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

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty first Session
Christchurch, New Zealand
23 June – 2 July 2007

**Item 17 of the Provisional Agenda: Reflection on the election of members of
the World Heritage Committee**

INF.17: Impact study

SUMMARY

19 States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* responded to the Committee's request (Decision **30 COM 18B**), and sent written comments on Document *WHC-06/30.COM/18B* to the World Heritage Centre.

Many of them requested that an impact study be carried out on the effects of the following three measures adopted by the Committee in 2000 following the work of the working group on the equitable representation of the different regions and cultures of the world in the World Heritage Committee:

1. Voluntary reduction of the mandate from 6 to 4 years;
2. Discouraging Committee members to seek consecutive mandates;
3. One reserved seat for a State Party with no property on the World Heritage List.

The statistical data underpinning this study come from the World Heritage Centre's databases on the States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*, on the composition of the World Heritage Committee, and on inscriptions on the World Heritage List.

I. Statistical data

Year ↓	Total number of States Parties	Total number of States Parties who ratified the World Heritage Convention each Year	Number of States Parties members of the Committee (cumulative)	Average year by Members of the World Heritage Committee	Total number of States Parties with consecutive mandates as Committee members	Number of States Parties Committee members with no properties on the List, each year	Number of States Parties elected for the first time to the Committee
1973	1	1	0	0	0	0	
1974	10	9	0	0	0	0	
1975	20	10	0	0	0	0	
1976	26	6	14	4.4	0	14	14
1977	34	8	14	4.4	0	14	
1978	42	8	23	5.4	2	17	9
1979	48	6	23	5.4	2	9	
1980	55	7	29	6.0	2	9	6
1981	60	5	29	6.0	2	4	
1982	69	9	29	6.0	2	3	
1983	77	8	34	6.3	3	5	5
1984	82	5	34	6.3	3	2	
1985	87	5	39	6.6	3	2	5
1986	90	3	39	6.6	3	1	
1987	98	8	40	7.5	4	0	1
1988	105	7	40	7.5	4	0	
1989	108	3	46	7.4	4	2	6
1990	113	5	46	7.4	4	2	
1991	121	8	49	7.8	5	1	3
1992	130	9	49	7.8	5	1	
1993	136	6	51	8.3	9	0	2
1994	139	3	51	8.3	9	0	
1995	145	6	54	8.6	9	0	3
1996	146	1	54	8.6	9	0	
1997	151	5	58	8.8	10	0	4
1998	155	4	58	8.8	10	0	
1999	157	2	61	8.9	11	0	3
2000	161	4	61	8.9	11	0	
2001	167	6	64	9.0	11	1	3
2002	175	8	64	9.0	11	1	
2003	177	2	69	8.9	11	2	5
2004	178	1	69	8.9	11	1	
2005	181	3	73	9.0	11	2	4
2006	183	2	73	9.0	11	1	

II. Analysis

A. Voluntary reduction of the mandate from 6 to 4 years

1. At the beginning of the 1980s, States Parties elected as Committee members stayed in the Committee for an average of 5 years. This average duration increased continuously until the late 1990s when the average was almost 9 years. However, since the beginning of the 2000s, further increase has been arrested as the average duration of a Committee member in the Committee is still 9 years in 2006.
2. It is important to note that, for the first time, all 12 new members of the World Heritage Committee elected during the 15th General Assembly of States Parties (UNESCO, 2005), have voluntarily decided to reduce their mandate from 6 to 4 years. Hence, it can be anticipated that in the years to come, average duration will continue to fall.
3. In 1978, 55% of the States Parties to the *Convention* had been elected to the World Heritage Committee. This dropped to 36.4% in 2002. Then, this percentage has increased again, reaching 40.5% in 2005.
4. This indicates that more States Parties have had access to membership to the Committee in the past 4 to 5 years. Any conclusion however needs to take into account the high number of States that ratified the *Convention* between the early 1980s and the late 1990s (from 42 States Parties in 1978 to 157 in 1999), compared to the number of States having ratified it since 2000 (from 161 in 2000 to 183 in 2006).
5. If the value continues to increase, it simply means that more States Parties have been elected to the Committee for the first time, thus indicating a greater rotation/turn-over of members.

B. Discouraging Committee members to seek consecutive mandates

6. Since the entry into force of the *World Heritage Convention*, 73 States Parties^{*} have been elected to its Committee. Of these, 11 have benefited from consecutive mandates.
7. From 1978 until the late 1990's, there was a tendency for an increasing number of States Parties to be re-elected to the Committee for consecutive mandates.
8. Since 2000, no State Party has been re-elected to the Committee for a consecutive term.

^{*} The *World Heritage Convention* has been ratified by 183 States Parties at the time of the drafting of this document.

C. One reserved seat for a State Party with no property on the World Heritage List

9. Resolution **13 GA 9**, followed by Decision **24 COM VI.2.2** adopted at the 24th session of the World Heritage Committee (Cairns, 2000), reserved one seat to the Committee for a State Party with no property on the World Heritage List, in order to improve rotation within the Committee.
10. Until the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a decreasing number of States Parties with no property on the List members of the Committee (17 in 1978, none in 1993). During almost one decade (1993 until 2000), no State Party with no property on the List has been elected as a Committee member. However, since 2001, there has always been at least one State Party with no property as Committee member.
11. To date, the States Parties of Saint-Lucia, Kuwait and Mauritius were elected to the reserved seat for a State Party with no property on the List, respectively at the 13th (UNESCO, 2001), 14th (UNESCO, 2003) and 15th (UNESCO, 2005) sessions of the General Assembly.