

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

AUSTRALIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in advance of the third meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Australia

Australia would like to thank the Secretariat for the development of the excellent background document presented to the Open-ended Working Group held on 25-26 April 2024, and the keynote speakers for their thought-provoking presentations. These stimulated important discussions of the Working Group, at its second meeting.

Noting the extensive mandate of the Open-ended Working Group and the call to focus discussion, Australia is pleased to provide the following general remarks and recommendations on the first two mandates of the Working Group.

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

Hear under-represented voices

Proposals:

- Australia encourages the Chair to consider specifically requesting representatives from under-represented States Parties to speak at the May meeting of the Open-ended Working Group and provide insights into the challenges they face in engaging with the World Heritage Convention, what their capacity building needs are, and/or examples of successful initiatives.
- Australia will encourage and consider ways to facilitate greater participation in the Working Group from Pacific Island Countries through our networks. We ask that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies also encourage greater participation from Pacific Island Countries through their own networks.
- Australia asks that the Bureau consider whether some Open-ended Working Group meetings could be scheduled at times that are more conducive to virtual participation from Pacific Island Countries, which are typically 9 to 13 hours ahead of Paris time. Starting some meetings at 8.00 or 9.00 am (Paris time), shortening their length to 3-4 hours per day, and/or spreading meetings across multiple days, if need be, may support this.
- Australia strongly supports IUCN's suggestion and recommends that the Open-ended Working Group invites representatives from the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage to participate in its May meeting and all future meetings of the Working Group.

Supporting points:

- We agree with interventions made during the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group that the Working Group needs to hear directly from those that are under-represented on the World Heritage List. This includes Africa and Small Island Developing States, which are acknowledged as priority groups.
- There has not been strong representation from Pacific Island Countries at Open-ended Working Group meetings. The Pacific is one of the three geographical regions in which Small Island Developing States are located, making it particularly important they have the opportunity to participate in Working Group discussions.

- It is clear that under-representation on the World Heritage List is not just geographic or regional—it is also thematic, in the types of properties included on the List. There are artificial dichotomies, such as nature/culture and tangible/intangible, which may be contributing to this imbalance by making it difficult for certain communities to engage in the Convention. To break down these barriers and ensure better representativity, we need support the participation of diverse voices in this working group, particularly those that represent Indigenous peoples and local communities. The World Heritage list will be richer for it.

Better define and/or solidify understanding of fundamental World Heritage concepts

Proposals:

- Australia supports the suggestion that consideration should be given to better defining the concept of Outstanding Universal Value, including its three pillars, and recommend that the Open-ended Working Group includes in its recommendations to the Committee that:
 - The Committee convene a meeting of experts of all regions with relevant qualifications and expertise to reflect on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value, including its three pillars, and make specific proposals on how the definition could be improved considering developments in World Heritage, since the special expert meeting convened in Kazan, 2005.
 - The Committee request the World Heritage Centre report the outcomes and recommendations arising from the meeting of experts to the 47th session of the Committee.
- Australia recommends that the Open-ended Working Group includes in its recommendations to the Committee that:
 - The Committee approve the reintroduction of the category of International Assistance, “Assistance for educational, information and promotional activities”, for access by States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List.
- Australia recommends that the Open-ended Working Group includes in its recommendations to the Committee that:
 - The Committee request the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies work together to update the resource manual titled “Preparing World Heritage Nominations”, with consideration to be given to the outcomes and recommendations arising from the above meeting of experts, and encourage States Parties to contribute to the cost of its revision.

Supporting points:

- We acknowledge the need to better define and solidify understanding of fundamental World Heritage concepts. This was raised by keynote speakers and in State Party interventions. Clearly defined and consistent terminology is important to enable diverse cultures to understand and engage in the Convention, as concepts often need to be translated into languages other than French or English.
- We witnessed this during Australia’s capacity building work in the Pacific region in 2023. World Heritage concepts were translated into Cook Islands Māori to facilitate consultation workshops with the local community. Translating the concept of Outstanding Universal Value was particularly challenging. Such translations were critical in enabling Cook Islands to undertake necessary consultations and include its first property on its tentative list.

- We note that International Assistance cannot currently be accessed by States Parties that do not have properties on their tentative list, unless it is to prepare a tentative list. These States Parties are often most in need of access to resourcing and technical expertise to support efforts to educate and raise awareness of World Heritage among local communities.
- The categories under which International Assistance could be accessed were previously broader and it may be beneficial to reintroduce the category of “Assistance for educational, information and promotional activities” for States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List. This category was removed from the Operational Guidelines following decision 30 COM 14A. Its reintroduction could be used, for example, to support States Parties to develop World Heritage materials and define important concepts in local languages.
- We note that the key resource for developing nominations, the resource manual titled “Preparing World Heritage Nominations”, was last revised in 2011 and there have since been many developments in the World Heritage nomination process. The resource manuals were developed as user-friendly tools for capacity-building and awareness raising on the Convention and form the basis of training provided by Advisory Bodies. “Preparing World Heritage Nominations” is the first resource manual new World Heritage practitioners would be expected to encounter and use. It is important this document is periodically revised to ensure it remains current and World Heritage concepts are clearly and consistently defined.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

Revisit gap analyses and thematic studies

Proposals:

- Australia recommends that the Open-ended Working Group includes in its recommendations to the Committee at its 46th session that:
 - The Committee request Advisory Bodies work together to develop gap analyses and thematic studies, which include regional/sub-regional and typological considerations, starting with the priority groups of Africa and Small Island Developing States, and encourage States Parties to contribute to the costs of developing these.

Supporting points:

- We acknowledge the potential for new and updated gap analyses and thematic studies to improve the balance and progressively close gaps in the World Heritage List. These should be focussed at the regional or sub-regional level and include typological considerations, like the gap analysis undertaken for the Arab region. Advisory Bodies should work together on these to help break-down the nature/culture and tangible/intangible divides.

Streamline the nomination dossier

Proposals:

- Australia asks that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies provide advice to the Open-ended Working Group on whether it would be feasible for States Parties to submit preliminary assessments and nomination dossiers electronically, including the greater use of GIS information to define the location of sites, and to remove the need for hardcopy submissions of these documents.

- Australia asks that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies provide advice to the Open-ended Working Group on how repetition between the preliminary assessment and nomination dossier processes could be reduced.

Supporting points:

- We agree that there are improvements that could be made to the format of the nomination dossier. Introducing word or character limits to additional sections of the nomination dossier may be effective in ensuring dossiers are not equivalent in length to a thesis. However, this is only one potential solution and would not by itself streamline or simplify the process. The use of new technologies and online submissions may be a more significant simplification to help manage the workload of document preparation.
- One of the objectives of preliminary assessment is to make the overall nomination process more efficient and less costly, by increasing the quality of potentially successful nominations and providing early indications of proposals unlikely to succeed. We agree with interventions made during the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group that efficiencies—both in terms of simplifying the process and reducing overall costs—may be found by reducing repetition between the preliminary assessment and nomination dossier.

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Submitted by:

AUSTRIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

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Submitted by: AUSTRIA

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity-building activities:

- **Conduct of a comprehensive “Obstacle Assessment/Study”**

The Open-ended Working Group may recommend the Committee to request the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies to undertake a study or a survey to assess the obstacles for States Parties currently not represented or underrepresented on the WH-List for successfully nominating properties for inscription. Within the framework of such a study or survey, the Committee may invite the respective States Parties (with one or no inscribed WH site) to step into a structured in-depth dialogue with the Secretariat, the Advisory Bodies and regional experts.

As a first step, this could allow identifying some of the underlying reasons for the current imbalance on an empirical basis. The results could then lead to the definition of targeted structural and/or procedural measures and specific capacity-building activities as well as international cooperation measures.

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Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

BAHRAIN



Ref. 2-15.24.13

Date : 13 mai 2024

Mr. Lazare Eloundou Assomo
Director of the World Heritage Centre
UNESCO
7, Place de fontenoy, Paris
France

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

Dear Mr. Assomo,

The Permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain to UNESCO would like to express its gratitude to the World Heritage Centre Secretariat for its role in preparing the documents for the Second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in relation to Decision 45 COM 11.

In relation to the discussions during the Open-ended Working Group, we would like to raise the following points to be presented and discussed during the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group:

- 1) Explore further Gap Analysis studies.
- 2) Enhance Capacity Building projects specifically on the preparation of World Heritage Nominations.
- 3) Mobilize resources to support underrepresented Member States.
- 4) Encourage International cooperation through the establishment of an experts Exchange Programme.
- 5) The exploration of the potential of Transboundary Nominations in reducing the gap on the World Heritage list.

The Permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain to UNESCO avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the World Heritage Centre Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.



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Submitted by:

BELGIUM

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: BELGIUM

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Essential first step: define “over- and under-represented countries” then define what is better representation, setting objectives and goals, even if these don’t translate in precise figures;*
- *Invest in and provide means for genuine & regular dialogue with advisory bodies, as well as in capacity building strategy (see point II.);*
- *Update of gap analysis is absolute priority. As it can be an important stepping stone for successful nominations, the WH Fund should invest if no extrabudgetary funding can be found in the short term (end of 2024);*
- *For natural heritage: explore whether a fast-track-procedure could be devised for underrepresented countries if included in the updated gap analysis document and whether the quota (one dossier per country per year) could be abandoned for natural proposals if the dossier is included in a gap analysis;*
- *Explore whether and how twinning/jumelage could be introduced as a mandatory system where a nomination of an overrepresented country can only be accepted in combination with a nomination from an underrepresented country – e.g. via §61a that sets the order in which nominations are examined;*
- *Possible question to WHC: is international assistance often used for drafting nominations? If so: in how many cases (e.g. for the last 5 Committee sessions)? How much money is requested and what is the success rate?;*
- *Any measure related to tentative lists will only have an impact if we start looking at tentative lists differently. Today, the only obligation is that you have to have a tentative list, without standards or rules. Only when that changes, countries will start looking at their tentative list differently.*
- *Look into ways to introduce a selective or general moratorium for nominations from committee members, especially applying to over-represented State parties whose frequent participation within the Committee would be required.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *We need to look at our processes and question whether everything is needed/should be this complex;*
- *Update the Nominations guidance document notably by asking WHC and advisory bodies to screen the nomination format and propose how it can be made as simple as possible, e.g. through fixed number of pages/words;*
- *Ask WHC and advisory bodies to screen current procedures and propose how some of these can be made more transparent, easier to understand and implement (see point IV.)*
- *Invest in and implement capacity building strategy through sustained dialogue with advisory bodies and WHC, and through training sessions and workshops. Capacity building should be both structural (e.g. in a regional framework, every 3 years, ...) and ad hoc;*

- *Mentoring, twinning and jumelage systems: encourage the Committee to strongly advocate for such practises at 46COM and place these on the agenda of the next 3 or 4 sessions to come. Countries and advisory bodies are asked to take the floor and showcasing their practises and projects in order to inspire some others;*
- *Set up a system of regular meetings with site-managers and/or focal point to share experiences, discuss common issues etc. (including financial backing to involve advisory bodies and/or WHC, if needed)*
- *Explore whether/how Cat. II-centres could play a role in all this (and possible side-effect: develop a strategy regarding Cat. II-centres in World Heritage context), as there are quite a few regions without a Cat. II-centre at the moment);*
- *Tools optimisation: creating a single database for all cultural conventions, with shared criteria, including for cartography;*
- *Build connections between regional and sub-regional centres of different Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) like UNESCO, CMS, Ramsar and CBD in order to improve cooperation and synergy at the national or regional level, implementation, agenda setting ea. (recommendation of the Bern 3 conference).*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Priority should be put into further developing the current advisory bodies' efforts to diversify their experts' panel for better representation as well as integrating regional and thematic experts into evaluation processes;*
- *Rather than looking for additional service providers, we should support the statutory advisory bodies in their work (including giving them the financial and other necessary resources to do their work);*
- *Subsequently: additional service providers could be considered for specific reasons (e.g. expertise for particular topic is not available in advisory body network). But as a matter of principle, the relevant advisory body – i.e. ICOMOS or IUCN – will remain in charge, and will be the one involving the additional partners (also taking into account the associated extra cost, and therefore reflecting on the added value);*
- *Suggest that, as a matter of principle, all advisory bodies mention the names of the experts involved in the evaluation of the files, for transparency and inclusivity matters.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *In terms of financing, we keep coming back to 'voluntary contributions' as the solution. But the current financial challenges prove this is not a sustainable solution. Therefore, we believe it is time to launch a legal study on sustainable ways to provide a more solid and futureproof funding for the WH Convention and its operations. We want to steer clear of amending the Convention, but maybe there are other ways to organize a mandatory supplement to the statutory contribution that is defined in the Convention?:*
- *The Executive Board/General Conference itself decides to provide additional funding from the Unesco budget. But that additional funding has to be sustainable. A one-off increase won't get us much in the longer term;*
- *As a matter of principle, we would like to implement a rule that future changes to the working methods of the Convention can only be considered when the impact in terms of finances and staff, both at the level of WHC and advisory bodies, has been calculated;*
- *We suggest that budgets foreseen for catastrophes at the level of the different cultural conventions and programmes need to be considered transversally;*
- *In accordance with the recommendation of the Bern 3 conference: develop coordinated actions on World Heritage and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), cf. Decision*

45COM7.2, and make dedicated funding available through the GEF (Global Environment Facility) to support inscription of prioritized natural world heritage proposals in line with the target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF);

- Possibly encouraging that National Commissions play a fundraising role?

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Belgium would like to echo what IUCN mentioned in its report to the Committee at 45COM:*

“IUCN is therefore of the view that a fundamental rethink is needed regarding the operation of the Convention, including its governance arrangements; the frequency and length of Committee meetings; the timelines and methods for the evaluation process, the implementation of upstream advice; and most importantly (but of least current attention) the systematic support needed for the conservation of World Heritage properties, including, as top priority those on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and the related issue of partnership development and fundraising. Transcending all of these issues is the need to look at the financing, capacity, effectiveness and working methods of the World Heritage Convention as a whole, including all of the current and potential sources of budget available, noting that the majority of the present funding is outside the World Heritage Fund”.

Doc. 45COM-5B, §139

On that basis, we suggest the following:

- *World Heritage Committee meetings need to be rethought completely:*
 - *Disproportioned mobilisation of people and money (with a larger budget than the WH Fund!) while not all state parties and other relevant stake holders can afford to be there, e.g. many NGOs are not;*
 - *Committee deviating from advisory body opinions should be required to provide scientific justification;*
 - *NGOs and other (potentially) relevant parties have no formal voice (they only get to speak after the debate), when it has no impact;*
- *Site managers do not have enough voice in the Convention, yet they are the ones who take care of our world heritage on a daily basis. We need to integrate them better.*
- *Financing of advisory bodies needs to be looked at, considering they are under-funded. This underfunding has consequences:*
 - *Advisory bodies have too little capacity to do their work, which leads to unreasonable/unacceptable delays;*
 - *They also have no room whatsoever to invest in a good dialogue, let alone to do extra studies;*
 - *They can't pay their experts sufficiently, which may lead to good experts dropping out (while we should strive for the best).*
 - *Extra money for advisory bodies should also ensure that they can create space for proper/continuous support to member states and site managers. That real and continuous dialogue is also the first step in capacity building, which is perhaps even more valuable than expensive training sessions.*
- *State of conservation (SOC) must take centre stage again:*
 - *The main focus today is on nominations, but challenges in general (e.g. climate change) and specific World Heritage issues have only increased. Today, the annual committee session deals with 'only' 150 or so SOC's (the vast majority of them*

without discussion). It is problematic as there are more than 150 WH properties/year with SOC-issues.

- *Also, the absence of complaints in no way means that everything is going fine. And WH properties where things are going well also have something to tell the rest of the world (e.g. sharing good practices). There is a need for a systematic periodic visit (e.g. every 10 years), by an impartial body, from a positive angle. But this comes at a cost, so it can only be implemented following a substantial increase of the regular budget.*
- *Perception of Danger List must reverse: while the idea behind that sub-list was actually meant to be positive - 'those on that List get extra support and resources', it unfortunately has received a negative connotation. Reframing therefore seems necessary, for instance by providing a subset of lists within the statutory Danger List:*
 - *A limited list of sites at risk of losing recognition;*
 - *A positively framed broader 'list of sites seeking international support'**Formally, all these sites would of course still be on the Danger List. But in its communication, the WHC and state party involved can be more nuanced, and thus put forward a more positive story.*
- *In a context of international solidarity and cooperation, it would actually be interesting to put more effort into learning from each other, sharing experiences, etc. We should focus much more on this, both actively (e.g. network meetings, workshops, etc.) and passively (e.g. putting HIAs made for a particular world heritage on the website). That too is a form of capacity building.*

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Submitted by:

BRAZIL

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

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Submitted by: Brazil

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Brazil proposes the establishment of different limits for the presentation of nominations. Countries with less than 10 recognized sites should be able to present more than 1 nomination per year.*
- *In order to promote the recognition of a larger number of natural sites, contribute to global preservation efforts, as well to enhance the balance of the List, Brazil proposes the establishment of a fast-track for sites, in the developing world, already recognized as biosphere reserves and as UNESCO Global Geoparks.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Regarding the additional bureaucratic instrument of the preliminary assessment, Brazil proposes*
 - A. to make it voluntary, considering that States parties have different capabilities in this regard;*
 - B. to simplify its form, reducing the length and number of fields to be filled in, considering that the form replicates all the fields of the nomination form and anticipates a series of complex issues to a very preliminary phase, serving as a buffer that will compromise the workload from less developed heritage institutes.*
 - C. To make it widely accessible, given the opportunity to states parties present more than one simplified pre-assessment request per year in order to build a list of potential nominations, as well as to have guarantees against possible negative pre-assessments.*
 - D. To consider sites included in national tentative lists until 2024 ready for nomination, without the need for voluntary pre-assessment, until 2030.*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Brazil proposes the establishment a governing council, with elected members, with due attention to geographical balance, for all the advisory bodies of the 1972 Convention, taking into account the positive experience of the evaluation body of the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Brazil is concerned that countries with a large number of recognized sites impose a greater monitoring burden over UNESCO, which needs to be compensated accordingly. For this reason, the country proposes the creation of a compensatory voluntary mechanism within the World*

Heritage Fund, to be paid by member-states in accordance with the number of World Heritage Sites within their territory (either national or transnational), and in proportion to respective national contributions, in order to fund nominations from the developing world and the establishment or development of management plans. Each recognized site could increase a country's contribution, for example, by + 0,1 percent. For instance: with 23 sites, Brazil would pay, in total, 1,23 percent of its regular contribution to UNESCO budget to the World Heritage Fund, instead of only 1 percent.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

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Submitted by:

CANADA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Canada

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *The Working Group needs to hear more directly from those that are underrepresented on the World Heritage List to better understand the challenges faced in identifying potential sites that meet the criteria and preparing successful nominations. It would also be important to understand challenges associated with conserving and protecting existing sites.*
- *It would be helpful to have more contributions from experts and stakeholders on ways to reduce gaps in representation. Given the timeline and potential challenges in having experts participate in person, it would be beneficial to have a group of experts with wide-ranging expertise, ensuring diverse geographical representation, prepare a report that could inform the work of the Working Group, looking in particular at possible revisions to the definition/concept of Outstanding Universal Value.*
- *It is of key importance that the voices of Indigenous representatives are heard as some of the challenges encountered by Indigenous sites are similar to those faced by underrepresented (sub)regions (e.g., Definition of OUV, concepts of authenticity and integrity, etc). In order to ensure accessibility and broad representation, an electronic survey could be circulated to members of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage to solicit input.*
- *The preparation and update of gap analyses and thematic studies should focus on identifying areas where capacity is lacking; barriers to identifying potential sites; and what the deterrents are for some communities to engaging with the Convention. This would help in identifying solutions and would inform the strategy moving forward. These analyses and studies should be done at a subregional level to ensure perspectives from smaller and more isolated areas are included. These analyses should not be limited to the number of sites in each country or region, but also include the types of sites on the list.*
- *The definition of OUV must be reviewed and updated to better reflect the realities and values of many sites that do not fit within the current framework (i.e., nature vs. culture, tangible vs. intangible, etc).*
- *To prevent barriers to successful nominations, it is imperative that reviewers with relevant expertise to the proposed site are sought to conduct the review of the dossier. This will ensure the value of the site as outlined in the dossier can be appreciated, and accurately and fairly assessed.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Any capacity building activities proposed should be done based on gap analyses and thematic studies that clearly identify what is lacking.*
- *Low-cost solutions to building capacity should be explored – including sharing knowledge and expertise in informal and virtual settings, and encouraging and facilitating communication and*

relationship building between countries with more experience and expertise navigating the World Heritage system and those who have less experience.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *It is critical that technical evaluations are done by experts with relevant and appropriate expertise to the nominated site.*
- *The Preliminary Assessment process could be used as an opportunity to better understand the breadth of potential site types and values that may not readily fit the current criteria but are worthy of consideration and could inform revisions to the Definition of OUV, Operating Guidelines, etc. Submissions to the Preliminary Assessment process could also help identify gaps in the areas of expertise in the Advisory Bodies.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *The requirement for hard copies of nominations should be reconsidered in favour of electronic submissions, as this would be one way to simplify the process and reduce costs.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *The important work of this Working Group should continue beyond the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee, as there remains a substantial amount of work to be done. The General Assembly should also have the opportunity to review any proposals prior to them being adopted.*

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Submitted by:

COLOMBIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Colombia.

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

Proposal:

- It is suggested to organize workshops in regions where there are no sites listed in the Heritage World List, in collaboration with advisory bodies such as ICOMOS and IUCN. These workshops should focus on developing a methodology centered on the importance of conservation, rather than just the inscription of sites on the list. Additionally, the workshops could help improve the sense of responsibility among the site managers.
- Desarrollar talleres a través de los cuerpos consultivos (ICOMOS e UICN) en los territorios que cuentan con una baja representación de sitios en la Lista de Patrimonio Mundial; este taller debería enfocarse en una metodología que permita entender la importancia de la conservación de los sitios, más allá de la inscripción en la lista, al igual que la responsabilidad de la comunidad en torno a ellos.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

Proposal:

- It is suggested that exchanges of management experiences of world heritage sites be conducted periodically, starting every two months. These exchanges should be organized by topics, such as mixed sites in Latin America and the Caribbean, or management of cultural and community tourism in world heritage sites. The presentations should be made by local site managers and widely disseminated to the States Parties.
- Desarrollar periódicamente (iniciando cada dos meses) intercambios de experiencias de gestión de los sitios de patrimonio mundial organizados por temas (por ejemplo: sitios mixtos en América Latina y El Caribe; gestión de turismo cultural y comunitario en sitios de patrimonio mundial; etc.) mediante presentaciones que realicen los gestores locales de los sitios para su amplia difusión a los Estados Parte

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

Proposal:

- Category 2 Centers (C2C) have the potential to enhance capacity building. These centers can organize workshops within the surrounding regions since most of them have a scope that extends beyond their country's boundaries. This idea is closely linked with proposal number two.
- The proposal above could work with organizations associated with UNESCO, such as Ruritage or others.

- A través de los Centros categoría 2 se podría implementar un desarrollo de capacidades de los gestores del sitio; estos centros podrían ejecutar diferentes talleres, teniendo en cuenta que su alcance regional, esta propuesta puede complementarse con la propuesta número dos. También, se podría realizar lo mismo con organizaciones adscritas a la UNESCO, por ejemplo, en Ruritage.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal:*
- The open-ended working group's purpose is to submit its report and conclusions to the next 46th session of the World Heritage Committee, which will take place in July. Nevertheless, additional time is necessary to analyze the convention's issues more deeply.
- El propósito de este grupo de trabajo abierto tiene como objetivo entregar los resultados en la próxima sesión 46 del Comité de Patrimonio Mundial en el mes de julio. No obstante, se considera necesario expandir el tiempo de trabajo del mismo dado que, el tiempo fue muy corto para poder realizar un análisis profundo de los problemas de la convención.

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Submitted by:

CZECHIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Czechia

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Proposal:*
- **Update the gap analysis with a focus on underrepresented categories of heritage including the indigenous people narratives and looking into synergies with other conventions and relevant programmes (e. g. Geoparks).**
- **Propose mechanisms aiming at strengthening compliance with the code of conduct, despite its voluntary nature.**
- **States parties should be encouraged to provide the WHC and the advisory bodies with preliminary comparative studies they previously developed as part of the submitted nomination dossiers. National committees of Advisory bodies should be encouraged to provide existing thematic studies with national or regional scope that could be further explored.**
- **Call on State parties and encourage the regional harmonization of tentative lists with the support of national committees of Advisory bodies and/or category 2 centres.**

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Proposal:*
- **Simplify the nomination file and take into account the information already provided in the preliminary assessment. Consider introducing word limits and/or multiple choices where possible.**
- **Focus capability building initiatives on underrepresented categories of heritage based on the updated gap analysis.**
- **Provide examples of good practices in the field of international cooperation aiming at building capacities. Explore possibilities of mechanisms of coordinated/parallel nominations of well- and underrepresented states/categories of heritage that will foster international cooperation.**
- **Make available and accessible on the webpage of the WHC comparative studies from the submitted nomination documentation as inspiration for State Parties.**

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Proposal:*
- **Strengthen existing structures with a focus on underrepresented regions/categories identified by the updated gap analysis.**

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal:*
- **Strongly encourage all member states to pay their assessed contributions and to provide voluntary contributions.**

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal:*
- **Extend the mandate of the OEWG and submit the recommendations to the GA in 2025 for a possible adoption.**

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

ECUADOR

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (State Party)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

It is important to identify the gaps so that measures to protect all sites of Outstanding Universal Value. This could involve conducting thematic studies and gap analyses by the involved States.

It is crucial to improve the socialization and dissemination mechanisms of the 1972 Convention and its instruments. This could involve conducting awareness campaigns, workshops, and seminars to increase awareness about the importance of world heritage protection.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

To ensure the effective conservation of World Heritage properties, guidelines and best practices for the management and conservation of properties could be developed. These guidelines could be shared with the States Parties to help them protect and conserve their properties effectively.

To promote the development of effective capacity-building measures, workshops and training programs could be organized for the States Parties. These programs could focus on the preparation of nominations for the World Heritage List, as well as on understanding and implementing the World Heritage Convention and related instruments.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

The service providers such as ICCROM, ICOMOS, IUCN, could help strengthen the implementation of trainings, the development of instruments and guides, and support the

States Parties in the development of indicative listing files. These institutions could also promote research focused on the particularities, environments, and contexts of each region of the world and contribute with specific guidelines for each of them.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

Promoting partnerships with international organizations, private companies, foundations, and local governments can help encourage the necessary resources for the nomination process. These partnerships can provide funding, expertise, and logistical support.

Crowdfunding can be an effective way to attract new sources of support. Crowdfunding platforms can allow individuals and organizations around the world to contribute to the nomination process.

Companies can be incentivized to contribute to the nomination process as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. This can not only provide funding but also increase visibility and public support for the nomination.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

It is essential to work on the continuous improvement of the Convention's implementation. This could involve reviewing and updating existing policies and procedures, as well as introducing new initiatives and programs that support the Convention's objectives.

Strengthening technical, scientific, and traditional skills for heritage conservation is a crucial aspect. This could involve organizing training and capacity-building programs, as well as promoting research and innovation in the field of heritage conservation.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

FRANCE

Groupe de travail à composition non limitée en relation avec la Décision 45 COM 11

Contribution écrite en vue de la troisième réunion du groupe de travail à composition non limitée

Soumise par : FRANCE

I. Envisager les améliorations nécessaires pour réduire l'écart de représentation des États parties sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et améliorer l'équilibre de la Liste :

- Recenser tous les mécanismes existants au sein de l'UNESCO pour aider les pays qui en ont besoin
- Encourager les discussions au sein des groupes régionaux sur les typologies patrimoniales

II. Proposer des solutions aux exigences de l'évaluation technique, y compris l'amélioration des activités de renforcement des capacités :

- Renforcer le dialogue avec les organisations consultatives avec des échanges réguliers durant les évaluations....

III. Étudier la possibilité de faire appel à des prestataires de service supplémentaires :

- Cette proposition est trop compliquée et coûteuse, la solution serait d'augmenter les budgets des organisations consultatives.
- Demander aux organisations consultatives de recruter d'autres experts avec plus de spécialités

IV. Proposer des solutions durables aux exigences financières du processus de proposition d'inscription pour mettre en œuvre ce qui précède, y compris l'analyse préliminaire :

- Demander aux organes concernés de sanctuariser le budget destiné aux organisations consultatives
- ...

V. Considérer le mandat et les méthodes de travail pour une extension de ce groupe de travail à composition non limitée, afin de lancer une réflexion fondamentale sur le fonctionnement de la Convention du patrimoine mondial :

- La réflexion entamée par ce groupe de travail et les pistes de travail dégagées permettront d'améliorer le fonctionnement de la Convention.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

GABON



Groupe de travail à composition non limitée
en relation avec la Décision 45 COM 11

Contribution écrite en vue de la 3^{ème} réunion du groupe de travail à composition non limitée.

Soumise par : Gabon

I. Envisager les améliorations nécessaires pour réduire l'écart de représentation des États parties sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et améliorer l'équilibre de la Liste :

- Proposition 1 : créer un réseau d'experts internationaux de haut niveau, spécifiquement dédié à la sensibilisation et à la formation pour les États sous-représentés. Ce réseau pourrait organiser des missions dans les pays concernés et fournir un soutien direct pour la préparation des dossiers de candidature ;
- Proposition 2 : encourager la mise en place de partenariats entre les États parties bien représentés et les États sous-représentés, en permettant le transfert de connaissances et l'échange de bonnes pratiques dans la préparation des dossiers de candidature.

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II. Proposer des solutions aux exigences de l'évaluation technique, y compris l'amélioration des activités de renforcement des capacités :

- Proposition 1 : mettre en place un dispositif de médiation scientifique pour les États parties qui rencontrent des difficultés dans la préparation de leur dossier de candidature. Ce dispositif pourrait être géré par des experts indépendants et permettrait de résoudre les problèmes scientifiques et techniques rencontrés dans le processus d'évaluation ;
- Proposition 2 : améliorer le Réseau Mondial d'information sur le patrimoine mondial (WHIN), en : encourageant la participation active des experts nationaux et internationaux pour renforcer la collaboration et l'échange de bonnes pratiques, en mettant à disposition des outils de communication en temps réel, tels que des forums de discussion ou des espaces de travail collaboratifs, pour faciliter l'échange d'informations et de connaissances.

III. Étudier la possibilité de faire appel à des prestataires de service supplémentaires :

- Proposition 1 : développer un programme de certification pour les prestataires de services, afin de garantir la qualité et la crédibilité de leurs interventions dans le processus de préparation des dossiers de candidature.

Etendre le processus d'évaluation pour les prestataires de services, en permettant une évaluation continue et systématique de la qualité de leurs prestations. Cela permettrait de garantir un niveau

de qualité constant et durable et de renforcer la confiance des États parties dans le processus d'inscription.

- Proposition 2 : créer une base de données des experts et consultants indépendants spécialisés dans le domaine du patrimoine mondial, afin de faciliter l'accès aux compétences et aux connaissances nécessaires pour les États parties.

IV. Proposer des solutions durables aux exigences financières du processus de proposition d'inscription pour mettre en œuvre ce qui précède, y compris l'analyse préliminaire :

- Proposition 1 : Crowdfunding: encourager les campagnes de financement participatif (crowdfunding) pour soutenir des projets de conservation et de protection du patrimoine mondial. Cela pourrait permettre de mobiliser un grand nombre de donateurs individuels et de générer des financements supplémentaires.
- Proposition 2 : établir des partenariats avec des industries culturelles, comme le cinéma, la musique ou les jeux vidéo, pour intégrer le patrimoine mondial dans leurs productions, ce qui permettrait de non seulement de générer des revenus additionnels pour sa conservation, mais aussi d'accroître les connaissances du plus grand nombre en matière de patrimoine mondial.

V. Considérer le mandat et les méthodes de travail pour une extension de ce groupe de travail à composition non limitée, afin de lancer une réflexion fondamentale sur le fonctionnement de la Convention du patrimoine mondial :

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- Proposition 1 : organiser des consultations ouvertes avec l'ensemble des parties prenantes, y compris les populations locales, pour rassembler des avis et des propositions visant à améliorer la mise en œuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial ;
- Proposition 2 : créer une commission indépendante, composée d'experts internationaux, pour mener une étude approfondie sur les défis et les opportunités du patrimoine mondial, et proposer des recommandations pour une meilleure mise en œuvre de la Convention de 1972.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

GERMANY

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Germany

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Updating the Gap-Analysis* with a focus on underrepresented categories of heritage including the indigenous peoples' narratives and aspects of intangible heritage: Regarding the importance of a better understanding of the gaps for credibility and representativity updating the ICOMOS "Filling the Gaps" study would be considered useful. Updating could include simplifying the study (e.g., focus on typologies, chronology and regions, include considerations on natural, cultural and mixed sites as well as cultural landscapes), a systematic analysis of potential heritage of OUV in under-represented countries and guidance on gaps that continue to exist and that should be prioritized in future to reduce gaps and enhance the representativity.
Question: How was the Study 2004 financed? Could the WHC provide a cost estimate, and is there a possibility to allocate a budget from the regular budget?
- *Additional thematic/comparative studies and accessibility:* Concerning personnel and financial constraints, states parties could be encouraged to provide the WHC and the advisory bodies with preliminary comparative studies that were prepared for, e.g., nominations. The possibilities of engaging ICOMOS national committees to provide additional studies could be explored including guidance by IUCN/ICOMOS on topics. Comparative analysis of existing World Heritage sites could be made more easily accessible on the website of the World Heritage Centre to provide guidance on specific typologies and regions
- *Revision of the TL format:* Regarding the importance of TL entries for credibility and for the preparation of comparative studies, it could be helpful could to include the standardized provision of information regarding typology, chronology, and region (e.g., by ticking a box) for a better understanding. This also may foster regional harmonization of tentative lists.
- *Explore possibilities of twinning/linkage:* A background document of the World Heritage Centre would be helpful to understand what is needed and how State Parties could implement these concepts. States Parties could be encouraged to share their experiences and best practices with twinning projects including experiences in other cultural fields which could be used as examples and adapted to World Heritage sites and nominations.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Simplify the nomination format* including information already provided in the preliminary assessment, focussing on information, providing templates, and introducing word limits for all chapters: A more simply nomination format could provide a mechanism to reduce complexity and costs of nominations files. Nomination Dossiers should be an argument why the proposed property meets criteria, has authenticity and integrity and protection. A way forward could be to reduce redundant information, provide templates following existing tools (attributes/values, comparative analysis according to filling the gaps), deletion of chapters (e.g., 3.3 as SOUV statement is proposed). Limit word numbers could be included for all chapters, and proposals could be included to simplify layout requirements.
- *Strengthen the PA process:* The PA process is a good process that enhances dialogue and improves the quality of nominations. To create a better understanding of the process, the WHC,

ICOMOS and IUCN could offer short online-meetings on a regular basis for all SPs. The dates could be announced on the website.

- *Updating of the World Heritage Nomination Resource Manual:* Updating would complement the already updated toolkits. The manual provides useful information in particular for practitioners. Voluntary contributions by SPs could be encouraged.
- *Development of structured capacity building programme (medium term):* A clear understanding of what is needed and what is considered as successful and not successful would be helpful as there are quite a lot of activities ongoing. Gaps in existing activities could be evaluated, e.g., by a survey among state parties to define a way how to proceed and to develop activities for a constant systematic programme of activities on all levels and by the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the State Parties. Activities for under-represented countries should be prioritized. The evaluation could also provide guidance for State Parties to support the activities and programmes. Administrative arrangements to enable capacity building activities should be not to complex.
- *Explore possibility of short-term capacity building activities:* To address needs short-term, the possibility of introducing online capacity building programmes on specific topics on a regular basis (e.g., Upstream, PA, TL and nomination procedures) could be considered. Technical experts (and/or universities, etc.) of State Parties could act as multipliers and partners and support regular implementation. Young professionals could be involved. Train the trainers might be an option to support the activities of ICCROM and the World Heritage Centre and to reduce workload.
- *Promote educational activities:* As the lack of awareness of the importance of heritage seems to a potential reason for lack of capacities, the SPs should provide information on the implementation of educational programmes in the nomination file. This is not yet requested and may allow to shift the focus from tourism to community involvement and the potential benefits of inscription beyond tourism.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Strengthen existing structures:* Regarding personnel and financial constraints new structures should be avoided. Potential to improve existing practice should be identified, e.g., with regards to guarantee full representativity and unbiased decision-making.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Encourage State Parties:* to pay their contributions to the World Heritage Fund, voluntary contributions for PA and nominations as well as additional activities and statutory tasks.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- Extend the mandate of the OEWG (46. WHC): The shift of the focus from nominations to conservation, the notion of OUV including the establishment of expert meeting, and the workload of the World heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies could be proposed as part of the mandate. Submission of the recommendations to the GA in 2025 for a possible adoption.
- *Review the Strategic Action Plan 2012-2022 and the related implementation:* to clear identify the potential for a way ahead and avoid discussion that will fail (by 46. WHC meeting)

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

GRENADA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: GRENADA

Note: The following proposals have been prepared in cooperation with the Permanent Delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Although part of the proposals of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, they do not include all of the latter's proposals.

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

A- Proposals addressed to States Parties

- 1) To promote the establishment of a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, States Parties are requested, if their heritage is well represented, to link each of their nominations with one or two nominations presented by a State Party whose heritage is under-represented or non-represented; this entails full support for the whole process of the preparation of the nomination file until the submission of both sites at the same session; *(based on WH Operational Guidelines, paragraph 59 c))*
- 2) States Parties should make efforts to update their tentative list especially if they are under or non-represented. All States Parties are invited to introduce this information in the periodic reporting.

B- Proposals addressed to the World Heritage Committee

- 1) Nominations of States Parties, former Members of the Committee, who accepted on a voluntary basis not to have a nomination reviewed by the Committee during their mandate will have their priority placed after paragraph 61c (ii)¹ of the Operational Guidelines. *(WH Operational Guidelines, paragraph 61 c (xii))*
- 2) Review the order of priorities concerning examination of nominations in Paragraph 61c) of the Operational Guidelines.
- 3) The Committee shall use the results of the regional periodic reporting to establish regional and sub-regional operational programmes with specific targets to

¹ *61c (ii) nominations of properties submitted by States Parties having up to 3 properties inscribed on the List*

achieve the five Cs: Credibility of the List, Conservation of the properties already on the list, Capacity building in States Parties, Communication and awareness-raising about the Convention and Communities involvement.

C- Proposals addressed to the Secretariat

- 1) Act in a manner consistent with the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage. This includes transparent and neutral processes. Improve the direct dialogue between the representatives of States Parties and the Secretariat. *(Based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage);*
- 2) To facilitate opportunities including twinning and access to resources to give support to non-represented and under-represented States Parties notably for the development or update of the tentative list as well as for the preparation of the nomination files.

D- Proposals addressed to the Advisory Bodies

- 1) Bearing in mind the gap in the World Heritage list between States Parties well represented inscribing sites regularly or each year and States Parties under-represented and non-represented, the Advisory Bodies shall strengthen their efforts to respect the principle of fair and equitable geographical representation, involving regional experts familiar with the subject; make public the methodology and existing policies of evaluation of the nominations, the list of panel members and criteria of selection of the field mission experts, the panel members and advisors; to establish dialogue with the States Parties to better clarify the additional information required. *(Based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, paragraph 14)*
- 2) Recalling the Advisory nature of the Advisory Bodies, make an effort to take into consideration the diversity of the expertise views based on professional, geographical and cultural perspectives as well as the need to protect World Heritage and balance its protection with sustainable development, while taking note of the Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development. *(Based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, paragraph 15)*
- 3) The Advisory Bodies shall strengthen their efforts, while evaluating the state of conservation reports of under-represented States Parties, to take into consideration unpredictable social situations as well as conflict, post conflict, natural disasters and pandemic crises. They shall recommend benchmarks to achieve a sustainable conservation of the property.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

1) **Proposal for the technical evaluation requirements:**

The presentation of the additional information to the nomination file within the deadlines will allow the Advisory Bodies to evaluate this information and could contribute to a review of their first technical evaluation.

2) **Proposal for improving capacity building activities:**

Capacity building could be developed at many levels through the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and also between States Parties, and adapted to the specific needs of the States Parties covering among others:

- Awareness raising campaigns for the preservation of the heritage for communities and youth;
- Institutional capacity building for public policies development;

- The preparation of the tentative lists;
- The preparation of the nomination files;
- The development of management plans;
- The implementation of conservation measures;
- The preparation of periodic reporting;

This should be tailored on the regional periodic reports analysis.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

Before using additional service providers, we need to know who decides on the distribution of the dossiers? Are the evaluators chosen according to the nature of the site, its history, its typology?

According to ICOMOS and IUCN, their services have been enlarged with international experts from all regions. This is necessary to evaluate sites from all regions.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal ...*
- ...

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal ...*
- ...

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Jointly submitted by:

States Parties from

GROUP Va

**namely Comoros, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria,
Rwanda, South Africa, Togo and Zambia**

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM II**

Compilation of Submissions by Group V(a) Member States (Comoros, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, and Zambia) in Advance of the 3rd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Date: 10th May, 2024

Submitted by Ambassador Prof. Peter Ngure (Vice Chair of the Group V(a))

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap in the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

The World Heritage Convention is considered a universally ratified Convention. To date, 1199 sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List of which 9% are in the Africa region. Yet Africa accounts for approximately 20% of the global landmass. To match the universal nature of the Convention, at a minimum, the Africa region needs to be able to double its current rate of nomination and more, as the continent hosts 54 countries. Urgent measures are therefore required to bridge the gap for a truly universal reflection of world heritage in various regions. Eleven countries in Africa have no single site inscribed and listed by the World Heritage Committee.

While commending the achievements of States Parties in the implementation of a Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced, and Credible World Heritage List as adopted by the Committee at its 18th session (Phuket, 1994), the following essential improvements are envisaged to reduce the gap in representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and to improve the balance of the List:

- Expand the capacity within the Convention to process more nominations and support conservation, to enable State Parties, to increase nominations as well as conservation processes.
- Organize awareness-raising meetings for a period of two years, from 2025 to 2027, in each State Party that does not have any property inscribed on the World Heritage List. The meeting would focus on the elaboration of the Tentative List in the nomination file of high quality with the conviction that the Outstanding Universal Value and all the attributes of the site it contains will be well preserved and transmitted to future generations. These meetings, which in principle will be regional or even sub-regional, should be organized by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with the States Parties concerned and ICCROM as an advisory body.
- Encourage States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre only Tentative Lists with under-represented themes, except countries with no properties on the World Heritage List. However, clarification on thematic studies and classifications should be widely published for implementation by States Parties.
- Encourage good practices and experience of over-represented countries to improve the World Heritage Lists of under-represented countries.

- Adaptation of heritage management and evaluation approaches to regional and local contexts.
- Consider the dynamic nature and language of local legal protection.
- Adaptation of the management plan according to local realities.
- Review the criteria of authenticity and inscription that are currently deemed “Eurocentric”.
- Promote the creation of world heritage by indigenous peoples.
- Give priority to States Parties with few (1 to 5 properties) or no World Heritage properties so that they have at least one (01) property inscribed by 2027.
- Work with States Parties in the process of revising the Tentative Lists while emphasizing the upstream identification of the attributes of the OUV.
- Invite States Parties to present different typologies of properties on their Tentative Lists.
- Explore the possibility of extending the number of nominations from underrepresented or unrepresented countries to 2 until 2032.
- Streamline the current format of nominations.
- Encourage collaboration between States for the extension or serial inscription of transboundary or transnational properties.
- Review of Tentative List, Upstream Process, and Preliminary Assessment for alignment and to respond to the purpose of reducing the gap of representation and enhancing the balance.
- The role of the Tentative List must add value to closing the gap and strengthening capacity building. The role of Advisory Bodies in this process should also contribute to capacity building.
- Re-consider paragraph 59 of the Operational Guidelines to be mandatory and enforceable by the Advisory Bodies.
- Review of paragraph 61 of the Operational Guidelines to address the concerns of underrepresentation of sites (themes) and regions.
- Consider incentives for bilateral and multilateral cooperation mentioned in paragraph 60.
- Focus on thematic studies and a clear plan of implementation at international, regional, and state party levels is critical.
- Need to clarify the difference and the value between the Upstream process, Tentative Listing, and Preliminary Assessment, with respect to Paragraph 122 of the Operational Guidelines.
- Adaptation and implementation of the Convention to African realities.
- Spirit of the convention: need to reposition the understanding of the Convention, inscription on the list, and safeguarding.
- Decolonising the Convention to emphasize regional particularities.
- Revise Criteria in the Operational Guidelines number 2 and 4 where examples focus on monuments and buildings.
- Update and adapt the Operational guidelines to contain models of dossiers, categories, different kinds of sites, and nomination dossiers that have been admitted.

- Improve capacity building for developing Member States, which are less represented on the World Heritage List. Innovation for financing, to increase assistance in funding nomination processes should be considered. We strongly recommend more private sector participation and a financing dialogue to bring more innovation to the finance and assistance mechanism.
- Preliminary Assessment should not be another layer of the process that will further increase the gap in the representation of States Parties on the WHL. The Preliminary Assessment should be an instrument to accelerate the transition from Representative List to submitting nomination files. The expiry time from the Preliminary Assessment to the proposed nomination should be strictly respected. There must also be a clearer term on what basis member states applications for Preliminary Assessments are accepted or rejected.
- Conduct targeted outreach programs to underrepresented regions and State Parties, facilitating capacity-building initiatives to assist them in preparing nominations that meet the technical evaluation requirements.
- Establish mentorship programs between experienced and less represented States Parties that could enhance their nomination processes.
- Only allow submissions for nominations from State Parties that do not have or have very few World Heritage sites for the 2025 Committee session.
- Noting that even though 97% of States Parties to the Convention have established a Tentative List a number of them have not updated and resubmitted their list for over 10 years as is encouraged in the Operational Guidelines. We, therefore, propose that financial and expert assistance be availed to the state parties that are underrepresented on the World Heritage list to update their lists. It is envisaged that updating the tentative lists will contribute to enhancing the balance of the World Heritage list.
- The adoption of a Declaration on the criteria and authenticity of African cultural, natural, and intangible heritage. This declaration would be in line with the 1964 Venice Charter and a "conceptual extension" (Nara document. Pg.3). "All cultures and societies express themselves in forms and modes of expression, both tangible and non-tangible, which constitute their heritage. These forms and procedures must be respected" Doc. Nara pg.7
- Undertake specific regional gap analysis tailored to identify the gap in heritage management approaches specific to African cultures.
- Determine the objective/purpose of the world heritage list: a symbolic representation and selection of properties of outstanding universal value, or a list that is open to a universal inscription of all sites of outstanding universal value to humanity? If inscriptions are limited to symbolic representations of categories of sites, what alternatives are to be made available to sites of similar representation inscribed later in time, but that bear a stronger representation of OUV to humanity than earlier inscribed sites?

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity-building activities:

- Increase Africa's presence on the Expert's list of the Evaluation Bodies.

- Acceleration of targeted, relevant, and structured capacity-building activities, notably for underrepresented regional experts.
- Enhancement of regional and local expertise.
- Enhancement of traditional expertise (indigenous protection practice).
- Use a dual assessment (regional and international).
- Technical evaluation requirements and processes need to be clear throughout the nomination process.
- Paragraph 76 to be revisited, it may be too late to host training workshops to assist under-represented States in methods of their Tentative List and nominations, only at that stage. This training should be considered much earlier.
- Determination of a site for potential OUV including integrity and/or authenticity, comparative analysis, management, etc. may be considered at the Tentative List stage so that any concerns on Capacity Building are identified and addressed earlier. Also see paragraph 122 (b) of the Operational Guidelines.
- The evaluation of a property by an expert from the advisory body from the region where the property is located for two main reasons: to strengthen the evaluation capacity at the regional level and to reduce the cost of evaluation compared to an expert from another region. The exception would be the lack of an expert in the region in a field for which the property will be technically evaluated, hence;
- Capacity-building: Improving capacity-building activities, especially among young people, should in principle focus on the development of the Tentative List in the nomination file that is of high quality. Indeed, a nomination file for a site has a high potential for success, its evaluation costs less from all points of view: time, human, and financial resources.
- The implementation of the Nice Declaration, in particular concerning the strengthening of the network of African experts so that they can be integrated ICOMOS and IUCN.
- Encourage and support States Parties to establish departments within their universities related to the management and conservation of heritage.
- Strengthen the capacities of young people through an AFRICA 2009-type programme to be called AFRICA 2035, whose strategic objectives would be:
 - Reinforce the achievements of the Africa 2009 Programme;
 - To introduce young Africans to the dynamics of inscription of files on the World Heritage List;
 - Strengthen site management and conservation systems in the face of climate change to ensure that sites are sustainable in the face of the global climate challenge.
- Further strengthen the technical and financial capacities of the structures responsible for preparing nomination files.
- Intensify capacity-building activities (such as those organized with the support of the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) or the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH)) by giving youth and mid-career experts from underrepresented regions the opportunity to take part in the evaluation process.

- Cooperate with institutes or centers that train cultural specialists, particularly in under-represented countries, to offer modules or courses that meet the technical specifications for the inscription of World Heritage properties.
- Invite States Parties with solid experience in the preparation of nomination files to strengthen their cooperation with countries whose heritage is poorly or not represented.
- Develop an open platform on which focal points can exchange experiences or answer any questions they may have from their colleagues.
- Develop comprehensive guidelines and toolkits for States Parties, particularly those with limited experience in preparing nominations. This would include workshops, online resources, and peer-to-peer exchanges to enhance their understanding of the technical evaluation criteria and requirements.
- Improve the understanding of the Convention and its processes by the local community.
- Structured and personalized capacity-building formulas enabling the sustainability of capacity-building programmes, stronger outcomes, and reducing turnover.
- Beneficiaries of capacity-building programmes benefit from the capacity-building programmes by signing contracts to continue in or return to their home institutions for a certain period to put the training into use.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- The Convention began with 20 countries and has increased to ratification by 195 countries today. Given the scope of work, it is important to increase the capacity to adequately evaluate the unfolding and increasing number of (diverse) world heritage sites manifesting due to the universality of the Convention. It is necessary to secure more service providers and to avail of regional institutions with local expertise and in line with pre-determined and established criteria. Option I presented in the Background document will achieve this purpose: **Option I - Accreditation of additional service providers + services budgeted in advance.**
- Strengthen regional capacity building by reinforcing category II regional centers and more institutions engaged in world heritage processes to utilize local knowledge bases.
- Category 2 Centres and Funds, such as the Africa World Heritage Fund (AWHF), are proven examples of capacity-building mechanisms, in building Member States and Experts' knowledge of the intricacies of the Convention, the nomination process, and cooperation around the WHC. We propose more attention and deployment of the potentials of the AWHF by the World Heritage Centre, on capacity building in the African region. In our view, this is a measure to have additional service providers in the area of capacity building around the Convention.
- Conduct a critical analysis of why additional service providers may or may not be necessary.
- Discuss the potential role and value of additional service providers in building capacity, especially at the state-party level.

- Advisory Bodies may also have a programme for experts not currently in the world heritage mainstream in our countries.
- Use regional and local service providers.
- Involvement of regional experts from the African continent
- Facilitate similar expertise of proximity and common experiences.
- Favor long-term services (one-month minimum)
- Explore partnerships with regional organizations, academic institutions, and heritage experts to provide technical assistance and support in the nomination process. This could involve training local experts to conduct evaluations and assessments, thereby reducing reliance on external service providers.
- Reinforce the current service providers with partnerships and financial support to aid them in their work.
- The Committee to call upon Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO that are already contributing to the implementation of the Centre's Programme. E.g. the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and the School of African Heritage (EPA).
 - For Reactive Monitoring Missions and Technical Reviews about Articles 172-174 of the Operational Guidelines (including reviews of Heritage or Environmental Impact Assessments), and;
 - Examination of International Assistance requests.
- Additional service providers may be technical, such as bringing together a group of experts, including those from ICOMOS, ICCROM, and IUCN, or not, for specific topics.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- Reinforcement of the African World Heritage Fund.
- Financial resources made available for the Priority Africa Operational Strategy to be provided to the World Heritage Centre to assist African Member States, that may need it, to cover some costs in their nomination process.
- Establish a dedicated fund within the World Heritage Fund/Category Centers for African World Heritage Fund to support capacity-building activities and technical assistance for underrepresented States Parties. This fund could be supplemented by voluntary contributions from States Parties and other stakeholders committed to addressing the representation gap.
- Review current lengthy, costly, overlapping processes for nominations.
- Consolidate multiple evaluation processes with similar functions before submission of nomination file, by either deleting or combining them to reduce evaluation costs and simplify processes.
- Remove or suspend the implementation of the Preliminary Assessment until its issues are resolved or at least clarified.
- Make the Preliminary Assessment not mandatory for under-represented and non-represented countries.

- According to paragraph 22 (b) “The Decision to prepare a full nomination Dossier regardless of the outcome of the Preliminary Assessment lies with the concerned State Party”. This defeats the purpose given the efforts, time, financial, and human resources constraints of State Parties, Advisory Bodies, and the World Heritage Centre.
- Review of paragraph 61 and ensure enforcement.
- Submission of files with limited word counts in each section, as is the case for the file submitted for inscription on the Representative List of Humanity (2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage).
- Raise awareness among States Parties to pay their arrears which in principle accrue to them for international assistance and the study of the nomination file process.
- Consider incentives for twinning.
- Linking to the web pages of the listed properties to allow donations to be made to the Fund.
- Introduce a mandatory progressive flat-rate contribution per tranche of inscribed properties.
- Pursue Private-Public-Partnerships funding opportunities.
- Develop strategies to encourage State Parties to budget and invest more in World Heritage items.
- Explore innovative fundraiser strategies leveraging network with partners and category II centers.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- The current exercise is a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention.
- Preference is to fast-track and complete the work of the OEWG with practical implementation steps in tandem with an ongoing fundamental reflection, given the 30-year history of efforts to achieve results on the items. The extension of the OEWG mandate and working methods is however necessary until the work is completed. To save time, the proposal is to develop a system whereby some solutions could be operationalized by the 46th World Heritage Committee and other initiatives developed and implemented over time.
- Given the complexity of the World Heritage Convention, its orientation, and its guidelines for better functioning, the open-ended working group should involve:
 - Women experts in the field of World Heritage representing all regions to deepen the reflection on the functioning of the World Heritage Convention fifty years after its adoption.
 - For Africa, more experts such as Lassana Cissé from Mali, Souayibou Varissou from Benin, and Bakonorina Rako including George Abungu could also be further integrated into the reflection process.

- The overall duration of the reflection session on the functioning of the World Heritage Convention could be one year from September 2024. Its report will be presented at the 47th Session of the Committee.
- The means for the achievement of this mission will be put in place by the Committee.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the World Heritage Convention's operation to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing the evolving challenges of heritage conservation and representation. This review should involve consultation with all stakeholders, including States Parties, advisory bodies, and civil society organizations, to explore potential amendments or enhancements to the Convention's mandate and working methods.

Thank you.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

HUNGARY

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Hungary

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *A precise update of the gap analysis would be necessary in order to properly understand the source of the problem.*
- *We are very supportive of the ICOMOS suggestion that the sites should be assessed by geo-cultural regions and the final results of the gap analysis should be based on these regions.*
- *It would be highly recommended that the tentative list should be carefully examined by the State Parties to ensure that all of them are in the right place. It may also be worth considering their relevance for designation in terms of importance.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Proposal ...*
- *...*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Proposal ...*
- *...*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *It would be a huge step forward to simplify the structure and detail of the currently excessive and complicated nomination dossiers, resulting a much clearer, more concise material.*
- *It would also be important for States Parties to submit sufficiently focused nomination material so that the dossier is clear and structured, and adequately reflects the outstanding universal values.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *What would greatly help the working group to run more smoothly would be if a precise schedule of tasks were drawn up, listing which tasks need to be completed by which deadlines....*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

INDIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (22nd and 23rd May 2024)

Submitted by: India

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- Imbalance in representation: The imbalance in the representation is to be interpreted beyond numbers, across categories and typologies. The representation of each state party is also to be judged in its geo-cultural context. For instance, it is clear that Africa is not adequately represented based on the following computational logic:
 - a. There are 1199 properties inscribed on the WH List. Out of these, Africa has 103 properties from 47 states parties or 8.59% of total properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Africa's population is about 1.3 billion (15% of global population). 15% of 1200 would be around 180 properties. It displays an under-presentation of the African region from a geographical point of view.
- Definitions of terms: Can the terms “well-represented” or “under-represented” be quantified/defined objectively? We may also consider the term “adequate representation” that allows the States Parties to ensure that all their properties (cultural, natural or mixed) are “adequately” represented on the Tentative List and consequently on the World Heritage List.
- Similarly, we may try to establish benchmarks for achieving balance in terms of numbers, typologies, categories and equitable geographic representation on the World Heritage List.
- Periodic Revision of Tentative List: The gap or imbalance in the representation in the World Heritage List mirrors the gap in representation in the Tentative List (TL). This could be due to a number of factors including lack of professional capacity, financial constraints and non-revision of the Tentative List for long. Hence periodic revision or revalidation of the Tentative List may be strongly advised at regular intervals. Inclusion of properties on Tentative Lists may be evaluated against existing gaps by the states parties.
- Harmonization of TL: As suggested in the Operational Guidelines para 73, the harmonisation of the Tentative List could be done in a way that underrepresented typologies and categories are encouraged in the transnational nomination. Transnational nominations amongst least or underrepresented state parties may be encouraged and prioritized. Such transnational nominations could bring fresh perspectives and diverse narratives to the World Heritage List.

- The effectiveness of limiting the number of nomination dossiers to increase representativeness should be carefully assessed (Decision 43COM 11A). Limiting the nominations to one per State party per year or any attempt to slow down the number of nominations per year may not be a desirable or effective solution to work towards adequate representation. It is, therefore, India's view that the decision to limit nomination to one per state party a year should be reversed to pre-2017 condition of allowing 2 nominations per state party, provided the second nomination is that of a natural or mixed property.
- Streamlining of Nomination Process: The nomination process may be simplified by merging overlapping tools like Tentative List, Technical Evaluation, Completeness Check, Upstream Process, and Preliminary Assessment. This would encourage broader participation and benefit State Parties with limited capacities and resources.
- Suggestion for a Regional World Heritage Centres & List: A suggestion towards reducing the gap in representation may be to have a Regional World Heritage List of the 6 electoral groups: Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 (GRULAC), Group 4 (ASPAC), Group 5a (Africa) and Group 5b (Arab). Let each group have its own Regional World Heritage Center (RWHC) with regional experts, regional evaluators and regional advisory bodies. Further suggestions in this regard could be as follows:
 - a. RWHC costs would not be borne by UNESCO, but by the member states of that regional group. This would include costs of dossier preparation, nomination, preservation and conservation, periodic reporting, SoC reports, international assistance, emergency assistance, etc.
 - b. Member states of the region can nominate as many of their properties as they have on the RWH List and populate it.
 - c. Every 4 years, the RWHC would be submitted to the World Heritage Committee to be merged into the main WH list.
 - d. This merging of regional lists will significantly reduce the geographic gap and help fulfill regional aspirations.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity-building activities:

- Gap analysis for needs of capacities to be developed, within least represented states parties may be done. States parties that have been recipients of capacity-building activities may provide feedback on challenges faced in the application of capacities/ skills developed.
- Capacity building with a focus on Preparatory Aspects: Activities may be focused on the technical aspects of preparing nomination dossiers, such as, identifying attributes, delineating boundaries and buffer, drafting OUV, preparing management mechanisms, etc.

- Multilingual dissemination of Documents: All resources, guidelines, and training materials can be made available in multiple/local languages to overcome language barriers and make information more accessible.
- Regional Collaborations and Mentorship programs may be established where states parties with successful World Heritage nominations mentor those in the early stages. Dedicated funds could be earmarked for this purpose.
- Category II centres may be further encouraged to undertake capacity-building initiatives within their regions.
- Multi-disciplinary approach may be incorporated into the evaluation of nomination dossiers. This would involve incorporating expertise from various fields such as cultural heritage, natural sciences, social sciences, anthropology, and environmental studies. Additional services may be used here on need basis.
- Periodic reviews may be conducted of the evaluation guidelines being used by Advisory bodies/WHC., in order to make them adapt to evolving understanding, challenges and changes in the world heritage field.
- The whole process of evaluation and reviewing of a nomination dossier by the advisory bodies needs a significant overhaul in terms of making it more transparent than what it is right now. It should become more consultative and less time-consuming. Efforts should be made to reduce the financial implications for evaluation of each nomination dossier.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- At the outset detailed studies need to be carried out to ascertain the necessity for additional service providers. Initially, the effort should be to strengthen the existing three Advisory Bodies by providing them additional budget and to ensure multidisciplinary approach for the evaluation of nomination dossiers.
- In order to ascertain the objectivity of the evaluation of nomination dossiers, we may consider options for decentralising the evaluation process. This could be achieved by using the services of the regional/national level scientific committees of the by the Advisory bodies.
- Additional service providers, if at all required, may be engaged on need basis depending on the nature of nomination dossiers to be evaluated. Their services may be utilised, if at all, to support the three Advisory bodies.
- Category II Centres: The possibility of involving category II centres as additional service providers in the initial stages of preparing the nomination dossier may be explored. This would help in decentralizing the process and reduce the workload of the three existing advisory bodies and the World Heritage Centre. This would also encourage the involvement of regional experts in the process.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- The Secretariat has, in the past, given enough statistics on how expensive has the nomination process become (from the point of view of WHC Secretariat + ABs costs). Much more is spent by a state party for producing exhaustive multi-volume dossiers, expert's fees and for the evaluation of properties proposed for nomination. The recent step of Preliminary Assessment (PA), made mandatory from 2027, adds substantially to the cost, which was not factored in when it was adopted during the 44 COM.
- Preliminary Assessment (PA) should continue to remain voluntary since it shares similarities with other tools/mechanisms such as Draft nominations/technical analysis (completeness check) and the upstream process, and their objectives often overlap. As both these processes are voluntary for a State party, it is suggested that the Preliminary Assessment, being a similar tool, should also remain voluntary. This would also prevent imposing additional financial burdens on states parties, which could deter their participation and representation on the World Heritage List. Making preliminary assessment voluntary allows state parties with the means and interest to opt for it, without disadvantaging others who may not have the resources or the need to do so.
- Preliminary Assessment service should be available for those states parties who wish to adopt this process, at an additional cost. Furthermore, if possible, it should be subsidised or even made free of cost for LDCs / SIDS.
- Revenue maximisation through differential value nominations: Wherein the pre-2017 state may be considered, and a state party may be allowed to submit a second nomination dossier. This could be allowed at a cost, borne by the state party, calculated as per actuals. The second dossier evaluation could be free of charge for the African nations, SIDS and LDCs. The additional funds, thus generated, can be diverted into the World Heritage Fund for different capacity building or conservation-related activities.
- Simplification of Nomination format: The nomination format may be simplified by removing repetitive sections and revising word limits. Using online platforms for submissions of Nomination Dossiers may be considered to make the process more efficient, cost effective and environmentally friendly. This would also help in reducing costs incurred in printing and couriering by states parties in case of referral, deferrals and non-inscription.
- Maximising the brand value: UNESCO may evaluate utilizing the brand value of the WHC for revenue maximisation. For example, the WHC logo may be permitted to be used by companies and corporations on their products who undertake and allocate funds towards funding green energy, sustainable development, preservation and conservation of World Heritage Properties, capacity building programmes and other areas of WH mandate. In exchange for the usage of the WH Logo on their products as a mark of their supporting WH properties, they would need to pay the WHC an annual amount.
- One of the recommendations issued by Sub-group 1 of the ad-hoc working group for Evaluations and Audits on Working Methods was 'to consider the

possibility of organizing a Partners' Forum annually'¹. India feels that by implementing this recommendation potential donors may be brought together to secure additional financial support.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- WH Convention is one of the most important, visible, and successful UNESCO instruments that has helped identify the properties with Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), 1199 till date, that has led to their effective safeguarding and protection. Ratified by 195 states parties, the Convention has turned into an unenviable brand that celebrates the heritage of humanity.
- India feels that it is absolutely critical to start a fundamental reflection on the operation of the WH Convention as well as the Operational Guidelines which has in the last 50 years undergone several revisions.
- However, expanding the mandate of this Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) to start this fundamental reflection would need serious thinking and will be a time-consuming affair. India, therefore, requests the Secretariat to prepare a working document, to be circulated amongst all states parties, that gives a background on the evolution/expansion of the Operational Guidelines, based on critical documents such as various gap analyses studies, various thematic studies, studies on the reflection on the WH Convention carried out every ten years of the implementation of the Convention, etc.

¹ WHC/23/45.COM/11; Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda; Paragraph 11 & Paragraph 39 recommendation 4

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

IRAQ

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (Iraq)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Proposal ...*

It might be useful to discuss that one of the main reasons for the existence of a gap in the World Heritage List, specifically with regards to the number of sites listed for each country, is due to the way that the World Heritage Committee is composited, i.e. the membership in the Committee has a role in the process of inscribing sites in the World Heritage List at some stages of implementing the Convention.

(The 21 members of the Committee nominated more than 30% of the sites listed between 1978 and 2004; in 1979 alone, nearly 70% of the listed sites were presented by a country that was already a member of the Committee. Then this number decreased to about thirty sites presented by member states of the World Heritage Committee in 2002).

Another reason to mention is that the election process within the Committee is affected by many factors that hinder sites' representation process, namely, financial reasons that limit the ability of poor countries to run for membership of the Committee, which has had a negative impact on the level of representation within the Committee to the extent that it has been almost confined to rich countries, and that countries expect to participate in the committee's membership plan in advance to submit more sites or invest more resources in preparing the nomination files.

In addition, the formation of the World Heritage Committee from twenty-one countries in the Convention, in accordance with the text of Article Eight of the Convention, needs to be reconsidered, because this number is small compared to the number of countries acceding to the Convention, which now constitutes almost all the countries in the world (195 countries), in addition to that most of the solutions adopted by the General Assembly of State Parties are still insufficient to achieve fair representation of the membership of the Committee, so it might be useful to propose the following: -.

A - Amending the text of Article (8) of the World Heritage Convention in a way that ensures an increase in the number of the World Heritage Committee members, from (twenty-one) to a maximum of (thirty-six), in

order to improve geographical and cultural representation of various countries of the world in the committee, and prevent the monopoly and control over the aspects of the committee's work and membership, especially with regards to policies related to the Convention.

In the case of the lack of possibility to amend the text of the Convention, we suggest that the term of membership in the committee for each country should be reduced to (two years), for instance, and ensure that this country is not eligible for re-nomination of the Committee's membership unless one or two sessions have passed, in order to pave the way for the entry of other countries to attain membership of the Committee.

B - Providing the necessary assistance (financial and technical) to poor countries that suffer from a lack of material, technical and human resources, to identify and nominate World Heritage sites, and then inscribe them in the World Heritage List, in order to preserve the world heritage in these countries.

C – Working towards achieving equality between the States Parties in terms of representation on the World Heritage List, and avoid imbalance. This is done by calling on countries that have many sites inscribed in the World Heritage List to refrain from submitting any new sites for a specific period of time. Until an acceptable level of equality of representation in the list is achieved in order to ensure the principle of justice and parity amongst state parties.

D - Giving member states of the Convention who do not have sites included in the World Heritage List preferential treatment by providing them with the necessary support to submit their sites and include them in the World Heritage List on an exceptional basis, as all countries and cultures have the right, in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities, to be part of the World Heritage.

E - Working to move away from sites characterized according to a purely architectural vision of the cultural heritage of humanity, and preferring sites characterized by a vision that takes greater account of the anthropological and social dimensions of the site, and recognition of local sites and indigenous people's perceptions of heritage values.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Proposal ...*

The first paragraph of Article (6) of the Convention stipulates that: “The States Parties to this Convention shall endeavor by all appropriate means and in particular by educational and information programs, to strengthen

appreciation and respect by their peoples of the cultural and natural heritage defined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.” This requires the mobilization of all member states to devise and implement National legislations regarding this heritage to identify it and prepare it to be presented on the tentative lists as it constitutes a global heritage, the protection of which requires cooperation between all members of the international community as common heritage of humanity and is not specific to the country that possesses it.

It is noted that the Advisory Bodies do not participate, directly and effectively, in the preparation or review processes of States Parties of the sites in the representative lists, nor in the regional coordination of these lists, under the pretext of a “conflict of interest” of the Advisory Bodies, because they feel that their participation, at this stage, is fundamentally influencing in one way or another, the process of evaluating nominations, for which they are directly and exclusively responsible. This argument, despite the validity of the statement, conflicts with several issues, the most important of which are the following:

A - Identifying heritage sites and preparing representative lists is one of the most important stages of the nomination process because it is considered a basic and main condition for nominating properties to the World Heritage List, and it requires technical ability, experience and skill, which most countries lack despite the availability of these technical expertise and necessary skills in advisory bodies.

B -The World Heritage Committee has established a specific timetable for nominating and evaluating the nominated sites. This strict timetable also has a significant impact as once a certain step in the nomination process is missed, for whatever reason; the next closest opportunity is to consider the nomination again will be at least one year away, and this leads to wasting a lot of time and effort that could have been avoided if the advisory bodies had intervened in the process of preparing the list early. Therefore, we suggest that the advisory bodies work directly with the national authorities in preparing and inventorying the representative lists in order to save time, effort and money, in addition to being an important means of developing the capabilities of countries in the field of identifying world heritage and ensuring its protection.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Proposal ...*

It is noted that the participation of non-governmental bodies in the World Heritage Convention could be further enhanced, given the fact that the Convention deals strictly with governments. moreover, it is worth mentioning that the participation of civil society, stakeholders, or indigenous people in World Heritage processes is emphasized in the operational guidelines, however, optional or non-binding for member states. Thus, in reality, the role of the above-mentioned parties is still below the required level, even though civil society, as a living example, is considered one of the most effective entities on the international arena, as non-governmental organizations lead different roles in the field of World Heritage, and these roles relate sometimes to providing services, and at other times by mobilizing local, national or international actors to support heritage through activities of public awareness campaigns that they carry out. In light of the above, we suggest the following:

Ensuring adequate protection and preservation of World Heritage sites requires the cooperation with governmental, non-governmental, civil society organizations, and indigenous peoples as they are considered to be the entities most in contact with World Heritage sites and they enjoy capacities that they can employ in the preservation process of the World Heritage, thus, the enhancement of partnerships with them serves to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Therefore, we propose that these parties be involved in all World Heritage operations, and allowing them to nominate World Heritage sites, or at least proposing to nominate World Heritage sites independently of governments that may not find it in their interest to nominate these sites for political reasons, or for reasons related to minorities and their status within the country in question.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal ...*

The World Heritage Fund is considered the executive tool that achieves the objectives of the Convention in effectively preserving World Heritage sites, as it is a practical means that finances the preservation and maintenance of these sites. Despite this, the resources stipulated in the Convention to finance the World Heritage Fund are still insufficient in light of the continued expansion and significant sites additions to the World Heritage List without a matching increase in the funds and resources, in addition to the increasing risks to World Heritage sites, whether due to natural or human factors, and the lack of financial resources necessary to finance the World Heritage Fund, requires a reconsideration of the compulsory contributions stipulated in the Convention.

In addition to the above, the financial aid provided by the Fund is still insufficient and does not meet the needs of these World Heritage Sites, especially for poor countries that do not have the necessary resources to meet the requirements of the World Heritage Sites located on their territories. Therefore, we propose the following: -

Working to increase and maximize the resources of the World Heritage Fund, apart from increasing the compulsory contributions provided by States Parties to the Fund, in accordance with the provisions of Articles (17) and (18) of the Convention, through the following:

A - Working towards activating and diversifying partnerships with the private sector, through the sponsoring of activities of governmental agencies during the preparation of the nomination files, and tentative lists, as well as sponsoring conferences and workshops carried out by government agencies related to cultural sites to be included in the World Heritage List. In addition to providing assistance to national and regional centers to train specialists at all levels, in the fields of identifying, preserving, displaying and reviving cultural and natural heritage, and contributing to building the capacities of these countries, as these partnerships enable the private sector to contribute to finding solutions to issues related to the Convention and fulfill its social responsibilities towards it, moreover, the funds returned to the private sector and its professional expertise can help to greatly expand the scope of the Convention's work and increase the strength of its impact, providing financially weak countries with the opportunity to preserve and protect their cultural and natural heritage, which is an indispensable condition for granting the least developed countries that are party to the Convention and to build their capacities in the field of World Heritage, especially with the existence of successful projects in cooperation with the private sector.

B - There is no doubt that placing the World Heritage logo on a site constitutes a great marketing tool, therefore, the inclusion of a specific cultural or natural heritage property on the World Heritage List constitutes an incentive to increase its attractiveness to tourists and leads, as a result, to an increase in the number of visitors.

Many studies have proven that the desire to visit historical sites represents one of the basic motivations for tourism, and that heritage often constitutes an essential element in the visitor's preference for one tourist destination at the expense of others. World heritage has become increasingly viewed as a resource for countries, local regions and commercial institutions, and that the World Heritage Convention today, has become big business in many countries, with many people relying on tourism for their income.

Therefore, we propose to impose (specific financial fees) on sites included in the World Heritage List, in proportion to the number of sites included in the World Heritage List, which exceeds (three or five sites) at the very least for each country. These fees can contribute to providing financial sums that contribute to increasing the resources of the World Heritage Fund and support the Convention's programs and support for World Heritage in many countries, especially with the number of sites included in the World Heritage List reaching more than (1,200) sites.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal ...*

The establishment of an open-ended working group came in response to the gaps in the work of the Convention and in order to raise the level of its performance in implementing the Convention in a manner consistent with its objectives in achieving the highest levels of protection and promotion for world heritage. The continued formation of the working group is linked to improving and achieving the goals for which it was established, in order to completing its tasks.

Therefore, we suggest that the working group continues to hold its meetings periodically, but specify that the meetings be held twice a year, before or after the meetings of the World Heritage Committee.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

IRELAND

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (State Party)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *State Parties with more than 10/15 WH properties should limit nominations to 1 every two years, unless they intend to present natural/mixed properties, or properties which directly address a geo-cultural gap in the list. Overrepresented States could also present serial nominations of which one or more components fall in the jurisdiction of an underrepresented State.*
 - This would need to be supported by updated thematic studies gap analysis based on typological and geo-cultural principles (overrepresented State Parties should commit to financially support these studies)
- *Twinning of Properties could be explored, but it should be clearly regulated and not used as leverage.*
- *Mechanisms should be explored to enforce the principle that State Parties should refrain from nominating while sitting on the Committee*
- *Reduce the number of new nominations reviewed annually by the committee to 20, of which at least a third should be natural or mixed*
 - All underrepresented categories should be strictly prioritised
- *Produce guidance document on the harmonisation of Tentative Lists*
- *Simplify and reduce the size of Nomination Dossiers with special exemptions for complex serial transnational or transboundary nominations.*
- *Update the 2011 manual on Preparing World Heritage Nomination (Ireland would consider supporting)*
- *Develop a communication campaign to re-focus perceptions of the Convention, by promoting the primary values of conservation and cooperation and moving away from the 'beauty-context' narrative*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *State Parties could sponsor targeted national or regional Capacity Building programme focussing on identified local needs*
- *If changes occur in the nomination process and dossier requirements, targeted capacity building programmes should reflect these changes*
- *Once the new Capacity Building strategy is launched, State Parties should be actively find ways to support it with the means at their disposal*
- *Units responsible to implementing Convention at State Party level should work to raise awareness at national level of all the resources and capacity building initiatives already made available by UNESCO.*

- *State Parties should support the establishment of Category 2 Centres*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Even if it has been ascertained that other service providers could lawfully provide advisory services, Ireland believes that this could generate more problems than solving them.*
- *Additional service providers would need to be formally accredited and be able demonstrate the same level of expertise and professional knowledge than official Advisory Bodies. If they simply offered better value for money the credibility of the process could be put at risk.*
- *The resources possibly saved by using additional service provider would need to be invested in selection, accreditation and monitoring of standards. The risk is that the whole process might not bring about the desired savings. In addition to this, conflict might arise with historically approved Advisory Bodies.*
- *Advisory Bodies would need to demonstrate that they are integrating regional specialists in the evaluation process. Decentralisation could bring about positive change.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Of the options presented in the Background document, Option 3.3 seems to be the most appropriate and fair and should be encouraged: 'Increasing the contributions by an additional amount per property inscribed, according to a percentage increasing with the number of property inscribed.'*
- *Links on listed properties website for donation to the funds could be considered*
- *A fund-raising strategy would greatly help identify donors, a call could be issued to State Parties to support the works necessary to produce such strategy.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *The mandate of the working group should be extended only if more discussion is needed around proposals, however it would be crucial to establish strict working methods ahead of meetings.*
- *Each proposal should be addressed individually, put to the room for discussion and closed once wording is agreed.*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

JAPAN

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Japan

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Take note that it has been repeatedly recalled that “balance of the World Heritage List does not mean an equal amount in numbers but equal attention to inscription, management, protection and conservation as well as between the various types, categories, themes, regions, periods of Earth life - geology, bio-geographic provinces, history of life or geo-cultural groupings with OUV on the List.”,*
- *Request ICOMOS for follow-up of the Gap Analysis from a geo-cultural perspective.*
- *Request IUCN for follow-up of the Gap Analysis from a perspective according to each natural heritage criteria.*
- *Encourage States Parties to update their Tentative Lists on a regular basis.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Repeal the submission of the nomination dossiers in paper copies.*
- *Encourage Advisory bodies to have more productive dialogue with States Parties through Preliminary Assessments and nomination processes, especially with countries whose properties are under-represented on the List, in order to facilitate their successful inscription.*
- *Enhance sustainable capacity building activities through thorough dialogue between States Parties and their supporters (Advisory Bodies, donors, etc), especially for countries whose properties are under-represented on the List.*
- *Aim at on-the-ground capacity building programmes to strengthen site managers, local communities, Youth, and indigenous peoples.*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Encourage the World Heritage Centre to consider proactive cooperation with the private sector.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

LEBANON

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (State Party) LEBANON

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- Propose to the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee to proceed with the identification of the gaps in the World Heritage List and the Tentative List on a regional, geographical chronological and thematic bases through:
 - an analysis of cultural and mixed sites, twenty years after the publication by ICOMOS of the 2004: *Filling the Gaps- an Action Plan for the Future*
 - an analysis of natural and mixed sites, twenty years after the publication by IUCN of the 2004 strategy paper: *Future priorities for a credible and complete list of natural and mixed sites.*
- Propose to the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee to consider as a priority the preparation of thematic and comparative studies related to the under-represented cultural and subcultural eras and regions as well as under-represented heritage categories.
- Propose to the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee to reiterate the decision taken in its 40th session (2016) regarding the limitation of the number of nominations to one nomination per State Party (New nominations, Deferrals, Referrals, Extensions) in order not to increase in the imbalance between State Parties that have large technical and financial capacities (and are well represented in the List) and other State Parties that don't have the same capacities and are under-represented.
- Propose to the 46th session of the World Heritage to consider proceeding with investigations/studies on the potential correlation between under-represented cultural and subcultural eras and regions and World Heritage sites in danger.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- Consider the possibility of limiting the submission of Preliminary assessment in electronic format (Word and PDF)
- In order to simplify the nomination procedures, consider the possibility of limiting the size of nomination dossiers by fixing a recommended gauge for the number of words per Sections and Subsections as is the case for sections 2a and 2b of the present nomination format. During the process of technical evaluation, advisory bodies may initiate a dialogue with State Parties to get additional information for specific issues if necessary.
- Encourage the Advisory Bodies to further develop the dialogue with State Parties and further promote transparent, equal and open procedures during the process of technical evaluation, including achieving better regional representation and geo-cultural balance in the WH panel as well in the selection of WH advisors and strengthening geo-cultural diversity of their experts for advisory, evaluation and monitoring missions.

- Develop a recommended format for the procedure defined in Article 50 of the OG which requests State parties, on a voluntary basis, “*to link their nominations with a nomination presented by a State Party whose heritage is under-represented*”.
- Consider as a top priority to develop a new World Heritage Capacity-building Strategy in cooperation between the World Heritage Centre and Advisory bodies (Decision 45 COM6) based on an assessment of capacity-building programs after the Global Training Strategy (WHC-2000/CONF.204/18) known as Cairns 2000.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

NO PROPOSALS: Using additional service providers may not guarantee a fair, consistent, rigorous coherent and balanced evaluation process since:

- It will be very difficult to guarantee that evaluations are done based on the same standards and criteria, since different evaluators can offer different perspectives or views on the same topic and evaluations may be easily contested since some evaluators might be considered by State Parties as “too strict” and others as “less demanding”, which may end up undermining the credibility of the Convention.
- Given UNESCO procedures, the process of accreditation/bidding/contractual arrangements may be so complicated that it will slow down the whole evaluation process, which would be counterproductive.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- In addition to the current measures that aim at providing supplementary voluntary contributions, consider the possibility of charging State parties that have more than 10 sites (30 State parties) or 15 sites (22 State parties) with a compulsory additional amount for each new property inscribed.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- Consider launching an in-depth reflection on the interpretation of the basic concepts of World Heritage (OUV, Authenticity, Integrity) twenty years after the Kazan meeting (2005) and thirty years after the Nara Document (1994), in order to integrate emerging issues related to cultural and natural diversity, environmental challenges, sites associated with memories of recent conflicts and heritage interpretation amongst other major issues.
- Consider launching an independent Audit on the operation of the WH Convention and the working methods and procedures of the WH Committee, 15 years after the 2011 Audit of the Global Strategy (WHC-11/35.COM/INF.9A) that noted several concerns related to the credibility, representativity and balance of the List and following the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage endorsed by the General Assembly of State parties in 2021(23GA 10).

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

LUXEMBOURG

Groupe de travail à composition non limitée en relation avec la Décision 45 COM 11

Contribution écrite en vue de la troisième réunion du groupe de travail à composition non limitée

Soumise par : (Etat Partie) Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

I. Envisager les améliorations nécessaires pour réduire l'écart de représentation des États parties sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et améliorer l'équilibre de la Liste :

- *proposition ...*
 - Regrouper les demandes d'inscriptions par régions : Etat arabes, Afrique, Asie et pacifique. Amérique latine et Caraïbes, Europe et Amérique du Nord et introduire un cycle d'inscription pour chaque région. Ce cycle pourra être calqué sur celui mis en place pour les rapports périodique. Les candidatures sont examinés ensembles avec les rapports périodiques de sites déjà inscrits. Ce parallélisme donne une vue globale de la gestion du patrimoine mondial.
- Proposer aux Etats parties de fixer un seuil maximum d'inscription leurs listes indicatives pendant une période à définir.

II. Proposer des solutions aux exigences de l'évaluation technique, y compris l'amélioration des activités de renforcement des capacités :

- *proposition ...* des échanges de best practices, des workshops, l'échange de professionnels stagiaires pendant une période à déterminer
- ...

III. Étudier la possibilité de faire appel à des prestataires de service supplémentaires :

- *proposition ...*
- ...

IV. Proposer des solutions durables aux exigences financières du processus de proposition d'inscription pour mettre en œuvre ce qui précède, y compris l'analyse préliminaire :

- *proposition ...*
- ...

V. Considérer le mandat et les méthodes de travail pour une extension de ce groupe de travail à composition non limitée, afin de lancer une réflexion fondamentale sur le fonctionnement de la Convention du patrimoine mondial :

- *proposition ...*
- ...

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

MEXICO

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (State Party)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Proposal:* It is a mistake to continue comparing how many sites each has registered. State Party cultural, natural and/or mixed and the numbers by region. It that should be improved is to promote the application of sites in underrepresented categories, whether cultural or natural, with which enrich the credibility of the List, through innovative national, cross-border and transcontinental candidacies.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Proposal:* Strengthen the presentation of comparative studies objectives in the technical nomination files, which allow for indicators specific information about representativeness: site, categories, and typologies over- represented and under-represented and their real contribution to the List through its outstanding universal value and its associated attributes.
- *Proposal:* Consolidate the delivery, together with the technical files, of integrated management and conservation plans, which make it possible to know the public policies and actions that will be developed in the proposed property, to guarantee, to the extent of the possibilities of each State Party, its preservation, mainly through good management and conservation practices and the permanent development of new technical capabilities.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Proposal ...*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal ...*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal:* The Open-ended Working Group, after deciding and make decisions on the previous points, it must promote a new and broad consultation and reflection on the future of the Convention and work on the presentation of a new Global Strategy, which responds to the needs, requirements and problems that have arisen for conservation. of World Heritage between 1994 and 2024.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

NETHERLANDS

(KINGDOM OF THE)

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (State Party)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Proposal:*
- **Update the gap analysis with a focus on underrepresented categories of heritage including the indigenous people narratives and looking into synergies with other conventions.**
- **Focus capability building initiatives on underrepresented categories of heritage based on the updated gap analysis.**

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Proposal:*
- **Simplify the nomination file and take into account the information already provided in the preliminary assessment.**

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Proposal:*
- **Strengthen existing structures with a focus on expertise from underrepresented categories identified by the updated gap analysis.**

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal:*
- **Strongly encourage all member states to pay their assessed contributions and to provide voluntary contributions.**

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal:*
- **Extend the mandate of the OEWG and submit the recommendations to the GA in 2025 for a possible adoption.**

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

NEW ZEALAND

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: New Zealand

New Zealand thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive and high-quality background document presented to the Open-Ended Working Group, and we acknowledge the considerable work undertaken over the last two decades on the matters of the representation and balance of the World Heritage List. We also thank the excellent keynote speakers for their stimulating presentations.

Mandate:

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

Update gap analyses and thematic studies

- New Zealand supports the recommendation to update the gaps analysis and thematic studies made in many State Party interventions.
- We suggest the updated gaps analysis focus at the regional or sub-regional level and begin with the identified priority groups of Africa and Small Island Developing States.
- Ideally the updated gaps analysis would consolidate natural and cultural World Heritage at the regional/subregional level and integrate thematic studies relevant to the regions under consideration.

Hear from those underrepresented

- New Zealand supports the interventions suggesting that the Working Group should hear directly from Parties that are currently underrepresented on the World Heritage List.
- Underrepresented Parties (including the identified priority groups of Africa and Small Island Developing States) should be invited to share their experiences with World Heritage Convention processes, including challenges, capacity building needs and examples of success.
- There has not been strong representation from Pacific Island Countries at Open-ended Working Group meetings although the Pacific is one of the three geographical regions in which Small Island Developing States are located. We note it is difficult for some Parties (including Pacific Island developing states) to engage in ad hoc working group meetings; not all Parties have capacity to be represented by a Mission in Paris, and time differences can make joining virtual meetings prohibitive.
- Specific consideration should be given to how to encourage the participation of underrepresented parties in the Open-Ended Working group moving forward.
- New Zealand also agrees with the IUCN that indigenous peoples' perspectives are central to the Convention and we support the recommendation that the Open-Ended Working Group invite representatives from the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage to participate in future meetings in an advisory capacity.

Ensure common understanding of fundamental World Heritage concepts and principles

- New Zealand acknowledges the complexity of explaining and translating some fundamental World Heritage concepts into different cultures and languages.

- We support the keynote speakers and State Parties that recommended consideration be given to better defining or explaining the concept of Outstanding Universal Value, and its three underpinning principles.
- We support the recommendation to convene a meeting of experts from all regions with relevant qualifications and expertise to reflect on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value, and make specific proposals on how the definition, or understanding of it, could be improved considering developments in World Heritage, since the special expert meeting convened in Kazan, 2005.

Streamline the nomination dossier

- New Zealand acknowledges that some nomination dossiers are becoming akin to theses, and this may contribute to elevated costs of the nomination process. We agree that options for streamlining the nomination dossier, which also increase the high quality of a dossier and its chance of success, should be fully explored. This should include consideration of new technologies and online submissions.
- We support Norway's suggestion that the preliminary assessment format is integrated with the nomination format to reduce repetition and gain efficiencies and reduce cost.
- We heard in some State party interventions of high-quality streamlined nomination dossiers that could be shared as examples.
- We suggest that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies provide advice to the Open-ended Working Group on how the nomination dossier could be streamlined; including the consideration of new technologies and integrating the preapplication and nomination templates.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- We support capacity building activities being focused on underrepresented parties, and particularly the priority groups of Africa and Small Island Developing States. We recommend hearing from these groups directly on their capacity building needs to inform the review of the Capacity Building Strategy.
- We support Australia's recommendation to invite the Committee to reintroduce the category of International Assistance, "Assistance for educational, information and promotional activities", for access by States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List. These States Parties are often most in need of access to resourcing and technical expertise to support efforts to educate and raise awareness of World Heritage among local communities.
- The categories under which International Assistance could be accessed were previously broader and it may be beneficial to reintroduce the category of "Assistance for educational, information and promotional activities" for States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List. This category was removed from the Operational Guidelines following decision 30 COM 14A. Its reintroduction could be used, for example, to support States Parties to develop World Heritage materials and define important concepts in local languages.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- In New Zealand's view the high-quality scientific advice of service providers is vital to maintaining the credibility of the World Heritage List.
- We support the continued efforts to diversify the appointments to the Advisory Bodies to better reflect the global context the Convention operates in.

- We note the central roles of the designated Advisory Bodies set out in the Convention provide for representatives of other intergovernmental or non-governmental organisations with similar objectives to attend meetings of the Committee in an advisory capacity (8 3), and to work on implementation of programmes and projects, including with public and private bodies and individuals (13, 7).

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- We look forward to the discussion on this while noting it is a difficult time for many Parties to consider increasing their financial contributions.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- A reflection on the operation of the Convention is a significant undertaking and requires adequate time and sufficient advice to ensure deliberation are appropriately informed.
- Recommend to COM 46:
 - To extend the mandate of the Open-Ended working group to report to COM47.
 - To encourage underrepresented parties to participate in the Open-Ended working group and to share their experiences.
 - To invite the Indigenous Peoples' Forum to participate in the Open-Ended Working Group.
 - Establish an expert group to reflect on the concept of Outstanding Universal Value, and make specific proposals on how the definition, or understanding of it, could be improved.
- Invite the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to consider ways to encourage greater participation from Pacific Island Countries through their own networks, and consider whether any regional organisations such as the Secretariat for the Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP) might be in a position to assist.
- Invite the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies provide advice to the Open-ended Working Group on how the nomination dossier could be streamlined.
- Invite the Bureau to consider whether some Open-ended Working Group meetings could be scheduled at times that are more conducive to virtual participation from Pacific Island Countries, which are typically 9 to 13 hours ahead of Paris time. Starting some meetings at 8.00 or 9.00 am (Paris time) and/or shorting their length to 3-4 hours per day and spreading meetings across multiple days, if need be, may support this.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

NORWAY

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Norway

Norway welcomes the opportunity to contribute in the OEWG and provides the following proposals for consideration.

We wish to emphasise strongly that we consider that reforms and changes should be based on the existing structures and systems that we have developed since the first inscriptions to the World Heritage List appeared in 1978. We are open to discussions that would result in changes to increase transparency, efficiency and credibility in the mechanisms for implementation of the Convention. When we are discussing matters of simplifying and streamlining, this applies to technical revisions. It is important for Norway that we do not contribute to weakening of the concept of OUV, and the strict, professional, unbiased and expert based assessments and considerations underlying evaluations, recommendations and draft decisions.

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

Proposals:

- Update the gap analyses with a focus on underrepresented heritage including the indigenous peoples' narratives and aspects of intangible heritage.
- Review the Capacity Building activities to identify what is needed and how this could be implemented in short and medium term by the World heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the States Parties.
- Consider mechanisms for harmonisation of Tentative Lists, which should be strongly encouraged.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

Proposal:

- Streamline and simplify the nomination format by including information already provided in the preceding steps of tentative listing and preliminary assessment, i.e. the same format being expanded for the different stages, focussing on concrete and specific information, providing templates, and introducing word limits for all chapters. This does not mean that the nomination format should be reduced to banality, rather avoid duplication and repetition and ensure that concise and specific information is provided. Based on Norway's experience, the information in the NOM file is crucial for future management and protection, as this is the agreed text submitted by the State Party and "frozen" in time. As such it is a crucial baseline document. The format could also be on a digital platform, to increase transparency, accessibility for stakeholders, ease of use and allow for the different steps in a NOM process to be interlinked.
- Update the 2011 Manual on preparing WH nominations

- Streamline and integrate capacity building efforts, including development of a systematic capacity building programme targeting the very specific issues discussed in this OEWG, within the framework of the new capacity building strategy and in close tandem and integration with the World Heritage Leadership Programme, to be presented at the earliest possible COM session (47COM/2025?)

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

Proposal:

- Norway holds the position of the last COM decision based on the recommendations of the ad hoc working group. We already have a working mechanism for this if the need arises. The existing system, with all considerations and decisions made through panels composed of different experts within different fields of expertise and regions is crucial for the safeguarding of OUV and universality of the Convention. We should rather continue to encourage increased capacity building and training of experts from all regions to be included in the processes and mechanisms of the Convention. A contribution towards this goal would be to strengthen the existing structures with a focus on underrepresented heritage (and thereby regions/categories etc) as identified through updated gap analyses.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

Proposal:

- Norway would strongly encourage use of the cost sharing mechanism. Secondly, it is important to continue to strongly encourage all member states to pay their assessed contributions as well as to provide voluntary contributions. Norway would wish to discuss and consider more broadly the financing mechanisms available within UNESCO to strengthen the World Heritage Convention.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

Proposal:

- Extend the mandate of the OEWG and submit the recommendations to the GA in 2025 for a possible adoption. Norway finds it important to ask what the contributions in the future towards this Convention should be? More nominations from the States Parties? Or a shift of focus from nominations to conservation of the existing World Heritage? And a much stronger focus on capacity building and assistance towards States Parties who need it to ensure the best possible conservation and good nominations of underrepresented heritage. The notion of OUV (but please do note our introductory remarks) as expressed in the criteria, and the workload of the World heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies could be proposed as part of the mandate.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

STATE OF PALESTINE

**Open-ended Working Group concerning
Decision 45 COM 11**

**Written contribution in advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working
Group**

Submitted by: (State of Palestine)

**I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the
representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the
balance of the List,**

We propose the following:

Maintaining the current practice where each State Party can submit one complete nomination dossier for examination per cycle. However, we propose that States Parties with over 30 listed sites, who submit continuously one nomination each year, the examination of their second nomination shall be suspended for the following cycle. Which means for those State Parties one nomination dossier out of two shall be suspended, nevertheless, it could be one dossier out of three suspended. These measures are consistent with the convention and aim to address the disparity in representation among States Parties and promote balance within the World Heritage List.

**II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving
capacity-building activities,**

To address the enhancement of technical evaluation requirements and bolster capacity-building activities, we recommend to establish a mentorship initiative. This program would pair States Parties with experienced member states, facilitating comprehensive guidance throughout the technical evaluation process, which is part of the international cooperation under the convention. Moreover, the implementation of regular capacity-building workshops focusing on the details of World Heritage nomination and evaluation processes, alongside the establishment of e-learning platforms, emerges as an advantageous strategy.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers.

**IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination
process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment,**

We propose that WHC establish partnerships with tour operators asking them to include a link on their websites to invite/encourage tourists while booking their trips to contribute to the World Heritage Fund.

For that purpose, we emphasize that the WHC shall have the administrative independence in order to be able to promptly establish such partnerships.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

POLAND

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Poland

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Identifying by advisory bodies, such as IUCN and ICOMOS, what should be understood as gaps and imbalances on the List.*

The discussion undertaken during the last meeting highlighted some incoherences in the definitions and understanding. Hence the revision and modification of the roadmap for the List and the modification of the criteria could improve the understanding of imbalances and gaps. There were some issues pointed out by the OE Group and the advisory bodies which require clarification. For instance, ICOMOS highlighted different criteria for cultural and nature heritage representation. It should be developed.

- *Mapping out the potential nominations which represent both natural and cultural heritage.*
- *Fostering the serial and transboundary nominations - this direction should be continued.*
- *Giving priority to natural heritage nominations, especially in the wake of climate change.*
- *Analyzing the Tentative lists: their revision should result in suggestions of the appropriate changes and reductions, especially of those objects that have been on the Lists for more than a couple of years, and are not likely to be nominated.*
- *Giving voice to under-represented countries and letting them precise, in what direction they would like to develop the list with sites on their own territory.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Updating the second edition (2011) of “Preparing World Heritage Nominations” by the advisory bodies in order to help States Parties to achieve good quality World Heritage nominations.*
- *Enhancing involvement of the managers in the discussion on the state of conservation and the management. The Site Managers Forum is not easily accessible for all the managers due to the costs of participation in it. We see the importance of increasing the social awareness about the preservation of UNESCO sites. The more engaged site managers could be a part of the solution.*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Poland is interested in participation of Polish experts in UNESCO trainings*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *No particular proposals.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *The Open-ended Working Group has given an impetus to point out areas of improvement. This work is important in terms of involving the wider public in diagnosing problems. The mandate of the group can continue, but a structure is needed and possibly, groups of experts should come up with concrete solutions for discussion by the broader group.*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

QATAR

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: (Qatar)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of State Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- **Start a type of strategy sets an ambitious yet practical framework to plan the appropriate scale, timing, and resources needed for fostering of the World Heritage sites to reduce representation of States Parties.**
- **The required capacity building and awareness raising is time consuming, so a phased approach needs to be considered to implement the Strategy.**
- **Considering Submission of more than one potential file for the World Heritage Properties for the nomination to the upstream process.**
- **Develop State Parties internal guidelines on the management and protection of Heritage Properties aligned with World Heritage guidelines, Tentative Sites List, the nomination process, and the Tentative List process.**
- **Protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Heritage Properties in state parties, to contribute to WHC objectives and goal to ensure future generations benefit from this provision.**
- **Building World Heritage capacity, capability and knowledge across key stakeholders and communities.**
- **Enhancing local stakeholder engagement, participation, and communication in the management of the existing and future World Heritage Properties and Tentative sites lists.**
- **Support capacity and capability building measures to ensure the development of Heritage in sites of the representation of States Parties.**
- **Support and establish partnerships between the World Heritage Unit, third level institutions and other relevant bodies to promote research, collaboration, enhance mutual knowledge and develop educational activities.**
- **Communicate greater benefits, understanding and appreciation of World Heritage values among key stakeholders and the wider community.**

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

Including Community capacity building which not only results in appreciation of their Heritage but also fostering economic and social resilience. Enabling all members of the community to engage, develop skills and competencies to take greater control of their own communities and contribute to inclusive local development.

- ...

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

Support and establish partnerships between the World Heritage Unit, third level institutions and other relevant bodies to promote research, collaboration, enhance mutual knowledge and develop educational activities.

Communicate greater benefits, understanding and appreciation of World Heritage among key stakeholders and the wider community.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

A sustainable solution could be to establish a Local Development Fund which is a financial instrument meant to support by highlighting the evidence that World Heritage Properties do bring a significant range of advantages and benefits to local communities and stakeholders and generate sense of local loyalty and ownership for future generations, support for the local tourist economy and businesses, and other benefits for local communities and stakeholders.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- **A clear description of the expected deliverables or outcomes of the working group, to know when this working group should end.**

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Republic of Korea

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- Propose the refinement of the current five regional categories of the World Heritage Committee into smaller categories, taking into account cultural contexts, and, a gap analysis to address disparities between the World Heritage Sites in line with the refined categories
- Propose a discussion to draw attention to the importance of the recommendations provided by advisory bodies when making decisions on inscriptions to the World Heritage List, for the credibility of the List

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- To assist underrepresented States Parties in preparing World Heritage nominations and conservation plans as a long-term and sustainable solution to the issue of imbalance, propose the establishment of a mechanism in the World Heritage Centre to support capacity building activities such as twinning programmes between States Parties, and to publicly share their experiences and outcomes in a systematic manner

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Russian Federation

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- Recommend the Committee to request the Advisory Bodies in close cooperation with the national experts recommended by the States Parties and relevant stakeholders to update the thematic studies in view to identify the remaining gaps on the World Heritage List for sites of potential OUV bearing in mind various imbalances (geographical, types and categories). Clear advice on the typologies and/or geographical distribution of the sites with the potential OUV with an emphasis on the underrepresented State Parties, particularly Africa and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) will be appreciated.
- Recommend the Committee to appeal to State Parties and Donors to provide additional resources for thematic studies.
- Recommend to prioritize nominations from new and under-represented categories, innovative proposals, cultural landscapes including mixed and transboundary sites, regional cultural itineraries, extensions of existing world heritage properties, addition of the new components of existing serial properties.
- Recommend the WHC in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies to provide advice and assistance, if needed, to the States Parties lacking the capacity to maintain the values, integrity, and authenticity of properties inscribed on their tentative lists, especially where the potential for nomination on the World Heritage List has been recognized by the Advisory Bodies as a result of the Preliminary Assessment.
- Recommend the States Parties while identifying the potential nomination to take into account alternative tools, established in line with other UNESCO programs (Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks).
- Recommend the Committee to request the WHC to provide more assistance to the States Parties for the establishment of the partnership and twining programs between World Heritage Sites, and the linkage of potential nominations as per para 59 -61 of the Operational Guidelines.

- Welcome the measures undertaken for improving dialogue between the States Parties, WHC, and the Advisory Bodies and encourage further cooperation on this matter.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity-building activities:

- Recommend the Committee to request the WHC in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies to explore possible ways to simplify the nomination format.
- Recommend the WHC and Advisory bodies to establish closer cooperation with the Category 2 centers institutions in the sphere of cultural and natural heritage preservation in view to encourage them to play a more active role in capacity building in the field of management and conservation where possible;
- Recommend the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to further develop Resource Manuals and toolkits on the nomination process given particular focus on the implementation of its first phase - the Preliminary Assessment, and to organize, if possible, online regional workshops on this matter.
- Recommend the Advisory Bodies to further strengthen regional diversity of their experts for advisory, monitoring and evaluation missions and panels.
- Recommend to the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to continue increasing the use of electronic means to reduce costs.
- Recommend the WHC in cooperation with the Host countries of the Committee sessions to consider the possibility of providing a permanent space (room) for the World Heritage site managers during the sessions to facilitate an exchange of experiences and best practices in conservation and management.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- While exploring the possibility of using additional service providers special emphasis should be put on the inclusivity of this exercise involving all the States Parties, category II centres, expert communities and academic institutions in the sphere of cultural and natural heritage preservation.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- Recommend the Committee to remind the States Parties that the timely payment of compulsory and voluntary assessed contributions is, under Article 16 of the World Heritage Convention, an obligation incumbent on all States Parties to the Convention, which was reiterated in numerous Committee decisions and General Assembly Resolutions, and confirmed in Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage. Non-payment of contributions jeopardizes the financial stability of the World Heritage Fund, hampers the effective implementation of the 1972 Convention, drastically limits the resources for capacity building and conservation activities for priority regions and groups and thereby impedes the establishment of the representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List.
- Recommend the Committee to appeal State Parties to pay timely the assessed contribution.
- Recommend to organize regularly on the margins of the Committee sessions the Donors' Fora open for States Parties and private entities.

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- Recommend the Committee to extend the work of the OEWG with the mandate as defined during the 45th Committee session until the work is completed.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

SAUDI ARABIA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: [Saudi Arabia](#)

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Recommend that the advisory bodies revise the previous studies (with the new potential sites of underrepresented states parties and topics) to determine the number of sites needed to progressively close the gap. (Perhaps add the term "gap analysis studies").*
- *As with IUCN in the past, these sites should have high potential for OUV and meet the nomination criteria to be prioritized and supported so that the credibility of the World Heritage List is not compromised. Similar to the prioritization of natural heritage and inclusion in the national tentative lists.*
- *Establish a guideline to ensure fair representation of underrepresented countries and themes by adding a part on offering updated guidelines and manuals on the preparation of nomination files.*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Enhance capacity building initiatives for stakeholders and decision makers through various means, such as organizing training programs, workshops, and seminars.*
- *Focus on providing technical expertise and guidance to states parties to improve their nomination process and meet evaluation requirements. by proposing the creation of an online platform of experts exchange programs.*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Contracting well established local Universities.*
- *Funding from regional Research centres.*
- *Giving more mandate to Category 2 Centres during the preliminary assessment and capacity building for stakeholders and decision makers.*
- *External experts or organizations with expertise in heritage conservation and evaluation.*
- *Alleviate the excessive workload and ensure efficient evaluation processes while maintaining transparency and adherence to the World Heritage Convention's guidelines.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Explore the revitalization of the concept of "twinning" between nominations with new and sufficient mechanisms to ensure that the States Parties involved are properly recognized by UNESCO and the World Heritage Center for their contributions by promoting transboundary nominations*

- *Provide sustainable support for capacity building stakeholders and decision makers, awareness raising, preparation of nominations, and subsequent implementation of management and monitoring plans.*
- *Seek funding from diverse sources, including intergovernmental organizations, public-private partnerships initiatives, philanthropic foundations, other UNESCO programs to meet the financial requirements of the nomination process.*
- *Explore innovative sustainable fundraising methods, e.g., crowdfunding and sponsorships.*
- *Streamline the nomination process and optimize resource allocation to ensure cost-effectiveness.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Clarify the used terms and definitions.*
- *Extend the mandate of the Open-ended Working Group.*
- *Identify areas for improvement and explore innovative solutions.*
- *Consult and engage with wider segment of stakeholders, including other states parties, subject matter experts, civil society organizations, and local communities, to ensure a broad and inclusive process.*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

**SAINT VINCENT
AND THE GRENADINES**

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**
**Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the
Open-Ended Working Group**

Submitted by: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties On the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

• Proposal to:

1) THE STATES PARTIES

- a) To promote the establishment of a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, States Parties are requested if their heritage is well represented to:
 - (i) slow down their rate of submission of further nominations by spacing the nominations on the list, unless they have a deferred or a referred nomination file that would be inscribed out of quota; *(based on WH Operational Guidelines, paragraph 59 a))*
 - (ii) link each of their nominations with one or two nominations presented by a State Party whose heritage is under or non-represented; this entails full support for the whole process of the preparation of the nomination file until the submission of both sites at the same session; *(based on WH Operational Guidelines, paragraph 59 c))*
- b) In any case, States Parties shall refrain from influencing the Committee's deliberations and decision making through lobbying before and during the World Heritage Committee sessions (Rules of Procedure, Rules 22.5, 22.6 and 22.7). *(based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, II. Declaration Provisions, paragraph 21)*
- c) States Parties should make efforts to update their tentative list especially if they are under or non-represented. All States Parties are invited to introduce this information in the periodic reporting.

2) THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

- a) Whenever State Party has three complete nominations entering the evaluation process in three consecutive cycles, the examination of the nomination foreseen for the third consecutive cycle will be delayed/postponed to the following session. This does not apply to non and under-represented States Parties.
- b) Avoid examining the nominations of the States Parties who are members of the Committee during their mandate in the spirit of contributing to the impartiality and objectivity of decision making. They would benefit from a 4-year priority after the end of their mandate on the Committee. *(Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, II. Declaration Provisions, paragraph 5)*

- c) Nominations of States Parties, former Members of the Committee, who accepted on a voluntary basis not to have a nomination reviewed by the Committee during their mandate will have their priority placed after paragraph 61c (ii)* of the Operational Guidelines. (*WH Operational Guidelines, paragraph 61 c (xii)*)
- d) Review the priorities in Paragraph 61c) of the Operational Guidelines.
- e) The Committee shall use the results of the regional periodic reporting to establish regional and sub-regional operational programmes with specific targets to achieve the five C (Credibility of the List, Conservation of the properties already on the list, Capacity building in States Parties, Communication and awareness raising about the Convention, Communities involvement).

**61c (ii) nominations of properties submitted by States Parties having up to 3 properties inscribed on the List*

3) THE SECRETARIAT

- a) Act in a manner consistent with the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage. This includes transparent and neutral processes. Improve the direct dialogue between the representatives of States Parties and the Secretariat. (*based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage*)
- b) To facilitate opportunities including twinning and access to resources to give support to non and under-represented States Parties notably for the development or update of the tentative list as well as for the preparation of the nomination files.

4) THE ADVISORY BODIES

- a) Bearing in mind the gap in the World Heritage list between States Parties well represented inscribing sites regularly or each year and States Parties under represented and non-represented, the Advisory Bodies shall strengthen their efforts to respect the principle of fair and equitable geographical representation, involving regional experts familiar with the subject; make public the methodology and existing policies of evaluation of the nominations, the list of panel members and criteria of selection of the field mission experts, the panel members and advisors; to establish dialogue with the States Parties to better clarify the additional information required. (*based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, paragraph 14*)
- b) Recalling the Advisory nature of the Advisory Bodies, make an effort to take into consideration the diversity of the expertise views based on professional, geographical and cultural perspectives as well as the need to protect World Heritage and balance its protection with sustainable development, while taking note of the Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development. (*based on the Declaration of principles to promote international solidarity and cooperation to preserve World Heritage, paragraph 15*)

- c) The Advisory Bodies shall strengthen their efforts, while evaluating the state of conservation reports of under-represented States Parties, to take into consideration unpredictable social situations as well as conflict, post conflict, natural disasters and pandemic crises. They shall recommend benchmarks to achieve a sustainable conservation of the property.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

a) *Proposal for the technical evaluation requirements:*

The presentation of the additional information to the nomination file within the deadlines will allow the Advisory Bodies to evaluate this information and could contribute to a review of their first technical evaluation.

If the Committee considers that valuable and verified elements are not sufficiently taken into consideration by the Advisory Bodies, the Committee could intervene for an eventual change in the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies.

b) *Proposal for improving capacity building activities:*

Capacity building could be developed at many levels through the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and also between States Parties, and adapted to the specific needs of the States Parties covering among others:

- Awareness raising campaigns for the preservation of the heritage for communities and youth;
- Institutional capacity building for public policies development;

- The preparation of the tentative lists;
- The preparation of the nomination files;
- The development of management plans;
- The implementation of conservation measures;
- The preparation of periodic reporting ;

This should be tailored on the regional periodic reports analysis.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

Proposal

Before using additional service providers, we need to know who decides on the distribution of the dossiers? Are the evaluators chosen according to the nature of the site, its history, its typology?

According to ICOMOS and IUCN, their services have been enlarged with international experts from all regions. This is necessary to evaluate sites from all regions.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- *Proposal ...*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Proposal ...*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

SWITZERLAND

Groupe de travail à composition non limitée en relation avec la Décision 45 COM 11

Contribution écrite en vue de la troisième réunion du groupe de travail à composition non limitée

Soumise par : Suisse

I. Envisager les améliorations nécessaires pour réduire l'écart de représentation des États parties sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et améliorer l'équilibre de la Liste :

- *Financer le renforcement des capacités pour les Pays sous-représentés à travers des mécanismes d'augmentation de contributions au Fonds du patrimoine mondial par les Etats sur-représentés. La formation de professionnels en patrimoine mondial devrait être notamment visée.*
- *Définir des catégories d'Etats sur la base de la densité de biens du patrimoine mondial et limiter le nombre de proposition d'inscription pour les Etats parties surreprésentés*
- *Adapter les exigences des dossiers de candidature en en limitant la longueur tout en clarifiant davantage les exigences à atteindre, insistant sur l'identification et la définition de la VUE, des attributs et de la gestion du bien ;*
- *Réaliser une analyse comparative des listes indicatives afin d'identifier des éventuelles synergies pour un développement concerté de dossiers de candidature distincts entre 2 ou plusieurs Etats parties, dont idéalement des Etats parties non ou sous-représentés (forme de partenariat)*

II. Proposer des solutions aux exigences de l'évaluation technique, y compris l'amélioration des activités de renforcement des capacités :

- *Renouveler / étendre les études thématiques et régionales afin d'aider à identifier de nouveaux types de biens susceptibles de disposer d'une VUE ;*
- *Renouveler l'étude The World Heritage: filling the gaps (2004)*
- *Poursuivre les efforts de capacity building (formations, ateliers) régionaux en vue de l'inscription de biens par des Etats parties ne disposant d'aucun site inscrit ou en sous-représentation*

III. Étudier la possibilité de faire appel à des prestataires de service supplémentaires :

- *Une extension des prestataires de service par des tiers augmentera les coûts de manière sensible et introduira des inefficacités de gestion, de transfert du savoir et de mémoire institutionnelle, ce qui devrait être comblé par des ressources supplémentaires. Cette option n'est par conséquent pas à poursuivre. Une étude devra porter sur les conséquences économiques et en matière d'efficacité et de gouvernance par un élargissement des prestataires, avant de poursuivre cette réflexion ;*
- *Afin d'améliorer la situation, les organes consultatifs existants doivent cependant être renforcés :*
 - *Des ressources des organisations consultatives peuvent être libérées en augmentant l'efficacité des dossiers de candidatures (voir point I) ;*

- *La représentation géographique des experts sollicités par les organes consultatifs actuels doit être élargie afin de renforcer la crédibilité de ces organes et d’atténuer la perception de biais colonialiste ;*
- *Le soutien financier au travail des organes consultatifs actuels doit être renforcé, en particulier pour le suivi des sites inscrits (SOC),*
- *Il faudrait réfléchir à des services payants, respectivement à des coûts réels à l’attention des pays demandeurs (au moins pour les groupes de pays en situation économique le permettant).*

IV. Proposer des solutions durables aux exigences financières du processus de proposition d’inscription pour mettre en œuvre ce qui précède, y compris l’analyse préliminaire :

- *Adapter les exigences des dossiers de candidature en limitant la longueur (voir point I), ce qui aura un impact non négligeable sur le coût de l’évaluation du dossier par les organes consultatifs ;*
- *Augmenter de 1 à 2 % le pourcentage standard utilisé dans le calcul des contributions au Fonds du patrimoine mondial,*
- *Réduire la fréquence, la durée et l’ordre du jour des réunions des États parties et des comités intergouvernementaux, en alternant les sessions d’inscription (année 1) et de suivi (année 2).*

V. Considérer le mandat et les méthodes de travail pour une extension de ce groupe de travail à composition non limitée, afin de lancer une réflexion fondamentale sur le fonctionnement de la Convention du patrimoine mondial :

- *Regrouper le mandat des réflexions à l’Assemblée générale, à qui appartiennent les décisions stratégiques, et non pas au Comité du patrimoine mondial, qui doit être l’organe exécutif.*
- *Créer des sous-groupes d’expertEs pour les thèmes fondamentaux fixés : politisation du travail et de la prise de décision ; équilibre de la liste du patrimoine mondial ; perte de crédibilité du Patrimoine mondial ; limites et focus à maintenir de la Convention du patrimoine mondial. Ces groupes travaillent de manière autonome et restituent leurs résultats au groupe de travail à composition non-limitée.*

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

TÜRKIYE

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Türkiye

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

The background document provided by the WHC clearly illustrates that the gap of the representation of State Parties and/or certain themes and categories of heritage on the World Heritage List is mostly derived from the imbalance of the nominations that are submitted. Therefore, the development of high-quality nominations for the underrepresented regions, state parties and, certain types of heritage is considered crucial for reducing the imbalances and enhancing the credibility of the World Heritage List. However, the development of high-quality nominations requires the development of high-quality comparative analyses, as it is through this work, it will be possible to prove whether a property has potential OUV, and whether there is room in the current World heritage list for the proposal. In parallel with its importance, conducting comparative analysis has been one of the most challenging works for many countries and experts, as it needs the use of a considerable amount of academic work including several published articles and books. In the absence of good quality published academic work, thematic resources, and major research programs, it would be very difficult to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis. Therefore, to support the development of high-quality nominations for the regions, state parties, or themes and categories and heritage, we recommend the following:

- Updating of thematic studies and Gap Analysis Study (ICOMOS, 2004) for under-represented regions and underrepresented types of heritage. This will also be very beneficial for the preparation of Preliminary Assessment (PA) form as it's "Comparative Analysis" section should include a section on "Gaps and underrepresented heritage on the World Heritage List".
- Ensuring the participation of experts from diverse regions and areas of expert in the work of updating ICOMOS Gap Analysis Study (2004), as the current work do not provide comprehensive chronological-regional and thematic framework for all regions.
- Given the extra budget and expertise required for updating studies, well-represented States Parties need to contribute (by allocating either financial resources and/or experts) to the

updating of thematic and comparative studies, and to the development of Tentative Lists for under-represented regions/States parties to reflect the diversity of heritage and contribute to increasing typological representation and balance.

- Making use of “twinning scheme” between educational institutions, including universities and Category 2 centers for the development and updating of thematic and comparative studies.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- Expanding the pilot initiative, ICOMOS UNIVERSITY FORUM’ with Africa and other unrepresented regions to develop network of National Committees and facilitate capacity building of experts in these regions.
- Continue to invite experts from underrepresented regions and countries to participate in advisory missions as observers.
- Ensuring the successful implementation of the Preliminary Assessment (PA) through the development of guidance, related training courses and workshops in the regions that are underrepresented.
- Further strengthening regional diversity of the Advisory Bodies’ experts for advisory, monitoring and evaluation missions and panels, and encouraging the national committees of ICOMOS and IUCN to expand their expert network.

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- Recalling the extensive discussions within the previous working group regarding using additional service providers, it is essential to consider the potential for further complication of the nomination processes and the associated financial implications.

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- Streamlining and shortening of the current nomination format to make it less resource-intensive and more accessible.
- Setting a word maximum per section, and thus limiting the overall number of pages of the nomination dossiers, depending on the nature and category of the nominated properties.
- Making best use of available new technologies in a way that is fair and equitable for all States Parties, (digital maps using GIS).

- Making best use of the tools and resources that are already in place, such as the technical review (30 September for incompleteness check), upstream processes, and available thematic studies.
- Submission of final nomination dossiers and its annexes in the digital format, rather than printing hard copies.
- Providing a report about the implementation of the Preliminary Assessment to measure its effectiveness in reducing both the nomination costs and the divergences between the Advisory Bodies advice and Committee decision (after 3 years of its implementation)

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND NORTHERN
IRELAND**

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: United Kingdom

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- Encourage State Parties that are well-represented to further slow down nominations
- Reduce barriers to putting forward nominations by simplifying the nomination dossier format
- Encourage greater dialogue/collaboration at regional/subregional level when developing nominations
- Consider a separate way to identify and support sites that have either become, or are inherently, vulnerable to external factors such as climate change. A secondary list where the international community is being asked to support without the negative associations of the 'in danger' listing that could be prioritised for financial and technical support by UNESCO, the Abs as well as individual SPs.

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- Encourage all States Parties to become Member States of ICCROM and access their capacity building programmes and knowledge
- Ensure that each Advisory Bodies has an appropriate geographical balance of experts to address limits in recognising OUV in each and every region
- Partnership between States Parties in development of nominations

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- Additional service providers should only be considered for provision of specialist advice to complement that from the existing Advisory Bodies at the request of the Committee or State Party relevant to the site in question. *This could be particularly beneficial to help resolve cases where there are professional differences of opinion at the national (State Party) and international (Abs) level.*

IV. Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment:

- Resourcing (financial and human resource) of Advisory Bodies should be evaluated. Nominations are one side, but we recognise that the State of Conservation workload has significantly increased even in the last 10 years and needs additional resource.
- Nomination dossiers have become increasingly complex and expensive to produce. By focusing the nomination on its purpose this should reduce the financial burden.
- The World Heritage Centre needs to be strengthened and supported in its role as the Secretariat for the Convention

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- The Open-Ended Working Group should continue until the next General Assembly (2025)

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: United States of America

A) Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of State Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List

- Update the nomination format, and simplify the process, taking into consideration the information already provided during the Preliminary Assessment.
- Explore options for the addition of the indigenous people narrative to the OUV of an existing World Heritage site without necessity to submit of a new nomination.
- Encourage regionals, sub-regionals, and inter-regionals discussions between State Parties when revising their tentative lists to avoid over-representation of one category of heritage.
- Subject to capacities of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, allow State Parties to conduct the Preliminary Assessment of several nominations at the same time to then prioritize the most promising one.

B) Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities

- Strengthen existing and develop new Category II centers for World Heritage.
- Encourage the development of bilateral capacity building projects before, during and after the listing of a site, including training, exchanges of experts, good management practices, and heritage restoration.
- Create an online platform inventorying all the capacity building programs and initiatives existing across the World to help State Parties to present stronger nomination.
- Explore options to highlight sites endangered by climate change and/or factors beyond one State Party's control. This category of sites would have a different kind of reporting and different requirements as the regular list of Heritage in Danger, including through the mobilization of the international community.

C) Explore the possibility of using additional service providers

- Recognize that the use of additional service providers is unadvised due to longer and more expensive processes.
- Encourage all State Parties to become Member States of ICCROM.

D) Propose sustainable solutions to the financial requirements of the nomination process to implement the above including the Preliminary Assessment

- Support the World Heritage Centre in fundraising activities to increase voluntary funding from the private sector, civil society, multilateral funds and institutions.
- Recommends States Parties, when putting forward World Heritage List nominations, to contribute to financially sustain the system of evaluation of nominations by the Advisory Bodies through the mechanism for making voluntary contributions to a dedicated sub-account of the World Heritage Fund established by Decision **43 COM 14**, and request State Parties with 20 or more World Heritage sites to systematically use this mechanism for any new nomination to be considered by the Committee.
- Add a link on listed properties' websites for donations to the Fund when possible.

E) Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention

- Continue the Open-ended Working Group until the 25th session of the General Assembly.
- Strengthen the ability of the World Heritage Centre to conduct its work as secretariat.

**Open-ended Working Group
in relation to Decision 45 COM 11**

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by:

UZBEKISTAN

Open-ended Working Group in relation to Decision 45 COM 11

Written Contribution in Advance of the 3rd meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group

Submitted by: Uzbekistan

I. Consider the necessary improvement aiming at reducing the gap of the representation of States Parties on the World Heritage List and enhancing the balance of the List:

- *Assistance in Revision of the Tentative List (Upstream Process) and identification of the potential sites for inclusion in the list*

II. Propose solutions to the technical evaluation requirements, including improving capacity building activities:

- *Capacity building for site managers on the Heritage Impact Assessment, preparation of the nominations*

III. Explore the possibility of using additional service providers:

- *Support the candidature of Uzbekistan in becoming member of ICCROM.*

V. Consider the mandate and working methods for an extension of this Open-ended Working Group, with a view to starting a fundamental reflection on the operation of the World Heritage Convention:

- *Mentorship Programme for Uzbekistan or for Central Asia Region;*
- *Attract experts who are not ICOMOS members to participate in the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel.*