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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-ninth Session

Durban, South Africa

10-17 July 2005

**Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda: Report of the World Heritage Committee for the
15th General Assembly of States Parties**

SUMMARY

Article 29.3 of the *World Heritage Convention* stipulates that “the Committee shall submit a report on its activities at each of the ordinary sessions of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization”.

This document provides the Committee with the draft report to be presented to the General Conference. The report contains information concerning the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 14th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* held on 14-15 October 2003. Information relating to the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee will be included after the closure of this session.

The Committee is asked to note that the Secretariat of the General Conference has requested that the report (which will be made available in the six official languages of UNESCO) not exceed six pages. The report will be included as one of the "statutory reports of UNESCO's intergovernmental committees and councils submitted to the General Conference, and the reports of governmental, regional and international conferences" (33 C/REP/____) and will not require a decision on the part of the General Conference.

Draft Decision: 29 COM 6, see point III.

I. Overview and structure of this document

1. This document is intended to provide the UNESCO General Conference with information regarding the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 14th General Assembly of States Parties (14-15 October 2003) in the implementation of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (hereinafter referred to as the *World Heritage Convention*).
2. In order to better present the varied information contained in this document, the main activities and decisions of the Committee have been grouped according to the Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Committee. The Strategic Objectives, adopted by the Committee at its 26th session (Budapest, 2002), are the following:
 - a) Strengthen the **Credibility** of the World Heritage List
 - b) Ensure the effective **Conservation** of the World Heritage properties
 - c) Promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** in States Parties
 - d) Increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through **Communication**¹

II. Background information

A. Number of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

3. As of May 2005, there are 180 States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*². The States that have joined the *World Heritage Convention* since the 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003) are: Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Trinidad and Tobago.

B. Current members of the World Heritage Committee

4. 21 members: Argentina, Benin, Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, India, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, South Africa and United Kingdom of Great Britain.

C. Members of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee since November 2003

NOV 2003 - JULY 2004	JULY 2004 - JULY 2005	JULY 2005 - ?
China (Chairperson Mr Zhang Xinsheng)	South Africa (Chairperson, Mr Themba Wakashe)	[Column to be completed after the 29th session of the Committee]
South Africa (Rapporteur, Ms Louise Graham)	Argentina (Rapporteur, Mr Ariel Gonzalez)	
Argentina	Colombia	
Nigeria	Lebanon	
Oman	New Zealand	
Saint Lucia	Nigeria	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Portugal	

¹ See Decision **26 COM 17.1**

² The list of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* is available at the following Web address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties>

D. Terms of Office of members of the World Heritage Committee:

5. The terms of office of the members of the World Heritage Committee are:

Until the **end of the 33rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO** (2005): Argentina, China, Colombia, Egypt, Lebanon, Nigeria, Oman, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, South Africa and United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Until the **end of the 34th session of the General Conference of UNESCO** (2007): Chile, Benin, India, Japan, Kuwait, Lithuania, New Zealand, Netherlands and Norway.

E. Number of seats in the World Heritage Committee reserved for States Parties with no properties on the World Heritage List

6. Following Rule 14.1 of the *Rules of Procedure* of the General Assembly of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*, a certain number of seats may be reserved for States Parties who do not have properties on the World Heritage List, upon decision of the World Heritage Committee at the session that precedes the General Assembly (see Draft Decision, point III).

F. World Heritage Statutory meetings since the 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003)

MEETING SESSION	VENUE	DATES	DOCUMENTS PREPARED
28th session of the World Heritage Committee (28 COM)	Suzhou, China	28 June-7 July 2004	29 working / 15 information documents (WHC-04/28 COM/)
7th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee (7 EXT.COM)	UNESCO	6-11 December 2004	28 working / 6 information documents (WHC-04/7 EXT.COM/)
29th session of the World Heritage Committee (29 COM)	Durban, South Africa	10-17 July 2005	29 working documents / 11 information documents (WHC-05/29 COM) ³
TOTAL	86 working / 32 information documents		(118 documents in total)

G. Revision of the Operational Guidelines:

7. Due to the fact that some of the provisions of the 6th extraordinary session had not entirely been reflected in the revised draft and that there was a need to further improve it, the deadline of 1 March 2004 set by Decision **27 COM 10** could not be met.
8. Additional drafting work had also been necessary to include decisions made during the 28th session as requested by the Committee. The Centre, in close consultation with the Chairperson of the 27th session, the Rapporteur of the 6th session of the Committee and the Advisory Bodies, completed the final draft of the revised *Operational Guidelines*.
9. The Chairperson, in cooperation with the Centre, submitted some issues (Tentative List, transboundary nominations, comparative analyses, photograph and audiovisual products, date of entry into force) to the Committee requesting for its approval during the 7th extraordinary session (Decision **7 EXT.COM 4A**). On the basis of the Committee's decisions, the Chairperson of the 27th session of the World Heritage Committee approved the revised text of the *Operational Guidelines* on its behalf.
10. As decided, the revised *Operational Guidelines* entered into force on **2 February 2005**, on

³ To be updated after the conclusion of the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee.

the understanding that the provisions on the format of nominations will apply to nominations to be examined starting from 2007 (Decision 7 EXT.COM 4A).

H. Changes to the working methods of the Committee:

11. At its 7th extraordinary session (UNESCO, 2004), the Committee established a working group with the mandate to discuss proposals aiming to improve its current working methods. The working group shall complete its mandate at the 29th session of the Committee (Durban, 2005) (Decision 7 EXT.COM 4B.3).
12. The Committee also decided, on an experimental basis and starting at its 29th session, to continue the current practice of holding one annual ordinary session of the Committee, with the possibility of convening an extraordinary session if the number of non-examined items in the agenda of the session so justifies and to establish an open-ended subsidiary body on administrative and financial issues, which will work simultaneously with the plenary sessions (Decision 7 EXT.COM 4B.1).

I. Strengthening the CREDIBILITY of the World Heritage List

Nominations to the World Heritage List:

13. The decision taken by the Committee at its 24th session (Cairns, 2000) to limit the number of new nominations to be examined each year to 30 (with a maximum one nomination for those State Parties who already have properties on the World Heritage List) was reviewed by the 28th session of the Committee (Suzhou, 2004) which decided, on an experimental and transitory basis, to set at 45 the annual limit on the number of nominations to be examined each year and to examine up to two complete nominations per State Party, provided that at least one of such nominations concerns a natural property. This mechanism will apply at the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee (2006) (Decision 28 COM 13.1).

Inscription of properties on the World Heritage List since the 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003): [To be updated following the 29th session of the Committee]

Region	New cultural properties	New natural properties	New cultural and natural properties	Total
Africa	2	1		3
Arab States	2			2
Asia/Pacific	10	1		11
Europe/North America	14	2		16
Latin America/Caribbean	1	1		2
TOTAL	29	5		34

14. The total number of properties on the World Heritage List as of June 2005 is 788 (611cultural, 154 natural and 23 mixed)⁴. These properties are located in 134 States Parties (i.e. 46 States Parties do not have properties inscribed on the World Heritage List). 145 States Parties have submitted Tentative Lists of properties they may decide to nominate in future years.

⁴ The World Heritage List is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

Inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger since the 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003)

Committee Session	Number of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger	Number of properties removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger
28 COM (2004)	3 (Cologne Cathedral, (Germany); Bam and its Cultural Landscape, (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara, (United Republic of Tanzania)	3 (Angkor, (Cambodia); Bahla Fort, (Oman); Rwenzori Mountains National Park (Uganda)

15. The total number of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger as of May 2005 is 35 (19 cultural and 16 natural)⁵. These properties are located in 29 States Parties.

State of Conservation reports of World Heritage properties examined by the Committee since the 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003)

28 COM	LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	WORLD HERITAGE LIST
Africa	14	10
Arab States	6	12
Asia/Pacific	8	28
Europe/North America	3	49
Latin America/Caribbean	3	23
Jerusalem	1	
TOTAL	35	122

Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List:

16. International, Inter-regional and Regional meetings and workshops have been carried out for the implementation of the Global Strategy (a full inventory of these activities is included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/5*), including the *Special Expert Meeting of the World Heritage Convention: the concept of outstanding universal value* held in Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation (6-9 April 2005). The Recommendations of this meeting are reported in document *WHC-05/29.COM/9*.
17. Moreover, the Committee at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004) noted with interest the results of the ICOMOS and IUCN analyses of the World Heritage List and requested the two Advisory Bodies to complete their analyses of the Tentative Lists and continue their thematic studies.

J. Ensuring the effective CONSERVATION of World Heritage properties

Approved International Assistance (IA) from the World Heritage Fund since 14th General Assembly (14-15 October 2003)⁶:

REGIONS	NUMBER OF STATES PARTIES TO REQUEST IA	NUMBER OF REQUESTS	TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED (in US\$)
Africa	20	26	503,857
Arab States	8	13	320,900
Asia & Pacific	17	24	495,526
Europe and North America	2	1	12,000

⁵ The List of World Heritage in Danger is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/danger>

⁶ As of 30 April 2005.

Central and Eastern Europe	9	10	143,282
Latin America & Caribbean	7	16	341,905
Global	n.a.	4	195,000
TOTAL	63	94	2,012,470

Periodic Reporting:

18. At its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004) the Committee examined the Periodic Report for Latin America and the Caribbean (with 109 World Heritage properties). The Report and the Action Plan for World Heritage 2004-2014 were approved by the Committee (Decision **28 COM 16**).
19. At its 7th extraordinary session (UNESCO, 2004), the Committee also took note of the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Programme for the Arab States, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region and in responding to the priority needs identified in the Periodic Report for such regions.
20. The Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005) will examine the presentation of the Periodic Report for North America and of Section I of the Periodic Report for Europe (2005) and will examine the Progress Report on the preparation of Section II of the Periodic Report for Europe (2006) .

Special activity in support of World Heritage in Iraq:

21. A project for the safeguarding and the conservation of the Iraqi cultural heritage was initiated, in September 2004, by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with the UNESCO Amman and Baghdad Offices and with the generous financial support of the Nordic World Heritage Foundation (NWHF).
22. The first phase of this project consisted of a "Training Workshop on the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* for Iraqi specialists", held in Jordan, Amman, which aimed to inform Iraqi experts about the *World Heritage Convention*, its objectives and procedures. The workshop was attended by representatives from Iraqi national institutions in charge of the preservation of Cultural and Natural heritage.
23. In the second phase of the project the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, the World Heritage Centre and the NWHF will cooperate on the preparation of the Nomination File of one of the sites included in the Iraq's Tentative List, for submission to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2006. The property of Samara was selected by the Iraqi authorities for this exercise.

Special activity for the protection of Palestinian natural and cultural heritage:

24. Activities aimed at the preservation of the Palestinian cultural and natural heritage, initiated by Decisions **26 COM 6.1**, **26 COM 6.2** and **26 COM 24.2.5** (Budapest, 2002), confirmed by Decision **27 COM 5.2** and **28 COM 17 B.II**, implemented mostly by the UNESCO Office in Ramallah, are continuing and are reported in document *WHC-05/29.COM/11D*.

Congo Heritage in Danger:

25. A special three week awareness and fund raising event in support of the five World Heritage properties of the Democratic Republic of Congo was held at UNESCO Headquarters from 9 to 26 September 2004.

International conferences and symposiums:

26. A number of international conferences and symposiums focused on various World Heritage issues were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance (a full

inventory of these activities is included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/5*), including:

- the international conference *World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture – Managing the Historic Urban Landscape* held in Vienna, Austria, from 12 to 14 May 2005 (the “Vienna Memorandum” included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/5*);
- an International Symposium on *Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: The Role of Sacred Natural Sites and Cultural Landscapes*, held in Aichi, Japan from 30 May to 2 June (the “Tokyo declaration” is included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/INF.5B*) .

K. Promoting the development of effective CAPACITY-BUILDING in States Parties

Global Training Strategy:

27. The World Heritage Centre continued to promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** measures with training courses, seminars and other technical cooperation activities and on-site conservation workshops (a full inventory of these training and activities is included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/5*).

Education Activities:

28. A number of International and Regional workshops and training-course were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre’s assistance to develop educational activities related to World Heritage (a full inventory of these training and activities is included in document *WHC-05/29.COM/5*).
29. The *World Heritage in Young Hands Educational Resource Kit for Teachers* is now available in Hindi, in Tagalog and in a Kiswahili version, thus bringing the total number of available languages to 24.

L. Increasing public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through COMMUNICATION

Awareness-raising:

30. A special one day event, entitled *World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme: Ecotourism for Communities and Conservation at World Heritage sites* was organized in context of the annual International Tourism Bourse (ITB) in Berlin, Germany, on 11 March in support of the sustainable tourism programme. The World Heritage Centre has begun to work with the renowned Brazilian photographer, Sebastião Salgado on his latest project, *Genesis* that aims to depict the unblemished faces of nature and humanity, and how humanity and nature long coexisted in ecological balance.

Publications:

31. Extensive work is continuing on the World Heritage Web address to improve communication with all of our audiences. The Information Management System team is continually assessing and addressing user needs and development is guided by their requirements. The Web address can be consulted at <http://whc.unesco.org>
32. Articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published through work with numerous international and national well-known media.
33. Five new publications have been produced in the *World Heritage Paper Series*, eight numbers of the *World Heritage Newsletter* and eight numbers of the *World Heritage Review* have been published. The *World Heritage Information Kit* has been revised and updated and the *World Heritage Map 2004/2005* has been produced and circulated. The *World Heritage Calendar* (in cooperation with Panasonic) and the *World Heritage Diary 2005* were also

produced.

Bi-lateral Agreements with States Parties⁷

34. Bi-lateral agreements in favour of World Heritage have been signed with the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. Existing UNESCO wide agreements with the Governments of France and Japan have continued to benefit World Heritage properties.
35. The Open Initiative between UNESCO and the European Space Agency, first signed in 2003, has evolved and now embraces the Canadian Space Agency; Chinese Academy of Sciences; and Comision Nacional Argentina del Espacio (CONAE). An agreement with NASA was signed in 2005.

Partnerships:

36. The World Heritage Partnerships Initiative, subsequently renamed as the World Heritage PACT ('Partnerships for Conservation') was launched on a trial basis at the end of 2002⁸. It seeks to build an effective system of international co-operation for World Heritage properties, including conservation operations and awareness-raising activities in support of the Committee's four strategic objectives. A regulatory framework for partnership development was developed and presented to the Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005). Existing partnerships with the United Nations Foundation and a network of conservation organizations and media companies have continued to evolve. New partnerships developed over the biennium 2004 – 2005 include the Japan Bank for International Development, NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy and the Earthwatch Institute, and private sector organizations such as Hewlett-Packard Europe, All Nippon Airways, and the Calyon Bank⁹.

III. Draft decision

Draft Decision 29 COM 6

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-05/29.COM/6,*
2. *Requests the Director of the World Heritage Centre to transmit the Report included in such document, as amended, to the Secretariat of the General Conference, so that it can be submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO at its 33rd session (UNESCO, October 2005);*
3. *Decides In accordance with Rule 14.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, to reserve one seat in the World Heritage Committee to be elected by the General Assembly at its 15th session (UNESCO, October 2005), for a State Party which does not have any properties on the World Heritage List.*

⁷ WHC-05/29.COM/13 presented an inventory of bi-lateral agreements with States Parties

⁸ Decisions **26 COM 17C** and **7 EXT.COM 12**

⁹ WHC-05/29.COM/13 presented a full inventory of all active partnerships as at May 2005.