

FINAL REPORT ON THE PERIODIC REPORTING WORKSHOP OF STATE PARTIES VISEGRÁD (HUNGARY), 6 – 8 MAY 2004

Background

Under the terms of Article 29 of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the States Parties shall report on the legislative and administrative provisions they adopted and other action they have taken for the application of the Convention. The above mentioned workshop took place on periodic reporting for those world heritage sites that were inscribed on the World Heritage List before and up to 1996/1997. The participants of the workshop included representatives from the World Heritage Centre, The Advisory Bodies, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom and Hungary. Please, find enclosed in Annex 1 the program of the workshop and a list of participants in Annex 2.

The Workshop was financed by the International Assistance (training) under the World Heritage Fund and was jointly organized by the Hungarian World Heritage Committee.

While periodic reporting is a requirement for nominated sites the great majority of World Heritage Sites in Central and Eastern Europe have no substantial experiences in this field since Periodic Reporting began in the Arab region in 1998. The process has become increasingly participative and has been supported by Questionnaires to structure the information collected.

The Workshop on Periodic Reporting

- gave the background of the history of Periodic Reporting process
-
- outlined the role of State Parties, that of the Advisory Bodies (IUCN, ICOMOS, ICCROM), the role of the „Focal Points” in the future and the importance of Section I and Section II
-
- discussed the problems related to the PR process and to the role of the World Heritage Centre in the Monitoring of the Sites and in giving assistance to State Parties for working out an efficient policy
-
- drew the attention to the statement of significance being the basis of further conservation;
-
- underlined the role of NGO-s


While the participants of the meeting explained the difficulties they are confronted with, namely the diversity of institutions responsible for the protection of world heritage, the lack of financial resources, the shortcomings of legal structures, the lack of motivation of some authorities, etc., they all were on the opinion that the solutions will certainly include the disclosure of problems expressed at national level, the organisation of training courses, a proactive approach of the UNESCO WHC, good cooperation, networking and international data collecting and processing tools.

Almost all delegates thought that some parts of the Periodic Reporting Exercise seem to be sometimes a bit difficult they all agreed it will provide baseline information for future work and will bring our knowledge for sites up to the standards of recent nomination dossiers and the process of Periodic Reporting is of great value to those preparing the reports in providing the opportunity to take an overall, structured look at what they do and to the effectiveness of their activities.

After the meeting the participants visited the Royal Castle of Visegrád (which was included in the Tentative World Heritage List and they also went for an excursion to Esztergom in the Danube bend).

The participants thanked the organisers of the Workshop for the meeting which was useful since it focused on common professional problems.

Budapest, 13 September 2004.


Tamás Pintér
Head of Secretariat