

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee

Tenth Session

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Item 13 of the provisional agenda: ways of ensuring a better turnover in the membership of the World Heritage Committee

1. At its ninth session the World Heritage Committee requested the Bureau to look at ways of ensuring a better turnover in the membership of States Parties on the Committee. A suggestion made during the discussion of this question was that States should limit membership to one or two successive terms of office.
2. It should first be recalled that the Convention itself contains no provision concerning the number of terms of office for which a state can be elected to the Committee. The Convention does, however, make provisions on the length of the term of office and on the system of rotation: Article 9, paragraph 1, stipulates that "the term of office of States members of the World Heritage Committee shall extend from the end of the ordinary session of the General Conference during which they are elected until the end of its third subsequent ordinary session.". According to the terms of paragraph 2 of the same Article, the term of office of one-third of the members ceases at the end of each ordinary session of the General Conference.
3. Furthermore, the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Second General Assembly of States Parties in 1978 and followed by all General Assemblies since, similarly make no reference to the number of terms of office of members of the Committee.

4. The Secretariat has sought information on the rules followed in certain other intergovernmental committees which have been established for several years. Below are details on the length of the term of office and the rule on re-eligibility followed in six intergovernmental committees:

Intergovernmental Copyright Committee

Length of term of office :	: 6 years
Re-eligibility	: "At least one-third, but not more than two-thirds of the States proposed on the list (of candidates) shall be States that are not members of the Committee at the date of the elections". (Rule 47.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee)

Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

Length of term of office	: 2 years
Re-eligibility	: no limit on the number of terms of office

International Co-ordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere

Length of term of office:	: 4 years
Re-eligibility	: no limit on the number of terms of office

Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme

Length of term of office	: 4 years
Re-eligibility	: no limit on the number of terms of office

Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme

Length of term of office	: 4 years
Re-eligibility	: no limit on the number of terms of office

Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport

Length of term of office	: 4 years
Re-eligibility	: no limit on the number of terms of office

5. Attached in Annex I is the list of States which have so far been elected to the World Heritage Committee, with indications on the number and length of their terms of office.

6. During the discussion of this question at the tenth session of the Bureau, no consensus was reached. Several members considered that there should be no limit placed on the number of terms of office of members of the Committee. Other members were of the opinion that there were good grounds to change the present system, and the following suggestions were made:

- that the possibility of introducing a uniform election system to be followed by all intergovernmental committees established within Unesco should be examined;
- that, in order to ensure a better turnover in the membership of the Committee, States members should not be eligible for re-election for two years.

7. With respect to the first suggestion mentioned in the preceding paragraph, there are three aspects which would have to be taken into account in examining the possibility of introducing a uniform election system, namely the status of the electoral body, the length of the term of office and the rule on re-eligibility. As regards the electoral body, it should be noted that the World Heritage Convention stipulates that it is the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention which elects the members of the World Heritage Committee. In the case of the majority of other intergovernmental committees, it is the General Conference, upon recommendation of its Nominations Committee, which elects the members. The length of the term of office of members of the World Heritage Committee is likewise laid down by the Convention and could only be changed by a revision of the Convention. For the other intergovernmental committees, the length of the term of office is normally stipulated in the Statutes establishing the body which can only be revised by the General Conference. The rules of re-eligibility can, in certain cases, be found in the Statutes of intergovernmental committees and in others in the Rules of Procedure. In view of the above considerations it is difficult to see how it would be possible to adopt a uniform system for all intergovernmental committees.

8. If it were considered desirable to introduce a rule on re-election as suggested in paragraph 6 above, ie., that states should not be eligible for re-election for two years, an amendment could be proposed to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention. In accordance with Rule 16, the Assembly may amend the Rules of Procedure "by a decision taken in plenary meeting by a two-thirds majority of the representatives of States present and voting".

Terms of office of the Members of the World Heritage Committee

<u>State Party</u>	<u>Years</u>	
Algeria	1978-1980	1983-1989
Argentina	1978-1985	
Australia	1976-1983	1983-1989
Brazil	1980-1987	
Bulgaria	1978-1983	1985-1991
Canada	1976-1978	1985-1991
Cyprus	1980-1987	
Egypt	1976-1983	
Ecuador	1976-1980	
France	1976-1978	1978-1985
Fed. Rep. of Germany	1976-1978	1980-1987
Ghana	1976-1980	
Greece	1985-1991	
Guinea	1980-1987	
India	1985-1991	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1976-1980	
Iraq	1976-1983	
Italy	1978-1985	
Jordan	1980-1987	
Lebanon	1983-1989	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1980-1987	
Malawi	1983-1989	
Mexico	1985-1991	
Nepal	1978-1983	
Nigeria	1976-1980	
Norway	1983-1989	
Pakistan	1978-1985	
Panama	1978-1985	
Poland	1976-1978	
Senegal	1976-1978	1978-1985
Sudan	1978-1980	
Sri Lanka	1983-1989	

<u>State Party</u>	<u>Years</u>
<i>Switzerland</i>	<i>1978-1985</i>
<i>Tunisia</i>	<i>1976-1983</i>
<i>Turkey</i>	<i>1983-1989</i>
<i>United Republic of Tanzania</i>	<i>1985-1991</i>
<i>United States of America</i>	<i>1976-1983</i>
<i>Yemen</i>	<i>1985-1991</i>
<i>Yugoslavia</i>	<i>1976-1980</i>
<i>Zaire</i>	<i>1980-1987</i>