On behalf of the World Heritage Centre I want to extend my deepest sympathy to the countries devastated by the recent earthquake and the ensuing tsunami in the Indian Ocean and express the sorrow we have all felt for the tragic loss of life in the region.

The conservation community mourns the loss of several staff members of the Gunung Leuser National Park, one of the three national parks within the Indonesian World Heritage site Tropical Rainforest of Sumatra. The site itself has not sustained major damage.

The site of the Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications in Sri Lanka has been flooded and preliminary reports indicate that there has been important damage, notably affecting underwater heritage in the ancient harbour. The Marine Archaeology Laboratory in Galle has been demolished and its equipment and findings were lost. The Galle Fort itself has been reported intact.

The Indian sites of Mahabalipuram and the Sun Temple of Konarak, also located in the affected zones, have not suffered any substantial damage, according to the Indian national authorities.

The World Heritage Centre remains committed to taking all the necessary and appropriate action to assist in the preservation and rehabilitation of the damaged sites. The involvement of the local populations in these endeavors is of primary importance.

The year 2005 promises to be rich in events for the Centre. The 29th session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be held in Durban, South Africa on July 10-16, will mark the first time that the Committee will be meeting south of the Sahara. We look forward to this event as a way to strengthen the commitment of the international community to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of Africa.

Ahead of that meeting, South Africa is also hosting in March a preparatory meeting of African Experts on the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. This will be an important opportunity to discuss concrete proposals to support long term conservation of African Heritage.

It should also be noted that, as requested by the World Heritage Committee, a Special Experts’ Meeting will take place in Kazan, Tatarstan, Russian Federation, on April 6-9. This meeting will be focused on a discussion of the concept of ‘outstanding universal value’, a key element in the implementation of the Convention.

In May, the World Heritage Centre will be organizing a meeting in Vienna, Austria on ‘World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture: Managing the Historic Urban Landscape’, which will examine the impact of contemporary architecture on World Heritage. This meeting was requested by the Committee following the emergence of controversial construction proposals in several World Heritage cities.

Finally, we look forward to the 33rd UNESCO General Conference and to a very important statutory event: the General Assembly of the State Parties to the World Heritage Convention in October of this year.

All in all, the year ahead promises to be fruitful. The World Heritage Centre wishes you a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Francesco Bandarin, Director, World Heritage Centre
Seventh Extraordinary Session of the Committee

The World Heritage Committee’s Seventh Extraordinary Session was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (6 – 11 December), under the chairmanship of Themba P. Wakashe from South Africa. The meeting was attended by 88 States Parties.

The Committee recognized the primary of the World Heritage Convention in relation to tangible heritage. It also noted that the 2003 Convention is not to be interpreted as altering the status or diminishing the level of protection under the 1972 Convention when an item of the intangible cultural heritage is directly associated with it. The States Parties were encouraged to continue to encourage intellectual debate and reflection concerning the interconnectedness between the tangible and intangible heritage.

The Committee also examined proposals for the revision of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. It was decided that the revised Operational Guidelines will enter into force on 2 February 2005.

Concerning future publications, the Committee has welcomed the proposal to compile into one publication the Basic texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention which will include the revised Operational Guidelines.

The working group on the methods of work of the Committee, established at its 7th Extraordinary Session, is to continue its mandate at its 29th session in Durban, South Africa from 10 to 17 July 2005.

However, the Committee decided to establish, starting with its 29th session, and on an experimental basis, an open-ended subsidiary body on administrative and financial issues, which will work simultaneously with the plenary sessions, and to examine the previous practice of constituting working groups in parallel with the plenary sessions. It was agreed that the current practice of holding one annual ordinary session, with the possibility of convening an extraordinary session.

This session served as an occasion to examine several progress reports within the region. Periodic Reporting exercises were in order to study and reflect on the first cycle of Periodic Reporting, develop strategic direction and streamline the Committee’s consideration of matters raised through Periodic Reporting, the Committee decided to suspend for one year the cycle of Periodic Reporting. The first cycle will end in 2006 with Europe.

The Committee also invited the Director of the WHC, in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, to submit proposals at its 29th session on ways and means of optimizing the interrelation between the results of the Periodic Reporting cycles and the conclusions resulting from the state of conservation reports.

The session considered the progress report on the partnerships for World Heritage Conservation, and endorsed the proposal to establish the World Heritage FACT (‘Partnerships for Conservation’).

Regional Meeting on Modern Heritage – North America

A Regional Meeting on Modern Heritage: North America, organized by the WHC and the University of Florida College of Design, Construction and Planning Preservation Programs, with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, US-ICOMOS, the Consortium for Urban Conservation in North America, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, The Villagers Inc., the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation and DOCOMOMO-US, was held in Miami Beach and Coral Gables, USA (10–12 November 2004). Forty-five experts and professionals participated.

Both Canada and the United States have developed an elaborate system of institutions and instruments for the conservation of heritage. The United States was arguably far ahead of other regions in the world with regard to identification and listing of various heritage categories according to themes, including Modern Heritage while Canada has established an elaborate system regarding the World Heritage process, including a rigorous procedure for the drawing up of its Tentative List, which had just been completed after two years of identification and consultation.

As the United States has refrained from putting forward nominations during the last decade in order to make room for other States Parties, much discussion was focused on how the US was planning to get back in the process. A US representative explained that efforts were currently being put into the Periodic Reporting process in view of the presentation of the region’s report in 2005. A comprehensive revision of the Modern Heritage list, which was established over 20 years ago, was envisaged, although no strategy had been developed yet.

Participants agreed that there was a limited but growing appreciation for modern heritage in the North American society and urged a rethinking of the ways and means for garnering political support and public engagement.

Participants also underlined the need to pursue regional balance and efforts for assistance to under-represented regions. Assistance from the World Heritage Committee to conduct comparative analyses was requested. Support for the evolving concept and further development of serial nominations was suggested, particularly with regard to properties of Modern Heritage.

The World Heritage Centre was called upon to convene a thematic meeting involving experts selected from all regions of the world which would facilitate general advice to the World Heritage Committee.

World Heritage Partners: The German World Heritage Foundation

The German World Heritage Foundation (GWHF) was established three years ago by the Hanseatic Towns of Stralsund and Wismar in Germany. Recognizing their responsibility as a World Heritage site (‘Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar’, inscribed in 2002), they launched this initiative in order to actively contribute to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Foundation objectives:
- Assist World Heritage sites in regions of the world with fewer resources to protect and preserve their heritage values.
- Assist in preparing nominations of potential World Heritage sites to further enhance the balance of the World Heritage List.
- Over the past two years various projects supported by the GWHF in Mongolia, Ukraine, Latvia, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro and Australia addressed issues such as: research, restoration, preparation of nominations and management plans, communication equipment and harmonization of Tentative Lists.
- Currently the GWHF is supporting the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the preparation of its first cultural World Heritage nomination. It is also participating in the ‘Whole Village Project’ in Romania launched by the Mihai Eminescu Trust.

Further information: www.welterbetschutz.de.
- Or email: info@welterbetschutz.de.

Interview with the Chairperson

The Newsletter met with the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, Themba P. Wakashe, of South Africa, at its 7th Extraordinary Session and asked him whether he was happy with the results of the Paris meeting.

What do you hope South Africa’s chairing of the 29th session of the Committee will accomplish? How has South Africa contributed to conservation since the end of apartheid?

We have built partnerships through the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) programs. Support from the African continent, through the Organization of African Union (OAU) during the apartheid years led us to a free South Africa. We already had the solidarity on the ground. In chairing the Committee now, we need to leverage that African solidarity, hence our briefing to the African Union.

We want to draw attention to the status of conservation on the African continent, to highlight the challenges we face, and, of course, provide possible solutions. African experts will be meeting in March in Cape Town and will possibly table a position paper to the World Heritage Centre. We also need to set a time frame for removing properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger. We need to create mechanisms to prevent sites from being put on this List in the first place. South Africa’s chairing of the Committee will also be a chance to further advocate the linkage of heritage to sustainable economic development.
World Heritage and Pacific 2009

The WHC and UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC) have launched a seminar in New Zealand, hosted by the Tongariro National Park in New Zealand, to further the understanding of World Heritage in the Pacific region. The seminar, titled ‘World Heritage – Pacific 2009’, brought together representatives from the Pacific Islands, supported by a number of regional and international agencies.

The seminar’s objectives were to:
- Review the current state of World Heritage in the Pacific region.
- Identify and prioritize actions that need to be undertaken to achieve concrete results.
- Encourage the development of regional networks.

The seminar was organized to provide a platform for discussion and sharing of best practices among Pacific Island States Parties.

The seminar was attended by representatives from the WHC, UNESCO’s Pacific region office, and various other regional and international agencies.

Culture, Itineraries in the Sahara Desert

The first interregional meeting ‘Cultural Itineraries in the Sahara Desert’ was held in New Zealand as part of the WHC’s World Heritage and Cultural Heritage in Danger projects. The meeting aimed to define a strategy for the elaboration of a nomination for the Trans-Saharan Cultural Itineraries.

The meeting was organized by the WHC and UNESCO, with the participation of national and international organizations.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the WHC, UNESCO, and other international organizations.

The meeting discussed the following:
- The identification of cultural itineraries in the Sahara Desert.
- The preparation of a nomination for the Trans-Saharan Cultural Itineraries.

The meeting was successful in identifying cultural itineraries and in laying the groundwork for the preparation of a nomination for the Trans-Saharan Cultural Itineraries.

Conclusion

The ‘World Heritage – Pacific 2009’ seminar and the ‘Cultural Itineraries in the Sahara Desert’ meeting were successful in identifying cultural itineraries and in laying the groundwork for the preparation of nominations for World Heritage. These initiatives are important steps towards the conservation and protection of cultural heritage in the Pacific region and the Sahara Desert.
In November, the German Environmental Foundation (DBU) approved the project proposal ‘Management and Development Tools for World Heritage Cultural Landscapes in Central and Eastern Europe’ (with case studies from Germany, Poland and Czech Republic) for a total of 129,000 € in the first phase. The project will be funded by the University of Potdam and is considered to be the next step for future World Heritage activities with the Foundation. The DBU is one of Europe’s largest foundations and promotes innovative and exemplary environmental projects. Since 1991, almost 5500 projects have received financial backing totaling approximately one billion €. The goal is to promote the World Heritage cultural landscape concept 1993-95. For further information: http://www.dbu.de/environmental.php.

The UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust Cooperation: Support to World Heritage

It has been extended with an annual contribution of 375,000 € for the period 2005-2008. The agreement for extension was signed on 23 November in Amsterdam by State Secretary for Culture Midy van der Laan and the WHC Director Francesco Bandarin.

In the first agreement of its kind UNESCO and ANA signed a pact on 2 November to handle emergencies that might result in damage to any of the World Heritage sites. Italy is to provide a ready response team and Italian expertise in assessing damage and needs and drawing up action plans.

An International Conference on the Safeguarding of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage Towards an Integrated Approach was held in Nara Prefecture, Nara City, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO and UNESCO, was held in Nara, Japan (20-23 October). The conference, opened by UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura, particularly emphasized the necessity of exploring ways and supporting the safeguarding of tangible and intangible heritage, in close collaboration and agreement with the communities and groups concerned.

All Nippon Airways (ANA), Japan, and the WHC signed an agreement in 2004 to publish excerpts of four World Heritage Review articles in ANA’s inflight magazine Wingspan. By publishing these articles, ANA is helping raise public awareness of World Heritage and providing financial support to World Heritage publications.

**What Are They Doing?**

- Herman van Hooff, Adviser for World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO Montevideo Office, and Marc Patry, Programme Specialist, Latin America Section, attended the ‘Periodic Reporting meeting for Latin America: Towards an Action Plan for World Heritage in Latin America 2004 – 2014’, held in Cartagena, Colombia (25-27 October) to develop an Action Plan submitted for the 35th Session of the WHC’s Extraordinary Session. Mr Patry also participated in a meeting for the 2nd Local Governments and National and World Heritage Sites Conference, Aomori Prefecture, Japan (12-16 October).
- Ron van Oers, Chief (a.i.) Latin America and Caribbean attended a sub-regional meeting for the Caribbean Kingdom in Jamaica (27-29 September) to develop an implementation structure for the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage.
- Moehlich Rösler, Chief, Europe and North America Unit, along with Fumiko Ohnita, Associate Expert, attended the conference ‘Towards a World Heritage Centre for the Caribbean: A Caribbean Heritage Centre for UNESCO and UNESCO’ held in Nara, Japan (20-23 October).
- Marjana Kokkonen, Marine Heritage Specialist, Nature Section, visited Panama (8-12 November) to meet with project partners of the UNESCO/UNEP project for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape and to visit Costa National Park. Along with Grazia Piras, Associate Expert, Latin America and Caribbean Unit, she attended a sub-regional meeting for Central America and Mexico on Represen-
- tation and Harmonization of Tentative Lists, in San José, Costa Rica (1-4 November). Ms. Kokkonen and Hans Thulstrup, Scientist Officer of UNESCO Office for the Pacific States, were in Christmas Island, Kiribati, 5-11 November to attend a national workshop on the serial and transboundary nomination of the Line and Phoenix Islands of Kiribati.
- Salamat Al Abbas, Associate Expert, Asia-Pacific Unit and Ahmad Mynasary, Assistant Programme Specialist, Intangible Heritage Sections/CLT represented UNESCO at the Global Youth Exchange (GYEX) Programme 2004, ‘Discovering True Cultural Wealth and the Future of Culture in the 21st Century’ (22 November – 4 December) held in Tokyo, Kyoto and Okinawa, Japan, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
- Marjorie Richon, focal Point for Universities, attended the 9th International Seminar of Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage held at the University of Buenos Aires (10-15 October) on the theme ‘Heritage Management: Centre and Periphery’. She also participated in a workshop in Kazan, Tatarstan Republic, Russian Federation, to discuss the cross-cutting project ‘The Great Volga River Route – Uniting the Seas (Baltic, Black and Caspian Sea) in Support of World Heritage Education for Sustainable Development with the Support of IC’ (24-31 October).
- Steven Ripley, Consultant, Nature Section, Art Pederson, Consultant on Tourism and Visitor Management, and Marc Patry attended the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok (17-25 November). Two World Heritage workshops were organized for the Forest and Tourism thematic programmes.
- Nuria Sana, Programme Specialist, Latin America and Caribbean Unit, organized the Fourth expert meeting of the process of Nomination of the Oshun River (Main Andau Road) in Santiago de Chile, 6-11 November in co-operation with the Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales de Chile.
- Flora van Regeren Altana, Associate Expert, Africa Unit, attended a meeting on the preparation of a serial transboundary nomination for Mozambican heritage in Europe, North America and Africa in Baltimore, Pennsylvania, USA (7-10 November). She was also in Nigeria (25-29 October) to attend the Africa 2009 Seminar on Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Africa.

**New World Heritage Deputy Director**

In December Kishore Rao (India) was appointed as Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre. Kishore Rao has Master’s Degrees in Forestry (from India) and in Natural Resources Policy and Planning (from USA) and has worked with the Government of India since 1976 on protected area, forestry and wildlife conservation programmes in various capacities at the central and state levels. He joined the World Conservation Union in 1993 and was head of the Ecosystems and Livelihoods Group of IUCN in Hanoi, Vietnam with responsibility for the Regional Protected Areas Programme, the Regional Mountains Programmes, and oversight of the China programme. He was also the Vice-Chair for IUCN’s World Conservation Congress. Protected Areas for South Asia from 1994 to 1999 and a member of the IUCN’s World Heritage Panel since 2002. Mr Rao will take up his duties on 14 February 2005.

**February to March**

- February 3rd Training Workshop for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Gulf Region, organized jointly by the Arab States Unit of the WHC and the UNESCO Doha Office.

**9 to 11 March**

- UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention, Contributing to Forest Conservation and Sustainable Development \*BERASTAGI* + 7, Forest Policy Meeting. 

- Nancy, France. 

Information: m.patry@unesco.org and r.reply@unesco.org

**14 to 16 March**

- Sub-Regional Teacher-Training Course on the Use of the Sub-Regional Version of the ‘World Heritage in Young Hands’ Education Kit. 

- Zarabun, Tunisia. 

Information: c.keyudos@unesco.org and v.vujicic@unesco.org

**16 to 19 March**


- Paris, France. 

Information: irwin.langeveld@dac.gov.za and k.hendili@unesco.org

**23 to 25 March**

- International Workshop on Multimedia Material for World Heritage Education. 

- Pont du Gard, France. 

Information: jokahashi@unesco.org

**24 to 30 March**

- Central Asia Sub-Regional Workshop for the Follow-Up to the Asia-Pacific Periodic Reporting. 

- Almaty, Kazakhstan. 

Information: i.alexander@unesco.org

**29 to 31 March**

- 5th Regional Meeting on Modern Heritage: ‘World Heritage and Bio-diversity’ 

- Aswan, Egypt. 

Information: e.xavierousson@unesco.org and www.istamed.com

**6 to 9 April**

- Experts Meeting to Define the Concept of ‘Outstanding Universal Values’ 

- Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation. 

Information: a.lemaitre@unesco.org

**11 to 15 April**


- UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France. 

Information: a.soderink@unesco.org

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