The World Heritage Centre wishes to thank all the partners and contributors, including those who were not able to attend this special day, for having provided support to the conservation process in the African region.

The findings and recommendations of the 2002 Periodic Reporting Exercise for Africa are intended to:

• improve national heritage policies and site management,
• develop active participation by local and national officials and communities,
• and establish regional cooperation adapted to local and national realities in an attempt to establish a new era of heritage management across Africa.

On the occasion of the first meeting of the World Heritage Committee in sub-Saharan Africa, a full day of special presentations is being devoted to World Heritage in Africa.

The presentations included herein showcase concrete examples of projects and partnerships developed to address the recommendations of the Africa Periodic Reporting Exercise.
Africa is a continent of vast and varied natural, cultural and archaeological resources and assets encompassing not only the origins of human beings, social organization and artistic expression, but also important trade routes and some of the most remarkable and significant biodiversity in the world. Cultural heritage management programmes in Africa have long been concerned with preservation and conservation of sites with monumental character. Many of the natural sites are threatened by over exploitation of natural resources, by conflict and environmental factors. In addition, the 2002 Africa Periodic Reporting Exercise found that only 53% of countries benefited from regular financing to cover training, salaries and conservation measures.