventions in history. The 1154 natural and cultural World Heritage properties, located in 167 countries across the globe, testify to the immense cultural and biological diversity of the world. A survey questionnaire on the 50th Anniversary was developed and launched online on the 25th of June this year. The deadline was the 25th of July 2021, and later extended to 6th of August 2021. 243 completed surveys were received, many thanks to all those who responded. Nearly 55% of the responses came from site managers of World Heritage properties, and about 35% of the responses were from States Parties' representatives, including National Focal Points for World Heritage. 10% of the



responses were from experts and academics. As you can see, the respondents were from all five regions of the world.

The key conclusions from the survey were: the World Heritage Convention has served to identify and safeguard valuable cultural and natural heritage sites through inscription on the World Heritage List. It has also contributed to enhancing conservation and management capacities at the local and national levels, and promoting laws and policies for conservation. The Convention has served to raise awareness of heritage, and empowered and improved the lives of communities living in and around World Heritage properties. It has also helped to mobilise international cooperation and contributed to peace-building. The inscription of a site to the World Heritage List, first and foremost, leads to increased protection of valuable heritages, and promotes identity and pride for the communities nationally. It has, it also provides opportunities for establishing partnerships for conservation, and avenues to raise funds for conservation and training. Inscription also brings about revenues to local communities from tourism-related employment opportunities.

The greatest impediments to more fully implementing the World Heritage Convention is the lack of financial and human resources at the national and local levels. Another impediment has been the often-insufficient awareness and understanding of the importance of safeguarding certain heritage among the general population. Ill-conceived economic and infrastructure development projects that negatively impact heritage continue to pose threats to heritage conservation. Climate Change is the most significant global challenge today for cultural and natural heritage. Other major threats include unsustainable development initiatives, uncontrolled urbanisation, poorly-planned urban and infrastructure development initiatives, and the destruction of heritage in armed conflict.

Integrating heritage conservation with sustainable development is vital, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, the African Union Agenda 2063, the Sendai Framework and the SIDS SAMOA Pathway. The engagement of local communities and the inclusion of indigenous peoples in decision-making processes is key, along with engagement with the private sector and financial institutions for heritage, for heritage management. Strengthening governance, legal and regulatory frameworks, and capacity for the protection of heritage is essential. Integrating culture into strategies for Climate Action and Covid-19 recovery are critical for heritage conservation. Strengthening the heritage conservation and the heritage, education and awareness raising beyond the processes of the World Heritage List is valuable. Further awareness raising is needed, so the World Heritage in Danger is further seen as a useful tool.

Finally, the representativity of all geographical regions needs to be enhanced on the World Heritage List. While a balanced World Heritage List is yet to be achieved, the Global Strategy has paved the way for the inclusion of new categories of World Heritage. A number of themes, including climate change, Sustainable Development, Covid-19 recovery, sustainable tourism, digital transformation and balanced representation were proposed for the 50th Anniversary, which were taken into account during the conception of The Next 50. Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson opened the floor for interventions.

The floor was given to **H.E Mr. Velislav Minekov, Minister of Culture from Bulgaria**, as follows: Dear Mr Chairman, dear Mr Deputy Director, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm honoured to be here today and to express my country's sincere gratitude to all partners for the valuable support of the candidature of Bulgaria to the World Heritage Committee for the period of 2021-2025. Bulgaria reiterates its strong and continuous commitment to work with all of you in the spirit of good cooperation and dialogue for our common values and objectives enshrined in the 1972 Convention. As a member of the World

Heritage Committee, Bulgaria will engage for reaching a more balanced and representative World Heritage List, focusing on the improved conservation as well as on the reinforced protection and management regimes.

We welcome the positive assessment and the progress made so far in the realisation of Strategic Action Plan and look forward to work together in strengthening the implementation of the Convention. We are on the eve of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, its motto “The Next 50: World Heritage as a Source of Resilience, Humanity and Innovation for Future Generations” outlines ambitions, visions, with enhanced commitment for the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage community.

Bulgaria avails itself of its opportunity to commend the successful organisation by the Chinese Government of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, which was held under unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. We would also like to wish success for the organisation and holding of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in June 2022 in Kazan. In conclusion, please allow me, Mr Chairman, to welcome all newly elected and current members of the World Heritage Committee, and express my wishes for deepening the constructive dialogue related to the protection of our shared heritage. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving Norway the floor. The World Heritage Convention is one of the most global, important global conservation instruments for culture and natural heritage. The document in front of us takes stock of the status of World Heritage today and provides information on all our common objectives. We do believe that several aspects related to the implementation of the Convention have improved. Norway gives great attention to the credibility of the World Heritage List. We, the States Parties, must continue to be conscious of our common responsibility to maintain the Convention's integrity. The 50th anniversary would be an important opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the Convention, including the Global Strategy and the Strategic Action Plan, and to give guidance for the future of the Convention. In line with the theme of the anniversary, The Next 50, this should be an occasion to take steps to adapt its future to the rapid changes we all see in the societies around us. Active and meaningful inclusion of all Conventions, stakeholders, should be promoted in this reflection, including civil societies and communities. We believe that such engagement would be fundamental for the transmission of a world heritage to future generations. We have prepared some amendments to this end. Thank you, Mr Chair.

Le prochain intervenant était la Délégation de la **Suisse**, comme suit : Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président. Le patrimoine mondial a beaucoup évolué dans les derniers 50 ans. Qui aurait cru, au début de ce voyage, que la Liste aurait dépassé le cap de 1000 biens inscrits ? Qui aurait cru que les typologies de patrimoine inscrit auraient évolué dans une telle diversité ? Malgré cette évolution, nous sommes toujours en train de travailler pour une Liste plus équilibrée entre les différentes régions du monde. C'est un travail en cours qui nous tient à cœur pour refléter plus pleinement les joyaux de notre humanité et de notre planète. La société civile et les communautés sont cruciales pour la protection durable et la gestion du Patrimoine mondial qui leur appartient, surtout en prenant en compte l'évolution actuelle de la Liste et les facteurs affectant ces biens. Or, ces acteurs ne sont pas toujours intégrés suffisamment dans les discussions, ce qui peut entraîner des malentendus et des problèmes de conservation à long terme des biens du Patrimoine mondial. Nous proposons donc qu'une réflexion soit faite sur ce point important afin que nos procédures évoluent vers une inclusivité accrue, et nous nous joignons à l'amendement proposé par la Norvège. Merci.

The floor was given to the Delegation of the **Republic of Korea**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the work of the action plan undertaken by the World Heritage Centre, and indeed the valuable fruit yielded. We commend

the World Heritage Centre, in particular, for its professional and evidence-based approach in dealing with a range of difficult issues. At this juncture of preparing for the 50th anniversary of the Convention, and for the sake of upholding the spirit of the Convention on the path ahead, my Delegation wishes to emphasise the imperative need to respect and faithfully implement the decisions of the World Heritage Committee and related promises made. Indeed, fulfilling any duty derived from the decisions of the World Heritage Committee is vital in safeguarding the authority and credibility of the Convention, and in fact, the very sense of trust among the States Parties. In this context, we would like to remind the issue of the implementation of repeated decisions of World Heritage Committee over the sites of Japan's major industrial revolution. This July, the World Heritage Committee, using very strong language, for the second time, following the 2018 decision, urged the party concerned to implement previous decisions. In its decision taken by consensus, the World Heritage Committee emphasised the importance of the full history of each site, measures to remember victims, best international practice, and dialogue among all parties. The decision is based on the report of UNESCO/ICOMOS Joint Mission, which concluded the interpretive measures to allow an understanding of those brought against their will and forced to work are currently insufficient and there is no display to remember the victims, and that the measures fall short of international best practices. We look forward to the fulfilment of the requested measures at all this possible juncture.

To facilitate the implementation, the Republic of Korea recently proposed a dialogue among experts from UNESCO and the concerned Parties regarding the sites. We hope that this dialogue will be held so as to find a way forward through genuine and substantive discussion. We hope the World Heritage Centre continues to play a very constructive role in facilitating dialogue and monitoring the implementation. We are certain that we can find the solution through dialogue. Mr Chairperson, the value of World Heritage sites is recognised by the international community as a whole. This is a shared value. Accordingly, the interpretation of World Heritage sites should encompass and reflect multiple narratives and viewpoints. With regard to the nomination process, we hope that there will be no more cases in the future where a heritage site with a similar history is nominated without incorporating an interpretive strategy that allows an understanding of the full history of the site. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The next speakers was the **United Republic of Tanzania**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Since Tanzania is taking the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate you for your election to Chair and your able leadership. The Tanzania Delegation would like to comment on the specific issues of World Heritage sustainable development of the Agenda item. We appreciate the continued recognition of full implementation of the policy concerning the integration of sustainable development into the process of the World Heritage Convention by the World Heritage Community. Since its adoption by this Assembly at its 20th session in 2015, it is our sincere consideration that the implementation of this policy should be as much as possible people-centred. We therefore expect an optimal reciprocation of the human dimension and related environmental and developmental function as a critical driver for this ability we are all talking about. This position is also embedded in the African Regime's 2063 Agenda: The Africa We Want. Policy was adopted in 2015, which is partly driven by the appalling poverty level on the African continent in particular. To us, it is critical, it is indeed critical at this point in time, to harness the economic potential of World Heritage sites as an important input under the central mobility equation of the policy.

Excellency, Chair, despite best intentions, unfortunately, ambitions do not always fit into the reality on the ground, and the current situation is balanced in the World Heritage conservation and sustainable development is a point in case. We are confronted with the urgent but daunting task of balancing socio-economic and conservation needs amid a pervasive scarcity of resources and the broader complexity of competing needs, notably the unacceptable level of poverty. In our candid eye, the current policy lacks clear guidance for optimising its effective implementation. For this reason, my Delegation would like to strongly advocate for further

review of the Operational Guidelines on the implementation of the Convention so as to take on board the emerging issues and concerns, and consider notable ideas on how to strengthen implementation of the policy. Excellency, Chairperson, we are all aware that next year will be the 50th anniversary of the Convention. While we presume almost each Member State here has its own plan for the celebration, it is our advice that World Heritage Centre prepare a guideline that can help in attaining a greater impact through visibility during the celebration activity. Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Thank you.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chairperson, and I would like, and good morning all. I would also like to thank at the outset ADG Culture and the Deputy Director for their presentations. Chair, I will be very brief. I have four points and questions to the Secretariat.

The first one. The 50th anniversary is, we totally agree, that it is an occasion to hold celebrations, to take stock of the achievements and the challenges that we are facing. And also, it's an occasion to have a thorough reflection on how to address these challenges and how to further reform our system and ensure its current sustainability. So, my first question would be: what will be the outcome of this reflection or of these celebrations? And to be specific, we can see that in this document we have already in the annex, we have an action plan that covers the period from 2012 till 2022. So, I would like to know whether, or on which occasion, we are going to have the next action plan for this.

The second question or point I have is that first, we welcome, of course, Italy's proposal to have this, to host the celebration next November, and I would like to inquire on whether, if other countries would like to have some celebrations associated with UNESCO. What would be? My understanding is that we had informed the work contacts already with the Secretariat on this issue. So, I would like maybe to have some clarity on this point.

The third question, Mr Chair, or point, is here regarding the five key priorities that were identified in the presentation. We totally understand that these priorities were not set by the Secretariat per se, but they were the result of the consultations that they did, and we thank the Secretariat for it. However, as Norway has mentioned that they would like also to see a new priority added to it, we would like to add two other priorities here. The first one is, as Tanzania has mentioned, the sustainable development and the need with, the relation between sustainable development and cultural protection. This issue, I think, it's about time now to tackle it in a more comprehensive manner so that we do not deal with it separately in each SOC report or in each nomination file. We need to have a comprehensive view on it. And we need also to acknowledge that there is a challenge that we should all tackle seriously and think about it. That's the first priority. The second priority for us would be to ensure the diversity of expertise. And here we totally align ourselves with what His Excellency, the Ambassador of Korea has just mentioned, about the need to have the tolerance on different narratives, about, to have, to be open to the fact that in life we cannot, we can have different expertise, points of views, and that we need more dialogue in it. And in this regard, Mr Chair, I think one of it would be also to see what, how the Advisory Bodies are dealing and operating. This Convention relies on the Advisory Bodies, and we want to have strong Advisory Bodies. But we cannot have strong Advisory Bodies without having a strong dialogue with them, without ensuring that they understand us exactly as we are trying to understand them. And maybe I will just have a small mention here that when we were having the discussions on the Code of Conduct, at some point we added the sustainable development and one of the Advisory Bodies' representatives said exactly that this is not the job, it's the job, is cultural heritage. This is for us, Mr Chair, not receivable. Right now, we are in 2021. We are going to be in 2022. We cannot separate issues. Otherwise we will continue where we are.

That was the third point. The very last point, Mr Chair. I would like to also have clarity on what is the link between the track that we are having here for the celebrations and the track that

was already adopted in the last Committee in July. And to be specific, in Decision 44 COM 14, we had for instance, if I have it here, we have one of the things that were asked is the mapping of current and potential advisory service providers with a view to improving geographical balance. We have also asked the Secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, to contract a management consulting to prepare an independent assessment of some of the points. I think we need maybe to know exactly where this, I mean, in which context we are going to have the reflection, here or in the Committee. I thank you, Chair.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Estonia**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. We read with great interest the analysis of the Strategic Action Plan and we are glad to note the positive outcomes. We also understood that the goals of the action plan still continue to be relevant. The Action Plan, for instance, emphasises that the World Heritage List should be a credible selection of the world's most outstanding cultural and natural heritage. The Action Plan also underlines that Endangered Listing Mechanism should be used in conformity with the provision of Operational Guidelines, both for inscription and removal. What type of serious and specific dangers these are, either earthquakes or landslides, volcanic eruptions, conflicts or issues related to climate change, is irrelevant. What is important is to use the Danger List to work in a spirit of participation and solidarity to enable countries to address these challenges. And we believe that further efforts still need to be made to showcase the benefits of danger-listing to States Parties. We also listened to interventions by Norway and Switzerland, and we would like to support the focus on community involvement, and that's why we would like to support the draft amendment on that issue. And of course, we are looking forward to the celebrations of 50th anniversary in Kazan, in Florence and in all of our States Parties. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **South Africa**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. South Africa wishes to thank the Secretariat for the presentation on the future of the World Heritage Convention. Mr President, successes achieved, as mentioned in the implementation report of the Strategic Action Plan 2012-2022 include, amongst others, undertaking that the second and the third cycle of periodic reporting in consultation with the States Parties and the Category II Centres. Excuse me. Available Resource Manual for the preparation of World Heritage nominations and Tentative Lists. The World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy adopted in 2015, the African World Heritage Day, which is the 5th of May, as proclaimed by the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, which continues to be commemorated. Orientation sessions for the new Community Members in addition to information sessions.

Mr President, the moment of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention provides us with another opportunity to revisit the gaps the Global Strategy identifies, to assess what the ten-year action plan achieved to address them, and to inform what we need to do to accelerate progress going forward with renewed inspiration, motivation and vigour. Persistent discussion about how to balance heritage conservation and development is another area of high interest in Africa. Through international solidarity, more technical and institutional capacity should be built and sustainable funding mechanisms consolidated for the betterment of World Heritage sites and environment in Africa. Chairperson, that is why the African region, or the Africa region, marked the hosting of the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee for the first time in sub-Saharan Africa in 2005 by establishing the Africa World Heritage Fund, a Pan-African Category II Centre, to build capacity and to mobilise resources to address these challenges. The work of the Fund has led, for instance, to train more than 600 African professionals on nomination, risk management and sustainable business. The Fund has also supported 29 successful nomination projects. In terms of conservation, the Fund already supported 70 projects implemented in 35 African countries. We want to express our sincere appreciation, Mr President, to States Parties that have and continue to generously contribute to the work of the African World Heritage Fund in capacity-building, funding, community involvement and a balanced Global Strategy. We also wish to call on these and other States

Parties to continue to make contributions to the work of the African World Heritage Fund. Mr. President, despite the work done, the challenges remain considerable about the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa. The persistent under-representation of Africa on the World Heritage List and the over-representation on the World Heritage List in Danger calls for closer consideration in the implementation of the Priority Africa Strategic Goals, including through capacity-building and more collaboration between World Heritage institutions. One cannot overlook the need to enrich the World Heritage List and increase its representation and credibility by promoting new categories, by venturing into uncharted territories, as part of embracing change, transformation and innovation.

Mr President, South Africa welcomes the invitation from the Government of Italy and the City of Florence to host the celebration for the 50th anniversary on 16th November 2022, in partnership with UNESCO. In addition, the Republic of South Africa wishes to announce its willingness to host an event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Convention based on that great theme. The country looks forward to continue working with the World Heritage Community on the Convention for the next 50 years and beyond. I thank you, Chairperson.

The **Chairperson** announced the order of the remaining speakers, Hungary, Greece, Italy, Australia, Austria, Thailand, Lithuania, Lebanon, Japan and Germany. He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Hungary**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. The upcoming year will be an important milestone in the history of the World Heritage Convention, which provides us a great opportunity to make a stop and examine the challenges raised during its implementation. In this respect, both the updated Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage are considered good examples. Hungary welcomes and expresses its gratitude for these works, which are of fundamental importance for the future conservation of the World Heritage sites. However, we think there is still plenty of tasks to be fulfilled. For Hungary, 2022 is also extraordinary. In one hand, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the first Hungarian sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, namely Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue, and all the village of Hollókő and its surroundings. On the other hand, the Budapest Declaration has been adopted 20 years ago. Celebrating these remarkable jubilees, we would like to recall the four key objectives set by the World Heritage Committee in Budapest in 2002. Namely credibility of the World Heritage List, conservation of World Heritage properties, capacity-building measures, and communication, which are still actual. Hungary, both as a State Party and as a Member of the World Heritage Committee, has always been determined to fulfil all duties resulted from the World Heritage Convention. Yet we think that the world, also our World Heritage properties, went through a lot of social, political, technical and economic changes in the last decades, which couldn't be left out when we are looking for its 21st century message and its future. The spirit of the Convention should be allowed to be renewed.

First of all, it is necessary to reconsider the approach to the OUVs concept. In regard to the significant role of human influence, creativity and innovative mind in the evolution of the Outstanding Universal Value of cultural sites and cultural landscapes, the OUV cannot be defined as a constant static concept, but rather can be considered as a dynamic one. We believe the OUV is living. On the other hand, we shouldn't forget that today's development could be tomorrow's heritage, possibly bearing even a new, Outstanding Universal Value.

In preserving our World Heritage sites, therefore, is of utmost importance to take into account the human living in interaction with it and to find the balance between the conservation measures and the creation which fundamentally determines human existence. To achieve these ambitious goals, a shift in the mindset is crucial. The Paragraph 33 of the Budapest Declaration have already expressed the aim to seek to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and development, so that the World Heritage

Properties can be protected through appropriate activities, contributing to the social and economic development and the quality of life of our communities.

Although Hungary's Committee membership comes to an end, we remain committed to the mentioned objectives and open for dialogue. During this session, we have had the opportunity to share our goals with many of the States Parties. We hope our fruitful discussions will lead to splendid cooperation. We also congratulate the new Committee members and wish them a very successful cycle. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Greece**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Since it is the first time that Greece is taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you on your election. And I grasp also this opportunity to thank all the Member States for honouring Greece yesterday with their vote for a seat to the World Heritage Committee. I want to assure you that we are fully aware of the crucial importance and added value of the World Heritage Committee, and we remain committed to share our experience by actively cooperating with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the best possible protection of all cultural and natural heritage properties around the world.

And back to the Item 9 of the Agenda, regarding the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, I would like to inform you that Greece intends to host an international meeting at the archaeological site of Delphi, a monumental place of powerful symbolism and values, which is harmonically integrated to the natural environment and placed amidst an almost intact landscape since antiquity. Delphi remains also a place of inspiration due to its prestige and outrage during antiquity, as the sacred place was considered the navel of the earth. In Delphi was an early form of confederation aiming to bring people together in order to overcome their differences and disagreements, whatever they may were, in order to serve a common goal. This procedure revokes greatly United Nations of our times, as well as the principles of the World Heritage Convention itself. Our will is to highlight, in the framework of a Conference, these unifying aspects and potential of the Convention. The exact time and the practical details will be arranged in consultation with the World Heritage Committee, and announced in due course. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

L'intervenant suivant était la Délégation de **l'Italie**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Puisque le Directeur général adjoint, Monsieur Ottone, a eu l'amabilité de bien vouloir faire référence à la proposition du Gouvernement Italien d'organiser un évènement pour célébrer le cinquantenaire de la Convention, je voudrais partager avec les Distingués délégués de cette Assemblée quelques informations de bases sur les célébrations qui auront lieu à Florence en automne 2022.

Fifty years ago, in 1966, the General Conference of UNESCO, which had just concluded its 14th Session, decides unanimously to issue an urgent appeal to assist the efforts of the Italian people and authorities to preserve and restore cultural property that had been damaged by floods of extraordinary magnitude in Venice and Florence. There is a strong link between Florence and the 1972 World Convention. That is why, after half a century, we propose to host in Florence next year in November an open debate on World Heritage and past achievements, current practices and future trends.

A city, Florence, where Italy already organised the UNESCO's Third World Forum on Culture in 2014, and the G7 Ministers of Culture in 2017, which paved the way to the G20 Meeting of Ministers of Culture hosted in Rome last July. In November 2022, in Florence, we look forward to learning the priorities and developments from local, regional and international level. Looking at heritage from different geographical perspectives is one the best way to reaffirm its universality as World Heritage. Climate change, digital transformation and Covid pandemic invite all of us, more than ever, to boost our international and multilateral cooperation, which are indeed key elements of the World Heritage Convention, which is in turn, and has been and

continues to be, at the very core of UNESCO normative action. From this point of view, the Florence event would like to be not only an important celebratory event, but something more. The occasion to share our common views on World Heritage and how we can protect our past, live our present, and imagine our future. With reference to the comment of our distinguished Delegate from Tanzania. I would like to assure the Assembly that, indeed, and of course, we are working on the preparation of this celebration in close consultation with the UNESCO's Secretariat, the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Centre, because this is indeed a very important celebratory event, and we would like to move on together in harmony. Thank you very much, Mr President.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair, and I thank very much the Secretariat for its presentation and for this proposal. The 50th anniversary is a time for celebration, a time to recognise, protect and celebrate. We use these words intentionally, as the Convention has done so much to ensure the recognition of the world's most significant and iconic places, and provided a framework and network for people from across the world to ensure their protection. This is worth celebrating: heritage the people continue to connect with, that inspires awe, and teaches tangible lessons to successive generations. We thank the Government of Italy and the City of Florence for offering to host a celebration for the 50th anniversary in November 2022 in partnership with UNESCO. A beautiful city and country which attracts and welcomes many to experience its abundant cultural and natural heritage.

UNESCO's mandate to build peace through international cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding is more important than ever in light of the challenging global circumstances we face together. The World Heritage Committee is at the heart of this mandate. Australia was a founding member and has long been a strong supporter of the Convention. We have been proud to support the inscription of a number of our iconic properties, including the Great Barrier Reef, Greater Blue Mountains area and most recently the Budj Bim Indigenous Cultural Landscape. Australia is investing billions of dollars in the protection of our special sites, supported by world-leading science to ensure they remain resilient and iconic for generations to come. As we look to the future of the Convention, we emphasise the need for a contemporary World Heritage system that can adapt to meet our shared global challenges. A system that can embrace evolving notions of outstanding universal value, and with a focus on assistance and capacity building, shared stewardship, and partnering with Indigenous and traditional owners to protect and manage our heritage places. Australia will continue to strive for a system that is inclusive, equitable and transparent, and we look forward to working positively with UNESCO and our trusted State Party partners to achieve this. And we are pleased to support the amendment proposed by Norway in relation to further enhancing community involvement. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. And first of all, I want to thank the Secretariat for this most important strategic paper. Allow me to state that 2022 in Austria will not only be the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, but at the same time we celebrate 30 years that Austria signed this most important Convention. To our understanding, the Convention is not a business, it is mainly for the people. Therefore, we will use this double jubilee next year to promote the sense and the value of the World Heritage Convention and all the aspects that are included in this document to promote it to a broader public. And therefore, I very much welcome the proposal brought forward by Norway to strengthen the inclusion of the communities in all aspects concerning safeguarding World Heritage and dealing with the World Heritage Convention. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Thailand**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, for giving Thailand the floor. Thailand takes note and thank you. The report and proposal presented by the Secretariat. The 50th anniversary of the Convention in 2022 will serve as a good opportunity to undertake a reflection on the conservation challenges and to better reflect



the full spectrum of the world's cultural and natural treasures. Looking forward, our deliberations should focus on addressing the remaining and significant challenges and to envisage sustainable and innovative strategies for the future endeavour. This effort will encourage and subsequently lead to a representative, more regional and category-balanced and credible list of the World Heritage sites. Furthermore, to achieve a balanced list of the World Heritage sites, Thailand wishes to emphasise the importance of capacity-building and enhanced knowledge exchange. A closer dialogue between the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the States Parties is therefore very crucial and must be enhanced. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The next speaking was the Delegation of **Lithuania**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. First of all, we would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat and Advisory Bodies for their immense work and contribution of all States Parties to the Convention for the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. With the approach of the 50th anniversary, we should state that the World Heritage Convention retains clear vision and strong constant of human values that are relevant to the entire World Heritage community. Therefore, it is important, in view of the processes of the future, to reaffirm the primacy of strategic directions consolidated in the Budapest Declaration, 5 C's Objectives, Kyoto Visions and others, as well as to review the implementation. Lithuania supports the efforts to ensure a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List by improving the quality of nomination process and strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List. However, we should note that the consideration could be given to revisit the gap studies and evaluate their impact on both World Heritage List and the Tentative List, especially in relation to the reform that endorses the principle of two-phase nomination process, referring the primarily assessment. We acknowledge the importance of conservation issues, looking for the new ways and concepts to deal with it in order to achieve sustainable solutions. Reviewing long-term strategic directions of the Convention, it would be beneficial to strengthen the relationship between the World Heritage Convention, conservation and sustainable development. Thank you for your attention.

L'intervenant suivant était la Délégation du **Liban**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Allow me to raise two questions or two points. The first point is related to the progress report on the implementation of the SAP, the Strategic Action Plan. I would like to thank the Secretariat for this report. However, I would like to point out one main issue. In the column named Financial Implication, most items have the following notes: "Additional funding is necessary" or "Extra budgetary funding is required", or "Seek extra budgetary funds", etc., etc. This means that in these conditions, the protection and the management of World Heritage sites will not be fully insured if we cannot find really a better situation of the financial funding with, sorry, with the financial situation of the World Heritage Convention. We know that a lot of States Parties, due to the economic conditions the world is facing today. A lot of States Parties have difficulties in financing the Convention and have a lot of difficulties in managing their sites and in proposing new sites for inscription. And on the other hand, we regret that some States Parties are refraining from paying their contribution for political reasons. Really, we hope that everybody will come back to the spirit of the Convention. That solidarity, mutual cooperation and capacity-building will be the next main issues in the following Strategic Action Plan for the years 2022-2032. Another issue is related to the 50th anniversary. Je parlerai, à ce niveau-là, en Français. Je voudrais dire que la Convention, durant ces dernier cinquante ans, a connu énormément d'évolution. Il y a eu de nouvelles approches qui sont apparues, il y a eu un enrichissement du concept du World Heritage, un enrichissement de la façon de protéger et de manager les différents sites. C'est une expérience extrêmement riche durant cinquante ans. Durant cinquante ans aussi il y a eu des évolutions dans la façon de concevoir l'implication des communautés et de la société civile dans la protection du Patrimoine. Aujourd'hui il est inconcevable d'imaginer que la protection du Patrimoine peut se faire sans une implication extrêmement forte de la société civile avec nous tous. Et je voudrais à ce niveau-là donner rapidement l'expérience du Liban à ce sujet.

Vous savez tous qu'il y a un peu plus d'un an, nous avons eu cette catastrophe qui a détruit le tiers de la capitale du Liban, Beyrouth, un quartier qui a une très grande richesse patrimoniale. Je remercie l'UNESCO et les États parties qui ont travaillé avec nous sur l'initiative "Li Beirut". Je voudrais simplement noter et annoncer à tout le monde que dans des conditions très difficiles, la reconstruction de cette partie de la ville a pu avancer de façon très sérieuse, que, tout n'est pas réglé, évidemment, mais il y a de grands pas qui ont été effectués, et ceci a été fait essentiellement grâce à la mobilisation de la société civile libanaise dans des conditions difficiles, dans des conditions politiques de dead-lock, dans des conditions économiques et financières extrêmement compliquées. La société civile libanaise a pu se mobiliser, et grâce à l'aide internationale, et grâce à l'aide des ONG, une grande partie de la reconstruction a pu se faire. Cette expérience permet de montrer que l'implication de la société civile est essentielle. Et c'est pour ça que nous appuyons tout à fait ce que la Distinguée déléguée de la Norvège et de la Suisse ont proposé sur la nécessité d'accorder une attention particulière à l'implication de la société civile dans la protection, le management, du patrimoine. Merci.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Japan**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. Let me start with my observation regarding the statement made by the Republic of Korea. Japan has sincerely implemented all the relevant resolutions and recommendations taken on the file and will continue to do so. Also, Japan will continue to explain our undertakings in various occasions. We heard the proposal of the Republic of Korea for the first time here in this room. I must say that such a way to raise issue is not a constructive way to proceed the issue. Considering the significance of the matter, we definitely need sufficient and in-depth consultations. In going back to the original subject of the discussion. Japan welcomes the progress in the implementation of a Strategic Action Plan and stocktaking exercise of where we are. And we appreciate Italy for hosting the anniversary event next year. Although views are divergent on some issues, I would say we all reaffirm the importance of the spirit and objective of the World Heritage Convention and are committing ourselves to its implementation. We would like to maintain this collective feeling towards next year's 50th anniversary of the Convention. As stated in the Paragraph 11 of the Working Document, currently, the lack of financial and human resources, the impacts of climate related disasters or infrastructure development and urban development are recognised as main challenges of the Convention by many States Parties, with which Japan also shares this recognition. And in this regard, as we will be contributing to the implementation of the Convention as a newly elected Committee Member. For example, we have supported many projects of preservation of cultural heritage, including heritage in the Danger List, and we will continue to work in this area. Also, we recognise that increase in the number of heritage in Africa is a priority issue and we are providing technical support to the process of submission of nomination in some African countries. Further, we would like to actively engage ourselves in a discussion of reforms in the governance of Convention. Referring the discussion since the first day of the Assembly, we think that we will be able to approach this issue of divergence in view between States Parties and Advisory Bodies by reinforcing consultation between the two actors. In this regard, we welcome introduction of the preliminary assessment system to nomination, and we would like to work on the phase of monitoring. Thank you, Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Germany**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. My Delegation likes to thank the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat for the comprehensive report and presentation. The German World Heritage sites and the German World Heritage community are looking forward to celebrate, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. The World Heritage Day in Germany on 5th of June next year is dedicated to this anniversary. We are convinced that the engagement and the involvement of the communities and the civil society is crucial for a successful implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Therefore, I would like to endorse the amendment put forward by Switzerland and Norway, and I like to echo what has been said by my colleagues from Lebanon and Austria. Thank you very much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Mexico**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. But first of all, allow me to congratulate you for your leadership at the helm of this General Assembly. We'd also like to thank the ADG and the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre for their presentations on the future of this Convention. As established in Mondiacult in Mexico in 1982, culture is facing increasingly complex challenges, and it is a fundamental tool to promote sustainable development through the preservation and protection and dissemination of cultural heritage. All States Parties to the Convention must strengthen institutional action and the networks of institutions and government bodies to promote international cooperation in order to work jointly with the various bodies on the basis of the 17 SDGs of the UN and the upcoming celebration of the 50th anniversary of this Convention. The World Heritage Convention and Committee must further promote, and more effectively, the sustainability of the environment. As you know, Habitat III, the third UN Conference on the Sustainable Universal Urban Development in Quito was an opportunity to review the urban agenda with regard to these aims, and to reiterate the important role of culture in the implementation of this agenda over the coming years. Among the many challenges, we have the protection of urban identities, historical urban landscapes, the valorisation of local cultures, the promotion of creative industries and cultural expressions, as well as arts and cultural heritage as pillars of social and economic development in a sustainable manner. It is up to us, the members of the Committee, to establish and implement international mechanism, bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements that are required to guide and assess the strategies, plans and programmes that can jointly contribute to working better and more transparently with the Advisory Bodies, and the protection of the OUV of monuments, sites and other locations included on the World Heritage List.

Mexico has carried out its work, as Norway has done, in terms of reflection on the UNESCO cultural Conventions. And we need to strengthen this work with the Hague Convention, particularly its second protocol, to continue our fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property, as well as in sea to underwater cultural heritage, and the safeguarding of the symbolic values of identity of cultural elements listed on the inventories of intangible cultural heritage and the lists established in the framework of that Convention, in order to facilitate strategic integration of these various processes to sustainable development, economic, social and cultural, of local populations. And this is why we fully agree with the proposal tabled by Norway and Switzerland in terms of strengthening the participation of communities and civil society. Without them, we cannot achieve our common aims to protect World Heritage and its associated values. And, jointly with France, we also consider that we need to work on a new proposal for a Global Strategy. And let me simply table on behalf of my country the possibility of adding climate to these objectives. Let us not be late on this issue, as we work with communities.

Finally, we congratulate the Government of Italy and Florence for their proposal in terms of celebrating the 50th anniversary of this extraordinary Convention. Mexico will shortly announce how it intends to participate in international activities, not only on behalf of the Government, but also the various national committees of the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** informed the room that he has closed the speakers list, and that the remaining speakers are Kenya, Togo, Finland, Barbados, Bangladesh, Belgium, France, Qatar, Venezuela.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Kenya**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair, for giving Kenya the floor. Good morning, colleagues. We thank the Secretariat for the presentation and the work undertaken, which we believe will reinforce the future of the World Heritage Convention. We align ourselves with the interventions on the expected outcomes of the reflection process and on the relevance of a dedicated pillar to the nexus between conservation and sustainable development to reinforce linkages between conservation and socio-economic development, mainly for the benefit of the populations living in the areas where

the World Heritage sites are located. We all know that conservation and social economic development are Siamese twins. For example, some natural sites are substantial in size. If you'll allow me, in comparison, would easily fit in two or three countries. And these populations living in these areas need medical facilities, they need schools, they need roads. The conversation, therefore, should be on how do we develop while sustaining and conserving the sites? The narrative that the sites need to remain pristine can no longer hold. This conversation should be with all stakeholders, including the Advisory Bodies. There has been a debate on the success of the List in Danger. While some countries indicate it has served its intended purpose of conservation, others feel it has not served as intended. It is for this reason that we will call for more reflection on the nexus between conservation and sustainable development during the upcoming 50-year celebrations in Italy. We warmly congratulate the State of Italy for holding this wonderful event that we are all looking forward to, and for the reassurance that the process towards the celebrations is an all-inclusive process and that it will include the nexus between conservation and social economic development. I believe it will be a wonderful event, and we support it fully. We also support the proposal by South Africa to organise celebrations. We do recognise the financial constraints that the World Heritage Centre is facing. We had a lengthy conversation yesterday about the contributions, and while going onto the website we noticed that 104 countries are not up to their contributions and perhaps this might also contribute to some of the small problems that we face, because the World Heritage Centre does need, the World Heritage Fund, does need the funding from the Member States. Mr Chair, we thank you.

L'intervenant suivant était la Délégation du **Togo**, comme suit : Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président, de m'avoir donné la parole. C'est la première fois que le Togo prend la parole dans cette auguste Assemblée. Je tenais avant tout, au nom de la Délégation du Togo, vous féliciter, Monsieur le Président, pour l'excellente manière dont vous conduisez nos travaux. La Délégation du Togo voudrait également adresser ses plus chaleureuses félicitations à tous les nouveaux membres du Comité du Patrimoine mondial pour leur brillante élection, et par la même occasion, féliciter les membres sortants pour le travail abattu. Nous voulons ainsi réitérer, aux 21 États membres composant ce Comité, tout notre soutien dans l'accomplissement de cette lourde responsabilité. Il nous incombe à tous ici présents d'être les garants de la préservation du Patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, car c'est un bien commun que nous avons l'obligation de transmettre aux futures générations.

Monsieur le Président, qu'il me soit permis de saisir cette occasion pour réaffirmer notre reconnaissance à toute l'équipe intersectorielle de l'UNESCO pour l'élaboration de la Stratégie opérationnelle de la Priorité Afrique, qui a été adoptée avant-hier dans cette même salle, lors de la dernière Commission conjointe de cette Conférence générale. Le Togo s'en réjouit car cette nouvelle stratégie vient donner le signal de nouveaux départs de notre cher continent à travers ses programmes phares. À cet égard, le Togo souhaite remercier le Fonds du Patrimoine mondial pour toutes les actions en cours visant à améliorer le système de conservation des biens culturels, en l'occurrence, je veux ici parler de la Mission d'urgence sur le site Koutammakou le pays des Batammariba, le site Togolais inscrit sur le Patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO depuis 2004, qui a vu s'effondrer plusieurs de ses habitations en terre pendant la saison pluvieuse de 2018. Cette mission d'urgence qui verra la participation d'une architecte experte spécialiste du patrimoine culturel africain, est parfaitement en accord avec les décisions de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie de Fuzhou et j'en profite pour féliciter la Chine d'avoir abrité cet évènement qui a connu un franc succès. Par ailleurs, notre Délégation aimerait soutenir la déclaration faite par la République unie de Tanzanie quant au renforcement de la mise en œuvre de la politique sur le développement durable axé sur l'implication des sociétés civiles, étant donné que cette déclaration s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'Agenda 2063 de l'Union Africaine. Nous remercions également l'Italie d'avoir accepté d'accueillir la célébration du cinquantenaire de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial en 2022. Pour finir, Monsieur le Président, la Délégation du Togo, par ma voix, aimerait exporter le Comité du Patrimoine mondial à œuvrer pour une Liste du Patrimoine mondial plus représentative et équilibrée.

L'Afrique a urgemment besoin d'être renforcée afin de pouvoir inscrire plus de sites au Patrimoine mondial, et aussi pour que les nombreux sites africains détruits par des catastrophes naturelles ou des situations conflictuelles sortent de la Liste des sites en péril. Nul conseil n'est plus loyal que celui qui se donne sur un avis en péril, disait Leonard de Vinci. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Finland**, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr Chair, and thank you for the very smooth and efficient way you are conducting this meeting. We also take the opportunity to congratulate all newly elected members of the Committee. And thank you, thank you, Secretariat, for the presentation. The 50th anniversary is indeed an important opportunity to enhance the visibility of the Convention, reflect on its key areas, and especially raise awareness of conservation aspects of the World Heritage. Themes put forward in the presentation, such as climate change and heritage conservation, and a representative, balanced and credible List, are all important topics to reflect upon. It is important that the Convention contributes to global agendas, especially Agenda 2030. We also wish to highlight the importance of the inter- and intra-sectoral approach, also taking into account UNESCO's broader strategy and Programme Documents C4 and C5. It is also important to put emphasis on gender equality and strengthen this aspect in the implementation of the Convention. Lastly, involvement and active participation in the work of the Convention of experts, civil society and communities is essential, and we support amendments presented by Norway. Thank you very much, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Barbados**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. As it is the first time Barbados is substantively taking the floor, I would like to take this opportunity to offer our compliments for the manner in which you are advancing the work of this Assembly. We would also wish to offer our warmest congratulations to all our new Committee members and to assure them that Barbados remains committed to supporting and advancing the work of the Committee for the future. Barbados is seized by the unique opportunity which 2022 offers, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of this Convention, as a time to reflect, reframe and renew the Convention, and to refresh and reorient both the motivations and the methodologies of its processes. Barbados first wishes to thank the City of Florence for its excellent offer to organise and coordinate what I'm sure will be a hugely successful commemorative event. But we would also particularly wish to endorse the statements of South Africa and Kenya in this regard and would wish that those motives, speaking to the way in which we can reinvigorate the Global Strategy and reflect it in the future of the Convention we want, is a critical process and issue. Finally, we consider that one way of celebrating this Convention's 50th anniversary is to encourage its reflection in all regions of the world. And in this regard, we are satisfied that the Norwegian amendment would be a very useful support in strengthening the engagement of civil societies and community in the promotion and implementation of the Convention. Barbados again wishes to assure this gathering of its continued attention, reflection and action in this regard. Thank you for your attention.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Bangladesh**, as follows: Thank you, Chair, for giving Bangladesh the floor. And as I have taken the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate you on your manner, how you are coordinating the total Assembly as the Chair. Bangladesh also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new members of the World Heritage Committee, and also thank the outgoing members of the World Heritage Committee for their extensive support to this particular Committee. To us, World Heritage Convention is the most visible activity of UNESCO. Its 50th anniversary is definitely a time to celebrate and enhance the visibility. We welcome the continuous progress in the performance of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. We also take note of the reflection undertaken on the Global Strategy, using the opportunity of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in 2022. We also take note of the status of the preparation and the celebration of 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. Fortunately, it coincides with Bangladesh's accession to

UNESCO in 1972. It is our 50th anniversary as well. Bangladesh is doing their best to ensure the preservation of both natural and cultural heritage, and will continue to do so, which was effectively mentioned during the official visit of the Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, during the 41st General Conference. It was there, during the interventions and the meeting with Madame Audrey Azoulay. Bangladesh supports the interventions by Egypt, Kenya, Thailand and others, who categorically mentioned about the enhanced cooperation between World Heritage Centre, Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies and the Member States through this particular, on the eve of, this particular 50th anniversary. And, I thank you.

La Délégation de la **Belgique** était l'intervenant suivant, comme suit : Monsieur le Président, je vous remercie pour l'excellence de la tenue des débats. C'est la première fois que la Belgique prend la parole comme nouveau Membre du Comité. Nous remercions l'Assemblée pour notre élection. Vingt ans après les travaux de Budapest où nous étions, et à l'approche du cinquantième anniversaire de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial, la Belgique s'engagera tout particulièrement à investir du temps et des efforts dans les thèmes et sujets suivants: la crédibilité de la Convention, la Convention à une époque de changements majeurs, les procédures et processus, la gestion des changements dans et autour des biens du Patrimoine mondial, et la collaboration avec les Organisations consultatives. Le Patrimoine est un élément de résilience, de coopération et de développement majeur s'il est préservé et protégé adéquatement. Comme les 50 ans sont bien entendu l'occasion de faire des bilans, nous appuyons le document qui nous est soumis et soutenons les amendements de la Suisse et de la Norvège, et appuyons l'intervention du Liban sur l'implication de la société civile. Nos sociétés font face à de nouveaux défis. L'impact de la pandémie Covid, les catastrophes climatiques, le développement durable, seront importants pour tous, et pour le Patrimoine, quel que soit son statut, mondial ou pas, et pour les communautés impactées. La recherche de moyens dédiés au Patrimoine et à la Convention, la révision des procédures d'inscription et des Codes de conduite, sont des défis importants auxquels les secteurs de la culture et du patrimoine devront faire face. Cependant, si ces défis sont importants, il ne faut pas s'enfoncer dans une vision négative de nos travaux, mais il faut aussi davantage partager, je pense, les bonnes pratiques et les success-stories liées au Patrimoine mondial. Nous remercions d'ores et déjà l'Italie et Florence en particulier, pour la tenue de la réunion de célébration en Novembre de l'année prochaine et souhaitons franc succès à nos travaux.

Le Président a ensuite donné la parole à la Délégation de la **France**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président, de me donner la parole. Tout d'abord permettez-moi d'adresser toutes les félicitations de mon pays aux membres du Comité nouvellement élus hier. Donc, simplement pour indiquer que, en France, donc, la célébration du 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire sera également marquée, donc, par un événement organisé à destination du public interne pour sensibiliser à cette Convention mais aussi dresser un bilan de sa mise en œuvre et participer aux réflexions sur l'avenir de la Convention concernant notamment les principaux défis de gestion des biens inscrits. Donc, cet événement réunira, évidemment, le réseau des biens français inscrits, mais les principaux acteurs de la Convention, ainsi que le Secrétariat. Par ailleurs, puisque le Distingué délégué du Liban a mentionné l'initiative Li Beirut, je mentionne que la France permet via, donc, ses contributions au Centre du Patrimoine mondial, une contribution à l'initiative Li Beirut via la recommandation sur les paysages urbains historiques. Je vous remercie.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Qatar**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. The State of Qatar would like to thank the World Heritage Committee and all its members and voters for the support and the nomination of our nation, and to the Committee. Communication, credibility, conservation, capacity-building, communities. It is with these 5 C's object that the Committee and all members need to continue to support global cultural needs and progress. These objectives are crucial to the integrity as well as the success of the decision we will make together as a Committee. And we, as the State of Qatar, will ensure our actions reflect those noble values. We also wish to congratulate all other successful candidates for their successful,

for their successful candidates. Finally, we are looking forward for the 50th celebration in Florence, Italy. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The last speaker was the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. First and foremost, allow me to express my thanks to the Secretariat for the report and the presentation. Also, to highlight the extraordinary work done by UNESCO in the field of culture. As many previous speakers have said, this Convention is a fundamental instrument of UNESCO. This is an instrument to revitalise the sublime values in the hearts of human beings and which this Convention celebrates. And this is why we greatly welcome the proposal by the Government of Italy to celebrate in Florence, that marvellous city that holds so many great examples of human creativity, that this be the location for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of this Convention. We also welcome other proposals that have been tabled by other countries to celebrate similar events. Let me highlight what has been said by several other Delegations concerning the importance of going towards a better balance in terms of the World Heritage sites. Also, we would support everything that highlights the need for both the right to development and the preservation of cultural heritage. And we support the amendment that has been tabled highlighting the importance of community participation in the preservation of our universal heritage. There is no doubt that without the participation of the people, of the communities, these properties could disappear. It is only with the participation of communities that they can survive for eternity. We share the concerns that have been expressed concerning the illicit trafficking of cultural property and which is mainly extracted from developing countries. UNESCO recently published a report on the perverse effect of advertising sites that, through their networks, sell this looted property, looted from developing countries. We welcome the Strategy for Priority Africa and we also express our great satisfaction in this regard. We would also like to express our support for all members of the Committee and congratulate the members newly elected to this Committee. Thank you, Chair.

The Chairperson gave the floor to the Delegation of **St Vincent and the Grenadines**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman. It's very kind to give me the floor. Mr Chairman, as I am taking the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate you for your election, as well as the Bureau, and the way you are conducting this meeting. And I would like also, I take the opportunity to thank all States Parties for their support for the election for the first time of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the World Heritage Committee. And I would like also to congratulate all the new members. Mr Chairman, actually, I didn't prepare an intervention, but all the interventions are very inspiring and 2022 is tomorrow. And we are at the end of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. And I hope that all we have heard today will inspire to prepare a new strategy beyond 2022, taking into account our will, all of us, to improve the credibility of the Convention, to promote its values, and, as has been said also by Lebanon, to promote the cooperation. Of course, we share also the concerns expressed by Togo, Kenya, Tanzania, to improve the credibility of the List and to have a fair and transparent process in the preparation of the nominations. Also, we would like also to prepare this new strategy, taking into account sustainable development and climate change, which affect many, many countries and also small island developing states, and also taking into account the disasters emerged by conflicts and difficult situations. Thank you, Mr Chairman. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** thanked all the delegates for their interventions, and invited the Assistant Director-General for Culture, Mr Ottone, to answer the specific questions addressed to the Secretariat.

The **Assistant Director-General for Culture** intervened, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. Now, first of all, allow me to say how inspiring I have found this morning. And I say this completely sincerely. If I take a look at the over 30 interventions that look into issues of substance for what this Convention should be and that we hope it will be, I think we all agree on the major principles, on the balances that are required.

With regard to the work achieved by all of us, I've heard several times the Member States and especially of course the members of the Committee, but also the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies, play an important role and a crucial role. And I would like to thank you for that. And I would probably answer with no particular order.

I'd like to thank South Africa, France, Greece, Hungary for already announcing a number of events around the celebration, and certainly many others that I've forgotten. Egypt, a Delegation with whom we've been in deep conversation as well. The invitation emanating from the City of Florence was an official invitation that arrived in good time, several months ago, in fact, and this is why we have highlighted it. But we particularly agree with what has been said concerning the communities, the integration of the communities is fully in the spirit of what we're trying to achieve with The Next 50. And the discussions that you're having in this room, in this Committee, in this Assembly, reflect the changes that we have witnessed in terms of the communities and heritage. The communities consider heritage as part of their sustainable development, of their promise for sustainable development. And this is their approach. And I think that the whole spirit of the Convention and of course, it is up to you whether you wish to state this more clearly in the Draft Resolution, but they have been considered most certainly. Now, the discussion, the contributions of many of you on the issue of balance between sustainable development and conservation, preservation. That is very topical, and it will certainly be included in all of our exchanges and discussions. Sometimes we need to change titles and names of things to make it clearer what we have been discussing. In fact, sometimes, for the past 20 or 30 years, and also in response to what was said in particular by the Representative of Egypt, you may remember the process of the Action Plan, but some of the members may not remember this. In 2008, the Committee decided to launch a reflection for the 40th anniversary as to the future of the Convention. There were workshops, with the support of Australia in particular, and a report was presented in 2009 at the 17th General Assembly, which requested a Strategic Action Plan. This was then examined by the Committee in 2010, 2011, was then adopted at the 18th General Assembly in 2011. So that's the whole process. And what do we do with all this reflection? And I think that all of you have stated this. In addition to the work that has been done with the Action Plan, the first Action Plan, we should, all of us States Parties and especially the Committee, propose the Action Plan for 2022, 2020, 2032 or 2033. However it is defined, that is up to you. What the Secretariat can make available for you is not only what we intend to publish at the end of next year, that is to say the reflection, the seminars, the dialogue that took place. Obviously, this leads to a publication, but I think that there's also, it's up to the Member States to think about the five C's. Do we want five C's, six C's? A different letter? I think that we've seen many structural changes over the past few years and new factors that have affected, importantly, what we're doing with heritage to a great extent. And I think that the outcome is starting to work and this is precisely what we're trying to do for Priority Africa. Now, this will also need to be included in the reflection. Otherwise, we'll have two separate processes. I simply can't imagine that they would not be connected. So, I think we're on the right path, but it's really up to you to determine whether that is indeed the direction you want us to take.

Now, many other things were mentioned and of course, all of this is included. You can't really include everything that is important with just five themes. But expertise is an issue, the work that needs to be done with the Advisory Bodies. And then there were specific questions. The delegate of Egypt. There was a request presented by the Committee and we are trying to respond to that specific request, but then we need to provide the information to that Committee, and that is underway. So, I can't give you any further information other than we're working hard. And when we do have a bit more time, between 4 and 6 a.m., we're working on it. So, with regard to celebrations. The proposal that is in the Draft Resolution is something that we're trying to coordinate. We're trying to bring on board all of the celebrations that are proposed by Member States at national level, at international level. I think that a 50th anniversary should certainly have a very broad communication as to the importance of this magnificent instrument, the 1972 Convention, beyond inscriptions. And I am delighted that I heard in this debate so



many other matters also included in World Heritage. So, I am really completely delighted with the way the morning has been going so far, because all of the various amendments presented are also improving on the text. We have a difficult year ahead, but I'm certainly it will be marvellous. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** thanked the Assistant Director-General for Culture and moved on to the adoption of the Draft Resolution. He invited the Rapporteur to go through the text.

The **Rapporteur** invited the Secretariat to share the amendments on the screen and suggested to go through the Draft Resolution paragraph by paragraph.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 1 and Paragraph 2, which were agreed. He then read over Paragraph 3, and the floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you. Chair. Yes, I have one paragraph to add between 2 and 3, if I may now? "Recalling Decision 44 COM 14." Thank you Chair. This is it. The rationale of it is that in this Decision, we have already in Paragraph 20. It's the last Decision that was taken. And I'm just going to read what Paragraph 20 of that Decision was saying. It's: "Notes that the 50th anniversary of the Convention serves as an opportunity to thoroughly assess the Convention's main achievements, as well as its main challenges and how to address them". Thank you.

This **Chairperson** asked the room if this Paragraph was agreeable, and it was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 4, and the Delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** took the floor to clarify that in the French version "avec satisfaction" and in the English version, "welcomes" without satisfaction, therefore that something is missing.

The **Chairperson** read over the paragraph, starting with "Welcomes with satisfaction" and Paragraph 4 was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 5 and Paragraph 6, which were both agreed.

The Delegating of the **United States of America** took the floor regarding Paragraph 7, as follows: Thank you, Chair. First, let me congratulate the new members elected yesterday to the Committee. I would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre for their presentation and the information on the 50th anniversary. It's worth reminding all that the United States proposed this Convention and was the first State to ratify it. We continue to significantly contribute to World Heritage Protection and preservation around the world. We look forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary and to be as inclusive as possible in terms of protecting and preserving World Heritage. Regarding Norway's amendment, we fully support and agree the importance of including all stakeholders, which undoubtedly includes civil society and communities. We have one small tweak and that would be to change "implementing" to "promoting". Only Member States can implement the Convention. And with that, I thank you, Chair.

The **Chairperson** summarised that the US proposed a small amendment to the amendment, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Mexico**, who stated they are in favour of the amendment tabled by Norway and Switzerland, and would like to keep the text as it was originally proposed.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And in line with what our previous intervention and also many Delegates' interventions about the need to have other priorities when we are tackling it. We have an alternative paragraph and I would like to say that we have coordinated with Norway. Our understanding is that they are fine with what we are going to propose. But I would kindly ask you to ask their confirmation on this afterwards. I sent already the text to the Secretariat. If it can be displayed and then I can read it since my reading speed is not usual. Basically, this is an alternative to Norway. Exactly. So, it's "Recognising the importance of undertaking a reflection on how to strengthen the involvement

and contribution of NGOs and communities, comma, and how to ensure diversity of expertise views". This was one of the things that we have mentioned, transparency and dialogue with Advisory Bodies. "As well as sustainable development and heritage protection, and encourage to undertake a reflection on these points". I thank you, Chair.

The Delegation of **Norway** agreed that this paragraph was coordinated with Egypt.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation du **Liban**, comme suit : Merci. Monsieur le Président. Concernant la proposition modifiée par l'Égypte et la Norvège, je pense qu'il y a un problème de langage. La société civile est beaucoup plus large que les ONG et les communautés. La société civile implique les acteurs dans la société et constitue la base de la démocratie. C'est pour ça, je pense, qu'il ne faut pas enlever le mot "société civile". On ne peut pas restreindre la société civile aux ONG et à ce concept de communauté, qui en français ne veut rien dire. Voilà. Donc, je pense qu'il faut garder le terme "société civile". C'est extrêmement important.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Italy**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. My observation was for Paragraph 8, so maybe I can, I can speak later. It was just. Of course, we are fine, both with the amendment proposed by Norway and Switzerland and with, I think, we don't see any problem with the amendment proposed by Egypt. It was maybe because there is a clear tie with Paragraph 6 on the celebrations, because in Paragraph 6 there is a clear invitation to States Parties to celebrate the anniversary of the Convention. So maybe it would be more logic to put Paragraph 8, the present Paragraph 8, higher in the text.

The **Chairperson** reminded the delegate to focus on Paragraph 7, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. Indeed, we are among those who believe that preservation and protection of heritage involves a number of people. But the issue of responsibilities and exchanges between the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, this is clearly determined, it is a participation that is well defined. Now, I'm looking at the proposal tabled by Egypt, and first we agree with keeping "civil society" as was originally proposed, and instead of NGO. No, we would, we disagree with the proposal by Lebanon, it would be to strike out, in fact, "civil society". Before "NGOs", we would say "apolitical". "Apolitical NGOs". We are. Let me perhaps explain a bit the reason for this proposal. The discussions that we've had within World Heritage and elsewhere have demonstrated that there are organisations that have political views and are using these various bodies and fora to try to politicise the discussion. And this is a very important point. Many Delegations have said it, here and elsewhere within UNESCO, we must avoid politicisation of discussions and documents. And this is why we believe that it would be in agreement with that position to establish clearly that those NGOs that wish to have greater participation, well, it should be clear that they must be apolitical in nature and that this is exclusively as experts. Thank you.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation de la **République tchèque**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Nous avons suivi avec grand intérêt les interventions de nos collègues et nous nous réjouissons du soutien exprimé à notre Convention à son 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de priorités identifiées pour l'avenir. Nous avons aussi écouté les interventions de nos collègues et l'ADG concernant la meilleure intégration de la société civile et de la communauté vers la protection du Patrimoine mondial. C'est pourquoi nous voulions soutenir le paragraphe initial proposé par Norvège et la Suisse. Mais s'il y a un consensus à la nouvelle version proposée par Égypte, cela ne nous pose aucun problème. Merci Monsieur le Président.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **China**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I will be brief. We would like to thank Norway for this amendment. We also appreciate the additional modification tabled by Egypt, which in fact makes this amendment more complete. We believe that the amendment must be based on fundamental texts, and in particular, the text of the

Convention and the Operational Guidelines. So to simplify matters, we would propose to adopt what is included in Paragraph 12 of the Operational Guidelines: “To ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site manager, local and regional governance, local communities, non-governmental organisation, NGO, and other interested parties, etc., etc.”. So, we fully understand the amendment presented by Norway and then Egypt, which aims to involve more people in the implementation of our Convention. And we would propose to adopt the text from the Operational Guidelines. So, we would talk about local communities and NGOs. That's our proposal. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** noted that the delegate wanted to add “local communities and NGOs” as stated in Paragraph 12 of the Operational Guidelines. The Delegation of **Venezuela** provided assistance, and the delegate made an observation regarding the word “apolitical” which was misspelled.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Kenya**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. We fully support the amendment by Egypt and Norway because it addresses the topical issues which most Member States have been speaking on. But I just wanted to make a small amendment at the place “as well as the balance between sustainable development and heritage protection”, so that it's the balance between the two. And also, maybe just to propose “all stakeholders” to take care of the amendment by China and Venezuela, such that then everybody is included, then we are not mentioning every little part of stakeholders. It's just a proposal. Thank you.

La Délégation de la **France** est intervenue pour soutenir l'intervention du Délégué du Liban, réitérant que « les communautés » ne veut pas dire grand-chose en français, et que “société civile” est une formule plus souhaitable que “les ONG” trop restrictive.

The Delegation of **South Africa** joined France and Lebanon asking to retain “civil society” and warned against the use of “apolitical NGOs” because it is hard to determine that an NGO is apolitical. This was supported by the Delegation of **Finland** and **Austria**.

The Delegation of **Austria** added, as follows: I'm a bit at a loss now in terms of the text because it seems to me that a general undertaking, I honestly like actually the Egyptian, I understand, proposal, supported by Norway, Czech Republic, Kenya. I'm sorry. I came in a bit late. Because we do think that it's important to have a debate on this, how we can strengthen the involvement of civil society and communities. I would say that there is a difference between civil society and communities. Might not be such a common term used in the 1972 context, but we have a quite good understanding what communities are in the 2003 context, and we would rather welcome this approach of a very much bottom-up community-based approach. I think it goes well with this idea of a human-rights-based approach in the sense that cultural rights are very much community-based rights, and that's why I actually like it. But this is not a strong point. Where I do have a strong point is the deletion of “apolitical”. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Okay. Thanks for the intervention. I think the list is growing and I'm tempted to try and summarise it too, so that I can see if we can build a consensus. Thank you to Egypt and Norway for giving us this alternative paragraph. Let me try and read it, because what is emerging, it seems to me, the key issue here is “civil society” or “NGO”. China had proposed that we stick to the language in the Operational Guidelines which talk to “local communities and NGOs”. But there is an agreement that we mentioned NGOs, communities. I think the issue is whether we add “civil society” or not. I wish to build on that one. Switzerland, Venezuela, you, the issue of apolitical, “apolitical NGOs”, you raised it. And I think there is an objection on the floor on it. Do you still wish to put it on here? Because I want to summarise and to close this discussion. You wish to assist me there?

The Delegation of **Venezuela** assisted, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. We would prefer to maintain this term. I understand the concern. What we generally refer to is NGOs that have relations with the Advisory Bodies and with the Centre, but who also have pages online that clearly establish their aims, their mission, etc.. And there are some organisations where it's clearly identified that they are political in nature and that they are not experts in the field of heritage, that the reason for their participation or the will to establish a dialogue with the Advisory Bodies, comes from a political interest rather than an expert interest. And so I think it's quite easy to identify. I do not see where there would be a difficulty. However, if it is problematic to most people, then we would support the proposal tabled by China, which refers to a text already agreed previously. But we would prefer if, Chair, you can establish in your report that we need to ensure that those NGOs that establish a dialogue with the Organisation and participate with us should not have political interests or political funds because that creates a poison that will eventually affect the functioning and operations of this Committee and this Convention, which was originally beautiful in the way that it was designed. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Thank you so much for your flexibility on this one. So, colleagues, those who are going to speak, I recommend that you stick to this consensus that has emerged now. Help us to try to do this so that we don't bring other new issues. So, we have the text, as you have here, that paragraph with those slight amendments. But the primary sponsors are comfortable with what they see here.

He then gave the floor to the Delegation of **Ethiopia**, who agreed with all the amendments made and added that he wants to support the slight amendments made by Kenya. The Delegation of **Germany** added that they were in favour of deleting "apolitical" and keeping "civil societies". The Delegation of **Israel** informed the Chair that they supported the position by South Africa, Finland and Austria. The Delegation of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** also preferred to keep the wording "civil society" as it is in line with the synergies created between also the Conventions and the civil society is very involved in the 2005 Convention

La Délégation de la **Suisse** à ensuite pris la parole, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Alors, tout d'abord je me base sur l'amendement original d'Égypte et Norvège, et je pense que nous devrions corriger le premier mot qui est donne l'impression que c'est un paragraphe préambulaire. Ce n'est pas "recognising" mais "recognises". Il faut changer "recognising" par "recognises", ou "reconnait" et pas "reconnaissant". C'est un paragraphe opérationnel. Ensuite, concernant la question de la société civile ou des ONGs, nous sommes évidemment tout à fait favorables à "société civile" mais à titre de compromis, nous sommes tout à fait d'accord avec la proposition de la Chine qui se base sur du langage agréé des Operational Guidelines, c'est à dire "local communities and NGOs". Pour la suite de ce paragraphe, en revanche, nous souhaitons supprimer le mot "views" après "expertise", "diversity of expertise views", "diversity of expertise" c'est suffisant. Et, finalement, nous pensons qu'il n'est pas approprié de parler ici de, de nouveau dans le texte anglais "balance", donc dans la proposition apportée par le Kenya et Éthiopie, nous ne les soutenons pas, pour faire court. Voilà. Je vous remercie.

The Delegation of **Albania** informed that they also would like to keep "civil society" and delete "apolitical".

The Delegation of **Sweden** was the next speaker, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. And thank you also to Norway for proposing this paragraph and to Egypt for proposing a revision for Sweden. The word "civil society" is also very important as civil society, as we've heard, have a very crucial role to play in this Convention. And we agree with Lebanon on this, too, to keep the word "civil society". We would like to propose that we merge both the Chinese and the Kenyan proposal so that we say "civil society, local communities, NGOs and all stakeholders". If this could be acceptable to the room, otherwise, we are, we will, of course, be happy to go along with the consensus. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of **Cuba** added, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. We support the amendment presented by Egypt and supported by Norway, and we believe that the addition proposed by China, "local communities and NGOs", this being already agreed language in the Operational Guidelines, we believe it is probably better to stick to that agreed language. And we also support the proposal by Kenya supported by Ethiopia. Thank you, Chair. Apologies. And we also support the proposal by Venezuela to include in your report the issue of apolitical NGOs. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Mexico** added that it is in support of the paragraph as it is, the version by Egypt and Norway.

The Delegation of **Palestine** took the floor as follows: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr President. Palestine supports the "civil society" by Lebanon, France, South Africa, Germany, St Vincent, Albania and Sweden, and also supports the Swedish proposal of merging the Chinese language to the first paragraph of "civil society". Thank you, Mr President.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And I would like to, I will try to help in reaching a consensus just by explaining that when we, with Norway, when we drafted the first amendment, we tried to stick to what is in the Operational Guidelines. So now, starting from now, I am speaking only of course on behalf of Egypt. We are fine with whatever terminology that is in the Operational Guidelines. So what China has suggested, we are fine with it. If someone else would like to add anything from the Operational Guidelines, we are fine with it. But we are not comfortable to add a concept which is here, specifically, "civil society". Here we are asking to have a reflection on what we have, on the implementation of what we have. We do not have the implementation of "civil society" until this moment. Maybe the end result of the reflection, two years later on, we could have this, but up till now what we have is "communities". And "communities", we didn't create it. It's already in the basic text. So, we stick to, we thank China, and we support what China has made. This is the first point. The second point, we fully support what Kenya and Ethiopia has said. And we don't agree with Switzerland on this point, unfortunately. Because having "striking the balance" is the key issue and the key to the discussion that we are having here. And I would like to recall that in the Budapest Declaration, we have "striking the balance", exactly. I will, I have it here in front of me. "We will seek to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and development". So, we are not inventing anything new. Chair, I do believe that this paragraph could be adopted in 2 minutes, as long as we are only basing ourselves on the agreed language. Thank you.

The Delegation of **China** then suggested to use Paragraph 12 of the Operational Guidelines, as it is a consensual and exiting text.

The floor was given to the Delegation of the **Russian Federation** as follows: Thank you, Chair. I think we have all understood that the main problem is the term "civil society", which nowadays, at the moment, does not exist in our document. So, I would suggest that we agree on China's suggestion, namely that we stick to "NGOs and communities" in the French version, it was said that "communities" doesn't mean anything in French. That's correct. But in the Operational Guidelines and the Rules of Procedure, we refer to "local populations". Perhaps that could help our French colleagues to adopt this amendment. We'd be very happy if they were okay with that.

The Delegation of **The Netherlands** agreed with the text.

La Délégation de la **Suisse** a ajouté, comme suit : Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Nous sommes aussi, comme je l'ai déjà dit, d'accord avec la proposition Chinoise. Et j'aimerais ajouter aussi, avec la proposition de l'Égypte concernant le fait de s'en tenir au langage agréé, et il a cité, le Délégué Égyptien a cité le langage concernant la proposition du Kenya, et dans

ce cas-là, donc, à propos de “balance”, et si je ne me trompe pas, il a parlé de “adequate and appropriate”, and “adequate” j’aimerais bien voir le langage exact afin que là aussi nous reprenions le langage agréé et pas seulement “balance”, s’il y a une version plus précise, et agréée déjà. Est-ce que le Secrétariat pourrait nous le dire ? Je vous remercie.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. Well, it's in the Budapest Declaration, Paragraph 6. We will see. I'm just going to read the paragraph and then suggest the wording is based on it. We will, quote, “We will seek to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation”, comma, “sustainability and development”, comma, “so that the World Heritage properties can be protected while the quality of life of our communities is improved”, comma, “through appropriate activities such as sustainable tourism”. Unquote. This is the text of the Budapest Declaration. Based on this, I can have suggested wording if that would be fine with Switzerland. In this case, it will be “to ensure”. Yes, here we are “to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation”, comma, “sustainability and development”. And that would be it. And then we delete the rest until “encourages to undertake a reflection on this point”. I thank you, Chair.

La Délégation de la **Suisse** a informé être en accord avec cela, et a demandé à voir une version nettoyée du paragraphe.

The **Chairperson** attempted to wrap up this paragraph, as follows: Colleagues. Now, I want to put to you what I think is an emerging consensus. There are other difficult issues. We are not going to resolve them here. But I think what I am getting from you is that; let's try to stick to the, to the agreed language as far as possible. That is the only way in which we can have consensus. So, let me read what I think has come up thus far “Recognises the importance of undertaking a reflection on how to strengthen the involvement and contribution of”. Now, that's where we need to stick to the agreed language, and I think it's a valid point that's been made, and China has assisted us. So, we say “the involvement of NGOs and communities”. Right. China, assist us there.

The Delegation of **China** informed the Chair it should be “local communities”.

The **Chairperson** continued, as follows: And “NGOs”. “NGOs and local communities”. “How to ensure diversity of expertise, transparency and dialogue with Advisory Bodies, as well as to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and development and encourages to undertake a reflection on these issues, on this point”. May I request that we accept this paragraph?

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you very much. Please keep looking at the extreme left. Thank you so much for giving me the floor. You know, if, I just have to make very clear that sustainable development and heritage protection are not opposing concepts. And the idea that you need, that these are sort of mutually exclusive concepts is just plainly wrong. It's wrong. And in total, in this conformity with the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, where we agree that heritage protection contributes to sustainable development. I would not want us to adopt a text that construes an opposition between something that is inherently married, if you like. We are here because world heritage protection contributes to sustainable development. So that's why I have a real difficulty with any suggestion that conservation, sustainability in development don't go somehow, that they are opposing concepts. But I don't know what the room feels. We don't want to stand in the way, but can you please highlight that very clearly, that it's our understanding that heritage protection is part and parcel of sustainable development? Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** informed the delegates that all of the discussions will be reflected in the Summary Records.

Il a ensuite donné la parole à la Délégation du **Liban**, comme suit : Monsieur le Président, nous ne voulons pas nous opposer au consensus mais nous souhaitons absolument remarquer que revenir à des formulations anciennes etcetera, c'est très bien, mais les choses ont évolué. Et les choses évoluent toujours. Le concept de société civile aujourd'hui est un concept clé pour toute action sur le Patrimoine et pour toute action démocratique. Il ne s'agit pas seulement d'ONG. ONG, c'est une partie de la société civile. La société civile implique beaucoup d'autres acteurs. Et donc, bon, je ne veux pas m'opposer au consensus, mais nous insistons sur la nécessité que la société civile soit intégrée dans la Convention et que les démarches, et que le concept de société civile devienne un concept clé dans la question de la protection et de la mise en œuvre de la Convention. Le deuxième point, également. On a d'anciens textes sur le "equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and sustainable development". Je suis tout à fait d'accord avec le précédent intervenant sur le fait qu'il ne s'agit pas de "equitable balance". La conservation est une partie intégrante du développement durable. It is part of the sustainable development. There is no equilibrium. It's a part of the development, of the sustainable development. And there is no sustainable development if there is no heritage conservation. So, c'est un texte ancien que nous avons adopté à Budapest, les choses étaient différentes. Maintenant les choses évoluent. Il faut que nous évoluions. Merci Monsieur le Président.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Thank you, sir. I took your comments. All your comments will be reflected in the Summary Record. And I take it that we need to evolve. But, but we also are in the context where we need to forge consensus so that we all, we are together. So, I take all your points. May I take, colleagues, that, may I take it that, otherwise this delicate compromise that I think we have now should disappear. May I take it that this is a compromise paragraph, that we all agree? Please take down your thing. Can I accept, can I propose that we adopt this paragraph, imperfect or incomplete as it is? I see your hand, Kenya. I see your hand. If you may agree with me, we accept it the way it is.

La parole a été donnée à la Délégation de la **Suisse**, comme suit : Monsieur le Président, nous sommes d'accord avec le paragraphe tel qu'il est, mais c'est pour le rapport, nous aimerions souligner que nous, nous acceptons le langage agréé, mais notre compréhension concernant cette question d'équilibre entre durabilité, développement et conservation va exactement dans le sens exprimé par la Délégation de l'Autriche et nous vous serions reconnaissants d'ajouter ça au rapport. Merci. Et, ah oui, pardon, excusez-moi, une autre chose. Dans la version française, pour ce qui est de "expert views", je pense que la traduction du côté français n'est pas correcte, elle est restée telle qu'elle était avant le changement. Donc il faudrait vérifier la traduction française sur ce point. "Assurer la diversité des experts", et non pas des "points de vue des experts". Merci.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Kenya**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I was almost getting aggrieved. Yes, in principle, we agree with the, with the paragraph the way it is. However, we want to note and to have it in the records that "heritage protection" should have been maintained in the sentence. Why? Because it is part of the agreed language from the Budapest Declaration. And so, we want it in the record that "heritage protection" should have been maintained. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** stated he did not wish to open this for further discussion, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I have two points. One, I must say it now before the adoption. The other, I can say it afterwards. But the word "views" must be there. The "experts' views" must be there. I know that Switzerland raised it before and I took the floor afterwards. I'm sorry. I mean, it might be my mistake that I didn't reply on it immediately, but in this particular thing, we had a lengthy debate on it when we had, when, during the discussions on the Code of Conduct. And I hope that no one will open it again because it's a document that was the result of a lot of discussions and argumentation. And in it, I would invite everyone to see in it, on Paragraph 15, we had it already this "taking into account the divergence of

expertise views”, removing the word “views” would totally change it here. This is the first point. The second point just also in reply to this thing. Here we are only asking for a reflection, a reflection on it. We are not asking to take a decision on it. Thank you.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation de la **Suisse**, comme suit : Je pense que ce n'est pas tout à fait la même chose, si je peux me permettre de commenter. Parce que dans le texte cité par la Délégation Égyptienne il s'agissait de “prendre en compte”, “to take into account the diversity of expertise views”. Ici, il s'agit “d'assurer”, et je ne vois pas comment on pourrait être aussi prescriptifs que d'assurer la diversité des points de vue des experts. On peut assurer la diversité des expertises. Mais on ne peut pas être prescriptifs au point d'assurer la diversité des points de vue des experts. Donc, c'est le verbe initial change le sens. Merci. Donc, nous souhaitons conserver ce changement. Merci.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Estonia**, as follows: Thank you very much. Estonia also believes that it is not up to us to ensure what the experts will think, actually. And I think that the phrase “how to ensure a diversity of expertise” covers it. It shows us that we have different experts and we expect them to have different views. But it is up to them to agree or not to agree or to present their views. So, we will support the formulation as phrased by Switzerland. Thank you.

La Délégation de la **Chine** a informé le Président que la version française du paragraphe n'est pas entièrement cohérente avec la version anglaise. Ce que le **Président** a noté, et il a ajouté qu'il restait seulement 10 min d'interprétation et qu'il faut ensuite regarder le Point 10 sur le Code de conduite.

The Delegation of **Norway** intervened in order to add after “the conservation, sustainability and development”, “in line with the Policy Document, the Sustainable Development Policy Document on Sustainable Development adopted in 2015”. The Delegation of **Venezuela** responded, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. We would prefer to remove the addition just proposed by Norway in order to avoid confusion. We were using language in the Budapest Declaration. And the second point is we support the proposal by Egypt in terms of ensuring a diversity of views. We understand the other points of view, but we have a preference for Egypt's proposal. But perhaps instead of “ensure” we could talk about “to promote” and then this would refer to “diversity of expertise views”, but it would be understood as a process that we cannot entirely control. So that is a proposal with a view to a consensus. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** asked the Delegation of Switzerland if they would be comfortable if the text read “to promote the diversity of expertise views”?

La Délégation de la **Suisse** a répondu, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Franchement, je ne comprends pas le sens et je ne crois pas qu'on puisse activement promouvoir la diversité des vues, des points de vue des experts. Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ? On peut promouvoir, comme certains collègues l'ont expliqué avant, on peut promouvoir la diversité des expertises. Ça c'est un processus clair, bien identifiable. Mais on ne peut pas par avance indiquer quelles seront les vues des experts, ni promouvoir ces vues. Je crois que ce n'est pas dans notre rôle. Merci.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I totally understand what the Delegation of Switzerland is saying, and I totally can have a full understanding of what they want. I just want to explain the other point of view. Maybe we can reach something. Our point of view is that when we have different, when we have one, only one expertise views, on the table in front of us, we shall not consider other point of views as wrong views. This is the basic thing that we want to capture. Here, what Switzerland is saying is totally correct, the diversity of expertise. So, I think that what Venezuela has suggested can



be a good compromise, or we are open to any other thing. But I want to capture the fact that when we have a view, do not take it as God's view. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** suggested to settle with the slight modification by Venezuela, adding that Egypt has no problem to it. La Délégation de la **Suisse** a répondu, comme suit: Merci Monsieur le Président. Je pense que, peut-être, comme proposition de compromis, on devrait revenir à la proposition initiale citée par la Délégation Égyptienne, à savoir, “taking into account” au lieu de “ensure”. Dans le texte du Code de Conduite, le Paragraphe 15 dit “Recalling the advisory nature of the Advisory Bodies, making an effort to take into consideration the divergence of expertise views”.

This proposition was agreed by the Delegation of **Egypt**.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Well, actually, the rationale with adding this paragraph was that this was actually discussed in the Open-Ended Working Group on the Code of Conduct. And where we had this proposal to have this “balance between” etc. And there we included that it would be important to also do it in line with the Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development. So that's the rationale behind it.

The Delegation of **Venezuela** informed the room that they were not in agreement with the latest addition and would prefer to continue with the paragraph that was lighter, adding that there is a fragile consensus being achieved here.

The Delegation of **Egypt** added that they have no problem with this.

La Délégation du **Liban** a ajouté, comme suit : Oui, Monsieur Le Président. Nous ne voulons pas nous opposer au consensus, mais le terme “divergent”, “divergence”, est un terme qui jamais n'a été utilisé au Comité. On parle de “diversity” mais on ne parle pas de “divergence”. Ça ne veut. Dans le Comité on essaye toujours de trouver des consensus, et pas de divergence. C'est pour ça, je pense que le terme “divergence” est un terme extrêmement violent, qui ne correspond pas au langage habituel du Comité. On parle d'habitude de “diversity”. C'est pour ça, on ne veut pas s'opposer au consensus, mais je pense que “diversity” est beaucoup plus intéressant que “divergence”.

The **Chairperson** summarized that Egypt and Norway seem to agree and requested The Delegation of **Venezuela** to join the consensus, to which the delegate informed not being in a position to agree with that consensus.

The **Chairperson** informed the delegates that it is now time to either adjourn the debate or continue, but it is not in the interest of the General Assembly to belabor this. He appealed to the delegates to accept the Paragraph as it is, adding the importance of the spirit of consensus.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Yes. Thank you so much Mr President. We support the consensus of the word “diversity” by Lebanon. And we also have a problem with the last sentence that says “and encourages”. Encourages whom? It doesn't say. Are we encouraging States Parties, are we encouraging World Heritage? I don't know who put this sentence there. So, we need clarification about that, please. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Yes. Thank you for the intervention Palestine, but assist us here. I think it will not be the perfect way we want it to be. And I think I would really request that we nudge this. There is just one issue that I wanted to do, as just on the outstanding issues, on the sustainable development. And I think Venezuela was the only one with a problem, and I'm appealing to them to assist me on this particular one. All the other

issues, we have extensively discussed them, and I think it will not be in our interest to reopen other things now, because that will break the delicate balance that we have forged so far.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation de la **République arabe syrienne**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Je vous félicite pour la manière que vous dirigez nos travaux. Je tenais simplement à dire que les propositions diverses et variées tendent à trouver un consensus. La proposition qui a été faite par l'Égypte et par la Fédération Suisse tend à une ouverture d'esprit. La remarque faite par le Liban sur la nécessité de préserver "diversité" est très importante. Le mot "divergence" nous renferme dans une logique de confrontation. Plus tard, quand on va discuter, donc, le Code de Conduite, le terme "divergence" va apparaître. Il n'est pas encore adopté, donc pour le moment on peut se contenter de préserver le terme "diversité" tel qu'il est parce qu'il est le plus ouvert, le plus appelant au consensus. Et le terme "divergence" va être traité sous l'Article 11, le document qu'on va discuter cet après-midi sur le Code de Conduite. Merci Monsieur le Président.

The **Chairperson** asked if anyone was opposed to the word "diversity", and since no one opposed he requested to use the word "diversity" instead of "divergence". Following the issue raised by Palestine, he suggested saying "Encourages all stakeholders to undertake a reflection on this point". He thanked all the colleagues for their understanding and compromise.

The Paragraph was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 7, which was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** also informed of the paragraphs added by Italy, which were accepted.

The **Rapporteur** read over the last Paragraph, number 9, which was agreed.

The **Chairperson** thanked all the delegates for their flexibility and closed Item 9.

The debate was adjourned until 3 p.m. and he reminded that the 16th extraordinary session of the Committee will convene at 2 p.m. in Room IV for Committee Members.

**THIRD DAY**

**Friday, 26 November 2021**

**FIFTH MEETING**

**3 p.m. – 6 p.m.**

**Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tebogo Seokolo  
(South Africa)**

**TROISIÈME JOUR**

**Vendredi 26 novembre 2021**

**CINQUIÈME RÉUNION**

**15h00 - 18h00**

**Président : S.E. M. Tebogo Seokolo  
(Afrique du Sud)**

**10 ELABORATION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT, A STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPALS OR EQUIVALENT TEXT – FOLLOW UP TO RESOLUTION 22 GA 10 //**  
**ÉLABORATION D'UN CODE DE CONDUITE, UNE DÉCLARATION DE PRINCIPES DÉONTOLOGIQUES OU UN TEXTE ÉQUIVALENT - SUIVI DE LA RÉOLUTION 22 GA 10**

*Document WHC/21/23.GA/10*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.10*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution 23 GA 10*

The Chairperson opened the afternoon meeting as follows: Dear colleagues, welcome back. As you know, following *Resolution 22 GA 10* adopted during our last General Assembly in 2019, an Open-ended working group was established, with the mandate to develop, for consideration by the 23rd session of the General Assembly, “a Code of Conduct, or a Statement of Ethical Principles or equivalent text”. After extensive discussions, the Open-ended working group has agreed on a text to be presented to us today, under the wise and able leadership of my dear colleague, **His Excellency Mr. Ghazi Gherairi, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Tunisia to UNESCO**. I would like to give him the floor now, as Chairperson of the Open-ended working group, so that he can present the results of the working group. Your Excellency, you may take the floor.

Le Président du groupe de travail, **Son Excellence Mr Ghazi Gherairi**, a présenté les travaux du groupe, comme suit : Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président. Je vous ai déjà félicité pour votre Présidence, à un moment, au début de nos travaux. Je vous renouvelle toute notre appréciation de votre sage conduite de nos travaux et les résultats déjà engrangés par cette Assemblée générale. Avant de commencer les humbles propos que je vais tenir devant vous au titre du travail de ce Comité, je voudrais me joindre, en tant qu'Ambassadeur de Tunisie, au concert extrêmement exaltant qui a eu lieu ce matin jusqu'à tard dans la discussion pour souligner l'importance de cette Convention, l'importance du symbole de son cinquantenaire, mais aussi d'en entretenir à la fois le flambeau, le flambeau et l'esprit. Et précisément parce que nous sommes attachés à cet esprit, nous avons voulu favoriser le consensus de loin en ce qui concerne la Tunisie ce matin. Mais juste pour vous dire que cette Convention, dont un ancien Ambassadeur de Tunisie avait eu l'honneur d'en conduire les travaux, était une idée généreuse, humaniste, pour que l'UNESCO serve aux communautés, à la protection de leur patrimoine. Mais c'était une idée, loin de son esprit, cette idée de système si sophistiqué et si compliqué. Si nous pouvions, à l'occasion de ce cinquantenaire, penser aussi à la simplification et à l'humilité de notre travail et à nous concentrer à l'essentiel, je crois qu'on rendra hommage non seulement à l'UNESCO, à cette Convention, mais aux pères fondateurs qui l'avaient écrite. Voici ce que je voulais partager avec vous, bien entendu, non seulement

partager avec vous, mais je suis tout à fait en harmonie avec le texte consensuel qui a été adopté avant nos travaux.

J'ai eu l'immense honneur d'avoir été choisi par vous pour précisément présider les travaux de ce Groupe de travail à composition non-limitée, et je cite ici les termes de notre 22<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale: "Ce comité est chargé d'élaborer un Code de conduite, une Déclaration de principes déontologiques ou un texte équivalent". J'ai été très heureux et je suis aujourd'hui encore plus heureux de vous retrouver dans le cadre de la 23<sup>e</sup> session de l'Assemblée générale des États parties de la Convention du Patrimoine mondial, et de m'adresser à vous, en ma qualité de Président du Groupe de travail à composition limitée établi par notre précédente Assemblée générale. Comme vous le savez, ce Groupe de travail ouvert a été établi à la suite des débats tenus lors de cette même Assemblée il y a deux ans, dans un mandat très clair: élaborer un Code de conduite, une Déclaration de principes déontologiques ou un texte équivalent. Et ce Groupe de travail a formellement débuté ses travaux le 16 février dernier et a tenu un total de neuf réunions en ligne au cours de l'année 2021. La dernière s'était tenue au mois d'octobre. Pour rappel, je reviens à mon idée de simplicité et d'humilité institutionnelle, la Convention elle-même de 72 n'avait pas pris plus de trois semaines pour sa propre rédaction. Il nous faut probablement garder tout cela à l'esprit. Ces travaux, qui ont donc pris fin en octobre dernier et à l'issue desquels on a finalisé ce qu'on peut appeler maintenant une Déclaration de principes afin de promouvoir la solidarité internationale et la coopération pour préserver le Patrimoine mondial, laquelle vous est transmise aujourd'hui.

Permettez-moi tout d'abord de faire part de l'immense honneur qui m'a été donné de présider aux travaux de ce Groupe. Et il me semble qu'il est parvenu à une conclusion importante qui soulignera notre volonté collective de refléter les valeurs partagées, les rôles et les responsabilités de toutes les parties prenantes exprimées à travers la Convention, mais aussi dans ses orientations et les règlements intérieurs de ses organes directeurs. Je voudrais, à cette occasion, chaleureusement remercier mes collègues du Bureau de ce Groupe, le Vice-Président, Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Ter Stepanian, l'Ambassadeur délégué de l'Arménie, mais également le Rapporteur de notre Groupe, Monsieur Ole Søre Eriksen, de la Délégation de Norvège, pour leur soutien constant et leur collaboration tout au long de ce long processus. Je souhaite, Mesdames et Messieurs, également saluer les membres du Groupe de travail qui ont permis des échanges constructifs et qui ont démontré à chacune de nos rencontres, leur engagement profond et leur intérêt pour cette Convention. Si nos échanges furent parfois passionnés, et à nos yeux cela était tout à fait normal, comme il est de coutume lorsqu'on aborde des questions de principes et de valeurs, nous avons toujours gardé à l'esprit notre mandat et nous avons toujours trouvé une voie vers le consensus. Je tiens ici à remercier tous les États parties pour leur confiance et leur esprit constructif dans la recherche et l'aboutissement de ce consensus qui, comme le laissent partager les nombreuses délibérations déjà menées depuis plus de dix ans sur ce sujet, représentaient une gageure. Ce résultat n'a été possible que grâce à la participation active et l'engagement commun des membres de ce Groupe représentatif de l'ensemble des opinions des États parties à notre Convention. Dans ce cadre et tout en tenant compte de la sensibilité des sujets abordés, j'ai pris à cœur mes responsabilités de Président de ce Groupe de travail et j'ai tenté de faciliter autant que possible et encourager toutes les, de toutes les manières et voies possibles, le consensus permettant de s'accorder sur un texte de haute qualité. Conscient des difficultés, voire parfois des obstacles qui s'annonçaient dans l'élaboration de ce texte, il m'est apparu clair que ce à quoi nous pouvions parvenir était un résultat consensuel à travers une approche, une approche la plus ouverte possible et la plus inclusive possible de toutes les opinions des États parties. Dans cette optique, la rédaction du texte n'est jamais restée figée, et des diverses contributions des membres du Groupe ont toujours été bienvenues et encouragées. Nous avons tout au long de ce processus, fait preuve tous ensemble de flexibilité dans nos méthodes de travail et exploré toutes les possibilités, tant méthodologiques qu'idéales. Aux riches échanges de nature principielle et politique se sont ajoutées au cours de nos

discussions des questions qui dépassent le cadre purement éthique, notamment celles liées au processus d'inscription, au renforcement du dialogue entre parties prenantes, à la représentation sur le plan géographique des experts des Organisations consultatives, à la divergence des points de vue scientifiques et à l'opérationnalisation des orientations et des procédures, pour n'en citer que quelques-unes ici devant vous.

Tout ceci a conduit à de riches débats sur des questions très actuelles pour la Convention, et a représenté en ce sens un exercice utile pour de futures réflexions. Malgré les difficultés qui ont jalonné notre parcours, le Groupe de travail ouvert est parvenu à un texte consensuel, fruit de la construction d'équilibres et de compromis sur toutes ces questions, hautement sensibles. Je suis le premier à admettre que le résultat final de ce travail n'est pas nécessairement un texte parfait d'un point de vue littéraire, ou qu'il satisfera totalement les uns et les autres. Pour autant, me semble-t-il, il a le mérite de représenter le fruit d'un consensus entre les nombreuses opinions exprimées acquis après de longues heures de débats et d'échanges entre les États parties. À cet égard, il me tient à cœur de souligner que son fragile équilibre mérite d'être soutenu ce soir par vous tous et conservé, pour éviter de remettre en cause la cohésion globale de l'existence même de ce texte et ainsi peut-être perturber les compromis trouvés après de longs débats collectifs. Cela demeure une pierre importante apportée par l'ensemble des États qui ont pris part à ce débat et je l'espère, à partir de ce jour, de l'ensemble des États parties à l'édifice de la consolidation normative et éthique du système de la Convention de 1972.

Chers collègues, au nom de ce Groupe de travail, j'espère que ce projet de texte satisfera pleinement l'Assemblée générale que vous représentez ici réunie, et qui contribuera à consolider et à ancrer les bonnes pratiques et les lignes directrices déjà mises en place par la Convention de 1972. Ainsi, à la veille de son cinquantenaire, cet instrument normatif phare et pratiquement universellement ratifié, je pense que nous pouvons tous nous enorgueillir, et de proposer un texte cohérent sur lequel l'ensemble des acteurs de la Convention pourront s'appuyer à l'avenir dans la poursuite des efforts vers le renforcement de la transparence, de la crédibilité, de l'intégrité de la Liste du Patrimoine mondial et de l'ensemble du système du Patrimoine mondial.

Mesdames et Messieurs, par ces mots, je termine cette présentation. Je sais que vos délégations ont participé activement à ces travaux. Je sais que vous connaissez ce texte parfaitement et je me tourne vers Monsieur le Président pour lui remettre la parole, pour conduire nos débats sur ce texte qui nous est particulièrement cher. Merci beaucoup.

The Chairperson responded, as follows: Thank you. Thank you, Excellency, my dear brother and colleague, for the work that you did with the Bureau and others. Indeed, you have alluded to the fact that after many meetings, nine meetings, a very delicate balance was reached, was reached indeed, in the Committee. And which resulted in the consensual text that is being presented to us today.

I have listened carefully, and we followed, and many Delegations participated in the Working Group, attended, were active, where different views were expressed, but finally you arrived at a consensus. I wanted to, before I proceed, I wanted to propose that, I hope you will support me, that because a lot of discussions took place at the Working Group, nine meetings, and there is this delicate balance, that document that has been presented to us, we should move to the Draft Decision and thereafter, after the adoption of it, of the Draft Decision, then I can open up for comments. I think in that way it will facilitate our work, so that we complete our business on time. I hope this proposal is acceptable.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Kuwait**, who supported the proposal, stating it is a constructive and efficient way to move forward.

The next speaker was the Delegation of the **United States of America**, as follows: I just wanted to briefly say that the United States would like to thank the Chair for all of the hard work of the Working group. With that said, the United States supports the Code of Conduct per the recommendations of the Ad-Hoc Working Group. However, we understand that the Code of Conduct should be non-binding and aspirational. Accordingly, the United States does not support the prescriptive language such as contained in Section 2, referring to actions of States Parties and the Convention "shall". In international treaty practice, such language is reserved to use for legally binding instruments, and therefore it's not acceptable and legally binding on a not legally binding Code of Conduct. And this will preclude the United States from joining consensus on this Decision if this language is kept in. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** suggested to proceed to the adoption of the Draft Decision, paragraph by paragraph.

The **Rapporteur** informed that the Delegation of Norway was raising their nameplate, as they have suggested an amendment which has been submitted to the Secretariat, which will be a new Paragraph 6.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 1, Paragraph 2 and Paragraph 3 which were agreed.

For Paragraph 4, the Delegation of **Egypt** took the floor asking for clarifications on who wrote the paragraph. He added that if it had no author, he would request to delete it.

The **Chairperson** noted this request for deletion, and reminded everyone that the most important is to avoid starting a discussion.

The Delegation of **Kenya** seconded the motion to delete this paragraph, adding that such language was not agreed, and there is an unpleasant pattern starting, as follows: Mr Chair, where Member States agree on something, and the report that's given does not reflect. We noted this in the Culture Commission. The report that was given after lengthy debate did not reflect what was agreed. Now here we are seeing there is a paragraph that has been brought in, that does not reflect what was discussed. I second the motion to delete. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** stated to delete the Paragraph.

The **Rapporteur** read the new Paragraph 4, which was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read the amendment proposed by Norway for Paragraph 5.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, we do recognise that the work done by the Chair and the entire Bureau of this Working Group, this was highly important in achieving this consensus. However, this is a paragraph that we do not usually include in a Decision. Venezuela was Vice-Chair at the Executive Board, and at no point was there proposal to recognise the role of Mr Hector Constant Rosales in the work done. And we would prefer to have this recognition in the report and these thanks in the report, rather than including this paragraph in the Decision. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Egypt** intervened to add at the end of the paragraph 'as well as the World Heritage Centre', if ever the paragraph is kept.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Actually, I think that this practice unfortunately, maybe our colleague did not carefully follow all the Assemblies, but such paragraphs, yes, we have the practice to thank the Chairs of the Working Groups and other Chairs. And it happened. And me personally, I've been thanked in Decisions of the Board for chairing the Working Group, me and my Co-Chair for the Memory of the World.

So, this is a usual practice. I'm sorry. There is no problem with it to have such a paragraph. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Delegation of **Ethiopia** added, as follows: Thank you, Chair. It is not possible to consider this amendment in Paragraph 6 “express appreciation” to bring the amendment and be inclusive on the sixth decision. And at the same time, I would like to support the amendment made by Egypt. The Secretariat and the World Heritage Centre should be appreciated if we are there to appreciate all the actors who have been involving in the process. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** summarised that the Delegation of Ethiopia wishes to match Paragraph 5 and Paragraph 6. He then went back to the Delegation of Venezuela, in order to generate a consensus. The Delegation of **Venezuela** accepted the Paragraph with the amendment from Egypt.

The Delegation of **Kuwait** added, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Just to make things not awkward for the future amendment, I ask the Secretariat, please, if it's a norm, to keep it in old DR. So make it like a standard, any working groups, so it doesn't make up sometimes people, I mean, I thank Norway, but because they have the Rapporteur, they put it. So, make it as a standard if it's a norm. Thank you, Mr Chair.

Paragraph 5 was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 6 and Paragraph 7 which were agreed

The Draft Resolution was adopted.

The **Chairperson** opened the floor to those who wish to make a few statements and reminded them of the time constraints.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: I wouldn't take 2 minutes. It will be 30 seconds. It's only to pay tribute to the Chairperson of the Working Group, Ambassador Ghazi Gherairi, who did really a great, great job. And that's why I wanted just to take the floor to thank him and to thank also his Vice-Chair and the Rapporteur who did an excellent job. And thanks to all the States Parties who contributed in this very important document. Indeed, everybody agrees it is not legally binding, but it is morally binding. Unfortunately, all States Parties do not have the same perception of this document. Again, thank you, Ghazi, Excellency, and thanks to the Rapporteur and the Vice-Chair. Thank you, Mr Chair.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation du **Liban**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Comme je n'ai que deux minutes je ne remercierai pas, pourtant je remercie de tout cœur les membres du Working Group et ainsi que le Président et le Rapporteur, le Vice-président etcetera. Je voudrais juste dire que, bon, cette question de Déclaration de principes est une très ancienne question qui a été débattue. Je me souviens en 2015, en 2005, pardon, en 2005, à Durban nous avons pris une session entière pour discuter de ces questions de principes, de ces questions de, et après on a décidé qu'il fallait absolument sortir un document, et bon. Ça a pris 15 ans, c'est très bien. Better late than never. Je voudrais juste dire une chose. Beaucoup de points dans ce document sont, effectivement, ont été débattu depuis longtemps. C'est un document qui est arrivé à un consensus. Nous ne sommes pas tous d'accord sur tous les points etcetera. Je voudrais juste, juste, faire une remarque sur le Point 15, “about the advisory”. Le Point 14 et le Point 15. Et d'une minute. Le Point 14, concernant les “Advisory Bodies”. La question des. Je lis le texte anglais, “respect the principle of fair geographic representation involving experts, panel members” etcetera. Ce point, en 2005, j'ai été, j'ai eu l'honneur de faire un audit d'ICOMOS et j'avais noté ce point à cette époque-là et c'est vrai que pour moi c'est un point essentiel. Parce qu'aujourd'hui, peut-être que, bon, la sensation qu'avaient déjà les États parties, et je pense, aujourd'hui aussi, c'est qu'il n'y a pas

une “fair distribution of geographic representation in experts in panel members, in the Advisory” etcetera. C’est un point essentiel et je réitère l’importance qu’il y a dans les Advisory Bodies de prendre ceci en considération. C’est le seul moyen d’arriver finalement à un travail collectif entre les membres du Comité et les Advisory Bodies. Le Point 15, je regrette qu’on garde la question de “divergence of expertise”. La dernière fois on a parlé de “diversity of expertise”. Le terme “divergence of expertise” n’a jamais existé dans les documents de l’UNESCO, jamais dans les documents du Comité, jamais dans les documents de tous les organes des Nations unies. Je ne sais pas pourquoi on, parfois on intervient avec des termes nouveaux, et parfois on dit, la société civile, non, on n’en parle pas, par contre, ici, “divergence” est un terme extrêmement violent. C’est pour ça, bon, je dois, le consensus est là, mais réellement, nous, le Liban a un point là-dessus. Le deuxième point, is always the question of “balance the protection with sustainable development”. Once again, the protection of world heritage is an integral component of sustainable development. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Chile**, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, allow me to congratulate you in the way you conduct our discussions. And I believe that without you, we would be running extremely late and our weekend would be in jeopardy. Second, let me thank the Open-Ended Working Group for its work and especially its Chair. And continuing with what was being said by my predecessor on Paragraph 14, we believe that transparency is fundamental. And the way, the moment in which we have transparency is the Committee meeting. When the file is presented, all the Member States take the floor, the Advisory Bodies present their arguments, and all third parties who are watching can see what is going on. And therefore, I do not fully understand this idea that we, the Member States, should limit our action, not discuss the issue of Advisory Bodies. And with the same aspiration. Mr Chairperson, we hope that the experts of Advisory Bodies will carry out the work with exclusivity, that they cannot be advisers of the Committee and at the same time advisors of the Member States preparing their files. We must make a clear distinction, for reasons of transparency, between those experts that advise the Committee and those experts that advise the States Parties. It is a bit like politics and business. There must be a clear distinction. And with all due respect that I have for the Ambassador of Tunisia, this is the reason why I accept the consensus and we will adopt the text. But this is a very relevant issue, as far as we are concerned, because this also favours the search for new experts and the preservation of balance. We know it is not necessary to have this in a declaration. It is sufficient to trust the Secretariat to introduce appropriate practices. Thank you, Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of the **United States of America**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. And once again I'd like to thank the Chair of the Working Group, the Centre and all involved. The United States has a long supported and contributed establishment and Codes of Conduct in international flora, and promote such principles as fairness, transparency, good faith, dignity and mutual respect. The United States supports the Code of Conduct for the World Heritage Committee members, States Parties, Advisory Bodies, per the recommendation of the Ad-Hoc Working Group, and is deeply appreciative of the work done by the Ad Hoc Working Group. However, we understand that the Code of Conduct is intended to provide limited, non-binding, aspirational objectives, and thus, consistent with long standing practice of using non-binding language throughout a legally non-binding instrument, the United States disassociates from the consensus to make clear that its understanding of this instrument does not impose binding legal obligations on States Parties. Nonetheless, we hope the Code of Conduct will serve as a useful tool for advancing the credibility and confidence of the important work of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you, Chair.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I'll be extremely brief. I just wanted to say that Norway has really liked to take part in the discussions, very important discussions and interesting discussions in the Ad-Hoc Working Group. And we are so happy that we have come to an agreement and we would also like to thank all the Delegations and experts and participants that have made us come to this very good



agreement. And I also wanted to clarify, actually, that the reason why we put forward an amendment to thank the Bureau was not because the rapporteur is Norwegian, but of course, because we think it is important to thank them for the important and great work and fantastic work they have done. And especially and especially His Excellency, Mr Ghazi Gherairi, the Ambassador of Tunisia. So, thank you so much.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to join all those who spoke before me in congratulating the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group and all the members for an excellent work done. Unfortunately, I was not able to participate to the work of this Open-Ended Working Group. I would have added one word in Paragraph 16 when we speak about the Secretariat of the Convention, an important concept which is the one of neutrality. Because it is important for all of us that the Secretariat of the Convention remains a neutral, honest broker that everybody can trust. So, we do believe that this word could have been part of this paragraph, but I did not want to unravel the text and open up the text again at your request. I would therefore still would like this to be kept in the Summary Record and considered as something to be implemented. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of the **Czech Republic**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Dear colleagues, we are pleased that this document was approved by the General Assembly. This document can be regarded as a very important step in order to achieve the highest possible integrity and transparency of working methods during the decision-making process, as well as the evaluation process of Advisory Bodies. The Czech Republic fully supported efforts to strengthen the compliance with procedure and rules in International Organisations in accordance with the principles of integrity, objectivity, impartiality and transparency, and thus to strengthen respect for expert opinions. We take note of the process of creating a document in which we were actively involved in open Working Group. It is important to note that opening the World Heritage Committee session to the wide public even before the pandemic, allowing all actors concerned with World Heritage to watch the Committee meetings online, have raised the legitimate expectation in terms of clarity and quality of the Committee decision-making, and perhaps just as importantly, it impacts the authority of the Committee's Advisory Bodies. During the preparation of the document, the Czech Republic particularly supported the key proposed recommendation concerning the Committee decision-making process of new nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List. We are persuaded that the Committee members should avoid making a decision that is moving more than one step from the Draft Decision as recommended in the advisory body technical evaluation. We understand that not all proposed recommendations have appeared in a final version of the document. We would like to thank everyone who participate in this elaboration, especially to Chair of the Open Working Group for his wise leading during several meetings. Thank you, Mr Chair, for giving me the floor.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I will be very brief. First of all, I'd like to thank His Excellency, the Ambassador of Tunisia, for all the efforts he did. Also, His Excellency, the Ambassador of Armenia, and the Rapporteur from Norway. Chair, just to remind everyone that there is no Code of Conduct that has been endorsed. This name was not adopted at the end. What we just endorsed is the Declaration of Principles to Promote International Solidarity and Cooperation to Preserve World Heritage. So, I double-checked and I was sure. I will not enter into the details again of all the discussions that we had. I will just say two things. The first thing is that all Member States had the occasion to participate and to raise their concerns and their voice during nine meetings. So, we do not see why all of the sudden now new positions or unsaid positions are coming now, today. The second thing is that, yes, this is not a perfect text because it's impossible to reach a perfect text that is being agreeable by everyone. However, it's the best possible thing in the reality. The third point and the last point I would like to say, to emphasise, is that, based on what Lebanon has just mentioned, that it dates back for over 15 years, that the Committee was asking in a way or another, the Advisory Bodies to have a geographical representation and diversification. I think

it's about time now that the Advisory Bodies start to show us some results in this respect. Thank you.

La parole a été donnée à la Délégation de la **République arabe syrienne**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Je vais être brève. Je vais passer en langue Arabe parce que ce serait éventuellement ma dernière intervention. I thank the Ambassador of Tunisia for his excellent management of the Working Group. I also thank Armenia and Norway, and the World Heritage Centre. They have made a great deal of effort, particularly during the pandemic period and over the course of nine meetings. Since 2014, the Working Group, which was founded by the Committee, has been working quite hard. The Committee worked to put in place and develop a Code of Conduct, with the collaboration of all States Parties. And it is important, given the decision taken, that we respect the various principles. States need to work together in order to ensure transparency and in order to enhance the credibility and integrity of our Committee. The aim is to put in place measures and practices, and good practices in our work. The adoption of this Declaration of Principles is a success, a success of this General Assembly. The Delegation of my country supports this declaration, this Declaration of Principles. There remains much to be done over the course of our next meetings. Thank you, Chair.

L'intervenant suivant était de la Délégation de la **Thaïlande**, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Tout d'abord permettez-nous de remercier l'Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent de la Tunisie d'avoir dirigé les travaux du Groupe de travail dont résulte le document présenté devant nous aujourd'hui. La Thaïlande accueille avec satisfaction le Project de la Déclaration de principes afin de promouvoir la solidarité internationale et la coopération pour préserver le Patrimoine mondial. Nous croyons que ce document servira d'orientation permettant une coopération mutuelle et garantir une collaboration étroite et transparente, mais aussi la solidarité et l'intégrité parmi tous les acteurs concernés. À cet égard, je voudrais réitérer le soutien de la Thaïlande pour une Liste du Patrimoine mondial qui soit équilibrée, représentative et crédible, mais aussi sur la qualité des propositions d'inscription. Renforcer les capacités des États parties en vue de préparer les dossiers pour améliorer la qualité des propositions d'inscription constitue à ce titre un des éléments les plus importants. Nous voudrions également insister sur l'importance d'un processus d'évaluation qui soit transparent, ainsi qu'une collaboration étroite entre les États parties et les Organisations consultatives, laquelle se trouve au cœur de ce processus. De ce fait, la Thaïlande est d'avis que les Organisations consultatives et le Centre du Patrimoine mondial devraient intensifier leurs efforts afin d'améliorer le dialogue et la collaboration avec les États parties pour leur transmettre les avis et les conseils impartiaux et équitables surtout de manière très en amont et temps utiles. Dans le même esprit, les informations et les rapports fournis par les États parties concernant leurs propositions d'inscription devraient être examinés avec soin. Pour conclure, la Thaïlande voudrait souligner l'importance des Droits de l'homme ainsi que des mécanismes internationaux des Droits de l'homme. Néanmoins, nous sommes d'avis que ces questions doivent être discutées devant les organes pertinents et compétents, et ainsi séparées de ce forum du Patrimoine mondial. Je vous remercie.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Kuwait**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. First, let me start to thank my dear friends, Ambassador Ghazi, for the hard work has been done and especially the Ambassador of Armenia and the Rapporteur for their work. Two general comments, Mr Chair. First of all I'm glad that the text we started only focusing in the Committee members, but now we end up with the holistic approach. Committee members, Member States, Advisory Bodies, and the Secretariat. This is one point. Second point, regarding the regional expertise. We've seen the recent issues with the lack of regional expertise and are trying, when we discuss this document, to be consistent with the Committee's last meeting. I believe if I'm not mistaken, in Saudi Arabia, we had initiative to promote the regional experts and it was, I think, embedded with the African's priority. So that's why we want it to be in the text. And with that once again, I would like to thank His Excellency, Ambassador of Tunisia, and everyone working on this document. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Slovenia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Slovenia was among the States Parties that actively participated in international consultations and exchanges on a Code of Conduct for the stakeholders to the Convention, and supported the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group during the last General Assembly. As we put the credibility of the World Heritage Convention at the heart of our endeavours, we appreciate the commitment of the States Parties, Committees, members and non-committee members alike. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, Ambassador of Tunisia, for his wise and constructive approach in leading this group, as well as the Rapporteur for his demanding work during the months of intensive work. The discussions in the meetings were lively. Namely, States Parties identified a number of pressing issues that are brought forward continuously and possibly cannot only be resolved in such a text, namely a Code of Conduct or Declaration of Principles to Promote International Solidarity and Cooperation to Preserve World Heritage, as it stands now, especially when the non-binding nature of the document is continuously emphasised. However, we are convinced that we can bring about positive change only when based on collective efforts and the notion of shared responsibilities, and when the latter are based on the values of the World Heritage Convention, what this Convention stands for. We only regret the trending practices in deviating from experts' advice and overlooking provisions of the Operational Guidelines. Mr Chairman, to conclude, we express our support to the Draft Resolution endorsing the Declaration in order to support collective efforts and responsibilities of all the stakeholders, and to turn to the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Convention with a positive attitude and hope for much needed improvement. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Oman**, as follows: Thank you Chair. From the very beginning, we supported the idea of this document, and this is what we said during the last meeting of the World Heritage Committee. Today we have a document before us and we would like to thank all of those who took part in drawing it up, beginning, of course, with the Ambassador of Egypt. I would also like to thank all of those who worked on this document. The text is a moral obligation, so to speak. Excuse me. I'm just trying to find the right word, says the speaker. This should be a document that has a moral value and carries a moral obligation. Thank you, Chair.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Bangladesh**, as follows: Thank you so much, Excellency, for giving the floor. At first, I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Working Group for his excellent work. We actually had a kind of document, as well said by our Lebanese colleague, around 15 years. So, I personally thank to the Chairperson of the Working Group and the Bureau as well for the effective coordination. As a State Party, we uphold always the objective of the Convention and, in this regard, we support the Declaration, the name, the content. And having said that, we support the statement made by Lebanon and Egypt in the regarding the variety, or rather, if I positively say, the diversity in our expert group also, or rather in our advisory group also. We need to create some new experts or new Advisory Bodies from all over the world so that it can be or may be acceptable to everyone. Otherwise, there are some questions that we are having all the time. So, considering that, we need to have new experts. I would like to support the statement made by Lebanon and Egypt. And again, I'd like to thank UNESCO as a whole, World Heritage Centre, and all the Member States working so hard during the negotiation process. I can share one thing that, even for these nine meetings, even I was in Bangladesh to attend three meetings consecutively. So, it was really a great job and good job, and we finally have a good kind of document. But I'd also request everyone just to keep one thing. We should not say this as a Code of Conduct as it is our moral obligation, and we should always say as a Declaration of Principles. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Saudi Arabia**, as follows: Thank you. Thank you. Mr Chair. I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group, the Ambassador of Tunisia, also the Vice-Chair, Ambassador of Armenia, and also to

our dear colleague Oli, the Rapporteur. I would like to thank you all for the great work that has been done and the great patience that His Excellency Ambassador of Tunisia has shown, especially with having very, if I can say, naughty members sometimes, and the discussions that made it harder. But with his patience and wisdom, I think we all emerged into this Code or this Declaration. I want here to stress upon the importance of this Declaration. And we hope that it is going to bridge the gap between the opinions of the advisory or the advisers of the Advisory Body and the discussion or the decision that is taken by the decision makers and the Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Committee. We hope that this divergence will get less because it calls for more transparency, it calls for more accountability, and it calls for more consideration for the real purpose of the development, which is sustainable development and all its dimensions - economic, social, environmental - which should not be treated as mutually exclusive with the preservation of World Heritage. It is a responsibility on all of us stakeholders, whether Member States or Advisory Body or Secretariat, and everyone here in this room, should really work towards that. It is our moral obligation to protect humanity and promote humanity. And this is part and parcel of preserving the heritage and that should be dealt with. So, this is the real importance of this Declaration, and we support it fully. We hope it is translated into action by all stakeholders, Member States, Advisory Bodies and Secretariat. Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

La parole a ensuite été donnée la Délégation de la **Suisse**, comme suit : Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président. J'aimerais bien, au nom de la Suisse, aussi remercier le Président, Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de la Tunisie, pour la conduite de ce Groupe de travail, et son Bureau, mais aussi tous les États membres qui ont contribué, et aussi le Centre du Patrimoine mondial qui a aussi fait un travail remarquable. Après toutes ces discussions, nous pensons maintenant, l'heure est venue à la mise en œuvre. Et c'est ça ce que notre Délégation aimerait bien souligner. En fait, nous avons un document, il est peut-être, il n'est pas parfait, il est le fruit d'un consensus, d'un compromis, de plusieurs compromis même, et maintenant l'heure est venue de sa mise en œuvre et nous appelons tous les États membres, tous les acteurs, de l'utiliser, ce document, de s'inspirer de ce document dans leurs méthodes de travail au sein de cette Convention. Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président.

The last speaker was the Delegation of **Libya**, as follows: Thank you Chair. I congratulate and thank the Ambassador of Tunisia, as well as the Vice-Chair from Armenia and the Rapporteur from Norway. I thank them for their great efforts. The Declaration really crowns all the work we have done. It is a moral obligation that we have before us under the 1972 Convention. I'd like to take this opportunity to support the declaration made by Lebanon and other Delegations. And I would like to underscore the importance of the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** thanked all the speakers and gave the floor to the President of the Open-ended working group, **Son Excellence Mr Ghazi Gherairi**, comme suit: Merci beaucoup à la salle. D'abord, je suis extrêmement heureux de voir cette Assemblée, tout d'abord cohérente et conséquente avec elle-même. C'est elle-même, réunie il y a deux ans, qui a demandé à ce que cette réflexion soit menée. Mais si elle n'était pas capable, dans sa forme plénière, de trancher, c'est qu'elle était consciente de la difficulté de l'exercice. Et cette difficulté bien sûr, est revenue à ce groupe de la mener jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Et je pense que nous avons tous réussi. Puisque nous sommes tous d'accord, que ce texte pourrait être considéré comme un pas vers cette direction, mais ce n'est jamais un pas définitif. Beaucoup de choses pertinentes ont été dites. Mais je vais vous faire une confidence. Peut-être le premier insatisfait du texte, de ce texte, serait moi-même, parce que si je m'en tenais à ma volonté d'écrire ce qui pourrait être un texte de principes, de mon point de vue, je l'aurais écrit à ma manière. Mais l'intérêt de ce texte, c'est qu'il est le point de rencontre d'opinions différentes, de perceptions différentes, et c'est pour ça que cela me semble, ce soir, nous soulignons la victoire du multilatéralisme éthique et humain de notre Organisation. Je suis très fier, extrêmement fier d'avoir conduit ce travail. Mais je suis absolument à l'écoute de tout ce qui a été dit, y compris des souhaits, des regrets, des critiques, des distances. Tout cela est respectable, rien ne devrait être laissé de

côté. Je voudrais juste réagir à l'honorable Déléguée des États-Unis d'Amérique. Elle a raison de voir quand elle voit "doivent" ou "devoir" dans le texte, de s'étonner. Mais nous avons, Madame, écrit plusieurs fois dans ce texte que ce texte n'est pas juridiquement contraignant. On le rappelle à tous les moments et que donc, s'il n'est pas juridiquement contraignant, nous ne parlons plus obligations. Nous ne parlons plus droit, mais nous parlons plutôt morale, éthique. Et ce qui, dans ma bouche, n'est pas moins fort, mais différemment dit. Et nous, nous invoquons non plus un rapport juridique entre nous, mais le partage de valeurs communes. Et donc je m'inscris dans votre remarque. Mais je vous rassure, il n'y a rien qui contrevienne à votre propre réserve. Le texte a été très bien discuté sur ce point et je ne vais pas révéler un secret, mais c'est l'un des points les plus discutés, sur comment dire que ce texte n'est pas juridiquement contraignant. Mais dans ma bouche, juridiquement non-contraignant ne veut pas dire un texte de moindre valeur, mais il nous interpelle différemment. Je pense que nous sommes une communauté d'États civilisés, d'États engagés par des valeurs transcendantes, et ce texte parle à cette partie-là de notre engagement. Nous avons suffisamment de textes juridiques pour ne pas en rajouter, et je suis extrêmement fier d'avoir conduit cette réflexion communément. Beaucoup ont dit, et je voudrais m'adresser à l'honorable Déléguée d'Arabie Saoudite. Elle a dit qu'il y avait des prises de position parfois engagées, il y avait de l'engouement. Mais moi je vois, Madame l'Ambassadrice, que c'était les jeunes diplomates qui y ont participé. Et c'est très bien, cette fougue de jeunesse. Moi, je l'ai trouvée extraordinaire, non pas parce qu'ils exprimaient, mais parce qu'ils s'engageaient eux-mêmes dans cette Convention. Et nous pouvons miser sur leur responsabilité future une fois qu'ils arrivent à des responsabilités plus visibles et plus engageantes dans leurs fonctions diplomatiques. Nous avons déjà formé, on va dire, les équipes du futur. Cela a été un apport non seulement d'idées, de fougue, d'engagement, mais surtout de continuité de nos États à travers les différentes générations impliquées. Et je voudrais particulièrement saluer tous ceux qui ont contribué et qui n'ont pas toujours dit des choses convergentes. Mais je crois que ce n'était pas l'objectif.

Monsieur le Président, permettez-moi de m'adresser à cette Assemblée qui me semble s'orienter à adopter ce texte. Je vous dis que vous êtes en train de faire l'Histoire. Vous mettez un pas dans une série de pas commencée par les pères fondateurs il y a 51 ans, en fait, puisque le processus de rédaction a commencé en 71, et qu'en confirmant cela, vous montrez que le système dont j'ai parlé tout à l'heure n'est pas fini, n'est pas clos. On peut ne pas le faire évoluer sur le plan du droit, mais on peut le faire évoluer sur le plan de l'engagement moral de chacun de nous. Et je rassure tous ceux qui auraient aimé rajouter un mot, modifier un adjectif ou exprimer une réserve. Ce texte est tellement souple qu'il pourrait être révisé à l'aune de quelques années. Et je crois que c'est la bonne nouvelle. Et que donc notre dynamique éthique est une dynamique continue. Je suis extrêmement ravi d'avoir pu vous présenter ce texte qui n'exprime pas une opinion mais qui exprime un point de convergence d'opinions différentes. Et vous l'avez vu, les différences se poursuivent jusqu'aujourd'hui. Et quelle mauvaise nouvelle à l'UNESCO si on voulait uniformiser ou taire nos différences. Nous ne sommes riches que de nos différences, de tous points de vue. Mais cette Convention, qui est aujourd'hui la norme de référence à l'UNESCO, pas uniquement en matière de patrimoine mais en matière de succès normatif, nous apporte beaucoup de responsabilité. Et si vous adoptez ce texte, vous montrez ce soir que vous êtes au niveau de cette responsabilité historique. Vous ne faites pas continuer une politique de vos pays, vous la fait avancer ensemble. Et je crois, Monsieur le Président, c'est ça le succès du multilatéralisme. Et je crois que cette Maison, l'UNESCO, depuis maintenant trois semaines, a des rendez-vous successifs avec l'Histoire. Et je crois que vous êtes en train de marquer cela. Vous m'avez fait l'honneur de diriger ce travail. Je vous rends cet honneur ce soir, c'est vous qui êtes à honorer si vous l'adoptez unanimement ce soir. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

The **Chairperson** requested excellencies and colleague to congratulate the Ambassador of Tunisia and give a big round of applause. *Applause*

The **Chairperson** closed Item 10.

## **11 POLICY DOCUMENT ON CLIMATE ACTION FOR WORLD HERITAGE // DOCUMENT D'ORIENTATION SUR L'ACTION CLIMATIQUE POUR LE PATRIMOINE MONDIAL**

*Document WHC/21/23.GA/11*

*WHC/21/23.GA/INF.11*

*Draft Resolution // Projet de résolution **23 GA 11***

The **Chairperson** opened the last Item on the Agenda, as follows: Dear colleagues, it is now time for us to review the last Agenda Item in our Agenda, Item 11, which pertains to the updating of the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage contained in Documents WHC/21/23.GA/11 and INF.11, that have been distributed to you.

The updating of the 2007 Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties was requested by the Committee at its 40th session in 2016. As a reminder, this Policy Document was recently endorsed by the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session and has been revised to incorporate the views expressed and amendments submitted during the extended 44th session, and after a consultation with Committee members. As you are all aware, all the more considering that the UNFCCC COP26 just closed a few days ago, climate change is one of the greatest threats of our time. Back in 2002, in my country, South Africa, climate change was already cited in the Declaration of Johannesburg as one of the challenges faced by the global environment. This Declaration emphasised that the adverse effects of climate change were already evident, that natural disasters were more frequent and more devastating, and that developing countries were more vulnerable, and air, water, and marine pollution continue to rob, continued to rob, millions of a decent life. We collectively need to act to address this threat. It is therefore my pleasure to now give the floor to the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre, Ms Hosagrahar who will present to us this Agenda Item. Madam, you may take the floor.

The presentation of **Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre**, went as follows: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. As you know, the first Draft Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties was discussed at the 31st session of the Committee in 2007 and finally adopted by the 16th General Assembly in 2007. Subsequently, at its 41st session of the Committee, of the World Heritage Committee in 2016, aware that knowledge related to adaptation and mitigation to climate change had drastically increased over the past ten years, the Committee requested the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to periodically review and update the Policy Document, so as to make available the most current knowledge and technology on the subject to guide the decisions and actions of the World Heritage community. As part of this updating process an important desk review of all existing documentation was undertaken by two international experts in 2019, where 100-plus relevant background documents, including policy and technical documents, conventions, decisions, reports, special reports, background documents from the UNFCCC, CBD, IPCC, IPBES, peer-reviewed papers, grey literature, policy briefs, case studies, outcomes of relevant meetings, etc. were all reviewed. In order to make this process as inclusive and participatory as possible, the World Heritage Centre also launched a wide online consultation of all stakeholders of the Convention, including States Parties, site managers, local communities and indigenous peoples' representatives, academics, NGOs, civil society and Advisory Bodies to gather feedback and comments on this

crucial matter. Three hundred and sixty-six (366) responses, the largest number that we have received to questionnaires in general, including numerous from numerous States Parties were received. All comments and suggestions were taken into account in order to prepare a first draft of the updated Policy Document. This zero-draft was also shared with all States Parties end of April 2020. Four meetings of a Technical Advisory Group of international experts took place. Experts of this Technical Advisory Group were identified through a consultation process with all UNESCO electoral groups to be as inclusive and representative as possible. Each group was therefore represented by two experts and several observers, and the experts were from Australia, Bahrain, Czechia, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Republic of Moldova, Senegal, the Netherlands and Zimbabwe, that took part in these discussions, with observers from Brazil, France, Greece, Hungary and Mexico.

A draft updated Policy Document was then presented to the Committee during its 44th session, the 44th extended session in July of 2021. During the updating process, all experts involved shared the view that the updated Policy Document should address the following key points and needs: ensure that the updated Policy Document is fully anchored in the World Heritage system and within the remit of the World Heritage Convention and doesn't bring new obligations to States Parties; ensure clear links with the UN 2030 Agenda, the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and with all other relevant World Heritage documents and policies such as the World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy Document adopted in 2015; Grounded in contemporary climate policy and in the best available climate science; integrate - this is also continuing on the key points - integrate the concept of the theory of change and highlight the importance of education and capacity building; And finally, to make sure that the updated Policy Document provides sufficient guidance to encourage and facilitate its implementation at all levels, especially the World Heritage Committee level, States Party level and the site level. In addition, the updated Policy Document sets some guiding principles for States Parties to adopt a precautionary approach aimed at minimising the risks associated with climate change to anticipate, avoid and minimise harm to protect the heritage of the outstanding universal value of World Heritage properties; to use best available knowledge to integrate a sustainable development perspective; to promote global partnership, inclusion and solidarity.

The updated Policy Document provides a coherent structure which has been designed to make it an action-oriented document. The long-term vision of the Policy Document is that each State Party understands the current and future potential impacts of climate change. On the OUV of the World Heritage properties, undertakes climate action in an effective, ambitious and cooperative and active way, consistent with their obligations under the Convention. To assist States Parties in reaching this vision, the Policy Document establishes a series of four World Heritage Climate Action Goals. First, on the identification of climate risks, on their assessment and reporting. Second, on climate adaptation and building climate resilience for all World Heritage properties. Third, on climate mitigation and encouraging the reduction of net greenhouse gas emissions associated with World Heritage properties. Fourth, on knowledge sharing, capacity-building and awareness-raising in relation to climate change impacts on World Heritage properties. In the last part, after setting the legal framework under which it has to be implemented, the updated Policy Document provides details on five elements for climate action dedicated to the four main topics of the global climate agenda. First, assessing climate risks. Second, climate adaptation. Third, climate mitigation. And fourth, knowledge sharing, capacity-building and awareness, as well as introducing the concept of transformative change. As one of the key recommendations that came from the wide online survey conducted with all stakeholders of the Convention, the updated Policy Document was drafted to clearly set the implementation modalities at various levels, and not only to provide global considerations. However, as you all know, implementation is not always possible without some preconditions addressed, which can include financial aspects, technological innovation, institutional capacity, multi-level governance, and also changes in human behaviour and lifestyles. There is also need to be mindful of the inclusive processes and pay attention to the power asymmetries and

unequal opportunities. All these aspects are set in the Enabling Conditions section of the document.

The last section of the Policy Document focuses on such implementation guidelines at three levels: the World Heritage Committee level, the State Party level, and the site level. To support its implementation and to provide additional areas of focus for climate action, the updated Policy Document finally provides a series of annexes. The updated Policy Document, as presented, was endorsed by the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, the 44th extended session, in July of 2021. However, the Committee requested that UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, revise it by incorporating views expressed and amendments submitted during the 44th session, and to consult World Heritage Committee members, especially concerning three aspects, before its presentation for review and adoption by the 23rd General Assembly in November 2021. The three aspects for which the Committee members were consulted concerns the fundamental, first, the fundamental principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, or CBDRRC; the alignment of climate change mitigation actions with the CBDRRC; and the nationally determined contributions, also called NDCs. The need for support and capacity-building assistance, as well as the encouragement of technology transfer and financing from developed to developing countries. The World Heritage Committee also requested that the updated draft Policy Document be transmitted for review and adoption at the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. A Circular Letter was therefore sent on 4th August by the Secretariat to all 21 Committee members to invite them to provide inputs by 15th of September this year. Out of the 21 Committee members, nine have provided comments. These included Australia, Brazil, China, Guatemala, Norway, Oman, Russian Federation, St Kitts and Nevis and Thailand, but only five with concrete amendments to the Policy Document itself.

Out of these nine, one Committee Member indicated that no changes were required in the text of the Policy Document, and that it should remain as endorsed by the Committee in July. Although some Committee members provided inputs and concrete proposals on the three specific points raised in Decision **44 COM 7C**, a number of comments, of a general nature or more specific, were also received, notably on the purpose and scope of the Policy Document, on its implementation and future revisions, as well as on good practice examples, management and monitoring of World Heritage properties. All comments and inputs received have been consolidated and reflected in extenso in Document WHC/21/23.GA/INF.11, in track changes mode and with indication of the submitting Committee member for ease of reference and the sake of transparency. All comments and inputs have been duly reviewed by the Secretariat and Advisory Bodies, as requested by the World Heritage Committee in Decision **44 COM 7C**. A series of suggestions based on the best available science and existing statutory documentation was integrated in the document in order to facilitate the work of the General Assembly on the Policy Document today, as was done in the framework of the adoption of the Policy Document on World Heritage and Sustainable Development in 2015. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**Le Sous-directeur général pour la Culture** a fait quelques commentaires supplémentaires, comme suit : Merci Monsieur le Président. Je souhaiterais préciser que dans sa Décision **44 COM 7C** qui a été mentionné, le Comité a demandé au Centre du Patrimoine mondial de réviser le Document d'orientation sur l'action climatique pour le Patrimoine mondial en consultation avec les organes consultatifs en tenant compte des opinions exprimées et amendements soumis lors de la 44<sup>e</sup> session élargie. Et, le cas échéant, de consulter les membres du Comité, notamment en ce qui concerne les trois points spécifiques. Le Comité a, par ailleurs, décidé de transmettre le Projet de document d'orientation après les révisions finales pour examen et adoption à cette session de l'Assemblée générale. Avec l'intention de ne pas empiéter sur le mandat de cette Assemblée souveraine, et en reprenant les mots de notre Déléguée de Sainte Lucie, de la neutralité qu'on nous demande, le Secrétariat a décidé



de ne pas effectuer les révisions finales sur la base d'amendements proposés par les différents membres du Comité, mais plutôt d'intégrer ceux-ci au Document d'orientation approuvé par le Comité dans un format permettant de les identifier aisément et de laisser bien entendu l'Assemblée générale décider de ceux qu'il convient de retenir ou pas. Afin d'aider l'Assemblée générale dans sa prise de décision, le Secrétariat et les organisations consultatives ont formulé des commentaires afin de distinguer les amendements qui, de leur point de vue, répondent à la demande du Comité et renforcent le document et qui pourraient être adoptés en l'état, et ceux qui méritent une discussion plus avancée du fait de certaines conséquences que ces derniers pourraient éventuellement avoir. L'intention du Secrétariat n'était nullement de se subsister à l'Assemblée générale, mais bien au contraire être un facilitateur et de lui proposer un document aussi détaillé et informatif que possible afin de faciliter leur travail et bien sûr de maintenir cette neutralité qu'on nous demande tous les jours. Merci.

The **Chairperson** went over the next steps regarding this Item, as follows: I'm sure what is in your minds is: how is the Chair intending to handle this matter? We have two documents before us. One is this updated Policy Document that has just been presented, and you have it. And also, we have a Draft Decision that we have to look at. Now, I will open the floor to hear from you. And I guess I've been doing with many others. But my plan at the beginning was to handle in the event, to handle the adoption this way. That one, and this was explained at the beginning, that there are parts or sections or paragraphs in this Policy Document where there were no proposals for amendments. Those ones, my proposal would be, let's adopt them as they are and not open them for discussion. Then the second, and I'll request them to please put the updated policy on the screen, the Draft Policy on the screen, so that the General Assembly and Delegations can see what I'm talking about. It's coming. Yes. So, we will see this document so that we can appreciate what we are going to be dealing with. Those sections which are not highlighted, there's no issue about them. The second part will be those that would be highlighted in yellow, it's, the recommendation is for them to be, so. This is what we have. So, some are highlighted in yellow, those where there are, which are not highlighted, is not to be opened. Those in yellow are proposed amendments to be considered, and those in grey, these ones, are open for discussion. Now, just go slowly so that I. I think you have seen those ones, just go down and see where the scope and the breadth of the document, and see how far these amendments are going. Where you see yellow, proposal for amendment, maybe not discussion, we amend. And then where you see grey. Is it grey or blue? Grey. Yes. Just go down. That's where, what is open for, what will be open for discussion and deliberation. Just go, continue so that they see the whole picture. So, it will cover down to all the, until the last pages of the, as well as the annexes. To be honest with you, it's not the ideal, that, how I would have preferred, I would have preferred to process such things, but I'm in your hands. I note, I'm in your hands. I'm in the hands of the General Assembly. I see there are some. We are. There are some. Palestine. Okay. So, you have a picture. You have a picture. I now open the floor to hear from you. Yes. I have already received here a list. Australia?

The Delegation of **Australia** was the first to take the floor, as follows: Thank you Chair. In fact, as the author and co-sponsor of proposed amending Draft Decision, I have some remarks in relation to that Draft Decision, and, so, without prejudice to the proposed approach you have identified in relation to dealing with the text, but in the interest of prosecuting this as quickly as possible, can I say that Australia can accept the text as proposed by the Secretariat and provided to this Assembly. But if I could make some remarks in relation to our proposed amendment, with your indulgence, Chair. We certainly look forward to the General Assembly's consideration of the Policy, noting there remain some issues to be resolved, and certainly on a final agreed text. We express appreciation for the efforts of the World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies, States Parties to the Convention, and stakeholders who have contributed to the development of this policy, which will set the foundation for tractable climate action in the World Heritage system. A purpose design policy to support site management in the face of climate change is long overdue. IUCN lists some 83 World Heritage properties, this is 33% of all natural World Heritage sites at risk due to climate change, and no doubt this number will

increase. For some properties, there is no greater threat. But a new policy is worthless if it cannot be effectively implemented. And implementation will fail if it is not supported by transparent, consistent and fair procedures that apply to all States Parties and properties. It's for this reason that Australia, along with our co-sponsors, Chile, Greece, Hungary, Saint Kitts and Nevis, South Africa, Uganda, and Australia, have proposed the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group to support the development and implementation of Operational Guidelines which are fit and contemporary for the evolving purpose of dealing with the threat of climate change. This Policy that we have before us today sits at the heart of the future operation of the Convention. States Parties must have a say in how we shape the future implementation of our Policy. Such decisions should be informed by the views of States Parties following meaningful engagement and consultations. The transparent and equitable implementation of this Policy will be crucial to the credibility and integrity of the World Heritage system. To use potentially In Danger Listing as an example, all States Parties need to have confidence that the application of such a measure is an appropriate and effective response to the danger which has been identified. Historically the system has served us well. However, there is a risk that as we go forward the changed circumstances need to be addressed, and very much in the case of climate change, the remedy is not so clear as in other in-danger circumstances. The current Operational Guidelines make clear that the danger identified under the Convention must be remediable by human action, with the expectation that in most cases, the relevant State Party will have responsibility for this. What in particular is the route off the In-Danger List for a single property, if the dangers concerned are global developments that require global solutions? Or are we to accept a future where a large proportion of World Heritage properties are to languish permanently on the In-Danger List with no resolution deliverable by the State Party concerned? And so, a mechanism originally designed to help becomes a punitive one. The purpose of this intervention by me today is not to prejudge the outcome of the consideration of these difficult issues, but it is to highlight the need for States Parties to have the opportunity to consider them in ways which can help inform the development of appropriate implementing frameworks and guidelines which will support all participants in the World Heritage system to approach such issues with confidence and clarity. We must see how this policy will be implemented and ensure it is appropriately embedded in the key processes of the Convention, such as in periodic reporting and the nomination process, and in the state of conservation review, in an effective, transparent, and equitable manner.

Until that is done, we will not expect to see propositions that climate change threats would form the basis for In-Danger Listing individual properties, because this is a global problem, not amenable to single site intervention. The world needs the threat of climate change acknowledged and dealt with collaboratively. We need implementation measures embedded in Operational Guidelines which encourage properties to be exemplars of conservation management, mitigating against climate change and adapting to it. Thank you Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. At the outset, let me emphasise that Austria is a very committed and engaged partner in advancing the efforts of the international community to address the climate crisis. And we do believe that the World Heritage Convention can make a very important contribution to that end. That's why we have welcomed the process of revising our Climate Change Policy. Having reviewed the documents presented to us, we are, however, at a loss, and we need guidance from the room. We have an Inf. document before us that is full of amendments that at times contradict each other. In addition to comments by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Our understanding is that the process after endorsement of the Draft Policy Document by the Committee was not in conformity with the Committee's decision. It is also our understanding that the Committee did not have adequate time for proper scrutiny of the draft that had been before it. I think we all agree that we as delegates here in the room have not the time and certainly not the expertise to negotiate these amendments that are contained in the Inf. Many of them have nothing to do with World Heritage, I'm afraid. Many amendments touch on language that are completely out of UNESCO's remit, as the intent to renegotiate language

that has been negotiated in international climate change related processes. But all these amendments suggest clearly that a document endorsed by the Committee is not a final one, and would benefit from a proper open, inclusive and transparent, intergovernmental process. Given that the Committee, due to the late submission of the draft document, had no time to properly discuss this or review the document, this is another indication for us that the document is not yet finalised. In conclusion, Austria cannot approve to adopt this Inf. document that has been presented to us. We don't think we can discuss content at this General Assembly. We can discuss process and the way forward. It would thus be important, as I said, to commence proper intergovernmental consultations in order to finalise the draft, in order to attain the quality that allows for the policies' proper implementation. Thank you very much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Canada**, as follows: Thank you Chair. I have some general comments and some comments on a way forward. And I'll just start by saying excuse me for my voice, it's kind of, I'm losing my voice. So, Canada acknowledges the critical impacts that climate change poses to the integrity of cultural and natural World Heritage properties and recognises that we all have a role to play in addressing these challenges. We welcome the updated Policy Document as endorsed by the World Heritage Committee. It provides a comprehensive framework for enhanced attention and work on climate change as it relates to World Heritage Properties. We would support further the discussions, including by experts, in order to finalise this document. But, as mentioned by Austria, we don't think we should be getting into the discussion of amendments to this document, the Policy Document, at this time, as we are not necessarily the experts. We need also to have our climate change experts have a closer look at this document. We appreciate the work of the Technical Advisory Group that developed the updated Draft Policy Document and the valuable comments provided by Committee members on the draft. We also recognise the value of the broad engagement process that was managed by the World Heritage Centre. Canada views the update to the Policy Document as very timely as we're witnessing more and more impacts of climate change around the world. All countries are at risk from the impacts of climate change and we need coordinated action and approaches to protect our treasured heritage places. Canada is also supportive of comments from the multiple parties to reflect examples of good practices in future amendments to the Operational Guidelines and any other guidance material. This could include good practices for the development of baseline information on climate impacts at heritage sites, assessing risk at both macro and local levels. And in particular the implementation of adaptations solutions, especially ecosystems based and nature-based solutions that concurrently support mitigating climate risk and enhancing overall ecosystem resilience. Canada looks forward to working with the World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies, States Parties and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Policy Document once it has been adopted. Thank you.

The following speaker was the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Thank you, Chair. I'd first like to thank the Secretariat for the very clear and interesting presentation of this very important item. Thanks also for the documents that have been prepared for this item. Mr Chair, as you noticed, there are some concerns regarding the INF. document. There's 63 pages in the INF. document which contains the Policy Document on climate change. And with so many amendments on that document, it would be absolutely impossible to discuss them here tonight. So, what I suggest, very simply, is to close the debate on this item. We have a DR before us, with amendments. So, I suggest to close the debate and to go directly to the examination of the DR. We have, yesterday we heard some colleagues saying we are wasting time and wasting money. Let us avoid this waste of time and money today. Let us be efficient and let us go to the DR directly, Mr Chair. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** reminded that he wishes to hear other colleagues, and gave the floor to the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair for giving Norway the floor. Like Australia, Norway would also like to share some reflections on danger listing on the account of climate change before we go into the Policy Document or the Draft Decision. As we hear,

some have raised questions whether a property should be inscribed on the List of the World Heritage in Danger or deleted from the World Heritage List due to threats beyond the sole control of the concerned State Party. Threats such as climate change. Of course, it should, if not we would have had to change the Convention itself, particularly Article 11.4 where the World Heritage in Danger is created. 11.4 mentions quite a number of examples of serious and specific dangers, including calamities, cataclysms, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, etcetera, even major alterations due to unknown causes. Where the threat comes from is irrelevant. Surely these are equally impacts beyond the sole control of the concerned State Party. In fact, most of these examples are beyond the control of a State Party. If the Convention itself foresees the option of danger listing in cases of threats beyond the control of a State Party, it would be inappropriate to make changes to the Operational Guidelines. They would in fact be in contradiction to the Convention itself. Climate change is a threat that can lead to the loss of Outstanding Universal Value and thanks to danger listing and to the deletion of the World Heritage List, this is how the Convention works, and this is how it must work to have credibility if its purpose is to protect our common heritage. And if the Convention is to have continued relevance and efficacy in the coming decades, the serious threats posed by climate change to World Heritage sites must be addressed. Any further discussions should stop immediately and not be drawn into the 50th anniversary of this flagship Convention. We face challenging times, and in the wake of Glasgow we must follow up on the good ambitions. We will enter a time when several World Heritage sites might have to be included on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and some will probably be lost, and some might be saved if we fulfil our duty as an international community, as a whole, to cooperate, to protect these places, in line with the Convention. When implementing the revised Policy on Climate Action, we will need to have a dialogue on how the mobilisation of national and international efforts can be optimised through the use of existing instruments, and Norway looks forward to contributing to such a dialogue. However, we cannot bring the discussion on whether or not the site can be danger-listed or deleted from the World Heritage List if it is facing potential or certain threat based on climate change further. This is contradictory to the Operational Guidelines but also to the Convention itself. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The **Chairperson** responded as follows: I thank you, Norway. I do not wish to test your patience, or your will but let me test this one. There's a concrete proposal that, and of course an appreciation from the speakers who took the floor that, while appreciating the work that has been done by the Secretariat so far, but having looked at the amendments in the document, and others also, because the expertise is not in this hall and in this meeting, and if we are going to go through, some are not comfortable to enter into that area. So the proposal is that, and this was put by Austria, Canada, Palestine, is that we refer the matter to an intergovernmental process, but that we should go straight to a Draft Decision so that these views can be incorporated. Because I, we can go and make statements, and later on, and look at what the time is now. So how many of you here are saying this is, let's rather go to the Draft Decision so that we, I don't have to take you. Just. Raise your hand so that I see. What the view, emerging view?

The **Chairperson** decided to move to the Draft Resolution.

The **Rapporteur** informed that they have formally received a baggage of amendments presented by Australia, Chile, Greece, Hungary, Saint Kitts and Nevis, South Africa and Uganda. These were reflected in the Paragraphs 8 and 9.

The **Chairperson** clarified that it has been agreed not to go into the Policy text, but only the Draft Resolution, and that therefore the updated Policy Document has not been adopted. The proposal is to have it referred for further discussion, which needs to be added to the Draft Resolution. He asked clarification from the Rapporteur with regards to the amendments received. The **Rapporteur** informed that there are amendments to Paragraph 8 and Paragraph 9 which have been formally received.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Colombia** who expressed their confusion, as they have submitted some counter-amendments to the amendment. La Délégation de la **Suisse** a informé avoir envoyé un amendement autour de 13 ou 14 heures, au Secrétariat.

The **Rapporteur** informed that they have well received the amendment from Switzerland, but that it was expected this amendment to be presented during the discussion, therefore it was not added to the text.

The **Chairperson** asked Switzerland and Colombia if they wished to have it incorporated. The Delegation of **Venezuela** responded, as follows: Thank you very much, Chair. I am a little confused as to how we are moving forward. I think that we are all hoping to be able to close our session, and there's an event organised by the African group, and we'd also like to take some rest. But I think that we're a little confused as to how we are proceeding now. Before we discuss amendments, I think that perhaps we should take this paragraph by paragraph and then discuss the amendments as we go along. If Switzerland and Colombia believe that their amendment should be set up on screen, then it should be. And, that being said, and I am taking a look at the Decision the way it looks now, we believe that we would also need to present a brief amendment in Paragraph 6 when we get there. Thank you.

The Chairperson decided to go Paragraph by Paragraph.

The **Rapporteur** read Paragraph 1, Paragraph 2, Paragraph 3 and Paragraph 4 which was agreed.

Regarding Paragraph 5, the Delegation of **Colombia** made an addition at the end of the paragraph "And recommended its review in line with its Decision **44 COM 7C**". The Delegation of **Brazil** informed the Chair that they are part of the amendment proposed together with Colombia and Switzerland, and added that the idea was to highlight that this is not the final version of the document and it needs to be revised in conformity with the Decision.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Belgium**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. We can fully agree with this amendment. I just have some questions about the wording that might seem a little bit superfluous, in a sense that it refers to the Document **44 COM 7C** and then "recommended its review in line with Decision **44 COM 7C**". I don't know if that last part is necessary. I think it could just be "recommended its review". Even "in its decision", not "in line with decision". I'm not sure. This is a bit confusing to me. Maybe the co-sponsors can clarify that, thank you.

The Delegation of **Colombia** responded that the co-sponsors welcome any improvement of the language. The **Chairperson** clarified that the Delegation of Belgium proposed "recommended its review" and delete "in line with Decision **44 COM**"

The Delegation of **Brazil** added, as follows: If I may. Yes. Actually, the language in the amendment might be a bit awkward because we tried to agree it this morning during the session, so I welcome any improvements to that. Perhaps, to, just, with the same idea, in a better text we could do something like "recommended its review in line with Paragraph 7 of such Decision". I believe that could be correct. If Belgium would accept it.

The Delegation of **Belgium** accepted this modification.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Sorry. I'm also a bit confused about the text. And maybe just again hoping for some clarification. So are we saying now, who's recommending, sorry, really? I think we all agree that this document needs review by a proper intergovernmental, open and inclusive process. So, is it "we recommend its review"? So, the "General Assembly recommends"? If so, it must mean "and recommends its review",

right? Not “recommended”. And then, well, then I’m honestly not sure that we need. Or I find it highly confusing, “in line with Paragraph 7 of such Decision”, because why do we refer back to the Committee’s Decision? This is what I don’t quite understand, what the added value there is. Because I understand the Paragraph 7 of the Decision of the World Heritage Committee, basically only said: We endorse the document and we transmit it for final revisions to the General Assembly. So why do we want to say that? Why is it necessary?

The floor was given to **the Secretariat, Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre**, for clarification, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I just wanted to point out that there are two different. One is the Decision, which is the **44 COM 7C**, which is the Decision. And the document, which was presented to the Committee, which is WHC/21/44.COM/7C, which is the document. So, just to be clear which one is to be used here, consistently.

The Delegation of **Belgium** provided further clarifications, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Actually yes, I just had a very small informal consultation with Distinguished colleague from Brazil, which has clarified a lot for me. So basically, when we say “in line with”, it is referring to the specific principles in that Paragraph 7, so maybe it would be more useful to say “in line with the principles mentioned in Paragraph 7 of such Decision”. I think that could clarify things. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Brazil**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Just to clarify, the idea was “and recommended” because we are mentioning that the World Heritage Committee recommended. And so that’s why we used that language. We’re not recommending it at this point, we’re just saying that the Committee recommended. That’s what I think we’re saying, “The Committee endorsed and recommended”. And concerning the other point, if, there’s a difference between the document, which is WHC/etc..., and Decision **44 COM 7C**, then we should say “in Paragraph 7 of Decision **44 COM 7C**”.

The **Chairperson** summarised all the points and asked if the Paragraph could be adopted. The Paragraph was accepted.

The **Rapporteur** read Paragraph 6 and informed the Chair that some amendments were received by email. These were added to the text.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Colombia** to present those amendments, in coordination with Brazil, as follows: Yes, Mr President. Thank you very much, yet again. These amendments are also in response to other amendments tabled by Australia. So, I do agree that, presented like this, it looks a little strange, but what we’re attempting is a consensus between what is proposed by Australia and our own alternative, and perhaps it would be better for Australia to present their concerns and then we would be able to respond to that amendment. So that everybody else in the room can understand why we are presenting this text. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you, thank you Chair. Australia aligns itself with the proposed amendments put forward by Colombia, Brazil and Switzerland. Our thinking in relation to this is that coming out of, coming out of the World Heritage Committee meeting, it was clear that there was considerable work to be done, first in relation to the Climate Policy itself, but also in relation to the Operational Guidelines which would underpin and allow implementation of that Policy. And so, our thinking in relation to this language, although I would say that this is language brought together with a range of colleagues, not specifically drafted by Australia, I think in relation to this language, is it allows for the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group, and the mandate of that group would be to review and develop the final version of the policy text, and I think that’s very important on the basis of the conversation that we’ve had in the room this evening, where clearly there

is text to be settled in the Policy Document itself. And, importantly from an Australian perspective, we think that that Open-Ended Working Group should consider proposals for the effective implementation and measures for the implementation of that policy, which will explore how the policy will operate in practice, and as the amendments suggest there, that would be put forward to the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties. I appreciate that there is a hierarchy of mandates in relation to this. We are simply proposing that the Open-Ended Working Group consider, but with the text of the Policy, with a view to settling it, and then consider possible issues in relation to implementation. And those issues were at least in part touched upon by the World Heritage Committee in its meeting earlier this year. Thank you Chair.

The floor was then given to the Delegation of **Brazil**, as follows: A brief intervention to explain the idea. In line with what has been said by our Distinguished colleagues from Colombian and Australian Delegations. We as well as the countries that proposed these significant number of amendments to the original draft, have been approached by several Delegations with a view that a large consensus seems to be emerging in the room, in the sense that it might be preferable to discuss this argument in more detail in the context of a Working Group, considering the importance and the complexity of many issues therein. Our preference would have been to debate and approve the document here at this session, as we believe the issue of climate change is urgent and it would be desirable to have an agreed text in line with Decision **44 COM 7C** as soon as possible. But we understand these concerns and will not stand in the way of this emerging consensus, so long as it is clear that the Policy Document can only be considered approved and start to be implemented once all amendments proposed have been taken into consideration. And there doesn't seem to be much time for this at this moment. So, with this purpose we have come together with Colombia, Switzerland and other Delegations to try to reach a text that might be acceptable to all and that tries to also encompass the purposes of the Australia amendment submitted earlier. The result is the present text, which proposes the creation of an Open-Ended Working Group under the General Assembly to review and finalise the document before submitting it for final approval at its next session. If that could be an extraordinary session, to be convened sometime next year, we would find that ideal, but the text is a bit more conservative, also taking into consideration all the views expressed in the sense that the required timeframe may be too tight. So, we would like to thank all Delegations that took part in the negotiated effort to produce the present text and would be very grateful if other delegations may take it into their consideration. Thank you very much Mr Chair.

The **Chairperson** asked if there is a consensus on this Paragraph, and the Delegation of **Belgium** intervened to say that they fully support for the idea mentioned in this paragraph of the Open-Ended Working Group, and thank Brazil, Colombia and Switzerland, and other Delegations for working on this. The delegate added, as follows: However, I think again that the language might need some clarification. For example, where it says "for its effective implementation" to address how it will operate in practice. Okay. "Its effective implementation" refers to the Policy Document, I assume, but how it will operate in practice, I'm not sure where that second "it" refers to, because the document itself cannot operate. I also think that, well, the text is rather difficult to read, since it's so long. I would practically propose to say, after "**44 COM 7C**" comma "as well as proposals for". This might make it a little more legible.

The **Chairperson** thanked the delegate for assisting in modifying it.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Venezuela**, as follows: Thank you very much Chair. We support the idea of creating an open-ended working group to discuss this issue, this Declaration. However, we are not quite sure about the "welcomes", which is the equivalent of the French "accueille avec satisfaction". There is a number of countries, in fact, that have presented amendments and have said that they are not completely at ease with the document as presented. So perhaps the word "welcomes" pre-empts the discussion that we are planning.

Perhaps the best option would be “takes note” for this paragraph. We, of course, do not want to go against the consensus. I’m simply trying to reflect what I think I have heard in the debate that we’re having on this paragraph. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Kuwait**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I think, we are focusing a lot of the modality of the document, how we’re going to move forward. But we should not forget the substance of the document, it’s highly a technical and very complicated. So, I can go with the consensus. But I think here in this situation, having an Open-Ended Group will maybe not serve the best. I think might it be intergovernmental expert meeting. Where we have involvement of experts. So, this is what Kuwait suggests intergovernmental expert meetings. But again, Kuwait can go with the consensus. I don’t want to, just change the substance of the document. It’s really complicated. Thank you.

The Delegation of **Colombia** made clarifications, as follows: Thank you, Chair. Let me clarify the request by Kuwait. There is another amendment that covers a proposal for an expert group, and I’m not certain whether it would be useful to see them together, but perhaps we could agree on this one, and then look into the experts’ issue, which is also important. So, that is on the one hand. Also, we would agree with “takes note”. We are willing to accept any assistance with the language. We simply wanted to recall that the three countries that co-sponsor this amendment did not have that same point of view. So, it is perhaps a compromise, we and Brazil believe that this is urgent and if we can present this at the Extraordinary General Assembly that would be ideal. But we are quite committed to having a text after this discussion and this revision, that will be the best possible text, and that will cover everyone’s concerns, and to find a solution to the threat posed by climate change for World Heritage sites. So, thank you very much, and I do hope that the Ambassador of Kuwait can wait for our next amendment, where we will clarify that request. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** reminded that the Ambassador of Kuwait has said he’s flexible.

He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Austria**, as follows: Thank you Chair. I would also have a slight preference for “takes note” if that’s good with the room. And regarding the Distinguished Ambassador of Kuwait’s proposal, although I can see what he’s trying to do, and he’s trying to help. I would just be a bit afraid, but I don’t have my guidebook with me on the terminology we use for certain meetings. You know, it sounds a bit like intergovernmental experts’ meetings, the kind of meetings we have when we negotiate standard texts. I know that my Distinguished colleague of Saint Lucia is extremely well-versed in the category of meetings that UNESCO has, and whether we may be getting to, getting here a terminology that would rather not be helpful. So, I mean, for me it’s just important that it’s an intergovernmental open, an open and transparent and inclusive process. I will be fine with “Open-Ended Working Group”, but subject to some clarification if we don’t get into troubled water with “intergovernmental experts’ meeting” meaning something else because it’s a very formalised process, but I see the Distinguished Ambassador of Palestine saying “non, non”. So, I’m fine.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Bangladesh**, as follows: I think, Excellency has covered. That we would like to support the idea represented by the Distinguished Ambassador of Kuwait. And I also like to support Venezuela for, regarding not to adopt the “takes note”. Thank you. Because we have not yet finalised our discussion. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** noted there’s agreement on “takes note”, and that the issue is the mechanism, whether it’s going to be intergovernmental, there is a proposal I think of “intergovernmental experts’ meetings” or an “Open-Ended Working Group”.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine** as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. To start with actually “takes note”, I think it is more appropriate, and we support this proposal. As for



the “intergovernmental experts’ meetings”, as our colleague from Colombia mentioned, it will be covered later. There is an expert group that has been decided upon, and it will meet before March or something like this. So, the working group is totally different from the expert group. There is an expert group that has been decided already, and it will meet, and there will be another amendment later that will request this expert group to report to the Open-Ended Working Group. So here, I suggest, and I thank our colleague from Kuwait for his flexibility, I suggest to take off this last amendment, “intergovernmental experts’ meeting”, this is my first suggestion. Second, I agree with our colleague from Belgium. It is a little bit puzzling, the question how it will operate? I agree, we can think about proposals for its effective implementation, but how it will operate, also, the, it is not so clear for us. We can talk about implementation but, here, if we are talking about how it will operate, it means that they should indicate, they should give us a mechanism, a specific mechanism. “Effectiveness of implementation” is much more relaxed. It could contain also such mechanism. But I suggest also here to delete, “to address how it will operate in practice”. And we keep, yes, we keep “for consideration by the”. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Norway**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Norway can agree with “takes note”, we may also agree with the “Open-Ended Working Group”. But we would like to suggest an addition, and that would be, after “an Open-Ended Working Group”, “to include the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies”, comma. And we would also agree with the suggestion from Palestine.

The Chairperson requested to read the new Paragraph and asked if this is okay.

The floor was given to the **United States of America**, as follows: Thank you Chair. I just wanted to say we appreciate everyone’s flexibility and way to find consensus to move forward on this, finalising the Policy Document as well as creating an Open-Ended Working Group. We think this is very important, considering the importance of climate change. With that said, we have one very, very small edit. Instead of “in line with Decision **44 COM 7**” it would be “taking into account”.

The **Chairperson** asked the Delegation of **Colombia** if they were okay with this, to which they responded as follows: Yes, but I’m afraid I wasn’t hearing the interpretation. But “in line with” remains closer to the Decision, I believe, rather than “taking into account”. I’d like to clarify that, because that’s what it would mean in Spanish. And I would like to know whether it is indeed the similar distinction in English. So, I’m looking to the United States for linguistic clarification, please.

The Delegation of the **United States of America** made further clarifications, as follows: No, it’s slightly different. “Taking into account” means there may be, you broadly take into account, but “in line” means you’re following it to the letter. And so, we feel like “taking into account” is kind of broader and encompasses it all. That explains our request.

This was agreed by the Delegation of **Colombia**.

The **Chairperson** asked the other co-sponsors if they agreed with the slight amendment, this was confirmed. He then gave the floor to the Delegation of **Venezuela**, who made a small remark with regards to the proposal by Norway, that is to say to include “the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies”. The delegate would prefer this not to be included, or to include them as observers, because this is a Policy Document on Climate Action, and this has to be established by the Member States, by the States Parties. She reminded the room of their responsibility towards this Document and that they are the ones to adopt it.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Oman**, who stated they are in agreement with the amendment. They added their dissatisfaction that this Document will not be approved at the

current session, and another 2 years will pass, adding that the Secretariat and the experts have put a lot of efforts since the last session of the World Heritage Committee.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Uganda**, as follows: Thank you Chair. Allow me, Chair, since this is the first time for Uganda to take the floor in this session, to congratulate you on your election to lead the Assembly. As an outgoing member of the World Heritage Committee, Uganda had an opportunity to serve with you on the Committee, and admired your leadership skills. Chair, Uganda, as a co-sponsor, supports the proposed amendments by Australia to establish an Open-Ended Working Group to review all proposals regarding the amendments to the Operational Guidelines to enable implementation of the principles of policy on climate action for World Heritage. Uganda's justification for co-sponsoring the amendments is based on two grounds. The idea of an Open-Ended Group is a perfect arrangement whereby all Member States are invited to participate. The Group at its inaugural meeting determines its leadership and sets its own agenda based on the matters of concern. After all the deliberations are concluded, the Open-Ended Working Group reports back to the General Assembly within the timelines specified. Secondly the Open-Ended Working Group process also provides the possibility of holding intersectional consultative meetings with industry, non-governmental organisations, academia, and any other stakeholders deemed relevant to add value to the subject matter. I conclude by urging Member States to support the proposed amendments. Thank you Chair.

The **Chairperson** reminded the proposal from Venezuela on whether the "Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre" should be included or added "as observers". He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Norway**, who responded they would not like to include "as observers", as they do not see how the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies can assist in this Open-Ended Working Group if they are only observers.

The Delegation of **Saudi Arabia** responded that they are in agreement with Venezuela's proposal but suggested to call them "advisers". Or delete it.

The Delegation of **Palestine** responded, as follows: Well. I think that I have a solution for this issue. As a matter of fact, everybody knows that whenever we have a working group, the Secretariat should assist, and they are there. We can't hold a working group decided upon, it's a formal working group, the Secretariat shall be there. But to settle the issue, I propose the following wording. Let me see. "Open-Ended Working Group assisted by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies". And that's all.

This proposal was agreed by the Delegations of **Norway, Austria and Venezuela**.

The Delegation of **Belgium** was also in agreement but requested to have a clean version of the paragraph.

Once the paragraph was cleaned up, the **Chairperson** read it over, "Takes note of the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage as endorsed by the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee and decides to establish an Open-Ended Working Group assisted by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, with a mandate to review and develop its final version, taking into account Decision **44 COM 7C** as well as proposals for its effective implementation to address how it will operate in practice".

The Delegation of **Belgium** reminded the Chairperson that it was agreed to delete "to address how it will operate in practice".

The **Chairperson** asked all co-sponsors if they agreed with this paragraph.

The Paragraph was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** informed that there was a proposal from the Delegation of Colombia to replace the rest of the paragraphs, from 7 to 12, by two new paragraphs.

The Delegation of **Colombia** presented the amendment, as follows: Thank you, Mr President, and I'm with you. We want to go quickly and go to the African session next door. So. Basically we struck the next few paragraphs because they didn't make any sense since we didn't adopt the text, and so we introduced... Oooh okay. Well. We introduced the other ones that you see in the English part. Basically, speaking of the experts' panel that was created already by the Committee with a very clear mandate. So, the idea, for everyone to understand, is that this experts' panel will revise the document, will see all the things we have discussed already with the proposals of the Secretariat, etcetera, and then submit it to the Open-Ended Working Group with what we hope to have an intergovernmental instance that approves the text and so we can move forward fast. And let me just finish by saying that I'm with, I think it was the Ambassador of Oman who spoke earlier, it's also in Colombia's interests that this will be very fastly done and we really want to do this work, so we hope that both the experts' panel and the Open-Ended Working Group will be very effective, very efficient in their mandates, and that can only be done with all of us helping. So, we thank very much, and, the co-sponsors, we are really into this. So please read it and tell us if the language is okay for you. Thank you.

The **Rapporteur** read over the new Paragraph 7.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Be sure Mr President, I'm not going to complicate the issue, but we need just a slight clarification regarding the second paragraph, b), at the end, "noting the desirability of avoiding decisions which would otherwise pre-empt the outcomes of that consideration". Well, it is very difficult to me to understand it. Here we are talking about the working group and the experts. Who might take decisions, in that case, that pre-empt the outcomes? Could it be explained? I don't catch it. It's not clear for me. I have no problem with the rest. For me, if we delete this, it would be much more clear and much more appropriate. Otherwise, maybe the co-sponsors could explain this to us. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Delegation of **Brazil** made a suggestion, as follows: Actually, that was a language that we tried to incorporate from the original Australian amendment in order to encompass what he desired, so I think perhaps the, my colleague would give consideration to that. Thank you.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Thank you Chair. Thank you very much, Ambassador of Palestine, for raising that question. The thinking behind that. Obviously, the Climate Policy Update Document is an exceptionally important document which is going to be fundamental to the future operations of this Convention. And the work being done in relation to the implementation of that policy, and the consideration going towards the implementation of that policy, likewise very important and fundamental to the future workings of the Convention. What this suggestion makes, it's really noting the desirability, it's not requiring any action, it's simply a notation. Notes "the desirability of avoiding decisions", and it would be general decisions which would otherwise pre-empt the outcomes of the consideration. So, you have consideration of, a really fundamental Policy Document, and consideration by an intergovernmental working group, of how that Policy Document is going to be implemented. I think it's entirely appropriate and perfectly conventional to put in a notation about the desirability of pre-empting the outcome of those processes.

The Delegation of **Palestine** was in agreement.

The Delegation of **Norway** added, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. We totally agree with Palestine and what Palestine first proposed. We actually find it very confusing as well, and we agree with your reflexion. Indeed, as Australia is saying, action is needed and this is an important policy. That's why we find it highly inappropriate to suspend tools as the reactive

monitoring or in-danger listing pending global resolution because that might actually be the consequence of this paragraph. It's basically the same that is being proposed in the Policy Document, that we see in a different wrapping. Thank you.

We ask for this, we ask for this part, "noting the desirability" and the rest of that sentence to be deleted. And we also propose to have the second part of a) deleted, which goes "including the legal and administrative questions in Paragraph 36", because this is about the implementation of the Policy, and we're talking about having the input from every State member, so we should not be pulling out any specific issue. Thank you.

The **Chairperson** responded as follows: Okay. Thanks. Norway has come back to the issue by Palestine on deleting "noting the desirability of avoiding decisions which would otherwise pre-empt the outcomes of that consideration". Let me check with the co-sponsors. Do you feel strongly on this one? I think the message is understood.

He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Australia**, as follows: Chair, look, thank you very much for your patience. And I hear Norway. The two parts of language which Norway has proposed, the deletion of, they are of considerable importance to Australia and, I believe, the co-sponsors of this original draft-amending decision. I think the observations are made in relation to Paragraph 7b), the notation of desirability, I respectfully, respectfully suggest that Norway's suggestion that this would preclude decisions in relation to listing process, I don't believe that that's the result of that language at all. And in relation to the inclusion of the reference to the legal and administrative questions at Paragraph 36 of the policy, these are fundamental questions which were raised in 2007 and remain unanswered, particularly in relation to how they are going to be implemented. So, I would strongly argue, Chair, that that is a perfectly reasonable proposition for inclusion in the mandate of the considerations of the Open-Ended Working Group. Thank you, Chair.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **China**, who was in full support with the proposal raised by Norway. This was seconded by the Delegations of **Iran**, **Germany** and **Czech Republic**.

The Delegation of **Venezuela** made some comments, as follows: Thank you very much for giving me the floor Chair. We will take again the floor afterwards to establish a position on this. However, I've heard various colleagues say that they support the position of Norway. But Norway has two proposals, one in Paragraph b) and another one in Paragraph a). When they say they support Norway, are they referring to both of them or only to b) or only to a)? I think this would be also very important to clear.

The **Chairperson** checked whether the delegates supported both proposals from Norway. The Delegations of **China**, **Czech Republic** and **Germany** agreed on both.

The Delegation of the **United States of America** requested further clarification with regards to the experts in the panel of experts, and wanted to make sure that that's referring to the Technical Advisory Group of experts that's referred to in Section 1d) of the 44 COM document.

The **Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre** provided assistance, as follows: Thank you, Chair. The Technical Advisory Group mentioned in the document was established for the preparation of the document and is no longer working on the document because the document was endorsed by the Committee. What the Committee asked for was an expert panel to work on the specific, the request was to establish an expert panel to look into the points that have been mentioned in the decision of **44 COM 7C**. Thank you very much, Chair.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Sweden**, as follows: We would like to join all of the Member States who wanted to strike out the last part of number a) in Paragraph 7, as we believe that World Heritage sites are increasingly affected by impacts of global nature and it's

very hard to separate these from the realities of the global very complex ecosystem. And the climate change issue will continue to be unanswered. And we believe also that we have a very clear Convention and clear Operational Guidelines on this matter. And we believe also that climate change is an amplification and a catalyst of these very serious and specific dangers, such as earthquakes, landslides, and volcanic eruptions, as mentioned in the Convention. Thank you.

La Délégation de la **France** a informé soutenir également la Norvège.

The Delegation of **Japan** added, as follows: We would like to echo what has been said by Australia, actually. For both paragraphs. Legal and administrative questions should not be excluded from the consideration. And also, for Paragraph b), since this Policy Document on climate change will be such an important document for all of us, I think it is logic to be deliberate on making decisions which can be concerned. Thank you.

The Delegations of **Spain**, **Finland** and **Belgium** supported the proposal from Norway.

The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** requested clarification, as follows: Mr Chair. I think it's my turn to ask for clarification. My question is only on paragraph a), requesting the deletion of the reference to Paragraph 36. Do you mean, dear colleagues, that now the Working Group can examine all of the Policy Document except Paragraph 36? Paragraph 36 is part of the Policy Document that the working group is supposed to look at. So, what does it mean? Or am I mistaken? Or are we talking about another document, another Paragraph 36? I don't understand. If it's part of the Policy, why are we excluding it?

The Delegation of **Brazil** responded that the idea of the Working Group is to analyse the whole document.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Poland**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. First of all, I would like to support and agree with the question that was raised by Saint Lucia, just recently. Because it's totally reasonable that the whole Open-Ended Working Group, that we are very much in favour of being established, needs to revise all the document. So, in this sense, we would like to support Australia and Japan to keep the inclusion of the Paragraph 36 in the Point a). Thank you.

The Delegation of **Thailand** added that they support Norway for the a) and b), 7a) and 7b). Thank you.

The Delegation of the **Russian Federation** added, as follows: Thank you very much, Mr President. I would like also to support my colleagues, Norway, China, Republic of Iran, and others. And just to remind our dear colleagues that we are speaking not about the Open-Ended Working Group, but the panel of experts, as agreed. It is in the Paragraph 7, up. And then, just to say that we ask them to consider revision to the Policy Document and its unresolved policy matters. So, if they found that, Paragraph 36, is unresolved matter, they will consider it. So, I don't see any problem with this. Thank you very much.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Colleagues, the question that Saint Lucia posed is this. It's a Policy review of the whole document. So, the question is: if what divides us is us wanting to go to the specifics. Why go to the specifics? Because the understanding is that they will review the whole document. And if what divides this room is those specifics, when we understand what it is, why go into them? So, the deletion, and many people are saying for deletion, deletion does not mean those issues will not be discussed. So, may I, as a Chair, now, and we are going to have a Party at the Africa Group, that we delete this, as proposed by Norway. With this understanding I have given you. That it doesn't mean that these issues will be excluded. What? I hope the co-sponsors, Australia, you support me with this proposal.

Palestine. Thank you so much colleagues. I think you, we all understand it. Is that, you know. Sometimes the specifics, we get boxed into the specifics, when actually the product, the picture, we have it. So, may we say we delete those paragraphs, with the support of the co-sponsors? But the understanding is clear. It is so decided.

Paragraph 7 was agreed.

The **Rapporteur** read over Paragraph 8.

Paragraph 8 was agreed.

The Draft Resolution **23 GA 11** was adopted. Agenda Item 11 was closed.

Applause.

## 12 CLOSURE OF THE SESSION // CLOTURE DE LA SESSION

*No Document // Aucun document*

*No Draft Resolution // Aucun projet de résolution*

The **Chairperson** moved on as follows: Now, thank you so much for your deliberation. You remember when we started, there was an addition of Other Business. And who's addition was that? Colombia? Ah no, you are going to make my day, I am sure. Do you want to assist me?

He gave the floor to the Delegation of **Colombia**, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. I'm also looking forward to go, so I hope this is not very disruptive. It's actually a very, very, easy, easy, easy one, as I said before. Is just to bear in mind all the discussion about the analysis of the different Conventions, etcetera, etcetera, so this will be only to take it into account for the next General Assembly. So, if you can put it on screen, I will explain to you.

So, it's actually "takes note of the Resolution of the last General Conference", three days ago, etcetera. The second paragraph is only to "Requests the World Heritage Centre to widely disseminate Document 41C/55" etcetera "to all States Parties to the 1972 Convention". Hopefully in all the languages as it has been done already. And also "Requests the World Heritage Centre to add an item on the above-mentioned matter on the Agenda of the 24th session of the General Assembly of States Parties in 2023". So, I hope we all agree in this, is really just to add it in the Agenda so we don't wait another extra two years, just we can enrich from the discussion of these two years in between general conferences and have it also for the 72 one. So, thank you very much.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Saint Lucia**, as follows: Thank you Chair. So, my understanding as well, we are adopting a Decision where there is no Item on the Agenda, and we want to take note of a Resolution, this Assembly has not seen. And ask for the dissemination of a document that this Assembly has not seen. Does this sound logical to you? Thank you.

The Delegation of **Brazil** took the floor and supported the proposal made by Colombia, added that the Document was seen during the General Conference a few days prior.

The Delegations of **Chile** and **Ecuador** supported the Colombian proposition.

The Delegation of **Kuwait** added, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. Just, a matter of principle. I think what Saint Lucia says is so true. So, to me, is, no, I mean, I won't accept this, I think we are, we don't want to rush it. It's a matter of principle. So, Kuwait doesn't agree with this Colombian Draft Resolution. Thank you, Mr Chair.

La parole a ensuite été donnée à la Délégation de la **République arabe syrienne**, comme suit : Merci de me donner la parole, Monsieur le Président. Écoutez, le sujet est très important, ce qui est proposé par la Colombie est très d'actualité, il est très important, mais je pense que je soutiens parfaitement Sainte Lucie parce qu'il n'est pas sur le plan de la forme et de la déontologie, on n'a jamais vu ça. On ne peut pas proposer un, sous autre, Other Business, un Projet de résolution tel qu'il est présenté ici, formulé avec une phrase. Le souhait de la Colombie, qui est, que je soutiens, parfaitement, mais on ne peut pas proposer un Projet de résolution sous, as Other Business, Autres points. Merci Monsieur le Président.

The **Chairperson** responded, as follows: Yes. I know. I hear what you're saying. I think on this one, let me be advised by the Secretariat. As you know, there are issues of processes and procedure and on those ones, we really are guided by the Secretariat. But, notwithstanding that, if you decide that there are simply, that notwithstanding this, you take that decision as a separate issue. But I think what Saint Lucia raised, it was, it's just procedure and issue how it's running. I think I want to defer to the Secretariat to guide us on this one.

The Delegation of **Saint Lucia** added, as follows: Mr Chair, if you don't mind. Just to say that the Resolution adopted by the General Conference allows the Secretariat to disseminate a document and to send it to the next General Assembly. It allows it already. So, we don't need this Resolution. And it can stay on record. They can do it. But, we cannot not respect procedures like this. It's not possible. Thank you.

Le **Sous-directeur général pour la Culture** a apporté quelques clarifications, comme suit : Si vous me permettez, ce que je comprends, ce qui est proposé ici, c'est effectivement ce que la Déléguée de Sainte Lucie vient de rappeler, c'est que la Conférence a demandé à transmettre le document à toutes les Assemblées générales. Dans le cas de cette Assemblée, comme vous savez, elle se tient les deux derniers jours de la Conférence générale. Donc ce serait la seule Assemblée qui n'aurait pas pu voir le document. Donc. Mais ce n'est pas à moi de vous dire si ça correspond ou non. Ce qui est clair, c'est que l'envoi du document a été demandé. Dans la Décision de la Conférence générale, on nous demande de reporter. Donc si vous souhaitez qu'on reporte à la Conférence générale que toutes les autres conventions l'ont vue et que celle-ci on l'a envoyé, c'est, bien sûr, vous êtes menés à prendre les décisions que vous voulez. Absolument.

The floor was given to the Delegation of **Egypt**, as follows: Thank you Chair, yes, I wish to assist you because we have a party and we must leave now quickly. Chair, we are not in favour and we will not accept by any means adopting any decision on this item. This is to be clear. Because we fully respect our rules and procedures and we don't see this. This is, I'm sorry to say, but this is not the way that we should be doing our work. There are two ways of doing work. The correct way. And this way. We are for the correct way. Second point, Mr Chair, just to show you how flagrant it is, is what we are having. Here is requesting what? The World Heritage Centre to widely disseminate document, not even the Resolution. So even it supposes that the document has been accepted, smoothly, during the General Conference and that everything was fine so that we can disseminate the document, and not even the Resolution. So, Chair, in order to avoid a mistake, please, we don't want to see it, this Resolution. We are fine with the inclusion of it under Any Other Business in order to say comments, so that we have the comments on it, oral comments. But not to have a Resolution like this, that we see it at the very last second, which is totally wrong in its form and its format. Thank you.

The next speaker was the Delegation of **Palestine**, as follows: Thank you, Mr Chair. I will try to find a way out. Because, indeed, we don't agree on the procedure as it has been mentioned. But the spirit, the idea, is acceptable, but the ADG mentioned that the request to disseminate the document is already done. So, the Secretariat will do it, whether we adopt this Decision or not, it will be done. This is the first thing and this is the most important thing. Now, second thing. As it has been mentioned differently by other colleagues, I think at this stage, what we can do under this item, we can take only the statement of Colombia, and it will be on the records. Regarding the document itself, it will be disseminated, no need to adopt a Decision in order to ask the Secretariat to disseminate it. So, I suggest to stop there, to delete it, and to put only a statement referring to the request of Colombia that will be on the records. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Delegation of **Colombia** responded, as follows: Thank you, Mr President. I'm super flexible. A little surprised of the outrage of the proposal, but it's alright. I mean, it's okay. The important thing is to, is just to put it on the Agenda of the next Assembly. if it's not for a Project of Resolution because it's too much, it's okay. We have no problem at all. If, I mean, I mean, the Resolution exists, the text exists, they were rotated so that everything will be done anyways, so I'm flexible. You can put it on the record. As long as it can be on the Agenda for the next Assembly, I have no problem.

The **Chairperson** invited the room to applause for the spirit of consensus.

Applause

La parole a été donnée à la Délégation de la **Tunisie**, comme suit : Ne vous inquiétez pas, Monsieur le Président. La parole de la Tunisie ne changera pas le consensus, au contraire. Je crois qu'il y a un moment important que nous venons de faire, que ce soit, que cela prenne la forme d'une résolution ou d'une note dans nos travaux, nous avons été prié maintenant les travaux de cette Assemblée générale avec ce que la Conférence générale vient d'adopter il y a quelques jours. Je crois que c'est le plus important. Parce que le texte en lui-même proposé par nos amis de la Colombie est généreux, est intéressant, mais peut-être ne correspond pas à un point de consensus à ce stage. Mais je crois que ce que nos minutes, ce que nos travaux vont retenir, est extrêmement important. Nous faisons le lien entre ce qu'a dit la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO et ce que dit et ce dont prend acte l'Assemblée générale de cette Convention. Je crois que le plus important est là, et il faut se féliciter de l'esprit du consensus, et je crois que ce qui s'est dégagé maintenant de cette salle est à saluer, mais aussi est à retenir dans la minute et dans les records de nos travaux. Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président.

The **Chairperson** closed this General Assembly, as follows: Thank you, my dear brother, for your comments. This brings us to the end of this 23rd session of the General Assembly. What is left of me is to thank the Secretariat, the translators, and everyone who has worked behind the scenes to make this session successful. And I also, from my side also on behalf of the Bureau, wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the constructive manner in which this session was run and in which we proceeded with our business. On this note, I declare the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention closed.

Applause.