

States Parties to the World Heritage Convention

15 January 2024

**Culture Sector
World Heritage Centre**

Ref: CL/WHC-24/03

Subject: First meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in conformity with Decision 45 COM 11

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to my communication of 7 December 2023 (Circular Letter CL/WHC/23-07), I would like to inform you that for technical reasons, the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, initially scheduled on 5 February 2024, will now take place on **Friday 9 February 2024, from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm (Paris time)**, both *in praesentia* at UNESCO Headquarters (Fontenoy, Room XI) and online (Zoom).

As previously indicated, this inception meeting will be the occasion to proceed to the election of a Bureau (i.e., Chairperson, 4 Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur), to discuss the expected outcomes and to decide on the frequency and length of the meetings.

In this regard, I encourage all electoral groups to consult between themselves to propose candidates to the Bureau of the Open-ended Working Group **before end of January 2024**. Allow me in this regard to recall the Committee consensus in favour of Saudi Arabia assuming the chairpersonship of the Open-ended Working Group.

States Parties representatives wishing to join the meeting online in an active manner (i.e., with the possibility to request the floor) will need to register beforehand at the following link:

<https://unesco-org.zoom.us/j/89048617375>
(Meeting ID: 890 4861 7375; passcode: 927212).

The deadline to register is **8 February 2024 by 4.00 pm (Paris time)**. Past this time, access to the meeting will not be guaranteed.

Once their participation is confirmed, active participants will receive information to access the meeting to the e-mail address they would have provided during their registration, and that will imperatively need to be used to join the meeting, to avoid connection issues. In case of connection issues before or during the meeting, please send an e-mail to c.varnet@unesco.org.

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Furthermore, I am pleased to inform you that all the documentation relevant for the work of this Open-ended Working Group will be made available on a dedicated webpage at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/1405/&p=oewg2024>.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Alessandro Balsamo (a.balsamo@unesco.org) or Ms Frédérique Aubert (f.aubert@unesco.org) should you require any further information.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Assomo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lazare Eloundou Assomo
Director

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