



**UNESCO Stakeholders Consultation Workshop on the Silk Road
World Heritage nomination
1-8 August 2006**

(Turpan, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China)

Organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in collaboration with China's State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH), and with financial support from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust

Background:

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre has been working together with the Government of China on a methodological approach for the preparation of a nomination for the cultural properties along the Silk Road to the World Heritage List. Although the network passed through China, Central/Western and South Asia and beyond, China is the only country that has placed its Silk Road section on the national ‘Tentative List’ for World Heritage nomination.

In August 2003 and July 2004, UNESCO sent expert missions, sponsored by the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust at the World Heritage Centre, to the Chinese section of the Silk Road in order to research and improve understanding of ‘Cultural Routes’ as a possible candidate for inscription on the World Heritage List. The missions also sought to develop a systematic approach towards the identification and nomination of the Chinese section of the Silk Road, and in particular the Oasis Route which, together with the Steppe Route and the Maritime Route, is one of three intercultural routes along the Silk Road., that will tell the story of the Chinese Silk Road in a comprehensive manner.

An impressive number of monuments and sites are to be found along the Oasis Route, which extends over some 4,450 km from Xi’an in Shaanxi Province to Kashgar in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Almost the entire original road, however, has disappeared, assuming that it ever existed, as much of it consisted of no more than tracks through the desert, and has been replaced by a four-lane highway. Some uncertainty remains about the best way to proceed and the missions sought to co-operate in the development of an approach and methodology for the identification and nomination of a serial and linear Cultural Route.

The UNESCO missions to China concluded that a cultural route could be defined in terms of space (the route ran through sites, monuments, constructions, buildings, ways, and areas of influence); time (the beginning and end of its use, its frequency, intensity and variations) and cultural criteria (impact of spiritual and/or material exchanges; impact on human memory or experience, impact of the volume and nature of the exchanges). The mission recommended the establishment of a Silk Road Nomination Task Force management body to co-ordinate studies and preparation of the World Heritage nomination.

As a regional follow-up to the Silk Road nomination of the Chinese section, ideas and concepts have been shared with neighbouring countries, particularly those in Central Asia, that pursue connection of their most significant properties to the Silk Road to achieve further development of this nomination of serial properties.

During a Sub-regional Workshop for follow-up of the Periodic Reporting Exercise held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in November 2005, representatives from the Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) adopted an Action Plan for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Central Asia in which they serial nomination of the Silk Road was given the highest priority. The participants agreed to further develop and consolidate this initiative at the UNESCO Consultation Workshop to be held in Turpan, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the People’s Republic of China.

Workshop Objectives

1. Inform the Chinese and Central Asian officials and experts of the current status of the regional project and World Heritage Convention's Guidelines on the inscription of specific types of properties on the World Heritage List;
2. Provide an overview of the conservation and management of cultural heritage properties along the Silk Road as well as the development of a systematic approach towards the World Heritage identification and nomination of the Silk Road;
3. assess the needs of Central Asian and Chinese representatives in pursuing the serial and potential transboundary World Heritage nomination of the Silk Road;
4. develop a participatory action plan for the serial and possible transboundary World Heritage nomination of the Silk Road;
5. share views on the development a common management mechanism/system to coordinate the conservation and protection of the cultural heritage properties along the Silk Road;
6. determine the mechanisms most appropriate to establish and maintain a useful network for preparing the World Heritage nomination in the concerned countries.

Expected results

1. Central Asian and Chinese participants are better informed of World Heritage Convention and global strategy activities as well as cultural heritage conservation and management issues in China and Central Asia; (objectives 1 and 2)
2. A better understanding within the World Heritage Centre's Silk Road programme of the practical realities of cultural heritage properties' conservation and management in Central Asia and China with prioritized activities; (objective 3)
3. A well consulted action plan with recommendations of training needs and mechanisms most appropriate to establish and maintain a useful network for preparation the World Heritage nomination (objectives 4 and 5)
4. Commitment to collaborate amongst the State Parties and with the World Heritage Centre in pursuing the idea of potential serial and transboundary World Heritage nomination and an information network amongst Central Asian and Chinese experts and heritage managers.(objective 6)

Participating agencies

In addition to high-ranking officials having authority to agree upon on the basic modality/strategy for possible serial nomination, experts on heritage conservation and management have been invited from the Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and China to participate in the Workshop. The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China (Beijing), in cooperation with the Cultural Heritage Administration Bureau of Xinjiang (Urumqi), will ensure overall coordination for the organization of the Workshop.

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Workshop Provisional Programme
1-8 August 2006
Turpan, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China

Day 1: Tuesday, 1 August

Arrival and registration of Workshop participants at Turpan, Xinjiang

Day 2: Wednesday, 2 August

08:30-12.30 Session 1: Opening and introductory presentations

Purpose: To present an overview of the workshop objectives, expected results and provide information on the World Heritage conservation, Global Strategy adopted by the World Heritage Committee

Moderator: Representative from SACH

Welcoming and opening speeches by the Chinese and Central Asian Delegates, UNESCO representative

Presentation of the Workshop Agenda and Review Goals for the Workshop

Mr Feng Jing, Programme Specialist, UNESCO World Heritage Centre

Presentation on UNESCO's efforts in identifying the outstanding universal value of the Silk Road, Mr Feng Jing

Presentation: status on the preparation of the World Heritage nomination of the Chinese section of the Silk Road

One Chinese expert to be identified by SACH

Discussion and questions

14:00-18:00 Session 2: Identification of cultural heritage properties along the Silk Road

Moderator: To be identified

Purpose: To assess the needs of concerned countries in pursuing the serial and potential transboundary World Heritage nomination, particularly relating to identification of properties

Country presentations from Central Asian countries and China (including presentations from the resource persons from Central Asia)

Working group discussion: Divide into working groups to develop preliminary lists of information needs for this section of the nomination.

Day 3: Thursday, 3 August

8.30-12.30 Session 3: Management and protection of cultural heritage properties on the Silk Road

Moderator: To be identified

Purpose: To present an overview of the conservation and management of cultural heritage properties on the Silk Road and develop a systematic approach towards the World Heritage nomination

Moderator: To be identified

Presentations by Country Representatives and Resource Persons

Introduction on the nomination of specific types of heritage described in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the WH Convention

Discussion and questions

13.30-17.30 Session 4: Modality of WH nomination and elaboration of a participatory Action Plan

Moderator: To be identified

Purpose: To review the World Heritage nomination process and develop a participatory Action Plan for the serial and transboundary nomination, with timeframes, budgets proposal for implementation by the concerned countries.

13.30 -14:00 Presentations on the shared views on the preparation of the World Heritage nomination, by resource persons

14:00-17:00

Working groups: Divide into working groups to develop an Action Plan for the serial World Heritage nomination

17:00 – 18:00 Presentations by the working groups and discussion

Day 4: Friday, 4 August

8.30-12.30 Session 5: Elaboration of an Action Plan and shared management mechanism for the World Heritage nomination

Moderator: To be identified

Purpose: To present an overview of experiences for management mechanism to coordinate the conservation and protection of cultural heritage properties on the Silk Road

Morning Presentations on ideas of a shared management mechanism for Silk Road World Heritage nomination

Afternoon

Working group discussions: Divide into working groups to develop a proposed Action Plan for preparing World Heritage nomination

Presentations by the working groups and discussion

17:30-18:00 **Closing ceremony, adoption of the Action Plan.**

Saturday-Monday, 5-7 August

Field visits to cultural heritage properties around Turpan

Tuesday, 8 August 2006

Departure of the Workshop participants.