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WHC-96/CONF.201/7A
Paris, 10 October 1996
Original: English

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twentieth session
Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

2-7 December 1996

Item 7.2. of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of
properties inscribed on the World Heritage List:

- (a) Reports on the state of conservation of properties
inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

SUMMARY

In accordance with paragraphs 82-89 of the Operational Guidelines, the Secretariat submits herewith reports on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

If appropriate, the Secretariat or the advisory bodies will provide additional information during the session of the Committee.

Decision required: The Committee is requested to examine the attached state of conservation reports and take the appropriate decision in accordance with paragraph 89 of the Operational Guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

1. The following reports on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger are submitted to the World Heritage Committee to facilitate the 'review at regular intervals [of] the state of property on the List of World Heritage in Danger' which is foreseen in paragraph 88 of the Operational Guidelines.

2. The Committee is requested to examine these reports and to take a decision in accordance with paragraph 89 of the Operational Guidelines which reads as follows:

"On the basis of these regular reviews, the Committee shall decide, in consultation with the State Party concerned whether:

- (i) additional measures are required to conserve the property;*
- (ii) to delete the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger if the property is no longer under threat;*
- (iii) to consider the deletion of the property from both the List of World Heritage in Danger and the World Heritage List if the property has deteriorated to the extent that it has lost those characteristics which determined its inclusion in the World Heritage List, in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 46 to 56 above."*

3. To facilitate the work of the Committee, each of the reports is accompanied by a draft decision for examination and adoption by the Committee.

NATURAL HERITAGE

4. Nine natural properties are inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Reports on each of them were examined by the Bureau during its twentieth session in June 1996. Subsequently, the Bureau's recommendations and observations were transmitted to the States Parties concerned. Updated reports are now submitted to the World Heritage Committee for consideration.

Srebarna Nature Reserve (Bulgaria)

The World Heritage Committee at its nineteenth session examined a monitoring report prepared by the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention. This report indicated that the new water control structure allowed for an inflow of water on a small scale and that a colony of the Dalmatian Pelican had been re-established. The report concluded, however, that the integrity of the site had not yet been adequately restored.

As a result, the Committee decided to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger and requested the Bulgarian authorities to prepare a status report on their efforts to restore the site, to be presented in three years time.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee decides to retain this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger pending the threat mitigation status report which the Committee requested the Bulgarian authorities to submit in 1998".

Plitvice Lakes National Park (Croatia)

The Bureau at its twentieth session took note of the results of a multinational rapid assessment mission organized by the Centre and the Croatian authorities from 5 to 9 May 1996. The mission made an interdisciplinary review of the state of conservation of the site and determined that the World Heritage values had not been adversely impacted by the armed conflict. To the contrary, the mission concluded the natural systems of the area were recovering from prewar overdevelopment and over-use. The mission surveyed the war damage to Park commercial and administrative facilities and the neglected Park infrastructure and favorably reviewed the newly strengthened legislative framework adopted by the State Party. Park management and administrative capability was evaluated and the socio-economic situation of the site was assessed with regard to postwar tourism potential. Summary recommendations were proposed and remedial actions are now being taken by the State Party. The Bureau took also note of the specific recommendations made concerning the List of World Heritage in Danger. Radio equipment provided from the World Heritage Emergency Fund is now installed and operational; an estimated 250,000 tourists visited the park so far this year.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee (a) commends the Croatian authorities for their initial rehabilitation activities, (b) takes note of the full mission report contained in information document WHC/CONF.201/INF.14, (c) decides to maintain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger because, although there was no longer threat or damage to World Heritage values by armed conflict, there are now post-war potential threats such as visitor impacts, damaged infrastructure and other conditions identified in the mission report; (d) favorably considers possible management planning assistance and training requests to strengthen the management and staff capabilities, and (e) requests the State Party provide a state of conservation report on the area in 1997."

Sangay National Park (Ecuador)

At its last session, the World Heritage Committee called for an Environmental Impact Assessment of road construction activities in the Park and requested information from INEFAN, the National Park administration, on road modifications, a land tenure study and steps for an updated management plan. INEFAN informed the Centre that with respect to the road construction a meeting was organized with the concerned political authorities and local communities. It was also noted that the road was declared of military interest. The Centre received a copy of the land tenure study which was concluded in March of this year and the terms of reference for the elaboration of a new management plan were prepared during a workshop in December last year.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee commends INEFAN on its actions but at the same time reiterates the Committee's concerns about the road construction activities and its request for an Environmental Impact Assessment."

Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Guinea/Côte d'Ivoire)

The site was included on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1992 because of negative impacts from a proposed iron-ore mining project and threats due to the arrival of a large number of refugees from neighbouring countries.

The Ministry for Energy and Environment, in collaboration with the "Mission Française de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle", organized a Round Table on Mount Nimba which was held in Conakry, (Guinea), on 17 and 18 April 1996 with participation from the Secretariat. The Round Table included representatives of the following donor countries and organizations: France, Germany, Japan, Canada, the Wallonian Region of Belgium, The World Bank, UNDP, the European Union, and USAID. The recommendations included that UNESCO consider the establishment of a working group to create an "International Foundation for Mount Nimba". Preliminary discussions of a reflection group began, including legal aspects of such a foundation.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee commends the States Parties for their efforts. However, given the uncertainties concerning the adequate management of the site, and the shortcomings with regard to the on-site management, the Committee decides to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger."

Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (India)

The site was included in the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1992. At the nineteenth session of the Committee, the Observer of India indicated that her Government was ready to welcome a mission by members of the World Heritage Committee and the Director of the Centre to Delhi, Assam and Manas. In her recent letters, the Ambassador of India to UNESCO reiterated this information and advised that an updated state of conservation report would be available in due course; the latter has not been received from the Government of India to date. The Centre Director met with the Ambassador to plan, schedule and prepare arrangements for the New Delhi, Assam and Manas mission and to provide related training at the Government of India's request. Subsequently, the Centre was advised that the mission would be

welcomed at the end of November 1996. As this conflicted with the twentieth session of the World Heritage Committee and the preceding extraordinary session of the Bureau, alternative scheduling was necessary. At the twentieth session of the Bureau, IUCN informed the Bureau that a full report by a member of the Rhino Specialist Group will be made available to the twentieth session of the Committee. Alternate arrangements to receive and review the Manas state of conservation report, together with other reports on the state of conservation of natural World Heritage sites in India and from the region, in the context of implementing the Natural Heritage Training Strategy, are being planned by the Government of India for early in 1997 subject to the availability of World Heritage funds for international travel of regional participants.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee, having examined the information provided by the Secretariat and IUCN: (a) ask the State Party for detailed information concerning the state of conservation of the site; (b) encourages the State Party to further develop its consideration of hosting a regional World Heritage site managers training workshop in support of implementing the World Heritage natural heritage training strategy and as a 25th anniversary of the Convention event, and (c) subject to the Centre recommendation, favourably considers support for regional World Heritage manager participation in such an event in 1997. In lieu of updated information on the state of conservation of the site, the Committee decides to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger."

Aïr-et-Ténéré Reserve (Niger)

The site was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1992 as it was affected by civil disturbances. The Committee at its nineteenth session recalled that a peace agreement was signed on 9 October 1994 and that it had encouraged the authorities to implement it and to undertake all efforts to safeguard the site. In 1995 a dialogue was established between the parties, which has paved the way for a return to a normal situation and may allow for a detailed evaluation of the state of conservation of the site as well as the development of an action programme for the recovery of the site.

The Bureau at its twentieth session took note of information provided by IUCN, that an IUCN project of 1 Million US\$ is underway to assist in re-establishing the management regime. A written progress report on this project is expected in time for the extraordinary session of the Bureau.

In their letter of 22 July 1996, the Ministry of Education informed the Centre that the site faces severe problems and that other conditions have been aggravated since 1992. In the information they provide the following problems are indicated: insecurity, poaching and deforestation, as the local population lives mainly from products from the Reserve.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to examine the report that will be provided by IUCN on the site and subsequently, despite the significant national and international effort being made to re-establish a management regime, decide whether the site should remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Everglades National Park (United States of America)

The site was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1993. At its last session, the World Heritage Committee examined the detailed monitoring report presented by the State Party, which outlined the precedent setting long-term experimental restoration work necessary to restore the balance of the Everglades ecosystem. The State Party presented an interim monitoring report dated May 1996 outlining the Federal and State government's \$2 Billion partnership efforts with the private sector to protect the World Heritage values of the site. The State Party further indicated that Everglades now has the largest science staff of any unit in the U.S. National Park System. The report acknowledges however, that despite significant progress made (acquisition of additional land, improved ecological indicators), the Park remains in danger.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"Due to the long-term nature of the rehabilitation activities the Committee (a) commends the State Party and its state government and private sector partners for their extraordinary efforts to protect the World Heritage values of this site, (b) encourages the State Party to consider

sharing the knowledge and experience gained through this restorative effort in the rehabilitation of aquatic ecosystems with other State Parties with internationally significant wetlands in commemorative events related to both the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Everglades National Park and the 25th anniversary of the Convention in 1997, and (c) decides to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger until further rehabilitation progress is demonstrated."

Yellowstone National Park (United States of America)

It is recalled that, at its nineteenth session, the World Heritage Committee decided that, on the basis of both ascertained dangers and potential threats outlined by the State Party, Yellowstone National Park be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and that the State Party was invited by the Committee to provide information on the results of its required Environmental Impact Statement as related to proposed mining activity adjacent to the park boundary and mitigating actions. In May 1996, the State Party advised the Centre about the remedial actions taken. These included long-term programmes to mitigate the impact of the non-native lake trout in Yellowstone Lake and to safeguard the park bison herds; initiation of public meetings to analyze and improve visitor management; selectively increase elements of the park budget to correct deficiencies; minimize road repair and realignment impacts; and the continued preparation of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the proposed Crown Butte/New World Mine. With respect to the latter, in September 1996, the President of the United States publicly announced his efforts to achieve a satisfactory resolution of the mining issue with a mutually to be agreed upon trade of land valued at \$65 Million to fully remove this potential threat from Yellowstone.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee (a) congratulates the State Party on President Clinton's recent intervention and resolution initiative of the Crown Butte mining issue and for actions taken to mitigate other threats to Yellowstone, (b) encourages the State Party to coincide and relate events associated with the 125th anniversary of the establishment of Yellowstone as the first national park in the world with

the 25th anniversary year of the Convention in 1997, and (c) invites the State Party to outline the steps and schedule for threat mitigation which could be followed so that the site may be considered for removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger."

Virunga National Park (Zaire)

Virunga National Park was included on the List of World Heritage in Danger in December 1994, due to the tragic events in Rwanda and the subsequent massive influx of refugees from that country. Virunga National Park, situated on the border between Rwanda and Uganda, has been destabilized by the uncontrolled arrival of refugees, causing deforestation and poaching at the site.

The Centre wrote to the authorities requesting that the World Heritage Committee be informed about any action to be undertaken to stop illegal poaching operations within the site and to improve control in the Park. The Centre and IUCN are in contact with several NGOs working in the area and a mission was organized together with WWF to the site in order to evaluate its state of conservation and to strengthen cooperation between the different international assistance agencies working to protect the site. The mission was carried out from 15 to 30 April 1996 and the results of this mission were reported to the twentieth session of the Bureau, including priorities for granting international assistance. No request for assistance has been received from the authorities of Zaire at the time of the preparation of this document.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

Taking into account the presence of thousands of refugees, the Bureau may wish to express its concern about the continuing degradation of the Park and may wish to recommend to the Committee to encourage the authorities to prepare the appropriate international assistance requests and to retain the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

5. Nine cultural properties are inscribed on the List of World

Heritage in Danger. Reports on three of them were examined by the Bureau during its twentieth session in June 1996. Subsequently, the Bureau's recommendations and observations were transmitted to the States Parties concerned. Reports on the following properties are now submitted to the World Heritage Committee for consideration.

Angkor (Cambodia)

In the framework of assistance provided by the UNESCO Secretariat to the Cambodian authorities, to enable them to honour the obligations made to the Committee at the time of the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, UNESCO continues to assist the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia to prepare the decrees necessary for the enforcement of the **Law for the Protection of National Cultural Heritage** which was promulgated on 25 January 1996.

The Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia confirmed, during the Technical Committee of 2 April 1996, its determination to respect the obligations related to the World Heritage status of the site of Angkor. Thus, **APSARA** (Authority for the Protection of the Site and Management of the Region of Angkor), which was created in fulfilment of one of these obligations, was provided with human and financial resources necessary for its functioning.

The Royal Government has also informed UNESCO of its decision to have all economic development projects examined by APSARA in accordance with the related laws and regulations and in conformity with its commitment to the international community. In the light of this, tourism management projects have been carefully examined and numerous meetings were held on this subject. As a result, all projects which do not conform to the zoning plan have been refused. The Government of Cambodia has, furthermore insisted on the sacred character of the temples of Angkor which exclude, de facto, all activity or undertakings which do not respect the religious traditions of the area.

The International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor, created in October 1993, by the Tokyo Conference and for which UNESCO provides the secretariat, held a plenary session on 9 January 1996 and two sessions of the Technical Committee on 2 April and 27 September 1996. It was recalled that this Committee assures, in cooperation with the Cambodian authorities, **the coordination and**

the monitoring of international activities to preserve the site, conserve its monuments and protect the environment.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee takes note of the report presented by the Secretariat and commends the Government of Cambodia for its actions to implement the obligations set forth by the Committee at the time of inscription of Angkor on the World Heritage List. The Committee requests the Government of Cambodia to keep it informed of the progress made in its efforts to ensure the preservation of Angkor, especially with regard to the promotion of environmentally sustainable tourism development in harmony with the socio-cultural character of the region. Recognizing the still-prevailing exceptional conditions at the site, the Committee decides to retain Angkor on the List of World Heritage in Danger".

Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)

In May 1996, the first European World Heritage Youth Forum took place in Dubrovnik. One hundred students and teachers from 22 European countries met and discussed World Heritage issues. They sent an appeal to the European Ministers of Culture who were meeting in Helsinki at the same time, asking for their help in order to preserve the European cultural heritage.

On September 5, 1996, the area of the Dubrovnik littoral was hit by a VIII Mercalli scale earthquake. The most affected area includes Dubrovnik itself and the nearby (10kms) village of Ston, a historic town on the Croatian Tentative List. In response to a request from the Croatian authorities, a fact-finding mission was sent to Dubrovnik. At the time of the preparation of this report, the report of the mission has not yet been presented.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to take note of the mission report that will be presented during its session and take the appropriate action thereupon.

Bahla Fort (Oman)

The Bureau at its twentieth session was informed that a new expert mission would visit the site, the expenses of which would be shared with the Ministry of Culture of Oman.

In the course of this mission (14-21 September, 1996), the experts made the following observations:

- more use is being made of traditional materials (mud bricks and coating).
- the work should be further oriented towards a restoration based on solid historical and scientific documentation and should definitively avoid any conjectural reconstruction.
- a site commission in charge of defining the nature, the scope and the priorities of the work to be undertaken should be set up as soon as possible.
- a number of emergency safeguarding and consolidation operations should be undertaken without delay, especially as concerns the citadel, Bait el Hadith and the two outer mosques. A maintenance and preventive consolidation team should also be set up.
- historical, architectural and scientific documentation, indispensable for achieving a restoration in conformity with international standards, must be compiled rapidly.

At the end of three working meetings, the Omani authorities adopted all of these recommendations.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following text:

"After having examined the report of the Secretariat on the expert mission to the Bahla Fort (14 to 21 September, 1996), the Committee thanks the Omani authorities for their efforts towards safeguarding the site and the satisfactory use of traditional materials, and to have adopted the recommendations of the mission concerning, in particular:

- the adoption of a restoration policy supported by precise scientific documentation and avoiding all conjectural reconstruction;
- the establishment of a site commission;
- the implementation of emergency safeguarding and

consolidation work, especially at the citadel, at Bait el Hadith and in the two outer mosques, as well as the establishment of a preventive conservation team;

- the compilation of exhaustive scientific, historical and architectural documentation, indispensable for the restoration of the site in accordance with international standards.

The Committee encourages the Omani authorities to implement this programme as rapidly as possible, as they have indicated their will to do so. The Committee requests them to keep it informed on a regular basis, through the intermediary of the World Heritage Centre, of the progress achieved in the implementation of these measures."

Archaeological zone of Chan Chan (Peru)

An extensive report on the state of conservation of Chan Chan was submitted to the Committee at its seventeenth session in Cartagena in 1993. It was concluded at that time that the issue of invasions and land occupation by farmers needed to be addressed immediately in order to rapidly and permanently reclaim and secure the site's intangible zone. In 1996, the Government of Peru initiated this process which will be implemented gradually over a longer period of time. Long-term protection of the site is now a concern for the site managers and several alternatives of securing the site are presently under study.

The Pan-american Course on the Conservation and Management of Earthen Architectural and Archaeological Heritage will be held at the World Heritage site of Chan Chan from 10 November to 13 December 1996. Chan Chan being the venue of the course and one of its main case studies, it is expected that the course will provide valuable material on the conditions of the site, as well as guidelines for future interventions and management.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to consider the following decision:

"The Committee commends the Government of Peru for its efforts to secure the intangible zone of Chan Chan. It also requests the Peruvian authorities to submit a full report on the state of conservation of Chan Chan, including proposals regarding the future conservation and management

of the site in order to enable the Committee, at its twenty-first session, in consultation with the State Party, to decide if additional measures are required to conserve the property. Awaiting the state of conservation report, the Committee decides to retain the Archaeological Zone of Chan Chan on the List of World Heritage in Danger."

Wieliczka Salt Mines (Poland)

At its eighteenth session, in Phuket, December 1994, the Committee "approved [a] request for US\$ 100,000 to purchase the dehumidifying equipment required for the preservation of the salt sculptures of this World Heritage site in Danger".

This World Heritage Fund technical cooperation is but a part of a larger engineering work estimated at US\$ 256.000. The rest of the project cost is born by the Polish Government and the US-based Marie Sklodowska-Curie Foundation. The detailed engineering studies are now completed, and the project ready to be implemented.

A contract to this effect has been negotiated and signed between the Culture Sector of UNESCO and the Polish permanent Delegation. The project is to be completed before the end of 1997.

Decision required: The Committee may wish to adopt the following:

"The Committee commends the Polish authorities and the Marie Curie Foundation for their efforts in order to preserve the precious salt sculptures at Wieliczka, and requests to be kept informed about the outcome and results of the preservation project."