

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**
**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**Bureau of the World Heritage Committee
Tenth Session**

(Unesco Headquarters, Paris, 16-19 June 1986)

Contemporary architectural structures

In accordance with the request of the Committee, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has prepared the attached guidelines for evaluating contemporary architectural structures.

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

GUIDELINES FOR THE INCLUSION OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

In order to implement the World Heritage Convention, the World Heritage Committee requested during its 5th session in Sydney (Australia) that ICOMOS draft "Guidelines for the evaluation of contemporary architectural structures". The various texts of the Convention and the "Guidelines" include no specific provisions in this regard.

Accordingly, the group of experts convened by ICOMOS devoted its efforts to :

1. formulating a definition of Contemporary Architecture for the Convention,
2. extracting from the "Guidelines" those criteria that could be applied without modification to Contemporary Architecture,
3. handing down guidelines, in the form of recommendations, for the States Parties to the Convention concerning the nominations and the related preparation of the States Parties' tentative lists, and for the World Heritage Committee in order to guide it in its task of evaluation.

1. Definition and Comments

1.1. Definition

- In the present period of the Convention's implementation Contemporary Architecture will be defined as the works of the 20th Century.

1.2. Comments

- Beginning point in time : since these properties are related to industrialization, some works of the 19th and in some cases even the 18th century representative of this phenomenon can be focused upon as milestones in a historical or typological evolution.

- End point in time : in order to assure sufficient perspective in evaluating the influence and importance of works of Contemporary Architecture, only those buildings which were built more than 25 years ago will be considered for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

However, some exceptions will have to be made to take into account those masterpieces built after the end point in time by architects from a preceding generation having exercised the

profession for several decades (minimum 25-30 years).

- see diagram in appendix.

2. Application of Criteria of the "Guidelines" and Comments

2.1. Application of Criteria of the "Guidelines"

The criteria : (i) "represent a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative genius"

(ii) "have exerted great influence, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscaping"

(iv) "be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in history"

(vi) "be directly and tangibly associated with events or with ideas or beliefs of outstanding universal significance"

relating to the inclusion of cultural properties on the World Heritage List were chosen to be applied without modification to Contemporary Architecture.

It was also recalled that all properties nominated "must meet the test of authenticity in design, materials, workmanship or setting" (extract of the "Guidelines", par. 21.b.).

2.2. Comments

In light of criteria (ii) and (iv), it is necessary to develop sufficient perspective so that only the following will be chosen :

a) those works which are most representative of our history and our society,

b) the most outstanding elements of distinct major movements of Contemporary Architecture not found in earlier periods (as the technological, sociological and philosophical consequences of the industrial age transformed basic architectural facts),

c) the works which represent the dawn or the apogee of a trend.

3. Guidelines

As is explained in their commentary, the experts have decided that implementation of the criteria of the "Guidelines" should be completed by the following guidelines. In this way a better definition for properties suitable for proposal by the States Parties and included on the World Heritage List by the Committee can be arrived at. They recommended that these points be taken into consideration :

3.1. the nature of the relationship between Contemporary Architecture and the existing environment;

3.2. technical innovations in the use of materials and the originality of structure, though this must not encourage the States Parties to increase substantially the number of nominations, for all nominations must be outstanding and this standard must be maintained;

3.3. the "psycho-sociological" character of buildings, which sometimes lends them primordial significance even though formally speaking they are not of extraordinary architectural perfection. This concerns especially such Contemporary Architecture as public housing programmes;

3.4. the overall conservation of works of Contemporary Architecture (functions and materials, interior and exterior layout and surroundings) which illustrate the conception of "Total Art" ("Gesamtkunstwerk");

3.5. the conservation of colonial Contemporary Architecture;

3.6. the existence of urban ensembles which fall within the scope of "city" and "Contemporary Architecture" typologies.

ICOMOS, May 1986.

