



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

World Heritage

44 COM

WHC/21/44.COM/INF.19

Original: English / French

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

**Extended forty-fourth session
Quarante-quatrième session élargie**

**Fuzhou, China / Fuzhou, Chine
16-31 July 2021 / 16-31 juillet 2021**

SUMMARY RECORD

RÉSUMÉ DES INTERVENTIONS

The text contained in the present document is a transcription of the debates of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee held from 16-31 July 2021 in Fuzhou, China. It is therefore to be considered as a verbatim.

Le texte contenu dans le présent document est une transcription des débats de la 44e session élargie du Comité du patrimoine mondial tenue à Fuzhou, Chine, du 16 au 31 juillet 2021. Il doit donc être considéré comme un verbatim.

AGENDA OF THE EXTENDED 44TH SESSION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE (2021)

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- 15. Other business

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- 16. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee

17. Provisional Agenda of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee
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INTRODUCTION

N.B: *The languages used for the verbatim of the sessions of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee are English and French. Presentations and comments made originally in another language are indicated by ^[interpretation] at the beginning of the intervention.*

The extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee was held from 16 to 31 July 2021 in Fuzhou, China and online.

The 21 Members of the World Heritage Committee were present: Australia, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Uganda.

The elected Members of the Bureau of the extended 44th session of the Committee were:

Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)
Rapporteur: Ms Miray Hasaktun Wosinski (Bahrain)
Vice-Chairpersons: Bahrain, Guatemala, Hungary, Spain, Uganda

The following 116 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, which are not members of the Committee, were represented as Observers:

Afghanistan; Albania; Algeria; Andorra; Angola; Argentina; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Barbados; Belgium; Benin; Bhutan; Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Botswana; Bulgaria; Burkina Faso; Cambodia; Cameroon; Canada; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Croatia; Cuba; Cyprus; Czechia; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Denmark; Djibouti; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Estonia; Fiji; Finland; France; Gabon; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Haiti; Holy See; Honduras; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Jamaica; Japan; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kuwait; Latvia; Lebanon; Lesotho; Libya; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Madagascar; Malaysia; Malta; Mauritius; Mexico; Monaco; Mongolia; Montenegro; Morocco; Myanmar; Nepal; Netherlands; New Zealand; North Macedonia; Pakistan; Palestine; Panama;; Peru; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Republic of Korea; Romania; Rwanda; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; San Marino; Senegal; Serbia; Seychelles; Singapore; Slovakia; Slovenia; Sri Lanka; Sweden; Switzerland; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United Republic of Tanzania; United States of America; Uruguay; Uzbekistan; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); Viet Nam; Zimbabwe.

Representatives of the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, namely the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) also attended the session.

The full list of participants is available [here](#).

The session was conducted in two languages: English and French - the two working languages of the Committee -, with additional interpretation in Chinese provided by the Host Country. Thanks to the generosity of the Kingdom of Spain, Spanish interpretation was also available for the entire duration of the meeting.

The World Heritage Centre of UNESCO provided the Secretariat for the meeting.

Friday 16 July 2021

OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee was held simultaneously in Fuzhou (China) and at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France). The ceremony was livestreamed online.

Speeches were delivered by the following dignitaries:

- H.E. Mr Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China (read by Madam SUN Chunlan, Vice Premier)
- H.E. Madam SUN Chunlan, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China
- H.E. Ms Audrey Azoulay, Director General of UNESCO
- H.E. Mr Altay Cengizer, President of the General Conference of UNESCO
- H.E. Mr Agapito Mba Moky, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO
- H.E. Mr Lin Baojin, Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party of Fuzhou City
- H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun, Chairperson of the extended 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee, Vice Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China

The speeches were followed by a cultural performance and a reception at Fuzhou Strait Culture and Art Centre.

FIRST DAY – Saturday 17 July 2021
FIRST MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Good morning to all. We are just checking the quorum. It was good to hear your good mornings and good evenings. I think we have the quorum, Mr. Chair. If the Secretariat in Paris can also confirm, please. We do not see South Africa here.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Good morning from South Africa.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Excellent. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, please allow me to welcome you again at the 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee. I hope that you have enjoyed the opening ceremony live broadcast yesterday. Although we could not celebrate the opening of this extended session together, in the face-to-face way, I am confident that we have already been united in heart and mind to embark on this journey and make headway hand in hand, with deep gratitude for your trust in me, as Chairperson of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee,

I wish to highlight my hope, once again, that all of us, Committee members and representatives of other States Parties, colleagues from the Secretariat and Advisory Bodies, as well as other organisations and stakeholders, work in a true spirit of multilateralism and through dialogue and cooperation to promote the values of the Convention, to forge trust and solidarity, and to make this unique extended session successful and decisive.

This is a really unusual session in that we have a very tough agenda, but limited working time and adapted working methods. Hence, I would like to remind all the participants to follow strictly the time limits of interventions and requirements of the Rules of Procedures, so that we can keep pace with our timetable. Please, understand that we may not be able to give floor to every observer every time, but we will try our best to let all interested parties make interventions and comments.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Now I would like to proceed to the agenda and start with the document WHC/21/44.COM/2, Request for Observer Status. Before considering the admission of Observers, I would like to give the floor to the Director of World Heritage Centre, Ms. Rössler, for some general announcements. Ms. Rössler, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. First of all, allow me to recall that the World Heritage Convention at its 35th session decided that Committee meetings should be live streamed over the web. Therefore, the debates of our session will be live-streamed through the app which appears on the screen now. I do not see it, but I think we all have it. It is also available on the website of the extended 44th session on the World Heritage Committee.

Secondly, allow me, please, to indicate that UNESCO gratefully acknowledges the Host Country for providing interpretation in Chinese throughout the session. Please, also note, that thanks to the generosity of the Kingdom of Spain, interpretation will be available in Spanish for the duration of the entire meeting.

In this regard, I would like to invite Spanish and Chinese language speakers to choose in which European language, English or French, they would like to see their interventions being reflected in the Summary Record of the session. Your choice should be indicated orally at the time of your first intervention. It should also be transmitted in writing to the Secretariat before the end of our working session, today. Thank you very much in advance and thank you Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much Madam. We now turn our attention to the admission of Observers. The list is presented in Document 2, in accordance with Article 8 of the Rules of Procedure. For your information, this is a bilingual

document. I would like to ask our dear Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed?

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments,

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. Dear colleagues, I now have to ask you if you agree to the presence of these Observers throughout the session. I see no objection. The participation of Observers is agreed. I declare Agenda Item 2 closed. Thank you.

We can now move to the review of the agenda and of the timetable of our session Items 3A and 3B. As you will surely remember, the Provisional Agenda of the extended 44th session was already adopted by the Committee at its 14th extraordinary session (Decision 14 EXT.COM 4), on the 2nd of November 2020.

The tentative timetable was adopted by the Committee at its 15th extraordinary session (Decision 15 EXT.COM 3) on the 29th of March 2021, including a number of Agenda Items proposed to be adopted without debate. Those items appear with grey highlight in Document 3B. There will be no presentation by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for such items and we will move directly to the adoption of the draft decision, during which, answers to any questions will be provided by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

I would like to invite Ms. Rössler, to present the agenda and the timetable for this session as contained in Documents 3A and 3B. These documents should be read in conjunction with Document INF.3A.Rev2, which contains the provisional list of documents of our session. Ms. Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As you just have pointed out, the agenda was already adopted in September 2020 and the timetable on March 21st by the extraordinary session of the Committee. Now, as you see in your Agenda, a number of Agenda Items are proposed to be adopted without debate. Those items appear with grey highlight in your Document 3B.

Therefore, I encourage you to read these documents very carefully, we will go immediately into the Draft Decision and we stand ready, as World Heritage Centre and Advisory Body to answer the Committee members questions by examining the relevant paragraphs of the draft decision.

Please, I would also like to recall that the practical information of the holding of this session is included in Document INF1 which provides general information and methods of work.

Furthermore, you have all received and seen the specific schedules that have been prepared regarding State of Conservation that means Items 7A and 7B and Nominations meaning Item 8B which will be conducted by regions.

This has been proposed to accommodate different time zones. I think it will facilitate the active participation of all stakeholders. Please, note that these timetables have been uploaded on the World Heritage Committee webpage and we will update it as required. These specific schedules will be adopted with you, Mr. Chair, after our daily meetings and the update will be uploaded on our webpage.

Regarding Document 3B which contains the timetable, please note, that the Bureau was informed yesterday that the Fuzhou Declaration will be presented before the end of today's plenary meeting. I think you will do that Mr. Chair. The text of the Declaration has been distributed to you in English and French. Please, also note that the video message from the World Heritage Young Professional Forum and Site Managers Forum will be presented. I think we are all looking forward to seeing those videos.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me also recall that, due to the number of items on our agenda and time constraints, Rule 22.2 of the Rules of Procedure, which grants the Chairperson the possibility to limit the allowed time to each speaker, will be applied in the circumstances which may be necessary. Time for interventions therefore will be limited to three minutes for Committee members and two minutes for Observers.

In this regard, please note, that a timer to gauge interventions will blink in red whenever a speaker exceeds the recommended time limit. Concerning the interventions by Observers from civil society and NGOs, we strongly advise, if they wish to take the floor on the same topic, to hold consultation among them in order to prepare and deliver one single intervention.

In order to save time as much as possible, we also appeal to you not to repeat what other Delegations have said or for making congratulatory statements.

Official statements/declarations should be transmitted to the Secretariat in writing as soon as they have been delivered in order to integrate them in the Summary Records of the session.

Furthermore, I would like to recall again what is indicated in Document INF.1, that is for the item on Nominations. After decisions for inscription made by the Committee, the submitting State(s) concerned may be invited by the Chairperson to give a speech. Regardless of the format of the intervention, submitting States will be allotted a total

of two minutes. In the case of transboundary/transnational nominations, the duration of interventions (speech by one or more States Parties) shall also not exceed two minutes in total. The coordinating State for the nomination is asked to coordinate in advance the order and format of interventions that will be made. Due to the reduced duration of the session and the necessity to allocate a fair amount of time to all files, the cooperation of submitting States in respecting this time requirement would be very much appreciated.

Please, note that timing of sessions will be strictly respected, allow me to insist on this point. Please, also note that, as indicated in the timetable, the meeting of the Bureau will be held every morning from 11.00 to 11:30 am, as of tomorrow, Sunday 18th of July, with an exception on the 20th of July when we will not have a session, and on the last day of our session, of course, on the 31st of July.

Dear participants, allow me to remind you that the bilateral consultations will have to be arranged by Delegations aside of session, the Secretariat will not be able to provide assistance in this regard.

However, for meeting of the working groups, or in case of the establishment of drafting groups by the Chairperson, the Secretariat will facilitate the organisation of the meetings which will be held in the format of separate online events at a different timeframe than the plenary session. The Secretariat will also participate in these meetings as deemed necessary.

I would also like to recall that all microphones should be turned off when not speaking, so as not to disturb the proceedings. Please note that no specific coffee breaks, or should I say tea breaks, Mr. Chair, are foreseen during our daily meetings.

Mr. Chair, as it was indicated in the Bureau meeting yesterday, I also wish to remind all Committee members that amendments to draft decisions have to be submitted well in advance before the discussion to our Rapporteur, Ms. Miray Wosinski Hasaltun in writing, preferably showing the changes proposed in so-called track-changes.

Indeed, considering that the 44th session has an extended agenda, the Rules of Procedure will have to be strictly respected in order to ensure a timely and smooth processing of all Agenda Items. Therefore, amendments to draft decisions shall be submitted by Committee members by email to wh-rapporteur@unesco.org, using the appropriate form. You remember in the past we had this blue form, which has been sent to all Committee member Delegations. Please, ensure that you do not modify the form and do not add new headings.

While Committee members are entitled to submit an amendment at any moment until the decision is made, oral amendments made during the examination of the item concerned should remain, as far as possible, small changes to the wording of the draft decision.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, I want to clarify that so-called 'co-sponsoring' of amendments is not an option for Committee sessions, in line with Rule 23.2 of the Rules of Procedure. Committee members can, however, be co-authors of an amendment, with other submitting Committee members. All co-authors should then be always in copy of the email exchanges and their names should appear in the box entitled 'Amendment submitted by the Delegation of...'. Alternatively, a Committee member can take the floor during the plenary to express its support for a proposed amendment.

The submission of substantial proposals of amendment should be made at least 24 hours before the discussion, we discussed that at the Bureau, of the Agenda Item concerned, if feasible, in accordance with Rule 23.3 of the Rules of Procedures and as reiterated by the Committee in Decision 15 EXT 3. This would greatly facilitate the organisation of the online debates and the informed decision-making process. The Secretariat will upload the submitted proposed amendments on the webpage of the meeting at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/44COM/documents/#amendment> and will inform Committee members accordingly in a timely manner. As you know the chat box should not be used for submitting amendments, hence amendments submitted into the chat box will not be considered.

Last but not least, as for all online meetings, I would like to kindly remind you to speak clearly and at a normal speaking pace when taking the floor. This will enable clear and accurate interpretation. I also wish to ask all Observer Delegations not to turn their camera on during the meeting, and to only switch them on when taking the floor, upon invitation, so that Committee members can be identified more easily from Fuzhou and that we can see who are the Committee members and the Observers more easily. Thank you very much to all of you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ms. Rössler, for this presentation. Any comments on the Agenda Items? I see none. Actually, the Delegation of Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair, and good morning to all. We thank the Director for the explanations given to us on the proceedings. I just have one question, a clarification, about the procedure for voting. If, indeed, we come towards voting, how is this going to take place and what are the measures in place? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Chair. I have a problem as our camera is not turned on from your side, could the technician tried to turn the camera on for us?

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other comments? You have the floor for the first question, Director.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As you know, this was discussed by the World Heritage Committee and there were extensive exchanges on the procedure of voting. You have all the details in your Document, and I hope you have it in front of you, 44COM/INF.1. If you go to page 12 in the English version, under point 10.12, The method of voting. The practice of this Committee, as you know, for the past nearly 50 years is that the Committee takes decisions normally by consensus. However, if a vote is necessary all information and details regarding the voting is detailed here. These arrangements have been made and approved by the Committee by correspondence on 21/5/2021 following Decision 15 EXT.COM 3.

Each State Party of the Committee has one vote in this Committee. Normally, and you remember this happened at the Committee many times, voting at the Committee shall be by a show of hands. This is in Rule 40.1, maybe voting can be also by roll call if there are any doubts with the results of a show of hands voting. This is Rule 40.2 or at the request of at least two members of the Committee which is Rule 40.3. Roll call voting, if necessary, will be conducted in presentia at UNESCO headquarters and my colleagues at the UNESCO headquarters will assist you in this regard.

Now, in case of a secret ballot, this is explained in your document on page 13. Once a secret ballot has been requested and, in order not to disrupt the plenary meeting and the continuation of the examination of the subsequent items, the ballot will be held in the morning of the following day. So that arranged plans can be made for the secret ballot and results can be announced immediately at the resumed plenary meeting. Members of the Committee have to ensure that one of their representatives in Paris is available to come to UNESCO headquarters to vote, according to a schedule which will be drawn up by the Secretariat in English alphabetical order of the member States of the World Heritage Committee.

To my understanding, but I am here in Fuzhou and the team is there in Paris, Room V which you remember is in front of Room I at UNESCO will be provided by the Secretariat with a ballot box and a polling booth. Each member of the Committee will be given an envelope and a ballot paper. The tellers will be decided as per usual procedures among Delegations of the Committee members. The two tellers, members of the Secretariat, should be present during the voting and counting of the ballot and our legal advisor will certainly be with us on this matter. And in general, the conduct of the vote will be in accordance with Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedures.

Sorry to be so long, but I think it was important to clarify that following the question of the delegate from Ethiopia. I hope I answered your question. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I wanted to know if the camera with Oman is functioning now?

The Delegation of Oman:

Yes, it is. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Are there any more questions or comments? There are none. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 3A. But before doing so, I would like to ask the rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Okay. I therefore declare Agenda Item 3A closed ^[gave].

Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 3B. Before doing so, I would like to inform you of a decision adopted during the first meeting of the Bureau yesterday. Subsequent to a request made, it was decided that the Draft Decisions of the four following state of conservation reports that are not open for discussion be adopted at the

opening of Item 7A tomorrow on the 18th of July. These reports are: 7A.10, Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, site proposed by Jordan; 7A.16, Hebron/AI-Khalil Old Town, (Palestine); 7A.17, Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine); 7B.135, Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine).

Consequently, Item 7B will be open at the same time and will remain open until all state of conservation reports on Item 7B have been adopted as schedule. Shall I take it that you all agree with the request? Okay, thank you very much.

In addition, at the outcome of the first meeting, several members of the Bureau indicated that our working group on *Operational Guidelines* would not be necessary during this session. This will be discussed later on today when we open Agenda Item12.

Furthermore, I wish to let the distinguished Committee know that concerns were also raised regarding the situation of the Africa Region and the changes required to remediate in a global and systematic manner. It was considered that such a matter could be addressed within the mandate of the next ad hoc working group that is meeting intersessionally. This will have to be discussed in Agenda Item11.

It was also recalled during the Bureau meeting that Item 8, that will be open on Saturday 24th of July will remain open until the end of our session and that Committee members may wish to meet informally on this matter.

Dear colleagues, with this information on the outcomes of the Bureau, I would now like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision 44 COM 3B proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 3B adopted. I declare Agenda Item 3B closed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us now examine Item 4 of our Agenda. As you know, Ms. Mahani Taylor, Australia, was the Rapporteur of the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee, which was held in Baku (Azerbaijan). I understand, however, that she is not able to join us live today, but she has kindly prepared a video recording to address the Committee.

Rapporteur 2020, Ms. Mahani Taylor:

^[video] Hello all, I had the great honour of being the Rapporteur of the 43rd session of the World Heritage Convention in Baku, Azerbaijan, from the 30th of June until the 10th of July 2019.

The past 18 months have been, of course, very difficult globally and the 44th session was first postponed and is now being held virtually as a consequence. One of the very small upsides of this pandemic and the move to working away from our offices is that we see a small glimpse into the homes and lives of our colleagues. I am filming this report here in Canberra, in our nation's capital from my back deck. If you are lucky, you might be able to see or hear some of the many parrot species we have here in our nation's capital.

I am pleased to present you a report of my work as the Rapporteur of the 43rd session. At its 43rd session the World Heritage Committee adopted 245 decisions, the highest number since 2011. 2,000 participants, from 130 States Parties and Observers registered, 260 NGOs and IGOs also registered as well as 63 international journalists. This session was generously hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan and chaired by Dr Abulfaz Garayev who steered the Committee through many difficult discussions and decisions over ten long days.

The Committee at its 43rd session inscribed 29 new properties on the World Heritage List, and approved the extension of one property already inscribed on the List. On these new properties inscribed four were natural, one mixed and 24 were cultural.

Among the newly inscribed properties, one was from the Africa Region, two from the Arab Region, ten from the Asia Pacific Region, 15 from the Europe and North America Region and one from the Latin America and the Caribbean Region. Following the debates, two nominations were referred and three deferred.

At this session, in eight cases the Committee did not follow the Advisory Bodies recommendation which was presented in the draft decision. Four referrals became inscriptions, two deferrals became inscriptions, one deferral became referral, and one recommended for non-Inscription was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

In one case, the Committee agreed to refer a site back, although it was recommended for inscription due to the withdrawal by one State Party of the component part of the transnational serial nomination prior to the Committee meeting.

In General Item 8, perhaps in recognition of the eight cases in which the Committee did not follow the Advisory Bodies advise, the Committee reaffirmed the overriding necessity to continue to work towards bringing greater convergence between the decisions taken by the Committee and the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies. It

also strongly reiterated that only meeting criteria is not sufficient to warrant inscription, as to be deemed of OUV, a site must also meet the conditions of integrity (and authenticity) and must have an adequate protection and management system in place also.

The Committee also endorsed the principle of a two-phase nomination process to support the development of high-quality nominations, for sites through enhanced dialogue very early in the process between the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies.

The 43rd session also examined 166 reports on the state of conservation, including 54 properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Among these reports, 22 were open for discussion, however, for a large number of sites that were not open, statements were still made, including by NGOs.

At this session, the Committee decided to inscribe one property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, this site was in Mexico. At the same time, two properties were removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger: one property in Chile, and one in Palestine. There are now 53 properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Four proposals for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger were not approved by the Committee.

The Committee reaffirmed the need to promote a better understanding of the implications and benefits of properties being inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Under Item 7: the Committee was presented with a comprehensive evaluation of the Reactive Monitoring process. The Committee requested all stakeholders of the Convention implement the recommendation as soon as possible.

Addressing climate change, the existential crisis of our time, the Committee noted progress on updating the 2007 Policy on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties. The draft updated document is to be examined by the Committee at this 44th session.

At the end of my report, may I repeat what I said last year at the end of the Committee, to applaud the Secretariat to the immense and dedicated work they put forward in ensuring the success of our Committee session. The job of Rapporteur would not be possible at all without the extraordinary work of the Secretariat. I am very grateful to have worked with them so closely in the last session.

I would also like to congratulate and wish all the best to the next Rapporteur, Ms. Miray Hasaltun Wosinski from Bahrain. I am certain she would do wonderfully. I wish all the members of the Committee rich debates, smooth proceedings and a successful session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the presentation. We have agreed that this is an item to be adopted without debate, therefore, on behalf of all the Committee members, I would like to reiterate our gratitude to the Rapporteur for such high-quality work and to the Secretariat at Baku for their great work. Once more, I wish to thank Azerbaijan for the perfect organisation and conditions provided for the previous session. I propose that the Committee takes note of the report by the Rapporteur of the 43rd session. If there is no objection, it is so decided. Thank you very much. I now close Item 4 of the agenda ^[gavel].

Dear colleagues, we are now moving to the opening of our Agenda Item 14, dedicated to budget matters. The relevant document for this item is Document 14. However, before we do so, I would like to give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre, Ms. Mechtild Rössler, who will provide us with some important clarifications regarding this Agenda Item and the two next ones, Items 11 and 12. Ms. Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. We are in a particular situation here, as we have to consider examination of 3 Items (14, 11 and 12) which are linked with each other. Indeed, and as you will remember, the Committee, at its 43rd session in 2019, endorsed the principles and modalities of the Preliminary Assessment proposed in the framework of the reform of nominations. It also decided to extend the mandate of the ad hoc working group to further elaborate upon the nomination reform process and Preliminary Assessment proposal, and review the outcomes of the work of an expert drafting group that was constituted to discuss and propose concrete changes to be introduced into the *Operational Guidelines* in this regard.

The report of the ad hoc working group is contained in Document 11 while the proposed concrete changes to the *Operational Guidelines* are presented in Document 12. Furthermore, financial implications related to the proposed reform are reflected in Document 14 on the Budget. Consequently, and as you see, the discussions on these items are closely linked.

Therefore, as indicated in the timetable, it is proposed that we will leave Items 11 and 12 open to take into account discussion and proposed recommendations that may arise during the working group on the Budget we will now establish, because it is a standing body, Mr. Chair.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, as also indicated in the timetable, the establishment of the working group on the *Operational Guidelines* was foreseen. However, Committee members may wish to decide on the necessity for such a working group after having heard the report of the Chairperson of the ad hoc working group and there were already discussions yesterday at the Bureau in this regard. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Many thanks. These are indeed extremely important points to consider in our deliberations. Dear colleagues, as you will remember, the Committee established, by Decision 35 COM 12B, a standing consultative body for review of the Committee's biennial Budget in conformity with Article 20 of the Rules of Procedure. This consultative body is open to all States Parties that wish to participate, including States non-members of the Committee. I would also like to recall that the Advisory Bodies will have the possibility to attend this working group as Observers.

Based on past years' practice, I would propose that the Budget working group meets three times from the 21st to the 23rd of July, from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Paris time. Are there any objections on this proposal? I see none. This is so decided.

Furthermore, as you know, as per Rule 20.2 of the Rules of Procedure, it is of the responsibility of the group to elect its chairperson. However, I understood that some consultations already took place in this regard, therefore I would like to know if a Delegation would like to make a proposal.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Allow me, since this is our first intervention, to congratulate you for organising and chairing this session. I would also like to thank Dr Rössler, the Director of the World Heritage Committee, for the excellent presentation of this session. To respond to the question you have just addressed, I would like to present the candidature of Ms. Zoya Kritskaya from the Delegation of the Russian Federation to UNESCO to chair the working group on Budget. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Are the members of the Committee in agreement with this proposal? I see no objections; this is so decided. Congratulations.

Dear colleagues, please note therefore that the first meeting of the Budget working group will be held on the 21st of July from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Paris time, using the same Zoom link as for this plenary meeting.

As we have just heard from Ms. Rössler, I suggest that we open Item 11, which concerns the Follow-up to Recommendations of Evaluations and Audits on Working Methods, jointly with Item 12 on the Revision of the *Operational Guidelines*, as they are intrinsically linked with each other. The relevant documents for these items are Document 11 and Document 12.

As you will remember, the Committee, at its 38th session in 2014, decided to establish an ad hoc working group to examine the issues related to working methods of the evaluation and decision-making process of nominations. Since this date, the working group has met between sessions examining different matters in this framework.

Therefore, since our last session in Baku, the ad hoc working group has met several times, chaired by China, to review the outcomes of the work of the expert drafting group tasked to discuss and propose concrete changes to be introduced into the *Operational Guidelines* to reflect the Preliminary Assessment. The ad hoc working group also had the mandate to further elaborate upon the nomination reform process and Preliminary Assessment proposal based on the Decision 43 COM 12.

I am pleased to give the floor to the Chairperson of the ad hoc working group, Mr. Ying Jiao, who will report to the distinguished Committee members on the work of the group. You have the floor.

Mr. Ying Jiao:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Good morning, afternoon and evening depending on where you are. Distinguished Committee members, as per the Decision 43 COM 12, the ad hoc working group is composed of members of the Committee and of up to two non-members per electoral group. The composition of the working group is provided in Annex A of Item 11. The mandate of the working group is to review the outcomes of the work of the expert drafting group and further elaborate upon nomination reform process and Preliminary Assessment proposal based on the Decision 43 COM 12.

The World Heritage Centre, in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, has organised an expert drafting group to discuss and propose concrete amendments to the *Operational Guidelines*. The experts are from the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Jamaica, Zimbabwe, Bahrain and Australia. The amendments to the text of the *Operational Guidelines* proposed by the expert drafting group have been circulated in January 2021 for further review by the working group.

The working group commenced its work on the 12th of January 2021 and subsequent meetings took place on the 10th of February 22nd of April 12th of May and 7th of May. We had a problem with the microphone, I will continue.

We invited working group members that would seek clarifications and potential proposal for amendments to approach the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies during the time of each of the meeting. As a result, the working group made the most effective use of the time available for its discussions.

The working group focused on operationalisation, being mindful of the need of careful alignment with existing processes and ensuring consistence. Now, I would like to summarise some key issues we discussed:

1) Timeframe of the Preliminary Assessment: the working group let the Committee decided in 2019 that the Preliminary Assessment should be finished at least one year before phase two of the nomination cycle. The working group noted that preparation of the full nomination dossier took us significant amount of time to develop.

2) Transition period: the working group discussed two options for the transition period for the implementation of the Preliminary Assessments. The first option would be the first to enter into force with the first outline request for the Preliminary Assessment in September 2022. This option would be difficult to implement as the budget for that period was already agreed. Therefore, the working group endorsed option 2 as recommended option for implementing the Preliminary Assessment according to this option. The first outline for submitting a Preliminary Assessment request would be the 15th of September 2023 in the transition period, as State Parties can submit either a nomination dossier or a request for Preliminary Assessment per year. Nominations with and without Preliminary Assessment would be considered by the Committee until mid-2027. After this time, only nominations with a Preliminary Assessment will be reviewed by the Committee.

3) Financial implication: on the basis of information provided by the Secretariat, the working group noted that once a Preliminary Assessment is introduced, it would become a mandatory process and should be funded through the World Heritage Fund.

4) Revision of amendments to the texts of the *Operational Guidelines*: the working group reviewed the amendment to the text of the *Operational Guidelines* through a thorough analysis of the *Operational Guidelines* as a whole, and agreed upon the proposed changes stand over different sections and axes of the *Operational Guidelines*, and recommends the Committee to adopt the proposed revision of the *Operational Guidelines*.

5) Potential impact of the Preliminary Assessment. The working group believes that the Preliminary Assessment will build the capacity of the States Parties to develop high quality nominations for sites which have a strong potential to succeed and agreed that the Preliminary Assessment should provide States Parties with specific guidance and advice to aid in the preparation of the nomination dossier. The working group noted that the amendment of the *Operational Guidelines* related to the Preliminary Assessment must reflect that the Committee is the decision-making body with regard to determination of the OUV. The working group also discussed some other issues related to the Preliminary Assessment. You can find more details in the document of Item 11.

Dear colleagues, I cannot finish the presentation without expressing my gratitude to all members of the working group for their constructive contribution, in particular the Rapporteur of the working group Ms. Zoya Kritskaya of the permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation. My gratitude also goes to the Secretariat for their efficient and professional assistance during meetings.

Dear Mr. Chairperson, as you mentioned a moment ago, a working group on the *Operational Guidelines* may not be necessary during the session. Indeed, the recommendations of the working group have been consensually endorsed and do not imply any further work. As a matter of fact, the revision of the *Operational Guidelines* presented in Document WHC/21/44.COM/12 is specifically targeted to the integration of the Preliminary Assessment in the nomination process. The proposed revisions have already been thoroughly discussed and endorsed in the working group. We would recommend, however, that the financial aspect linked to the reform of the nomination process, and more specifically to Preliminary Assessment, be examined in the framework of the Budget working group that has been established and that will meet during the session. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the presentation. Dear colleagues, as it has been the practice for the past few years, allow me to suggest that we leave Item 11 open for the moment, to allow for further discussion and consultation, notably on matters that might be discussed during the working group on the Budget. This will allow to prepare and adopt an agreed decision on the 30th of July as foreseen in our timetable. If there is no objection, I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal and that Item 11 remains open.

Regarding Item 12 on the Revision of the *Operational Guidelines*, as the Committee has just heard from the Chairperson of the ad hoc working group, it is not recommended to establish a working group on the *Operational Guidelines* during this session. This was also supported during the first Bureau meeting yesterday by several members of the Bureau. I recall that all financial aspects related to the Revision of the *Operational Guidelines* will be addressed by the working group on the Budget. Can I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? I see no objection. There is therefore no need to establish such working group on the *Operational Guidelines*. We can therefore now move to our next Agenda Item.

Dear colleagues, we will now move to the next item concerning the Report of the World Heritage Centre on its activities since the last session of the World Heritage Committee in 2019, which is contained in Document 5A. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of our session to 2021, exceptionally this year, the report of the Secretariat spans over a two-year period and is therefore very comprehensive.

As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I would like to thank, on behalf of all Committee members and States Parties, the excellent work conducted by the World Heritage Centre under the outstanding leadership of Ms. Rössler.

I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of Draft Decision 44 COM 5A. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 5A adopted [gavel]. I now declare Agenda Item 5A closed [gavel].

Our next item is the reports of the Advisory Bodies on their activities. These reports are presented in Document 5B and exceptionally span over a two-year period this year, as for the report of the Secretariat we have just examined. I thank the three Advisory Bodies for these very informative reports.

As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of Draft Decision 44 COM 5B. I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 5B adopted [gavel]. I now declare Item 5B closed [gavel].

We will now move to the next item, which concerns Priority Africa, Sustainable Development and World Heritage and is contained in Document 5C. As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of Draft Decision 44 COM 5C. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments under this item as well.

Chairperson:

No amendments?

Rapporteur:

No amendments.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you and also to all colleagues. We are understanding that there will be no debate on the report, but we were expecting a short presentation on the report. Now, nothing is presented but we should have short presentations about each report from the Secretariat. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? There are no other comments. I now give the floor to the Secretariat for a two-minute statement on this matter. Ms. Rössler you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As you know, and to answer the point from Oman, it was decided that certain reports would go to the Committee without any presentations from the Secretariat and that the Committee would go directly into the decision. I am sure that my colleagues in case you have any specific questions on the Draft Decision will be able to answer your questions, or if the Committee would nevertheless insist, of course, my colleague can make a very brief introduction on this item if you wish to hear them. It is up to you. Maybe the delegate from Oman can reply?

Chairperson:

Oman, please, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Oman:

I do not have any specific questions. But we were expecting a presentation. Since there was a decision not to present, it is okay for me. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We would like to have a presentation on this issue by the Secretariat. Thank you very much.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think my colleagues in Paris will do the presentation. Thank you.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairperson. I will make the presentation along with my colleague Mohammed Jumma. I will just give you a brief overview of the document, and Mr. Jumma can provide some additional details.

The report on the progress of Priority Africa, Sustainable Development and World Heritage is mainly structured around a few key points. The first is the state of conservation in Africa, then the regional and national policies and initiatives that have been undertaken. Then, looking at the way in which the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy has been operationalised. The operationalisation has the support for operationalising the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy was requested during the last session and some of the activities regarding the development of the tools have been noted here. There was also some work on good practices and so on.

The Periodic Reporting exercise which is the third Periodic Reporting exercise will also be covered in a separate item and Mr. Jumma may wish to elaborate on it, because there was a reporting exercise for the Africa Region that was undertaken. Then, we have a number of local initiatives for sustainable development and World Heritage properties that have been elaborated in the report. These are examples of various initiatives that have been undertaken at different sites across the world. These are looked at around some key thematic areas.

The first is to do with initiatives around inclusion for sustainable development. The second is looking at enhancing resilience and environmental sustainability looking at local communities. Then, initiatives around enabling inclusive and equitable growth. Those around peace and security and then around the theme of enhancing knowledge and skills. For each there are specific examples and links provided.

There is a paragraph on the strengthening of governance which is also a theme that came up. The last theme here under this set is the preparation of tentative lists and nomination files for which a variety of efforts have been made, and Mr. Jumma can elaborate a bit more on that. And then, addressing the most vulnerable World Heritage properties is the next section. This has to do with the properties that are already on the in Danger List and looking at how to bring them to establish the desired state of conservation.

Then, we have a section Monitoring and Measurement looking at the Culture 2030 indicators framework and looking at how this framework could provide valuable measures and data for understanding the progress of sustainable development. The Periodic Reporting exercise and indicators are also looked at as another aspect of this. The framework itself, the framework of Culture 2030 indicators, has these specific dimensions. So, the structure of the report is already looking at the same sort of dimensions, the same thematic areas, so that different aspects of sustainable development are already addressed.

The next section is on key global partnerships, because there are a number of different partnerships that have been established from the World Heritage into national assistance to the UNESCO Africa China Forum, to the Africa World Heritage Fund and IUCN activities and, of course, the African World Heritage Fund is a very close partner.

Finally, there is the support from Norway and a number of projects stemming from that. Again, something that my colleague can touch upon. And then the challenges, priorities, and the way forward where certainly the idea that there is a need for capacity building and awareness for which further work is much required. More broadly, sustainable development requires finding solutions that benefits both the needs of the local communities and the protection of World Heritage properties rather than seeing these as opposing.

And with that I just want to invite, of course, with the guidance and coordination of the Advisory Bodies in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage and other stakeholders, to look at taking further actions and initiatives in this regard.

I will now, Mr. Chairperson, with your permission, ask my colleague, Mr. Mohammed Jumma, to make some comments.

Chairperson:

Mr. Mohammed Jumma, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you. I just want to go more into details. My colleague has given you the general description of this report. I can use some concrete examples of what has been done during this activity to give you more first-hand information. If I go to nomination, we are now working with 15 countries in Africa with a fund from Japan and Oman. With Oman, we are now funding more countries in eastern Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Comoros and Madagascar). With Japan, we are funding ten countries and those ten countries do not have properties. They include Burundi, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sao Tome Principle, Sudan and Sierra Leone. Thi is specific to what we are doing specifically with nominations.

When it comes to international assistance during this period, there are 20 countries which have been the subject of international assistance to review their Tentative List and then to go to the nomination. This is a typical example. We come now to the danger listing. As said, we are now working with a third party to develop a strategy for all 16 countries. For this, we have funds from Norway. The strategy has already been started and the working document has been agreed between the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

For capacity building, there is a specific item on Periodic Reporting. I am not going to touch it now. As said, for Africa we have 100 per cent capacity building, all 96 properties have filled in their questionnaire. We have also a database. We have a database for Africa, we have now 140 experts in Africa in this database, 54 of them are women and 25 are youth. Following this database, we have now created what we called a mentorship programme. We have started piloting twelve mentorships in Africa. Our target is to increase the number next year to 20 mentorships over a five-year period. This mentorship programme is part of this database that we have been developing. We have also established a network of site managers. All site managers in Africa will have a network. We are also initiating a network of universities which is part of this capacity building. This a typical example of what we have done in this Priority Africa. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your presentation. Are there any other comments and questions? I see none. Now, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 5C adopted ^[gave]. I declare item 5C now closed ^[gave].

We will now move on to the next item concerning the World Heritage Convention and Sustainable Development. Please refer to Document 5D in this regard. As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would also be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of Draft Decision 44 COM 5D. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendment.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Australia is very interested in this issue, and we will be pleased to hear more from the Centre and a presentation on this report if it is permissible. Thank you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

I think, Mr. Chair, this is my colleague our Deputy Director on this item. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Again, this was an item that we had not anticipated a presentation on, but there is no problem, we will just give you an overview of this document. Again, for this document, this is a policy that came about in 2015 and was adopted. It was adopted just before the 2030 Agenda was adopted in September, then the General Assembly adopted it in 2015 in November. There was a bit of alignment and synergy that we

looked at and there were other frameworks like international agreements on sustainable development that have come about in recent years. The activities have been to look at synergies to align the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy. Because there are a lot of synergies and alignments already, but we looked at this more carefully.

Looking at the activities that have been undertaken at the global level and also at the local level, the Secretariat has been looking at environmental resilience, for example. The Secretariat of the eight biodiversity related conventions including the World Heritage Convention has been working closely with the liaison group of the biodiversity related conventions and you can find more details of this within the document. I am not going to detail each activity, but there are a lot of different activities related to natural disaster to specific projects in the Congo Basin and on national consultative workshops.

With regard to climate change, this is also Sustainable Development Goal 13 and is also another document that we have. This matter will be discussed under 7C. The natural and cultural heritage will be regarded as shared assets. There is a report also on the World Heritage Marine Programme that will be elaborated more in this regard in 7C.

With regard to enabling poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods for local communities: the conservation and management of natural heritage has tremendous potential to address many of these sustainable development challenges. Various different efforts and initiatives to further community sustainable development have been looked at from various projects, in Lesotho for example to the Botswana Okavango Delta and so on.

The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on World Heritage responses have also been looked at and, thanks to the government of Japan, a global project has been launched to explore strategies. The UNESCO Tourism Pledge which is in partnership with the Expedia Group is something that we have looked at also and it has been included here.

Looking at sustainable cities and settlements which is Sustainable Development Goal 11: the 10th World Urban Forum is something we took part in. The 40th General Conference of UNESCO also reaffirmed the importance of the 2011 recommendations on the Historic Urban Landscape which celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. Various workshops and activities of the City Programme have been listed. The importance of looking at cities also in terms of the urbanisation pressures, as well as the impact of Covid-19 and the relation to climate change.

With regard to enhancing knowledge and skills, a number of different capacity building, education and awareness-raising activities have been carried out and these, along with the UNESCO Chairs and Category 2 Centres, all of which are in other reports that you will be hearing.

On the topic of promoting social inclusion and empowering local communities including youth and indigenous people, there is a whole section and another on promoting peace and security and facilitating international cooperation.

All of these different dimensions have been looked at from the perspective of the framework of the Culture 2030 indicators in synergy, as I mentioned, with the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy dimensions.

Also, looking at the measurement and monitoring the Culture 2030 indicators which implementation has been launched and, of course, sustainable heritage is very much an important part of it, as well as a dimension on climate change-related issues among others including knowledge and skills

Finally, for key challenges related to the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy, the unprecedented crisis arising from the Covid-19 pandemic has had various impacts. This will be reported or has been already reported in the information Document 5A.2

In terms of other activities that have been outlined is the development of draft tools for Preliminary Assessment to support the implementation, of the operationalisation of the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy. In terms of draft tools to check, sort of the preliminary health check, or to help with sustainability of projects along with this. And the platform canopy which has been developed to share innovative strategies of sustainable development along with heritage conservation. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Are there any more comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 5B adopted *[gave]*. I now declare Agenda Item 5D closed *[gave]*.

Dear colleagues, we will now move to Item 6 of our Agenda: Follow-up to the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy and progress report on the World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres. The relevant working document is Document 6. Considering their close links, these two reports are presented together within the same document.

Like our previous items, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of Draft Decision 44 COM 6. But before we do so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment to the Draft Decision 44 COM 6. The amendment was submitted by the distinguished Delegation of Saudi Arabia. The proposal is shown on the screen. Could we share the screen? Thank you.

It proposes three new paragraphs namely 3, 4 and 5, and modifications are proposed under new paragraphs 6, 10, 11, 12 and 13. For consistency, we had two minor corrections on the new paragraphs 3 and 6: 'further recalling' changed into 'also recalling' and 'further takes note' into 'also takes note' respectively in new paragraphs 3 and 6.

The proposed amendment was circulated beforehand and I hope the Committee members had time to look at it. Due to the time constraints, I would suggest not to read the text, Mr. Chair. If it is suitable for you as well, we can perhaps adopt the decision paragraph by paragraph in order to give enough time to the Committee members to intervene if they wish to. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other comments? Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. Since this is my first intervention in this long awaited 44th session of the meeting, please, allow me to extend my country's utmost gratitude and appreciation to the government of China for its exemplary efforts to host this year's session against all odds perpetrated by the Covid-19 pandemic. I certainly enjoyed the fabulous opera performance yesterday and I am sure that my fellow Committee members shared the same enjoyment.

Before I go on explaining the amendment, we have proposed to the Committee members on this item, I would like to take a moment to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies along with all Category 2 Centre that spared no efforts to implement the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy. We appreciate initiatives launched, workshops conducted and the projects completed for the past weeks.

We would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre Secretariat for a very fruitful and productive meeting yesterday in which we have gone through the amendments and discussed them orally to reach the Draft Decision that lays before you today.

With that said, we have tried to capture two major points that are on the screen now. The first point is the need to carry out an independent evaluation of the previous strategy. An evaluation process that is result based, inclusive, transparent and based on close consultation with the State Parties and other capacity building stakeholders and beneficiaries to be examined by the Committee next year.

The second major point is that a revision of the existing strategy will not be enough, because this year marks the 10th anniversary of the current strategy. Therefore, we believe, it is necessary, based on the aforementioned independent evaluation that a new World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy with clear priorities, strategic objectives, expected outcomes and relevant indicators is to be redeveloped for the 2023-2032 period and presented for review at the 46th session.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia, under instruction of the dedicated Ministry of Culture in 2018, has already embarked on numerous national capacity building programmes and initiatives related to culture and heritage. We are committed to work with all relevant international stakeholders to develop and empower the next generation of experts and practitioners from all regions of the world.

Once again, thanks to the government of China for hosting us all this year, and thanks to the Secretariat and all participating bodies and centres. I look forward to the forthcoming discussion on this Item. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Thank you for kind words for China and for the opening ceremony. Are there any other comments? Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Allow me to express our appreciation to the government of Saudi Arabia with the financial support they have extended to contribute for an independent evaluation of the current World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy. I would like to propose adding this between paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Draft Decision. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We would like to support wholeheartedly the amendment and general spirit proposed by Saudi Arabia in this decision. It is very important for us that the issue that we raised in our opening statements be addressed and this is one of the ways of addressing them. The issue of truly having an independent audit of the real results, the tangible results of the protection and conservation strategy of the World Heritage Centre. And the issue of diversity of experts which is a serious challenge and a problem for us and which must be addressed. Of course, we thank Saudi Arabia for its generous contribution both in terms of the revision and in terms of the financing. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

There is a problem, we cannot hear you clearly. We have problems the sound is not clear. Maybe could you turn off your camera so it could improve the connection? We still cannot hear you clearly. Maybe I come back to you after two other colleagues. Is it okay?

The Delegation of Brazil:

It is okay. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much your Excellency. We are in full agreement with the amendment provided by Saudi Arabia. I would also like to extend, like others, my gratitude for all the support provided by Saudi Arabia. We are in agreement with this amendment for this decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, the floor is to Russia.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, very clearly.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you for giving me the floor. Since I am intervening for the first time, first of all, I would like to congratulate you on your chairmanship and wish you all the best and great success in your activity. Also, to thank the government of China for assuming the leadership of our committee in a situation which is far from easy.

We support the amendments presented by the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia. I would like, first of all, to point out the importance of the idea to enhance expert diversity. We think it would be very important to enlarge the circle of experts on World Heritage, especially by the greatest contribution of regional experts who know the reality of their regions and countries and therefore capacity building acquires a very important dimension. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, is your sound okay now? Maybe Thailand before.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the Thai Delegation is taking the floor for the first time, I would like to express our sincere and utmost appreciation to the government of China for the tremendous effort, under the very difficult circumstances caused by Covid-19, in organising this meeting of the World Heritage Committee. Also, allow me to congratulate you on your chairmanship of this meeting and we promise to extend to you our full support.

On behalf of the Thai Delegation, I would like to express our full support for the amendment proposed by Saudi Arabia. Capacity building, definitely, is crucially important to the work of the Convention, and indeed, we need to give it greater priority and lay out a clear-cut strategy as proposed by the amendment made by Saudi Arabia. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Also thank you for your kind words. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Je me joins à mes collègues pour féliciter la Chine d'avoir organisé cette conférence dans des conditions très difficiles, et je tiens à féliciter tous ceux qui ont contribué à remercier le gouvernement de Chine. La Bosnie-Herzégovine soutient la proposition d'amendement de l'Arabie saoudite et tient à exprimer un intérêt, qui est partagé par beaucoup d'entre nous d'après ce que l'on a pu voir ces jours-ci, et même avant, concernant le renforcement des capacités et une inclusion plus transparente et plus visible des experts régionaux, qui connaissent mieux la situation sur le terrain, et en général la transparence de ce qu'on appelle les expertises des sites. Il y a très souvent une grande différence entre la proposition, et les efforts des pays qui font des propositions, et les opinions des experts, qui ne sont pas toujours favorables – très souvent, ils ne le sont pas. Il y a une grande différence entre les propositions des pays et les opinions des experts, il faut donc voir ce qu'il en est vraiment, et c'est pourquoi nous avons besoin de cette transparence. C'est la raison pour laquelle je soutiens la poursuite de cette discussion, dans le sens que l'amendement a proposé. Je vous remercie de votre attention. C'est la première fois que la Bosnie-Herzégovine prend la parole à cette conférence.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words and comments. Now, I come back to our colleague, Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President. Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, very clearly.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Fantastic. As this is the first time we speak at this meeting, allow me to thank you, Ambassador, Mr. Tian Xuejun, and all our Chinese colleagues and the Secretariat for the extraordinary work conducted for organising this special Committee session. We are very happy that we could finally sort out some technical issues.

Mr. President, capacity building is the only way to enable many countries to become actors in the transformative change that we need. Category 2 Centre have a large role to play in this as they are the training units present on the ground which can have immediate impact for local communities in the region.

In Brazil, although considerably hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic, our Lucio Costa Centre has maintained almost all its activities because it could switch its work directly to online platforms. The Centre is now, Mr. President, and this is important, working on the internationalisation of its professional MBA on the preservation of cultural heritage.

Mr. President, we can, we have to support very strongly the Saudi amendments and make the most from this 10-year anniversary of the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy. We believe, it is an excellent time for an evaluation, to know what the strategy has accomplished so far in order to be able to draft an ambitious new plan for the next decade. We support very strongly those amendments. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I give the floor to Bahrain. Please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We begin by echoing our colleagues congratulating China for organising this Committee meeting in these unconventional circumstances. I would like to reiterate as well what our colleague of Brazil has mentioned with regard to the Category 2 Centres. We, in Bahrain have put great effort and resources in supporting Category 2 Centres, especially here in the Arab Region.

We also thank the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for being partners in this process and we do emphasize the importance of moving forward in terms of developing any Capacity Building Strategy in the future. In light of that we are also supporting the proposal by Saudi Arabia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Guatemala you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Thank you, Mr. President. I think I am having problems with turning on the microphone. First of all, as this is the first time I take the floor, I would like to congratulate your government, that of China, and also your leadership, Mr. President, and the leadership of your country in the running and leading of this very important Committee session. Especially in the situation we are facing now. And now I will speak in Spanish.

[Interpretation from Spanish] I would like to thank the government of Spain for providing interpretation in Spanish. I should also like to thank the work of the Secretariat for all of the work and the challenges they have addressed, notwithstanding the virtual format of this discussion.

Regarding the proposal of Saudi Arabia, we believe that it is an interesting proposal and an important one. We need to pay attention to regional representation, not only in assessing submissions but specifically when it comes to assessing experts, we need to pay attention to cultural, social and political aspects in order to build capacities. We believe it is essential to have regional representation for these processes. In addition, the amendment put forward by Saudi Arabia for an external mechanism for evaluation would allow us to assess strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, Guatemala supports the amendment. Thank you very much, once again, Chair, for giving me the floor.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, the floor is to Uganda please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Uganda is taking the floor for the first time since the opening of the session, I therefore would like to thank China for organising and hosting the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Convention. I have taken the full support of the amendment proposed by the distinguished comrade delegate from Saudi Arabia to UNESCO. Thank you for the opportunity.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Spain has the floor, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much Sir. As this is the first time I am taking the floor I would also like to congratulate you for your chairmanship and organising this Committee. There are two sessions this year, as we were not able to hold one last year. These are difficulties that we have faced across all of the different countries of the world and there are some countries that are facing specifically difficult climate and economic related challenges. These should be addressed in a global manner and particularly when it comes to assessment. We need to take into account these singularities. We cannot take a universal approach. We need to take into account the asymmetrical aspects of capacities and the efforts that need to be undertaken to put forward the mission of this Committee.

I would also like to join my colleagues. We support the amendment put forward by Saudi Arabia, because we believe it is timely given the current state of affairs this year and in the years to come, as it is the tenth anniversary we need to update certain items, and this amendment will allow this to happen. Therefore, we support this proposal.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, China, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you Chair. We wish every success in these deliberations. We would like to congratulate you, and we believe this event will be successful. China appreciates the strategy for capacity building as well as the activities undertaken. We also appreciate the activities undertaken by the Category 2 Centres. We have observed that the World Heritage Committee, regarding the Committee's decision for carrying out an evaluation of the Strategy, is important. We should draw upon the experiences of the Committee in this Strategy to pay greater attention to Africa which is underrepresented in the World Heritage List. We must undertake activities that benefit countries in Africa as well as SIDS, in order to help youth and to establish a World Heritage List that is better balanced and more representative.

As our Deputy Prime Minister mentioned in his speech, China stands ready to provide 100 scholarships to developing countries, and specifically African countries, in order to promote capacity building. We stand ready to work with UNESCO to provide assistance to these countries in preparing the nomination dossier to help African countries to better protect World Heritage and thus improve representation, balance and credibility of our World Heritage List. We are pleased to see the amendment put forward by Saudi Arabia and we support it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, the floor is to South Africa. Maybe your microphone is on mute.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Yes, thank you. South Africa wishes to join other Delegations in congratulating you, and your country China, for hosting and presiding over this important session, especially, during this very difficult period. We believe, Mr. Chairperson, that capacity building should be at the core of the work of the Secretariat in providing support to State Parties to implement the 1972 Convention. We are particularly concerned, as China has recently highlighted, that there are too few properties on the World Heritage List from the African continent, and too many properties from the African continent that are in the Danger List.

This is why we fully support, as South Africa, the amendments that have been proposed by Saudi Arabia and the extent that Saudi Arabia placed to the all-important issues such as the need for a robust result-based Capacity Building Strategy for 2023-2032. Saudi Arabia has also highlighted the important point that there is a need to ensure that such a Strategy should result in enhancing expertise and strengthening regional expertise to enhance skills in order to address issues of capacity building on the continent. With these words Mr. Chairman, we are fully behind the proposed amendment by Saudi Arabia. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The floor is now to Kyrgyzstan.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Mr. Chairman of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Convention, on behalf of the Kirgiz Republic, I would like to congratulate the Republic of China for hosting this World Heritage Committee. The preparation of a meeting of this stature can be challenging because of the current Covid-19 situation. Therefore, we convey our sincere thanks for organising this challenged session and we wish a fruitful meeting.

This session is exceptionally dense and important. We acknowledge the efforts of the UNESCO Secretariat, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the representatives of ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN to examine the state of conservation and nominations. We wish to thank them for their contribution and thoughts. We would also like to support the amendment from Saudi Arabia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now St Kitts and Nevis, the floor is yours.

The Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis wishes to congratulate you on your appointment as Chairman and on the excellent hosting of this meeting by the government of China. We also support the amendment by Saudi Arabia. Especially, as it has special significance for Small Island Developing States. This will lend great support to the enhancement of skills and capacity building in those countries. Therefore, we wish to congratulate and support Saudi Arabia on this amendment. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to ask ICCROM to give some response. ICCROM, you have the floor.

ICCROM:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. Since this is the first time ICCROM is taking the floor, we would like to thank the Chinese government for the excellent organisation of this meeting. We are very much more appreciative of it. First and foremost, actually, we would really like to thank all of the Committee members for their interventions on Item 6. We are very happy to hear the interest that capacity building has among all the Committee members and hopefully on other State Parties to the Convention as expressed today in these interventions.

I would say, first and foremost, as the Advisory Body acting as focal point for capacity building that we look very much forward to developing new activities, new programmes for capacity building with State Parties and also with other capacity building actors, such as Category 2 Centres around the world.

In regard to diversity, I just wanted to comment and say that, yes, we completely agree with everything that has been expressed here today. There is definitely a need for as much diversity as we possibly can. And if you look at Document 6 you will see that there are quite a number of activities that are taking place all around the world related to capacity building for World Heritage. That really is in all regions of the world. I will refer you to Document 6. I obviously do not want to go into each single activity. Just to mention that this is something that we take very seriously, this issue of diversity, in terms of training and expertise and having the right expertise on hand in all regions of the world.

Specifically in relation to Africa, I would certainly hope that Committee members would recall that ICCROM along with the World Heritage Centre actually had a 12-year Capacity Building Programme in sub-Saharan Africa, Africa 2009. Subsequent to that, we have been working with the African World Heritage Fund, with IUCN, ICOMOS and other capacity building partners in terms of trying to work with that region. Again, this is an area in which ICCROM has been very interested for a long time. We have actually initiated a new programme, Youth Heritage Africa, which will involve not just World Heritage, but World Heritage will certainly be a part of it. We very much look forward to working with parties that have an interest in capacity building in that region.

In regard finally to the issue of evaluation. First and foremost, we would like to thank the Saudi Arabian initiative for their amendments today. We are very much in agreement with the idea of this independent transparent consultation process for this result-based evaluation. The result-based evaluation was already requested last year. Let me put it this way, we agree that it should be independent. It is not possible for ICCROM to evaluate itself or for the World Heritage Centre to evaluate itself. The idea that Saudi Arabia is coming in and say this needs to be independent and also needs to be done in conjunction and collaboration with State Parties is actually something that we very much support. We very much look forward to working with them on this evaluation for the future.

Finally, to conclude, I would also like to thank our ongoing capacity building partners, specifically the government of Norway, Korea and Switzerland, all of those that have been working with us up to now on the various capacity building initiatives.

Again, in conclusion, I am really pleased with this discussion and the interest that has been shown today and I really look forward in the coming year, first to having this independent evaluation, second to develop in the following years a strong new Capacity Building Programme for World Heritage for the next ten years and we look forward to working with all States Parties in this development. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, as we have a little technical problem, I suggest that we come back with the draft decision in five minutes. Is this okay? Belgium, you have the floor, please.

Délégation de la Belgique

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de nous avoir accordé la parole en tant qu'observateur, et bien sûr toutes mes félicitations à vous et à la Chine pour l'organisation de ce Comité. Nous voulions intervenir brièvement sur ce point, et voudrions en fait rejoindre les collègues qui ont parlé du renforcement des capacités, surtout dans les pays africains, parce que, pour la Belgique, la Convention du patrimoine mondial ne peut être un instrument vraiment universel que s'il y a une répartition équitable, représentative et crédible des sites dans toutes les régions du monde, et c'est avec regret que l'on constate que l'Afrique reste sous-représentée dans la Liste du patrimoine mondial. La richesse naturelle et culturelle de l'Afrique est immense et elle mérite une place centrale dans nos discussions. Il est indispensable de soutenir nos partenaires africains, tant au niveau de la soumission des nouveaux dossiers que pour la conservation et la gouvernance des sites. C'est dans cette optique que la Belgique a contribué financièrement à une série de projets liés au patrimoine en Afrique durant ces dernières décennies. La Belgique étant candidate au Comité du patrimoine mondial lors des prochaines élections, nous nous engageons à travailler pour et avec les partenaires africains afin que le patrimoine africain reçoive l'attention qu'il mérite. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? Dear colleagues, since there were several revisions on the draft decision, I think it will be better for us to adopt the text 44 COM 6 paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1, are there any objections on this paragraph 1? Please, examine the document. Is it approved? Okay, it is approved. Paragraph 2, no changes, do you have any objections? It is approved. Paragraph 3 with changes. Can we accept it? It is approved. Dear colleagues, would you like our Rapporteur to read the paragraph? Rapporteur, please read it out.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. New paragraph 3 reads: 'Also recalling that capacity building is one of the Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Convention and is at the core of the sustainable implementation of the Convention and therefore is a priority for the effective implementation of the World Heritage Convention for all stakeholders'. Should I continue with all the paragraphs, or shall we adopt paragraph by paragraph?

Chairperson:

Paragraph by paragraph.

Rapporteur:

Okay.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, do you have any objections for paragraph 3? I see none. It is approved. Thank you. Paragraph 4, please, read it out Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

The new paragraph 4: 'Expresses its concern over the challenges faced by the States Parties in the protection and conservation of World Heritage properties in the face of increased global economic, social, digital and environmental challenges, as well as the need to strengthen national and local capacities through enhanced knowledge exchange, capacity building and training of current and future national and local officials in heritage conservation and management'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? It is adopted. Now, Paragraph 5, Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5: 'Takes note of the need to enhance expert diversity, strengthen regional expertise, enhance skills to address issues at endangered sites, develop technical and vocational training modules for youth, develop competencies for all World Heritage stakeholders, improve the use of digital technologies within the process of identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage, and to develop a strategic multi-stakeholder partnership programme to enhance the credibility and visibility of the World Heritage brand globally'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? It is adopted. Now, Paragraph 6 with some changes, Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6: 'Also takes note of the challenges faced by all stakeholders to maintain capacity-building activities during the global COVID-19 pandemic and commends the progress made by the States Parties, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies, Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO (C2Cs) related to World Heritage as well as the UNESCO Chairs with the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS), and notably the efforts to adapt capacity-building activities during the global COVID-19 pandemic'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? It is approved. Now, Paragraph 7, Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

We actually have no changes in new Paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, Mr. Chair. Our next changes are in new paragraph 10.

Chairperson:

Okay. For the Paragraphs with no changes, are there any objections? No, adopted. Please, continue.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 10 reads: 'Also takes note of the 10-year anniversary of the WHCBS in 2021 and, further recalling its request for an evaluation of the WHCBS, notes that no funding has been made available for this purpose to date, and therefore will consider reallocating USD 30,000 as seed money from the World Heritage Fund under item 14 of the agenda, to initiate the evaluation and the creation of a new WHCBS'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving us a chance to present this amendment. I would also like to thank all Delegations that expressed their support and investment in this amendment. I would like here to confirm again Saudi Arabia's commitment to contribute to the evaluation of the Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperso

Okay. Thank you. Egypt, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had made a comment earlier asking to insert a paragraph thanking the government of Saudi Arabia for the financial support extended to contribute to the independent evaluation of the WHCBS or I suggest making a new paragraph 11. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? First, Rapporteur, can you read it?

Rapporteur:

Based on the comment of the distinguished Delegation of Egypt we actually drafted it beforehand? Could the Delegation of Egypt agree with the proposed text? 'Notes with appreciation the generous financial support offered by the State Party of Saudi Arabia to conduct the above-mentioned independent evaluation of the WHCBS.' It was originally added as a new paragraph between 11 and 12, but if the Delegation of Egypt would prefer it in this location, it would be fine as well.

Chairperson:

Egypt, is this okay for you?

The Delegation of Egypt:

Yes, it is okay for us, thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. Let us continue, Rapporteur

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. New paragraph 12 reads: 'Requests the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM, in cooperation with IUCN and ICOMOS, to submit an independent results-based evaluation of the outcomes of the WHCBS, based on close consultation and a participatory, transparent, and inclusive process with the States Parties and other capacity building stakeholders and beneficiaries, for examination at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. Okay, it is approved. Ms. Rapporteur, next paragraph.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 13: 'Also requests, based on the independent results-based evaluation and assessment of the outcomes of the WHCBS, and taking into account the results of the Periodic Reporting process, that a new WHCBS with clear priorities, strategic objectives, expected outputs and outcomes, and relevant indicators be developed for a time period of 2023-2032 and presented, if funding allows, for review at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

A minor modification in new paragraph 14: 'Reiterates its invitation to States Parties to contribute financial resources for the renewal of the WHCBS through earmarked contributions to the World Heritage Fund or by providing extra-budgetary support to the World Heritage Centre for this purpose'.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes. Go on, please.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 15 without any modifications: 'Finally requests the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM to submit a progress report on the implementation of the WHCBS, for examination at its 45th session'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. We have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 6 adopted as amended ^[gave].

Dear colleagues, we are approaching the end of today's agenda. As I have highlighted at the onset of our work, we, as Committee members should demonstrate our responsibility and determination to preserve and ensure future legacy for humanity. As you know, our heritage is facing a level of threat never seen before in the history of the Convention, including current challenges of over exploitation of natural and cultural resources, as well as direct and indirect impacts of armed conflicts and natural disasters and most recently the consequences of the unprecedented worldwide pandemic. These underline the urgent necessity for the full engagement of government, international organisations, civil society organisations, private sectors, local communities and other key stakeholders to protect World Heritage properties.

Therefore, I took, as chairperson of the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, the initiative to present to you with a declaration to be adopted by the World Heritage Convention as a message to the international community affirming our common endeavour in protecting our heritage for future generations. I have proposed to name this declaration the '*Fuzhou Declaration*'. This text has been shared with all members of the Committee who had the opportunity to comment and enrich it. The final text is also displayed on your screen. I would like to know whether there are any comments? I would like to read out the text on this occasion.

Dear colleagues, I will read in Chinese the *Fuzhou Declaration*. If you have any comments, I would be happy to listen to them. The *Fuzhou Declaration*:

[English text] We, the members of the World Heritage Committee, gathered online on the occasion of its Extended 44th Session held in Fuzhou, China, declare the following:

Recalling that the Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage has commanded global consensus and universal ratification over the past five decades, triggered unremitting efforts worldwide for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage, and promoted a harmonized relationship of humankind with nature, striving to preserve heritage including its cultural and biological diversity;

Fully appreciating the progress made in the protection of cultural and natural heritage, that has fostered international understanding and dialogue of civilizations through mutual respect of cultural identities and appreciation of the diverse cultural expressions contributing to global peace and sustainable development;

Reiterating the need for increased global cooperation on the different dimensions of sustainable development including environment, economy, promotion of justice, peaceful and inclusive societies in the perspective of shared future, integrated with the protection of cultural and natural heritage in order to attain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Being fully aware of the challenges and shared responsibilities for humankind as the custodian of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage sites, which are glorious and meritorious assets of nature and humanity, and provide vital ecosystem services and embodying various forms of human values and creativity;

Expressing growing concerns about the impact of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, which has demonstrated the importance of local communities and their shared future, integrally linked to the conservation of World Heritage sites, while highlighting a growing lack of human and financial resources needed to secure an effective protection of sites and support to local communities and their livelihoods;

Bearing in mind and witnessing that climate change has been leading to an increased frequency of extreme weather events, natural disasters and other negative impacts and which adds to other long-term challenges affecting cultural and natural heritage protection, such as demographic growth, rapid urbanization and inadequately planned urban development;

Recognizing the existing vulnerabilities of the heritage sector compounded by the prolonged pandemic and unprecedented current challenges of over-exploitation of natural and cultural resources, as well as the impacts of armed conflicts on the conservation of World Heritage sites;

Emphasizes the need to reaffirm and advocate UNESCO's core values, objectives and mission on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, with particular emphasis on the World Heritage Convention and its role for ecological conservation, and the construction of cohesive societies at the eve of its 50th anniversary, as well as the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape with a view to integrating heritage protection with sustainable development in historic cities and settlements;

Calls for the full engagement of governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, private sector and other key stakeholders to protect the World Heritage sites and protect them against threats to cultural and

natural heritage sites in particular when exposed to armed conflicts, natural calamities or illicit trafficking of cultural and natural heritage assets;

Reaffirms the Declarations adopted at previous sessions of the World Heritage Committee such as those from Budapest (2002), Bonn (2015), Istanbul (2016) and Baku (2019), which reiterated the principles of the 1972 Convention and called for the protection of heritage from any impacts with a view to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage sites, including their integrity and authenticity;

Appreciates the importance of the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012-2022 with its six goals and 17 priorities and the achievements by the World Heritage Committee and the States Parties in the implementation of the Convention through openness and inclusiveness, constant dialogue and interaction, professional exchanges, knowledge/information sharing and partnership networking;

Commends the important role of UNESCO in its response to COVID-19 and the action taken by States Parties to mitigate the serious impact of pandemic on social, economic and cultural activities worldwide, especially in view of the new challenges to the conservation of cultural and natural heritage properties worldwide, such as the closure of World Heritage sites, the significant loss in number of tourists, delayed maintenance and restoration activities in some instances, and the safety and health of heritage site managers;

Welcomes the recent report published in May 2021 by UNESCO on World Heritage in the face of COVID-19, with a view to laying the groundwork for a roadmap to recovery that will help enhance the future resilience of cultural and natural heritage, and notes the positive trends having emerged in the midst of the pandemic crisis, in particular the wide use of digital technology allowing people and sites to remain connected;

Also welcomes the objectives and principles laid out in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the 2015 Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity;

Highlights the recognition that the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems poses a major risk to human survival and development and the protection of the World Heritage sites and stresses the importance of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Kunming (China);

Expresses gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for its contribution to host the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee;

Requests to further enhance the synergies between cultural and biodiversity-related Conventions bringing about a holistic approach to heritage conservation for both natural heritage and cultural heritage sites; and calls upon States Parties to reinforce international solidarity with a view of preserving cultural and natural heritage through fostering a new relationship of human beings with nature;

Calls for closer international cooperation to undertake appropriate research and planning to facilitate a balance between conservation and sustainable development, while addressing existing challenges and exploring new opportunities for World Heritage in the framework of universal multilateralism with common values shared by all humankind;

Urges wider participation of academics, civil society and communities to significantly strengthen links between heritage conservation and social and economic development activities, with an aim to protect World Heritage sites for the benefits of all in line with the 2015 World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy;

Calls for increasing support be provided to countries in need, in particular in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in order to establish a balanced, credible and geographical equally representative World Heritage List, which can also benefit awareness-raising, capacity-building and preservation activities of cultural and natural heritage;

Underlines the potential of digital technologies to improve effective heritage management and capacity-building programs and appeals to the international community to scale up support to developing countries, giving emphasis to Priority Africa and SIDS, in order to harness these new technologies and optimize innovative solutions;

Invites all States Parties to scale up World Heritage education and knowledge-sharing for the youth through formal and non-formal education in order to reinforce awareness of the need and value, knowledge and skills of World Heritage protection and foster a generation of Patrimonitos;

Also invites States Parties to participate and engage in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention as an occasion for reflection and analysis on its history and looking towards its future, to promote the conservation of World Heritage, with the aim to maintain an open, inclusive, adaptive, sustainable, resilient, clean and beautiful world for future generations.'

I have read the text of the *Fuzhou Declaration*. I would like to know whether there are any comments. I see none. Thank you very much for your support. I declare the *Fuzhou Declaration* adopted [gave].

Dear colleagues, before we resume the examination of items on the Agenda, as is indicated in the timetable, I would like us to dedicate a few more minutes to two other very important events that took place on the lead up to the 44th session. Namely, the World Heritage Young Professionals Forum and the World Heritage Site Managers Forum. The Young Professionals Forum took place online from the 5 until the 9 of July and addressed the ambitious theme

of World Heritage and Sustainable Livelihoods, while the Site Managers Forum also took place online from the 7 until the 13 July and focused on World Heritage Governance, Being Prepared to Manage Change and Continuity.

As you know, it is now customary that these two fora present to the Committee with a message prepared with the participants of these important international events. I am really pleased to have the chance to listen to these young future decision-makers and to these women and men who tirelessly work hard daily to ensure our heritage sites are well managed and preserved. It is very important that their voices are heard in the context of the World Heritage Committee session. I now invite you to listen to the messages of the participants of the two fora. Thank you.

World Heritage Young Professionals Forum 2021:

[video] We, the participants of the UNESCO World Heritage Young Professionals Forum 2021, would like to extend our sincere thanks to Vice-Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Tian Xuejun, Chairperson of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, and to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

Furthermore, we are grateful to the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for hosting the Forum. Our heartfelt thanks go to the organization teams for their support, and the groups of experts and facilitators for their enriching insights and mentorship. We would like to share our recommendations with all heritage stakeholders, through this outcome document: *'Youth Voices on World Heritage and Sustainable Livelihoods'*.

We recommend:

Encouraging dialogue and enhancing the inclusive participation of local communities and youth by UNESCO, other international agencies, national, regional, and local governance structures, towards World Heritage governance, by promoting safe spaces for communication and consensus, by developing new media and platforms for lateral exchanges, and by democratising the decision-making processes;

Creating a wider, universal knowledge-sharing platform accessible to all stakeholders, led by UNESCO in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, and the State Parties' national, regional, and local governance structures, which would provide best practice guidelines and propose strategies to empower local actors;

Supporting and mobilizing community networks and establishing feasible and realistic exit strategies for external agencies working on the field;

Revise, discuss, and update World Heritage management plans in shorter time-durations at local levels, to account for the evolving socio-cultural contexts, values, perceptions, knowledge and priorities of the stakeholders over time, establishing dialogue and strong synergies with varied sectors (those particularly engaged with digital technologies), in order to benefit from intersectoral expertise;

Encouraging the management and tourism bodies to implement sustainable tourism practices through cross-sectoral collaborations and by holding accountable the existing/established management frameworks, through the Culture 2030 Indicators;

Supporting local tourism through community-led projects on the ground, by incorporating local knowledge and skills into development projects;

Recognizing and promoting the role of cross-sectoral institutions in the field of culture and environment in propagating the communities' narratives and affinity towards World Heritage sites through storytelling and other formats of documenting ethnographic information;

Empowering the local communities to develop their own narratives to interpret heritage documentation, conservation, and management, through a mixed approach of modern technology as well as the community's traditional knowledge and skills;

Advocating equitable access to technology and connectivity at and around World Heritage sites by ensuring the allocation of sufficient funding and resources;

Providing financial incentives, technological and logistic support, and business training to young professionals.

We, as young heritage professionals commit ourselves to pursuing UNESCO's mandate of building peace.

Site Managers forum 2021:

[video] The Site Managers Forum Participants would like to thank the People's Republic of China for hosting and facilitating the online meeting to ensure the continuation of the Forum as a venue for discussion, knowledge sharing and exchange, especially in the COVID-19 global health crisis. Participants are grateful for the opportunity to work with and learn about the management and governance structure of the World Heritage property of Kulangsu, a Historic International Settlement.

The World Heritage Convention is a global standard-setting conservation instrument. National, regional and local legal frameworks and policies regarding heritage conservation should be encouraged to be revised and updated on a cyclic basis. Traditional management practices reflecting community values should be integrated with the management frameworks for World Heritage properties, to include monitoring, reporting, and adaptive strategies.

World Heritage properties must review and update their respective management plans and governance arrangements regularly, in order to adapt continuously to change.

At World Heritage properties, heritage should be at the centre of local development strategies, contributing towards the quality of life of local communities and the conservation of the heritage values.

The management system of World Heritage properties needs to be based on approaches that enable functional management, with decision-making grounded on technical advice, promoting active consultation with all relevant and concerned actors, and setting up an appropriate data management system for management actions.

The management system should be interconnected and respond to different levels - national, regional, and local - with reciprocal cooperation between the different levels of governance. State Parties are encouraged to establish management systems at the site level, and provide continuous resources for site managers to set and achieve sustainable and strategic management objectives to respond to ongoing issues and challenges.

Heritage is not only a component to be preserved but to be seen as a sustainable resource for the future which has developed in a time-tested manner.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for these thoughtful messages of which the Committee will take good notes.

Dear colleagues, we are now moving to the examination of one of our major Agenda Items, namely Item 7 on the State of Conservation of World Heritage properties. This year, there are two draft decisions proposed for adoption within the related Document 7:

- Decision 44 COM 7.1 on statutory matters related to the Reactive Monitoring process

- Decision 44 COM 7.2 on conservation issues

I would like to inform you that, as for the past years, this item will remain open to possibly take into account the debates held under Agenda Items 7A and 7B. The Draft Decisions 7.1 and 7.2 will therefore only be adopted once we have completed the examination of Items 7A and 7B.

Before we proceed with these items, I would like to inform you that since our last session in July 2019, the World Heritage community at large was saddened again by the loss of human lives, including of staff tragically killed while on duty, fighting against illegal activities within World Heritage sites. Therefore, I would like to propose that a tribute be paid to them, and that we all observe one minute of silence in their memory. Thank you very much.

Dear Committee members, I would like to now give the floor to Ms. Mechthild Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre, to introduce this item. Ms. Rössler, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. You have Document 7 in front of you. This is composed of the introduction we have just seen which provides some statistical analyses and then we have two parts. Part 1 on the Reactive Monitoring process and more strategic and policy implications in part 2. We have two parts of the decision which will be adopted at the end of Items 7A and 7B. In case you have any additions to make, any other considerations to add, that will be throughout these items. I think that there is a PowerPoint with my presentation if this could be put up?

The World Heritage Convention is one of the most successful international instruments for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage sites. Its unique Reactive Monitoring process highlights and highly contributes to the efficient monitoring of threats affecting the properties and to their mitigation. Can the PowerPoint be uploaded please? Here it comes. Thank you very much, dear colleagues.

Document WHC/21/44.COM/7 is a key document on statutory and global World Heritage conservation issues and contains different parts.

The introduction also provides information on the state of conservation reports submitted by States Parties. I am very, very pleased to say that this year, we have received 97 per cent of all reports requested by the Committee to States Parties. There is also some information on the 4th edition of the World Heritage Site Managers Forum, organized by the Host Country, China, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre, the IUCN/ICCROM World Heritage Leadership Programme and ICOMOS which has just concluded its work. I think it was really a pleasure to watch the video of the Forum. This year, the Forum was exploring the theme of 'World Heritage Governance – Being Prepared to Manage Change and Continuity'. A very appropriate topic. I think we are very appreciative of the great work they have done during this forum.

In Part I, Document 7 proposes a follow-up to the very comprehensive and positive evaluation of the Reactive Monitoring process you had requested in 2016 and which was presented to you during the last session of the Committee two years ago in Baku, in 2019. A matrix for the implementation of all the recommendations made by the two independent experts is being proposed for adoption by the Committee this year. In preparing this matrix, we took good care of the order of priority set by the Committee in 2019, with an initial focus on the recommendations

relevant to communication, capacity building, as you have just discussed, including for site managers, and finance. The matrix can be found at the web address showing on the screen, here, in front of you.

The document also addresses one of the Committee's concerns of the previous years: the List of World Heritage in Danger, and the need to identify ways to better assist States Parties with properties on this List and with the development of costed action plans and Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, and also to look more in-depth at the properties which have been inscribed on this List for over ten years. At the request of the Committee, the World Heritage Centre has also launched a project with the aim to overcome the negative perception of this List of World Heritage in Danger. A contractor will conduct a series of interviews in this regard as well as an online survey to collect inputs from all concerned stakeholders of the Convention. I would like to thank Norway for its generous support in this activity.

In Part II, dedicated to global conservation issues, more comprehensive information is provided on emergency situations in conflict areas. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for this minute of silence, because many of our rangers and others face very difficult situations. This part of Document 7 alerts on the tragic loss of human life resulting from conflict situations and on the devastating damage and continuing threats facing cultural and natural heritage in general. It also provides detailed information on UNESCO's actions to advocate and mobilise the international community for the protection of the endangered cultural and natural sites.

The destruction over the past few years brought the question of Recovery and Reconstruction sharply into focus. Since the adoption of the Warsaw Recommendation on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage, several activities have taken place aiming at helping development practitioners, national and local authorities and international organisations integrate culture into all phases of urban reconstruction and rehabilitation processes in urban crisis situations following conflict or natural disaster. This section of Document 7 reviews most of the activities that took place over the past two years and provides links to relevant seminars, workshops, publications in this regard. I would like to especially thank our Category 2 Centre in Bahrain for the workshop on reconstruction and the Polish authorities for providing cost for the translation and assisting the translation of the Warsaw Recommendation in Arabic, which has been published.

Dear Committee members, a recent global assessment made by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Indigenous people BES) shows that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history — and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating. Considering this current biodiversity crisis and its impacts on World Heritage, Document 7 also proposes a detailed insight into the contribution the World Heritage Convention can make into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). This contribution is also highlighted in the World Heritage Review n°96 published in December 2020, here on the screen. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN have been actively engaged in the development of the new GBF in various capacities including preparatory processes, workshops and policy submissions, and participation to meetings with members of the Bureau of this Committee. I would like to thank the Bureau members particularly for their participation.

In Part II of this document, we have also decided with the Advisory Bodies to address the issue of buffer zones, to remind all actors of the Convention about the need to better design buffer zones in order to better fulfil their key objective to support the OUV of the property and about the need to put in place effective protection and management regimes that prescribe and regulate development in buffer zones, foster sympathetic land use practices, contribute to sustainable development, and overall ensure good cultural, environmental and landscape connectivity with the wider setting. I think you all have experiences relating to this matter with buffer zones which have been very often discussed at World Heritage Committee sessions.

On several occasions, the Committee expressed concern about the growing impact of the extractive industries on World Heritage properties and urged all States Parties and leading industry stakeholders to respect the so-called 'No-go' commitment by not permitting extractive activities within World Heritage properties and to ensure their OUV is not been impacted. To date, 30 major extractive industries companies had subscribed to this commitment. The World Heritage Centre, with the support of the Advisory Bodies, has continued dialogue with the banking and investment sector on the 'No-go' commitment and to ensure that they are not financing projects that may negatively impact World Heritage properties. At the time, 13 companies have confirmed that they have some form of policy in place and submitted it to the World Heritage Centre. In 2018, the World Heritage Centre and the UNEP Finance Initiative Principles for Sustainable Insurance, in partnership with WWF, launched the first-ever global insurance industry Statement of commitment to protect the OUV of World Heritage properties, which has already been subscribed to by 17 major insurance companies. Dialogue is also ongoing with the International Hydropower Association (IHA), regrouping the major players of the hydropower industry in order to integrate a similar 'No-go' commitment.

Due to the unfortunately increasing number of cases recently, Document 7 provides useful information on the issue of fire, both in terms of its impact on World Heritage properties and how to manage it properly; as well as on the increasing pressures on urban heritage from the transformation of urban areas and their settings arising from rapid inadequately planned development, including large-scale projects and cumulative incremental change, as well as mass tourism. Information on the production of an integrated guidance on impact assessment for World Heritage properties, with the aim of providing a sound basis for improved decision-making in World Heritage management, is also provided.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies felt important to highlight not only the vulnerability of our cherished heritage, but also the urgency to maintain the knowledge systems, including the traditional skills and trade practices, that created this heritage, and how the absence of adequate skills or materials and inappropriate restoration may incrementally affect the OUV of some properties.

Last, but not least, Mr. Chairperson, we wanted to share with all States Parties how the application of space technologies for World Heritage monitoring and conservation could prove extremely useful, notably in identifying threats to properties, particularly for those in situations of conflict or after natural disasters, that may be inaccessible. I think Mr. Chair, we have made a lot of progress in this regard especially during Covid-19 times and use new technologies for monitoring of sites and had also extensive collaboration with ISA in this regard.

As you indicated Mr. Chairperson, Draft Decisions 44 COM 7.1 and 7.2 will only be adopted at the end of the session to take any further reflections into account, which you may have during the discussion of state of conservation reports 7A and 7B. This concludes my presentation. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Many thanks. I would like to give the floor to the Advisory Bodies for additional statements on this item first ICOMOS and ICCROM joint statement followed by IUCN. Please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you. Chair as this is the first occasion that ICOMOS has addressed this 44th session of the Committee, we congratulate you and we extend our thanks to the host, the Republic of China.

ICCROM and ICOMOS have continued to analyse, advise and support the state of conservation of cultural and mixed properties on the World Heritage List. Some threats to attribute sustaining OUV can be directly managed through State Party action. Management systems and plans are difficult tools and the Advisory Bodies continue to assist through capacity building, technical advice and reviews.

ICCROM and ICOMOS are particularly encouraged by the emergence of the World Heritage Sciences Forum as an important adjunct to World Heritage Convention sessions. All three Advisory Bodies have been pleased to deliver the highly resourceful and well attended fourth World Heritage Managers' Forum online on the theme of World Heritage governance being prepared to manage change and continuity.

ICCROM and ICOMOS have been active participants in the ongoing evaluation of the Reactive Monitoring process and have proactively contributed to prioritising implementation of high priority recommendations. The initiatives arising from the evaluation have great potential to improve the efficacy of the Reactive Monitoring but the proposed changes will require significant additional funding.

ICCROM and ICOMOS emphasize, as acknowledged in the Draft Decisions, that inscription on the list of World Heritage in Danger should be marshalling international support to help the State Party to address the challenges face by the property.

ICCROM and ICOMOS express concerns that some State Parties represent listing in Danger as a sanction and punishment which is neither correct nor helpful to effective conservation. An important part of the process is the development of a programme to achieve a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, as provided in Paragraph 183 of the *Operational Guidelines*. For some properties this has proven problematic under circumstances that have prevented Reactive Monitoring missions. ICOMOS has been pleased to collaborate with the World Heritage Centre in the pilot project of the Ancient City of Damascus and of the Old Town of Ghadamès supporting the State Parties in preparing their SOCA documentation and identifying corrective measures using innovative collaborative approaches without an in-country mission.

ICCROM and ICOMOS note the implication of the Covid-19 pandemic for Reactive Monitoring. One of the biggest challenges resulting from this crisis has been the lack of the Committee session in 2020, which has left some threatened properties in limbo. Reactive Monitoring missions have not occurred during the pandemic, but it has nevertheless been possible to evaluate states of conservation based on information provided by State Parties and other sources to provide technical reviews and to formulate evidence-based advice.

The *Operational Guidelines* do not require a mission before the Committee can intervene and provide appropriate guidance, requests or other decisions. Technical reviews of proposed actions which may affect the OUV of inscribed properties have been becoming increasingly important during the pandemic. These reviews rely on timely submission of comprehensive documentation by State Parties. Early submission on accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* allowed a collaborative approach and better outcomes.

The majority of problems occur when a project proceeds without prior consultation. The need to protect the immediate settings of properties through buffer zones is becoming more and more critical because of increasing pressures from external threats. The widening use of Heritage and Environmental Impact Assessments and the expectation that properties can and should support sustainable development particularly for communities within buffer zones. Currently only just over 60 per cent of properties have defined buffer zones. Guidance to State Parties on designing, establishing, managing, evaluating and monitoring effective buffer zones is currently limited. Best

practice guidance is therefore urgently needed and ICCROM and ICOMOS would welcome involvement in this development if extra budgetary support is forthcoming.

The expansion of interest by commercial companies in the 'No-go' commitment and the associated expansion and protections of mixed sites is beginning to include cultural sites more specifically within this framework. ICCROM and ICOMOS would be pleased to be involved in future dialogue as suggested in the Draft Decision.

Intergenerational transfer of crafts and skill sets and the use of traditional fabrics are essential to the maintenance of some World Heritage properties and preservation of their authenticity. As provided in the Draft Decision, ICCROM and ICOMOS encourage existing and new research and training programmes about traditional methods, technologies and materials to support the intergenerational transmission of traditional and contemporary restoration and maintenance of skills and to embed these in management systems.

ICCROM and ICOMOS have been pleased to contribute to Recovery and Reconstruction. In March 2021, ICCROM and ICOMOS compiled and published analysis of case studies on Recovery and Reconstruction. In 2020, ICOMOS also published a special issue of the international journal of cultural property on the theme Authenticity and Reconstruction.

Cultural World Heritage properties in urban areas continue to be subject to development initiatives and practices that do not always take into account the protection of attributes which convey their OUV. Particular pressures arise from the transformation of the urban areas and their settings through rapid inadequately planned development. ICCROM and ICOMOS highlight the opportunity presented by the 10th anniversary of the 2011 UNESCO recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, and, as proposed in the Draft Decision would welcome the opportunity with State Parties in renewed effort to promote its implementation through practical actions.

ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN have been collaborating in partnership with the World Heritage Centre on a new joint World Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance document within the framework of the World Heritage Leadership Programme funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and the Environment. The new Guidance is at an advanced stage and will be available later in the year. The intent in this Guidance would apply to both natural and cultural properties and to small- or large-scale project either within broader Environmental Impact Assessments or used stand-alone. State Parties are encouraged to use, promote incorporate and integrate this new World Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance in relevant national, regional and local planning and development consent frameworks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. IUCN, now, please.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As this is IUCN first opportunity also to take the floor, allow me, Mr. Chair, to congratulate you, on behalf of IUCN, on your appointment to chair the session, and we wish to declare our sincere thanks to the host city of Fuzhou. The magnificent ceremony reminded us on how much we would all like to be together in person for this session.

IUCN takes this opportunity to restate its full commitment to working closely with UNESCO, the State Parties and the other Advisory Bodies to comprehensively implement the recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Reactive Monitoring process. We welcome the prioritised indicatively costed and actionable matrix embraced by the Committee through Decision 43 COM.7 as our agreed framework to take action forward.

Consistent with these recommendations, IUCN fully support efforts to improve the perception of the World Heritage List in Danger, specifically regarding the benefits of in Danger listing alerting the international community to threat and as a catalyst to mobilise collaboration, technical and financial resources. We note the Reactive Monitoring process report with 86 per cent of survey respondents believed that in Danger listing is beneficial or highly beneficial and 60 per cent considered it to assist in avoiding the loss of the OUV. In this respect, we particularly welcome the financial support of Norway in improving the promotion, awareness and positioning of in Danger listing as a positive tool to address common threats.

Mr. Chair, IUCN in this brief intervention would finally like to stress this critical moment in time for the World Heritage Committee to positively influence the shaping of the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the closely connected Global Agenda on combating climate change towards achieving the inspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. The IUCN convened 2019 workshop referenced in Document 44.COM 7 articulated the unique contribution the World Heritage has potential to make linking nature and culture through the powerful concept of heritage. Recent analysis has shown an extensive overlap between cultural sites and key biodiversity areas, highlighting that this contribution extends beyond natural World Heritage sites. To this end, IUCN strongly support calls for greater investment in World Heritage as noted in the Draft Decision of Document 44.COM 7. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments on the entire Document 7 on the general state of conservation issues. Norway, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since it is the first time Norway is taking the floor, allow me to thank China for hosting this session of the World Heritage Committee and to congratulate you for its chairmanship. We would also like to congratulate China on the very significant and highly important *Fuzhou Declaration* just presented.

This Committee meeting and the important decisions we are about to make on the state of conservation are the ultimate tests of the Convention. We are confident that the Secretariat even under these difficult and extraordinary circumstances has strictly followed the agreed rules of the Convention. We hope that our fellow Committee members share this understanding and take this into account when we are making decisions during this meeting.

This year is a crucial year for biodiversity during which new objectives and new commitments will be made for the coming decades. The world's most important natural areas have protection under our Convention. The leadership role of World Heritage properties should not be underestimated. They show world class examples of successful conservation practices. If the OUV underpinning World Heritage status is under threats, it must prompt decisive action from the global community to protect our most valuable and beautiful cultural icons and biodiverse places and gems on earth.

Over the four years as Committee members, we have seen an increasing trend of weakening recommendations based on expert advice. This makes us deeply concerned for the future of the Convention. We all have responsibility and a task that may be difficult to grasp, seating here in front of our screens, in its entire seriousness. We, therefore, urge the Committee to take responsible decisions founded on scientific evidence and the principle of the Convention for the sake of the integrity and future of World Heritage properties.

Finally, we are aware that some State Parties wish to contribute to the discussion on this important Agenda Item and, with reference to Rule 22, we would kindly ask the Chair to consider giving the floor to the Observer State Party of Switzerland before the state of conservation reports are being discussed. Could this be possible, Mr. Chair? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your very kind word and comment. Now, the floor is to Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I want first of all, to congratulate you and the People's Republic of China for the adoption of the *Fuzhou Declaration* which we adopted earlier. I want to state here as a developing country that the Declaration encompasses all our concerns as an African country, as a developing country, in meeting the challenges of the future. Truly, we thank China in particular for its solidarity with the people of Africa and with my country and the support you continue to give. Having said that, Mr. Chair, I want to make a couple of comments after the presentations made by the various representatives of the Centre and ICOMOS.

From our point view there cannot be any protection of heritage without development. Without development, without people having food on their table, shelter over their heads and with all the modern amenities that people enjoy in Europe, America and Australia, there cannot be heritage protection. It is as simple as that. There cannot be heritage preservation. Therefore, the issue before us is not the dichotomy or the opposition of cultural and natural preservation and development, it is how we create a harmonious development that takes into account the imperative of cultural and natural heritage protection. If we do not do that we are losing out. I am afraid that the approach we have taken does not go far enough in acknowledging the development needs and that of the people first and foremost, communities, that are at the heart of these heritage sites.

Second comment, Mr. Chair, we fully agree that climate change and biodiversity are the biggest risk that we all face in a global world. Unfortunately, beyond lip service that threat and concern does not commensurate with the support and international partnership and solidarity that is required. We have many initiatives that try to mitigate the effect of climate change on us, specifically poor countries, but the support is not there when it comes to concrete projects. In Ethiopia for example, our government planted millions of trees, there is no international support for that kind of project. It is good to talk, make statements, speeches and commitments, but when it comes to concrete things, technology and support, to concrete projects, the support is lacking. So, let us walk the talk. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your very kind words of support to China, and thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to give the floor to Spain.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I would also like to congratulate the Secretariat for the documents that have been presented, but we would like to follow up on what has been said. The state of conservation is highly important, it sees to the conservation of our heritage and sometimes we make the effort for inscription and the latter is just a means for the end which is conservation. We have seen the recent period with the

problems generated by the pandemic, the difficulties in sending out missions encountered by some countries especially in Africa.

I think that we should consider matters to observe the existence of disparages. We look at properties on the List in Danger. This is sometimes misinterpreted it should be a favourable issue to improve cooperation. But in any case, I think the state of conservation has to be demanded but analysed with the difficulties encountered by each country. And when we go to the general reporting, we have to make congratulations, but when we look to specificities of countries that did not have the time to do what they needed to do — we were not able to hold a session last year — we need to be understanding, Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to take this opportunity to speak with the voice of Spain. We have observed with great concerns the difficulties encountered by many countries, especially in development, as said by Ethiopia, in Africa, and sometimes in Asia as well, and also for climate reasons, they have been highly affected. We need to understand that. We need to understand that we have impossibilities which are encountered by the government and there is a problem of climate change that we cannot deny, which affects all government it is a collective consciousness of the world. We have to really understand this when we come to examine the states of these countries. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, China has the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Dear colleagues of the Committee, Item 7 is one of the most important items of the current session. Over the past two years, all the State Parties have been facing unprecedented challenges, especially for the Desired state of conservation of their World Heritage property protection. Their protection has been negatively impacted. Under such circumstances to better protect and use World Heritage is a collective responsibility. In the face of the normalisation of the pandemic, China hopes that member States Parties, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies can have a better collaboration and adopt more efficient measures to better protect World Heritage properties. And also provide important and more assistance to countries in need.

It is also hoped that the Committee can uphold the spirit of the Convention and can give a mandate to a scientific and fair attitude and take into account the proper circumstances of different countries and regions to carry out details analyses which should especially endow the relations between conservation and development. We have to be committed to the principles of people-centred protection. In order to adopt decisions which are in favour of sustainable development and in favour of the protection work and, also, bring benefits to the population of the world. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia now, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Did you offer the floor to Australia as we did not hear?

Chairperson:

Yes. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that. The magnitude and longevity of climate change substantially differentiate it from other threats to OUV, although climate change impacts may affect property in locally specific ways, these threats originate from global processes. Australia agrees that climate change is a serious threat that needs an urgent and meaningful response. The current state of conservation and in Danger List processes were not developed to address a threat of this nature. Around a quarter of World Heritage properties are currently in this state of conservation cycle. If we continue with our current processes, the number of properties in our in Danger List would significantly increase and many would remain on the List indefinitely.

We know that the next Item 7C deals with a proposed updated Climate Change Policy. However, we are concerned that this policy does not address the fundamental questions of how to address OUV in a changing climate. We will discuss this further in the next item, but we will put our attention to the three questions at notice at Paragraph 36 of the Policy. Whether a property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List knowing that its potential OUV may disappear due to climate change. Whether a property should be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger or deleted from the List due to impacts beyond the sole control of the concerned State Party.

The reality is that for some natural and cultural properties it will be impossible to maintain the original OUV for which they were originally inscribed on the World Heritage List, even if effective adaptation and mitigation strategies are applied and this may require an evolving assessment of OUV. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now the floor is to Bosnia, please.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je suis inspiré par les observations de mon collègue de l'Éthiopie, et par d'autres, mais surtout par ses observations qui touchent à la vie au quotidien. Nous parlons, d'un côté, de la protection des biens mais, de l'autre côté, parfois, et même souvent malheureusement, on oublie la vie autour de nous. Je viens d'un pays où il y avait la guerre dans les années 1990, et je me souviens bien de la différence entre ce que l'on vivait dans la ville de Sarajevo elle-même et ce qui se passait à quelques dizaines de kilomètres de la ville. Il y avait deux mondes différents. Ici, quand on parle des biens culturels, quand on parle des biens que nous avons à protéger, parfois on a l'impression de parler également de deux mondes. Cela n'est pas juste, et je pense qu'il faut en tenir compte. C'est vrai que notre Comité n'est pas une agence qui a pour mandat de faire face aux problèmes de ce genre ; par contre, il est important d'avoir un niveau d'empathie et de prendre en considération l'état des choses sur le terrain. Il est important de se demander comment est-ce que les gens qui sont appelés à protéger les biens dans leur pays, là où ils vivent, comment est-ce qu'ils peuvent y penser alors qu'ils ont des problèmes de survie. Je pense, malgré le fait que nous ne parlons que de la protection des biens culturels, que nous faisons partie du système des Nations Unies et que notre but principal, que notre objectif principal est de contribuer par notre travail à la paix, et cela signifie aussi l'amélioration de la vie des gens. Cela ne veut pas dire nous éloigner de notre travail principal. Il y a beaucoup de situations de ce genre, comme par exemple ce qui se passe en ce moment avec les vaccins. Tous les jours, vous pouvez constater un manque d'empathie envers les gens en souffrance. On passe à côté pour voir des biens culturels. À quoi bon observer et admirer les biens culturels lorsqu'on voit la souffrance ? J'appelle tous ceux qui pensent comme moi, et j'espère qu'ils sont très nombreux, à prendre en considération cette situation. Ce n'est pas ce qui se passe actuellement, c'est un état de choses, qui empire avec le temps, et c'est quelque chose qui me préoccupe énormément. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Allow me to express our appreciation for you, Mr. Chairman, and also for the Delegation of the Republic of China for drafting the *Fuzhou Declaration* and for taking the necessary measures to ensure its smooth adoption. The Declaration represents another milestone with a successful implementation of the 1972 Convention and reflects our commitment to preserve natural and cultural heritage. This said, Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank Dr Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre, and also the Advisory Bodies for their presentations.

Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the Convention and it is an important opportunity to conduct a reflection on the issues raised under Item 7. These Discussions should be resumed during the upcoming year with the ad hoc working group. We all want to protect natural and cultural heritage. We are united in this noble goal. However, we have to discuss openly our different perspectives such as decision-making processes, expertise in the different regions, the mapping of advisors' services and also the balance between protecting heritage and sustainable development. Also, to discuss openly so that we embark on the upcoming 50 years of the Convention on a more solid basis. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you very much for giving me the floor again to make a comment on this most important item of the agenda. Mr. Chairman, Brazil would, first of all, like to endorse other speakers in congratulating China on the successful adoption of the *Fuzhou Declaration*. We think this is a very important document and we think that it has been achieved in a very balanced manner addressing all kinds of concerns. Thank you.

I should also like, Mr. Chairman, to endorse what was said by the previous speakers from Spain, Ethiopia and China, above all concerning the difficulties related to this last year, as everyone has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and at the same time we do think that it is time to deeply discuss the very real dichotomy with development, on the one hand, and safeguarding heritage on the other. They need not be opposing one another. We do think that it is possible to ensure continued conservation and yet, on the other hand, to continue to have development. The distinguished delegate of Ethiopia mentioned this and at the same time we need to ensure sovereignty of the development process.

In this regard, Mr. Chairman, this Committee, and only in this particular context, we have a privilege position because we have reached a junction over the last two years, where it has become clear that we are taking very important decisions. That is why we need to bear in mind the difficulties posed by the pandemic on many of the different

countries, but in particular concerning financial resources, budgetary issues and other challenges facing countries. And in this way, to the extent possible, we will avoid cases in which the files that are put before us for consideration will have to face extreme decisions. We think that the Committee, particularly during this current session, needs to show compassion in this regard. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now the floor is to Guatemala.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor. We should also like to thank and congratulate you for all the work done by you, your government and your country in successfully reaching the adoption of the *Fuzhou Declaration*. We think it is a very inclusive Declaration, one which really does reflect all of our concerns and in particular some of the updates and changes that we are going through. As has already been mentioned, this is particularly true as we have seen and mentioned by other delegates via a broad range of processes.

Mr. Chairman as concerns one particular consideration in the Latin American and Caribbean Region with regard to the *Fuzhou Declaration* — I think it has already been pointed out quite well by Director Rössler — that in the previous sessions when it came to assessing nominations and the involvement of Latin American and Caribbean region, our situation was taken into consideration. This is why we have appreciated what Ethiopia was saying. Item 7 is a very delicate and important issue. It is important for us to bear in mind that we owe a lot to the Advisory Bodies for the excellent work they have been able to do, not only for the entire last 50 years, but also the way they have been able to reiterate and give credibility afresh every time they do their work for our Convention. This is one of the most inclusive and respected conventions in the United Nations system.

With your permission Mr. Chairman, I should also like to recall, since this is such a comprehensive Convention which really does cover such a huge geographical representativeness, that we also need to bear in mind the current situation. Because, as a society, the whole world is going through upheavals. We are going through climate change through many other kinds of challenges. And I do think we need to analyse quite thoroughly how we are going to ensure a robust Convention, given the current challenges that we are facing.

There are also financial difficulties being faced in various parts of the world and we need to look at how we dovetail those challenges with the overall implementation of the Convention. Climate change is affecting us. Guatemala over the last two years has been looking deeply at this issue. I think we do need deep discussion on this particular issue and yet, at the same time, as an international community, let us also analyse which steps are going to be necessary if we are going to improve our Convention going forward and make it stronger than ever. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you know, our Delegation is a relative newcomer to the World Heritage. Over the last years we were Observers and it was not easy for us to grasp all the details and the relationship and cooperation within the framework of the Committee. Now that we are a full-fledged member, we see all these difficulties that the Committee is facing because of many problems. Not only the consequences of the pandemic of Covid-19 but also of some problems that look like existential issues. It was mentioned by many previous speakers, the need to strike a balance between conservation of World Heritage properties and the development, or even not only the development, the need to create normal living conditions for the people there, and that they somehow relate to the World Heritage properties being natural or cultural.

So, what is the way to strike this balance. I think, first of all, we should think about striking the balance between the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies, which are very important to fulfil for every State Party, and also the measures and decisions that the Committee adopts which could really be with far-reaching consequences. I think that under these difficult circumstances we are all of us finding ourselves in, I agree with the Ambassador of Brazil who mentioned the need to try to see very carefully whether drastic or irreversible decisions should be taken.

I agree with what some of the Advisory Bodies' representatives said about the need to overcome the negative perception of in Danger listing. But we also have to see it from another angle, the angle of the State Parties. For the States Parties, sometimes, in Danger listing is a challenge and is not really helpful for the conservation of properties, but is perceived as a sort of punishment.

Therefore, we should try to refrain from these extreme decisions, trying, first of all, to encourage the member States to take necessary measures for the state of conservation where the properties are really in danger or face some serious problems. On the other hand, we should see clearly whether these measures would be really helpful for the conservation or on the contrary they may happen to be counterproductive.

I think the improvement of the understanding and close cooperation between the Advisory Bodies and the members of the Committee is the key for the improvement of our general cooperation for the sake of World Heritage.

The experience of our country in the last years suggests that a close dialogue with the Advisory Bodies — joint search for reasonable and effective solutions of the problems which are inevitable — exists and is the best way to achieve positive results and to ensure the effective conservation of World Heritage properties. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to South Africa, please. Your microphone may be muted.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Excellency. Since South Africa is taking the floor for the first time, Chairperson, South Africa would like to congratulate China for the stylish opening yesterday and appreciate your leadership during this particular session.

What we want to raise or note is that there is a delicate balance that we need to strike among countries during the economic divide that continues to threaten the livelihoods of the African countries. We therefore feel that the issue of conservation vis à vis development agenda of countries needs to be taken into cognisance and I think the situation has also been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Therefore, how do we build back better in terms of ensuring that natural resources become the core element for building better. I think that, Chair, given the opportunity, the African States combined need to look at those issues that we thought we should look at when looking at various submissions by the Africa Region. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The floor is now to Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you. Since this is the first time Nigeria takes the floor, I would like to congratulate you on your nomination. Concerning the state of conservation reports for properties under World Heritage, the pandemic has led to loss of jobs and lives have been affected and so has our heritage. Our view, with that of others, is that looking at the state of conservation for properties under World Heritage and even on the World Heritage List in Danger, we should look at the balance between development and conservation of properties. The local people are supposed to benefit from the sites. We align our view to the fact that World Heritage sites have to look at the communities, their views, and the economic situation affecting countries in the African Region and the world. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Are there any more comments from Committee members? There are no more. Dear colleagues I would like to seek your permission to give the floor to two observers. One is Switzerland another is the Forum on Indigenous People. Are there any objections? I see none. Switzerland you have two minutes for your comment.

Délégation de la Suisse

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Merci de nous donner la parole. Nous remercions aussi la Chine pour l'organisation de cette réunion. Je prononce cette intervention conjointe au nom de la Colombie, des Pays-Bas, de la Suède et, bien évidemment, de la Suisse. Les effets de la crise environnementale sont de plus en plus évidents sur notre planète. Les changements climatiques et la crise de la biodiversité, nous l'avons vu, impactent notre monde de façon massive, touchant également les biens du patrimoine mondial. Notre responsabilité commune de la préservation de cet héritage que nous partageons est accrue. À l'heure d'entamer les travaux d'examen des rapports d'état de conservation, nous souhaitons, en amont des discussions, rappeler aux membres du Comité l'impératif d'agir sur la base des connaissances scientifiques et techniques et de ne surtout pas céder à des pressions particulières. Les intérêts nationaux sont compréhensibles, mais ne doivent pas peser plus que l'intérêt du patrimoine mondial, et surtout pas plus que la crédibilité de la Liste. Nous prions ainsi le Comité d'agir selon les plus hauts standards éthiques, comme l'a demandé notre assemblée générale. Nous ne rappelons pas cela à la légère. La dernière assemblée générale de la Convention a fait une constatation grave : certaines pratiques et méthodes de travail du Comité menacent la crédibilité du système du patrimoine mondial. La plus flagrante en est la tendance à s'écarter de manière récurrente de l'avis des experts et à ignorer les dispositions des orientations. Ce sont les principes d'objectivité et l'impartialité, principes fondamentaux de cette Convention, qui sont en jeu ici. Monsieur le Président, le monde nous regarde ; il est temps que le Comité fasse primer les intérêts mondiaux sur les intérêts nationaux. Nous avons comme mandat d'être exemplaires pour les acteurs gouvernementaux professionnels, les intervenants de la société civile, les jeunes qui travaillent incessamment pour la conservation et la gestion du patrimoine mondial et du patrimoine en général. Nous comptons sur vous, distingués membres de ce Comité, pour donner le meilleur exemple et inspirer la confiance dans la Convention du patrimoine mondial, en évitant, s'il vous plaît, de répéter les erreurs du passé. Nous vous remercions, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. This was very accurate, exactly two minutes. Now, I give the floor to the Forum on Indigenous People. You have the floor.

Observer- International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage would like to congratulate you on your position and is confident that you will be able to manage this very well. The International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage wants to express our serious concern that despite recent improvements to the *Operational Guidelines* encouraging respect for Indigenous Peoples and human rights, the management of many World Heritage sites continues to be marked by a lack of respect for Indigenous Peoples' relationship to the land, and a lack of protection of our traditional livelihoods and cultural heritage. Human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples continue to occur unabated in many sites. The World Heritage Convention is in many ways enabling, and sometimes even driving, these violations.

In 2019, due to intense media pressure, WWF commissioned an independent review into grave human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples by eco-guards in and around protected areas supported by WWF, including instances of murder, rape, torture, physical beatings, unlawful arrest and detention, and multiple other types of abuse and intimidation. Notable is the high proportion of World Heritage sites among the eight protected areas that are implicated: five of them are listed as World Heritage sites and another two are on the Tentative List. The implicated World Heritage sites are Salonga, Lobéké, Chitwan and Kaziranga National Parks, and Dzanga Sangha Protected Area.

The independent study makes clear that the underlying cause of the human rights abuses against Indigenous Peoples is the systemic denial of our customary rights to access and use our ancestral lands, territories and resources. Regrettably, the decisions the World Heritage Committee, the Advisory Bodies and UNESCO have in many ways contributed to this denial, and may also have directly contributed to some of the violations described in the study, for instance by encouraging 'voluntary relocations' of Indigenous Peoples or by identifying traditional resources use as a threat. A contributing factor is also the fact that all of the implicated World Heritage sites are listed as purely natural sites, without an adequate recognition of Indigenous Peoples' relationship to the land in the OUV, and in disregard of our holistic view of our heritage.

We therefore call on the Committee to stop labelling World Heritage sites in Indigenous Peoples' territories as purely 'natural sites', and to make changes to the wording of the natural criteria, so that the indissoluble bonds between Indigenous Peoples and their lands can be fully and consistently recognised in all sites. Thank you.

Chairperson!

Thank you. I see another Observer asking for the floor. With the permission of the Committee, I give World Heritage Watch two minutes for its comment. You have the floor.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chairman, may we also congratulate the People's Republic of China, and also the World Heritage Centre under the leadership of Dr Rössler, for the successful organisation of the 44th Session of the Committee under extremely difficult conditions.

We have observed that in 69 properties under examination by 44 COM the Draft Decision states that the State Parties in question have not sufficiently followed their obligations under Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. We feel this is a major failure.

We also observe that the Committee will decide on the inscription of no fewer than 45 properties on the World Heritage List, taking a full four days of its Agenda, while not even all of the properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and other sites under imminent threat of destruction, such as the Acropolis of Athens and the Curonian Spit, will not even be on the Agenda.

It is urgent that the Committee revise its priorities – away from inscribing ever more sites while being unable to sufficiently address the problems of sites already under its tutelage. It is also urgent to establish a mechanism to ensure as much as possible that States Parties cannot continue unhindered a strategy to ignore or defy their obligations under the Convention. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, I remind you that these items remain open and that the proposed Draft Decisions 7.1 and 7.2 will be examined at a later stage of our session, once we have concluded the examinations of Items 7A and 7B. Thank you very much.

We come to the end of our meeting today, we will meet tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time and for Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am. Thank you very much for your hard work and I think there is an announcement from Paris. The Deputy Director has the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, I just wanted to announce that tomorrow, 18th of July, we have two side events. One on Maritime Silk Road Heritage Research and Conservation organised by the host country, the Natural Cultural Heritage Administration of China. This is at 3:30-5:00 pm Beijing time or 9:30-11:00 am, Paris time. The second side event is: World Heritage with Multiple Memories, the Role of Heritage Interpretation, organised by the CTC World Heritage Indigenous People IC. This is at 3:00-4:00 pm Beijing time or 9:00-10:30 am Paris time. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues please enjoy the rest of your day. We now conclude today's meeting. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 3:27:21 pm.

SECOND DAY – Sunday 18 July 2021
SECOND MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Before starting with the Agenda Items, as you know we have held our second Bureau meeting earlier today. During this meeting, I flagged to the Bureau members that according to the timetable the opening of Item 7 was supposed to resume today from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm. However, as we have now exhausted the list of speakers, the Bureau agreed that we start the session today directly with Item 7C on Climate Change and World Heritage. In addition, once Item 7C has been concluded, we will start the examination of the state of conservation reports of properties which are inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and that are open for discussion.

These properties are reflected in Document INF.7Rev.2. I also want to recall that it was agreed yesterday that we start Item 7A with the adoption of Draft Decisions 7A COM 10, 7A COM 16, 7A COM 17 and 7B COM 135. Consequently, we will open our Agenda Item 7B, which will remain open until all 7B reports have been adopted, as scheduled.

Last but not least, concerning our work today, as you have seen in the indicative timetable only two reports are foreseen for today's session, Kosovo and Liverpool. Should we finish the examination of these two items earlier than 3:30 pm Paris time, I suggested to the Bureau to proceed directly with the examination of the report on the Salonga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo today. We will then start tomorrow our plenary session with discussion on the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania. Once we have closed our discussion on Selous, we will proceed with the examination of Item 7B, initially foreseen for the 21st of July in the order indicated in the calendar for the examination of state of conservation report published by the Secretariat and website. The Secretariat will subsequently publish tonight a revised calendar for the examination of state of conservation report and share it with you all. If there is no objection, we will then proceed this way.

I see no objections. Thank you. These are the main contents discussed just now by the Bureau and that I wanted to share with all of you.

Dear colleagues, we are now moving to the examination of an important Agenda Item, Item 7C on the updated Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties. The related Document is 7C. The updating of the 2007 Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties was requested by the Committee at its 40th session (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016). As a reminder, this Policy Document was presented to all States Parties during an online information meeting on the 18th of June.

I would like to now give the floor to Ms. Mechtild Rössler, Director of the World Heritage Centre, to present this item. Ms. Rössler, you now have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and hello to all delegates here and online. It is a pleasure for me to present Document 7C which you have in front of you. If my colleagues could put up the slides, please.

Mr Chair, Dear Committee members, as you are all well aware, climate change is the defining issue of our time, and its impact on our shared cultural and natural heritage is, unfortunately, more apparent than ever. Increasing fires, floods, droughts, desertification and ocean acidification are threatening both cultural and natural heritage, while the uprooting of communities due to climate change is putting entire ways of life at risk, including the practice and transmission of living heritage, oral traditions, performing arts, social practices and festive events.

Adapting to climate change presents therefore a major challenge for the continued preservation and sustainable management of heritage. There is also now a growing appreciation of the dual role of heritage in climate change mitigation. Firstly, as a key consideration in risk prevention and, secondly, as a factor contributing to enhancing resilience.

In addition to the updated Policy Document on the impacts of climate change on World Heritage properties, a number of climate change-related activities initiated by the World Heritage Centre or in which the World Heritage Centre is taking part are presented in Document WHC/21/44.COM/7C.

UNESCO is indeed actively mobilized to address the impact of climate change on culture and promote its role for climate action, building on its interdisciplinary mandate on culture, science and education and based on its normative expertise, notably enshrined in its conventions and programmes.

In February 2020, UNESCO launched a Reflection Group on Culture and Climate Change, on the eve of the 52nd session of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) to explore and exchange on the role of culture as a key resource for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

As a result of this reflection group, UNESCO established a co-sponsored initiative with the IPCC and ICOMOS on Culture, Heritage and Climate Change in 2020 to assess the state of knowledge and practice in this domain and launch the preparation of an online International Expert Meeting on Culture, Heritage and Climate Change to take place in December 2021, with a view to provide strategic recommendations to support the integration of culture into the international climate agenda.

In addition, at the request of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, following the 2019 Climate Action Summit, UNESCO started a dialogue with Greece and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to establish a tripartite Follow-up Committee to ensure the coordination of multi-stakeholder contributions, initiatives and research to promote knowledge sharing and streamline culture in global climate processes.

UNESCO is also supporting, including through the Follow-up Committee, the work of the Flexible Mechanism launched by the Government of Greece in January 2021, which aims at promoting and accelerating the implementation of operational actions and cooperation on addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage.

At the policy level, the Secretariat has been working on updating the 2007 Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties.

At its 40th session in 2016, aware that knowledge related to adaptation and mitigation to climate change had drastically increased over the past ten years, the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to periodically review and update the Policy Document, so as to make available the most current knowledge and technology on the subject to guide the decisions and actions of the World Heritage community.

An international expert workshop took place in October 2017 at the International Academy for Nature Conservation in the island of Vilm, in Germany, to discuss the challenges posed by climate change to the conservation and management of World Heritage sites. The meeting brought together 20 international heritage experts on climate change from 15 countries with the aim to discuss the revision of the 2007 Policy Document.

Subsequently, the World Heritage Centre developed a project, with the objective to propose the updated Policy Document for consideration by the World Heritage Committee and to ensure its widespread communication and dissemination to all stakeholders concerned. I would like here to express our gratitude to the State Party of the Netherlands for its generous support.

As part of the updating process, an important desk review of all existing documentation was undertaken. In order to make this process as inclusive and participatory as possible, the World Heritage Centre also launched a wide online consultation of all stakeholders of the Convention, including States Parties, site managers, local communities, indigenous peoples, academics, NGOs, civil society, the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Bodies to gather feedback and comments from key World Heritage stakeholders of the Convention on this crucial matter.

The aim of this consultation was to gather feedback and comments from key World Heritage stakeholders of the Convention on this crucial matter. They were invited to share their views, expectations and best practice examples, and were also requested to flag the importance of several aspects for their possible inclusion into the updated Policy Document.

A total of 366 contributions were collected through this successful exercise, from all regions of the world as you can see on the screen. This represents the highest response rate to any online survey conducted by the World Heritage Centre to date, and demonstrates the interest of the international community for action on climate.

Some of the major types of observed climate-related impacts experienced on the World Heritage properties relate:

- To the increasing cost of maintenance or management in nearly half of the responses collected in the survey;
- To the direct damage to historic built fabric;
- To the deterioration of historic built fabric;
- As well as to the impact on tourism, in 40 per cent of the responses.

Other commonly mentioned effects were the impacts of climate change:

- On biodiversity, including for example the loss of species;
- On local communities or Indigenous Peoples, as well as on Landscape changes, for example the loss of the ability to grow traditional plants/agricultural systems;
- On the availability of water.

A number of respondents also highlighted the degradation of the OUV of World Heritage properties and of Intangible Heritage, to name just but a few of them.

The contributions received also highlighted a number of key challenges faced for the proper implementation of the 2007 Policy Document, as well as some gaps in this Policy Document which should be addressed in its updated version. As you can see on the screen, the issues of human and financial resources, the lack of policies and enabling legislation, as well as the lack of capacities came clearly as the main challenges for the implementation of the Policy Document. The results of the survey also provided suggestions and key considerations to ensure an improvement in the implementation of the updated Policy Document,

In addition, a Technical Advisory Group was established, with the assistance of the Chairpersons of UNESCO Electoral Groups, to assist in defining a clear roadmap for updating the Policy Document. I would like to mention the experts that were appointed from the UNESCO electoral groups, they came from Australia, Bahrein, Czechia, Italy, Morocco, The Republic of Moldova, Senegal, the Netherlands and Zimbabwe. They were Observers coming from Brazil, France, Greece, Hungary and Mexico. To address the potential different viewpoints or approaches and to provide guidance, this Group met several times online to review the draft updated Policy Document prepared by two international experts on the basis of literature review, on the recommendations of the Vilm meeting and the outcomes of the survey. Mr. Chair I believe the two international experts are also online in case there are any questions.

The Group identified the following needs:

- Ensure that the updated Policy Document is fully anchored in the World Heritage system, and within the remit of the World Heritage Convention;
- Ensure clear links with the UN Agenda 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and with all other relevant World Heritage documents;
- Ground the updated Policy Document in contemporary climate policy and in the best available climate science;
- Integrate the concept of the 'theory of change';
- Highlight the importance of education and capacity building;
- Make sure that the updated Policy Document provides sufficient guidance to encourage and facilitate its implementation at all levels.

The Group was also of the view to have an action-oriented updated Policy Document, which clearly identifies the actors and their roles and responsibilities (it means Committee-level, national-level, site-level).

As a means to reinforce the fact that more climate action is now needed, it was also overwhelmingly suggested to take the opportunity of this updating process to change the title of the 2007 Policy Document and move away from 'impacts of climate change on World Heritage properties' to a more positive title calling for 'climate action for World Heritage'.

In the Policy Document Preamble, divided into three parts, the Overview provides the historical background of 2007 Policy Document, and illustrates the new evidence of the magnitude of threats due to climate change. It also relays how climate change causes the unsustainable use of nature and how World Heritage properties can contribute against climate change impacts. 'Transformative Change' has also been emphasized, as well as the need to reinforce the links with 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda and the 2015 Paris Agreement, among others, by aligning the goals and engaging with local communities to strengthen natural, cultural and social resilience and offer sustainable futures.

The Purpose and Scope of the updated Policy Document are also clearly enunciated as follows:

- To provide high-level guidance on enhancing the protection and conservation of heritage of OUV, through comprehensive adoption of climate action measures, including climate adaptation, mitigation, resilience building, innovation and research;
- To create synergies between the objectives and processes, multilateral agreements, processes and instruments;
- To galvanise urgent action in support of transformative change by States Parties, which can reflect its aims in their own national policies that guide the implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
- To highlight its relevance to all stakeholders and rights holders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society and the private sector;
- Embedded in the existing processes of World Heritage Convention.

Lat but not least, the Preamble also sets some Guiding Principles for States Parties:

- To adopt a precautionary approach aimed at minimising the risks associated with climate change;
- To anticipate, avoid and minimise harm to protect the heritage of OUV;
- To use best available knowledge (all types of knowledge);
- To integrate a sustainable development perspective;
- To promote global partnership, inclusion and solidarity.

The next section of the updated Policy Document presents the Policy Framework, which provides a coherent structure for the whole document and reinforces the action-oriented nature of this Document.

The Long-Term Vision of the Policy Document is that all States Parties understand the current and future potential impacts of climate change on the OUV of World Heritage properties and undertake climate action in an effective, ambitious, cooperative and active way, consistent with their obligations under the World Heritage Convention.

To assist States Parties in this end, the Policy Document establishes a series of 4 World Heritage Climate Action Goals.

In the last part, after setting the legal framework under which it has to be implemented, the Policy Framework provides details on five elements for climate action, dedicated to the four main topics of the global Climate agenda (Assessing Climate Risks; Climate Adaptation; Climate Mitigation; Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Building and Awareness), as well as to introducing the concept of 'Transformative change'.

The four World Heritage Climate Action Goals also follow the four main topics of the global Climate agenda, with the aim of being reached by 2030.

The first Goal is on the identification of Climate risks, on their assessment and reporting. The second Goal relates to Climate Adaptation and building climate resilience for all World Heritage properties

The third Goal identified relates to Climate Mitigation and encourages the reduction of net greenhouse gas emissions associated with World Heritage properties. The fourth Goal emphasizes the need to implement activities supporting knowledge sharing, capacity building and awareness raising in relation to climate change impacts on World Heritage properties

As was already highlighted, one of the key recommendations that came from the wide online survey conducted with all stakeholders of the Convention, was that the updated Policy Document should clearly set the implementation modalities at various levels, and not only provide global considerations.

However, as you all know, implementation is not always possible without some preconditions addressed, which can include financial aspects, technological innovation, institutional capacity, multi-level governance, and also changes in human behaviour and lifestyles. There is also need to be mindful of the inclusive processes and pay attention to power asymmetries and unequal opportunities. All these aspects are set in the Enabling Conditions section of the Document.

The next items of this third section of the Policy Document provides such implementation guidelines at three levels:

At the World Heritage Committee level, such as:

- Ensuring that basic documents of World Heritage system, such as the *Operational Guidelines* and Resource Manuals, adequately address climate change;
- Promoting climate action measures for properties;
- Strengthening the link between the World Heritage Convention and UNFCCC.

At the State Party level, such as:

- Identifying and accessing resources needed from all sources through collaboration with government and corporate/private sectors;
- Achieving coherence with national policies by building synergies between the heritage sector and other sectors;
- Ensuring national guidance on World Heritage and for cultural and natural heritage addresses climate change.

At the site level, such as:

- Undertaking climate vulnerability and risk assessments;
- Developing and implementing climate adaptation strategies;
- Monitoring climate hazards, assessing and reducing climate risks;
- Implementing management practices that reduce the vulnerability and increase the resilience of the property;
- Engage with traditional knowledge holders and local communities (I think it is also important);
- Knowledge mobilisation, education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity building.

To support its implementation and provide additional areas of focus for climate action, the updated Policy Document finally provides a series of annexes.

The first annex is actually a glossary of terms used throughout the Document, based on definitions from the IPCC reports. It is important to note that these terms should be understood by the heritage sector to enable better communication and coordination with environment sector. There are however a number of discrepancies between some of the terms used, such as 'mitigation', defined in the glossary based on IPCC reports, but also used by the heritage sector sometimes differently.

The three following annexes provides some guidance on areas for further focus, based on the main elements constituent of the global climate agenda: adaption, mitigation and knowledge sharing, education and capacity-building. Annex 2 is on adaption and includes five topics, selected for their contribution to achieving the World Heritage Climate Action Goals 1 and 2.

The third annex relates to mitigation and relates to the latest climate science. Again here, the four sub-topics were selected because they are used in the climate context, and in particular in the work led by the UNFCCC and the IPCC.

Finally, annex 4 relates to knowledge sharing, education and capacity building and is mainly divided into 2 categories:

- For global action, at the level of the World Heritage Convention,
- For national/site-level action.

With this, Mr. Chairperson, I have concluded the brief presentation of the updated Policy Document. and I would like to personally thank everybody who participated in the technical group. I have to say it was not easy, we had long discussions, Mr. Chair, and as I had to chair that group, believe me it was not easy, but I am very pleased that we are here today to present this document. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Many thanks. I would like to give the floor to the Advisory Bodies for additional statements on these items. You have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not sure whether my video is working but my microphone is. IUCN is making this intervention on behalf of all three Advisory Bodies. It hardly seems necessary to state in this forum that climate change represents one of the most alarming threats to the OUV of so many World Heritage properties. Impacts related to climate change are being felt now and that on unprecedented scale across both natural and cultural properties with the potential to cause irreversible damage.

The 2020 update of IUCN World Heritage Outlook starkly illustrated how quickly this threat is moving and how wide ranging it impacts. Climate change now affects one third of all World Heritage properties. Also, in 2020 the ICOMOS General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to declare a climate and ecological emergency, noting the IPCC reports which paint a picture of increasing climate impacts, some of which may be long-lasting or irreversible. All three Advisory Bodies have proactively work for many years to address climate change by placing the issue at the centre of our statutory roles under the Convention, but also by our own initiatives and resources. Document 44 COM 7C details just some of these efforts.

Mr. Chair, the Advisory Bodies welcome the Draft Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage as a major step forward in achieving the transformational change required to address climate change for World Heritage. The Climate Action Goals and five areas of climate actions set out in the draft Policy Document are underpinned by the latest climate science and policy and represent a comprehensive framework to respond to the negative trend associated with climate change in World Heritage property. The draft policy has advanced in several key areas including recognising the need for precautionary approaches aligning with the latest IPCC and IPBES science: integrating nature and culture, promoting transformative climate action, acknowledging the potential for loss and damage and addressing issues of vulnerability assessment, finance enabling conditions and integrated climate planning.

The draft policy makes great stride in establishing coherence between the World Heritage Policy and the world of climate policies including the Paris Agreement. Drawing connections between the distinct yet intertwined areas to promote harmonisation and mutually reinforcing policy and actions on climate change. This coherence responds to a key request of the participants in the multi-stakeholders online global consultation conducted by UNESCO who rated the integration of World Heritage properties into national and local climate policy as one of the top elements to be prioritised in an updated policy.

We know that it is the collective responsibility of all States Parties to address the causes and impacts of climate change on World Heritage and that an effective response will require not only every State Party to the Convention implementing the Policy but also national and site level commitments to combat climate change.

Despite the advances that this draft policy provides, we know there remains much to be done. Both the international expert Worksop held in Vilm in 2017 and online consultation revealed a deep concern about implementation. Meeting the current challenge of climate change means a new policy would need to be accompanied by guidance as well as a robust and well-funded implementation strategy at global, regional, national and site level. It would be critical to operationalise core elements of the policy into the machinery of the Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. Furthermore, several fundamental challenging issues related to the systemic nature of this threat also remain unresolved and require further reflection.

Mr. Chair IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM reiterate our support for the adoption of the Draft Policy Document at the General Assembly. We look forward to mobilising our technical guidance and expert network in partnership with the World Heritage Centre and the States Parties to support the ambition and urgency needed to address this unprecedented threat. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Many thanks. Dear colleagues, I think that Dr Rössler has some technical announcements to make.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. Apparently, the World Heritage Centre website is having technical problems, maybe there are too many people who are watching this item, Mr. Chair, I do not know. We are trying to recover but it may take some time. People are invited to follow the discussion via YouTube. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear colleagues I would like to know whether there are any comments on this document. Hungary, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear Mr. Chair, Committee members, members of the Secretariat, members of the Advisory Bodies, dear participants, since this is the first time Hungary takes the floor, I would like to thank the People's Republic of China for generously hosting the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee in this difficult and extraordinary circumstances. Now, I invite my expert colleague to present Hungary's position on this very important Agenda Item.

Thank you. Firstly, Hungary welcomes and address its gratitude for the completed Policy Document which is of fundamental importance for the conservation of World Heritage sites. Our country devotes significant attention to issues related to climate change. Therefore, it was one of the first countries to recognise the Paris Agreement and international conventions and EU directives. It has drafted the Act on Climate Protection in 2020 in which it has committed to be climate neutral by 2050.

Our professional commitment to the subject is further demonstrated by Hungary having taken the leading role in the working group on climate change as a member of the Convention. The protection of man-made heritage and natural values is also emphasised in our country's Constitution declaring that Hungary strives to cooperate with all nations and countries of the world for sustainable development of humanity.

Hungary is one of the most vulnerable countries in Europe in terms of the negative consequences of climate change, so it is of paramount importance for us to be able to take timely measures to ensure the long-term conservation of our heritage sites by implementing the Policy Document. In order to effectively implement the objectives of the document for States Parties, it is essential to develop a guidance document that precisely define the target, the necessary interventions and set of instruments for different levels of implementation.

As the number of state of conservation reports is growing every year, the primary reason for the reparation is due to the effects of climate change. It is essential that what is set out at the Policy Document also appears at the level of the *Operational Guidelines* as soon as possible. Hungary, therefore, respectfully request the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to prepare, as soon as possible, the Policy following the adoption of the Policy Document with the involvement and the assistance of the States Parties regarding documents to facilitate its implementation and the necessary amendments to the *Operational Guidelines*.

Finally, Hungary respectfully turns to the States Parties for their support for the Policy Document in the Draft Decision and it is in the interest of all of us to play a role together in taking on the task to achieve the objectives set out in the Policy Document.

Our World Heritage sites are not equally affected by the impact of climate change, but it will take a common effort to mitigate its effect. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and we would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their constructive contribution to the revised Climate Change Policy. We extend our appreciation to member States and experts that have contributed to this effort.

The IUCN recent Outlook Assessment clearly identifies climate change as a challenge to conservation of World Heritage sites, and we also welcome the work being done by the ICOMOS working group on climate change to further extend awareness on climate change and cultural heritage.

We believe that the proposed policy framework presents a clear call for action on all levels, as it relates to climate change and equally emphasises the need to explore the role of World Heritage sites and climate change solutions. Mr. Chair, we express our support to the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

I have not requested the floor, sorry.

Chairperson:

Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Excellency. This is not Australia's first time to speak, but I would like to correct my intervention from yesterday by acknowledging China and the people of Fuzhou for hosting the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, particularly in this challenging online format.

In relation to climate change, I would like to acknowledge the work of the World Heritage Centre and thank the experts' technical advisory group and the two senior experts who continued to its development. I would also like to acknowledge my colleague, Mr. Stephen Oxley, who participated in the technical advisory group. Australia acknowledges that climate change is one of the greatest threats to World Heritage properties. We welcome the updated Policy and it provides a sound site-based guidance to property managers and how to respond to the impact of climate change.

We also welcome the Policy's role in supporting, strengthening and informing the international conventions on the impact of climate change on World Heritage properties. We consider it to complement but not encroach on the separate mandate of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations treaty which supports the global response to the threat of climate change. As we have raised previously, we noted the difficult question on how to respond to changing OUV in a changing climate is flagged, but not resolved, in the Policy. It is important that these issues are clarified, so that the Committee and indeed all States Parties can understand how to manage the inherent tension between a site-based Convention and the global impact of climate change to World Heritage which requires collective action.

We have provided an amendment intended to facilitate such a dialogue, as we consider that it is critical to address this significant, legal and interpretive questions around the relationship between changing OUV from impacted climate change as a global challenge and the interaction with in Danger listing.

Australia reiterates its commitment to working constructively with other States Parties including through dialogue to finalise and implement this important policy as soon as possible. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brazil welcomes and supports the present draft Policy. We agree that World Heritage properties are fundamental assets and must be protected from the negative impact of climate change. There are also important resources to strengthen local communities' capacities of resilience and adaptation to change in the pursuit of sustainable development.

There is much to be commended in this draft Policy, but adjustments are, in our view, still needed to align to the regime established by the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, especially by incorporating the fundamental principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities which is one of the pillars of the international environment regime. This principle should guide the actions proposed for Climate Mitigation, Goal 3, and Knowledge Sharing, Goal 4. It is important to emphasise that developing countries are particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change and their capacities to deal with it is much more limited.

Climate change action in developing countries must be coupled with technical support and financial assistance from developed countries including capacity building and the transfer of technology. We have presented an amendment in this sense.

The new reviewed Policy is to build a bridge between existing framework for protection of World Heritage and action against climate change. It should not create obligations that exceed those already established by both frameworks. Action on climate mitigation should observe determined contributions accepted under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement which may orally be exceeded on an entirely voluntary basis.

We have, Mr. President, a few suggestions on specific points of the draft Policy. First, paragraph 3 seems to equate deforestation with the burning of used up fossil fuels when the latter account for more than 70 per cent of the region. If we are to mention the different causes of climate change, we should give an adequate idea of its specific weight in the equation.

Second, in paragraph 12, we prefer the expression ecosystem-based approach agreed under the Convention for Biological Diversity instead of nature-based solution which has not been accepted multilaterally. We would also question the scientific data presented in this paragraph. As it is based on a single report still under discussion. Paragraph 16, Mr. President mentions the Paris Agreement, but not the UNFCCC, yet there are important goals and commitments in the UNFCCC which remain crucial beyond the Paris Agreement, so the Convention should be specially recalled. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. Climate change is indeed currently one of the top challenges in World Heritage management all over the world. The impacts of climate change have no boundaries regardless of where the properties are located and the causes of the impacts and whether the causes of the impacts are natural, locally or externally generated.

The entire world is grappling with issues of climate change, both developing and developed States, with heavy impacts on people's livelihoods. The updated Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change has therefore come at the right time. Provided guidance, in-house expertise shall address the issue of climate change at global, regional and national levels. As this is a new area with new challenges in heritage management, we, therefore, need more studies to enhance our understanding of the trends and ways of addressing the issues, those that come with the impacts. The installation of early-warning systems, the application of practical strategies and designs are commendable.

My Delegation therefore welcomes the draft updated Policy and consequently support the Draft Decision. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, thanks to everybody who has been drafted this document because it has really been necessary. When we talk about climate change, right at the onset in this Committee, we always thought it was important to look at the direct and indirect effects on World Heritage properties, and some regions, Africa for example, in some of the most vulnerable and affected areas vis a vis climate change, need our assistance.

What we are currently doing is launching a call for action internationally, to raise awareness internationally for this most worrying phenomenon. Climate change is not something that is recent. Currently, here, in World Heritage, we have to think that each of World Heritage listing that we make or declaration that we make is potentially going to be affected by climate change, and this is something that we need to all bear in mind and that affects World Heritage throughout the world. We, here in the Committee, start looking at this seriously because we are working on one of the fundamentals of UNESCO towards peace and sustainable development. Therefore, in our recommendations, we need to make sure that there are decisions concerning climate change.

This is a call that has been made from our World Heritage to the world which is of interest to everybody concerning a phenomenon that affects everybody. It affects the people of all regions of the world. It is up to us to come up with an international global policy. Another comment is to bear in mind what humanity has done and that it has only been some 63 old years since we decided we have Human Rights and choose that we can make progress very quickly. World Heritage is often about heritage that stretches back millennia, so now it is time for us to take swift action to correct the trajectory and we can fully support the Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning to all. We also support this draft Policy Document in that it highlights the challenges facing our time, including with regard to the preservation of heritage that is impacted by climate change. We also agree that this Document is a good basis for moving forward but has some concerns. These are trueful.

The first concern is that made by my colleague from Brazil: the responsibility regarding climate change is not really effected in a proper way. The principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility has to be reflected in the Document.

Secondly, regarding technical and financial support and global solidarity, it also has to really comes out in the Decision. Thirdly, for us, it is very important that this Document is only the first bases, the premise upon which we start to take seriously the climate change challenges with regard to heritage protection and preservation. The most important part for us is how we implement, what kind of interventions we make and what kinds of projects we devise. This is really lacking.

It is good to have highlighted what we need in terms of expertise, in terms of management systems, but what we now need are concrete projects that we can realise to actually have impacts on the ground. If you are going to have an impact on climate change, we need impactful projects and these projects have to come from us, as a global community, to support in particular developing countries. Thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, China please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. China welcomes the very high-quality work accomplished by the Centre and by the Advisory Bodies on this updated Document. Especially, as concerns the forthcoming updated Policy Document on Climate Change.

China, feels that it is time to play an exemplary role in our response to climate change in bolstering resilience and ensuring sustainable development. All countries need to comply with the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. We must contribute to this in World Heritage as well and China is doing its utmost to offset the multiple climate-related challenges that it is facing.

China places great importance on fighting climate change and accentuates both adaptation and mitigation. The National Adaptation Strategy 2035, which we are currently working on, does encompass boosting protection for World Heritage sites for vulnerable or threatened sites and also for flora and fauna that are under threat. It is time to take firm action. Climate change is a reality for China, but each country needs to take action to mitigate the impact of the phenomenon on their World Heritage sites.

We think that the concept and the framework of this Document need to be made more operational as has been mentioned by the Ethiopian delegate. We need to make sure that the content becomes operational in the field and we would be happy to work with other countries to do our utmost to fight climate change.

Thank you very much. My colleague, Mr. Chairman, would like to ask a question of a technical nature concerning the text of this document.

Thank you. We have a question on paragraph 9 of section B page 32 of annex 3 of Document 7C which recommends the adoption of two mitigation targets for natural World Heritage properties. We hope to learn more about what is the process to set up the two targets as well as the method and standard to achieve these two targets. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now, Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would like to express our gratitude for the effort deployed by the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies, prominent experts and all interested stakeholders of the Convention to update the Policy Document on the Impact of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties.

The issue is of great importance and I am sure it could be raised more than once during our discussion at this session. In particular, I believe that we should see more clearly the difference between the individual responsibility of the States Parties with relations to the impact of climate change on their properties and the global responsibility of the world community.

The Russian Federation is one of the leaders in the international climate process both in terms of its contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and in terms of efforts made to ensure the universal nature of the climate regime under the hospices of the UNFCCC. We can see that the updated Policy Document should become a useful tool to continue research and capacity building, to help the States Parties site managers and other stakeholders of the Convention to better understand the impact of climate change, and to elaborate adequate measures for the protection of World Heritage properties, bearing in mind the leading role of the UNFCCC, limited resources and the necessity to respect the division of labour within the United Nations system.

Wishing to contribute on the dialogue on these matters, the Russian Federation submitted amendments to the Policy Document and we hope that they will be incorporated in the text which will be sent for further consultations to the States Parties before the General Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Dr Rössler has a technical announcement to make, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Mr. Chair, just that the livestream is now back. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. I am pleased to take the floor on this important day, Nelson Mandela Day, which marks the death of Nelson Mandela the founding Father of our nation. As you may all be aware, Nelson Mandela spent 18 years of its incarceration in Robben Island prison in Cape Town, South Africa. It is one of the inscribed properties on the World Heritage List. Today, this property stands out as a towering symbol of the terms of justice over injustice, of the resilience of the human spirit over adversity. Now, Nelson Mandela played his part in making this world a better place and therefore, as he correctly said: *'It is in your hands now'*.

Chairperson, climate change has become one the most significant threats to World Heritage properties, potentially impacting the OUV including their integrity and authenticity, leading to development at the local level.

As the updated IUCN Outlook Process from 2020 has revealed, climate change has currently become the number one threat to all natural World Heritage properties. As it stands, South Africa is experiencing significant effects of climate change, particularly as a result of increase temperatures and water availability. South Africa has made progress in developing a plan that responds to preparing for the impact of climate change.

South Africa appreciates the work done by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on the development of the draft Policy Document on Climate Change on World Heritage Properties, and the extensive consultation process undertaken. However, we wish to request the World Heritage Centre to search legal opinion on true issues that were raised during the consultation process:

- 1) Whether a property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List knowing its potential OUV may disappear due to climate change impact;
- 2) Whether a property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger or deleted from the World Heritage List due to impacts beyond the sole control of the concerned party. This request is based on the fact that the situation on climate change observed at the time of nominations can take a different turn.

To this effect, South Africa welcomes the dialogue proposed under section 36 of the Policy and calls for the dialogue to be held as a matter of urgency.

Furthermore, South Africa supports a proposal by Brazil that the policy should acknowledge that the regional contribution to greenhouse gas emissions currently differs and historically has differed among regions of the world. And that resources available for climate action are still not equal among regions. We also, like Brazil, recommend that the draft Policy should reflect the fundamental principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities and that knowledge sharing, capacity building, technology transfer and financing should be encouraged from developed to developing countries to enable States Parties to implement this Policy. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Egypt, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Egypt attaches great importance to facing the challenges of climate change and its significant impact and threats to the World Heritage system. In this context, Egypt welcomes the process of updating the 2007 Policy Document on the Impact of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties. However, we believe that the updated Policy should support States Parties in addressing the risks and impacts of climate change and should be aligned with international climate regimes established by the UNFCCC and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

In this respect, Egypt supports the Draft Decision proposed by the Secretariat with the amendments presented on paragraphs 7 and 12 by the distinguished Delegation of Brazil, in particular the adoption of the fundamental principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities as well as the necessity of capacity building and encouraging technology transfer and financing to developing countries. Taking into

consideration that climate mitigation actions proposed by the paper should not exceed the nationally determined contributions accepted by the States within their obligation with the aforementioned international framework. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We truly appreciate the efforts made by experts and the World Heritage Centre in devising the Climate Policy, taking into account the increasing threats of climate change to the OUV of World Heritage properties.

Regarding amendments to the content and the wording of the Policy itself, we believe that paragraph 7 of the Draft Decision outlines a process to revise the Policy based on the needs expressed by Committee members and that the World Heritage Centre should incorporate this Policy that would be endorsed at the General Assembly.

May we ask if the World Heritage Centre could confirm this or given a comment with regard to the process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, the floor is to Guatemala.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Guatemala is in favour of updating this Document. We would like to thank you for elaborating it and we should also mention that our country is particularly hard hit by climate change. For that reason, we support the idea that the Differentiation of Responsibilities be made between countries that have more emission and tropical countries or those that suffer the most from the effect of climate change. We are also aware that the future scenarios foresee that many forests and other green areas will also play a role or be impacted. We consider that we need to take measures necessary to counter the effect of climate change. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank and commend the working group and all contributors to this Document. Climate change is a global issue affecting all States Parties. This is an important Policy Document. As said by Ms. Rössler, and, as indicated by the results of the questionnaire, the States Parties are facing challenges for the implementation that is due to the lack of capacity. Therefore, a training manual or kit is crucial. And the World Heritage Centre can use their bodies and all their national clusters and regional offices to help States Parties to implement this training kit. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the working group and all concerned stakeholders for updating this very important Document. Can you see me Your Excellency?

Chairperson:

Yes, very clearly. We now have some problems and cannot hear y

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

I am sorry. I would like to thank the working group and stakeholders for updating this very important Policy. We acknowledge that climate change is here and is already having an impact on our globe, as we all know it. But it has been in the making for decades and it requires more decades to overcome. Climate change, as mentioned in the Policy, is a collective responsibility and requires collective actions. It goes beyond this Convention.

Saudi Arabia has taken serious steps in the past, both nationally and internationally, to mitigate the risk of climate change. We look forward to the practical implementation of this Policy where capacity building, clear support and clear lines are drawn between the roles of the State members and the global collective responsibility, in line with the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement after being adopted by the General Assembly.

Therefore, we look forward to discussing this Policy framework at the General Assembly this coming November. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. There are no more requests for the floor. Now, I ask Dr Rössler to answer the questions.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. There were a number of comments and a number of questions. First of all, let me reply on the issue of the consultation process. Concerning the latter there will be a process starting now until mid-September for Committee members only to provide written amendments to the text of the Policy Document in track changes. So that we can provide the revised version to the General Assembly in November before adoption. As you know, we will present a document, which will include the discussions of the Committee here to the General Assembly in November. This was answering the question asked by Norway and referred to on the consultation also by Ethiopia.

Now, I have also taken good note on the points which were raised on capacity building. I think this is really a critical point once the policy is clearly adopted at the General Assembly. Then, I would like to make a comment on the proposal by Brazil and which was supported by a number of Committee members. I would like to refer to that wording which already existed in the Decision at the 41st Session of the World Heritage Committee 41COM 7 which *'Invited strongly all States Parties to ratify the Paris Agreement at the earliest possible opportunity and undertake actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement consistent with their Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances that are fully consistent with their obligations within the World Heritage Convention to protect the OUV of the properties'*.

I think that there was a point raised by China which referred to page 32 of the Annex point 9. In this regard, I think this is directly related to the IPCC documents. As our expert on this annex is online, with your permission, Mr. Chair, we may wish to give him the floor, Mr. Oscar Guevara.

Chairperson:

Okay. Please, you have the floor.

Mr. Oscar Guevara:

Thank you very much. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can.

Mr. Oscar Guevara:

Thank you. Regarding the question, I just wanted to highlight that the modification included in the draft Policy Document is related mostly to the IPCC special report, but the text and the outcomes of the discussions that take into considerations those findings are linked to the discussions and the inputs from the parties and the Observers. Basically, when there is the need to include facts, information related to climate change and the impact of climate change, the proposed targets along the Document reference to all the IPCC documents and all the references that were included into the discussion that has been happening in the last couple of years.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see that there are no more questions and comments. Now I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7C. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received two amendments to the Draft Decision 44 COM 7C submitted by the distinguished Delegations of Australia and Brazil. The Decision with amendments is shown on the screen.

Before going into detail, I would like to say that we received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Russia which included revisions to the text of the Climate Change Policy Document. The proposed changes are well noted by the Secretariat in line with paragraph 7 of the Draft Decision. The text of the Policy Document will be revised by the World Heritage Centre in consultation with the Advisory Bodies and will incorporate the interventions and amendments of today. To reflect this more precisely we introduced a minor addition in paragraph 7. Can we go to paragraph 7 please? 'Views expressed and amendments submitted during the extended 44th Session'.

Now going into details of the amendment proposed by Brazil in paragraph 7 reads: 'Especially concerning the following points:

- a) the fundamental principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), which is one of the basic pillars of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
- b) the alignment of climate change mitigation actions with the CBDR-RC and the Nationally Determined Contributions accepted under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, except on an entirely voluntary basis,
- c) the need for support and capacity-building assistance, as well as the encouragement of technology transfer and financing from developed to developing countries; in line with the CBDR-RC and the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.'

No amendment proposed for 8. Can we continue please and scroll down?

Paragraph 9: Australia crosses 'also' and 'requests the World Heritage Centre'. New paragraph 10 proposed by Australia reads: 'Also requests the World Heritage Centre, in parallel with the processes outlined in Paragraph 9, to convene a panel of experts drawn from the ad-hoc Working Group, World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other qualified experts in the field of climate science and heritage to meet by March 2022'.

New paragraph 11: 'Requests in this regard that' — just for consistency we edited this part — 'the panel proposed recommendations for consideration by the World Heritage Committee with regard to the significant legal and interpretative questions raised in the policy document on climate action for World Heritage set out in paragraph 36 as follows:

- a) whether a property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List while knowing that its potential OUV may disappear due to climate change impacts,
- b) Whether a property should be inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger or deleted from the World Heritage List due to impacts beyond the sole control of the concerned States (examples: threats and/or detrimental impact on the integrity of World Heritage property associated with the global impacts of warming from anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions);
- c) The reality that for some natural Cultural properties it will be impossible to maintain the OUV for which they were originally inscribed on the World Heritage List, even if effective adaptation and mitigation strategies are applied and this may require an evolving assessment of OUV.'

No amendments in the following two paragraphs and now a new paragraph 14: 'Recommends that the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage be interpreted in consonance with the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement (2015) and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, and in conjunction with the Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015);'

The rest of the Draft Decision remains the same Mr. Chair. These are all the amendments. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments, objections? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and sorry for taking the floor again. To Norway's understanding there will be a formal process allowing for providing input after the Committee meeting and this is also stated in Paragraph 7 of the Draft Decision. The amendments proposed as well as the other comments and input from States Parties it should be handled at the General Assembly or in the process leading to the General Assembly.

We may approve the amendment from Australia which concerns the process, but when it comes to wording and content, we believe that should be handled differently. The Secretariat might clarify if we have misunderstood. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Excellency. Australia welcomes the comment of Norway and would agree. Our understanding is that we will be submitting text changes to the Policy Document. We have very minor changes in accordance with the process by Madam Rössler, that is our understanding.

With regard to Brazil's amendment, Australia would like to say that we support the amendment in new paragraph 14, the inclusion of a direct reference to the UNFCCC reinforces the intent of the policy to complement the separate mandate of that body. However, in relation to new paragraph 7, I believe, we would note that this issue was canvassed by the expert technical advisory group. One of our concerns perhaps is that applying the concept of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities under the World Heritage Climate Change Policy may introduce inconsistency with the Convention's Article 4 which already provides the State Party to protect

heritage to the utmost of its own resources. We could see some clarity from the Centre or from the legal advisor. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a list of comments that have been made during the general debate and now regarding this Decision we are taking. We have heard several supports for the proposal made by Brazil in particular Article 7. That is something that the distinguished Delegations of Australia and Norway looked at. We are not creating anything new, but what we are doing here is just recalling the Advisory Bodies and all those, even ourselves, to work on these documents that will be reviewed in order to be presented at the General Assembly in November.

There are elements that should be taken into consideration in order to align the texts of the bodies that are dealing with climate change and the position of UNESCO. It is not for UNESCO to invent new elements or to create new commitments, it is just that UNESCO is not the appropriate body to discuss these issues, to align this text as much as possible with the texts that have been negotiated, but those that are our negotiations in this issue.

I will recall and ask that we review and re-read Article 7 that says exactly that the Policy Document on Climate Action will be reviewed in consultation with the Advisory Bodies by incorporating views expressed here in this 44th Session — and this is what we are doing. We are making clear in small a, b and c which are the elements that Brazil considers essential to be included in this reviewed version. Therefore, we do not see any difficulties to have these reflected in this text. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. Two issues: one on the procedure, we do not understand the logic that says we are here to adopt a Draft Decision without changing it or modifying it, then what is the purpose of submitting it if we cannot change it. I think that goes against the workings of this Committee and the Rules, we are here to review and to amend decisions that are submitted, otherwise we can just go home.

Secondly, on the more fundamental and substantive issue of the proposal of Brazil. I think it goes to the heart of the matter, whether or not to apply a green line, negotiated a green line which is in the international environmental regime. Common But Differentiated Responsibility, it has a meaning. And for us, its inclusion is absolutely critical with regard to its implementation on the impact of climate change to heritage sites. We are strongly advocating in favour of the proposal by Brazil which goes at the heart of what we want to do, if we are serious about climate change and mitigating its impact.

The inclusion of the UNFCCC also should not be controversial because, again, this is what has been agreed upon by the global community. If we want to strengthen the fight against climate change where we are all in it together, we accept these changes. But if we say that somehow there is not going to be any formal solidarity, then what is the purpose again of coming together to try to find a solution for a global problem.

These are really substantive matters and for us critical matters, as a developing country and as an African country. We feel that this is a fundamental amendment proposed by Brazil that should be maintained and a critical issue for us. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor. We cannot hear you. Please, speak to the microphone. Please, go ahead. Sorry, we have problems, the interpretation is not working. I believe I will let Australia take the floor first then we come back to China.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Excellency. I would just like to thank the Delegation of Brazil for the clarification on their proposed amendment. I think having heard their intervention, I now understand the intent of their drafting and we would like to agree and support this amendment. I would also like to acknowledge the comment made by the Delegation of Ethiopia, we also support that climate change requires global action and strongly support their comment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am sorry for taking the floor again. We also acknowledge the comment from Ethiopia and our impression is that everyone will be able to share their views with the process that is outlined. We will also need to make sure that the amendments proposed by Brazil and other States Parties are in accordance with the international environmental regime in the adopted documents. This would require prior consultations with all the judicial and ministries. We cannot agree on these issues in this Committee meeting as we see it because the Policy would be for all States Parties. For example, Common But Differentiated Responsibilities in Respect of Capabilities is to be reflected in the Document. It has to be discussed by the plenary and the General Assembly not by the Committee.

Norway does agree with all the States Parties that capacity building is very important and we would like to discuss this further in this process for endorsement to the General Assembly. As explained, in order for all States Parties input to be taken into account, we would like to stick to the process that has been presented by the Secretariat. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I come back to China. You have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you very much. We wish to recall a gentle reminder, for member States to be able to study the amendment, the best option is to present amendments 24 hours in advance.

China supports the Brazilian amendment for article 7. As regards the proposal by Australia on article 12, we have some concerns. It is clear that climate change is a challenge, a shared challenge for humanity and therefore all countries must take effective measure to mitigate the impact of this phenomenon on World Heritage. It is our duty to implement the Convention. There have already been very clear demands for the protection of World Heritage, particularly as regards the protection of OUV. If a property loses its OUV, well, the property no longer has a place on our List. At the same time, there are potential and ascertained dangers in which case, a property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger. The inscription of a site on the List of World Heritage in Danger is based on scientific justification and the aim of inscribing a property on such a List is not a punishment but rather an incitement to better action.

Therefore, we call upon the international community to pay attention to the threats that are faced by the various World Heritage sites and to strengthen that protection. All of this is enshrined in the Policy Document. This does not have direct links with climate change. We need to understand which of the actions need to be taken to protect sites.

Chairperson:

Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

We are having technical problems.

Chairperson:

Yes, there are problems, your voice is not clear.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Can you give the floor to someone else while we correct our fault?

Chairperson:

Now your voice is clear, please, go ahead.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Okay. Could you please pass the floor to other speakers while we correct our technical problem?

Chairperson:

Yes, maybe we come back to you. Australia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Excellency. We were muted. We thank China for their comments and would just like to recall that the words that we have inserted in paragraph 11 are verbatim from the Climate Change Policy, and that these questions, these same questions, were also posed in the 2007 Policy and still remain unresolved. Our amendment is merely to suggest a process to bring together collectively World Heritage experts, States Parties, the Centre and the Advisory Bodies to come to an agreement on how these inherent questions and tensions can be resolved, so that

we can implement the Climate Policy as quickly as possible and create certainty for the Committee on the implications of placing a property on the in Danger List for climate change reasons.

Chairperson:

Brazil, are you okay? Go ahead. It is working.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you very much, Mr. President. We recognised the several Delegations that have endorsed our amendment and we are very grateful for that. I think these three amendments here enrich the text and we believe that they should be kept. We could not follow very clearly the debate.

I am sorry, maybe Norway can explain to us better if there are looking for the possibility of creating new principles in this framework that were not discussed in the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC and they imagine that new principles should be created. This is the first thing that we could not grasp very well. Because the idea that sites are in different countries therefore should be taken in a different way.

Those two principles, it was a little bit confusing for us to understand and a little bit worrisome because we have several colleagues that are negotiating very strongly this Document in very, very specific bodies with people with enormous knowledge in these issues, and we, here, us, at UNESCO, we do not know very well all these issues. As our colleagues from Norway stated, she must go to her ministry to look at all the areas that have already been engaged in this negotiation. This shows that we are sort of not understanding what exactly Norway is proposing here. Is it the creation of a new principle then we cannot accept at all? Or, please, can they explain better so we can understand?

For our point of view, paragraph 7 is very clear, in the sense that proposals and debates of this Committee should be incorporated in the new version of the text before it should be presented at the General Conference. What we are making sure here is that these three elements that are essential for having an aligned Document and a relevant Document of UNESCO in this world of climate change, in this negotiation process. To have a relevant Document, these three elements should be incorporated. And we make sure that they will be incorporated therefore they will be taken into consideration because they are written down in this Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the comments made by Brazil. We would like to emphasize that as a party, as a signatory to the Paris Agreement, we are definitely not questioning these issues, let me be clear on that. There are nuances when we refer to all the Conventions and we would like to make sure that these references are referred to correctly.

We suggest, a new paragraph to be introduced. If there are changes to be introduced to paragraph 7, we would suggest the wording from the decision from 41 COM 7 that was referred to by Brazil and the Secretariat, if we are not mistaken. I do not have the full text in front of me. We kindly ask the Rapporteur to find the correct wording that was used during the 41 COM under Agenda Item 7. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, since there are several revisions on the Draft Decision, I think it would be better for us to adopt the text of 44 COM 7C paragraph by paragraph. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Paragraph 1 reads: '*Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7C*'.

Chairperson:

Do we approve? It is approved. Paragraph 2, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Recalling Decisions 40 COM 7, 41 COM 7, 42 COM 7 and 43 COM 7.2, adopted at its 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively'.

Chairperson:

Do we approve? It is approved. I think for paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 there are no revisions. Are there any objections on these four paragraphs? I see none. They are approved. Paragraph 7, please, Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 7 reads: 'Endorses the draft Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage, as presented in Annex 1 of Document WHC/21/44.COM/7C, and requests the World Heritage Centre, in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, to revise it by incorporating views expressed and amendments submitted during the extended 44th session and, as appropriate, to consult Committee members, especially concerning the following points:

- a) the fundamental principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), which is one of the basic pillars of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
- b) the alignment of climate change mitigation actions with the CBDR-RC and the Nationally Determined Contributions accepted under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, except on an entirely voluntary basis,
- c) the need for support and capacity-building assistance, as well as the encouragement of technology transfer and financing from developed to developing countries in line with the CBDR-RC and in line with the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Could I ask the question again to the Rapporteur if it would be possible to insert the suggestions from Norway with reference to the Decision 41 COM 7. We have not been able to rephrase the exact way we would like to see it, but we would like the wording to be in agreement with what has already been decided in 41 COM in paragraph 22.

Rapporteur:

My colleagues were trying to find the paragraph and they found it and will insert it now after paragraph 7.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Rapporteur:

I will just read out the text, if I may, Mr. Chair?

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

Rapporteur:

The 41 COM 7 paragraph 22, as referred by the distinguished Delegation of Norway reads: 'Reiterates the importance of States Parties undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and by pursuing efforts to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change and strongly invites all States Parties to ratify the Paris Agreement at the earliest possible opportunity and to undertake actions to address Climate Change under the Paris Agreement consistent with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances, that are fully consistent with their obligations within the World Heritage Convention to protect the OUV of all World Heritage properties'.

Chairperson:

We are waiting for the wording. This is the proposal by Norway. While waiting for the wording, I give the floor to China.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the latest amendment of Norway, China would like to raise its concern that we are going far beyond the framework of our Convention, because the wording raised by Norway is most related to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement which is beyond our mandate. It is difficult for China to accept it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We thank Norway for this proposal or amendment, we have no problems with it. All the talks about being ambitious, we want to be ambitious because we are the most affected as developing countries. It talks about ratification of the Paris Agreement which my country has ratified and I believe most of the other countries have ratified. Generally, I mean we do not have any problems.

The only issue, and it is underlined in the fundamental general principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibility, because there is a differentiation that has to take place between industrialised and non-industrialised countries, and industrialised countries have to assume more responsibilities. That is what it means. I am very happy that it is also stated there. But I want to see in the amendment the paragraph c which is very important for us. As proposed by Brazil, the need for support and capacity building assistance as well technology transfer and financing from developed to developing countries.

This part is absolutely critical for us and is not contained in Norway's amendment. Therefore, we would strongly support the proposal with the need to be ambitious including the targets that are there. This is in line with our national policy and I believe also very important for the global community, but it has to take place within a context where we have to recognise that there is greater responsibility on developed countries and this responsibility is translated among others with the need to support capacity building, technology transfer and financing. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The floor is now to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. Just to clarify, the paragraph from Norway is actually exactly the text that comes for Decision 41 COM 7. So, if the Committee wishes, they can just say 'recalls paragraph so and so' and reiterates. It is exactly the text that was copied and pasted. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President. We thank Norway for this proposal and now it is becoming clearer for us because it has turned into a new paragraph, paragraph 8. Therefore paragraph 7, as we have amended, is kept as it is with amendments made by Brazil and supported by Ethiopia, Australia and China. Therefore, we are flexible and we can have it with this idea for recalling the Decision and reiterate the elements of the Decision in a new paragraph which would be number 8.

Thank you, and thanks again to Norway for this contribution, which is very, very important as my colleague from Ethiopia has already said. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much for the comments from Ethiopia and Brazil. We would also like to give our support to 7C. We think that it is a very important paragraph and we would suggest that it reads: 'The need for support and capacity building assistance, as well as the encouragement of technology transfer and financing from developed to developing countries', end of sentence. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to reiterate that Guatemala supports the proposal of Brazil as well as the proposal made by Norway, in a sense that it focuses on our mandate which is World Heritage and the protection of OUV of properties on the List of World Heritage. Therefore, we wish to support both proposals and to leave them in separate paragraphs. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Can I take it that paragraph 7 is approved? Are there any objections? Norway, again, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a minor suggestion and sorry for taking the floor again. We would like to propose one minor change in 7, which is deleting the last part '*Which is one of the basic pillars of the international environmental regime*'. The other part we would like to keep and make sure it is covered as well in number 8. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments on paragraph 7, on the revision proposed by Norway? Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Norway, for their contribution. We are flexible and we can accept the contribution and the changes in the paragraph 'c' of 7. I see it struck, but please, uncross it if it is possible. In 'c' we can accept this proposal of deleting the last part of this amendment. We will have a greater problem nonetheless in deleting the last part of 'a', because we think, and not only we, but the entire international community believes, this is one of the basic pillars of the international environmental regime. It is not a question of UNESCO changing the perception of the world in this issue. We have to align our perception to what the international community has already decided as to continue to be relevant in this process. We are negotiating here. We are just stating what it is.

Therefore, Mr. President, I would like to have it reinstated in the text and I will request Norway to show flexibility in this regard. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Norway, can you accept?

The Delegation of Norway:

Could we give one last suggestion? What if we change 'international environmental regime' into 'UNFCCC' because we do believe there are some discrepancies in some of the Conventions, like the Convention on Biodiversity. So, we are not actually sure of the wording, but we can accept if we put UNFCCC in that regard. Would that be acceptable by Brazil?

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Brazil:

Yes Mr. President. I thank Norway for their flexibility and I am learning from her. Yes, we agree.

Chairperson:

Okay. Paragraph 7 has been approved. Now paragraph 8, China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. China supports the amendments made to paragraph 7. We also noted that in paragraph 8, some elements are duplications with paragraph 7, so we could merge those two paragraphs 7 and 8. 8 Could be put under paragraph 7.

Chairperson:

We cannot go back. You can revise paragraph 8 not go back to 7. Paragraph 7 is approved. Paragraph 7 has been approved, so if you have any comments or revision for paragraph 8 then you can make a proposal. Are there any comments on paragraph 8? China now, do you agree with paragraph 8?

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Our suggestion is that we can streamline paragraph 8 because some elements are duplication with paragraph 7. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? China, do you have any specific amendment to this paragraph?

The Delegation of China:

We think we can end the paragraph [...]

Chairperson:

Maybe we give you a few minutes then we come back to this paragraph.

The Delegation of China:

Okay, thank you.

Chairperson:

Paragraph 9, Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

There are no amendments for new paragraph 9, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections for paragraph 9? It is approved. Paragraph 10.

Rapporteur:

We have a minor modification in paragraph 10 crossing over '*also*' and '*request*'.

Chairperson

Are there any objections? It is approved. Paragraph 11, you have the floor, it is a new paragraph.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 11 reads: 'Also requests the World Heritage Centre, in parallel with the processes outlined in Paragraph 9, to convene a panel of experts drawn from the ad-hoc Working Group, World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other qualified experts in the field of climate science and heritage to meet by March 2022'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify that we have no funding for this. So, if interpretation, etc. would be required you would rely on external budgetary resources. That is the comment from the Centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

For paragraph 11 that Dr Rössler has just explained, are there any comments or objections? It is approved. Paragraph 12, now, Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Just to incorporate the point raised by Madam Director, perhaps the paragraph can just highlight the budgetary deficiency here and repeat the previous paragraph text 'Calls on States Parties to contribute financially to this end' at the end of the paragraph.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. Regarding paragraph 12 and the amendments included, we have doubts. For example, mentioning the impact of climate change and this potential OUV may disappear if it is going to be inscribed on the List. I think it is not related to the *Operational Guidelines*, but rather an issue of whether we should amend our Convention. We know that without OUV a site cannot be inscribed on the World Heritage List. We are still studying or reviewing this issue.

Secondly, it says whether a property is in Danger for whatever reason. If its OUV is threatened it is in Danger, the Committee should consider if it should be put on the List of World Heritage in Danger. We would think about whether an inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger can be favourable for the protection of this World Heritage property, rather than not consider putting it on the List in Danger just because it is impacted by climate change. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Mr. Chairman, did you give us the floor?

Chairperson:

Yes, I did.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you very much, I was a bit confused, I thought we were still looking at paragraph 11 with the amendment of the Rapporteur. Have we already passed paragraph 12?

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur proposed some wording and I wanted to know whether all of you agree with that or not.

The Delegation of Brazil:

We agree with the Rapporteur. I wanted to ask the Secretariat, we have requests in paragraphs 10 and 11 and again in 12 and maybe they can organise it in a better way after that, it is just cosmetic.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur will do that. Any other comments concerning the proposal of Ms. Rapporteur on paragraph 11? I see none. Paragraph 11 is approved. Let us move on to paragraph 12, are there any other comments? China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have expressed our concerns and doubts regarding this paragraph 12, especially the sub paragraphs a and b. Because we believe that those questions might put some doubts on the foundations of the Convention. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Do you have any other comments on paragraph 12? Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Chair. Just to clarify to the Delegation of China. These were questions that came up in the first policy in 2007 and they were repeated. If you look at page 8 paragraph 36, this is the exact quote from the Policy itself. Thank you.

Chairperson:

China, do you have any other comments?

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you Dr Rössler for the clarification. As it is mentioned in the documents and in paragraph 11, we have already requested the creation of a working group. Maybe it is not necessary any more to repeat the same content here in paragraph 12. Furthermore, we believe that for some issues the Convention has very clear stipulations and whether we should still raise the question again in this paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I want to clarify with China that you want to cross a, b and c and maintain 12. Did I understand right?

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We think we can keep the paragraph 12 but delete a, b and c. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Any comments? Please, you have the floor, China.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you Chair. At paragraph 12 I have mentioned paragraph 6 on the floor, we think all the paragraphs should be deleted. Under paragraph 11 we have adopted that we will establish an ad hoc working group to study the issue of implementing this suggestion. We think we do not need to keep paragraph 12.

Chairperson:

You mean to delete paragraph 12 altogether?

The Delegation of China:

Yes, thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this? I see none. This is approved. Let us continue with paragraph 13.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, now it would be new paragraph 12 I suppose. We have no amendments to the original text of the Decision in new paragraph 12 and new 13.

Chairperson:

There are no revisions on new paragraph 12?

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 12 and new paragraph 13 are as proposed in the text of the Decision.

Chairperson:

New paragraph 12 and new paragraph 13, do you have any objections? They are approved. Now, paragraph 14.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 14 reads: 'Also Recommends that the Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage be interpreted in consonance with the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement (2015) and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, and in conjunction with the Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015)'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you for giving us the floor. We would like to keep the original text, but if this amendment is possible to change the word '*in consonance*' to '*in the context of*'. If you could change the wording, we would be happy with that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Any objections to the changing of the wording? I see none. Okay it is approved. Rapporteur go ahead

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. New paragraphs, 15, 16 and 17 remain as per the original text of the Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Can we approve them? Yes. They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

These are all the amendments Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I remember paragraph 8. China, have you got a new wording for paragraph 8?

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much Chairperson. China suggests that to avoid duplication we just delete the whole sentence in quotes. The whole paragraph would read: 'Recalls Decision 41 COM 7 and reiterates the importance of States Parties undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC' — we delete from 'by' and we continue — 'and strongly invites all States Parties [...]' and the paragraph will remain as is. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. So, dear colleagues, now that we have been through the entire text, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7C adopted as amended ^[gave].

Dear colleagues of the Committee, with your permission, the Observers would provide some comments on this subject. Now Peru, you have the floor for two minutes.

The Delegation of Peru:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Peru would like to express its support to the amendments that have been made and approved aligning the document on better principles on climate change. To that end, we also consider that the document needs, as in fact has already been done, to bring out the basic principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities. This backs up the need to have support, technology transfer and knowledge following the indicated international principles. Given these are crucial elements for the implementation of the Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*, we consider these concepts need to be integrated to uphold the Outstanding Universal Value of the properties on the List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now France, you have the floor two minutes.

Délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La France remercie l'UNESCO, la présidence chinoise du Comité du patrimoine mondial, et le secrétariat de la Convention du patrimoine mondial pour son implication sur cet enjeu majeur. Consciente des risques importants pour certains sites et monuments, nous souhaitons rappeler notre engagement continue s'agissant de la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel menacé par le changement climatique, tant aux niveaux local et national qu'international. Nous saluons les initiatives en ce sens, en particulier la stratégie 2017 de l'UNESCO et l'initiative sur la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel contre le changement climatique, lancée par la Grèce à l'occasion du Sommet du climat du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies en septembre 2019, tout en rappelant qu'il est essentiel de ne pas dupliquer ou multiplier les initiatives et enceintes et de s'appuyer sur les structures performantes déjà existantes. Le changement climatique constitue une menace grave pour les biens du patrimoine mondial. Les sites naturels en particulier, les biens marins et forêts du patrimoine mondial constituent des puits de carbone et fournissent des services naturels essentiels pour la régulation de la menace climatique. Les sites culturels du patrimoine mondial également assurent la transmission des savoirs traditionnels qui favorisent la lutte et la résilience face au changement climatique. Le document d'orientation sur l'action climatique pour le patrimoine mondial souligne ces liens fondamentaux entre climat, biodiversité et patrimoine. Il constitue un cadre global pertinent pour orienter la prise de décisions aux différentes échelles de responsabilité. Il appelle en premier lieu à connaître davantage, pour chacun des biens qui font partie de la Liste, comment ces sites contribuent ou peuvent participer à la lutte climatique. À cet égard, soulignons le travail remarquable réalisé dans le cadre du programme marin avec le soutien de l'Office français de la biodiversité notamment, qui a permis une première estimation sur la capacité de capture de carbone par les biens marins du patrimoine mondial. Il nous apparaît indispensable de poursuivre ce travail pour traduire les principes en actions concrètes. Ainsi, nous souscrivons pleinement à la proposition qui est faite de préparer des directives destinées à faciliter la mise en œuvre opérationnelle du document d'orientation. Ce travail devra être mené en s'appuyant sur les expériences nationales et les gestionnaires des biens inscrits avec des objectifs concrets, comme par exemple le développement d'un mécanisme d'identification des sites vulnérables et très vulnérables à la menace du changement climatique, ou la réalisation d'évaluations régionales de la menace du changement climatique dans la mise à jour des plans stratégiques régionaux. Je confirme le soutien de la France pour accompagner le Centre du patrimoine mondial en lien avec les organisations consultatives et faire des propositions dans ce sens. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Qatar, you have two minutes for your intervention. Actually, Cuba now.

The Delegation of Cuba:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would like, first of all, to congratulate China for the organisation of this session of the World Heritage Committee in the extremely complicated context created by Covid-19. We would also like to inform on the importance of this Document and policies and especially concerning the focus on Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and the necessary measure for developing countries and particular for Small Island Developing States who are particularly hard hit by climate change.

We will have to fold this into our protection of heritage, and this is making this even a more difficult task to carry out. We have a National Strategy for fighting climate change which has 11 aspects. This Strategy can be organised around four or five of the major texts concerning protection of heritage. It is very important to take account of the need of Small Island Developing States both in terms of strategies and action plans. They need to be aligned with

what we are working on already in repositioning the needs and priorities of our Small Island Developing States as a priority for the organisation. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mexico, you have two minutes for your intervention.

The Delegation of Mexico:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks. As this is the first time Mexico is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you and at the same time recognise and express my country's gratitude to China in particular, and to the World Heritage Centre and the Secretariat for the work that has been done to ensure the organisation of this meeting.

We are very pleased with the *Fuzhou Declaration* and also with this Document that we have just seen adopted concerning policies on the impact of climate change on World Heritage sites. We reiterate Mexico's commitment which will go on making available what it can and cooperating with all those that are committed to the fight against climate change impacts on World Heritage, as we have already seen in the working parties that have been working on this Document.

We would also like, at the end of the day, to thank Brazil for its amendment which we support on point 7C. We agree with the changes that have been made and we consider them to be relevant to the general line of the Document and also of UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. We also find very relevant to include these points on the basic importance of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities, and not to exceed international contributions for the Convention and the Paris Agreement that have also been done on a voluntary basis and particularly for developing countries for which we need to see greater incentives for the transfer of technology and knowledge.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Gabon, you have two minutes for your intervention.

Délégation du Gabon :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président, de me donner la parole. Bonjour chers collègues. Monsieur le Président, comme c'est la première fois que le Gabon prend la parole à cette 44^e session du Comité du patrimoine mondial, je voudrais vous féliciter pour la manière avec laquelle vous conduisez nos travaux. Je voudrais aussi féliciter la Chine pour cette belle cérémonie d'ouverture qu'elle nous a offerte. Le Gabon félicite le travail accompli par le Centre du patrimoine mondial sur le document fourni ainsi que des efforts des organes consultatifs. Nous nous prononçons en faveur de cette résolution qui vise à préserver les biens du patrimoine mondial face aux impacts du changement climatique. Le Gabon accorde une grande importance aux questions du changement climatique. Il faut en effet renforcer la protection des biens face au changement climatique. Toutefois, pour le Gabon, nous devons rendre plus opérationnel nos décisions et nos engagements, comme l'ont dit mes chers collègues de l'Éthiopie et de la Chine, en faveur des pays en développement. Je voudrais terminer mon propos en soutenant également les propositions du Brésil ainsi que celles de la Norvège. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The floor is to Germany, you have two minutes for your intervention.

The Delegation of Germany:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. Since it is the first time Germany is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate China for the extraordinary organisation of the meeting and your excellent Chairmanship.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century. The effects of this are making themselves felt even today with an increase of severe floods, droughts and storms, which reminds us of mankind dependence to climatic conditions. Our neighbours the Netherlands and Belgium, and also Germany, are particularly affected at the moment. Huge floods have killed far more than hundred people within minutes and destroyed livelihoods in the last few days. Also, in these regions, live family members friends and colleagues of the Director of the World Heritage Centre and of myself.

I could not imagine beforehand how quickly we are at risk. We have to strengthen our goals, our commitments, as Common But Differentiated Responsibility addressing the impact of climate change. Anything else is dangerous not just for our heritage, but for all our lives. Therefore, I would like to thank all of those involved in updating this crucial Policy Document. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now Earth and Justice you have two minutes for your comment.

Observer-Earth and Justice:

Thank you very much. Allow me first to congratulate you and to thank all the hosts of this important meeting as well as the Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their hard work.

The real subject of the World Heritage Convention, our common heritage on this planet is beginning to disappear before our eyes, as we have just heard the last testimony about that. The credibility and relevance of the World Heritage Committee, of the entire World Heritage system is here at stake.

We appreciate the intention of the Document and welcome its guiding principles and goals. Two elements need to be clearly formulated: first, where the impact of climate change threatened a World Heritage property and its OUV, the State Party concerned must address the threat by aligning its action with the global pathway limiting warming to the level at which the OUV is most likely to be sustained, upon taking its fair share of the global emission reduction necessary to achieve that goal.

Second, as a number of States are not major or high per capita carbon emitters or might meet their fair share of climate mitigation obligation, the Document must — and it has been decided just now with the new resolution — recognise the Common But Differentiated Responsibilities of States Parties for the climate harm to whole World Heritage sites, and the corresponding obligations of all States Parties to undertake their fair share of global emission reduction, necessary to prevent climate-related harm to all sites in danger. This is consistent with Article 6.3 of the Convention requiring States Parties not to take measures which might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage situated on the territory of other States Parties.

A complete presentation of our position is accessible on the website, and we thank you for your attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I declare Item 7C closed. Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, we will take a five minute a technical break.

Dear colleagues, let us resume the session. We are lagging far behind and need to quicken our pace. According to Paragraph 190 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee shares a review annually on the state of conservation of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger. We have now reached this crucial part of our Agenda which is at the heart of the Convention.

Before we start with the examination of individual state of conservation report, I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler, the Director of the World Heritage Centre. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairperson. Documents 7A, 7A.add and 7A.add.2 present detailed reports on the state of conservation of the 53 properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

In addition to the individual reports, there are three general decisions: on the World Heritage properties in Iraq; on the World Heritage properties in the Syrian Arab Republic and on the World Heritage properties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In line with our 'rotation' practice, this year, we will start the presentation of the reports with cultural properties, in the following order of regions: Africa, Arab States, Asia – Pacific, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. The presentations will be made jointly by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

After the examination of cultural properties, we will proceed with the examination of natural properties, in the same regional order. There are no mixed properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Once we reach the relevant Agenda Items, and before the floor is given to the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies, it is the practice, Mr. Chairperson, that the Committee member who has requested a specific state of conservation report to be open for discussion is asked to present the reason why it felt important to discuss this report, in order to keep the debate focused on this issue.

I would also like to remind the distinguished Committee members that for all the state of conservation reports not open for discussion, as it is the practice, the list of these properties will only be read out by the Secretariat and Mr. Chairperson, you may then declare (if no objection) the relevant decisions all adopted.

As the distinguished members of the Committee have seen, we have proposed a specific timetable for the examination of the state of conservation reports, you will find it on the webpage, in order to take into account the various time zones of the experts concerned. I would therefore encourage you all to refer to this document, which will be updated each day on the World Heritage Centre's webpage, according to our progress.

Before concluding, I would also like to recall some of the Committee's Rules of procedure which you may want to apply on this Agenda item to facilitate the conduct of our debates:

Rule 22.5: 'The Chairperson shall put Committee members' questions to a State Party once at the end of the Committee's debate on the property'.

Rule 22.6 'States Parties shall not speak to World Heritage properties in their own territories, except at the explicit invitation of the Chairperson within the allowed time for their speech and in response to specific questions posed'.

Lastly, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to remind the distinguished Committee members about the very important Decision 35 COM 12E, which the Committee adopted at its 35th session in 2011, requesting States Parties to refrain from providing additional information regarding conservation issues after the deadlines indicated in the Operational Guidelines, as this information cannot be given the necessary attention for review by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies at such short notice. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for this very useful introduction. If there are no questions, we should now proceed with the examination of the first report. Dear colleagues, as was agreed yesterday during the adoption of our timetable, we will start the examination of Item 7A with the examination of the Draft Decision of the following state of conservation reports which are not open for discussion. These reports are 7A COM 10, Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls site proposed by Jordan; 7A COM 16, Hebron/AI-Khalil Old Town (Palestine); 7A COM17 Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) and 7B COM 135 Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine).

Consequently, I also open our Agenda Item 7B which will remain open until all 7B reports have been adopted as schedule. Please note that these Draft Decisions were the subject of intense negotiations and have been agreed upon by all the parties concerned. Furthermore, I would also like to inform that the consensus implies no statements or declaration be made after the adoption of these Draft Decisions.

I see no objections. Draft Decisions 7A COM 10, 7A COM 16, 7A COM 17 and 7B COM 135 are therefore adopted ^[gavel]. Thank you.

Now, we are reviewing cultural heritage in danger in Africa. As no cultural properties inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger located in the Africa Region were requested to be open for discussion. I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of such properties for which the decision can be adopted without discussion. Dr Rössler, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have the Old Towns of Djenné, Mali; Timbuktu, Mali; the Tomb of Askia, Mali and the town of Uganda Kings at Kasubi, Uganda. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gavel]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of cultural properties inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger located in the Arab States Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Abu Mena in Egypt; Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) in Iraq; Hatra in Iraq; Samarra Archaeological city in Iraq; then we have the general Decision on World Heritage properties in Iraq; the Archaeological Site of Cyrene in Libya; the Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna in Libya; the Archaeological Site of Sabratha in Libya; the Old town of Ghadames in Libya; the Rock Art Site of Tadrart Acacus in Libya; the ancient city of Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic; the Ancient City of Bosra, Syrian Arab Republic; the Ancient City of Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic; the Ancient Villages of Northern Syria, Syrian Arab Republic; Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din, Syrian Arab Republic; the site of Palmyra, Syrian Arab Republic; then we have the general Decision on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic; the Historic Town of Zaid in Yemen; the Old City of Sana'a in Yemen, and the Old Walled City of Shibam in Yemen. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the decision read out adopted ^[gavel].

I would like to ask whether any Observers Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the decision without discussion. Syria, you have the floor.

Délégation de la République arabe syrienne :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je tenais simplement à remercier la Chine pour l'organisation de cet événement très important dans des conditions difficiles, et également le Centre du patrimoine mondial, les organes consultatifs et le Secrétariat de l'UNESCO pour leur travail acharné. Je voudrais également remercier pour la coopération assidue entreprise pour la mise en place de la procédure DSOCR pour le retrait des sites du patrimoine mondial en Syrie

de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Je parle précisément dans cette liste à l'Ancienne ville de Bosra. J'appelle à la solidarité internationale pour que l'ensemble du monde et les États parties à la Convention de 1972 puissent aider la Syrie à relever ce défi, afin qu'on puisse préserver ce patrimoine de l'humanité et faire revivre ces sites qui figurent sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Merci encore à l'aide internationale et à l'aide apportée par le Fonds d'urgence du Centre du patrimoine mondial. Je remercie également la Fédération de Russie pour l'apport très important qu'elle nous fournit pour la préservation des sites du patrimoine mondial en Syrie. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Qatar, you have two minutes for your intervention.

Délégation du Qatar :

Bonjour, Monsieur le Président. Nous prenons la parole pour la première fois et je voudrais tout d'abord exprimer mes remerciements à la République populaire de Chine pour son travail, et aussi bien sûr au Centre du patrimoine mondial pour ses efforts exceptionnels. Je voudrais exprimer, au nom de l'État du Qatar, notre appréciation devant les efforts déployés pour protéger et sauvegarder le patrimoine mondial qui se trouvent dans la région des pays arabes, qui sont vraiment en danger. L'État du Qatar appuie tous les efforts du Centre du patrimoine mondial et des États membres qui ont l'objectif de sauvegarder et protéger le patrimoine mondial aux niveaux international et régional. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, World Heritage Watch you have two minutes for your intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to read a statement from a conservation architect from Aleppo. Mr. Chairman,

The statement reads: "I am Louay Dakhel, a conservation architect from Aleppo, my city that I did not leave during the last war period. After the war I witnessed restoration and reconstruction works that are not free from small and big mistakes, due to the lack of knowledge and the scarcity of funds, which often leads to resorting to the least expensive methods of restoration, which are generally in violation of international conventions of restoration. As a result, some of Aleppo's reconstructed buildings have become fake copies of themselves which do not embody the values of the property inscribed in the World Heritage List.

I believe that the best ways for the international community to contribute to stopping the distortion of this beautiful and ancient city and to proceed with its reconstruction in a

manner consistent with science, logic, the city's history and international conventions is the following:

- 1) Finance and conduct training programmes on restoration science for all actors working in this field.
- 2) Provide the necessary funding for restoration work, and stipulate that it be allocated in sequential stages in accordance with the sequence of implementation works on the ground in conformity with international covenants, to ensure that the distortion of ancient Aleppo landmarks does not continue.

Under prevailing stakeholder constellations, we call upon UNESCO and other United Nations bodies to find ways to work with civil society in Syria. We can offer a proposal for a mechanism for implementing the above-mentioned conditions guaranteeing donors that their funds are actually allocated for completing the restoration of ancient Aleppo in accordance with international conventions."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. Now let us proceed. I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of cultural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger located in the Asia Pacific Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan; the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam in Afghanistan; Nan Madol Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia, Federal States of Micronesia and the Historic Centre of Shakhrisayabz in Uzbekistan. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer Delegations would like to

express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the decision without discussion. Uzbekistan, you have the floor for two minutes.

The Delegation of Uzbekistan:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since I am taking the floor for the first time, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the government of the People's Republic of China for the excellent organisation of this Committee meeting despite the current challenges in the world.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to reiterate my government's commitment to work closely with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and this year we are greeting the International Advisor Report which will rule over the whole World Heritage sites that are located in Uzbekistan and we would like to appreciate the Decision of the World Heritage Committee on Shakhrisyabz. It is fully in line with the expanding relations between Uzbekistan and UNESCO as well as all other States Parties. We are fully committed to implement all the Decision's items and recommendations within the required time frame. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I ask to give the floor to the distinguish representative of Syria.

Chairperson:

Okay. Syria, you have the floor.

Délégation de la République arabe syrienne :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Merci à la Fédération de Russie, membre du Comité, d'intercéder en notre faveur en tant qu'Etat observateur. Je salue l'intervention qui vient d'être faite par ce représentant de la société civile. Je comprends son inquiétude grandissante, mais je me permets de dire que les informations qu'il nous a annoncées sont fausses et dénuées de toute valeur. Le fait d'être sur place ne donne aucune légitimité à formuler des allégations. Peut-être que cette personne, tout simplement, n'a pas lu les projets de décision sur les sites du patrimoine mondial en péril qui figurent dans les rapports du secrétariat du Centre du patrimoine mondial et des organes consultatives. Parce que, en fin de compte, il est démontré que les ateliers de formation sont maintenus, en coopération avec la Direction générale des antiquités et des musées (DGAM) qui a des experts nationaux de très grande qualité ; qu'un très grand nombre d'experts internationaux participent à la mise au point de ces études de la remise en état des souks d'Alep ; que la visite de ces souks est autorisée à tout expert international pour qu'il fasse sa propre expertise. l'ONU, représentée par le Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains et le Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement, c'est-à-dire les deux organes des Nations Unies pour le développement et les établissements humains, sont sur place. Il est vrai qu'on attend, très rapidement, la visite des experts des organes consultatifs et de l'UNESCO sous forme de missions réactives, pour justement ne plus permettre ce genre d'interventions à l'échelon mondial, qu'elles soient représentées par la société civile ou par d'autres intervenants. On appelle donc le Comité du patrimoine mondial à tout faire pour envoyer ces missions réactives, pour qu'elles fassent leur rapport et valident la légitimité des travaux réalisés par des mains d'experts syriens nationaux et l'assistance de l'expertise internationale en ce domaine. Les images, les pages Internet, les vidéos sur Internet et les vidéos représentant la très grande qualité de ces restaurations sont diffusées dans les médias internationaux et sur les réseaux sociaux. Merci, Monsieur le Président de m'avoir accordé la parole. Merci à la République de Chine d'être la plateforme de cette très grande réunion malgré les aléas du COVID-19.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, we are reviewing two properties proposed for discussion for cultural properties located in Europe and North America. I now give the floor to the Delegation of Hungary to present to the Committee the reason it requested to open the state of conservation of the World Heritage Medieval Monuments in Kosovo. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The World Heritage property, Medieval Monuments in Kosovo, was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2006. At the 43rd session held in Baku the World Heritage Committee decided to adjourn the debate on the state of conservation of the property at its next ordinary session. The reason why Hungary has opened this state of conservation report for discussion is that the presence circumstances are still not met for the debate on it. So, we respectfully suggest the Committee to adjourn the debate on this Agenda Item for its next ordinary session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Uganda would like to commend your leadership on the excellent manner in which you are guiding the work of the Committee. I have taken the floor to second the proposal by the distinguished delegate of Hungary. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My Delegation would like as well to second the proposal from the distinguished colleague from Hungary to adjourn the debate on this Agenda Item until the next ordinary session of the Committee. I would like as well to note that this adjournment was also undertaken in the last Committee's session and we believe that the Committee needs to take the same position this year too. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We understand that this Draft Decision touches on sensitive political issues that this Committee has preferred not to debate at our last session. We believe the same reasons of recommending postponement of this discussion on the 43rd session of the Committee remain valid today. For these reasons, we support Hungary's proposal and the debate on this site can be adjourned until the 45th Session of the Committee. Thank you very much Sir.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, the floor is to Ethiopia.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. In line with what was said by my previous colleagues, we also agree with the proposal by Hungary on this issue, as it was eloquently stated the same sensitivity prevails as during the last meeting, and therefore, we also support the postponement. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thailand wishes to join the emerging consensus in supporting the proposal by Hungary to postpone the debate on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I found that all of you are in favour of the proposal by Hungary. This Agenda Item is therefore adjourned to our next ordinary session. Let us proceed.

I would now like to invite Ms Réka Virágos of the Europe and North America Unit of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to present the next report on the state of conservation of cultural properties located in Europe and North America Region and open for discussion. You have the floor.

Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr Chair. I am going to present the case of Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. At the time of inscription in 2004 on the World Heritage List, it was considered that the major dock structures together with the commercial and cultural buildings of the Maritime Mercantile City of Liverpool were the supreme example of a commercial port at the time of Britain's greatest global influence and satisfied authenticity in terms of form and design, materials and to some extent, use and function. It was nevertheless recognised at the time that it was essential that future development within the property and its setting should respect the authenticity and transmit its OUV.

At the time of inscription, the World Heritage Committee requested, among other matters, that the height of any new construction in the property should not exceed that of structures in the immediate surroundings. The character of any new construction should respect the qualities of the historic area. Conservation and development to be based on an analysis of townscape characteristics and to be constrained by clear regulations establishing prescribed heights of buildings.

At its 36th Session, in 2012, and in its subsequent Decisions, the World Heritage Committee considered that the proposed major development project known as Liverpool Water constituted a potential danger to the property and noted that the implementation of this extensive development of 60 hectares stretching two kilometres along the water front and covering some twelve docks or former docks would irreversibly damage the attributes of OUV and conditions of authenticity and integrity that warranted its inscription on the World Heritage List as an outstanding example of World Mercantile Port City that was a major centre of innovative technologies and methods in dock construction and port management in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Therefore, at this 36th Session, in 2012, the Committee decided to inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger with the possibility of deletion from the World Heritage List should the Liverpool Water project be approved and implemented, as the development would fragment and isolate different dock areas instead of integrating them into one continued historic urban landscape, and with its clusters of tall buildings does not reflect nor evolve from the significant heritage structures present in the dock areas and would instead irreversibly damage them. The Liverpool Water project has been approved and is being implemented.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would now like to propose to give the floor to ICOMOS International to provide further important details.

Chairperson:

Yes, please, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. The OUV of the World Heritage property, Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City, has been under major threats for a decade. The Committee urged the State Party not to approve the Liverpool Water Scheme prior to approval of the outline planning consent and has repeatedly requested that the State Party:

- a) Reverse course and stop the granting of planning permissions which have a negative impact on the OUV of the property,
- b) Provide substantive commitments to limitations on the quality, location and size of allowable built form, and
- c) Link the strategic city development vision to a regulatory planning document.

Over the period since inscription on the World Heritage in Danger List, in 2012, the State Party has been provided with consistent advice through a comprehensive Reactive Monitoring process with eight Committee Decisions, two missions, advisory visits and multiple technical reviews of the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre Secretariat. Such advice was not designed to stop development, but rather to respect the commitment made by the State Party at the time of the inscription that new buildings would be sympathetic to the heritage status, and furthermore, to encourage appropriate development that promoted dynamic urban revival and a vibrant sustainable city while respecting the attributes of OUV.

Regrettably, the State Party has not complied with this advice and neither develop a tool and framework document in the form of an appropriate Desired state of conservation for removal document with related Corrective Measures, nor demonstrated either adequate commitment to limit the quality, size and location of allowable built forms, nor putting mechanisms in place to prevent continuing approval and implementation of projects that have been already acknowledged by the Committee to threaten the OUV of the property.

As a result, the Liverpool Water Scheme has proceeded without sufficient alteration and its components have been progressively approved and constructed, along with other major constructions, resulting in ever increasing irreversible loss of OUV of the property.

The recently approved stadium, right on top of a highly significant historic Bramley-Moore dock within the property, is the most recent example of a major project that is completely contrary to conserving the attribute that is essential to the OUV of the property, and that was approved against the explicit advice of the State Party's advisor, Historic England.

Furthermore, the State Party has consistently and unambiguously communicated its position that, because of obligation to comply with the national and local planning framework, there is no ability to put in place the repeatedly requested moratorium for new building project, nor to stop the approved Liverpool Water outline planning consent. Despite some successful adaptive reused of historic buildings in the centre of Liverpool, the implementation of the Liverpool Water project and other large-scale water projects in the waterfront and northern dock area of the property and its buffer zone have progressively eroded the integrity of the property. The State Party itself has indicated that there are no legal and instrumental means available that would allow the cessation or reversal of these changes.

This means that even with recent change of administration in Liverpool, there are no effective tools available to change, mitigate or reverse the current situation. The recent approval of the new stadium in Bramley-Moore dock, which has occurred during the time of the new City administration and without the State Party minister calling in the development for a public enquiry, serves to highlight the absence of a commitment to developing planning processes and decisions which would support conservation of OUV and signifies that there is no change of direction at national or local level.

Chair, when the property was inscribed, the OUV indicated and I am quoting verbatim: *'The main docks survive as water-filled basins within the property and in the buffer zone. The impact on the setting of the property of further new development on obsolete docklands is a fundamental consideration. It is essential that future development within the World Heritage property and its setting, including the buffer zone, should respect and transmit its Outstanding Universal Value. The height of any new construction in the property should not exceed that of structures in the immediate surroundings'*. The images, already showing on the screen, show that this is no longer the case.

Liverpool was inscribed on the World Heritage List as a Port City that had no parallels around the world. Its OUV inextricably linked to the integrity of the dock area. The dock area with its horizontal landscape of water-filled docks no longer retains sufficient attributes of OUV to demonstrate integrity and authenticity of these areas, and this in turn undermines the OUV of the whole property. There are serious deteriorations and loss of attributes that conveyed the OUV of the property to the extent that the property has lost very specific characteristics which determined its inclusion in the World Heritage List in conformity with paragraph 192.a of the *Operational Guidelines* as an 18th and 19th century port city that has no equal around the world.

For this reason, and with deep regret, both the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS propose the deletion of the property Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City from the World Heritage List. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for this presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a case in which none compliance would have led to the severe deterioration of the property's OUV. It is important to track back requests and recommendations by the previous Committee sessions starting at the 36th Session when the Committee acknowledged that the Liverpool Water development would irreversibly damage the attributes of the property, which was the basis of the Danger listing.

It is with great regret that the Desired state of conservation report was not adopted in time to prevent the erosion of the OUV. To the contrary, the State Party continued to approve large-scale projects, such as the Everton stadium, without taking into account the Committee's Decision 42 COM 7A.78 which called for substantive commitments to limitations on the quantity, location and size of allowable built form, in order to acknowledge the importance of protecting key attribute contributing to the OUV of the property.

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee, we believe the Draft Decision is appropriate. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before we adopt any decision on the state of conservation report of the World Heritage site of Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City, we have to take note of three very important aspects.

First, the challenges Liverpool as a global city has to face are not unique. Expectations of urban development, the question of high-rise buildings, the need to follow up international trends and the significant interest in tourism caused major challenges for the preservation of every single World Heritage property which is part of a world city. As my distinguished Russian colleague yesterday also pointed out, balancing between preservation and development is a very up-to-date issue of the Convention. Being on the World Heritage List cannot be equal with being unable to develop.

Second, if a State Party makes considerable efforts to maintain the aforementioned balance between conservation and development, then these actions should be highly respected. Hungary welcomes the steps taken by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to conserve the Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage site, in particular the efforts made by the city authorities to protect and enhance the heritage of the city of Liverpool, including within the World Heritage site and its buffer zone. It is highly appreciated that the skyline, tall buildings policy and the local plan are under development. And Liverpool City Council is strengthening its policy guidance for development across the World Heritage site and its buffer zone through additional supplementary framework documents. In addition, if our information is correct, there is a new city leadership which might bring further promising solutions to the conservation of the World Heritage property.

Third, we can all agree that mankind is facing an unprecedented threat in the form of the Covid pandemic. Even though we call this 44th Session an ordinary session, it is not. In fact, it is an extraordinary session in terms of all the limitations we have to deal with, in spite of the splendid organisation of our excellent host. Most of us are online with technical difficulties, with different time zones challenges, we are unable to interact with each other in person. We have a very narrow time frame for discussion. The Members of the Advisory Bodies could not possibly do their job on site due to travel limitations and the list goes on.

These difficult and extraordinary circumstances do not provide the right solid foundation for us, Committee members, to make the hardest of decisions, such as Danger listing and deletion. Making such a decision without the right kind of in person, in depth analysis and dialogue would go against the spirit of the Convention in itself.

In conclusion, Hungary suggests instead of deletion of the World Heritage site Liverpool Maritime Mercantile World Heritage City from the World Heritage List to discuss the state of conservation of the property on the next ordinary session, hopefully next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, allow us to thank ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for a very clear and well-structured analysis on the case at hand, and for rigorous technical reviews and reports in every Committee session since 2006 on the state of conservation of this property.

We are in our view presented with two significant challenges. On one side, the ongoing developments described over many years which led to the initial inscription on the list of World Heritage in Danger in 2012, and the documented and continuing loss of heritage attributes which constitute the OUV of the property. Many of these issues in themselves are certainly collectively challenges that justify discussion of possible delisting of the site. Not to mention significant uncertainties and threats concerning future development.

Secondly, permissions have been granted for totally new developments on the Bramley-Moore dock which only adds to the sum of issues pushing the necessity of taking this painful discussion even further. Already, when described in 2004, the Committee was very clear, recommending and requesting the State Party to pay particular attention to process of change in the property and its surroundings. In particular, to changes in use, new construction, heights and the importance of new structures respecting the historical context and complementing not dominating the World Heritage property and its unique attributes.

The first state of conservation decision was made two years after, on exactly the same topics as now, 15 years later, putting us in a very difficult situation. Committee decisions have been made at every session since. Extreme concerns were expressed in 2011. When the Committee had no choice but to include the property on the Danger List, in 2012, the State Party was warned from the possible deletion from the World Heritage List. In 2015, an advisory mission was at the property and all stakeholders recognised the serious concerns of the Committee and the threats to the OUV of the property. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, the State Party was again warned of the risk of possible deletion from the List. The decision in 2019 in which half of this Committee was part is crystal clear on its request and consequences in the absence of compliance.

We fully acknowledge the immense challenges related to the needs for socio-economic developments, and we are painfully aware also from our national experience of the conflicts that may arise when fully justified development needs come into conflicts with the OUV of our World Heritage properties. Yet, we truly believe that a delicate balance between the need to conserve and preserve World Heritage and the need for development can indeed be found. There are always alternatives and choices to be made to this end. We are fully convinced regrettably that the requirements of Paragraphs 191 and 192 of the *Operational Guidelines* are met. We cannot really describe the pain and the burden on our shoulders in this very moment giving our support to the Draft Decision and acknowledging our shared failure in safeguarding this property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Il y a toujours un problème dans les situations de ce genre. D'abord parce qu'enlever de la Liste, supprimer de la Liste, ce n'est pas facile. Cela signifie que le site va tomber dans l'oubli. Et ça signifie également autre chose, qui est que ceux qui, d'une certaine manière, vont contre l'intérêt de la protection des sites en danger, sur le terrain je veux dire, se sentent comme des vainqueurs. Il y a pas mal de situations de ce type. La Bosnie ne favorise pas cela. Il nous semble important de tenir compte de la liste des sites à protéger, d'encourager les pouvoirs locaux à s'engager davantage dans ce travail. Nous ne sommes pas favorables quant au retrait de la Liste. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Nigeria please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. Since Nigeria is taking the floor for the first time, I want to thank the Chair for taking this session through effectively and also thank China for hosting us. Thank you very much.

The position of Nigeria is actually not in favour of deletion of this historic site. We feel that, if the cultural World Heritage property is in danger, I think we need to support and engage with the different regimes to see that the necessary support and expertise is given to maintain the historic value of that place. I think it looks like the proposal by some States Parties to delete this item does not recognise the historic value attach to this place. Especially, not only for people in the United Kingdom but worldwide. Remember this is an international area where a lot of people come from different parts of the world and I think we want to maintain that attachment and especially with the present new regime that are willing to engage and review the situation. I think we should give them a chance.

Therefore, Nigeria does not support deletion of this property from the List. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Chair. Along with what was said by previous Delegations, we also do not support the deletion of this site from the List. We understand the concerns expressed by the experts, but we feel that it will be vindicating those who are wanting to remove sites to go along with this approach.

Generally, we are of the view that when countries are constructively engaging then punitive measures — this is in many ways a punitive measure — should not be introduced. We, therefore, given the exceptional circumstances also which we are in with this pandemic for this meeting, feel that it is too rushed a decision and that we can wait until the next session with regard to a very important and significant site for many of us as was mentioned by previous colleagues. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. It is difficult in times like these to address challenges but it is important to retain the credibility of the Committee and strengthen the Convention. Half a century of efforts have been undertaken to protect World Heritage. For a long time, the discussion of a site that has been on the World Heritage List in Danger for a long time has been postponed. And this inscription has given opportunities to several sites which have been facing serious difficulties.

However, in the case of Liverpool, this is a major site which represents important history in the 17th and 18th centuries. It has also been a leading site in terms of transport and port technology. In 2012, the Committee considered that the proposed development of Liverpool Waters was a potential danger. In 2017, the Committee expressed its concern for the implementation of this plan which initiated the granting of concessions for individual building through a Strategic Plan. In 2020, the ICOMOS assessment concluded that the plans would negatively affect the property inscribed, as well as the buffer zone which would have an unacceptable impact on its OUV. The urban development project in the northern water front must be addressed taking into account the OUV. This development is under way. In our understanding the impact on the OUV is irreversible and is well known.

The World Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies have made efforts with the State Party to ensure the implementation of guidelines. We believe that it is important to support the Decision. It is a sad day for the Convention and for the Committee. However, it is also essential to ensure that norms and guidelines are implemented and understood by all parties to this Convention because the World Heritage is at risk. It is up to our credibility as a Committee. Our credibility is at stake. Therefore, we support this Decision.

We understand the position of other States Parties. However, we consider that after so many years of considering, assessing and providing technical observations and advice for protecting the OUV, without them being implemented. This is a very difficult and sad decision the Committee must take. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President. In Brazil's intervention yesterday on Item 7 of the Agenda, we expressed our concern that considering the very exceptional circumstances that the whole world is facing presently, these issues with far-reaching or irreversible consequences should be avoided at this time, but without creating any precedent for any other future session. Removing a site from the World Heritage List is exactly the kind of decision which has only been taken twice before in the history of the World Heritage Convention. Without getting into the technical aspects of the conclusion, we would not recommend at this stage that this decision of excluding Liverpool be taken during this current Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Oman would like to also add its voice to those member States who ask for postponement of deleting this site of the World Heritage List without going into details for the delisting. But I think all countries supporting this Decision have said what was needed. So, we would like to postpone this for the next meeting. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ms. Réka Virágos or ICOMOS do you have anything to say?

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The Secretariat just would like to reiterate very shortly that the State Party was supported throughout since the Danger listing to develop a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The advice that was given was very consistent and clear and it pointed out that prior to developing any detailed documents for revision of the legal framework for the property's management, the State Party should create a commitment and a strategy for the future of the property. I would like to propose to give the floor to ICOMOS for further detail. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Please, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS would like to take the opportunity to provide some response and clarification in relation to the points made by the distinguished delegate from Hungary and a number of other Delegations.

ICOMOS would emphasize that the Maritime Mercantile City of Liverpool was not inscribed as a historic urban centre. It was inscribed as the last intact port city of that period in the world. And the docks and the water front were the fundamental characteristics that underpinned that inscription.

That characteristic — visual quality and the sky of the waterfront, the horizontality — has been lost. As you can see from the images of the introductory slides, there are large towers on the waterfront and the most recent approval for the proposed football stadium would infill one of the most historic docks. And it is the water in the docks that are emphasised in the statement of OUV.

ICOMOS would highlight also that, while there is a new city leadership, in fact, the new dock on this site of the new stadium at Bramley-Moore has been approved during the time of the new administration, and, in fact, during that time, the national minister of the State Party had the opportunity to call in the development and to put this property and its conservation on a different trajectory and that opportunity was not taken.

ICOMOS notes the commentary about this being an extraordinary session, but ICOMOS assures the members of the Committee that there is no absence of dialogue, there is no absence of a thorough Reactive Monitoring process undertaken in accordance with Paragraph 169 of the *Operational Guidelines* that has been going on with the State Party in an attempt to change what has been happening at this property for more than a decade. It is a matter of great regret, but over that period, components of the approved scheme have been implemented including the high-rise buildings which are in the wrong place. There are on the waterfront rather than elsewhere in the larger city.

The adverse impact of these constructions such as those at Princes Dock have been put before the Committee and set out clearly in technical reviews and in multiple state of conservation reports. It has previously been accepted by the Committee that there has been an accumulative loss of attributes of OUV in the dock area with this horizontal landscape of waterfilled docks were an essential part of the property when it was inscribed a port. The significant loss of attributes in the dock sadly means that the OUV is no longer justified. The point has been reached where the property no longer warrants inclusion on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have heard the clarifications of the Advisory Body. I remember very well that they have pointed out that, for this project, for this heritage, the OUV does not exist anymore. This actually implies how we should proceed in accordance with the Convention's spirit. Because when one heritage is on the World Heritage List but now the OUV does not exist anymore. How can we still keep it on the List? This is very disturbing for us. This is the first point.

Second point, in spite of the pandemic, we noted that, in spite of some actions taken by the State Parties, there still were other factors or measures taken which had a negative impact on the OUV of this World Heritage property. Therefore, in order to better promote the preservation of the World Heritage properties, the Committee should make a decision which is in line with the Convention. Therefore, we support the Decision included in the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. Is it possible perhaps to hear from the concerned State Party, the United Kingdom?

Chairperson:

Okay. United Kingdom you have the floor with the permission of the Committee.

The Delegation of United Kingdom and Northern Ireland:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The United Kingdom is incredibly grateful to the government of China for hosting this Committee meeting and we wish you and the historic city of Fuzhou every success in your important work in the next two weeks. I really want to say to the Committee that my government remains absolutely committed to the principles of the World Heritage Convention. We see that as such an enduring beacon for excellence in conserving and in promoting the world's most important cultural heritage sites.

Mister Chairman, as you will know from its sister City Shanghai, Liverpool's contribution to the maritime heritage of the world stands in comparison to any of the great port cities around the world. I believe so strongly that it continues to merit its recognition under the Convention. It would be a huge loss if it were to be deleted from the World Heritage List today.

I have listened really carefully to the discussion among Committee members over the last hour or so and I would say this. Over the last ten years, the property has been protected, it continues to be protected, and actually not just protected but enhanced. I was there myself just a month or so ago and it is a city where they are investing so much in the culture and the heritage. Where they feel so strongly about the importance of that and they understand what a beacon they are around the world.

I believe all members of the Committee have received a copy of a publication which is entitled *Liverpool, a World Heritage city*, and you only have to look really briefly at that report, to show, to demonstrate what I am saying. The huge investment the city of Liverpool has made in their culture and in their heritage over the last decade.

As other speakers have said, the city is now under new leadership. I have met with the new mayor of Liverpool, she was elected just two months ago and already she has a compelling vision, she acts passionately about protecting and enhancing the heritage of Liverpool that includes in and around the World Heritage site.

Now, Liverpool City Authorities face some really similar challenges to many great cities, who are managing World Heritage sites in urban settings all around the world. I know some of these will be discussed in this Committee this week. We have to think very carefully how we best reconcile economic regeneration and the vital work of heritage conservation. In this area of the city which the Committee is looking at, I do not know how many members of the Committee have been there, but it is an area of long-standing economic deprivation. And the city has been making huge effort to create jobs, to develop the economic prosperity and fortunes of the area. To give its citizens hope, better quality of life, better living environment which is accessible, healthy, well-designed and welcoming, not neglected or derelict. The Northern Docks were and have been well before the site was inscribed in 2004, there were beautiful buildings but they were no heart to them. The Draft Decision before the Committee focuses on the Liverpool Water development which was the proposal which triggered the delisting in 2012. I have to contradict the words of the ICOMOS's speaker [...]

Chairperson:

Please mind your time.

The Delegation of United Kingdom and Northern Ireland:

[...] the two buildings that were proposed a decade ago, I cannot emphasise enough they will never be built. ICOMOS seems to want to punish the people of Liverpool for a perceived weakness in our national planning framework, but we are looking at that planning framework and it will be coming to Parliament later this year. We want to strengthen all our World Heritage sites.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of points in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, if I can very quickly mention them, which I think all Committee members need to bear in mind when casting their vote. The guidelines say: 'There has to be evidence that the property has deteriorated to a point [...]

Chairperson:

You are over time, now. You can have one minute.

The Delegation of United Kingdom and Northern Ireland:

The guideline says, 'There has to be evidence that the property has deteriorated to the point where it has lost its characteristic irretrievably'. That is not the case, these characteristics have not been lost. Paragraph 169 says Reactive Monitoring is foreseen in the procedures for the event of deletion. Mr. Chairman, there has been no Reactive Monitoring, the last mission to Liverpool was in 2011, ten years ago. It would be a disaster if the Committee had to enforce the decision of deletion for only the third time in its history without having even visited. I echo the invitation of the mayor of Liverpool for any member of the Committee to visit Liverpool in person and see first-hand how the city's heritage is being protected and promoted. Thank you.

Chairperson:

It is time. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. I just would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of ICOMOS, to clarify and respond to some of the matters raised by the State Party of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. Can I begin by saying that the deteriorations relate to the characteristic visual quality and scale of the water front that have been lost. And the impact cannot be compensated or offset by improvements elsewhere in the property. It may be that not all the tall buildings, the numerous tall buildings that could be possible under the Liverpool Water Scheme would be built, but tall buildings have been built has shown on the screen in front of the Committee. The construction of tall buildings on the water front, the infilling of docks, represents the worst possible approach to new development in this site. ICOMOS is not opposed to new development, it is opposed to the new development that has been approved and is being built.

Can I say, with respect to the Reactive Monitoring and the reference to the *Operational Guidelines*, that Reactive Monitoring is a comprehensive process that involves the Committee as well as the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Reactive Monitoring is not just or even necessarily a mission. Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines* indicates that Reactive Monitoring is reporting by the Secretariat, other sectors of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat. There has been a decade of advice to the State Party, including eight Committee's Decisions, two missions, advisory visits, and multiple technical reviews.

ICOMOS considers the Committee, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory bodies have made exceptional efforts to encourage the State Party to set out a Desired state of conservation for the removal document and to halt the adverse impact of the gradual implementation of the Liverpool Water Scheme.

Unfortunately, the recommendations of the previous missions have not been fulfilled. Decisions of the Committee have not been complied with and approval and construction of inappropriate development in the dock precinct, which is so critical of the characteristics that underpin the OUV of this property, have continued. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, you have the floor. Try to be concise.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving the floor to Norway again. We have sympathy with the statement presented by the State Party. But nothing we have heard in this discussion has convinced us that our initial assessment was incorrect. We are not denying the exceptional circumstances due to Covid-19, but developments have happened anyhow. This is not a new case not a surprise to anyone. Dialogue and consultations have taken place and we are confident that all due procedures and principles to that end are fulfilled. ICOMOS is very clear. A parallel could be for all the species were lost in a natural property. Accumulative and overall effect on the property as a whole are undisputable in the past present and future. We reach a point where it is too late.

Our Decision 42 COM 7A.7 from the last session has not been followed up. The State Party has continued to permit new individual constructions that have negatively impacted the attribute contributing to the OUV of the property to such an extent that the property has lost characteristics which supported its inclusion in the World Heritage List.

And, in addition, we have crystal clear evidence that the approved plans in the Bramley-Moore dock, if implemented, would have a completely unacceptable major adverse impact on the authenticity and integrity, and therefore the OUV of the property. Liverpool itself even recognised UNESCO's concern that the stadium development will have a major adverse impact on the authenticity, integrity and OUV of the property. A Reactive Monitoring mission will not change any of the developments that have already taken place. And it is not foreseen as a requirement in the *Operational Guidelines*.

We will possibly ask ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre to elaborate on the processes that have been undertaken with regard to consultation. That said, we reiterate our full support to the original Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank You, Mr. Chair. We understand how painful this decision can be for a State. Here, we are not talking about a developing country. As Norway mentioned, all countries are affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. We have a doubt, because this is a debate on a decision, is there an alternative? Unless we are mistaken, there is no alternative to the Decision. We have to decide yes or no, nobody has put forward any alternative. None of the members of the Committee have put forward an alternative. Therefore, we have a doubt as to how the decision is going to be taken, since there is only one text and no alternative unless I am mistaken.

On the other hand, this is not just a technical discussion which we will be having a lot of during this Committee. Here, what we are talking about is the OUV which has disappeared. What we are affirming here is that the OUV does no longer exists. We also need to take into account what was mentioned by other States. That is to say that if the property was to be removed from the List it would be very sad, because, as Brazil has mentioned, there have been lots of other opportunities for this to happen in recent years. Therefore, we are not sure whether what we are discussing at the moment is the approval of the Decision without any alternative. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other Committee members that would like to take the floor? Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Chair, we just heard the intervention of the State Party of the United Kingdom and the economic revitalisation that we wish to see for the great City of Liverpool. However, as it has been clearly said by ICOMOS, the new developments are going to undermine the OUV of the property as well as set a wrong precedent for other similar sites in urban landscape. It is a regrettable decision, however, collectively, as a Committee, it is our mandate to protect our World Heritage site, as well as to maintain the integrity of this Convention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can.

The Delegation of Australia:

My apologies, we were having trouble with the audio. Having listened to the other Committee members and recognising the important challenges on this property outline by the Advisory Bodies and also acknowledging the other Committee members comments, on the challenges of irreversible decision on delisting being made at this unusual online meeting, with this in mind, Australia accepts the view that a decision on the property should be considered at the next session of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. China believes that each inscription is difficult. So, we need to make a very prudent and careful decision. So, I would like to invite the Advisory Bodies to tell us whether there are Corrective Measures to save this property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. Can I say that the Reactive Monitoring process has been applied to this property for many years, and there have been multiple attempts on both sides to achieve a Desired state of conservation and the issue that has always come up is that the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies quite properly required that there be significant changes to the approved outline planning consent for the Liverpool Water Scheme.

What that means is reductions in the building volume and height, relocation of the buildings' footprints, identification of significant views and major changes to the amount of buildings. At each stage the State Party comes back with a set of documents and proposals that said that these things will be addressed in future planning documents, meanwhile the State Party continues under the United Kingdom's law, as it was explained very clearly before the Committee at previous sessions, to deal with individual applications that are lawfully made within the framework of the outline planning consent. These have been progressively approved and some have been constructed as shown on the screen.

So, the problem is not a problem of dialogue, the problem is not having fulfilled a Reactive Monitoring process as outline in the *Operational Guidelines*, the problem is that there is an unwillingness to move the large development away from the water front and there is an unwillingness to put in empirical measures that downscale the approved development in a way that is consistent with the OUV of the property.

This is not a question of a new administration and that is sadly revealed by the most-recent approval this very year of the new stadium at Bramley-Moore dock. ICOMOS sincerely wishes that it was otherwise, but with all due respect, what has happened with this property is that the State Party and the local authorities have made their intent very clear. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The floor is to South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

We are withdrawing our request to take the floor.

Chairperson:

Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. Once again, I would like to align with the proposal put forward by Australia that we postpone this discussion on Liverpool for the next session, so that we get more information and issues on this Reactive Monitoring be addressed and opportunities be given to the different parties and, especially, the State Party to reach out and engage more with the World Heritage and various experts. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chair. As we said it is very important to give the discussion another year. It is very important also that we listen to the State Party with a new administration and one year is not long. Therefore I think it is very crucial to give some time for further study this file. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I also join those who said that this issue should be postponed to the next meeting, maybe a mission on the ground in between can be undertaken? We are taking an exceptional and drastic measures of

delisting which is very rare. We feel that all precautions should be taken and we feel, at the minimum, that an on-the-ground mission should be taken. And therefore, one year is not too long.

If indeed, after that mission and the consultation with the State Party, nothing can be done to save the property then we take a decision. We are not comfortable at all of making a decision now. We feel that an on-the-ground mission would give us more confidence, as it is a drastic decision. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. I am sorry. We would like to ask our distinguished colleagues what more information we can possibly ask for, how much more evidence do we need? What would we get from postponing the discussion for a full year? Our opinion is that the evidence we have been provided with over many years is crystal clear. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Bosnia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Un an, ce n'est pas long. Plusieurs années, ce n'est pas long. Perdre une valeur exceptionnelle ou perdre un site important, la Bosnie-Herzégovine considère qu'il faut prendre plus de temps et engager davantage des experts locaux, les experts du pays, pour qu'ils nous donnent aussi leur avis. C'est cela, notre décision.

Chairperson:

South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair. We have been listening quite carefully to all Delegations and inputs and I think we would want to be on the side of patience. These are extraordinary times, the meeting itself, as one Delegation said, is extraordinary. We are meeting in a virtual setting.

We have listened carefully to the report made by the Secretariat and ICOMOS. There are questions they have asked and it is quite important that United Kingdom, the State Party, should be afforded an opportunity again, probably to come back to us and respond to some of the questions that have been raised.

It is important that we balance the need to ensure that there is development but also the integrity of our own processes. So, many people will be looking at the decision that you are making on this matter. Of course, to protect the integrity of our process, the framework that guides and governs our work but also afford the concerned party ample opportunity to respond. It would be sad to take such a drastic decision at this time when the world is facing an unprecedented challenge with this matter of Covid-19.

So, a proposal has been made that we defer a decision on this matter, we give the concerned party one more chance to give us some assurance that we are willing to attend to their concerns that they raised. And I think one year, chairperson, if we work on this for so many years, one more year for us to make a decision would not depart from the mission that we wish to pursue.

We support those who are proposing that we defer it, that we give the concerned party one more chance, so that when we come to a decision we can clear our conscious that we did our best. Remember, there are many other properties that we may have to deal with. We have to make sure that, as States Parties, when we take such drastic decisions, we can sleep comfortably with. I am not saying let us not accept the decision, the delisting, all I am saying is let us give this decision one more chance. Give the State Party an opportunity to make whatever representation that they wish to do. So that when we take it in next time, we are sure that it is the right decision. This is South Africa's input on this matter.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I think this is the last speaker for today. We have no time for the Draft Decision. I suggest that we leave it here. Let us come back with a consensus tomorrow. I encourage some consultation and coordination among colleagues. With a full agenda, we come to the end of our meeting today.

Let me remind you that we are somehow behind our schedule, I therefore call upon your cooperation to respect the time limit of your intervention and to be concise and straight forward. Notably, I ask you to advance our programme, upholding the spirit of consensus and trying to find a solution and compromises to tough questions.

I thank you for your effort. We meet tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time. For Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am Paris time. Thank you have a good rest.

The meeting rose at 3:38:42 pm.

THIRD DAY – Monday 19 July 2021
THIRD MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, nice to see you all again. Before we proceed with the Agenda Item, I would like to inform you that we just had the third meeting of the Bureau. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the progress of the work of the Committee. I recall that we had Hungary started the examination of the state of conservation report on Liverpool before stopping our discussion due to time constraints. I closed the meeting asking Committee members to consult with each other, so as to move forward today with a consensual text.

In addition, as you can see on our schedule for today, once we have concluded the examination of the report on Liverpool, we will only have two other properties to examine: Salonga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Selous Game Reserve in the United Republic of Tanzania. In this regard, in case we finish the examination of these two items earlier than 3:30 pm Paris time, we will proceed with the examination of Item 7B reports, initially foreseen for the 21st of July and for which amendments have already been submitted and shared.

It means that we will examine Item 7B.1 on the Royal Place of Abomey, Benin, and 7B.118 on the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela, Ethiopia, if today's time allows.

The Secretariat will publish a revised calendar for the examination of state of conservation report supporting them and upload it to its website. If you do not have any objections, we will proceed this way.

Furthermore, I would like to stress, once again, the importance to respect the time allocated for the interventions and that those be focused and concise. I count on your support in this regard. In addition, and in line with Rule 22.6 during the examination of state of conservation report, in case a Committee member requests that the floor be given to an Observer State Party concerned, I will ask the Committee member to formulate a clear question you want to put forward to the State Party. We will ensure that they strictly respond to it and respect their speaking time.

Last, for practical and technical reasons, I want to inform you that the established working group on the Budget shared by Ms. Zoya Kritskaya will be slightly postponed from 4:30 to 5:30 pm instead of 4:00 to 5:00 pm from 21st until 23rd of July. If there are no objections, we will then proceed this way. Thank you.

Dear colleagues, as you know we have started yesterday, the examination of the state of conservation report on Liverpool during which we have heard extensive and in-depth discussions. A number of Committee members have expressed divergent views. We also heard from the Observer State Party of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at the invitation of a Committee member. However, due to time constraints I had to close the meeting and ask the Committee members to consult with each other so as to move forward today with a consensual text.

I would like to know whether there has been any progress in consensus or any comments.

Hungary, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary would like to thank all States Parties taking a position on this item yesterday. It seems that the Committee is divided in this matter. This adds to the reasons why Hungary reiterates its suggestion in line with Rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure to adjourn the debate of this Item to the next ordinary session in 2022. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? Mali, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs de délégation, puisque nous prenons la parole pour la première fois, la délégation permanente du Mali auprès de l'UNESCO voudrait féliciter le Gouvernement de la République populaire de Chine pour l'accueil de cette 44^e session du Comité du patrimoine mondial et pour la pleine réussite de la cérémonie d'ouverture. Je voudrais également vous féliciter personnellement, Monsieur le Président, pour la conduite remarquable de nos sessions. Pour le Mali, le retrait d'un bien culturel de la Liste du patrimoine mondial est une décision grave, extrêmement importante pour le Comité. Nous pensons que de telles décisions pourraient se faire après une mission de suivi sur le terrain. L'État partie étant disponible pour de telles missions, je pense qu'il serait judicieux de lui porter ce projet. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Has China the floor?

Chairperson:

Yes, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Good morning, dear colleagues. We have worked so hard yesterday and we would like to look forward to a very fruitful discussion today. I was quite surprised by what our Hungarian colleague said, to postpone. This session is not an extraordinary session. We want to make it clear. I said it once and I say it again. This session is the statutory 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee, this is not an extraordinary session.

If we have to take decisions, we have to take decisions. We cannot shy away from our responsibilities. We work under very difficult time. We have waited for two years for this session. We have already had two extraordinary sessions. I would like to plead to all colleagues to shoulder our responsibility, to show the integrity of the Committee. We cannot shy away from our responsibility; the world is looking at us. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Nigeria please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. I appreciate and thank you very much for the chairing of the sessions. I want to align with Hungary that at the moment we have divisions. There are those who are against and those who are for. I think, in order to save time, I support that we postpone this to the next standard session. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much and good morning to all. We believe what the Ambassador of China said, and rightfully, this is as statutory meeting and we have a responsibility to take a decision. For us, the decision should be that we cannot delist this very important heritage site until we have a Reactive Monitoring mission on the ground. Based on that, we will also ask the State Party to provide us a report. And on that basis, when we will have a complete full picture, we can move ahead with whatever decision we make.

Delisting is a very serious and unprecedented move. When we take such moves, it has to be surrounded with all the precautions and all the necessary procedures that have to be fulfilled. We are not saying it should be postponed, at least as far as we are concerned, but we are saying there should be a Reactive mission. The State Party should submit a report and on that basis we can, at the next session, take an informed decision. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bahrain please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We fully support the decision expressed by China with regard to the need to take a decisive decision on this matter and other subjects according to the agenda. We have listened carefully to the concerns of the members of the Committee who were calling for a postponement of the debate. Our position is that the requests have been sent to the State Party since 2012, since the Danger listing. These are not recent requests. The State Party had many years to comply with those requests, in particular the drafting of the state of conservation report.

This implies that the State Party would have submitted local plans, revised supplementary planning documents and the majority of neighbourhood master plans, and the tall building skyline policy. Unfortunately, none of these have been agreed with ICOMOS over the past couple of years. We do not know exactly what is further required from the State Party since all the recommendations and requests have been repeated year after year since the Danger listing. They can clearly verify what is needed.

ICOMOS have shown us two images on the screen today that showed what I believe is the water front during the year of inscription and a recent image. And I think the images speak for themselves as to the transformation of the water front of that property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. Allow us first to echo the colleagues from China and Bahrain. The State Party had the possibility to develop Liverpool without compromising the OUV. The State Party has made many choices in this case which were not in compliance with previous Committee's decisions and expert advises and guidance. Dominating and high-rise buildings are there already as we can see on the screen. Plans have not been halted or reversed. Individual permissions are continuously given.

Norway takes on its full responsibility as a Committee members, and we cannot leave this difficult matter to the next Committee. Today, we feel great concern for the credibility and the very future of this Convention. The world is watching us now, as members of the Committee, we have taken a great responsibility on behalf of the 173 States Parties observing us in this very moment. It is our obligation to safeguard the integrity of this Convention and to protect and conserve the properties on the list.

It also means that these are our responsibility to make difficult decisions when the OUV is threatened or lost. We have such obvious evidence in front of us. And Liverpool itself has even recognised the major adverse impacts. Yet, it chose to go ahead with the development. If you fail to follow up on our decision from Baku, in 2019, we have to ask ourselves what will happen to the credibility of the Convention and of the World Heritage Committee.

On this specific case what could possibly be achieved by giving this difficult decision to the sessions coming afterwards? We heard the State Party yesterday, no concessions were given. We had two extraordinary sessions last November and March, we agreed on the modalities and modus operandi for this ordinary session, as explained by our distinguished colleague from China.

We are painfully aware that we are deviating from experts' advice in an increasing number of decisions. At least, we could hope to avoid also deviating from our own decisions. The world is watching and it leaves us in a very, very difficult position and we see no other way out than asking for a vote by secret ballot. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Notre position reste inchangée, à savoir ne pas retirer de la Liste Liverpool. C'est vrai que ça dure depuis quelques temps, c'est vrai qu'il y a eu des séances extraordinaires, c'est vrai que le monde nous regarde, mais nous ne devons pas encourager ceux qui oublient les principes fondamentaux que nous sommes censés défendre. C'est notre position. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr Chairman. We take the floor on this subject with great concern but at the same time with great responsibility. We share the thoughts many States Parties have already expressed. This is a special meeting, it is a different meeting, it is an unprecedented meeting, but it is an ordinary meeting at the end of the day. As a member of the Committee, we have the responsibility to take decisions in harmony with our guidelines and this Committee's usual way of work.

We are close to the 50th anniversary of the Convention and we need to strengthen our commitment and our responsibility that we all have as Committee members and members of the Convention. We believe that the evidence is palpable and the damage to the property is unfortunately irreversible. We can see how buildings have changed and indeed transformed the characteristics of the site.

We could perhaps ask ICOMOS and see if they can clarify their opinion as to the reversible or irreversible nature of the damage to the site to begin with, and then support Norway's proposal to see how, as a Committee, we can make progress in those discussions and have a secret ballot on this point. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, a request for a secret ballot has been moved by the Delegation of Norway. As you all know, according to Rule 41 on the conduct of a secret ballot, a decision shall be voted on by

secret ballot whenever two or more States Parties share the request. Therefore, I would like to ask whether any member of the Committee wish to speak to support this request of the vote by secret ballot. Just now, Guatemala seconded this proposal, this move. So, any other comment? Spain, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We have a doubt that has not been clarified. First of all, if there is going to be a vote, it seems to me that it would be the thing to do, but we are not sure on what we are voting on, for or against the report, because we are not aware of any amendments that have been made unless the Secretariat has proposed them.

First of all, it is important to see if we have an alternative, at least officially speaking, to the proposed report. We do not know really if this is the right way to propose to be for or against the report because we have not had the possibility of voting on an amendment which would change the report somehow. Have there been some problem, has something been sent out that Spain has not received? While we are looking at different alternatives, we do not seem to have an alternative to the report that was proposed. The vote will have to be for or against the report and not for or against some alternatives we are not aware of.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Uganda, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. I am taking the floor to support the proposal by Norway to vote by secret ballot on this matter. I thank you.

Chairperson:

The floor is now to Norway to clarify on what the vote will be on.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. I think we would like to ask the advice of the Secretariat in regards to the questions asked by the distinguished colleague from Spain. And also, to ask for clarification from the legal adviser on this matter. To our knowledge, there have been no amendments proposed to this case, but we have to verify that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Since the request for a vote by secret ballot has been seconded, we will therefore proceed to the vote. The question will be drafted by the Secretariat. Just give us a few seconds to clarify this. I give the floor to Dr Rössler, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is in line with Rule 41 for the secret ballot. You heard that three States Parties requested voting by secret ballot. I can explain the procedure but first is the question from Norway on the drafting of the question itself. I presume it would be: "Are you in favour of the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.34?" knowing that we have not received any amendments. But this needs to be also clarified with the legal adviser and I am sure that my colleagues are already in contact with the legal adviser.

In the meantime, would you like me to explain the process? I also think that you cannot go to other interventions when we are in a voting procedure.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, I wanted to know whether this is properly understood?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. What was just explained by the Director of the World Heritage Centre is corresponding to our understanding of the situation, yes, but we would also like to wait for the clarification from the legal adviser. Thank you. And also, a confirmation from the Rapporteur that no amendment has been submitted, we have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Chair. We have received no amendments for this Decision Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, just wait for a moment, the legal adviser is working on it as we speak.

Legal adviser:

Mr. Chairman, good morning or afternoon to you. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes.

Legal Adviser:

Mr. Chair, I do not believe there is a particular legal question that is asked at this stage, but I can clarify the situation in the same terms as was clarified by Madam Rössler as the Secretary of the Committee.

The Committee is currently discussing a Draft Decision, 44 COM 7A.34, and it needs to make a decision in this regard. No amendments have been proposed and therefore my understanding is that the proposed voting would be on the Draft Decision that is currently before the Committee. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I remain available to reply to any other questions. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I will give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you also to our legal adviser for the explanation. Let me just explain the process now. I would like to recall Rule 39 regarding counting of votes which states that '*State members present and voting shall mean State members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Therefore, States Parties abstaining from voting shall be regarded as not voting*'. Furthermore, Mr. Chair, allow me to underline that according to Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure: '*Decisions of the Committee on matters covered by the provisions of the Convention shall be taken by a majority of two thirds of its members present and voting*'.

I also wish to recall the voting arrangements which have been approved by correspondence by the Committee on the 21st of May 2021 as per Decision 15 EXT COM 3 for the conduct of a secret ballot. The secret ballot or voting was requested by three States Parties, member States of this Committee. Once the secret ballot has been requested and in order not to disrupt the plenary meeting and the continuation of the examination of the subsequent Agenda Items, the ballot will be held in the morning of the day following. Tomorrow, we have no session, then it will be, if I am not mistaken, let me check my agenda, on the 21st. They will put the calendar on the chat.

Members of the Committee will have to ensure that one of their representatives in Paris is available to come to UNESCO Headquarters to vote according to a schedule drawn up by the Secretariat following the English alphabetical order of the member States of the Committee. You see it now on the screen. Room V which is the room in front of Room I will be provided by the Secretariat with a ballot box and a voting booth. Each member of the Committee will be given an envelope and a ballot paper on arrival in the voting room. Two tellers from among the Delegation of the Committee members who can be physically present need to be appointed by the Chairperson with the assistance of the Secretariat. The two tellers together with members of the Secretariat shall be present during the voting and counting of the ballots. The conduct of the vote will be in accordance with Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure.

Dear Mr. Chairperson, I would like to add that I think that Ms. Thumeka Ntloko, from South Africa and Mr. Szabolcs Nemes from Hungary have kindly volunteered to serve as tellers during the 44th Session, if the World Heritage Committee has no objection. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Before the voting begins, I must appoint two tellers among the members of the Committee to scrutinise the vote cast. According to Rule 42.1, as we have just heard from Ms. Rössler, they come from member States, Ms. Thumeka Ntloko, South Africa and Mr. Szabolcs Nemes from Hungary have kindly volunteered to serve as tellers. I therefore appoint them as tellers. As there is no session tomorrow, the voting process will therefore start on the morning of the 21st of July at 9:00 am sharp Paris time at the UNESCO Headquarters. And the result will be announced at the start of the plenary meeting on the 21st of July. I now adjourn the debate on this item until the 21st of July.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Mr. President, Point of order.

I will need some explanation on this voting procedure. Exactly what are we going to vote on? On Draft Resolution 7A.34, is that correct? Which means, in my view what does a 'yes' vote means? That we can adopt

point 11 of this Resolution? Or a 'no' vote what does it mean? How does the counting go? To eliminate this site from the List it will be the 'yes' vote which means those that supports the resolution must have two third of the votes or is it the contrary? Please, explain this to us if you are so kind.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. To answer the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil, this was my understanding: a 'yes' would mean an agreement with the Draft Decision as it is in the document. As you have heard from the Rapporteur, we have not received any amendments. So, if the Committee agrees to the Draft Decision, it would mean delisting, and I am looking at our dear legal adviser if this is the correct understanding. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Legal adviser, please, you have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Mr. Chair, I confirm what was said by the Secretary of the Committee. You have before you the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.34. In paragraph 11, it decides to delete the site from the World Heritage List, this would be the matter in front of you. A 'yes' decision, in my understanding would be to adopt the Draft Decision, a 'no' vote would be not to adopt the Draft Decision. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, is this okay with you?

The Delegation of Brazil:

Yes. Therefore, I understood correctly, to delete this site a two-thirds majority of 'yes' vote will be needed. Is that correct? Is my understanding correct? It is a yes or no question.

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I adjourn the debate on this item until the 21st of July. We can now move on to our next item.

I now invite Ms. Rössler to read the list of properties of Latin America and the Caribbean for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

I think we missed out one of the properties from Europe. It is number 32, the Historic Centre of Vienna, Austria which was not open for discussion, so we need to gavel that done.

Chairperson:

Okay. It is approved [gavel].

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you. I will read as you requested, Mr. Chair, the list of properties from Latin America and the Caribbean. We have the city of Potosi (plurinational State of Bolivia); Fortifications on the Caribbean Side of Panama: Portobelo-San Lorenzo in Panama; Chan Chan Archaeological Zone in Peru and Coro and its Port, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. That is it for Latin America and the Caribbean. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on the state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted [gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observers Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted a decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed. Sorry, I did not see Panama, you have two minutes for your intervention.

The Delegation of Panama:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. I wish to congratulate the People's Republic of China for organising and the excellent holding of the 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the World Heritage Centre for its tireless work.

Panama reiterates its firm commitment to implementing the Corrective Measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger of the Fortifications on the Caribbean Side of Panama: Portobelo-San Lorenzo. In this sense, Chair, the management plan for including all of the components for the property is in preparation for international publication.

As part of the execution of the loan from the Interamerican Development Bank for the tender in Portobelo-San Lorenzo in 2019, a public tender was held and this is in line with the public use plan for the National Park for the protected landscape of San Lorenzo, which was approved in 2017, which was about the OUV of the castle of San Lorenzo which is located within the National Park at approximately seven kilometres.

Although the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the quarantines due to health measures have affected the execution of this project, Panama reiterates its firm commitment to fulfilling the Corrective Measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the World Heritage in Danger List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more interventions. Let us proceed. We are now moving to the examination of natural properties. I would now like to give the floor to the Delegation of Mali, to present to the Committee the reason it requested to open the state of conservation of the Salonga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo. Excellency, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs de délégation. La délégation du Mali voudrait remercier M. le Président de la mise en débat, dans le cadre des travaux de la présente session, du projet de décision 44 COM 7A.44 relatif à l'état de conservation du Parc national de la Salonga – un bien inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1984, et sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril depuis 1999, plus de vingt ans –, conformément à la requête qu'elle a introduite à cet effet, au nom de l'État partie de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), qui ne siège pas actuellement au Comité du patrimoine mondial. Pour rappel, ce projet de décision proposait trois éléments à mettre en œuvre par l'État partie pour permettre le retrait du bien de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Concernant la première condition, relative à l'atteinte de tous les indicateurs de l'état de conservation souhaité en vue du retrait du bien de la Liste en péril, le rapport de la mission conjointe de suivi réactif UNESCO-UICN de 2020 soulignait déjà les importants progrès réalisés par l'État partie et ses partenaires en vue de l'atteinte de tous les indicateurs de l'état de conservation souhaité en vue du retrait du bien de la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Le projet de décision corrobore ce constat en proposant de ne plus appliquer le mécanisme de suivi renforcé pour ce bien en raison de progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre des mesures correctives et de l'amélioration de la situation sécuritaire. Concernant les deux autres conditions pour le retrait du bien de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril, notamment 1) l'annulation des blocs pétroliers qui chevauchaient le bien, et 2) la finalisation de l'accord de cogestion du bien, l'État partie de la RDC a jusqu'ici privilégié le dialogue, un dialogue régulier, ouvert et constant avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial et l'UICN. Dans ce cadre, notamment, l'État partie de la RDC a transmis, le 2 juillet 2021, le procès-verbal des négociations en cours avec le Fonds mondial pour la nature pour la finalisation de l'accord de cogestion du bien ainsi que d'importantes clarifications sur la caducité des blocs pétroliers qui chevauchaient le bien et son engagement à continuer à préserver la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien. D'une manière concrète, ces documents apportent des éléments probants, solides et irréfutables sur l'atteinte des conditions requises pour le retrait de ce bien de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril lors de la 44^e session élargie du Comité du patrimoine mondial. En somme, ce sont ces évolutions positives, qui n'ont pas pu être prises en compte lors de l'élaboration du projet de décision en raison des contraintes du délai, que l'État partie de la RDC souhaite voir reflétées en suggérant quelques amendements au projet de décision, ces amendements concernant 11 points sur les 14 proposés dans le projet actuel. Je voudrais à ce stade vous prier, Monsieur le Président, de bien vouloir donner la parole à l'État partie de la RDC, après les membres du Comité, pour qu'il nous donne quelques précisions sur la caducité des blocs pétroliers et l'accord de cogestion pour la gestion durable du bien en vue du retrait du bien de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Uganda, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair for giving me the floor. Allow me to first thank you for steering this meeting despite the hazardous Internet connectivity.

Chair, my Delegation joins the State Party of Mali in voicing its concerns over the harsh advice IUCN has submitted to this Committee in respect to maintaining Salonga National Park in the List of World Heritage properties in Danger.

IUCN clearly indicated in its evaluation report that the status of the management of the park has improved with the park patrol enhanced from 27.9 per cent in 2018 to 59.5 per cent in 2019. The wildlife assessment report indicates a positive trend with the level in decreasing poaching and site evaluation puts the site management at 64.5 per cent in 2019 from 40.9 per cent in 2016.

Furthermore, Chair, the IUCN evaluation report indicated that all areas that led to the placement of the property on the List of sites in Danger have been addressed. Such milestones, Chair, cannot be undermined. On the other hand, Chair, it is important to note that many properties worldwide are now grappling with sustainable funding due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic which has impacted tourism revenue. The issue of sustainable funding therefore cannot be overlooked here, at this moment, for so many sites have been affected worldwide.

Lastly, but not least, Chair, it is important to note that the World Heritage Centre is under immense pressure and supports most of the properties on the List of sites in Danger. Removal of properties from the Danger List where tremendous progress is witnessed should be impressed by this honourable Committee. Relinquishing monitoring and management responsibilities by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre will not only save resources which should be directed to other sites that are in dire needs, but also give comfort and responsibility to States Parties to generously support such properties in order to allow them not to slide back to the list of properties in Danger.

It is therefore my Delegation's preferred view that now is the time for the Committee to remove Salonga National Park from the List of properties in Danger, for the State Party to take full management and responsibility. My Delegation, therefore, Chair, would like to associate itself with the States Parties of Mali and the Democratic Republic of Congo by supporting the draft amendment 44 COM 7A.44. I submit Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, at the request of Mali and with the permission of the Committee, I give the floor to the Democratic Republic of Congo to answer the question.

Délégation de la République démocratique du Congo :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je m'exprime au nom de la République démocratique du Congo. Nous tenons d'abord à vous féliciter et à vous remercier pour votre élection et pour la manière dont vous conduisez notre 44^e session, cette réunion, et féliciter la Chine pour cette organisation. Monsieur le Président, la République démocratique du Congo, qui a connu son site figurer sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril pendant très longtemps, tient réellement à confirmer que tous les indicateurs sur l'état de conservation souhaité du bien ont été atteints, et la mission conjointe de suivi réactif l'a constaté lors de sa visite au Parc de la Salonga. S'agissant de l'accord de cogestion sur la gestion de Salonga avec, entre autres, l'Institut congolais pour la conservation de la nature (ICCN) et le WWF, nous pouvons dire que cet accord est très avancé. Le procès-verbal des négociations a été signé entre les deux parties et il a été transmis au Centre, et dans les jours qui viennent interviendra la signature du protocole d'accord entre la RDC, l'ICCN et le WWF. Quant à l'exploitation pétrolière, nous voulons confirmer, Monsieur le Président, chers membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, que les éléments de clarification que nous avons donnés sur le Parc de la Salonga sont suffisamment éloquentes à ce sujet. Les droits pétroliers sur ce bloc sont tombés caducs ; de plus, l'ordonnance y relative qui avait été signée n'était pas assortie de permis ni d'exploration ni d'exploitation, il n'y a donc aucun permis qui a été délivré à cette fin, et aucun appel d'offres n'a été lancé dans la cuvette centrale qui couvre le Parc national de la Salonga. Donc, aujourd'hui la RDC est en négociation à l'amiable avec cette partie pour avoir renoncé à cet accord ou pour avoir renoncé à ce contrat-là. Nous tenons vraiment à vous remercier de nous avoir écouté et vous confirmons une fois de plus que les trois conditions requises ont été remplies. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to invite Mr. Guy Debonnet, Chief of the Natural Heritage Unit of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to provide their comments. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Mr. Chair, we can confirm that the State Party submitted additional information on the 2nd of July after the state of conservation report was already published. The information included a letter by the Director General of the National Petroleum Company, SONAHYDROC, confirming that there were currently no oil exploration or exploitation activities within the blocks overlapping with the property. And that no further optioning of these blocks is currently foreseen.

A follow-up meeting was organised with UNESCO, IUCN and the State Party on the 9th of July in which the Director General of the protected area agency ICCN and SONAHYDROC participated, together with the Cabinet Deputy Director of the Minister of the Environment. In this meeting the World Heritage Centre requested further clarifications on the status of the oil concessions which had been already attributed by presidential decree and are overlapping with the property.

I want to recall that in several decisions the World Heritage Committee had urged the State Party to cancel these concessions. In the meeting, the Director General of SONAHYDROC clarified that the concessions have not yet

been cancelled and that this would require a new presidential decree. However, he noted that the company which was awarded the concession is in a legal dispute with the government on this concession, rendering the concessions null and void. In addition, he clarified that the company has never been granted the exploration permit necessary to start exploration activities.

This statement was confirmed in writing in the minutes of the meeting submitted by the State Party on the 12th of July. We also want to recall that a joint World Heritage Centre and IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission which visited the property in January and February 2020 was also able to note the important progress made in achieving the indicators of Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

In conclusion, at this stage, the concessions have not been cancelled yet, but the State Party has confirmed that the contract is no longer valid as a result of the legal dispute. If the Committee considers this assurance from the State Party sufficient, it could decide to remove the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger at this session. Mr. Chair, IUCN would also provide some further clarification.

Chairperson:

Okay, IUCN please, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you Chair. IUCN would like to also acknowledge the additional information that was submitted by the State Party regarding to the status of oil concessions overlapping the property as well as the positive confirmation that a new co-management agreement is in the final stages of approval between ICCN and WWF. The World Heritage Centre has just outlined this information in detail and the State Party itself has confirmed that information in its intervention.

Regarding the oil concessions, the State Party has assured that no active concessions overlap with the property and there is no intention to allow exploration or exploitation within the property. IUCN, therefore, considers there is currently no threat to the property in this regard. It is important that the State Party ensures that no exploration or exploitation occurs in future by implementing the Committee's request for these concessions to be permanently cancelled.

As was noted by the distinguished delegate from Uganda, the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission indeed concluded that notable progress had been made to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger. IUCN considers this progress to be very positive and, although some indicators remain to be fully achieved, strongly encourages the State Party to continue its effort, to improve the conservation of the property and address all the points in the Draft Decision.

Should the Committee decide to consider removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger at this session, it would be essential that the State Party complete all of these measures and ensures that there is no reason for the property to be considered as in Danger in the future. Mr. Chair, in that regard, I think the way that Uganda spoke to that issue was entirely correct. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the presentation. I would like to know whether there are any other comments. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de l'Éthiopie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Nous sommes très heureux d'intervenir sur ce sujet qui, pour une fois, en tous cas en ce qui concerne notre continent, est un événement positif. Nous voulons remercier la République démocratique du Congo d'être vraiment le porte-drapeau des événements positifs qui surviennent sur notre continent et, comme cela a été dit par plusieurs collègues, et qui a été confirmé par les experts, les progrès nécessaires ont été réalisés pour le retrait de ce patrimoine important de la Liste du patrimoine en péril: les réponses adéquates qui ont été apportées concernant les concessions pétrolières qui chevauchent le bien et qui sont caduques, donc nulles ; les progrès importants qui ont également été réalisés dans la mise en œuvre des mesures correctives et dans l'amélioration de la situation sanitaire ; la finalisation de l'accord de cogestion, qui est en cours ; ainsi que les progrès dans la démarcation des limites non naturelles du parc. Donc, pour toutes ces raisons concrètes et évidentes, il est important que ce patrimoine important soit retiré de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. À cet égard, nous tenons à féliciter les acteurs pour tous les travaux qui ont été faits, pour l'engagement et la coopération avec les experts, que nous voulons également remercier dans ce cas très important. Nous appelons donc nous aussi au retrait de ce site de la Liste en péril. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, the floor is to Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We have discussed the status of the Salonga National Park carefully, and we would like to congratulate the authorities of the Democratic Republic of Congo for its outstanding efforts deployed in preserving the park and dealing with the threats it was facing which led to its inscription on the World Heritage List in Danger in 1999. We would like to welcome the renewed commitment of the Democratic Republic of Congo not to authorise or undertake activities likely to compromise the OUV of Salonga National Park or any other property inscribed on the World Heritage List without first informing the World Heritage Committee.

The improvements witnessed in this site since 1999 were recognised by the different experts visiting the site including the latest Reactive Monitoring mission organised in January and February 2020. These efforts should be recognised by the Committee in its coming session in adopting the current decision.

We welcome the Advisory Bodies recommendation to no longer apply the Reinforced Monitoring mechanism for the property and, as many have just rightly said, the right decision today is the removal of the Salonga National Park from the World Heritage List in Danger. Uganda asked, Mr. Chair, to add Egypt to the list of cosponsors of the amendments presented by Mali for this site. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China thanks the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for their mission report and their very clear interventions a few minutes ago. China commends the State Party as a developing country for making continuous and significant efforts in the implementation of the Corrective Measures ensuring regular ecological monitoring of the species which are characteristic of the OUV of the property, and the strengthening of the collaboration between all those involved in the management of the property to maintain the viable population of the different flagship species.

China takes note that the joint World Heritage IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission has witnessed the important progress made in achieving the indicators of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Although the oil concessions awarded by presidential ordinance and threatening the property are seen as potential threats to the OUV, the Reactive Monitoring mission notes that no oil explorations or exploitations were undertaken that could affect the OUV of the property or its integrity.

China also understands from the State Party and the author of the amendment that the rights to the oil blocks have already expired and the State Party's government has given assurance that the oil blocks will not in any way be put to tender which should satisfy the Committee. The potential threats to the property have no realistic implications.

China therefore, supports the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Thailand, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Thai Delegation is fully in agreement with the sentiments expressed by all the previous Delegations. The Democratic Republic of Congo has indeed made concrete and significant progress in addressing all the issues of concern. We commend the progress made and also the commitment of the Democratic Republic of Congo not to undertake any activities that would undermine the OUV of the property including the question of oil exploration.

Therefore, Thailand supports the amendment to the Draft Decision to remove Salonga National Park from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairman, for giving us the floor. South Africa notes that Salonga National Park from the Democratic Republic of Congo has been on the list of World Heritage in Danger since 1999 which is more than 20 years since the significant threats were identified. We therefore believe that the threats are no longer having significant impacts on the OUV. We further note and appreciate the World Heritage Centre and IUCN joint Reactive Monitoring mission conducted from the 20th of January until the 4th of February 2020. The State Party subsequently submitted additional information that was required.

We welcome the positive comments made earlier today both by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN. Chairperson, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN report further indicates the overall improvement of the summary score of the integrated management effectiveness tool for the property which has increased from 40.9 per cent in 2016 to 64.5 per cent in 2019. This shows improvement in the efficiency of the management of the property.

Mr. Chairman, it is also encouraging to note that the joint World Heritage Centre IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission has confirmed that there is no exploration or exploitation taking place inside the property.

Mr. Chairperson, the report also acknowledges the significant efforts made by the State Party and its partners in the implementation of the Corrective Measures. It says, especially with regard to improving security of the property: rendering the anti-poaching strategy more effective, ensuring regional ecological monitoring characteristics of the OUV of the property and straightening collaboration between all those involved in the management of the property.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we believe that the State Party has met the requirements for the removal of Salonga National Park from the List of World Heritage in Danger as outlined in the *Operational Guidelines*. The removal of the property from the in Danger List will also encourage the State Party to address the other issues that have been mentioned in the same effort they have been addressing the issues and even more. Keeping the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger will not achieve this at all. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr. Chairman. We would like to add our voice to the opinion already expressed by other Committee members given the report that we have which has recognised progress has been made. We want to congratulate the Democratic Republic of Congo on this. We are aware of how difficult it can often be to maintain a property in certain places and circumstances, but given the harmful events which have now been removed, especially the presence of the petroleum factory, we consider that we should definitely add our voice to those who are supporting this proposal to withdraw this property from the in Danger List.

This is important because I think it causes member States but also the international community to pay proper attention to this and to see the percentage or balance for stopping alteration has been achieved. I think we need to recognise the progress that has been made in the accomplishment and achievements of this property that has been preserved.

For these reasons, we support the proposal to withdraw the property from the Danger Listing. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor..

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous sommes très contents et très heureux d'apprendre de bonnes nouvelles concernant la protection des sites qui sont sur la liste dont on parle. Il est particulièrement important que cette fois-ci la bonne nouvelle vienne d'un pays d'Afrique qui va, je l'espère, bientôt enrichir notre Liste avec d'autres sites dignes de protection et de notre attention. Je me joins à tous mes collègues dans le même esprit de soutien à cette initiative, ce que notre collègue du Mali a dit ainsi que d'autres. Cela me rend personnellement très heureux, et la Bosnie-Herzégovine soutient le retrait du Parc de la Salonga de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Saudi Arabia would like to commend the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat, for the fruitful collaboration in the implementation of the Corrective Measures to safeguard the OUV of Salonga National Park. We encourage the State Party to continue on this great momentum and therefore we support the removal of Salonga National Park from the endangered List, as per the amendments presented by our dear colleague from Mali and as seconded by Committee members here. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brazil wants to join all my colleagues that have made these statements in favour of this resolution and the amendments of this resolution. We have seen and heard the information given by IUCN that has recognised the great efforts made by the Democratic Republic of Congo and the progress made during all these years and, of course, which is most important in this case, the assurances by the member State on the oil production. That should be sufficient for all of us to receive this good news that comes from the African continent that we have finally taken out from the List of Danger one of its important elements, Salonga National Park. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Guatemala please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Hello to everyone and thanks for the floor, Chair. Guatemala respectful of the opinion of the Advisory Bodies, in this case IUCN, and having received more information from the State Party for further consideration in 2022, considers that we now have sufficient clarification. Guatemala can support the withdrawal of this site from the Danger List. I would like to thank the member State and the experts for all of the efforts they have undertaken to this end. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Oman took note of the discussion regarding this site from the different Committee member States. We would like to support the Draft Decision for delisting or taking out the site from the List in Danger. Thank You.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our Delegation would like to share the satisfaction which was unanimously demonstrated by the Committee members on the fact of fruitful cooperation between the State Party and Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre on this particular case. This is a good example of cooperation. We hope that there will be more examples like this, and it gives us the possibility to unanimously about taking out the property from the List of World Heritage sites in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway would also like to join our colleagues in congratulating the State Party of the Democratic Republic of Congo with their notable progress regarding the conservation of this tremendously important World Heritage property. Based on the additional information provided by the State Party, Norway supports the amendment to remove Salonga National Park from the list of World Heritage in Danger. We commend the State Party's commitment not to undertake activities related to oil exploration in the World Heritage property.

We would like to encourage the State Party to continue to investigate and address allegations of human rights violations as specified in paragraph 7 and to make sure that indigenous people and the local communities' rights and needs are secured. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As this is the first time I am taking the floor, let me commend your leadership. I want to join other voices to commend the technical cooperation of the Secretariat and IUCN and the effort of the home country on the Salonga National Park and for getting this park back on track and getting this site of Salonga National Park out of the World Heritage List in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Australia is delighted to support the amendment proposed by Mali and congratulates the Democratic Republic of Congo on the progress it has made on meeting the conditions to remove the Salonga property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Australia supports the comments made by Norway regarding the rights of local people and the importance of protecting them. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary welcomes the measures taken by the Democratic Republic of Congo for the conservation of the Salonga National Park and congratulates the progress made in the implementation of the Corrective Measures and the improvement of the security situation. We encourage the State Party to continue the work and the significant effort with regard to improving the security of the property and strengthening fight against poaching.

Therefore, Hungary welcomes the steps being made for the renewal of the co-management agreement between ICCN and WWF and the clarification provided by the State Party on the oil exploration and exploitation within the property. Finally, Hungary welcomes the decision to no longer continue to apply the Reactive Monitoring mission for the property and supports the Draft Decision with the amendments submitted by Mali and the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I cannot see any more questions in the comments. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.44 concerning this property. Before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The distinguished Delegation of Mali submitted an amendment to the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.44. The proposed changes are shown in and integrated in the original text of the Draft Decision already. Shall we go through it?

Chairperson:

Yes.

Rapporteur:

There are no amendments in the first three paragraphs of the Draft Decision. In paragraph 4 it reads: 'Takes note of the clarification provided by the State Party that although oil concessions awarded by presidential ordinance and straddling the property have not yet been cancelled, the rights to the oil blocks have now lapsed, as well as the assurance given that these blocks will be excluded from any tender and reiterates its request to permanently cancel these oil concessions, while not authorizing new concessions within the property and its periphery which could have negative and irreversible impacts on its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).'

New paragraph 5 reads as the original paragraph 13 in the Draft Decision, it moved to paragraph 5: 'Decides to no longer apply the reinforced monitoring mechanism for the property due to the progress made in the implementation of the Corrective Measures and the improvement of the security situation'.

New paragraph 6: 'Noting the clarification provided by the State Party on oil exploration or exploitation within the property, the significant progress towards the formalisation of the Co-management Agreement between the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the significant progress towards the achievement of all DSOCR indicators, also decides to remove Salonga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) from the List of World Heritage in Danger'.

New paragraph 7 with a minor modification: strike through 'deep' and the rest of the Draft Decision stays the same. The following modification is struck through 'previous paragraph 7'.

We continue with paragraph 8: 'Further requests the State Party to implement the recommendations of the 2020 mission, as follows — we have a modification on 8 a —:

a) 'Pursue current efforts and strengthen the human, technical and financial capacities dedicated to the fight against poaching, both in terms of staff and their training with a view to reaching a surveillance rate of 80% of the property,'

We have a modification up until 8g: 'Extend the sampling base for the annual monitoring of species in the corridor separating the two blocks which constitutes a favourable habitat for most of them, in particular the flagship species, the Congolese elephant, bonobo and peacock in order to document the follow-up of the reconstitution of fauna'.

The addition in 8l: 'Finalise the Co-management Agreement between ICCN and WWF for the sustainable management of the property'.

Our next amendment is in paragraph 9b: 'Undertake participatory finalization of the demarcation of the non-natural boundaries of the Park, of which 120 kilometres have already been demarcated'.

We continue with paragraph 10: 'Thanks all the donors who continue to support the conservation of the property, in particular the Governments of Germany and Norway, and the European Union [...]' The rest stays the same.

Paragraph 11: 'Also takes note of the limited funding aimed at ensuring in a sustainable manner the implementation of all the management functions of the property and further requests the State Party, with the support of its partners, to continue its efforts with a view to develop a sustainable financing system with a view to the improvement of the efficiency in the management of the property'.

Paragraph 12 reads: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the implementation of the progress made aiming for the definitive cancellation of oil concessions straddling the property and the formalisation of the Co-management Agreement between ICCN and WWF, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.'

Mr. Chair, we have a small modification required in here if I may suggest. Because this is the text traditionally asking for an update report. We already listed the measures that are requested from the State Party in paragraph 8 namely letters 'a' to 'l'. I would propose to keep all of the above and respect the original formalisation of the text and, if these two particular items are to be highlighted, then we say 'including the progress made', if this acceptable to the Committee members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.44 adopted as amended ^[gave]. On behalf of the entire Committee, I would like to warmly congratulate the State Party for this major achievement after having been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1999, 20 years ago. The State Party has set a good example. In making the adequate efforts to protect the OUV of World Heritage property. Congratulations. Now, the Democratic Republic of Congo you have two minutes for your statement.

Délégation de la République démocratique du Congo :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Au nom du Gouvernement de la République démocratique du Congo et au mien propre, nous avons le grand honneur de vous saluer Monsieur le Président et de vous témoigner notre reconnaissance et nos remerciements de tout cœur pour avoir encouragé notre pays en général et tout le personnel de la conservation de la nature en particulier par cette bonne décision que vous venez de prendre pour sortir le Parc de la Salonga de la Liste en péril. Votre décision, Monsieur le Président, honorables membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, motive à suffisance notre pays pour fournir davantage d'efforts en vue de respecter et de mettre en œuvre les recommandations et les orientations du Comité, du Secrétariat et des organes consultatifs afin de préserver les valeurs exceptionnelles et universelles des autres quatre biens qui restent sur la Liste en péril. La République démocratique du Congo vous promet de rester en contact permanent et harmonieux avec le Secrétariat des organes consultatifs pour un travail fructueux sur les autres biens de la Liste en péril et en même temps propose, si possible, l'inscription de nouveaux biens tant naturels que culturels. Enfin, Monsieur le Président, notre pays, la République démocratique du Congo, son Président, Son Excellence M. Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, son Gouvernement et tout son personnel de la conservation de la nature vous sont très reconnaissants et vous réitèrent leurs remerciements, ainsi qu'au Fonds du patrimoine mondial africain, qui nous a accompagnés tout au long de la préparation de ce dossier jusqu'à la décision du retrait du Parc national de la Salonga de la Liste en péril. Que notre dieu vous bénisse, Monsieur le Président, et bénisse la République de Chine pour avoir organisé cette 44^e session. Nous vous remercions. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Mali, for a short intervention.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le Mali remercie les membres du Comité pour leur soutien, le Secrétariat de l'UNESCO, les organes consultatifs, l'UICN et les experts pour les efforts abattus et les avis qui ont permis de retirer aujourd'hui le Parc de la Salonga de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Enfin, le Mali félicite chaleureusement la République démocratique du Congo pour ses efforts consentis avec toutes les garanties suffisantes, et constitue désormais un nouveau départ. Merci et félicitations.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. I see International Indigenous People's Forum, you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-Indigenous People's Forum:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I read this statement on behalf of the Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC). They are committed to good governance and the sustainable management of Central African forest with their traditional lands in Salonga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo. REPELEAC is currently engaged in the implementation of a project titled PACEL. This is an initiative underway in Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It highlights the urgent needs to promote the traditional knowledge and practices of the indigenous people in the conservation and management of World Heritage sites. This project has been supported by WWF and has the support of Central African States.

The DRC's Salonga National Park is one of the largest national parks in the world with an area of 3,600,000 hectares. A third of the southern area of the park is home to indigenous pygmy people whose traditional knowledge and practices contribute to the protection and preservation of biodiversity consisting of important species in forest areas which remain relatively intact. Indigenous pygmy's management of the ecosystems of the environment of the World Heritage site also plays a fundamental role in climate regulation and carbon sequestration. REPELEAC proposes the following recommendation to the Committee, UNESCO and IUCN:

- 1) Recognise that the rights of access by the indigenous people to traditional lands territories and resources contribute effectively to nature conservation, the preservation of biodiversity as well as the reduction of poverty in rural areas.
- 2) Stop promoting the voluntary relocation of indigenous people from their ancestral land within the Salonga National Park. Stop identifying indigenous hunting gathering and collecting as a threat to the park.
- 3) Ensure the effective participation of indigenous people in the management of World Heritage sites including Salonga National Park and,
- 4) Recognise the rights of indigenous people to determine their own development priority in World Heritage sites.

Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I now give the floor to the African World Heritage Fund for two minutes.

Observer- African World Heritage Fund:

Thank you very much, Chair. As this is the first time I am taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you, Chair, for the excellent conducting and management of this meeting. I also thank the government of China for hosting the event. The African World Heritage Fund would like to congratulate the Democratic Republic of Congo for the efforts that were made towards meeting the required conditions for the removal of Salonga National Park from the World Heritage List in Danger after 22 years.

The African World Heritage Fund considers this decision as a collective win by the World Heritage Committee but also as a collective win by the whole World Heritage community. The African World Heritage Fund would like to remind that its partners remain committed to support efforts for improved implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I suggest that we take a technical break. I will resume the meeting in ten minutes at 1:17 pm Paris time. See you in a bit.

Dear colleagues, let us proceed. I now invite Mr. Guy Debonnet, Chief of the Natural Heritage Unit of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to present the reports on the state of conservation of the natural properties located in the Africa Region and open for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The report opens for discussion is Selous Game Reserve in the African Republic of Tanzania. It is important to recall that the Committee, since 2019, in numerous decisions expressed its utmost concern regarding the likely irreversible damage of the Julius Nyerere Hydropower development on the OUV of this property and urged the State Party to halt this development. The dam development is also in direct conflict with the Committee established position that the construction of a dam with large reservoirs within the boundary of properties

is incompatible with their World Heritage status. Following the announcement by the State Party that it could go ahead with the dam development, the Committee at its session in 2018 added the dam development to the justification of the in Danger List and reiterated its request to the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.

Although requested three years ago, the State Party has not yet invited this mission, in spite of several reminders from the World Heritage Centre. However, in a public statement the government has confirmed that the dam is now more than 50 per cent completed and will be fully completed in 2022. The project involves a construction of a 130-metre-high dam on the Rufiji River, the central river in the property. A reservoir that is 12.5 kilometres wide and 100 kilometres long inundating an area of 1,250,000 hectares. Four settle dams of a total length of 18.2 kilometres, a power plant, transmission lines, workers camp, access roads and transmission infrastructure all situated inside the property.

Promotional videos by the Government-owned Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited companies confirmed the advancement of the works and the scale of the environmental damage that already took place. Recent satellite images as well as the images that you see now on the screen show the construction area before the works on the left and the area today and document the massive alterations in the natural vegetation and landscape that have already taken place.

We also want to recall that the Committee in its Decision 43 COM 7A.16 at the last session has already stated that the deforestation and other cumulative damage would likely lead to the irreversible damage of the OUV and create the conditions for deletion of the property from the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that today the damage, as a result of the dam project, has irreversibly impacted the OUV of this property and therefore have to recommend that the Committee deletes the Selous Game Reserve from the World Heritage List.

Mr. Chair, IUCN will provide some further information on the impact on the OUV of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Rufiji River that flows through the property and plays a fundamental role in its ecology and in sustaining its OUV. For criterion (ix), the OUV for which the property has been recognised, includes the large undisturbed wilderness area, seasonal dynamic transformations of sand rivers and seasonal flooding of the river. The construction of a large Hydropower dam on this River inside the property will unquestionably lead to a permanent loss of these characteristics. The river has already been diverted according to the videos referred to by the World Heritage Centre that have come from the State Energy Electricity Company. Together with the video and satellite imagery evidence of the scale of forest loss and landscape degradation within the property, it is evident that the value for which the property was inscribed under criterion (ix) has already been irreversibly damaged and the integrity of the property has been lost.

The exceptional biodiversity value which justifies its criterion (x) continue to be severely threatened recalling these declines for the reason for the site originally be added in the List of World Heritage in Danger, and they are anticipated to be further impacted as a result of the Hydropower project. As noted by the World Heritage Centre, the project clearly runs contrary to the Committee's established positions on dams with large reservoirs within World Heritage properties and the construction has continued despite the Committee past urgent requests not to proceed, to halt activities and to undertake a mission.

Thus, the opportunity to avoid this loss of OUV has not been realised. As the World Heritage Centre also noted, the Committee at 43 COM considered that this damage would be likely to lead to the condition of the deletion of the property being the situation.

Mr. Chair, with great regret given this evidence of permanent loss of the OUV for which the property was listed it is unavoidable that the Selous Game Reserve should be recommended now for the deletion of the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. This decision is about the construction of a dam within the boundaries of one of our 252 most precious natural properties. It is about how the Committee will deal with a well-documented hydroelectric projects that impacts the integrity and the attributes in a natural heritage property. It is a test of the credibility of the Committee.

Almost 40 years ago, IUCN evaluated this property and the Committee inscribed it on the World Heritage List. Since then, we have gained a lot of experience and knowledge about consequences of dams on ecosystems and species.

This has led to the Committee decision from 2016 stating that construction of dams and large reservoirs within the boundaries of World Heritage property is incompatible with World Heritage status.

After studying the documentation, Norway has concluded that to avoid undermining the principles making this Convention the most prestigious guardian of heritage, there is no other option than deleting Selous Game Reserve from the World Heritage List. A dam of this size cannot be present within a World Heritage property. It cannot mitigate the consequences that this project has on the OUV of Selous. Norway looked at boundary modifications. Boundary modifications should enhance the protection of OUV and not the opposite. Sadly, this is a case where the conditions of Paragraph 192 are met. Norway supports the Draft Decision. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. I am listening to the solution made by all that spoke before me and I wanted to present an amendment in view of the issue raised in the Draft Decision. Paragraph 3 of the Draft Decision: 'Also recalling that States Parties have the obligation under the Convention to protect and conserve the World Cultural and Natural Heritage situated on their territory, notably, to ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection and conservation of such heritage'.

Further the Draft Decision reads: 'Recalling, furthermore, that the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the dramatic decline in elephant population due to poaching, and the tendering of large-scale logging rights within the property for the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) (formerly the Rufiji Hydropower Project)'.

Mr. Chair, a case has been made in the action analysis that poaching remains a critical problem within the Selous, so much that the elephant population has remained stagnant since the site was put on the in Danger List in 2014. However, data provided in the same analysis showed that the elephant population has gone up from 13,091 in 2013 to 15,500 in 2018, representing an increase of 18.4 per cent. Indeed, the state of conservation report also shows that between the year 2018 and 2020 there has been no single elephant carcass encountered attributed to poaching in Selous. This is a clear testimony of the State Party undertaking strong conservation measures within Selous.

Regrettably, however, such information is not reflected in the Draft Decision. We argue that such a strong spirit and practice by States Parties in conserving World Heritage site should always be fully recognised. IUCN analysis also raised the issue of large-scale logging within Selous. The fact, however, is that clearance only involved 91,400 hectares or roughly 1.8 per cent of the entire 5,200,000 hectares of the total area.

How much area of forest clearance has already affected the OUV of the property needs strong verification. Are we sincerely saying, for instance, that the remaining 98.2 per cent or 5,108,600 hectares of the entire Selous wilderness have no added value? Accordingly, the Nigerian Delegation has submitted an amendment to the Draft Decision in view of this reflection. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair, for allowing me back on the floor. Chair, the Delegation of the Republic of Uganda carefully studied the analysis and Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.51 in respect with the deletion of Selous Game Reserve from the World Heritage List.

Unfortunately, Chair, my Delegation has taken note of a number of several procedural flaws and lack of precise data that are likely to mislead this Committee in its discussion on this property. My Delegation is well informed that the State Party of Tanzania was not formally consulted prior to the submission of this Draft Decision. This contravenes Paragraphs 174 and 194 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Moreover, Paragraphs 191.A, 176.B and 196 give clear guidance to be undertaken before a decision on a matter of such a nature is concluded by this Committee.

On the other hand, Chair, as raised by my colleague from Nigeria, where Selous Game Reserve has 12.2 million hectares, here we are looking at only 1.8 per cent of it being developed for hydropower production. The form in which the Draft Decision was presented by IUCN has the implication that all the property attributes under criteria (ix) and (x) have greatly been impacted and the entire property has completely lost its credibility, thus suggesting its deletion from the World Heritage List.

My Delegation is extremely concerned that IUCN adjunction remains speculative without consideration of the remaining 98.2 per cent of the critical habitat area holding massive biodiversity in danger and threatened species.

My Delegation therefore supposes that this honourable Committee would be misguided into making an uninformed decision without adequate information. In this regard, consideration of dialogue between the Advisory Bodies and

the State Party would be the best way to go to attain a 'win win' position in line with Paragraph 176e of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Chair, with the above in mind, my Delegation therefore does not fully support the Draft Decision and has submitted several amendments to this effect. At a later stage possibly, Chair, you will allow Tanzania to make more clarification and give a little bit of information. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Selous is one of the largest protected areas in Africa. Australia considers the situation regarding this property to be very different from that of Liverpool. When the property was listed in 1982, the scale of the impacts from the construction of the dam in Stieglers Gorge were clearly unforeseen, even though a construction of a dam was foreshadowed.

The Draft Decision clearly states that the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that important biodiversity remains in the wider ecosystem including the Selous-Niassa ecosystem. They have suggested that it may be appropriate for the State Party in consultation with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre and possibly with other States Parties to consider the evaluation of these remaining areas with significant biodiversity with a view to developing a new World Heritage nomination. Our concern is that the remaining biodiversity values of the property will be seriously reduced in the time between the delisting of the property and the development of a new nomination and the different criteria.

We would like to reduce this risk of biodiversity loss by giving the State Party time to explore with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre whether the biodiversity remaining in the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem might be incorporated in a new World Heritage nomination before the current property is delisted. Thus, when the property is delisted, there would be a roadmap for the future. We therefore suggest it would be appropriate to retain the property on the in Danger List to give the State Party time to invite IUCN and the World Heritage Centre to send a mission to verify the state of the property on the ground and suggest options for conserving the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem.

Consequently, we have redrafted paragraphs for addition to the amendment proposed by Uganda which we would like the Committee to consider.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We go along with what was said by previous Delegations who have expressed the view that delisting or deleting the Selous Game Reserve from the World Heritage List is a grave mistake. It is a great mistake at two levels. Because it tells for many of us that development and heritage protection cannot go hand in hand. Specifically in a case where, as what highlighted by many Delegations, over 98 per cent of the site remains as is. You cannot in a vast area such as this one, in a country upon to take any development without ensuring the livelihood of its population, that is just not feasible. What we are here to do is to ensure a harmonious relationship between development and preservation. That is possible, because the overwhelming majority of the area has still maintained its OUV.

So, we do not understand the rush to condemn a country that is seeking to develop its economy, develop the livelihood of its people while preserving its important national site. We are of the view that the procedure, as was highlighted by my colleagues from Uganda and Nigeria, was deeply flawed and that what is needed, at this time, is a dialogue between experts and the State Party, in order to find a solution. Because the OUV of this magnificent heritage site is still there and we can ensure the development and heritage protection hand in hand.

With that in mind, we support the proposal and the amendment put forward by Uganda and Nigeria. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] First of all China commends the work carried out by the State Party is in light of the demands formulated by the Committee including drafting and revising a SEA report. We especially would like to express our thanks to the State Party for a host of measures taken to respond to the poaching activities and we are pleased to notice that the size of the elephant herd is increasing.

We also noted that IUCN believes that irreversible damage to the OUV of the property has already been caused through the loss of values and integrity under criterion (x) and there continues to be significant threats to remaining values under criterion (x). In other words, the OUV of this heritage property, especially its value related to biodiversity still exists. According to the report submitted by the State Party, this important World Heritage property spans over 5.2 million hectares which is the same surface as Switzerland. Only 1.8 per cent of the total property has been impacted due to the construction of the dam.

Under such circumstances, distinguished colleagues, assuming that the Committee decides to remove from the World Heritage List this heritage property which covers such a vast area with numerous protected species therein, then the question we need to ask ourselves is: which means do we still have to continue protecting this property in the future? Without the protection of this Convention, will there be other development projects? Furthermore, will this decision take a heavy toll on the ecosystem of the adjacent Mozambican Niassa Game Reserve? In other words, should we keep promoting or keep up the protection of the heritage property? We definitely need to mull over it.

Mr. Chair, this heritage property is a prime example of a developing country seeking a balance between protection and development. China believes that the Committee should focus on the protection of World Heritage and help States Parties and encourage them to find a more balanced path between development and protection. Rather than remove this property from the List for punishment.

It is our hope that the Committee can fully take account of all of the above-mentioned factors. China's recommendation is to give the State Party more time to finish the Strategic Environmental Assessment and then at the next session, we will be able to make a considerate and sensible decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. May I ask Australia to send the proposed text to the Rapporteur as soon as possible. Next speaker is Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As other members of this Committee, Oman acknowledges the serious commitment of the State Party to protect and conserve the OUV of the property that is now inscribed in the List of World Heritage property in Danger. The State Party, we believe, has responded convincingly and clearly to each of the concerns raised and has met most of its requirements in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Consultative Bodies.

The steps taken by the State Party in terms of reducing the land size with hunting blocks, the avoiding of any logging and undertaking site clearing for the dam area, and reservoirs, the update of lists of species of fauna and flora, as well as the maintenance of the size of the reservoir with a strong conservation protocol. As the results of these steps, it has been noted that for the past three years 2018-2020, no single elephant carcass has been encountered within the property. The State Party has expressed its commitment to fulfil the obligation and continue its effort and fruitful dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Consultative Bodies.

Therefore, Oman sees the deletion of the property of Selous Game Reserve of the World Heritage List to be deferred and supports retaining it in the List of World Heritage property in Danger. This gives the State Party the opportunity to continue its effort to protect the OUV of the property. Oman encourages the State Party to take into consideration all concerns raised by the World Heritage Centre and the Consultative Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are gathered here today to make sure that we conserve, promote and protect OUV and there is no better example than Selous Game Reserve. The vast magnificent area that is covered by this area and the huge commitment that the Republic of Tanzania has shown with regard to preserving the OUV and the amazing biodiversity this Game Reserve has.

Speaking of development and needs and I would like to echo what my colleagues have said before. When we look at development, this site has been inscribed around 40 years ago, a lot of development has happened globally, a lot of changes, population changes, different needs that emerged across the globe. And with that emerged the sustainable development agenda which clearly indicates the interdependence and the interrelationship between these goals and that we cannot cherry pick from sustainable development goals.

Therefore, development has its own needs, yet it only covers less than two per cent of the Selous Game Reserve. We are asked here to weigh the benefits and the cause, and therefore giving up the OUV that the Selous Game Reserve still has and still owns, and the commitment of the United Republic of Tanzania, we suggest that the United Republic of Tanzania is given the chance to work with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to further enhance the protection of this amazing Game Reserve. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor again. South Africa does not support the Draft Decision for the site to be delisted. As confirmed by the IUCN in its technical review of 1992, Selous Game Reserve is one Africa largest protected areas with a core of more of 5 million hectares and a buffer zone of more than 21,000 hectares. South Africa considers any decision to delete Selous as disproportionate, given the sheer size of the property and the total area being impacted, which on a scale basis can be considered as negligible.

Chairperson, whilst acknowledging that poaching of elephants for their tusk is an issue of concern in Africa, the latest census of data in 2018, as presented by Tanzania, indicates that the elephant population in Selous Game Reserve has increased by a total of more of 18 per cent, from about 15 000 individuals to 18 000 individuals. Noting this, we commend the efforts made by Tanzania to ensure that the elephant population in Selous Game Reserve recovers.

Additionally, the decision to build what is now called the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project was conceived and communicated to the World Heritage Committee at the time of its inscription in 1982. During that time, the IUCN evaluation team acknowledged that such a decision I quote: *'will result into clearance of a small area of vegetation and that will cause insignificant effect on the ecosystem'*. Chairperson, more recently the State Party has undertaken a Socio-economic Assessment and an Environmental Impact Assessment using IUCN procedures and guidelines as requested by the Committee during the 43rd session [...]

Chairperson:

Congo, please, turn off your microphone. South Africa, please, continue.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.51 also makes reference to the tendering of large logging right within the property for the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project. This is factually incorrect since, according to the State Party, they only undertook site clearing for the dam and the reservoir accounting for 1.8 per cent of the total reserve area.

Finally, the Draft Decision mentioned that additional plans and existing projects, such as mining, hydropower project, oil and gas exploration and roads are planned inside the property. It is once again important to note that the State Party has indicated that prospecting license do not exist within the property and the formerly granted prospecting licenses within the property expired in 2017 and were not renewed in accordance with Tanzania's legislation.

Noting the clarifications presented by the State Party, South Africa is of the view that the Selous Game Reserve should be retained in the List of World Heritage in Danger instead. South Africa encourages dialogue and collaboration between the State Party, IUCN and the World Heritage Centre in order to save this valuable and important property.

In closing, Chairperson, South Africa is of the view that decisions of this Committee should also take in consideration the efforts by developing country to address the socio-economic challenges they are currently experiencing and deleting this site from the World Heritage List will further decrease the number of African properties on the List, a point that we have consistently made, and a concern we have expressed to this Committee. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have mentioned before in our general intervention, on Item 7 of the Agenda and also yesterday while discussing the proposal to remove the city of Liverpool from the World Heritage List, decisions with far-reaching or irreversible consequences should be avoided during the exceptional circumstances the whole world is facing today without creating any precedent for the future sessions of the Committee.

This applies to the present case which also touches on another issue that was put forth by Ethiopia, China, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and other countries including Brazil and has been debated by this Committee. The need to strike a balance between heritage conservation and development needs. Development without protection compromises a property, but there can be no adequate protection without development.

In this specific case, the hydropower project under construction will impact a small portion of the site, but the larger part will maintain its original richness in terms of biodiversity and its OUV. This is a question that must be discussed in further depth. We should not recommend the removal of this site from the List before additional debate by the Committee, especially at the present time. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We support the amendments presented by Uganda on the Draft Decision. I would like to stress that we are opposed to the delisting of the site from the World Heritage List. As provided by the State Party in the latest state of conservation report, there is currently no single prospecting or mining license which has been granted within the reserve area. In addition, the rest of the proposed development are all planned outside the boundaries of the property and currently non-operational. We do not see how this Committee can proceed to conclude on impacts of projects that have actually not commenced.

Furthermore, the State Party of Tanzania, has provided assurances that none of the above projects will go ahead without an Environment and Social Impact Assessment as required by the Environmental Management Act of 2004 and in compliance with Paragraph 418 of the *Operational Guidelines*. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary does not agree with the content of the Draft Decision for several reasons. The analysis does not provide complete and honest information on the site and the dam construction. For instance, that the idea of the dam is older than the Convention, almost twice older, or that it is a must to solve Tanzania's energy crisis. The analysis fails to present and to demonstrate the scale and exact ratio of the area of the interventions compared to the total area of the property. Only 1.8 per cent is affected. The construction might be huge, yet is tiny compared to the whole site. Hungary also misses the participation of a homegrown African expert who could find insightful balance between the OUV and the rightful need for development in Tanzania.

Amongst these difficult and extraordinary circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Committee should not take such irreversible decision as deletion. To conclude, Hungary would retain Selous Game Reserve on the List of World Heritage in Danger and could ask the State Party a Reactive Monitoring mission along with African experts to find out a suitable creative solution for both the conservation of the OUV and the rightful development of Tanzania. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Russia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our Delegation is fully aware of the seriousness of challenges facing this outstanding property as it was described by the Advisory Bodies. However, we share the view of many Delegations that it is early to adopt irreversible decisions. Existential contradictions between the interest of conservation and those of development appear all over the world, specifically in Africa. The adequate solutions are not easy to find but should be by all means encouraged.

Therefore, in our view, more consultations with the State Party are needed. We would like to stress the importance of dispatching an expert mission by IUCN in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre to the site. We believe that these steps are critical for subsequent fair decision by the Committee. That is why we would like to support the proposals made by Australia to give time to the State Party time to elaborate proper measures in consultation with the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. Thank you, Mr. chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. nous sommes de l'avis qu'il ne faut pas biffer ce site de la Liste. La question qui se pose toujours devant une situation pareille est : que faire après ? Après le retrait d'un site de la Liste ? Cela ne peut que faire empirer la situation sur la terrain. En même temps, nous félicitons les efforts de la Tanzanie en vue de la protection du site, ce qui est de sa responsabilité. La troisième chose concerne le braconnage, mais aussi ce qu'on appelle le commerce illicite d'animaux ; cela reste un problème, pas seulement pour la Tanzanie, c'est un problème qui est global et qui mérite notre attention. Dans ce sens, je voudrais féliciter tout d'abord ceux qui sont en première ligne de la défense de ces animaux et de ces biens, à savoir les personnes qui, au péril de leur vie, sont confrontés à ce défi sur le terrain. Je répète notre opinion : ne pas biffer ce site et appuyer la proposition de l'Australie et des autres pays membres du Comité d'encourager la Tanzanie dans les efforts qu'elle va devoir déployer en ce sens. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Bahrain, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Given the Committee's interest in retaining this important African reserve on the World Heritage List and with IUCN using any possible solutions to further enhance attributes contributing to criterion (x) and as the assessment highlighted that these attributes could still be saved, we reiterate the request to the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission, requested by the Committee in Decision 42 COM 7A.56, and to agree upon the appropriate Corrective Measures that are feasible in preserving what remains of the original OUV. We further call upon the State Party to ensure that the recommendations of IUCN are taken into consideration and further encourage dialogue between the two. Mr. Chair, could the floor be given to IUCN for further clarification? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I now ask IUCN to take the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the comments from all the Committee members. If I may respond to those including the question from Bahrain.

First of all, I think it is important to be clear on the point, the suggestion, that it is only a small percentage of the property which is affected. Indeed, Selous is a very large property and indeed it is a large and undisturbed wilderness area in the current state or at least the state before the construction of the reservoir advanced, and that one of the most important justifications for its inscription on the World Heritage List.

Firstly, the dam footprint within this area will be exceptionally large. It is a 130-metre-high dam that will create a reservoir of over 12 kilometres in width and over 100 kilometres in length and over 125,000 hectares inundated. The footprint itself is connected to the need for large amount of supporting infrastructure, roads and transmission lines and so the reservoir itself is not the only impact. We need to also recall the location for the reservoir in the centre, at the heart of the reserve area, as it is currently listed. These are among the first reasons why the undisturbed wilderness is going to be directly and permanently lost in the way it has been included in the World Heritage List.

It is also important to stress that the impact of the dam goes well beyond its physical footprint. With river diversions in place, river systems will be substantively altered and this will also result in many downstream impacts including parts of the ecosystem that has sustained world famous aggregations of wildlife in the northern part of the property. And this is another irreversible change. The dam will alter the seasonal variation of the river flow, water chemistry, sediment loads and the complex interaction with the riparian systems downstream as well.

These are also different times than the 1980s when the site was listed. Firstly, it is important to note that these impacts are on top of the decline in wildlife and that was the reason for the site being listed in Danger. For instance, only a quarter of the water buffalo numbers that were there at the time of inscription still survive, and perhaps 20 per cent of the numbers of the elephant and black rhino declining from 2002 numbers of less than 20 are still there.

We have also seen cumulative pressure on the site from a number of other developments and we need to recall that we have to deal with the situation that is presented to us now. Also, to recall that this is not the first time the Committee has considered all of these matters that we had more than a decade of concerns being raised and the Committee has reviewed on many past occasions the situation that we find ourselves in now, and has given a series of clear requests to which, unfortunately, none of those we have seen implemented.

In terms of dialogue, I think it is clearly important that we keep dialogue in any circumstance on the issues that are raised. Obviously, the largest opportunity of that, over the last three years, would have been the Reactive Monitoring mission that had been requested by the Committee but unfortunately has not been requested to take place.

In terms of the question from Bahrain, it is really difficult to see how the implementation of this property assists the recovery of wildlife populations. We have seen at least stabilisation and possibly the sign of recovery in the elephant population. But, as we know, a number of the impacts are not certain and there are definitely concerns that the location of the dam directly results in impacts on wildlife, so not only there is impact on criterion (ix) but also superimposes on the major impacts we have seen on the OUV and criterion (x).

Mr. Chair, I believe I have covered the main points that were raised by Committee members. If there are other questions, I will be happy to address them. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe the World Heritage Centre also had some points that they may wish to reply to if you so allow. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Yes, please, take the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As for the question raised by Uganda on the procedure, I can inform you that there was a meeting with the State Party on the 18th of June. The Director met with the permanent delegate of Tanzania at UNESCO to inform him about the proposed Draft Decision ahead of it being published. If needed the Director could perhaps provide more information on this.

I think it is important to note, as IUCN said, that there was a great opportunity for dialogue to have the Monitoring mission. This Monitoring mission was been requested by the World Heritage Committee since 2018 and there have been many letters sent by the World Heritage Centre reiterating and requesting Tanzania to organise this Monitoring mission and Tanzania did not want to invite the Monitoring mission to date. In 2018, the Monitoring mission was requested, this was a proposal. Today, it is a project that, as you can see on the screen, is almost being completed. I think this is important to note.

I also wanted to mention the question of Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Environmental Impact Assessment. Indeed, Tanzania did prepare these documents, they were prepared, however, after the work had already started and the project was already decided. IUCN had an independent review of these documents. The review concluded that they did not comply with international standards for such impact assessment and also did not conform to the IUCN guidelines on impact assessment for World Heritage site. I think it is important to see that Environmental Impact Assessment and especially Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment are really instruments to inform decision-making. The problem here was that the decision was made when these documents were prepared. So, the State Party has indeed informed us that they want to revise the Impact Assessment to address the comments and the questions on the fact that it is not in line with standard and IUCN guidelines. However, one can question if that is still a useful thing to do given the fact that not only the decision has been made, but that the construction is almost completed.

I also wanted perhaps to add to the point of delegates mentioning the issue with the elephant population and biodiversity. I want to recall that at the time of inscription the elephant population at the site was estimated at 100,000 animals, and that when the site was inscribed on the World Heritage in Danger this number had dropped below 15,000. In 2018, a survey was done to find out if the population was recovering. This survey was not submitted to the World Heritage Centre but is publicly available. So, we did look at it with IUCN. It is indeed around 15,000 estimated. However, if you look at the statistical analysis, the increase in the number is actually less than the error margin of the survey methodology. It means that, in reality, we can only conclude that the numbers have not increased just remained stable, the 15,000 are the same if you look at the statistical error margin. Normally, the elephant population, when there is no more poaching, starts recovering quite quickly, it is an indication that poaching might still be an issue. We note the statement of Tanzania that there have been no elephant carcasses found in the last two years but, of course, this is also a complicated property to find these elephant carcasses.

We also want to mention here the population of the black rhino which is another flagship species of this site. And to date, it is not even sure if there is any black rhino remaining in the property, there is no published data about it. There have been efforts to locate remaining populations of black rhino but unfortunately most of these populations seem to be in the area where they would be inundated by the dam project.

I think these were the main points I wanted to cover. Perhaps, just on the question of development and conservation and the need to balance. Of course, this is an important topic in the Convention, as we all know. At the same time, I think it is important that development should not go ahead in a way that it impacts the OUV, if not, we cannot have the balance if the OUV is lost.

We believe that this project will irreversibly affect the OUV of this property. I think in this respect, again, it would have been important to do the Strategic Environmental Assessment ahead of the decision and to really look at options of having the needed development in a way that would preserve the OUV which is, unfortunately, in our and IUCN assessments not the case with the current development project. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We are very sad hearing what we have just heard regarding a very fundamental issue. I think, given what we have heard, it is not the sites that are in danger but the whole Committee itself and the whole World Heritage system that is in danger. Because choosing between preservation of heritage and feeding our population, we will always choose to feed our population. And unless this extremist view of "you do this or else we will punish" changes then we are heading towards disaster. I am saying this weighing my word. The way we have been doing things thus far can no longer be accepted by many of us now.

You cannot ask us to remain poor, underdeveloped and take punitive measures when development projects are implemented. That is just not any more accepted. So, the smart thing and the intelligent thing to do would be to try to find a balance. And here, the balance is heavily unfair or skewed in a property that still maintains its OUV. I have not heard anything that says that OUV is compromised. Road construction might come, electricity might come.

We are really baffled as to why we are going about this way, but that is a reflection on how things have been done over the last 50 years and it is up to us to change it as members from developing countries. In any rate, I want to ask you, Chair, if the floor could be given to the accused, the government and the people of Tanzania because we have not heard from them. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair, for allowing me back on the floor. I want to respond to the comments given by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre. Chair, even when we are considering a situation like this, we need to look at other areas. We cannot look at it in isolation without looking at other policies of sustainable development and we are also looking at climate change. We are actually grappling with climate change.

The moment we delist this site, a big area, an area almost as big as my country, I think we will be making a big mistake. Chair, on the other side of the river systems, an area that was raised by IUCN, I think IUCN needs to know that under criterion (ix) we will have other rivers that are flowing through Selous and providing the same criterion, and we have the ecological systems being delivered. We cannot afford to say that because one river is affected, all the rivers are affected, I think it would be wrong.

On the other hand, Chair, utilising *the Operational Guidelines* in one area and to not look at other areas, then we are getting a problem. Supposedly, if we look at other sectors with the *Operational Guidelines*, for example, can we evoke the element of *Operational Guidelines* Paragraph 191 and look at if there are any other interventions other than delisting. Should not we be sensitive to such a big area being delisted?

And I listen to my brother, Guy, of the World Heritage Centre. He is very sceptical about the numbers. These are the things we are saying: can't you then dialogue with the State Party and know whether we can establish whether we still have biodiversity, other than making a decision without data? I think this would be misinforming this Committee.

Chair, I think that we want to go ahead with the amended Draft Decision. I submit Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Mali, please, you have the floor. Turn on your microphone.

Délégation du Mali :

Monsieur le Président, à ce stade nous exhortons le Comité du patrimoine mondial à travailler en étroite collaboration avec l'État partie et à étendre sa pleine coopération et son soutien afin de trouver une approche commune en vue de relever le défi de l'équilibre entre la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial et le développement durable. Cela fonctionnera non seulement pour l'État partie de Tanzanie, mais aussi pour la plupart des pays en développement pour mettre en œuvre des projets visant à stimuler la croissance économique et le développement, conformément à l'agenda du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 des Nations Unies. Nous rejoignons donc d'autres délégations pour dire que cela serait une erreur de retirer à ce stade le site de Selous de la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The floor is to Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much for giving me the floor, Mr. Chairperson. Again, Guatemala, of course, recognises the urgent necessity to protect as many natural areas as possible. Thanks to these reserves, to restore those areas that have been degraded and all of this in order to improve the conservation of biodiversity, the environmental services and reducing the effect of climate change. My country would like to highlight that those sites that have the privilege of being on the List of the Convention, and that are protected through this Convention, apart from the biological aspect, should also fulfil all of their commitments, including the conservation of the integrity that is to say maintaining an environment that has not been altered.

Guatemala very much regrets the present situation and reiterates its trust in the measures that have been taken, and supports the position of the Advisory Bodies. Perhaps we should look into an intermediate solution such as removing the site and then perhaps presenting it again. But for the moment we would support IUCN's position. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Before I give the floor to China, I wanted to say to Ethiopia and Nigeria please formulate a clear question, because you asked for the floor to be given to Tanzania. Please, formulate a clear question. Now, China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My Delegation has followed very carefully the debate in the Committee. I would like to raise a question to IUCN. As we know, we are in the process to implement, to achieve all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We are in the decade to achieve the SDGs. I would like to present to the Committee a statistic. In 2018, in African countries, per capita energy consumption was only representing 20 per cent of the world average. Over 600 million people which is about 50 per cent of the African population do not get access to electricity. For countries to reach the SDGs, for countries to improve the living standard of their people, for countries to seek sustainable development, we really need to strike a balance between sustainable development and World Heritage Conservation.

I would like to know from the IUCN experts: are there any better ways to provide electricity supplies in every country than water generated electricity? Are there any better ways to strike a balance between development and conservation? I would really like to seek your advice. We have to strike a balance in the overall picture, otherwise we cannot really fulfil our responsibility to protect the integrity of the World Heritage Convention. I thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, Nigeria have you formulated the question?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Yes Chair, Maybe Uganda could speak.

Chairperson:

Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Chair, thank you very much. I think I needed to make sure I understand the question. Whether we are going with the Draft Decision or we vote against the Draft Decision and go with the amendments, is that what you meant? Chair, is it possible to also allow Tanzania to take the floor and explain if there are any grey areas that are not yet clear?

Chairperson:

This is not the question for the State Party to answer, it is only for the State Party for clarification, to clarify something then we can give the floor to the State Party. Ethiopia.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Chair. Two questions would be for the Delegation of Tanzania and their experts:

1) I know that due to the pandemic a field mission could not be undertaken and that the country was very hard hit, one of the hardest hits on the continent, but would you be willing to accommodate a field evaluation mission by the experts in 2021? That is the first question.

2) How do they plan to maintain the OUV over the 98.2 per cent of that beautiful heritage site in Selous?

Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Tanzania for a brief answer to these questions.

The Delegation of Tanzania:

Thank you very much, Chair. Let me first thank everybody for participating in this active discussion. We are very much pleased to see that most members of the Committee understand our situation and they are sympathising with what is going on, especially the decision that has been proposed by IUCN and the World Heritage site. I wish to reiterate that Tanzania is ready to cooperate with the Reactive Monitoring mission to collect facts on the ground, so that any misinformation that has been reported by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre are normalised.

We see a lot of flaws both in terms of procedures and in terms of the context of the substance of the matter. We are ready to collaborate. We understand that the situation is currently challenging, but we would like to see how best we can accommodate them at the right time.

In terms of managing biodiversity in the remaining 88 per cent of Selous, I want to assure you that we are now finalising a general Management Plan for the area and all these issues that have been raised by some members have been taken on board. So, there should be no worry of that we are ignoring the area simply because there is a big project going on.

Now, having responded to those two questions, let me also reaffirm that the subject of the construction of the Julius Nyerere Hydropower within the Selous Reserve World Heritage site has already attracted several decisions by the World Heritage Committee since 2017. This issue is not new, but rather I think sometimes we are going back unnecessarily opening up discussions which have already been closed. Taken together, the previous discussions have put a kind of positive spirit by the World Heritage community towards sustaining the environment safeguarding this beautiful site.

Tanzania would like to reaffirm its full collaboration and support towards this direction. I want to assure you that Tanzania is among the very few countries that dedicated more than one third of its entire country for biodiversity preservation. There is no way we can urbanise the site of Selous by not taking the necessary measures and take all precautions. We can assure that the project is implemented in a sustainable manner.

We have considered with keen interest the Draft Decision 44 COM7A.51 on Selous Reserve World Heritage site, I would like to make observations on its content. The Decision states that its property already lost its OUV and integrity [...]

Chairperson:

I remind you just to answer the question.

The Delegation of Tanzania:

I think I have already answered the questions that we are ready to cooperate and are talking all the necessary precautions to ensure biodiversity is well managed in the remaining part of Selous.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Nigeria.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you for giving me the floor. As you rightly asked, what is the question. Question is one to suspend deleting of the site, and two, like Tanzania just submitted, they said they would be open to work on a return to the site of an update on the situation, I think these are the two positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I think they have already answered the question. Now, I give the floor to Norway.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. The changes proposed by Uganda to the Draft Decision, an amendment we have been able to read, but during the discussion I have seen several other amendments coming up on my computer. We need time to take into account all of these amendments and questions. So, Norway would like to ask, Chair, to form a drafting group and we would also ask IUCN to participate in the proposed drafting group. Could that be possible? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Nigeria, now you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Sorry, I did not want to raise my hand. I take it down. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I now give the floor to IUCN.

IUCN:

Thank you, Chair. I would just like to respond to the question to IUCN from China and thank the delegate of China for that question. I think it is important to emphasise that IUCN is an organisation that works all the time on questions

of sustainable development. Our role that you see here focuses on World Heritage and on giving advice to the World Heritage Committee on impacts of development on World Heritage sites. But we are engaged in vast amounts of our work, and field projects through our offices across the world in programmes which are exactly about dealing with questions of sustainable development.

The question that I think China asked was answered. In fact, the point that was referred to by the World Heritage Centre on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the hope through that process was precisely to address looking at alternatives within the wider landscapes that could provide an answer to the energy development needs, but without creating the levels of impacts on the Selous Game Reserve that we believe this project is creating. The evaluation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment concluded that there were many unanswered questions in the work that had been done. As the colleague from the World Heritage Centre noted, the Strategic Environmental Assessment itself needed to be done before decisions were taken to move ahead with the project for that problem-solving approach to provide an answer.

In this instance, Mr. Chair, we're focus especially on this project and its impact on the OUV. And whether there is a compatibility or incompatibility. And our conclusion is that there is an incompatibility with the project and the OUV of the Selous Game Reserve and this is the basis of the resolution and our advice to the World Heritage Committee.

I just maybe conclude with a very specific point. We are not giving this advice based on the last two years but on the basis of the Committee's own decisions over more than a decade of considering this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.51 concerning this property. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received two amendments from Uganda and Australia. But before going into detail, the distinguished delegate of Norway asked to create a drafting group, perhaps you would like to reply to that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I think all of us have noticed that most of the Committee members prefer going through the Draft Decision, we will proceed then.

Rapporteur:

Well noted. As mentioned, we officially received amendments from the distinguished Delegation of Uganda and Australia to the Decision 44 COM 7A.51 concerning Selous Game Reserve, United Republic of Tanzania. The proposed changes are integrated into the original Draft Decision as shown on the screen.

We have no amendments proposed in the first three paragraphs. Perhaps we can continue looking at paragraph 4 which reads: 'Further recalling the Committee's clear position, adopted in its Decision 40 COM 7, that the construction of dams with large reservoirs within the boundaries of World Heritage properties is incompatible with their World Heritage status, and — we removed 'and here' just for the language — urges States Parties to ensure that the impacts from dams that could affect properties located upstream or downstream within the same river basin are rigorously assessed in order to avoid impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).'

We continue with paragraph 5.

Chairperson:

First, have you finished this paragraph?

Rapporteur:

Correct, I have finished paragraph 4.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will go through the text of the Draft Decision paragraph by paragraph. For the first three paragraphs with no amendments, do you approve? They are approved. For paragraph 4, are there any objections? It is approved. Thank you, go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5 reads: 'Recalling furthermore that the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the dramatic decline in elephant population due to poaching, and, site clearance of about 1.8% of the

5.2 million ha area of the property for the purpose of constructing the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) (formerly the Rufiji Hydropower Project)'.

Chairperson:

Paragraph 5, do you approve? It is approved. Paragraph 6, please, go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6 reads: 'Recalling moreover' — in the proposed amendment of Uganda 'moreover' was crossed over but for the flow of the Decision we need to have it here — 'the commitment made by the State Party that led to the adoption of Decision 36 COM 7B.43, to not undertake any development activities in the property without the Committee's approval, and further recalling the States Party's declared intention to construct a dam in the property at the time of its inscription on the World Heritage List and assessment by the IUCN Technical Review team that the proposed project at that time would have no adverse impact on the property'.

Chairperson:

I see IUCN asked for the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Chair. I think if you agree for us to make a comment. There are two comments to make here. I think that the Draft Decision is factually incorrect in that statement. Firstly, the proposed project in this form did not exist in 1982, but also you have heard the opinion of IUCN recorded, and clearly, our assessment is not that this will not have no adverse impact on the property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Now for paragraph 6, can we approve it? Norway, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Sir. Norway would like to delete the text added from Uganda.

Chairperson:

The floor is to Ethiopia.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We want to see this paragraph maintained and, if IUCN or other Delegations have issues maybe we can agree on the facts. The facts as we know them is that when this site was inscribed in 1982, the Committee was informed that there would be development projects and in particular the construction of a dam. Now, whether they were not aware of the scale, of the nature, that could be debated. What cannot be debated as a matter of historical fact is that when this inscription was made in 1982, the Committee and experts were fully aware that there was a development project that was planned and in particular the Selous dam construction project was in the pipeline. It could not be correct to say that there were no projects envisage. If the experts are not comfortable with the language, the language can be changed. This idea that there was no project planned is not correct, historically wrong. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Uganda, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair. Basically, during our review, we took note of a number of texts that actually were quoted by IUCN and I am surprised that IUCN is denying the very thing that they wrote. For example, I quote IUCN and some of the statements read in the past: '*Will result into clearance of a small portion of vegetation and that will cause insignificant effects on the ecosystem.*' Other statement: '*But thus would affect a relatively small part of the Reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern unless if the reservoir grows great number of settlers*'. These are on the report. So, that is the bases for us to have put on record that actually before this site was put on the List of Heritage in Danger, the State Party had already notified and IUCN had accepted that, yes, this was a small area to impact the entire Selous Game Reserve. So, for some of these things we need to get back to the records and we should not deny the facts tat are already in black and white. I submit Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief. I fully support the remarks made by the Delegation of Uganda. We believe that this paragraph should remain as it is, without any proposal to deleting it. It is very important to make sure to keep this paragraph. And as I had indicated in my previous statement why it is important to make the reference to constructing the dam at the time of the inscription on the World Heritage List. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, you have the floor

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, I fully support what my brother from Ethiopia has said and so has Egypt. IUCN is disputing those facts, perhaps they could privilege us by telling us exactly in their understanding how their report was formulated. Are they denying completely that they never said that? According to them, they said something and can they tell us exactly what they said in their report?

Chairperson:

Nigeria, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. In line with previous interventions, I entirely support the interventions of Ethiopia and Uganda and probably to ask IUCN to check their record, possibly some oversight from their side, but as is mentioned in the text it was part of the initial document. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are thinking about proposing some amendments to the text that could perhaps resolve this tension. Maybe the line could read after 'The assessment by the IUCN technical team', it could then say: 'that the project proposed at the time would have'—and I am quoting here from the IUCN assessment at the time which said that — 'it would only affect a relatively small part of the reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern, unless the reservoir draws in large numbers of settlers'. That is the direct quote.

Chairperson:

Okay. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Sir. We have a more recent decision made by the Committee in Baku and paragraph 6 in 43 COM 7A.16 that says: 'Considers that the deforestation and accumulative damage to such a large area in the property would likely lead to irreversible damage to its OUV and hence fulfil the condition for deletion of the property from the World Heritage List.' I think it is important to bear this in mind in this session when we are going through this amendment. That is our concern. The advice from IUCN in 1982 is existing but the Committee Decision in Baku is important to remember. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this amendment from Australia? Norway, I wanted to clarify, you want to add one paragraph to the text?

The Delegation of Norway:

No, it was just to remind the Committee.

Chairperson:

Not for the text?

The Delegation of Norway:

No.

Chairperson:

Okay. On the revised text of paragraph 6, have you got any objections? First, we listen to the Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, if I may ask the distinguished delegates from Australia to just dictate the text they wish to see in the Decision, it would help.

The Delegation of Australia:

It would say something like: 'That the project proposed at the time would affect only a relatively small part of the reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern, unless the reservoir draws in large numbers of settlers'. The document is IUCN Technical Review, identification number and name 199 Selous Game Reserve.

Chairperson:

Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Chair. I think that it would be better to give the floor to IUCN to clarify this matter, as it is better when it comes from the institution.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN, please, you have the floor.

IUCN:

If the intention is to communicate the review at the time and I understand the intention of the paragraph definitely to how it was drafted, I think to then be precise, it would be an assessment by the IUCN Technical Review. At the time, it was not a team, it was one person that made reviews without going to the field and that the project is not the same project exactly. I guess this would work: 'The project proposed at that time would affect only', — and it is not 'a very', — 'only a relatively small part of the reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern unless the reservoir draws in large numbers of settlers'. That is now a factually correct statement. Mr. Chair, as you have understood, it is not IUCN's view in 2021. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur, the text of paragraph 6 is okay now?

Rapporteur:

Should we just read the amended part just for clarity? I am just reading the new part: 'And further recalling the States Party's declared intention to construct a dam in the property at the time of its inscription on the World Heritage List and assessment by the IUCN Technical Review (No. 199 Selous Game Reserve), that the project proposed at that time would affect only a relatively small part of the reserve and should not be a matter [...]'

Chairperson:

Excuse me but the text disappeared. It is back now.

Rapporteur:

Should I continue?

Chairperson:

Yes, go ahead.

Rapporteur:

'(No. 199 Selous Game Reserve), that the proposed project at that time would affect only a relatively small part of the reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern unless the reservoir draws in large numbers of settlers.' This is the final text, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Any objections to this text, paragraph 6? It is approved. Rapporteur go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 7 reads: 'Notes the existing Mkuju uranium mine project that was excised from Selous Game Reserve through boundary modification, and the proposed Kidunda Dam, Kito-1 oil and gas exploration projects together with others planned oil exploration blocks outside the reserve, and also urges the State Party to subject these projects to appropriate and relevant Environmental and Social safeguards'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Sir. Norway would like the wording to be in line with Paragraph 118 bis in the Operational Guidelines when it comes to Environmental Impact Assessments. It states this and 'Social safeguards'. Maybe we can ask the Secretariat if this would be part of the standard or normal procedure of the Operational Guidelines?

Chairperson:

Mr. Debonnet, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Could you repeat the question, please?

The Delegation of Norway:

The question is that it says in the new paragraph 7: 'Environmental and Social safeguards'. Is that a term in line with the Operational Guidelines talking about Impact Assessment?

The Secretariat:

I think this question should be answered by somebody who works on *Operational Guidelines*. The best would be to refer to the relevant paragraph.

Chairperson:

Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Basically, what we want to, what my Delegation wants to, in this paragraph, is it to reiterate the need by the State Party to ensure that the Environmental and Social Assessments are subjected to this project including other areas that are outside the reserve. In fact, we need to have a social safeguard something that goes beyond the property in order for us to understand the cumulative impact of all these projects that are being developed. Therefore, in this, if Norway thinks we have not captured all the information adequately or possibly we have used a statement that does not adequately cover what I have explained, then I give them the floor to make it better. I submit Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now I can invite Dr Rössler to the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thanks also to all comments. I think it would be best to refer to the relevant paragraph of the Operational Guidelines. You could add 'In line with Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines' which states that 'States Parties shall ensure that Environmental Impact Assessments, Heritage Impact Assessments, and/or Strategic Environmental Assessments be carried out as a prerequisite for development projects and activities that are planned for implementation within or around a World Heritage property. These assessments should serve to identify development alternatives, as well as both potential positive and negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and to recommend mitigation measures against degradation or other negative impacts on the cultural or natural heritage within the property or its wider setting. This will ensure the long-term safeguarding of the Outstanding Universal Value, and the strengthening of heritage resilience to disasters and climate change.' So, if you refer to Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines, I think that should do it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, is this okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. That is fine.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, do we approve? Okay, it is approved. Ms. Rapporteur go ahead with paragraph 8.

Rapporteur:

It reads: 'Notes with concern that the State Party has continued with some of the project activities that may impact the integrity and OUV of the property, and further urges the State Party to put in place strong mitigation measures to manage such activities in accordance with the Operational Guidelines'.

Chairperson:

Can we approve this paragraph 8? It is approved. Paragraph 9.

Rapporteur:

The previous paragraph 9 is struck through and a new paragraph 9 is proposed by Australia: 'Notes the property is one of the largest protected areas in Africa and is vital for protecting the Endangered African elephant'.

Chairperson:

Can we approve? It is approved. go ahead

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 10 reads: 'Recommends that, despite the potential impacts of the construction of the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project, the State Party take note that the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that important biodiversity could remain in the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem and the heritage status of this property could be re-evaluated, with the option of developing a new World Heritage nomination'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Shall I continue Mr. Chair?

Chairperson:

Yes. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 11 reads: 'Requests the State Party to invite' — to be consistent with the other text, Mr. Chair, we will have a minor modification — 'a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to verify the status of the property on the ground and suggest options for conserving the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem'.

Chairperson:

Do we approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New Paragraph 12 reads: 'Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property for the examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023 with a view to considering whether the property will be delisted.'

Mr. Chair, due to the pandemic situation, we are actually not going to have the year in the decision text anymore, so: 'at its 46th session'. Also, for consistency: 'with a view to considering its deletion from the World Heritage List at its 46th session'. We have a clarification in here, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Yes. China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question to the Australian Delegation. I would like to know the specific reason why Australia would like to propose the 46th session.

Chairperson:

Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

The reason we suggested that is that we should give time for the Reactive Monitoring mission and the subsequent report from the State Party.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Also, from my side I need a clarification. The Committee is reviewing at each of its ordinary session all the state of conservation of sites on the in Danger List. So, it means that at the 45th session, there will be a report. On which ground is this report based, that is also a question I would have to ask Australia with this amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Australia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I think perhaps this is something we would take guidance from Uganda and maybe from the Secretariat on how we might navigate this. Our intention was simply to provide sufficient time to do the work, not to try to avoid a report at the 45th session, so I am in the hands of the very capable Dr Rössler. Thank you.

Chairperson:

The floor is to Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I think the concerns of the Director are valid. But having said that we can ask for a progress report at the next session and then, of course, a final one for the 46th session. There should not be any problem with that. There will be a report at the next session. For example, we ask that the State Party by December 1st submit its report and then thereafter we except a mission, so we can ask for a progress report. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Looking at the proposed paragraph, I think we should stop after the 46th session and we have to delete the last sentence of this paragraph: the fact of making reference to review concerning deletion. I think this is jumping to the examination by the 46th session and therefore I think that we should stop after '46th session' and to let the 46th session to examine and to take the necessary decision. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

I have carefully listened to the State member of Ethiopia and Paragraph 190 clearly states the annual review of state of conservation. So, with the permission of the delegate of Ethiopia we could say: 'Further requests the State Party to submit a progress report and, by 1 February 2022, etc.'. I leave this to the Rapporteur so that it is aligned with the Operational Guidelines.

Chairperson:

Is this okay with Committee members, this proposal? Yes, it is. The floor is to Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chair. I have the same observation as His Excellency the Ambassador of Egypt. I think we should stop at the '46th session' without putting a condition in order to delete the site. I have the same observation as Egypt. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you. First, we fully agree with what the Director of the Centre proposed, it is fine with us. More importantly, we forgot to mention that on the second part of the sentence prejudices the outcome of the report and the visit. And, by the way, I think we had a decision in our last meeting in Baku, maybe the Rapporteur could remind us, where we do not prejudge visits and reports. That has to be consistent with our previous practice, so this last part should be deleted as proposed by Egypt and is supported by Oman. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. I just want to share our views with those of Egypt and Oman. I think if we put 'With a view of deletion' this will be bias in the assessment. I think we need to leave the assessment to be very independent and to bring views without being biased. Secondly, I want to support the statement of the Director of the World Heritage Centre, I think it is in order. I submit Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to formulate this paragraph 12, we say: 'Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, a progress report and, by 1 December 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

In response to the question of the distinguished Delegation of Ethiopia, the continuation text is taken from previous decision so it is a text that was used before just to clarify: 'With a view to considering its deletion from the World Heritage List at its 45th session'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My Delegation supports the amendment raised by Egypt seconded by Oman, Ethiopia and Uganda. We also want to delete the final part of the sentence. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway would like to keep some remains of previous decisions. Norway would like to keep the last part of paragraph 12.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was about to speak to say that if consensus was around to deleting that paragraph, then Australia would not object, but to point out that it was part of the original text. So, in the interest of reaching a consensus we would not object to its removal. Because we also agree it is problematic to prejudge or assume to prejudge a future Committee's decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We join Egypt, Oman, China, Australia and most countries that are in favour of removing the last part because it is not fair that we judge. So, we urge to reach a consensus, because for us it is a fundamental issue that this party let a mission and a report guides us on whether or not there would be deletion.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary also agrees with Egypt, Oman, Ethiopia, China to delete the last part. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to join Egypt, Oman, Uganda, China, Australia and Hungary with the proposal to delete the last part since it is considered to be a prejudgment. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Indeed, Chairperson, I really want to join all other colleagues, Egypt, Oman, Uganda, China, Hungary, Australia and Saudi Arabia, to request that the last part is to be deleted. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Nigeria.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nigeria wants to join Egypt, Oman, Uganda, China, Australia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa to take out the last part of that sentence since it looks pre-emptive. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We simply wanted to support the proposal presented by Norway. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Sorry, Chair, it was an earlier hand.

Chairperson:

Okay. Bosnia-Herzegovina, please.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous sommes d'accord avec la majorité de nos collègues, à savoir de biffer la partie concernant le point 13, de maintenir la chasse. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We simply wanted to state that we agree with the proposal tabled by Australia and the consensus presented by Ethiopia and the other Committee members to remove the end of the sentence. We need to think of something that really describe the situation and we should not prejudice what the report and the question put to the member States will be leading to. So, we would agree with deleting it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

We would like to support the amendment proposed by Egypt to delete the last part of that paragraph because we believe that we should not prejudice what will be decided at the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I wanted to know, Norway, would you like to join the consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. We will join.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Paragraph 12 is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

The last paragraph, 13, reads: 'Decides to retain Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.' These are all the amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Dear colleagues now that we have been through; actually sorry, I give the floor to St Kitts and Nevis.

The Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to add my voice to all the previous endorsements and to record St Kitts and Nevis's appreciation of the compromises to reach an agreement. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, now we have been through all the texts, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.51 adopted as amended ^[*gave!*]. Thank you very much. I would now like to ask whether any Observer Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. First, Uganda has the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair. The Delegation of Uganda would like to thank the members of the Committee for discussing Selous Game Reserve objectively. Given the current wave of rapid biodiversity loss and climate change, it would have been a grave mistake on the part of the Committee to surrender such a magnificent habitat, with threatened, endangered and rare species, to deletion.

This Committee is mandated to protect the cultural and natural heritage and anything that is not in line with what put the mandate of this Committee at stake. We congratulate the United Republic of Tanzania on this achievement and advise on the dialogue for evaluation of the remaining area and onward protection of the critically threatened biodiversity. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I want to thank all Delegations that participated constructively in having what we feel is a very balanced and fair decision. We want to thank the government of Tanzania for positively engaging on this matter. The government is, of course, well aware I think of the challenges ahead, but this is a challenge that can only be met if supported by us, the Committee, and by the wider international community.

Again, the balance between development and heritage protection should be struck. There is no opposition between the two in our minds. Actual development is a condition for heritage preservation and protection. We are very happy to see that this magnificent site remains on the World Heritage List and now we should all work together in a cooperative manner to make sure that it is removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger. If you allow Chair, I think the government of Tanzania should also be given the opportunity to say a few words. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. We simply wanted to express our thanks for the in-depth work and analysis carried out by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. We also would like to congratulate Tanzania in this process at this stage and congratulate us all for a very dynamic and committed discussion that we have witnessed on this issue, on this particular site.

I would like to reiterate the need to keep that dialogue, that active conversation on the issue of development and how do we preserve the World Heritage of humanity. We all ratified and are parties to the Convention and to keep that in balance with the Sustainable Development goals. We agree with the important decision.

We would like to thank the Advisory Bodies for their analytical abilities and their scientific approach which we highly value. And also, the international community for the very interesting and valuable dialogue that we have had. Multilateralism must function, it is at risk, not only as the Ambassador delegate of Ethiopia was stating, we are in a situation of risk, but multilateralism is at risk. This Convention is a very good example of that. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I give the floor to Tanzania for two minutes.

The Delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania:

Thank you very much, Chair. On behalf of the Tanzania's Delegation, I wish to thank you personally for chairing this session professionally. I would also like to thank all members for their constructive views that have made Tanzania remain on the List of World Heritage sites in Danger. It is true that the Decision was based on facts that were not clear, but members of the Committee observed that there are anomalies which needed to be rectified.

On our side we are ready to collaborate, to make sure that all facts are known clearly and if there is any decision to be taken, it is to lead to an objective decision. We do not want a decision based on speculations. I assure you that we will cooperate, and I ask all members to continue supporting Tanzania, as we are highly committed to ensure that Selous is effectively managed and that there are no negative impacts on the sustainability of the ecosystem. Thank you very much, Chair, and I wish you all the best.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. Now I give the floor to the Environmental Investigation Agency for two minutes.

Observer-Environmental Investigation Agency:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor. This intervention is made on behalf of the Environmental Investigation Agency and the Rivers without Boundaries Coalition.

We regret this Committee's decision not to delete the Selous Game Reserve from the World Heritage List, as per the Draft Decision. We are disappointed by the move to retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The Rufiji hydropower project has been repeatedly flagged by UNESCO and IUCN as flouting Tanzania's commitments under the UNESCO Convention. This Committee has explicitly requested that the project construction not be carried out. The Tanzanian Government has instead chosen a path of unilateral action that has been detrimental to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Selous. For many years, even prior to the pandemic, the State has failed to invite a Monitoring mission to the site.

The decision not to delete Selous absolved the State Party of its responsibilities in instigating an unsustainable project in the middle of our shared heritage. Further, we are concerned that today's Decision waters down the purposes and integrity of the UNESCO Convention. The State Party has continued to undertake activities in the Selous Game Reserve that are contrary to this Committee own recommendations: Information published by the State Party presents the dam over halfway complete; significant deforestation in key habitats and the diversion of the Rufiji River — the central artery of the property, have taken place. The State Party has publicly announced its intention to start filling the reservoir in November 2021.

The reasons for the site being designated as World Heritage have been systematically destroyed, essentially due to the construction instigated by the State Party. We do not dispute the State Party's right to develop energy,

however, this Committee has unequivocally opposed the development of large dams inside UNESCO sites, and so a natural consequence of the State Party's action should be delisting.

Today's meeting was unfortunately a miss opportunity for the Committee to send a clear and unambiguous message that the wilful destruction of ecologically important UNESCO sites is unacceptable under the Convention. We would also draw attention to the involvement of state-owned companies and banks of several States Parties in the project and urge the Committee to remind Parties of their commitment not to threaten the World Heritage of other State Parties [...]

Chairperson:

Please mind the time.

Observer-Environmental Investigation Agency:

I have 20 seconds left. Is that okay? Thank you. The decisions taken today on the Selous Game Reserve are instrumental in determining the long-term protection of our shared heritage but also the future of the UNESCO Convention. We are deeply disappointed that a more robust outcome was not agreed to promote the protection of our shared heritage, our environment and the integrity of the Convention. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues before we conclude today's session, I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler concerning the vote scheduled on the 21st of July. Please, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I would like to just remind the Committee members that the secret vote on Item 7A.34, that is Liverpool, is scheduled for the 21st of July, which is Wednesday, and will start at 9 am in Room V at the Fontenoy building of UNESCO, according to the timetable which is shown now on the screen and you will also receive the timetable from the Secretariat tonight. The voting papers will be distributed in the room itself. Please, also note that there are two tellers. I think there was a mistake with the teller from South Africa. It will be Mr. Moses Phahlane and the Hungarian representative is Mr. Szabolcs Nemes.

There is also an announcement we would like to make, Mr. Chairperson, because we said this at a press conference yesterday. For all of you available is a *World Heritage* issue out in Chinese, English, French and Spanish. Because you are not with us here in Fuzhou so you can look at the World Heritage sites in China. Thank you very much and I think Ms Hosagrahar also has an announcement for a site event.

Chairperson:

Yes please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I wanted to announce the side event on the 21st of July 'Young managers and local actors around World Heritage seek dialogue with local communities'. This will be held at 9:45 pm to 11:30 pm Beijing time or 3:45 pm to 5:30 pm Paris time. This is organised by the permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to UNESCO. All information on side events day time and online access are available on the session webpage. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Chair, Excellencies, I would like to start by congratulating all in our Muslim world for the occasion of *Eid al-Adha*. Today and tomorrow are sacramental days for us and I wish *Eid al-Adha Mubarak*.

I would also like to thank the Committee for agreeing with the proposal of Oman and Egypt to halt the meeting for tomorrow the 20th. This is very much appreciated by us as Muslims. Wishing you all the best for the day. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear friends, we are closing today's meeting almost on time. In general, we are on track according to our programme. Thank you for your diligent efforts and efficiency. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish our Muslim friends *Eid al-Adha*. Dear colleagues see you the day after tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time. For Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 03:33:37 pm.

FOURTH DAY – Wednesday 21 July 2021
FOURTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, let us get to work today. As usual, let me present the discussions of the fourth meeting of the Bureau. Dear colleagues, I am very happy to welcome you today for our plenary meeting. The Bureau of the Committee held its fourth meeting today. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the progress of the work of the Committee and I record that we have examined a number of states of conservation reports of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the momentous decision to remove the Salonga National Park from the List in Danger. However, concerning Liverpool, as you all know, subsequent to a request formulated by Committee members we had to resort to a vote which took place earlier this morning at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and for which I will announce the results in a few minutes.

I also informed the Bureau that once all reports of properties in Danger, Item 7A, have been examined, we will start Item 7B in the exact order in which they are foreseen in the calendar circulated by the Secretariat.

This means we will start with 7B.31 the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi; 7B.33 Kathmandu; then proceed with 7B.1 Abomey; 7B.118 Lalibela before examining 7B.49 Budapest. I also informed the Bureau that we have 16 state of conservation reports to examine under Item 7B over the next three days and numerous amendments to consider. This is a very heavy workload.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to recall that at its 43rd session, in 2019, the Committee had supported the current procedure for Committee members to request the opening of a state of conservation report by providing a written request to the Chairperson sufficiently in advance of the session and indicating the reasons why the report should be open. Last-minute requests to open a report for discussion do not allow enough time to be prepared for a well-informed decision-making process. I therefore invite you to avoid opening any new reports at this stage of the session. If there is no objection, we will proceed this way. Thank you very much.

Lastly, I reminded the Bureau that the established working group on the Budget chaired by Ms. Zoya Krytskaya will hold its first meeting today from 4.30 until 5:30 pm Paris time using the same Zoom link for the Bureau and the Plenary meetings.

Dear colleagues, as you all know, voting by a secret ballot has taken place earlier on today regarding the state of conservation of Liverpool. The results are as follows:

- Number of Committee Members present and voting: 20.
- Number of Committee Members absent: 1.
- Numbers of blank ballot papers: 0.
- Numbers of invalid ballot paper: 2.
- Number of valid ballot papers: 18.
- Votes in favour of the proposal: 13.
- Votes not in favour of the proposal: 5.
- Majority required two third: 12.

Therefore, the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.34 is adopted.

Dear colleagues, I would like to know if you have any comments after the announcement of the results of the vote. There are no comments. Since the vote is positive, the Draft Decision 44 COM 7A.34 proposed is adopted ^[gavel]. It means that the site of Liverpool Maritime, Mercantile City is deleted from the World Heritage List.

We now move on with the next Agenda Item. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. I see none. Let us proceed.

I now invite Ms. Rössler to read the list of the other natural properties located in the Africa Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I will read out the list of the other properties from the Africa Region for which reports are proposed for adoption without discussion: n°39, Manovo-Gounda St. Floris National Park, Central African Republic; n°14, Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea; n°41, Garamba National Park

in the Democratic Republic of Congo; n°42, Kaosidega National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo; n°43, Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the Democratic Republic of Congo; n°45, Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo; n°46, a general Decision on the World Heritage properties of the Democratic Republic of Congo; n°47, Lake Turkana National Park in Senegal; n°48, Rainforests of the Atsinanana Madagascar; n°49, Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves in Niger; n°50, Niokolo-Koba National Park in Senegal. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gravel]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. Libya, please, you have the floor for a two-minute intervention. Please turn on your microphone. We still cannot hear you, Excellency. Is it okay? Dr Rössler, please take the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. We understand that the Ambassador of Libya wishes to intervene, but we cannot hear him. The microphone does not seem to work.

The Delegation of Libya:

Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, please. You have two minutes for your intervention.

The Delegation of Libya:

Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes. Please, we can hear you.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

I think it would be best if someone could write in the chat that we can hear the Ambassador.

The Delegation of Libya:

Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Libya:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor. As a State Party to the Convention and Observer to the Committee, I would like to thank China for the wonderful organisation for this session as well as the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Secretariat for their effort.

This statement concerns the World Heritage site of the Old City of Ghadames in Libya. I am sorry I missed the chance of the right to speak at the right moment due to internet problems. But, anyway, we appreciate the kind words and continued support from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and their acknowledgement of the effort of the State Party of Libya managing the World Heritage site of Ghadames.

We would also like to thank the Netherlands Funds in Trusts (Nfit) for its support in the project strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of Corrective Measures for Libya World Heritage property. Libya continues its close working relationship with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS. Libya took and will be taking more significant steps towards the conservation of the property of the ancient site of Ghadames.

It is known that this property has been included in the In Danger List due to the effect of the armed conflict that took place in 2011 and beyond. But in fact, the armed conflict did not have a direct impact on the property. Ghadames suffered from limited indirect effects from the conflict such as the lack of access to financing to carry out repairs and maintenance work. Unfortunately, a number of houses collapsed in December 2017 and more in March 2019. But this was the result of heavy rains due to climate change and not through neglect. Libya will adopt the submitted Corrective Measures and adhere to its main frame or timeframe for the implementation.

Finally, we would like to repeat the invitation to the Reactive Monitoring mission to visit Ghadames and other Libyan World Heritage sites. Libya has high hopes that at the next World Heritage Committee we will be able to take

Ghadames out of the in Danger List and thereby support the local Ghadames community to regain confidence in their ability to maintain their city to the highest standards. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to take the floor.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any more comments? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the properties of the Asia Pacific Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. This is n°52, Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra in Indonesia and n°53, East Rennell in the Solomon Island. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted [gave!]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see none.

Now, let us proceed. I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the properties of the Europe and North America Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have Item n°54, Everglades National Park in the United States of America. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted [gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the properties of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have item n°55, Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras and n°56, Islands and Protected areas of the Gulf of California in Mexico. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on this state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted [gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. The Centre for Biological Diversity, you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-Centre for Biological Diversity:

Thank you, Mr. President. I am a proud citizen of Mexico and I do this intervention on behalf of the Centre for Biological Diversity, the Animal Welfare Institute, the Natural Resources Defence Council and the Environmental Investigation Agency.

We thank the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for conducting two missions to Mexico to evaluate the status of the World Heritage site Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California and for inscribing the site as in Danger by the Committee in 2019, and for the allocating emergency funding for supporting removal of illegal fishing nets through the Rapid Response Facility.

With only ten vaquita remaining on the planet and despite over two years since the in Danger designation, the Draft Decision asks Mexico to submit its final proposal for Corrective Measures by 1 February 2022, nearly eight months from now. This time frame is inexcusable and must be rejected particularly since, as stated in the Draft Decision, illegal fishing of totoaba has continued in the Upper Gulf of California resulting in a threat of imminent extinction of the vaquita population. The volume of illegally extracted totoaba products remains high, and there are concerns that the State Party has not fully implemented the regulations adopted in September 2020 and has failed to enforce them.

That is why the Corrective Measures must be completed by 1 September 2021 and fully implemented by no later than 1st of October 2021 before the next illegal totoaba fishing season begins. Anything short of this will further

jeopardize the very existence of the vaquita which, if lost to extinction, will profoundly undermine the value and integrity of the site and tarnish the reputation of the World Heritage Convention. With ten vaquita left, this could be the last opportunity for the Committee to act before the species goes extinct. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mexico, please, you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

The Delegation of Mexico:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Dear members of the Committee, Mexico fulfils its commitments towards the World Heritage Convention and carries out actions to implement the Decisions of the Committee in order to guarantee the protection of the OUV of this property and the protected areas of the Gulf of California.

We would like to recognise and highlight the cooperation between the government of Mexico, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to look to these issues in view of the adoption and implementation of necessary measures for the survival of vaquitas in the Upper Gulf of California. The aim is to protect the vaquitas whose incidental fishing is the result of the fishing of the totoaba fish.

We started setting up a programme to ensure the partial or total closing of fishing for illegal activities and this would help the supervision of the area inhabited by the vaquitas and also look to confiscating illegal fishing equipment. We are not reducing our commitment to zero tolerance as established in 2020. On the contrary, we are strengthening it with new protection measures that are more effective and that have been established recently by the Mexican government and are complementary to strengthen the framework agreement for the protection of endangered species and their habitat in the Gulf of California.

All of which is a mark of respect. The establishment of measures will contribute to the well-being of the population with the participation of government institutions, researchers, communities and civil society organisations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more requests. Dear colleagues, with this, we have now concluded the examination of our Agenda Item 7A *[gave]*. Let us proceed then.

Dear colleagues, we are now moving to our Agenda Item 7B on the state of conservation reports of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Like for Item 7A, we will first discuss the reports concerning cultural properties followed by the mixed and natural properties. The region will be presented in the same regional order as for Item 7A. First Africa, followed by the Arab State, Asia and Pacific, Europe and North America and finally Latin America and the Caribbean. However, as for Item 7A, in order to facilitate attendance of the debate by all experts, the Secretariat has prepared a specific timetable for the examination of the state of conservation reports taking into account, as much as feasible, the different time zones.

We will therefore start today with the examination of two cultural properties located in the Asia Pacific Region. I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Kyrgyzstan which requested the state of conservation report on the Mausoleum Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Kazakhstan, to be open for discussion to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. We open the discussion to reflect on the discussion of the property and its wider settings concerned on the Decision. Our amendment will concern paragraph 6.

The World Heritage Convention protects the territory of the property and its buffer zone. In this case, the Republic of Kazakhstan did not implement any projects within the buffer zone or in the territory of the World Heritage property. It is clear that the projects of the Spiritual and Cultural Centre are placed outside the buffer zone. However, in respect to the World Heritage Property, the State Party of the Republic of Kazakhstan has completed for this project a Heritage Impact Assessment in full accordance with the *Operational Guidelines* and the international standards before their completion and informed the World Heritage Centre there was no negative impact to the Mausoleum in 2019.

We have discussed with the members of the Committee these documents during the 43rd session in Baku and addressed positively the efforts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in improving the state of conservation of the Khoja Ahmed Yasawi Mausoleum World Heritage Property. The state of conservation report submitted by the State Party in 2020 provides us with all information that confirms that all Decisions of the World Heritage Committee as well as the recommendations of the international expert group within the framework of the Heritage Impact Assessment were implemented by the State Party.

We would like to highlight from the report that the project of the second phase of the Spiritual and Cultural Centre in Turkestan are located in the wider setting of the World Heritage Property. Nevertheless, this project does follow the heights that are respecting the historic visual integrity of the Mausoleum as all buildings are lower than 27

metres. Therefore, there are no high-rise buildings neither in the wider settings, nor in the buffer zone of the property. There are no modern high-rise constructions in the buffer zone.

At the same time, the Republic of Kazakhstan, together with the international expert group, has elaborated and established a rebuild mechanism of new access protection areas in the wider setting of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi Mausoleum property. The effectiveness of this tool for protective planning of the city was confirmed in the Decision of the World Heritage Committee taken in its 43rd session. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan has created the Methodological Council. The Council considers all projects related to the Mausoleum and its buffer zone and to the Spiritual and Cultural Centre in Turkestan.

The above-mentioned efforts of the State Party led to the introduction of a complex system of coordination at the national level where all construction activities and urban planning regulations in the territory of cultural heritage site are carefully considered and assessed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to invite Mr. Feng Jing, Chief of the Asia Pacific Region of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to respond to this comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. *As-salamu alaykum* to everyone. I think in response to the comments provided by the distinguished member of the Committee of Kyrgyzstan, the World Heritage Centre, first of all, wishes to express its gratitude to the Kazakh authority for providing a report on the state of conservation of the property, as well as several technical documents including Heritage Impact Assessments, the first group of phase one project in 2019 and then a second group in March 2020, including three construction projects in the buffer zones and within the wider settings of the property.

As for the response to the question regarding the Draft Decision raised by Kyrgyzstan, please allow me to provide the following comment.

Paragraph 6 of the Draft Decision referred to the Heritage Impact Assessment provided by the State Party in July 2020 as the original Heritage Impact Assessments included several projects. These projects have been implemented without considering the concerns expressed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Furthermore, the three Phase II projects, the Kazakh Drama Theatre, Eastern Market (Caravanserai) and the Khoja Ahmed Yasawi Museum were submitted in March 2020 and, despite the 2018 advisory mission and the September 2020 ICOMOS Technical Review that highlighted the need for modifications and the reconsideration of the project, the Caravanserai was reportedly inaugurated in March 2021.

It now seems that these Heritage Impact Assessments were submitted after the work had been approved and construction had started. These consequently led the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to express concerns with the current mechanism of communication with the State Party, which does not allow any comment concerning large-scale development project that ICOMOS might provide to be addressed, especially in relation to mitigation measures. It also does not allow for the Committee to express its view on such project as expressed in the Draft Decision paragraph 8.

Now, coming to the Reactive Monitoring mission in paragraph 13, I think this is also in view of the current major development that impacts adversely on the OUV of the property. I will come to that when we are adopting the Draft Decision. Mr. Chairperson, ICOMOS may provide further comment on this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Mausoleum Khoja Ahmed Yasawi is a sacred symbol of Turkestan and of the vast region of the Turkish-speaking world. It was designed to dominate its surrounding landscape and that is acknowledged in the statement of OUV. The recent constructed high-rise amphitheatre building (20.26 metres) together with the Khoja Ahmed Yasawi Museum (26.71 metres) now dominate the skyline. This new museum under construction is located just in front of the main axis of the World Heritage property and competes visually with the Mausoleum and will have an adverse impact on its OUV.

Some of these projects have been constructed in excess of height restrictions. Something that was examined at national level by a group of experts. Their conclusion called for a new approach in which future developments will respect the property's OUV. This new approach includes a special Scientific-Methodological Council already referred to, created in September 2019, and the development of a Master Plan that could signal a change in direction for redevelopment.

Both the expert group and the Scientific-Methodological Council have unanimously recommended that new projects must respect both the national legislation and the requirements of the World Heritage Convention. The latest Heritage Impact Assessments submitted were carried out in this robust context. Unfortunately, they were still carried

out late and, in instances, after approval had been given and the buildings were under construction. This is a source of considerable concern, leaving no opportunity to mitigate adverse impacts that are identified or for the Committee to comment on projects.

A further major concern is that an extensive urban redevelopment is under way in advance of this new Master Plan and the updated visual access protection zone. This was completed before this was assessed by the Committee. These concerns are analysed and expressed in the state of conservation report prepared by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies now before the Committee. While ICOMOS welcomes the aforementioned new approach, it still needs to be put in practice and framed by the Master Plan that does not promote developments that impact adversely on the OUV.

Therefore, ICOMOS joins the World Heritage Centre in recommending that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and as a mechanism to continue communication and consultation in the collaborative framework provided by the Convention. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to support the distinguished delegate of Kyrgyzstan who rightly highlighted that the development project of this Cultural and Spiritual Centre of Turkestan is located outside the buffer zone which is not within the territory protected by the World Heritage Convention. Nevertheless, the Republic of Kazakhstan conducted the required Heritage Impact Assessment on this project and informed the World Heritage Centre about the new drawings and positive impacts of this project in 2019 and 2020, in accordance with the *Operational Guidelines* and the ICOMOS guidelines for Heritage Impact Assessment for cultural World Heritage.

The State Party has identified the attributes of the OUV of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi World Heritage property. Following the state of conservation report submitted, these attributes were identified with the assistance of the international expert group and improved during the focus group meetings with the local community of Turkestan in April 2019.

Moreover, the State Party has also identified the wider values of the World Heritage property. These values are of national and regional levels and contribute to the appreciation of the Mausoleum also with the contribution of monuments located in the buffer zone. The Heritage Impact Assessment submitted in 2020 confirmed that the redevelopment project on the second phase of the Turkestan Spiritual and Cultural Centre had no negative impacts neither on the OUV, nor on the wider values of the Mausoleum.

Considering the results of the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by the Republic of Kazakhstan as well as the elaborated heritage protection system of Kazakhstan which involves the careful consideration of new development plans for implementation within the buffer zone and/or near the buffer zone of the World Heritage property, we believe it is also vital to also remove paragraph 7 of the Draft Decision.

After the recent nomination of the city of Turkestan as regional capital, a major urban renewal will take place. The city will double in population in the next ten years. Adapting the city to its need and creating the necessary public facilities to improve the standard of living are rights that should be granted and recognised. The proposed development is also adapting the city to meet its touristic expectations, bringing economic development and welfare and helping to diversify the city's touristic offer and keep the tourist capacity within sustainable limits while protecting the Mausoleum for future generations. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning to all. We fully support the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan. This support is based on what was said by the previous Delegation that Kazakhstan has made all efforts and complied with all the rules to make sure that it balances the aspiration of its people towards economic development, development of tourism and the protection of this very important and symbolic site.

As was elaborated by previous speakers, the development project is outside of the buffer zone. The country conducted a Heritage Impact Assessment in February which proved, without any shadow of a doubt, that the OUV of the site is not affected and the involvement and the support of the local community was also highlighted because it will bring bread and butter to its community.

Based on that and the information received from the State Party of Kazakhstan which was prepared in a transparent, scientific and detailed manner, it should be enough for us, for this Committee, to accept the amendment in paragraph 13 of the Draft Decision as presented by our friend from Kazakhstan. There is therefore no need for a

Reactive Monitoring mission and we agree to the request for the State Party to submit an updated report by 1st of February 2022. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. The floor is now to Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary welcomes the steps taken by Kazakhstan to conserve the Mausoleums of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. Our country appreciates with satisfaction the implementation of the view access protection area. The introduction of the height limit in view access protection area strengthened the control over construction, not only in the property and the buffer zone, but also in the wider settings of the World Heritage site. It is necessary to highlight that this voluntary step and regulations regarding the height of buildings in this particularly vulnerable area taken by the State Party, set a good example for other State Party dealing with similar challenging situations. The adaptation of this management tool serves the protection of the OUV of the property.

In view of the above, Hungary supports the amendment to the Draft Decision submitted by the Kirgiz Republic and supported by distinguished States Parties. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia also supports the amendment put forward by Kyrgyzstan and others and many of the statements of the previous speakers, so I will not repeat. We do, however, appreciate the concern of ICOMOS in relation to the need to respect and protect the setting of this architectural masterpiece.

We note that the State Party has demonstrated its commitment balancing the need of development of the city with the protection of the OUV of the Mausoleum. We note here that there is a need to protect the setting, but the attributes of OUV are the architectural and design elements of the Mausoleum itself.

We are aware that the new Master Plan for the city provides a developments framework within which individual development projects may be assessed. And this includes developing guidelines that recognise the OUV of the property. We urge the State Party to forward the Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies as soon as possible. Finally, Chair, we would like to commend the State Party for their engagement with local and international experts who shared their expertise in developing the view access plan and planning guidelines meanwhile undertaking scientific research contributing to the conservation of the Mausoleum.

We further note that these conservation efforts have included the revival of the traditional craft of handmade roof tiles. We would like to say that this collaborative process offers a model for other States Parties and acknowledge that it is generating its benefits to us all. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chairperson. Nigeria wants to align with previous speakers who have seen the efforts by the State Party of Kazakhstan and the state of conservation report, the heritage [...]

Chairperson:

We are having problems with the connection, and we cannot hear your voice. Maybe I come back to you. I give the floor to China first, and we come back to you.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good morning to everyone from Paris. The city of Turkestan is an important site on the Silk Road and China pays close attention to the situation around the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. China commends the work conducted by the State Party of the Republic of Kazakhstan since the Decision adopted on the 43rd session of the Committee in Baku included the creation of a special advisory Scientific Methodological Council, public engagement, the development of holistic interpretation strategy for the property and an archaeological park as well as the development of the Master Plan.

China understands the Master Plan is of great importance in preserving the property. Therefore, such a Master Plan should have been based on far more analysis and has to be approved by the government before its submission to the Centre to ensure its implementation.

China would also like to encourage further joint research conducted by the State Party and the Advisory Bodies on the development impacts to the property. We believe it is important to take into consideration individual situation of each property. After all, the measures for the conservation of monuments are different from those for historical sites.

In view of the foregoing, my Delegation joins other Delegations in supporting the proposed amendment and encourage the joint effort to further improve the conservation of this important property. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear Chairperson, we would like to make clarifications regarding wider settings of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi World Heritage property, highlighted in three important elements. First and most important, the Mausoleum is a single standing monument. The protection approach implemented differed significantly from the protection approach that is done for cities. In this context, it is necessary to highlight that the attributes that convey the OUV of the Mausoleum are exclusively located within the historic structure of this stand-alone monument. These attributes do not reside in any urban patterns or residential district of the city of Turkestan.

Secondly, all development, all construction or any construction projects are in full alignment with the *Operational Guidelines*. The Republic of Kazakhstan has consequently shown its commitment to follow all prescriptions related to the World Heritage property and its buffer zone which are the areas protected under the World Heritage Convention. The State Party has constantly informed the Committee about its attempt to initiate or even permit large-scale restoration or new construction projects that may have an impact on the OUV of the property.

Although the development projects of the Spiritual and Cultural Centre of Turkestan are located outside the buffer zone of the property, the Republic of Kazakhstan has conducted required Heritage Impact Assessment, in accordance with Paragraph 108 bis of the *Operational Guidelines* before the completion of these projects. Before these projects were launched, the State Party has informed about its intention to the World Heritage Centre.

My third point, Mr. Chairperson and dear colleagues, is that legal instruments are in place and fully implemented. In order to additionally enhanced the effectiveness and also the protection of the World Heritage Property, the Republic of Kazakhstan has introduced a specially developed regulatory policy of view access protection zones. This serves as a tool to regulate the wider setting of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi World Heritage property. This effective regulation is very important because it is an extra step and it was conducted in 2019 as was the state of conservation report of the property.

It is necessary to welcome the efforts of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as these additional approaches are representing an approach which integrates effective management and protection of the wider settings of the World Heritage property, wider than the obligations of the State Party under the Convention. Additionally, The Republic of Kazakhstan has significantly improved its national heritage legislation which led to the introduction of a set of actions necessary to approve any development projects planned for implementation within the buffer zone and wider settings of the World Heritage property.

In this light, we would like to welcome the efforts of the Republic of Kazakhstan to protect the wider setting of the World Heritage property and congratulate them with these achievements in the international heritage protection system. Saudi Arabia reiterates its support to the amendment submitted by Kyrgyzstan and what has been submitted by our colleagues here. Thank you, Mr Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, is it okay now? It is not the case. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Excellency. Mr. Chair, Oman also noted the great efforts made by the State Party to ensure the utmost conservation of the property's OUV. Also, we would like to welcome and thank the State Party for their monitoring mechanism established to keep and preserve the site's excellent status of conservation. Additionally, we have welcomed the drafting of the new Master Plan which will work to further control the urban development within the property and its wider setting, especially, as it takes into account the preservation of different values of the property.

We also endorsed the statement of previous States Parties. We believe that more time and dialogue between the State Party and the Advisory Bodies will lead to drive properly all the efforts and interventions in a way that will not impact negatively the OUV and its attributes. In conclusion, Oman supports the amendment of the Draft Decision. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning to all. Mr. Chairman, after all that has been said by different Delegations concerning the amendments that we have seen gathering so much support from the Committee members, there is not much more that we would like to add. But there are nonetheless a few points that we would like to stress.

First, from what we have read in the ICOMOS report and from the information we received from the State Party, we understand that the projects that have raised concerns on the part of the Advisory Bodies are not located within the perimeter of the site nor in its buffer zone. We also understand that, although there may be some discussion on how this project may affect the general value to which the Mausoleums is associated or the wider setting of Turkestan City, they do not seem to impact on the OUV of the site itself.

In any case, Mr. President, we believe that the Committee would exceed its scope if it were to pronounce itself on that issue. For that reason, we strongly support the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment. Now, Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am sorry for the issue with the network earlier. Like the other previous speakers, Nigeria would like to express a concern regarding the implementation of the Reactive Monitoring mission. In this case, the Reactive Monitoring mission according to the *Operational Guidelines* Paragraph 169: '*Reactive Monitoring is the activity of reporting by the Secretariat, other sectors of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat.*'

However, based on this state of conservation report, Heritage Impact Assessment reports and earlier decisions of the World Heritage Committee, it is clear that there are no threats to the OUV of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi World Heritage property. Therefore, the use of the Reactive Monitoring mission instrument is not appropriate for this case, so we support the amendment by other countries. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine ;

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine se prononce en faveur de l'amendement du Kirghizistan [...].

Chairperson:

We have lost the connection. We cannot hear you. There is no sound. Maybe I come back to you. The floor is to Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Egypt supports the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan to the Draft Decision. We would like to admit that in response to the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee, the Republic of Kazakhstan paid special attention to the regulation of development project outside the buffer zone and the wider setting of the property under consideration.

According to the documentation submitted by the State Party, it is clear that this mechanism, which is based on scientific research and analysis was integrated to existing urban planning tools to ensure additional protection towards the World Heritage Property and its wider setting, as it was reflected in the previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee. Egypt would like to support the amendment made by Kyrgyzstan to the Draft Decision. Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Je vous remercie. La Bosnie soutient l'amendement du Kirghizistan. Nous félicitons le Kazakhstan pour tous les efforts déployés sur ce site et autour du site. Je tiens à dire quelque chose concernant la nécessité de faire appel aux experts locaux, et de travailler en étroite coopération avec les experts de l'ICOMOS ou autres qui se rendent sur le site. Je pense que ça pourrait éviter des malentendus et épargner beaucoup d'autres efforts et des moyens matériels. Par exemple, ce qui est intéressant, c'est l'objet qui est dans la zone, je parle de la mosquée. L'on avait demandé de ne pas dépasser la taille des minarets, ce qui a été fait, mais en même temps cela a perturbé un peu

les proportions de ce monument. Je n'ai rien d'autre à ajouter à ce que mes prédécesseurs ont déjà dit. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor. Norway would like to start by expressing our deepest sympathy with the people of China and particularly in Zhengzhou province with the extreme rain and flooding. This terrible news reached us this very morning.

As we all know, from the document, the city of Turkestan will grow remarkably in the coming decades with many developing projects. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the State Party conducts the necessary planning and impact assessments to safeguard the World Heritage site and its OUV.

Norway commends the State Party for taking these challenges seriously and its efforts to establish a necessary framework for a sustainable development of the city including protecting the World Heritage site and its wider setting. At the same time, we would underline the need for closer collaboration and dialogue between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before decisions on plans and projects permissions are made.

We would suggest that the distinguished Committee reflects the need for closer collaboration in the Decision from this meeting. We also consider that a Reactive Monitoring mission would be a constructive step to strengthen the collaboration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the kind words you expressed for the people living in the flood-affected area. Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to Spain.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much Mr Chairperson. Spain has always been aware of the difficulties that we need to take into consideration when we try to find the right balance between development and protection of heritage. This is exactly the challenge encountered by the city of Turkestan in Kazakhstan.

I will be brief because I believe it is not necessary to repeat arguments that we already heard from other States, but we would like to say that we do understand the difficulties. We would also like to pay tribute to the effort made by the State Party to do its best to combine protection of heritage with development. We believe that the commitments made and the assessments of cultural impacts that might be possible.

We need to believe the State Party and we agree with those who believe the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies should work together. We also believe it is necessary to have this margin of trust and flexibility towards the State Party to make sure they can implement the plans to which they committed. I think we have sufficient instruments to assess the implementation of these commitments, and this is also why we would like to support the amendment.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thailand would also like to express our heartfelt sympathy to the devastation resulting from the flooding in Henan Province.

Thailand supports the proposed amendment by Kyrgyzstan. I just wanted to highlight a few facts. The Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Kazakhstan indicates that the potential impacts on the OUV were analysed and mitigation measures proposed to ensure that there will be no negative impact from the development projects on the property. We would also like to note that the OUV attributes as well as other wider national, regional and local values were appropriately identified by qualified international heritage experts and confirmed by the local community via focus group meeting.

The role of the interdisciplinary team of 15 international and local experts in preparing the state of conservation and Heritage Impact Assessment reports reflects the commitment of the State Party of Kazakhstan to engage all concerned parties in the protection and management of the property in full compliance with the recommendations by the Advisory Bodies. Therefore, Thailand would like to express our support to the amendment to the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words and sympathy for the flood-affected areas in China and thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairman, for giving us the floor. We join many Delegations in extending our ways of solidarity and comfort to the people of China for the floods that struck your beautiful country and your area.

We join many Delegations in supporting the proposed draft amendment. We agree with many points articulated in support of this draft amendment. In particular, we welcome the fact that all the construction projects that are envisaged are in full compliance with the *Operational Guidelines* and that the Heritage Impact Assessment that the State Party commissioned has indicated that there is minimal risk that would depart the property from its uniqueness or unique attribute.

We also welcome the fact that the draft development Master Plan has been developed and that, as articulated by previous speakers, the Mausoleum itself is a single standing monument that will not be impacted by development. We also support the proposal for a visit of the Reactive Monitoring mission and for a constructive dialogue between the State Party, the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat.

With these few words, as I said, we support the proposed amendment. Thank you we have concluded our statement, Chair. Mr. Chair, your microphone is muted.

Chairperson:

Is it okay now? Okay, you can hear me. First, I would like to thank South Africa for your kind words and your comment. The floor is to Guatemala, now, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. We would like to thank the State Party for the information provided on the site. We have paid great attention to this case, the commitments and the coordination that is intended between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. This reflects very good results as others have stated.

In order not to repeat what other members of the Committee have already said, I just wanted to highlight the comment made by the Delegation of Brazil. We must pay attention to the physical space where we apply our decisions. There are physical limits of jurisdiction beyond which this Committee does not simply have any competence to act. The OUV of the Mausoleum is not in a level of risk that should be worrying, and this is precisely the result of the state of conservation report.

We would like to congratulate the State Party for all efforts made and we encourage the continuation of the cooperation and dialogue between all parties concerned. We have no problem in accepting the amendment proposed and that has already been supported by other members of the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I give the floor to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for the response.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Very briefly, I think we have three points. First, after listening to the interventions by the distinguished Committee Members, I would like to bring to the attention of the Committee that the evolution for the preservation of cultural heritage evolved from the past monumental approach to the current. I would quote from ICOMOS side the 2005 Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Historical Structures, Sites and Areas and from UNESCO side, in November 2011, the General Conference adopted the UNESCO Recommendation on the Preservation of Historical Urban Landscape. As the distinguished ambassador of China stated, the city of Turkestan is in an urban setting.

Second point, the distinguished Committee Members mentioned the OUV part. In fact, we have to review all the things in line with the OUV where in the integrity part the State Party said: '*Since Turkestan is situated in a vast plain, any high-rise building outside the buffer zone would have a significant impact on the visual integrity of the Mausoleum*'. I stop here for the quote.

Third point, I really think, dear Chairperson, distinguished Committee Members, when reviewing the proposed amendment to the Draft Decision I heard several Committee Members mentioned in particular Paragraph 13. I wish to speak as a former member of this Committee who served between 1992 and 1997. It is important to recall that the Committee in its Decision 43 COM 7.1 regarding the evaluation of the Reactive Monitoring process noted that the recommendations formulated in the evaluation referred to improvement of the current practices and did not call for structure changes, nor amendments to the statutory document. It also requested all stakeholders of the Convention to take them on board and to implement them as soon as possible. This was made in 2019 in Baku.

During the last two days of the present session, Committee Members have stressed the importance of Reactive Monitoring missions to address conservation issues at World Heritage properties. At this moment, we are reviewing the state of conservation of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi in Kazakhstan. It is desirable that the Committee maintain consistency in its approach and defends the credibility of the World Heritage system.

As you can all see from the working document 44 COM 7B, in view of the current major development that impact on the OUV, the Centre and the Advisory Bodies requested this Reactive Monitoring mission. The mission might consider how future developments might support rather than endanger the OUV of the property and also review all the major development projects on the site.

Furthermore, in similar cases on the state of conservation of other cultural properties in Central Asia, such as Bukhara and Samarkand, a Reactive Monitoring mission was dispatched to the property and the concerned State Party could benefit from effective dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS and work together to find a proper solution to address the conservation issues at these World Heritage properties.

So, taking all of this into consideration I would sincerely hope that the Committee could give a second thought to Paragraph 13 of the Draft Decision which recommends that the State Party invite a joint World Heritage Centre ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property. The Monitoring Mission is requested by the Committee to the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, as so far, there were two advisory missions dispatched to the property, but no official Reactive Monitoring mission has been sent to the site since its inscription in 2003.

Thank you for your kind attention. Mr. Chairperson, ICOMOS may add additional technical comment.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. ICOMOS will be very brief in formulating its point. ICOMOS would like to stress that, at this point in time, the draft Master Plan is being drafted but has not yet been submitted to the World Heritage Committee for it to look at. Yet projects are ongoing and this is one of the reasons ICOMOS recommends, in line with the World Heritage Centre, a Reactive Monitoring mission.

Secondly, as members of the Committee have pointed out, the city of Turkestan will be growing quite fast in the future, therefore it is critical to understand the context and at this junction for a Reactive Monitoring mission to be able to advise on the appropriateness of the current planning to use in the context. ICOMOS stresses that a Reactive Monitoring mission process could aid in communication and clarification. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.31 concerning this property. Before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before presenting the amendments, I have an announcement. There was a typo in Document 7B in French. The Draft Decision is referred to as '44 COM 7B.33' while it should have been '44 COM 7B.31'. We have received an amendment signed by a number of Committee Members as you can see on the screen. There were no amendments to the first five paragraphs of the Draft Decision. We can look at paragraphs 6, 7, 8 and 9 that are proposed for deletion.

And now we continue with new paragraph 6: 'Requests the State Party to submit relevant sections of the Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre and to ensure that the Master Plan:

- a) Recognises the OUV of the property,
- b) Includes the View Axis Protection Area that prohibits any new development within the area from exceeding the 7m height limit.'

6c is proposed for deletion. We continue with new paragraph 7: 'Also welcomes the analysis of development undertaken by a group of national and international experts, also acknowledges their call for future developments to respect the OUV of the property, and that the expert group and the Scientific-Methodological Council have unanimously recommended that new projects must respect both national legislation and the requirements of the World Heritage Convention, and that no construction within the buffer zone, View Axis Protection Area and the Turkestan Spiritual and Cultural Centre should be undertaken without notification to the World Heritage Centre and a Heritage Impact Assessment following paragraphs 108 bis, 118 bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and urges the State Party to address these recommendations.'

New paragraph 8 which is the original paragraph 12 with no amendments. Next paragraph is proposed for deletion. We have new paragraph 9 which is the last paragraph of this Draft Decision: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the

property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session' and, as usual, we removed the date. These are all the amendments Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Since there were several revisions to the Draft Decision, I think it would be better for us to adopt the text 44 COM 7B.31 paragraph by paragraph. The Rapporteur had time to put the text together. Can we now go through the text paragraph by paragraph, from the first paragraph? Thank you.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have no amendments to paragraph 1.

Chairperson:

Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 there are no amendments, do you approve them? They are approved. Paragraph 6, do you approve?

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, if I may, paragraphs 6, 7, 8 and 9 are proposed for deletion from the original Draft Decision and we have a new paragraph 6 proposed.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have new paragraph 7 with modifications to the original Draft Decision paragraph 11.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have new paragraph 8, original paragraph 12 of the Draft Decision without any changes, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have the next paragraph proposed for deletion, original paragraph 13 of the Draft Decision and we have new paragraph 9 which is the last of the Draft Decision about requesting the updated report, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. After the clarifications presented by ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, perhaps an advisory mission would be an appropriate thing to do. We have no objection at the deletion of paragraph 13, as proposed by members of the Committee, but we could consider the advisory mission as a non-binding recommendation as result from that mission. I think it would be clearer for the State Party and the Committee as well to take appropriate decisions in the future after the mission. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway would like to suggest that we keep the last part of the original paragraph 13. Starting with 'Requests the State Party to invite, as a matter of urgency, a joint World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission' and so forth. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We insist on maintaining the original drafting as proposed by Kyrgyzstan and we do not see any need for a Reactive Monitoring mission. The argument raised by the Secretariat is really baffling to say the least. Asking us for consistency because we requested such a mission on other items. It is the same Secretariat that suggested a deletion of a World Heritage site without any Reactive Monitoring mission. Where is the consistency from the Secretariat and the experts? Let us be serious. If you want to be inconsistent, we can also be inconsistent.

We do not support at all the proposal made to modify the amendments proposed. There is no need for a Reactive Monitoring mission. Studies have been done, the State Party will submit an updated report on the 1 February 2022 or at the next session. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Distinguished colleagues, I would like to express my agreement with the previous speaker, the distinguished representative of Ethiopia, that we do not see any particular need or legal grounds to invite the Reactive Monitoring mission. The State Party of Kazakhstan, as we can learn from the detailed report prepared in a scientific manner with involvement of international experts, strictly followed all the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee expressed in its Decision 43 COM 7B.67.

The State Party, following the recommendations, arranged a capacity building workshop in 2020 concerning the submission procedure of the information regarding all developments that may impact the OUV of the property. In the Decision, the Committee positively assessed the work carried out by Kazakhstan and requested the State Party to submit any projects related to the Turkestan Spiritual and Cultural Centre project to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. The State Party was also requested to provide information on the progress of the implementation of the project.

In this regard, the Republic of Kazakhstan has prepared, as part of the report on the state of conservation, a detailed objective scientific monitoring. This state of conservation report was timely submitted by Kazakhstan to the World Heritage Centre for considering by the World Heritage Committee at its upcoming 44th session. According to the documentation, ICOMOS has considered the report and prepared a technical review in September 2020. After receiving the ICOMOS review, the Republic of Kazakhstan has prepared the official detailed response. To our regret the answer of ICOMOS to this response is not present in the documentation. In this context it is necessary to know that this transparent system of consideration of new development project of the Republic of Kazakhstan is open for stakeholders at both international and national levels.

Once again, distinguished members of the Committee, here, it was pointed out the fact that there are no constructions within the boundary of the property or its buffer zone. The conclusion is obvious, we do not see the necessity of inviting the Reactive Monitoring mission. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Mr. Chair, Nigeria do not see the point for inviting the Reactive Monitoring mission and also agrees and shares and supports the position taken by Ethiopia and Russia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Saudi Arabia would like to join other members in insisting on the deletion of paragraph 13, since there is so much progress that has been made so far there is no need for a Reactive Monitoring mission.

As for the Advisory mission, we think at it is premature, maybe for next year when the report is submitted, we can discuss such thing based on the findings submitted by the State Party. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, can we all agree on the amendment? Sorry, Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to concur with the distinguished delegates that have expressed their opinion earlier. The Kirghiz Republic also does not see the need for the Reactive Monitoring mission because the Republic of Kazakhstan has shown its commitment to work closely with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Convention. It has shown its commitment to take into account all the recommendations. That is why we agree with all Delegations that expressed the opinion that the Monitoring mission is not necessary. This is why we would like to stick to the amendment proposed by the Kirghiz Republic and other Delegations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Hungary supports the original amendment by Kyrgyzstan and agree with Ethiopia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much. Oman would like to add its voice to the previous speakers and would like to support the previous amendment provided by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. We also side with Kyrgyzstan that there is no need for having a Reactive Monitoring mission as mentioned. We do believe that having it would be inconsistent with Paragraph 169 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is not applicable in this case and we totally support the removal of this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. South Africa agrees to the original draft amendment by Kyrgyzstan and concur with the interventions made by previous speakers. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you Chair. Brazil supports the proposal by previous speakers of deletion. We do not see any needs for a mission at this stage. Because basically, the projects are outside the buffer zone and we think this is out of our scope of action. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We agree with what has been said by other delegates who have taken the floor. However, we wish to highlight the readiness of the State of Kazakhstan in terms of communication with the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. Taking into account that a report has been requested within six months' time. We agree with the proposed amendments. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I wanted to know, Norway, would you like to join the consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. We can accept the amendment. We notice the almost consensus in the Committee, so we accept it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, now we have been through the entire text. If there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.31 adopted as amended ^[gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. Syria, please, you have the floor

Délégation de la République arabe syrienne :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. nous exprimons notre solidarité avec les habitants de la province du Henan suite aux inondations. Nous nous félicitons de l'adoption du projet de décision sur la base de l'amendement présenté par le Kirghizistan et les cosignataires. La République arabe syrienne félicite l'État partie, le Kazakhstan, pour la qualité du rapport d'état de conservation qui reflète une grande maîtrise des mesures de préservation de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle et du mausolée de Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. Les études d'impact, le plan directeur ainsi que les modes de partenariat et de travail entre les autorités nationales, locales et internationales sont un exemple. Nous invitons l'État partie, le Kazakhstan, à partager cette meilleure pratique avec les États parties concernés. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any more requests for the floor? I see none. Dear colleagues we will have a ten-minute technical break.

Dear colleagues, let us resume. I now give the floor to Kazakhstan for a two-minute statement.

Délégation du Kazakhstan

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Honorables membres du Comité, excellences, chers collègues, je voudrais remercier le Gouvernement chinois ainsi que le secrétariat du Centre du patrimoine mondial pour la parfaite organisation de cette 44^e session. Je tiens à vous assurer que les limites du mausolée et les contours de la zone tampon sont restés les mêmes qu'ils étaient au moment où ce monument a été inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Quant au centre spirituel et culturel, comme cela a été dit, il est situé hors de la zone tampon. Il a été développé conformément aux exigences de la Convention et de ses orientations opérationnelles. Selon les experts internationaux qui ont réalisé l'étude d'impact sur le patrimoine, les projets en cours n'ont aucun impact visuel négatif sur le site du patrimoine mondial. Tous les projets situés dans les vastes abords du site du patrimoine mondial sont conformes à la hauteur autorisée et respectent l'intégrité visuelle du mausolée, qui est basée sur des preuves historiques. Je tiens à confirmer que le Gouvernement kazakh s'engage à soutenir la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du monument architectural et appliquera tous ses efforts dans ce sens. Monsieur le Président, chers collègues et amis, je vous remercie de votre attention et exprime notre profonde gratitude aux honorables membres du Comité pour le soutien apporté au projet d'amendement introduit par la république kirghize au projet de la décision du Comité du patrimoine mondial. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, for the next property to be discussed I would like to give the floor to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for the next report on the state of conservation of the Cultural properties located in the Asia Pacific Region and open for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The site in front of us is Kathmandu Valley (Nepal). Details for the heritage property are summarised in working Document 44 COM 7B.add on pages 25 to 32 of the English version, and the same page numbers in the French version. It is important to remember that the Committee has reviewed the state of conservation of the property since 2015 successfully due to the extensive damage caused by the April-May 2015 earthquake. There is both ascertained and potential danger to the property. So far, there has been three joint World Heritage Centre ICOMOS, ICCROM Reactive Monitoring missions to the property, in October 2015, March 2017 and October 2019, confirming the many conservation issues faced by the property and the government of Nepal's insufficient capacities and resources to face the magnitude of the conservation and the restoration works required in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The 2017 and 2019 missions all recommended that the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger and hence identified the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in consultation with the State Party along with Corrective Measures. These

are also included in the working document for the present session. However, in order for these to be implemented and monitored by the Committee, the property needs to be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is also important to recall that in Decision 43 COM 7B.17, the Committee decided to review an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and with a view to considering, in the absence of significant progress in the implementation of the recommendations, the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger at the current session.

The Committee also underlined the State Party cooperation in conducting the requested Reactive Monitoring mission which would be a key consideration for the Committee at this present session. This mission took place in October 2019 and recommended to put the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Centre and the government of Nepal have engaged in regular dialogue about the state of conservation of the property since 2015, including via our UNESCO office in Kathmandu.

While the State Party would be willing to receive assistance from the international community and has benefited from significant amount of additional extra budgetary funding and foreign aid since the earthquake, it does not have the capacity to coordinate and ensure the quality of the works carried out, but considers that an inscription on the in Danger List would be detrimental to the country's image.

A dialogue meeting between the Director of the Centre and the Ambassador of Nepal on the subject of in Danger listing took place on the 8th of June 2021, before the publication of the working document. After publishing of the working document, the State Party has released a huge volume of information as of 13th of July and stressed the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic on the progress to be made and expressed that the government is dedicated to its commitment for the protection of the property.

However, it is important to recall in line with Committee Decision 35 COM.12B in which the '*Committee requested the State Party to consider refraining from providing additional information regarding state of conservation issues after the guidelines indicated in the Operational Guidelines, as this information is not able to be evaluated by the Advisory Bodies*'.

In view of the ascertained identified threats since 2015 and confirmed by the successive Reactive Monitoring missions of 2015, 2017 and 2019, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS and ICCROM, recommend again that the World Heritage Committee inscribe Kathmandu Valley on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

With your permission, Mr. Chairperson, ICOMOS will now provide comment on this property on behalf of the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. As my colleague has indicated, these comments are made jointly on behalf of ICOMOS and ICCROM. The State Party has endeavoured to address issues raised by previous missions, but is yet to comply fully with committee Decisions and recommendations from the three Reactive Monitoring missions in 2015, 2017 and again in 2019. The 2015 recovery Master Plan does not provide specific guidance of each seven individual monument zones which have very different attributes. While it is welcome that it will be reviewed, it is important that that review is regarded as urgent and is expedited.

The State Party has submitted detailed information about completed work, including a photo inventory on progress with 103 earthquake damaged monuments, but there are many remaining threats to the property. These include: ongoing deterioration of structures that are yet to be repaired; lack of attention to some of the ancient settlements; loss of traditional housing; the introduction of new materials and the reconstruction of some buildings based on conjecture instead of sufficient supporting evidence; unsympathetic new developments around monument zones; uncontrolled development within monument and buffer zones; the impacts of new urban infrastructure; disaster risk management planning not yet completed and proposed roads.

These issues continue to threaten the property's integrity, authenticity and other attributes of its OUV. At the 43rd session of the Committee after much discussion, the decision to inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger was not made to allow one more year. Two years now have passed. The subsequent 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission jointly undertaken by the World Heritage Centre and both Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS and ICCROM, confirmed that the recovery process remains inadequate to deal with the challenges that have arisen following the 2015 earthquake. And that the OUV of the property is subject to ascertained and potential danger. The 2017 and 2019 missions both found that the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger and they hopefully identified a suggested Desired state of conservation which is included in the report before the Committee.

The World Heritage Centre and both Advisory Bodies recommend that, in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee should inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I listened when the Secretariat was making the submission and also the Comments made by the last speaker. As mentioned by the Secretariat, everyone is facing challenges due to the issue of Covid-19. Nigeria would like to request and support that additional time will be given to Nepal to complete the remaining, conservation, restoration and preservation work of the site before inscribing it on the in Danger List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Committee, we know the positive steps taken by the State Party and their undeniable commitment to protecting the site. We further commend their response to the devastating earthquake and its consequences. I would like to start my intervention by reminding all the distinguished Committee Members of previous Committee's discussions on this property, as we believe it is important to have these discussions and build up on them, as we move further with our deliberations today.

This property was proposed for in danger listing five years ago at the 39th session. The Committee decided to give the State Party one more year to address the concerns of ICOMOS. As the OUV continued to be compromised, the same scenario repeated itself on the 40th, 41st and 42nd sessions of the Committee. When a World Heritage Property is proposed for in Danger listing by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS under Item 7B for five consecutive Committee sessions, the Committee should be alarmed and the conservation measures put in place are not in conformity with the standards outlined by this Convention.

As ICOMOS as stated, year after year while some progress is made on certain part of the property, the property is comprised of seven monument zones all of which require sustained attention and action to address conservation challenges as well as the need of the State Party to respond to the World Heritage Centre concerns on existing threats such as the expansion of the ring roads which could potentially impact the Swayambunath Temple Complex.

Mr. Chair, during the 43rd session of the Committee, the Committee did not reach an agreement to inscribe this site on the in Danger List despite the clear technical evaluation by ICOMOS. I recall the words of the Chair of that session: I quote: "*This must be done for the last year, this is the last chance*". And the Committee granted the State Party one final year to address the conservation concerns raised by ICOMOS. As a compromised position to bridge opposing views expressed by Committee members, the likely scenario this year is that another postponement will be granted to the State Party before in Danger listing, as the OUV continues to deteriorate.

We would like to emphasize, here, that the magnitude of the intervention required to restore the original OUV is immense and requires concerted efforts by the different stakeholders working within the site. One that might exceed the available financial and technical resources of the State Party to apply all the recommendations of ICOMOS within a short time frame.

We should not rush the State Party in applying the Corrective Measures, but request that they be applied in an appropriate manner. The mechanism offered by the in Danger listing provides that framework. Again, any in Danger listing is not a negative appraisal, rather it is a way to aid the State Party in gaining recognition of the site importance, as well as embarking further financial resources and technical support.

Mr. Chair, we align ourselves with the consensus that should be reached by this Committee. I reiterate our unconditional support to the State Party in overcoming these conservation challenges. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you for giving us the floor. Australia would like to recognise the commitment of the State Party of Nepal in addressing the enormous and complex conservation and reconstruction challenges for Kathmandu that have resulted from the 2015 earthquake. We also acknowledge the detailed comprehensive report from the Advisory Bodies and we value their work in bringing to the Committee a clear and concise summary of the situation in Kathmandu and outlining many diverse and ongoing issues that remain to be addressed.

Many of these issues have been raised in previous Reactive Monitoring Mission reports that have indicated the dangers to the properties. The properties have met the conditions set out in Paragraph 179.a for inclusion of the property on the World Heritage List in Danger. A picture emerges from the current report that while there has been

substantial progress — and I noticed the completion of the repair of the earthquake damaged monuments in seven monument zones — there is still a pressing need for a more prioritised and strategic approach in order to address the many interrelated issues of recovery and reconstruction.

We appreciate the scale of the conservation effort required to maintain the OUV of the property and we consider that this is made more complex by the urban environment in which these attributes are located. We also note the challenges of recent time, notably the Covid epidemic, and encourage the State Party to work with the international community to support their efforts.

In this regard, we are pleased to see that the State Party has worked with the 2017 and 2019 missions to draft the Desired state of conservation and Corrective Measures for the property, and this will greatly assist the State Party in addressing the many conservation issues it faces. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is not the first time that the state of conservation of this site is brought to the attention of this Committee with our recommendations to include it on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is not the first time that Brazil supports the opposing view. We do it again this time because we believe it is not in Danger listing that is required at this point but assistance and collaboration from the international community. The damage that has been caused to the site has not been of negligence on the part of the State Party, but a devastating earthquake in 2015.

The government of Nepal has not been sitting idle since then. On the contrary, as far as we were informed and that we read in the reports, it has been working steadily on the recovery of the site and the rehabilitation of damaged monuments and a recovery plan has been adopted in coordination with the UNESCO office in Kathmandu. We can clearly acknowledge the progress that has been achieved.

We understand that inscribing a country on the in Danger List is not a punitive measure, but an instrument devised by the Convention to assist the recovery process. Yet, we cannot refrain from recognising that in this case, in danger listing would have a negative impact on the State Party capacity to maintain the site. As Nepal is a developing country that depends on international tourism also severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic for an important part of its revenue.

We thus support the Thai amendment to this Draft Decision and ask the Committee not to inscribe Kathmandu Valley on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 2015 earthquake indeed had devastating impact on Nepal's unique cultural heritage. However, the State Party of Nepal has devoted tremendous resources to the recovery of the property and has been working closely with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies on the protection of the property's OUV. We, therefore, believe that the Committee has to take into consideration the continued effort and the considerable amount of work made by Nepal towards recovery of the property. Particularly, the post-earthquake conservation, renovation, rehabilitation of Kathmandu Valley in a time bound, planned and coordinated manner.

We also have to acknowledge that the conservation works are time consuming and require special construction materials and skilled workers with special expertise in conserving ancient properties. Upon studying the report prepared by ICOMOS and the material shared by Nepal, it is obvious that the overall progress made on the conservation work is quite impressive and deserve to be well-recognised. Out of the 170 damaged monuments, rehabilitation of 116 monuments has already been completed, ten monuments are expected to be completed soon and rehabilitation of seven protected monument zones are ongoing. The conservation and rehabilitation of 34 monuments had already been completed after the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee.

We are therefore of the view that under the prevailing exceptional circumstances, Nepal should be granted additional time to further their efforts in working with UNESCO and its partners for the completion of the remaining post-earthquake conservation, renovation and rehabilitation work of the project. To support international effort on the renovation of the World Heritage property, Thailand, on our part, has also made a financial contribution to support Nepal's recovery work.

In view of these facts and to ensure adequate international support for effective recovery of this World Heritage property, Thailand proposes that Kathmandu Valley should be not included in the List of World Heritage in Danger as appears in the proposed amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. After having analysed the situation with the World Heritage Property of Kathmandu valley of Nepal, we came to the conclusion that it would be premature to put this property on the list of World Heritage in Danger. As we all know, the present situation, which, of course, is rather serious, is the result of a devastating earthquake of 2015 in Nepal which did great damage to the cultural heritage site. It is also well known that after the earthquake, three UNESCO missions have visited Nepal. During the previous session, the Committee refrained from putting the property on the Danger List. The reason for that was the strong commitment of the government of Nepal for the conservation, renovation and rehabilitation of the property. It should also be stressed that the government of Nepal has made significant progress in the conservation of the properties, even during the adverse situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This progress has also been acknowledged by the last joint Reactive Monitoring mission.

Therefore, our Delegation strongly believes that this effort of Nepal should be encouraged by our Committee. Nepal should be granted additional time in order to complete the remaining conservation and rehabilitation of the property. Our Delegation calls upon the Committee to support submitted amendments to the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor. It is in fact the third time Norway is making an intervention on this matter as a Committee member and it is the sixth time that the World Heritage Committee is recommended to discuss and possibly decide the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Norway fully recognises and commends the considerable efforts and results achieved by the government of Nepal. We welcome the establishment of the international Scientific Committee. Yet, we wish to express our concerns for issue which are not addressed and which continue to affect adversely the property's state of conservation. We note the deep concern, the issues described in the Reactive Monitoring mission report related to reconstruction of urban housing and ancient settlements and ongoing losses of values related to structures which are yet to be restored; new developments in and around monument surrounds; new urban infrastructure and lack of overall master planning.

We strongly believe in the use of Heritage Impact Assessment as a crucial tool for planning of new developments in a sustainable way which would respects and protects World Heritage values. We believe it is possible to strike a sustainable balance between conservation and development. Guidance through the use of Heritage Impact Assessment is prerequisite to new development as per Paragraph 118 bis of the *Operational Guidelines*. Development goals can be achieved both for development and heritage. We consider that the dangers to the property continue to meet the conditions set out in paragraph 179.a for inclusion of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The matter was discussed extensively in our 43rd session and the State Party was then given another year. Two years later, we recognise the significant efforts and results achieved. We still see, confirmed in the Reactive Monitoring mission report, that required progress is not met yet. The report presents the framework for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the in Danger List in detail which, in our opinion, would assist the State Party of Nepal in its continued and committed effort towards recovery and conservation of this truly outstanding property. The Reactive Monitoring process under provision of the *Operational Guidelines* is in place to guide and support us in the shared endeavour and responsibility in protecting our World Heritage.

Norway strongly believes that the danger listing, as an instrumental tool, has positive effects for conservation and recovery through international support and coordination. We therefore support the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. China has been following closely the recovery work of the Kathmandu Valley since the 8.1 magnitude earthquake in 2015 which caused massive loss of lives and damage to this property cherished by us all. It is important to note that the effect of such devastating earthquake requires a large amount of recovery work and that they need financial resources, human resources as well as time.

China commends the commitment made by the government of Nepal, the relevant States Parties, national and international organisations towards the recovery of this property and welcomes achievements made so far. As a developing country suffering from such a devastating earthquake, Nepal has limited resources but unlimited determination to bring the glory back to this property.

However, such determination requires implementation and recovery work, step by step, and the many recovery projects take years to be completed. A case in point is the recovery work conducted by China in the nine-storey temple which started in 2017 and required 58 months altogether. Therefore, we need to be more patient to see the seeds grow. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic worldwide, the recovery work of Kathmandu Valley has been seriously affected because of the reduced tourism income and the lack of human resources. In view of the foregoing, do we encourage the State Party or discourage the State Party? This is the question in front of us. Therefore, China joins other Delegations in supporting not to inscribe Kathmandu Valley on the Danger List and allows and encourages the State Party to implement the decisions made by the Committee and conduct further cooperation with the Advisory Bodies, the Secretariat and the international community. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated by many previous speakers, Nepal has undertaken post-earthquake conservation, renovation and rehabilitation. Nepal continues cooperation with UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the international community as was stated in the presentation by the Secretariat. We would also like to acknowledge their overall progress made on the conservation work which is encouraging, and which was also acknowledged by the joint monitoring mission which visited Nepal in October 2019.

In view of the difficulties to carry out conservation work during the Covid-19 pandemic we support the amendment submitted by Thailand. We agree that we should allocate additional time for the completion of the remaining conservation and agree in supporting not to inscribe Kathmandu Valley in the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you Mr. Chair and our thanks are also extended to the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for all their efforts. Oman acknowledges all the efforts made by the State Party to address all the issues endorsed in the previous Monitoring missions and Committee decisions. We are aware of the scale of destruction caused by the devastating earthquake in 2015 and the commitment shown after by the State Party to rehabilitate the property through the Recovering Master Plan (RMP) as well as other conservation interventions conducted. We also thank the State Party for their excellent work to produce the photo inventory on conservation works carried out on 103 monuments affected by the 2015 earthquake.

Mr. Chair, we support the State Party's proposal to establish a new International Scientific Committee as an important step towards fostering the collaboration and coordination between local authorities and the international community. We believe that such steps will ensure and facilitate addressing all issues raised by previous documents.

However, and due to ongoing circumstances, Oman thinks that sufficient time is required to allow the State Party to move forward with all its effort to ensure the protection of the OUV, as well as proper management of the property. Oman supports the amendment to the Draft Decision and we request the Committee not to inscribe the site in the in Danger List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. My Delegation also joins others in supporting the amendment put forward by Thailand and in requesting that this site will not be put on the in Danger List. We wish to thank and really appreciate the government of Nepal which despite difficult circumstances, first the earthquake and then Covid-19, made such strong commitment as manifested in concrete actions that it undertook to conserve and rehabilitate the site. We believe that the commitment to set up an International Scientific Committee is another manifestation of this strong commitment.

Therefore, this is a test case again of the balance that needs to be struck between heritage conservation and development. We believe it is premature to put this site on the in Danger List. We call on the experts and UNESCO to support this developing country in realising this noble objective. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear Chairperson, dear Committee Members, I would like to first express our condolences and solidarity with countries that suffered human and economic losses due to natural disasters. As for Kathmandu Valley World Heritage site, which suffered from a devastating earthquake, we would like to highlight the following.

In line with decisions taken in Baku during the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee with regard to the site to be listed on the in Danger List, no such a listing took place as the member State could show the progress towards safeguarding the OUV. This calls for the Committee's support when such progress has been shown, although Nepal, as all countries, are suffering from the impact of Covid-19, and yet, has still maintained the commitments and progress shown in the conservation, renovation and rehabilitation of the property as clearly outlined by my colleagues Committee Members.

Dear colleagues, we see globally, even with developed countries where resources are abundant and available, that it still takes unpredicted duration to recover from unforeseen disasters. Therefore, we should give our support and encouragement to member States to overcome this challenge. Especially, in light of the impediments Covid-19 has presented which even hindered convening this meeting we are in today. This support shows our commitment to protect the soul of this Convention, preserving and promoting OUV.

Mr. Chair, dear Committee members we join other Committee members in supporting the amendment proposed by Thailand. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Also, like the previous interventions, we do believe that it would be premature and wrong to inscribe this site in the in Danger List. Nepal is exerting a lot of effort in preserving this site including the establishment of the Scientific Committee and the Master Plan. We commend this effort and we believe it should be taken into account when we adopt the decision.

Chair, today, we have a meeting online because we are unable due to the sanitary situation to meet in presentia and because there is Covid-19. It is a pandemic and it has a lot of consequences, not only the loss of lives, unfortunately, but also destruction of plans, new priority set on countries. We do believe that it would be inconsistent if this Committee, while meeting online because of Covid-19, takes a decision of inscribing this site on the in Danger List despite all the efforts undertaken by Nepal and ignoring totally all the challenges also that Nepal is facing. I think, it should have been mentioned more in the document we are examining. Not only for this site but also for other sites. In short, I would also like to support the amendment presented by Thailand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving me the floor again. As you all know, the Kathmandu Valley suffered significant damage in 2015 following the earthquake. It has been reported that, following this natural disaster, 171 monuments were damaged. Today, 116 have been restored. We commend the State Party for their commendable effort towards restoring the site to its original condition. Given the significant damage it will take time and effort to completely restore the property. We thank the support of the international partners extended to Nepal and wish to call for more international assistance.

Tourism is the largest industry in Nepal and inscribing this site in the List of World Heritage in Danger would be a setback for the economy. In this regard, I join many Delegations in supporting the amendment proposed by Thailand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I give the floor to Thailand.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Mr. Chairman, we requested the floor again in order to seek your permission to give the opportunity for Nepal to provide additional information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. nous soutenons l'amendement concernant le Népal. Il faut donner du temps au Népal. Quand on voit ce qui se passe de nos jours, je profite de cette occasion, comme certains de ceux qui m'ont précédé et comme nous tous je pense, pour exprimer mes sentiments envers les pays qui ont vécu et qui sont toujours sous la pression des éléments, et où l'on peut se rendre compte que tout cela est difficile à réparer. J'ai eu la chance de visiter le Népal avant le tremblement de terre. J'ai vu l'attachement des citoyens de ce pays à leur patrimoine ; j'ai vu et nous avons tous pu voir les efforts que le gouvernement s'est efforcé de faire et qu'il a faits. Je pense qu'il est très difficile de faire des miracles. Nos collègues l'ont déjà dit, et les experts le savent beaucoup mieux, il faut du temps pour renouveler, pour reconstruire un édifice. Ce qui s'est passé au Népal en 2015 était vraiment une catastrophe, dont on ne se remet pas facilement. Je termine avec la même phrase que je viens d'entendre: la pandémie nous oblige à nous réunir, même à distance. Merci bien.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I noted the request of Thailand to give the floor to the State Party concerned for a response. If you do not mind, I will invite the State Party to speak after Committee members to answer questions. I would like you to clearly formulate your question for the State Party. The floor is to Hungary now, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary welcomes the steps taken by Nepal to conserve the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage site, in particular its efforts to rehabilitate 116 damaged monuments, with special attention to the appropriate use of materials and the use of skilled labour. It is highly appreciated also that the State Party is ready to provide documentation of the conservation work, to implement the recommendation made in the past and is also ready to establish an international Scientific Committee to facilitate collaboration as well as to welcome back the monitoring missions in the future.

It should not be overlooked that the approval and the implementation of the guidelines for the reconstruction, rehabilitation and conservation of earthquake-affected monuments and approval and implementation of the post-earthquake conservation manual is completed. Nepal has made substantial efforts to comply with the observations and suggestions of the Committee and the Advisory Bodies. Hungary believes that the State Party deserves more time to continue its work.

For these reasons Hungary supports the amendment to the Draft Decision suggested by Thailand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor for the second time on this property. We would just like to say that Australia will also support the consensus of the Committee not to include Kathmandu on the World Heritage List in Danger. However, we urge the States Party to adopt and action Corrective Measures which have been developed with the Advisory Bodies to provide a framework to focus future actions and priorities for the recovery of the property, to monitor progress towards achieving this aim and, in particular, to focus the attention of international donors. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, have you formulated a question?

The Delegation of Thailand:

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first question: in view of the challenges faced by Nepal, how do you intend today to carry forward the renovation and rehabilitation work under the constraints faced, particularly in terms of the time frame? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Nepal, please, you have the floor for a concise clarification.

The Delegation of Nepal:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to congratulate you, first of all, for your appointment as Chairman of this session. I would also like to appreciate the government of China, the World Heritage Centre and the Secretariat for the excellent organisation of this session. The Delegation of Nepal would like to express its deepest condolences and sympathies for the people of China for the loss of lives and the disruption caused by the recent floods in Henan province.

Nepal has undertaken post-earthquake conservation, renovation, and rehabilitation work of Kathmandu Valley World Heritage property in a time bound and coordinated manner, as the esteemed Delegation of Thailand already highlighted. A six-year recovery plan has already been adopted. Conservation works are, as we all know, time consuming, require special construction materials and workers, a skill that is not abundantly available in the market, as we found local and other modern labours. The overall progress made on the conservation work is encouraging. Out of 170 monuments, damaged rehabilitation of 116 monuments has already been completed despite lockdown and curfew orders due to Covid-19.

Nepal is committed to preserve the OUV of the properties and will not conduct any activities that undermine the OUV. Nepal is also ready to continue collaborations and cooperations with the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the international community, ready to implement the past recommendations. We are also ready to welcome the joint verification mission again and are ready to establish an international Scientific Committee to monitor the progress.

Recently, Nepal has submitted new documents to the World Heritage Committee for its evaluation. Those documents include Kathmandu Valley Integrated Management Framework, Pashupati Master Plan 2021, the Master Plan of Hanuman Dhoka Palace Museum and the final draft of the Heritage Impact Assessment which is expected to be approved very shortly.

Since substantial progress has already been made, we are hoping that remaining tasks will be completed by the end of 2022. The verification mission has not been able to visit Nepal after October 2019. The 2019 mission noted a lot of progress. A first report helped to evaluate the real status of the work done. Hence, we sincerely request the esteemed Committee members, as I have heard that there is support from many esteemed Committee members, not to inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

I request the Committee Members and the Advisory Bodies to understand our situation and our commitment. Therefore, we would like to request again not to inscribe this property on the World Heritage List in Danger and to give us some more time to complete the remaining task. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Now, I give the floor to ICOMOS.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, this intervention is made on behalf of both cultural Advisory Bodies ICOMOS and ICCROM. I would like to thank the distinguished delegates for their comments and contributions. And I would like to highlight that at no stage are the Advisory Bodies questioning the commitments and efforts of the State Party of Nepal. But there is an issue at this property, given the circumstances since the major earthquake in 2015, of capacity and achievement.

When this matter first came before the Committee, back in 2015, the primary danger to the OUV of the property related to the earthquake damage. It is unfortunately the case that there are further threats now which arise from some of the inappropriate work that has been undertaken as outlined in the 2017 and 2019 mission reports. And there has been further damage. The image that is on the screen to Committee Members, the right-hand image of the left screen, for example, shows further collapses of buildings that have happened as the Committee has progressively across five different sessions indicated that there should be additional time and one more chance.

Chair and Committee Members, it is important to encourage the State Party, but ICOMOS and ICCROM would like to clarify that this needs to be the right kind of encouragement. That is why there have already been three missions and our exhortation is that the advice provided in those missions be taken. This is a question as to whether or not the Committee would be prepared to use the tools at its disposal in order to use the framework of in danger listing, the Desired state of conservation process and the Corrective Measures to support the State Party in addressing the profound threats that continue to affect the property. That, Chair and delegates, would be the soul of the Convention that was referred to by the distinguished delegate of Saudi Arabia.

Chair and delegates, ICOMOS and ICCROM are obviously cognisant of the common comments that have been expressed by the Delegation. We are with some sadness because there is an implicit message there that in danger listing is bad rather than supportive. That being the case, we would also advise that some of the other changes in the amendment do not reflect the comments that have been made by the Delegations, nor the content of the 2017 and 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission reports. For example, there have been a number of delegates that have supported the Scientific International Committee, and yet, the proposed amendment to the paragraph would delete that reference. There is a strong need for proper Heritage Impact Assessment processes in accordance with the ICOMOS guidelines, and yet, the changes that are proposed to paragraph 9 would water down that commitment.

Chair and delegates, we would advise, even if, given the position of the honourable delegates that the advice of the Advisory Bodies about in Danger listing is not taken, that the other changes to the Draft Decision that are proposed in the amendment are not simply appropriate, not in the best interests of the property and its OUV. And we would urge you to use the mechanisms of the Convention and the *Operational Guidelines* to support the conservation of this extraordinary, but highly challenged, property. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I give the floor to the World Heritage Centre.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Very briefly, I think the Committee should take a scientific and objective consideration of all the information available. I just have a piece of clarification regarding the current paragraph 5 of the Draft Decision. It is the second part that relates to the appreciation on the process of formulation of the new Master Plan for Pashupati Monument Zone. There is a sort of discrepancy on the information available to the Centre. By the 3rd of August 2020, the State Party said there is a draft for review by the Advisory Bodies. In the process of preparing the state of conservation working document, on the 3rd of March 2021, the State Party in its state of conservation report said that the Master Plan for Pashupati Monument Zone has been withdrawn. Now, by 13th of July, as the distinguished Ambassador was saying, the additional information on the new Master Plan for Pashupati has also arrived. But, as indicated earlier, the World Heritage Centre nor the Advisory Bodies were able to evaluate this information. In the best interest I believe that this paragraph should be of further consideration by the Committee members. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.33 concerning this property. Before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur whether she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Thailand. It is already integrated on the screen. If you wish so, Mr. Chair, we can go paragraph by paragraph.

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

Rapporteur:

We have no amendments proposed for the first two paragraphs

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, we are examining the text paragraph by paragraph. Do you approve of the first two paragraphs? Guatemala, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. Guatemala wishes to express ourselves and join the consensus that has been expressed by the majority of the Committee regarding providing more time for the State Party for the recovery of its site. My country recognised the efforts that have been undertaken. We give a vote of confidence for what has been expressed by the Advisory Bodies in the sense that they should continue to work jointly in the process of construction and preventing any harm to the OUV and integrity of the property which may have been altered by the damage from the earthquake. We agree that this must be a long and continued process and one that must be taken seriously. We agree that we could provide more time for the State Party to respond. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to reiterate for paragraphs 1 and 2, do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a new paragraph proposed for paragraph 3: 'Noting that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the current extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee takes place online'.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a clarification from the Secretariat. Now do you wish, and this is maybe a question to Thailand, to make a reference to the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact it has had on the situation of Kathmandu Valley Nepal, or do you wish to make a reference to the online session which I do not believe you wish to do. I hope I have been clear. Please, look at this paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to follow up on that, we have the same understanding and we were suggesting to delete this paragraph, because we thought it refers to the meeting held online, which is obvious, so we were suggesting deleting it.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our question was related to exactly the same paragraph. We will follow Bahrain on this one. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Mr. Chairperson, China would like to echo the previous speakers that we do not need to emphasize this matter. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, do you have any objections? First, Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Just to support what was said to paragraph 3, we are not sure it is relevant to the context of the Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any objections to delete this paragraph 3? The deletion is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In this case, we have the original paragraph 3 without any amendment, Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4 and before reading it, we had to make some adjustments and we will need some clarifications in this paragraph because the wording was changed 'Urges to appreciate', the text did not fit so it reads: 'Appreciates the State Party's commitment to expedite the revision of the Integrated Management Framework (IMF) and updating it, as per the requirements according to the context of sites and national legislative provisions. Also appreciates the process of formulation of the new master plan for Pashupati Protected Monument Zone and prepared Heritage Impact Assessment procedures which are in the process of government approval'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this amendment? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Taking into account the information that was provided by the World Heritage Centre and that we would go paragraph by paragraph, there is a need for clarification, because I have to admit we are a little bit confused as to what we are taking out and what we are taking in. Please, we need a little bit of clarification from the Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS and from the Secretariat as to the consequences of this new text that is being proposed. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

The floor is now to ICOMOS for clarification.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. As I mentioned in the preceding intervention, the Advisory Bodies note the consensus among the Committee with respect to the listing of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, but did not actually, here, hear grave concerns about the process that has been outlined in other sections of the Draft Decision. It is certainly the view of ICOMOS, that the Recovery Master Plan and six-year plan and timetable do need revisions in accordance with advice that has been provided through the Reactive Monitoring mission process.

We would suggest with respect to the honourable delegates and the State Party that the reference that has been made to Heritage Impact Assessment procedures in this amended paragraph is actually not adequate nor appropriate to the significance of the property and we would strongly commend to the Committee's decision the original words relating to proper preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments in accordance with the guidance prepared by ICOMOS in 2011 which is the usual Committee approach and should apply to this property in these circumstances. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your clarification. Dear colleagues, can we accept this paragraph or are there any other comments? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Having heard the clarification from ICOMOS, we would like to retain the reference to the Recovery Master Plan including revisions to the six-year plan and its timetable and also the appropriate wording related to Heritage Impact Assessments. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. In line with the fact that we need to recognise the analysis carried out by the Advisory Bodies, we support the request of Norway to retain this paragraph making a reference to the six-year plan and the timeline that needs to be integrated by the State Party in terms of the Recovery Master Plan. That is what we would request. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments or objections to the new wording? ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. I would just like to assist the Rapporteur. What is currently on the screen is not what I understand the Committee has agreed which is to include the words: 'including revisions to the six-year plan and timetable'. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any objections to this paragraph? Ms. Rapporteur, could you read this paragraph again?

Rapporteur:

Of course, Mr. Chair. Paragraph 4 reads: 'Appreciates the State Party's commitment to expedite the revision of the Integrated Management Framework (IMF) and updating it, as per the requirements according to the context of sites and national legislative provisions. Also appreciates the process of formulation of the new master plan for Pashupati

Protected Monument Zone and prepared Heritage Impact Assessment procedures which are in the process of government approval of the recovery master plan including revisions to the six-year plan and timetable'.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 5 is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair, and new paragraph 5 reads: 'Requests the State Party to implement fully what was already declared in the six-year plan and complete its all rehabilitation works within 2022 and to report to the World Heritage Committee'.

Chairperson:

Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would suggest that the original paragraph concerning the international Scientific Committee is retained unless clarification is given from the distinguished delegate of Thailand for the reasoning of the deletion of the paragraph on the Scientific Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. We would support Bahrain's suggestion to retain that paragraph. I think it would assist in bringing together and coordinating expertise and knowledge to assist in the recovery. I think we had a very good example of that already in the Kazakhstani property. Thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway would echo the two previous speakers. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS would highlight that this Committee is also a good example of the way that the advice from the Advisory Bodies can be hopefully harness to the advantage of the State Party and the property. And this is why collaborating about the terms of reference and membership of the Committee is an appropriate action. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Thailand please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think this paragraph's formulation needs to be amended because our understanding is that the previous formulation was based on the assumption that this World Heritage would be inscribed and placed on the endangered List. Also, the establishment of the Scientific International Committee is already something Nepal is ready to undertake on its own. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other comments or any objections to retain the original paragraph 5? There are no objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In this case, new paragraph 6 would read: 'Requests the State Party to implement fully what was already declared in the six-year plan and complete its all rehabilitation works within 2022 and to report to the World Heritage Committee'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7 reads: 'Noting the conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission, expresses concern at the mission's findings regarding the adverse effect on the authenticity of the property and the focus on monuments at the expense of other attributes, with resulting ramifications for traditional urban housing and ancient settlements, and therefore further requests the State Party to fully implement the mission recommendations, in particular:

- a) The establishment of a Recovery Master Plan for each Protective Monument Zone of the property, and
- b) The immediate cessation of proposed changes to the Lal Baithak wing of the National Art Museum, Bhaktapur, pending the submission of further documentation and a thorough technical review by ICOMOS to consider the potential impacts of the proposed project on the OUV of the property.'

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

There are no changes to the original paragraph 7 and 8; new paragraphs 8 and 9, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 9 is proposed for deletion. Shall we continue?

Chairperson:

Yes continue. Sorry, Bahrain first, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to follow up on some of the discussions we had earlier. We believe that reference to the Heritage Impact Assessment would be necessary and I do not think that is something specific to this site and the Heritage Impact Assessment has been clearly outlined in the *Operational Guidelines*. We just thought that this decision reaffirms States Parties commitment in general to apply Heritage Impact Assessment whenever projects are implemented within the property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. With specific reference to Paragraph 118 bis of the *Operational Guidelines*, we support what was previously expressed by our distinguished colleague of Bahrain. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, shall we keep this paragraph and do you have objections to this? ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair, I was simply going to highlight exactly what you have just proposed. It would be quite consistent with the state of conservation framework that was included in the report before the Committee. Again, recognising the consensus is not proceeding to listing in Danger site. I think it would be helpful to that productive collaboration between the Advisory Bodies and the State Party. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Can we approve of keeping this paragraph? No objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In this case the next paragraph would be our new paragraph 11 and we have no changes to this paragraph, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Can we approve this paragraph? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original Decisions paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 are proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do we approve of the deletion? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 12 reads: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much. China supports all the revisions but we have a very minor editing in language in previous paragraphs. In paragraphs 4 and 5.

Chairperson:

We cannot go back.

The Delegation of China:

It is just language edit.

Chairperson:

No, we cannot go back. Ms. Rapporteur for the last paragraph.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, just to clarify, the language edits will be done when we prepare the Decisions report.

Chairperson:

That is good. So, do we approve of the last paragraph? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. As we said in our opening intervention, it is the third time we are discussing this case and our position was expressed very clearly, but we do see where the meeting on this discussion is moving and there is a strong group of countries that are in favour of the amendments on the screen, but we do wish to note that we have been very consistent in our deliberations on this and our interventions on this specific matter. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

The last paragraph is approved as there are no objections. It is approved. Dear colleagues, now we have been through all the texts, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.33 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Thank you very much.

I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. World Heritage Watch you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. May I mention first that it would be helpful if we could be given the floor before the decisions are adopted in the spirit of improved participation of civil society, as has been decided several times by the Committee itself. We would really appreciate being given the floor before the decisions are adopted. The statement is the following.

The main reason why restoration work at the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage was hampered after the 2015 earthquake was not the lack of funding — but poor management, poor planning and uncoordinated implementation carried out by the Department of Archaeology (DoA), which is the official authority in dealing with World Heritage issues. The slow recovery process is partly due to the lack of DoA's authority caused by conflicting and overlapping responsibilities with other organizations. There is a boundary conflict between the planned ring road widening and the Swayambhu World Heritage Site. Major religious devotional buildings were constructed in Swayambhu without required government permits, and neither were they communicated to the World Heritage Centre.

A proposed Master Plan for the development of Pashupatinath is an example of an infraction on a major religious site. Big constructions are carried out on the site, and no valid environmental or heritage impact studies have been carried out.

The Bhaktapur Municipality plans to destroy a Rana building of the former royal palace.

Restoration work is of poor quality due to the lowest bidder tender system which favours the employment of less skilled craftspeople. The promised amendment of the procurement and hiring laws has not taken place. Examples are the Anantapur temple at Swayambhu where substandard mortar was employed, and the Patan Museum which remains incompletely restored after six years.

Listing the Kathmandu Valley as endangered might have worked as an incentive to increase funding, but, moreover, would have worked to give the government the message that it must develop one single competent and empowered an agency to look after conservation management. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. We can only give the floor to Observers after the decision is taken. Thank for your comment.

Dear colleagues, with this, we are now moving to the Africa Region. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Mali which requested the state of conservation report on the Royal Palace of Abomey, Benin, to be open for discussion to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs de délégation, la délégation du Mali voudrait remercier M. le Président de la mise en débat, dans le cadre des travaux de la présente session, du projet de décision 44 COM 7B.1 relatif à l'état de conservation des Palais royaux d'Abomey, bien du patrimoine historique béninois, inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial depuis 1985, conformément à la requête qu'elle a introduite à cet effet au nom de l'État partie du Bénin, qui ne siège pas actuellement au Comité du patrimoine mondial. Pour rappel, ce projet de décision contient d'importantes recommandations concernant deux dimensions, l'une actuelle et l'autre future, du bien. Il s'agit, d'une part, de son état de conservation, qui a fait l'objet de plusieurs missions récentes de suivi du Comité du patrimoine mondial et de l'ICOMOS et, d'autre part, du projet de création du Musée de l'épopée des amazones et des rois du Dahomey, initié par le Gouvernement béninois pour valoriser le site palatial d'Abomey, en renforçant l'intégrité et l'interprétation du bien. Sur ces deux aspects, l'État partie du Bénin a jusqu'ici privilégié un dialogue régulier et constant avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial et l'ICOMOS en vue de la prise en compte de l'ensemble de leurs recommandations pour la sauvegarde de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien. Dans ce cadre, notamment, l'État partie du Bénin a transmis, le 27 mai 2021, un mémorandum au Centre du patrimoine mondial pour répondre à certaines préoccupations formulées par l'ICOMOS dans son avis technique de janvier 2021 sur le projet de création du Musée de l'épopée des amazones et des rois du Dahomey et de valorisation du site palatial d'Abomey. D'une manière générale, ce mémorandum apporte des éléments probants sur des améliorations sensibles enregistrées dans l'état de conservation globale du bien, notamment en ce qui concerne la lutte contre l'occupation illégale à l'intérieur du bien, ainsi que les réaménagements introduits dans le plan architectural du futur musée pour réduire son empreinte sur le bien et réhabiliter plusieurs de ces composantes conformément aux recommandations pertinentes de l'ICOMOS. En somme, ce sont ces évolutions positives, qui n'ont pas pu être prises en compte lors de l'élaboration du projet de décision en raison des contraintes des délais, que l'État partie du Bénin souhaite voir reflétées en suggérant quelques amendements audit projet de décision. Ces amendements concernent notamment les points 6, 12, 13 nouveau et 15 nouveau, ancien point 14. Je voudrais à ce stade vous prier, Monsieur le Président, de bien vouloir inviter l'État partie du Bénin à donner quelques précisions par rapport à ces amendements. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I noted your request to give the floor to the State Party concerned for response for clarification. If you do not mind, I will invite the State Party after the Committee members to answer questions. I would like to ask you to clearly formulate the question to the State Party. Thank you.

Dear colleagues, before I invite the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to respond to the comment, I suggest we have a five-minute technical break.

Dear colleagues, let us proceed. I would like to invite Mr. Muhammad Muhammad Juma, chief of the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, to respond to this comment. You have the floor.

Secrétariat :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous pouvons confirmer que l'État partie du Bénin a soumis, le 27 mai 2021, un mémorandum au Centre du patrimoine mondial pour répondre à certaines préoccupations formulées par l'ICOMOS dans son avis technique de janvier 2021 sur le projet de création du Musée de l'épopée des amazones et des rois du Dahomey et la valorisation du site palatial d'Abomey. Considérant les délais de transmission, le Secrétariat et l'ICOMOS n'ont pas pu intégrer ces dernières informations fournies par l'État partie du Bénin dans le rapport d'état de conservation du bien, qui était déjà finalisé. Cependant, le Secrétariat a organisé plusieurs réunions, notamment le 28 juin et le 9 juillet 2021, avec la participation de l'ICOMOS et de l'État partie afin de poursuivre le dialogue sur la manière d'améliorer significativement l'état de conservation général du bien, et particulièrement en ce qui concerne le contrôle de l'occupation illégale à l'intérieur du bien ainsi que les actions à entreprendre pour l'empreinte du futur musée sur le bien et la réhabilitation de plusieurs de ses composantes. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. First, ICOMOS appreciates the recent dialogue with the State Party on the progress of the museum project. We are reviewing formerly the recent information that has been provided in the memorandum that has already been mentioned. We support the proposed amendments to the Draft Decision as being in line with our recent dialogue, in particular the need for further sustained exchanges of information as the project further develops, in order to ensure it supports its OUV and contributes to the overall conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Uganda supports the amendments in Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.1 as proposed by my distinguished colleague from Mali. Specifically, the amendments in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Draft Decision operationalising greater working between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies in the best way forward for sustainable conservation and management of the palaces in question.

Mr. Chairman, given the fact that several States Parties, including Benin, have continued to experience conflicts and the unpredictable challenges of Covid-19, the amendment in paragraph 14, simply requests for an extra two months to finalise and present the state of conservation report on the implementation of the recommendations in the Draft Decision as well as its examination at the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2022. This is for your approval. I rest my case. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de l'Éthiopie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Nous nous joignons donc au Mali ainsi qu'à mon collègue de l'Ouganda pour soutenir les amendements qui ont été proposés et qui ont été appuyés, il faut le noter, par les experts de l'ICOMOS. Nous les remercions pour leur compréhension face à la complexité [de la situation] et aux difficultés auxquelles le pays fait face, et à l'esprit de dialogue et de coopération dont il a fait montre. Nous apprécions particulièrement le fait que l'État partie ait envoyé un mémorandum répondant aux préoccupations de l'ICOMOS à cet effet, et que dans ce mémorandum il est clairement élaborée l'amélioration de la conservation du bien ainsi que l'aménagement futur du musée en tenant compte de l'avis exprimé par les experts. Compte tenu de cette évolution positive, nous soutenons tous les amendements soumis et nous nous attendons à ce que puissions avancer assez rapidement sur ce sujet. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The floor is to Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We would also like to give our support to these amendments, because we find ourselves facing a case which is exemplary. As discussed, the country has had difficulty despite the efforts it was making to put forth a memorandum to enumerate all these points and this corresponds to having more dialogue. Normally, people ask for more time, but, here, they have acted in this way, and for this reason we support the amendment, absolutely. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have reviewed the ICOMOS reports and we have also received information from the State Party concerning the state of conservation of this site. We believe the Draft Decision reflects most of the findings of the report, but does not adequately acknowledge efforts and improvements on the part of the local government, such as the legal measures adopted in order to increase protection from illegal developments and encroachments on the property. The adjustments that have been made to the museum project in the Court of the Amazon. We believe this should be reflected in the Draft Decision. Thus, we support the amendment that has been presented by the distinguished Delegation of Mali. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China thanks the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for this very good document. China commends the State Party for the efforts it has made in conserving the property. China understands that the structures of the palaces in the property are vulnerable and need immediate action. China expresses its appreciation to the institutionalised mechanism the State Party has established in protecting the property and restoring the decorated areas, including a revised management plan for 2020 to 2024 and a new management committee for its execution and the appointment of a site manager and a conservator for the museum. A fire prevention plan is also being formulated.

China is confident that the enhanced communication between the State Party and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies will enable a long-term recovery plan to be established to safeguard the OUV of the property and that the museum project will be carried out in respect to the OUV of the property. Therefore, China supports the amendment submitted by Mali. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment. Russia, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Russian Federation would like to highlight the progress made by the State Party of Benin in improving the state of conservation of the Royal Palaces of Abomey World Heritage Property. The efforts of the State Party are significant in scales and include a revision of a management plan and its implementation, as well as conservation works aimed at rehabilitation of the degraded parts of the property.

The achievements of Benin in ensuring fire safety at the World Heritage Property, as well as the introduction of a special programme to support traditional knowledge are also valued in terms of risk preparedness and sustainable development. In this site, the remaining issues concerning new developments, including the museum project as well as the development of the recovery plan, are the new challenges that we are sure will be efficiently addressed by the State Party in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies.

As we understood, the State Party has already taken in consideration the observation concerning the museum project made in the Draft Decision and has transmitted to the World Heritage Centre the memorandum about the substantial changes that go in line with the recommendations, such as reducing volume of the construction and other significant adjustments.

Therefore, we believe that there is no need to wait longer anymore and further progress made by the State Party of Benin should be presented at the 45th session of the Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Hungary welcomes the steps taken by Benin to conserve the Royal Palaces of Abomey World Heritage site, in particular its effort to restore the majority of the structures in the Palace area. Our country highly appreciates that they are also committed to address the high risk of fire, a fire hydrant has been brought back into service and Hungary also welcomes that a fire break of six metres has been re-established around the buildings and will be kept clear of vegetation.

Hungary noted with satisfaction that the State Party has revised the Management Plan for 2020-2024, and in order to operationalise this Plan, the State Party integrated comments from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS. Hungary also welcomes the new management committee established in November 2020.

In view of the above, Hungary supports the amendment to the Draft Decision submitted by Mali. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Advisory Bodies for their excellent report for this site. I also would like to take this opportunity to commend the State Party for its endeavour to preserve the property's OUV, especially the submission for the revised management plan as well as the establishment of the new management committee. Oman, Mr. Chair, would also like to echo the voice of the other States Parties for the positive comments on this site. Therefore, we believe that sufficient time is required to allow the State Party to comply with all the requirements from the Advisory Bodies. For this reason, Oman supports the amendment to the Draft Resolution. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. At the onset, I would like to commend Benin for the effort exerted in preserving the site of the Royal Palaces of Abomey and thank ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for their assessment. We equally commend the dialogue process between Benin, ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, as indicated in the previous interventions. We would like to support the amendments presented by Mali on this Draft Resolution which will enable the preservation of the site while implementing the museum project. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try to be brief since my colleagues have covered most of the items here. But we would like to express our appreciation for this exemplary case where countries, like Benin, show commitment and real action on the ground. There is a regulatory framework which is taking place, there is the planning of the site which is being met and there is also the actual ground work with regard to the museum and related buildings in this regard.

We see an exemplary case of dialogue between the member State, ICOMOS and the Secretariat and we commend them all for this constructive dialogue. I think it is an exemplary case and would like to support the amendment proposed in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving us the floor. We support the amendment proposed by Mali on behalf of Benin. As you know, the Royal Palaces of Abomey is one of the two World Heritage properties of the State Party of Benin, the other being the natural site of W-Arly-Pendjari Complex which will also be discussed during this 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

We welcome all the efforts undertaken by the State Party of Benin in preserving the OUV of these Palaces and their determination to engage in enhanced dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in their efforts to build the new museum. With this, Chairperson, as I said, we support the amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We would like to echo our distinguished colleagues in the Committee and acknowledge the great work that has been performed by Mali. We could also support the amendments proposed by Mali only with a few changes and those concern paragraph 12.

My question to you, Chair, is, if we could have the floor once again, please, when we are going through the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, no problem. Now, I will ask Mr Muhammad Muhammad Juma and ICOMOS to answer the questions. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair, but there was no question from our side.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. Likewise, we did not hear any particular questions directed at ICOMOS that need answering. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Mali, have you formulated the question that you will put to the State Party?

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le Mali remercie les membres du Comité pour leur soutien, le Secrétariat de l'UNESCO, les organes consultatifs et les experts pour les efforts abattus, et les appuis qui ont permis de prendre en compte les nouveaux amendements que nous avons soumis. Enfin, le Mali félicite chaleureusement le Bénin et l'encourage à continuer ses efforts conformément aux recommandations de cette décision 44 COM 7B.1. Les palais royaux d'Abomey constituent un joyau architectural très précieux pour l'Afrique et pour le monde. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you, there is no question. We will move forward. I see no more questions in the comments. Dear colleagues, I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.1 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on this Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment proposed by the distinguished Delegation of Mali. You can see the Draft Decision on the screen. We have no modifications proposed for the first five paragraphs and paragraph 6 reads: 'Expresses great concern that the continuing vulnerabilities of the Palaces remain, and requests the State Party to continue its efforts against the illegal development and encroachment of the property'.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear colleagues, we will pass the text paragraph by paragraph. From paragraphs 1 to 5, do you agree? Okay, it is approved. For paragraph 6, do you agree, approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraphs 7 to 11 including paragraph 11 remain unchanged as well.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, do you approve these paragraphs? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 12 reads: 'Further notes that the designs for the proposed museum have been modified with lower roofs and an architectural language that respects local traditions, and further requests the State Party to relocate the building or make it much smaller and less dominant, so that the Amazon court continues to be intelligible as a large ceremonial open space, and to submit volumetric studies for review before any further detailed plans are developed for the Amazon court'.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our first comment or point is regarding the second part of paragraph 12: 'Further requests the State Party to relocate the building or make it much smaller and less dominant'— we would ask to include — 'including considering alternatives outside the property'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none, can we approve this paragraph?

The Delegation of Norway:

Excuse me, Mr Chair, If I may Sir, I have a second point. I am not sure if this should be part of paragraph 12 or it should be a new paragraph but it is regarding the importance of carrying out a Heritage Impact Assessment. We would like to propose to add the following and I quote: 'And requests, furthermore, the State Party to carry out Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) as a prerequisite for development projects and activities within or around the components of the property in conformity with Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines before any decisions are made'. Thank you. I would be glad of the advice to check if this is the right place for the amendment, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Chair. We have a bit of a problem with the first amendment by Norway 'Including considering alternatives outside the property'. This, for us, is problematic as the whole idea is to ensure that the museum is there in line with the property, so that it can serve as a place of visit. If we locate it 200 kilometres away, I do not see the purpose of having a museum. I would just respectfully disagree with my colleague from Norway and would ask that the part that says: 'Including considering alternatives outside the property' be deleted. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, is this okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

I can say that if no one is supporting us we will go with the consensus. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. For paragraph 12, can we approve it? Okay. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a new paragraph proposed by the distinguished Delegation of Mali. Paragraph 13: 'Requests the State Party to continue dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in the framework of the timetable for the implementation of the project for the Museum of the Epic of the Amazons and Kings of Dahomey, to allow for a sustained exchange of documentation and to ensure the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property'.

Chairperson:

Can we approve this paragraph? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 14, original paragraph 13 remains unchanged Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Can we approve it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 15, there was an inconsistency between the French and the English versions. We took into account the English version proposal. New paragraph 15 reads: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Approved? It is approved. Dear colleagues, now we have been through the entire text, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44COM7B.1 adopted as amended ^[gavel]. Thank you very much. I would now like to ask whether any Observer Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Mali, please you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de me donner encore la parole. Je tenais à m'excuser pour tout à l'heure parce que mon micro était fermé à un moment donné et je n'ai pas entendu, j'ai pensé que c'était l'adoption. Alors je vous prie de m'excuser, j'étais tellement pressé pour l'adoption que j'ai remercié prématurément, mais je reviens pour à nouveau remercier le Comité du patrimoine mondial et les experts et pour féliciter le Bénin pour tout le travail accompli. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any other requests for the floor from the Observers? I see none. I am sorry, Benin, please you have the floor.

Délégation du Bénin :

Merci. Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs de délégation, je voudrais vous remercier de l'opportunité que vous me donnez ainsi qu'à ma délégation pour remercier la délégation du Mali d'avoir bien voulu accepter d'introduire notre requête, et tous les membres du Comité pour l'examen très favorable des propositions que nous avons faites. Nous voudrions nous honorer également d'avoir eu un langage constant, ouvert et transparent avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial et les organisations consultatives, notamment l'ICOMOS, sur toutes leurs préoccupations liées à la conservation du bien, Palais royaux d'Abomey, ainsi que la mise en construction du nouveau musée qui sera le musée de l'Épopée des rois et des amazones d'Abomey. Les quatre amendements proposés par l'État partie, comme vous le savez, aux points 6, 12, 13 nouveau et 15 nouveau, tels que présentés, visent simplement à mieux refléter les progrès accomplis dans l'amélioration de l'état de conservation du bien, avec l'appui très apprécié des partenaires, comme le Royaume de Norvège, comme on l'a constaté. Il s'agit notamment des dispositions légales et réglementaires prises pour améliorer la gestion et la conservation du bien et pour enrayer le problème d'empiètement sur son territoire. La construction du futur musée constitue un projet gouvernemental important, pertinent, dont plusieurs composantes sont dédiées à la réalisation du site palatial d'Abomey, et au renforcement de l'interprétation du bien dans la stricte préservation de sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle. La délégation du Bénin se félicite du consensus trouvé avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial et l'ICOMOS en vue de la prise en considération, par la présente session du Comité du patrimoine mondial, de ces propositions d'amendement, et réitère son entière disponibilité à poursuivre le dialogue fructueux avec l'ensemble des parties. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président, et vous félicite de la qualité de votre leadership.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I suggest we close today's meeting a little bit early to start our next site tomorrow. Thank you for your diligent effort and see you tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time and for the Bureau meeting we will meet at 11:00 am. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just to announce that we have the Budget group at 4:30 pm Paris time which is 10:30 pm Fuzhou time. Thank you and see you.

Chairperson:

Thank you and see you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 3:22:05 pm.

FIFTH DAY – Thursday 22 July 2021
FIFTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, it is great to see you again. Let us get on to our work today. First of all, I would like to thank all the colleagues for your sympathy, condolences and solidarity expressed towards the people in Henan province affected by the unprecedented flood havoc. I wish to take this opportunity to assure you that China, hosting the current session of the World Heritage Committee, has taken immediate measures and will spare no effort to safeguard the World Heritage properties located in Henan province.

The Bureau of the Committee held its 5th meeting today. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recalled that the Committee decided, through a vote by secret ballot, to delete the property Liverpool, Maritime Mercantile City from the World Heritage List. This was the third time a property was deleted from the List after the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary in Oman, in 2007, and the Dresden Elbe Valley in Germany, in 2009. Each time we collectively failed to preserve a site. We can only share the pain of the State Party concerned.

I also informed the Bureau that we had only examined three reports of property under Item 7b and that we will start our session today in the exact order in which they are foreseen in the revised calendar circulated by the Secretariat yesterday evening, as uploaded on the website. This means that we will start today's session with two sites from Asia Pacific first. Namely 7B.34 Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore and 7B.132 Borobudur Compounds. We will then resume the order where we left it yesterday. Namely 7B.118 Lalibela, 7B.49 Budapest, 7B.50 Venice, 7B.52 Auschwitz and we will close our session today with 7B.77 and the Ohrid Region.

Dear colleagues, I would like to draw your attention on the very heavy agenda today with seven state of conservation report to examine. As you have realised yesterday, there have been numerous long interventions to support an amendment. I fully understand the importance to express your support and solidarity, but I will kindly ask you all, in the interest of time management, to refrain as much as possible from making long interventions. Especially, when it is to fully support an amendment submitted. I count on your cooperation in this regard.

Lastly, the Bureau heard a progress report from the Chairperson of the working group on the budget, Ms. Zoya Kritskaya. The next meeting from the group today will be held from 4.30 to 5:30 pm Paris time using the same Zoom link for the Bureau and the plenary meetings. Thank you very much.

We will now resume our work on Item 7B with the nomination of two cultural properties located in the Asia Pacific Region. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Egypt which requested the state of conservation on the Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore, Pakistan, to be opened for discussion to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and very good morning to you. Thank you for giving me the floor to present the amendments to the Draft Decision pertaining to the Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore. As a sponsor of the amendments for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we believe that the orange metro line does not have any adverse impact on the OUV of the Shalamar Gardens.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to take into account the requirements of State Parties to undertake projects aimed at uplifting the quality of life for its people. The orange metro project is a transport project for more than 12 million residents of Lahore. Pakistan has conducted number of assessment studies prior to the execution of the project which indicated no significant impacts on the OUV of the property. These studies conducted by an ICOMOS expert included Environmental Impact Assessment, Heritage Impact Assessment, Visual Impact Assessment and vibration analysis. All these studies carried out earlier were submitted to the World Heritage Centre in November 2019 and acknowledged by the Secretariat.

We believe that the State Party has taken adequate measures to maintain the OUV of the site, including the preservation of its visual integrity. Furthermore, it has already earmarked this significant budget for engaging a consultant to carry out the feasibility study, as highlighted in paragraph 3 of the proposed Draft Decision. The consultant's findings will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS experts for review before implementation. We further believe that the World Heritage Committee should build on its earlier Draft Decision taken at the 43rd session in Baku. We need to acknowledge the effort of the State Party and its readiness to undertake further measures to implement the Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations.

We believe, Mr. Chair, that our proposed amendments are in line with the final adopted Decision in Baku, in 2019, when the Committee decided unanimously to delete some wording to the Draft Decision and believe that this wording should be reinserted in the current Decision. We propose to delete the first part of paragraph 5 to bring this

Draft Decision in line with the final adopted Decision at the 43rd session of the Committee. The same applies to paragraphs 6 and 10.

We take this opportunity to express concerns over reference to the concentration of possible inscription of the Fort and Shalamar Gardens on the List of World Heritage in Danger at the 45th session of the Committee in 2022. We believe such a reference is presumptuous and implies failure of the State Party in implementing the missions' recommendations. I thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I would like to invite Mr. Feng Jing and ICOMOS to respond to the comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you and good morning or good afternoon to you, Mr. Chairperson. Distinguished Committee members, you can see in front of you on the slideshow that this property is mainly threatened by a recent construction of a new orange line metro which includes 14-metre-high wired pylons passing on the immediate vicinity of the property. The previous analysis and conclusions by the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM indicated that there has been a lack in complying with the required procedure and especially in considering all impacts of the project on the property. This can be shown from the slides provided by the State Party and the April 2018 joint World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.

The efforts made by the State Party to address some of the Committee's requirements with regard to the conservation of the property and the directions provided by the Superior Court of Pakistan are acknowledged. These are demonstrated by the creation of the special committee of experts which oversees all orange line related operations enabling a better decision-making process. The State Party also undertook the planting of trees which may screen the view of the orange line from the property and test operations to evaluate vibration levels.

However, most importantly, the Committee may wish to reiterate its request to the State Party to fully implement all of the recommendations of the 2018 mission to mitigate to maximum extent the adverse effects of the orange line project on the OUV of the property. This is referring to paragraph 6 of the Draft Decision. The Committee may wish to also reiterate its request that the State Party submit detailed project studies for proposed mitigation measures to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Furthermore, in the absence of significant progress in the implementation of measures recommended by the 2018 mission to address the ascertained danger to the OUV of the property, the Committee may consider the possibility of inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger at its 45th session in 2022. It should also be recalled that the State Party has been requested for years to consider the boundary revision and creation of buffer zones. So far this has not been done.

After publishing of the working document, the State Party held a dialogue meeting with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on the 13th of July 2021. Dear Chairperson, with your permission, ICOMOS will provide further comments on this property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. Can ICOMOS say at the start of this intervention that a suggestion that the orange metro line does not have any adverse impact on the OUV of the property is simply factually not correct. That statement is not consistent with previous decisions of this Committee, nor the assessments provided by ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre. Indeed, the process over recent sessions of the committee including the Reactive Monitoring mission has been to address the acknowledged adverse impact of the orange metro line.

Chair, could I also, please, clarify with respect to the intervention of the honourable delegate from Egypt that the State Party Heritage Impact Assessment may well have been prepared by one of the 10,000 members worldwide of ICOMOS but was not an ICOMOS report. The official ICOMOS report has been previously provided to the Committee and the views of ICOMOS are embodied in the state of conservation report before the committee.

ICOMOS acknowledged the State Party has addressed some previous Committee decisions and some recommendations of the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission. However, there is a disappointing lack of progress with only the selection of a consultant and a feasibility study for implementation of the many unfulfilled mission recommendations. This is concerning, given the time that has passed and the acknowledged impacts of the orange metro line on the OUV of the property. The feasibility study should be expedited, it should be conducted in close consultation with ICOMOS and the outcomes should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review. Importantly, the State Party should very clearly commit to implementing the specific measures included in item 6 of the Draft Decision as these are the most important actions to address the adverse impact of the orange metro line.

Chair and members, the items listed in the draft paragraph 6 of the Draft Decision are the big impactful actions that the State Party can take and it is inexplicable that there would be a suggestion that they will not be embodied in the Decision, if indeed there is a commitment from the State Party to implement these actions. The State Party has not provided sufficient information about proposed restoration projects which may contribute to conservation. And the brief outline provided about these projects does not allow proper assessment of their potential impact on the property's OUV. More detailed information should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and frankly, to avoid the regrettable process that has taken place throughout the orange metro line project. The OUV of this property remains at risk.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies recommend that the decision of the Committee should embody the necessary commitment for the full implementation of the recommendations of the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission, and in particular, the measures which are specifically included in the Draft Decision. All of which, Chair, are perfectly consistent with the Decision taken by the Committee at its 43rd session.

If there is not significant progress with the implementation of the previous Committee decisions and the mission recommendations, then it is reasonable for the committee to give fair notice to the State Party that there is the potential for future consideration of inclusion of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Saudi Arabia the floor. We are here to present the amendments to the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.34 pertaining to the orange line metro train project and its impact on Shalamar Gardens. As a sponsor of the amendment proposed jointly with Egypt, China, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Oman, St Kitts and Nevis and Thailand, we believe that the government of Pakistan is firmly committed to the 1972 Convention.

Pakistan is an advocate and proponent of socially and culturally sensitive development and believes in striking a balance between the infrastructure development imperatives and social environmental and cultural considerations. The orange line metro does not have any adverse impact to the OUV of the Shalamar Gardens. Extra care has been undertaken in its design as well as construction and engineering plans to ensure full-proof protection and conservation of the property.

Mr. Chair, dear colleagues, as we went through the records of the discussion in Baku, we saw that exact same discussion took place with the same arguments again. And, it was highlighted in Baku, it is important to shed light on the eco-friendly nature of this project as it will decrease congestion on the roads in the vicinity of the park. The energy efficient nature of this project will continue to actually decrease the wear and tear of the heritage site due to pollution. It is also worth noting that since UNESCE is an integral part of the United Nations system, we have put in place such project to have better living standards and more environment-friendly transportation system which will advance Pakistan towards sustainable development goals.

The government of Pakistan is fully committed to the implementation of the Reactive Monitoring mission and recommendations. The report of the RMM which was released on the 12th of June 2018 gave a long list of specific recommendations including realignment of existing roads and redirection of traffic. It is important to highlight here that many of these recommendations are aimed at creation of buffer zones, revision of boundaries and realignment of motorways and historical growth.

These steps involved acquisition of land and houses to create an open space around the property, new and additional motorways, as well as pedestrian roads going along all sides of the property. These proposed measures involve the displacement of a large number of people residing in the neighbourhood surrounding the property which entails a significant social and financial cost by the government of Pakistan. All these actions, as agreed by the World Heritage Committee, ICOMOS and ICCROM, require detailed technical studies and appropriate social measures in order to maintain the integrity and consistency of decisions in the committee.

We believe, Mr. Chair and dear colleagues, that our proposed amendments are in line with the final adopted Decision in Baku, in 2019, where paragraph 3 proposed wording was deleted by Committee members in the final adopted Decision, 43 COM 7B.72. However, we noticed that the same wording has been reinserted again in Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.34. We propose to delete the first part of paragraph 5 to bring this Draft Decision in confirmation of the final adopted Decision at the 43rd Committee session in Baku.

As previously mentioned, regarding maintaining the integrity and consistency of the decisions of the Committee, we further note that paragraph 6 and in particular 6a, b and c were proposed in the Draft Decision at the 43rd Committee in Baku but were deleted from the final Draft Decision by Committee members. In addition, Mr. Chair and dear colleagues, we propose the deletion of the last part of paragraph 10 since it was deleted in the 43rd World Heritage Committee meeting in Baku as well.

In conclusion, the State Party has already submitted the outcomes of monitoring activities to assess the impact of the orange line metro, in particular, the Heritage Impact Assessment, the Environmental Impact Assessment, the

Visual Impact Assessment and vibration analysis studies. All these studies were shared by the State Party with the World Heritage Secretariat in November 2019 after Baku.

And, last but not least, Mr. Chair and dear colleagues, as we have said earlier, we should encourage State Parties who show progress and commitment towards decisions of the Committee, and Pakistan has spared no effort to show that progress and commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and sorry for talking a long time.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, the floor is to Oman.

The Delegation of Oman:

Good morning, Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, as a co-sponsor and in addition to the intervention made by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Omani Delegation acknowledges the progress made by Pakistan on the state of conservation of the Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore and its protection and management. This shows the willingness of the State Party in taking further steps towards protecting the OUV of the property.

The State Party has taken the comments, concerns and recommendations raised by the Consultative Bodies into consideration. It implemented some restoration and conservation work, basic documentation of planned work and provided proposals to further work and studies. Furthermore, it reduced the speed of the orange line metro around the property components. It showed readiness to continue working on the property conservation and protection.

The Omani Delegation values and welcomes the State Party commitment and all efforts that have so far been made to protect the OUV of the Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore. It is recommended that the State Party continue its planned works, with consultation from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, mainly in terms of restoration and conservation activities which can improve the general state of conservation and condition of the historical element of the property.

The State Party has still time, until February 2022, for examination by the World Heritage Committee in the 45th session in 2022, to submit and or address all concerns raised by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Oman supports the amendment to the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. China commends the progress made by the State Party of Pakistan to implement the Committee's previous decisions and recommendations of the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission with regard to the protection and management of the property. As pointed out by many members of the Committee, it is important to strike the right balance between sustainable heritage conservation and development.

Conservation is a concept recognising the fact that heritage provides opportunities for economic, ecological, educational and social benefits, based on the principle of wise use. The concept promotes planning, control, coordination and monitoring in the use and the management of the heritage to support development for the benefit of mankind.

China welcomes the creation by the Directorate General for Archaeology of a regulatory committee for the orange metro line related operations and future projects; and believes it is another testimony of the State Party's commitment to implement the Convention. However, we believe that the State Party needs sufficient time to implement the remaining recommendations, especially in view of the current pandemic. Moreover, we encourage the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to enhance the dialogue and cooperation to address the concerns.

We would like to say that my Delegation fully supports the amendments to the Draft Decision on Fort Shalamar Gardens in Lahore. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I have many Committee members on my speaking list. Please, respect strictly the time limit of intervention which is of three minutes. I remind you of this point and thank you for your cooperation. Now, Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The State Party demonstrated unwavering commitment to the protection of World Heritage and constructive engagement with the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS experts over the last couple of sessions. Mr. Chair, I would just point out some of the key points of the case. The orange metro line project was conceived in 2005, but the execution started only in 2015 due to the cautious approach of the government to avoid

any negative impact on the heritage of the historic city of Lahore. And the alignment of the metro was changed to avoid any adverse environmental impacts.

I will not repeat everything about assessments, studies and so on. Since the 42nd session of the Committee, Pakistan has made earnest effort to implement the recommendations of the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission. The mission was invited immediately after the verdict of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in December 2016 and the visit took place in 2018.

The mission gave a number of recommendations, some of which have already been implemented by the State Party, and it was also acknowledged in the report. For the remaining recommendations, significant social and financial costs are involved for which Pakistan needs time, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic has hampered many states to proceed with implementing measures. We further note that the State Party has implemented a number of recommendations.

We call on the Committee members to acknowledge the effort of Pakistan, its willingness to undertake mitigation measures. We are confident that this Committee will endorse the amended Draft Decision submitted by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and by us along with many other Committee members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning once again. We are also very much supportive of the amendments that have been presented by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and many other countries. It goes at the heart to what we believe is critical for this ommittee to understand and evolve in its way of seeing and doing things.

Development should be at the heart of heritage conservation as the benefits derived from heritage in terms of economic and social and other benefits for the local population. This transport project is absolutely for the country and its people which Pakistan has undertaken with utmost care in order to preserve the OUV of the site, undertaking all the necessary studies and establishing a very constructive dialogue with experts.

Therefore, we do not see any need to rush towards putting it in a List or a potential List of Danger sites. Chair, this is to express our full support to the amendments that have been put forward. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My Delegation shares the views expressed by previous Delegations in support of the amendments to the Draft Decision. We fully believe in the importance of balancing conservation and development which we believe the government of Pakistan has started to do with regard to the orange line metro. In this regard, we take note of the effort of the State Party in continuing to address the relevant recommendations in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Particularly, the mitigation recommendations of the joint Reactive Monitoring mission.

We urge the State Party to continue with this effort and believe that more time should be given to the State Party to undertake the remaining recommendations of the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The floor is to St Kitt and Nevis.

The Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. We will be brief. Just to underline and support what previous speakers have been saying in terms of supporting and endorsing the amendments that have been cited. Let me just also underline three points, first that St Kitts and Nevis is totally supportive of this Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore project, it always has been. We believe, as previously said, there is a need for the Advisory Bodies to recognise the importance of the balance between economic progress and prosperity, and the conservation of World Heritage sites.

It should be underlined that the orange line metro project will enable an enhancement of the quality of life of the many commuters that use the metro every day, especially to the women and families, which economic prosperity as a result of improving accessibility and transport via this orange line metro is critical. Let me also say that the alignment metro was changed in the past connection in order to avoid any other adverse environmental impacts; this involved, displacement of a number of buildings and also additional provisions. Therefore, I again underline the very strong support for this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. In order to respond to your appeal to make our speeches as short as possible, I will only support the assessments and proposals made by the previous speakers, in particular the distinguished representatives of Saudi Arabia, Oman and China. We hope that the State Party will continue its effort to ensure the conservation of the property in close cooperation with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment and example. Now, I give the floor to Brazil.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following your advice, and, of course, that of my predecessor, we will be very brief, just to support the amendments presented, Brazil strongly supports them.

There is nonetheless an element, that I want to highlight, which is our satisfaction to see the proposal of deleting the final part of paragraph 10 that we believe is totally inappropriate in the relationship between the Advisory Bodies and Member States. It does not reflect the real role of UNESCO in the preservation process which is cooperating with States and not prejudging actions to threaten State members. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway is concerned about the situation of the property. It is of the utmost importance that the State Party goes further and implement all the recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission. Today, we have all received an email from World Heritage Watch and Lahore Conservation Society that reminds us of the importance of making civil society an integral part of an informed decision-making process for World Heritage sites. This is the central perspective from the Convention in line with Article 5a. We also refer to Paragraph 211 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

We would therefore invite the Committee to add a new paragraph to the amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Saudi Arabia to underline this important point. We would like to come back to this proposal when we go through the amendments paragraph by paragraph. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Mali, please you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de nous avoir donné la parole. Je voudrais profiter de cette occasion pour présenter toutes nos condoléances au Gouvernement de la Chine suite aux inondations qui viennent d'avoir lieu Monsieur le Président. En ce qui concerne le dossier présenté par le Pakistan, nous notons que l'État partie du Pakistan a mis en œuvre un certain nombre de recommandations. Pour le reste, il a déjà affecté un budget important à l'engagement de consultants pour réaliser l'étude de faisabilité, comme souligné au paragraphe 3 de l'avant-projet de décision 44 COM 7B.34. Le processus de sélection du cabinet de consultants est également terminé, et les conclusions du consultant seront soumises aux experts du Centre du patrimoine mondial et de l'ICOMOS pour examen avant leur mise en œuvre. Au vu de tout cela, nous pensons que le Comité devrait reconnaître les efforts de l'État partie du Pakistan et surtout sa volonté de prendre des mesures d'atténuation. Nous sommes convaincus que le projet de décision présenté par l'Égypte et l'Arabie saoudite et coparrainé par d'autres pays sera approuvé par le Comité. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your sympathy and solidarity with the Henan province and thank you for your comment. Now, the floor is to South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, and many thanks for allowing me to take the floor in support of the proposed amendments tabled by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and their cosponsors. In the analysis of the state of conservation report, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS do acknowledge that evident progress has been made in the implementation of the 2019 recommendations. Considering the exceptional circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, South Africa would

like the State Party be granted more time to implement the outstanding recommendations included in the previous decisions of Baku 2019.

South Africa therefore finds the situation for inscription in the List of World Heritage in Danger premature. South Africa would also like to encourage a more active dialogue and open line of communication between the State Party and the Centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, now the floor is to Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. In the spirit of saving time, I will be very brief. Uganda joins the rest of the Delegations that have already taken the floor to support the amendments supported by Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and supported by other State members of the Committee. My Delegation recognises the various steps taken by the State Party to improve the conservation of the property. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, je vais être aussi bref que possible. Nous soutenons les amendements proposés et encourageons le gouvernement, et tous ceux que ce sujet concernent, de continuer les efforts nécessaires pour résoudre les problèmes et répondre autant que possible aux questions de l'ICOMOS et des autres organisations d'experts. Je vous remercie

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to ICOMOS for a brief clarification.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS would like to clarify with respect to the interventions from the honourable delegates that this issue is not about the metro itself, it is not about economic progress or social benefits. ICOMOS would note with the greatest of respect to those who made mentioned to the impact assessments and technical reports that for the metro itself they were not prepared, commissioned and submitted until after the project had reached the stage of constructing that it was a *fait accompli*.

The State Party declined to invite the originally requested Reactive Monitoring mission until the metro was already largely built. What the matter in front of this Committee is about are mitigating measures for a metro that already exists. It is not about sufficient time. Can, I simply say that ICOMOS would welcome the open dialogue that has been suggested by the honourable delegate for Brazil, South Africa and others and would be keen to collaborate with the State Party.

ICOMOS acknowledges the clear consensus of the Committee not to make reference to potential listing in Danger. That is accepted. But with respect to item 6, ICOMOS highlights again that the items set out in item 6 of the Draft Decision are the most important actions to address the acknowledged impact of the metro line, as you can see on the screens in front of you. And ICOMOS, frankly, does not understand why there would be an objection to including this specifics in the decision if there is a true commitment from the State Party.

ICOMOS stands ready to collaborate with the State Party on fulfilling that commitment. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.34 concerning this property. Before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. There was an amendment submitted by a number of Committee members. You can see the amendment on the screen. There were changes proposed for paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4. We can perhaps continue other options of this paragraph and I continue with the amendment proposed.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, I suggest that we approve the text paragraph by paragraph, but before doing so, just now, Norway could forward some amendments. I think we will give Ms. Rapporteur some time to table it on the screen. Please.

Rapporteur:

We have not received a written amendment. As far as we understood, Norway will interfere when the time comes and propose their amendment.

Chairperson:

Okay. Paragraphs 1 to 4 with no amendments, do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5, the first part of the paragraph is proposed for deletion so it reads now: 'Also requests that the State Party work in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to assess all OLM-related operations and future projects, in order to prevent any damage to the property's OUV'.

Chairperson:

Do we approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 6 of the Decision is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. I think this might be the right place to add a paragraph concerning the involvement of civil society. Our proposal is: 'Further requests the State Party to involve the civil society as an integral part of an informed decision-making process'.

Rapporteur:

May I ask kindly if you could read it very slowly so our colleagues could note it.

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes. 'Further requests the State Party to involve the civil society as an integral part of an informed decision-making process for the World Heritage property'.

Chairperson:

Norway, have you finished?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this amendment? Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Hello, Mr. Chair can you see and hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

I thank the Norwegian Delegation for this paragraph. But I was wondering because from our understanding in previous files that we have been discussing, there have been no such insertion, so I am just wondering is that the treatment for Pakistan? And again, from ICOMOS evaluation, I think the State Party needs some acknowledgement for its effort, it needs the benefit of the doubt, it needs some trust and I feel like this special treatment brings question marks. I was wondering whether this was just a special treatment. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I am also equally baffled like my colleague from Saudi Arabia. In terms of involving civil society as part of the decision-making process. As far as I know, I can be corrected, but the Convention does not talk about this. Why are we reserving a special treatment for Pakistan? I would understand if it would say the local community. There are directly affected and concerned. Yes, they are the owners. But a broad term such as this cannot be included, I suggest we delete it Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. We think it would be wise to change '*civil society*' to '*local communities*' in line with the last intervention from Ethiopia. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this proposal? It is approved or wait Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I recommend that we do not put it as a separate decision, we include it with paragraph proposed after 6, if we scroll down, there is a paragraph proposed: 'Takes note of the implementation of some of the recommendations formulated by...'. and then the rest of text, and we can say that: 'Further actions are to be taken in consultation with local communities, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies after the consultants findings become available'.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, is this okay? Norway, is this okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, it is okay for us. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The original paragraph 6 of the decision is proposed for deletion. We have new paragraph 6 reading: 'Also takes note of the implementation of some of the recommendations formulated by the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission, and further notes that for the remaining recommendations, the consultant engaged by the State Party will undertake detailed feasibility studies; further actions thereof will be taken in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies after the consultant's findings become available, also requests the State Party to involve the local community, as an integral part of an informed decision-making process for the World Heritage property'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Sorry Chair, we were not asking for the floor now. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Please bear with me, I would like to add on one phrase. We request the State Party to involve the local community and then 'According to national legislation, as an integral part of an informed decision-making process for the World Heritage property.' Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

For these three paragraphs can you approve them? They are approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

The last paragraph, the second half of the paragraph is proposed for deletion that starts with: 'With a view to considering'. These are all the amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

It is paragraph 10, am I right?

Rapporteur:

Correct, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this paragraph? No, it is approved. Guatemala please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Thank you, Chair, and good morning or afternoon to all. I just have a practical question with regard to paragraph 10. Should we take out the date of the session so that we comply with previous paragraphs and decisions? Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Ms. Rapporteur, you have been through all the paragraphs?

Rapporteur:

Yes, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, we have been through the entire text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.34 adopted as amended ^[gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. World Heritage Watch you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the State Party of Norway for raising the issue of civil society. We reiterate that we would like to be given the floor before decisions are being made in order to give us a meaningful participation in the processes and procedures of the Convention. We would also like to reiterate that the World Heritage Committee has repeatedly requested a full involvement and participation of civil society in all procedures of the Convention.

Taking that into consideration, I think it should not be even a matter of discussion whether civil society should have the floor and should have the possibility of making constructive contributions to the considerations of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Pakistan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Pakistan:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished Committee members, thank you for giving Pakistan the floor as an Observer and State Party to the Convention. I would like to congratulate China for the excellent stewardship of the Committee proceedings. I would also like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt for sponsoring Pakistan's amendments to the Draft Decision as well as all sponsors which include China, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Oman, St Kitts and Nevis and Thailand.

Mr. Chairperson, Pakistan is fully committed to upholding of the 1972 Convention and the conservation of its World Heritage properties. Mr. Chairperson, we also firmly believe in the conservation of Lahore Fort and Shalamar

Gardens. We have resolved to implement the recommendations of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations. Some of which have already been implemented and for the rest, I assure that our Committee consultant, who is being hired, will prepare a number of reports in the coming months. These reports will be shared with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for review before implementation work is undertaken.

Mr. Chairperson, I once again express my gratitude to all Committee members who have supported us in their intervention and look forward to working in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to implement the mitigation measures recommended by the 2018 mission. I once again thank you very much, Chair, for giving us this opportunity.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, for this item, I think our work has been very efficient. I encourage you to continue. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Thailand which requested the State of conservation report on the Borobudur Temple Compounds in Indonesia to be open for discussion to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

With regard to Draft Decision 44COM7B.142 regarding the Borobudur Temple Compounds (Indonesia), we have carefully studied both the report by the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Body as well the state of conservation report of the Borobudur Temple Compounds. In this regard, we wish to note that the State Party has confirmed that the development project within the core zone of the Borobudur Temple has been postponed pending the Heritage Impact Assessment report in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Body. Thus, at present no development project is being undertaken in the core zone of the property. This information is clearly stated in the state of conservation report of April 2021.

Mr. Chair, striking a balance between the improvement of living standard of the local community and the preservation of the World Heritage property is crucial. Thailand recognises that while remaining fully committed to protecting the OUV of the property, the State Party of Indonesia also strives to strengthen the quality of life and living standards of the local community with the improvement of infrastructure and public facilities. The government of Indonesia also attaches high priority to empowering the local community.

In this regard, given the growing number of visitors that may place considerable pressures on the property, Thailand also believes that the development projects that are undertaken outside the core zone of the Borobudur Temple Compounds are crucial. These projects focus on managing future visitor flows into the property and maintaining sustainable capacity for the Borobudur Temple Compounds.

At the same time, activities to promote sustainable development and well-being of the people living around the property shall not compromise the property's OUV. Thailand, therefore, encourages the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue to work closely and provide technical support to the State Party of Indonesia on the development of a management plan. This will ensure that the development projects will not cause any negative impact to the OUV of the property.

In light of this, Thailand wishes to request the Committee members to amend the Draft Decision that has been proposed and requests the State Party of Indonesia upon the commission of the Chairperson to make the necessary clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I note your request to give the floor to the State Party concerned for clarification. With the permission of the Committee, I give the floor to Indonesia to make a brief clarification.

The Delegation of Indonesia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Indonesia would like to thank Thailand and other members of the Committee for the opportunity given for clarification.

Borobudur is of great importance for Indonesia and its people. It symbolises the peaceful existence between various cultures and religions in Indonesia. The restoration project of Borobudur was supported by UNESCO and the international community in the 1960s. It became one of the key drivers in establishing the 1972 Convention to preserve World Heritage sites all over the world. Therefore, the government of Indonesia is always committed to preserve the OUV of Borobudur Temple Compounds in accordance with the principles of the World Heritage Convention.

The proposed development project is part of the programme not only to better increase visitor experience and interpretation of the site but also, more importantly, to increase the quality of life and living standards of the local community, by way of continuously improving communities' infrastructure and public facilities, especially during the pandemic. This will help to drive the local economy during this hard time.

However, Indonesia wishes to emphasize that the development project has been postponed until the release of the ICOMOS recommendation. This statement was clearly stipulated within the state of conservation document that has been submitted to the Secretariat in April 2021. It is therefore regrettable that information already provided by the government of Indonesia and the state of conservation report was not fully reflected in the Draft Decision.

In this connection, Indonesia wishes that the honourable Committee members could amend the proposed Draft Decision particularly on point 5 that requests the government of Indonesia to undertake an action that has already been taken. The government of Indonesia is committed to work together with the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies to ensure that the development of the proposed project will not negatively impact the OUV. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Now I would like to invite the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to respond to the comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I will be very brief and just give some background on the state of conservation of the site. Dear distinguished Committee members, as you know the discussion on the state of conservation of this property was not initially foreseen for this present Committee session. Tourism development at Borobudur Temple Compounds prompted an early review with the Committee, as it is not in line with the provisions of the *Operational Guidelines*, notably Paragraph 172. After publishing the working document, the World Heritage Centre also met with the Ambassador and permanent delegate of Indonesia regarding the state of conservation process and hence the state of conservation of this property has been opened for discussion now.

On the 8th of April 2020, the World Heritage Centre requested that the State Party clarify third party information regarding the construction of tourism facilities within and around the property. On the 23rd of October 2020, further third-party information was provided which indicated that construction works had already started prior to the submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment. In view of the urgent situation the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies requested the State Party to submit a state of conservation report for review by the current session. Between April 2020 and April 2021, a total of six letters have been sent by the World Heritage Centre to the State Party requesting clarification on the State of conservation of the property. An online meeting was also organised with the permanent Delegation of Indonesia on the 6th of November 2020.

On the 5th and 9th of April 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report and related documents. The state of conservation report indicated the ongoing development plan for the Borobudur region and comprises four components. First, the construction of a culture district and identity gates, second construction of cultural access pathways, and third is the development of Borobudur concourse area and the last one is the relocation of the commercial and parking areas.

As of yesterday, the State Party also transmitted a verbal note to the World Heritage Centre and this has been shared with the Advisory Bodies. It should be noted that the information provided in April and July 2021 is after the deadlines indicated in the *Operational Guidelines*. Mr. Chairperson, ICOMOS will provide further comments on this property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies only became aware of the extensive tourism development which has already commenced within and around the Borobudur property through third party reports, not through notification by the State Party in accordance of Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The statement of OUV for the property states and I am quoting: '*The main threat to the ensemble is from development that could compromise the extraordinary relationship between the main monument and its wider setting and could also affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.*' The incomplete Heritage Impact Assessment that has been submitted indicates clearly that the projects under consideration may impact the OUV of the property, especially as they affect the property setting and the landscape surrounding the components. And, as has been reported, ICOMOS has provided a technical review and the Heritage Impact Assessment and the projects themselves should be revised accordingly.

There is no comprehensive tourism management plan defining a general policy for tourism development in the region consistent with the OUV of the property, nor are there a minimum standards for individual projects. To be clear, ICOMOS supports sympathetic and sustainable tourism and the benefits that can flow for the local community. ICOMOS is making an offer of help. ICOMOS welcomes the advice from the State Party about the pausing of the development that is actually within the inscribed property. But the development projects within the buffer zone and around the property should also pause until the relevant management and planning documents and revisions have

taken place, and they have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed and finalised in consultation with the State Party.

The State Party should be encouraged to engage in phased dialogue and consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on further assessments of these projects and the development of the management plan through capacity building assistance, so that the manner in which the property and its setting develop in future and harness the benefits from tourism are actually consistent with the OUV of the property. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The government of Indonesia has been undertaking works outside the zone of the conservation area of the Borobudur Temple in line with what is stipulated in the zoning plan of Borobudur and its surrounding areas as well as the JICA Master Plan of Borobudur Temple Compounds.

Rebuilding local houses, improving pedestrian areas located in local villages, creating new travel patterns to enable tourists to visit areas outside the Temple Compounds, and creating spaces like local art community performances, workshops and training facilities for local artisans and traders, are all examples of development projects undertaken outside the Borobudur Temple Compounds to improve the quality of life and living standards of the local community.

These works are not only key to ensure the future sustainability of the local economy, but have been particularly important in the absence of both domestic and international tourists due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Government spending through public works to improve the community infrastructure and public facilities has become crucial to stimulating the current local economy and ensure livelihoods of the community.

We just wanted to make this Decision more reflective of the condition on the ground and therefore we ask to support the amendment proposed by Thailand and us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I would like to know whether there are any other comments. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Good morning, we would like another point of clarification from the State Party. The term 'core of the property' is not one we are used to hearing and we are wondering if the 'core of the property' is the property itself within its boundaries rather than the buffer zone. We are not quite sure what 'core of the property' means. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Borobudur Temple Compounds has a special place in the List of World Heritage. The restoration campaign for Borobudur Temple in the 1960s was actually one of the drivers to establish our 1972 Convention to preserve World Heritage sites around the world. This is a very important heritage.

China appreciates the concern from the World Heritage Centre regarding the state of conservation of the Borobudur Temple Compounds. We also acknowledge the efforts made by Indonesia in consulting the proposed development projects through submission of the Heritage Impact Assessment and several meetings between the State Party and the Secretariat.

Therefore, China commands the government of Indonesia to work together with the Secretariat and ICOMOS in managing the Borobudur Temple Compounds. To conclude, my Delegation supports Thailand's amendment to the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. As the largest Buddhist temple inscribed as a World Heritage, Borobudur draws millions of tourists each year and has a significant social economic benefit for Indonesia especially its local community. Uganda acknowledges the intention of the government of Indonesia to upgrade the existing facilities and improved the tourist

experience while preserving the OUV of the property as is stated in the state of conservation report submitted last April. The government of Indonesia reports that they have set up an inter-ministerial coordination led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in managing Borobudur Temple Compounds.

Uganda is therefore with the view that these efforts should be welcomed and acknowledged in the Draft Decision. Therefore, Uganda is joining Thailand and supports the amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We also join others in supporting the amendments proposed by Thailand. It was stressed by all Delegations the importance of the exceptional site that is at the heart of the establishment of our Convention. As was stated by the State Party, the development project was launched and that point 5 in particular should be deleted. Of course, we also believe that a constant dialogue should take place between the parties with a view to enabling continuation. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My Delegation would like to commend Indonesia for the efforts exerted in the conservation of the site of Borobudur Temple Compounds. We support the amendment presented by Thailand taken into consideration that there are no developments planned in the site. We welcome the effort of Indonesia to develop a Heritage Impact Assessment for proposed development projects outside the core of the property areas and its buffer zone.

Finally, Mr. Chairman we would like to appreciate and express our appreciation for the willingness shown by Indonesia to cooperate with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies as indicated in their intervention. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am listening to the interventions from Thailand and from the State Party and also to follow your advice and to save time, I would like to add the voice of the Delegation of Oman to the other interventions from State Parties. Therefore, we support the amended Draft Decision. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to thank the Delegations of Thailand and Kyrgyzstan for this amendment and for the clarifications that have been presented concerning the planned tourist facilities under construction in the vicinity of the property. We have also received information from the State Party that indicates that no development is being undertaken in the core zone of the property.

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that, although tourism must always be conducted in a sustainable manner that does not jeopardise the OUV of the World Heritage site, tourism should be viewed as a positive factor which stimulates local economy and generates revenue that can be applied to the conservation of the sites. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I promised earlier, I will be extremely brief. We commend Indonesia's efforts to preserve and protect this very beautiful temple and the World Heritage site and we support the amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Indonesia you may respond briefly to the questions raised by the Committee members with a two-minute intervention.

The Delegation of Indonesia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Regarding the honourable Committee member from Australia about the core zone. Within the JICA Master Plan the Borobudur Master Plan consists of five zones, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The core zone is in zone 1 and the buffer zone is zone 2. Most of the development project is happening outside in zones 3, 4 and 5. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your response. Now, I give the floor to ICOMOS for a concise clarification response.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like again to respond to some of the questions raised by the distinguished delegates. The project, which is called Improvement of the concourse area, is occurring within the inscribed property and the buffer zone. Projects A1 to A5, five different projects, are in one of the protected zones of the Master Plan which is a zone that is generally limited to agricultural settlements and agricultural areas rather than tourism developments. Project A1 is in an area which is identified for protection of historic landscapes. So, the projects are actually occurring in sensitive landscape areas which the State Party's own zoning identifies for other purposes. If I could clarify, they are not consistent with the specified zoning.

Having said that ICOMOS reiterates its support for sympathetic and sustainable tourism. We note that the State Party's own Heritage Impact Assessment indicates that there are impacts on the OUV and we would like to collaborate to prevent those impacts in accordance with the Draft Decision. There is no suggestion being made that tourism development should not occur in the vicinity of the property. But it is imperative that these tourism developments be designed and implemented in a manner that conserves the OUV. It is therefore appropriate that the project be paused, as per the original wording of the Draft Decision, because it will allow the input from the Advisory Bodies to ensure that these worthwhile developments occur at locations and in a manner that is consistent with the OUV of the property.

The advice from ICOMOS is to retain the Decision so that we can contribute and enjoy that collaboration with the State Party. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.142 concerning this property. Before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment from the distinguished delegates of Thailand and Kyrgyzstan. The proposed amendment has no modifications to paragraph 1 of the Decision.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, I suggest that we approve the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1, do you approve with no modification? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We have been looking very carefully into all information received from the Advisory Bodies, the Centre and the State Party. We have also studied the amendments proposed by our colleagues from Thailand and Kyrgyzstan. In light of that, we have the following questions and comments to the amendment.

The first part reads and I quote: 'Taking note that there is no development planned in the Borobudur Temple Compounds'. We would still like a clarification to what is meant by this phrase. If the meaning of this phrase is to say that there is no plan to perform development projects in the World Heritage property. We find this phrase highly problematic because, if we are not mistaken, there is at least one development project within the buffer zone and rather close, if not within, the World Heritage property itself, if we understand ICOMOS correctly. We would therefore suggest that this phrase might be struck.

Regarding the second sentence of the paragraph, we see it also as a bit problematic as it reads and I quote: 'Acknowledging that development projects outside the core of the property area and its buffer zone are needed to prevent adverse impact on the OUV of the property'. As this phrase stands Mr. President, it makes it sound like

development is a prerequisite for the safeguarding of OUV which is, of course, wrong. In that perspective, we are tempted to ask for the phrase to be struck.

But that being said, and as an attempt to meet halfway, we acknowledge that support for local communities and resources generation which can contribute to appropriating conservation activities may be facilitated by appropriate and sustainable development actions. If that is the intention of this phrase, we would like to propose the following wording: 'Acknowledging that development projects outside the inscribed property and its buffer zone may support local communities and conservation activities. In order to do so, the projects should be sustainable and consistent with the OUV of the property'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I ask the Committee members, for paragraph 1 do you approve of it? It is approved. Paragraphs 2 and 3, do you have any objections for their approval? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Chair, we would like to support Norway's amendment to the second part of the paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate the amendment proposed by Norway and the rationale behind it. We would like to insist with our amendments because they reflect the facts. There are no developments planned in the core area and also, we all recognise that tourism is an essential part of the development for preservation of the property. These projects are intended to ensure sustainable development without compromising the OUV of the property. For us, we would like to keep the amendment as proposed by Thailand and Kyrgyzstan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Spain would like to support the proposal tabled by Norway. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We support maintaining the proposal by Thailand and Kyrgyzstan, and, as was expressed, we feel that development is an almost *sine qua non* condition for preservation. We would like that language in that kind of spirit and mindset that is needed to be put forward, so also maintaining the amendment. Thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you Chair. In relation to the comment we made earlier in paragraph 3, I think we need to clarify again the language of the second sentence, the concept of the core of the property area. If we are going to retain that it needs to have the 'core of property' removed and just replaced with 'the property'. If I understand correctly Zone 1 equals the inscribed site. It is not a core area, it is actually the property itself. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chairperson. I simply wanted to take the floor to support the amendment by Norway. We consider that protecting the buffer zone is fundamental it is non-negotiable for the OUV of this property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. In the interest of ensuring that the Committee has a correct understanding, and in relation to the first phrase of amended paragraph 3, both ICOMOS's advice, and in fact the intervention made by the State Party has confirmed that the development that is called the improvement of the concourse area which was shown on the initial introductory slide is within both the inscribed property and the buffer zone. So, it would be a mistake for the Committee to note that there is no development plan in the Borobudur Temple Compounds because that would be factually incorrect. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to request the Rapporteur to read out paragraph 3.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We now have two options of new paragraph 3. Version 1 is as proposed by Thailand, Kirgizstan and supported by Ethiopia: 'Taking note that there is no development plan in the Borobudur Temple Compounds and acknowledging that development projects outside the [...]— as clarified by Australia — ' [...] property area and its buffer zone are needed to prevent adverse impact on the OUV of the property.'

Then we have the version proposed by Norway, Australia, Spain and Guatemala: 'Acknowledging that development projects outside the property area and its buffer zone may support local communities and conservation activities, and considers that in order to do so, the projects should be sustainable and consistent with the OUV of the property.'

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. Again, sorry for taking the floor again. I think we are in a bit of different views in terms of the facts because the experts are telling us that this statement is factually wrong. Would you allow me to request the State Party to tell us if there is no development inside the Temple Compounds? Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you again Chair. Given the clarification, we just had from ICOMOS, Australia would support Norway and Spain in deleting the first part of paragraph 3. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Our colleague from Ethiopia requested to give the floor to the State Party to answer. Can you formulate the question exactly, Ethiopia, please?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Well, the question is very simple Chair. Is there any development planned in the Temple Compounds? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Indonesia, please, you have the floor to give a brief answer.

The Delegation of Indonesia:

Thank you, Mr Chair. There are no new developments planned ongoing in the core and buffer zones. The one existing is only when we tried to replace the old materials within the concourse area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is, of course, a very important discussion. I would just like to say that we are in a situation where we have to choose between believing in the Advisory Bodies or the State Party. I have to admit that I have studied the maps and everything, the maps and the information that I received and looked through, it showed me that there are activities within the World Heritage property, and that is the fact that I have to base my suggestion on. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you Chair. Again, I am just making this intervention in an effort to help the Committee make a decision that is factually correct. The honourable delegate from the State Party from Indonesia was very careful to refer to 'no new projects'. There is an existing project. It is called the Improvement of the Concourse Area, it is clearly shown on the maps that have been on the screen. It was shown in the images before the Committee and it is within the inscribed property and the buffer zone. I would contend with the greatest of respect that it is appropriate for the credibility of the Committee that the first words in paragraph 3 of the Decision should accurately reflect the situation. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any other comments? Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

From our understanding, there is no new development project. Is that the formulation? If I could ask the ICOMOS expert?

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you Chair. ICOMOS's clear understanding is that there is an existing project proposed and it is in fact paused as indicated by the State Party. Our interest is in assisting the Committee in making a correct statement. The correct statement is: there is a current project within the inscribed property and the buffer zone. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, would you like to reach consensus or to constitute a drafting group? Thailand, please, do you have any comment?

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As suggested, maybe we proceed on the other paragraphs and, in the meantime, we try to work some compromise wording on this one. Would that be agreeable with the Chair?

Chairperson:

Okay. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Juste une petite remarque concernant les situations comme celle-là. Il nous faut davantage de coopération entre les experts de l'ICOMOS et les experts locaux, les experts du pays, afin qu'ils arrivent à une compréhension mutuelle de la situation et qu'ils puissent nous exposer clairement l'état des choses, à nous, membres du Comité. Le Comité ne devrait pas avoir à insister pour qu'on lui communique des choses qui devraient être connues davantage.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Chair, I simply highlight that it is the offer that ICOMOS is making. In terms of factual differences, I can only draw the attention of the Committee to the documentation that has been provided. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

I think we could do according to the proposal of the colleague of Thailand. We leave paragraph 3 aside and come back to it. If there are no objections, we proceed this way. Colleagues, are there any objections on paragraph 2? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor once again. We would like to actually keep the original wording in this paragraph, especially when we heard what the Advisory Bodies have had to say about the situation on tourism developments. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Did you mean the original wording in paragraph 2?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, with the tourist facilities and the problems with that one. The original 2, yes, sorry.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any objections? Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, just to clarify, new paragraph 2 that is shown on the screen is proposed by Thailand and Kyrgyzstan. Maybe we can read it out loud and get consent? New paragraph 2 reads: 'Recognising the measures taken by the State Party in preserving the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Borobudur Temple Compounds as a World Heritage property'.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We believe in maintaining the amendments of Thailand and Kyrgyzstan. For us, this is again, we repeat it, a very critical matter at the heart of what we want to see changed and we do not believe that opposing development projects for tourism and heritage preservation is the right approach. This should change.

Therefore, we do not have any concerns with development projects. The only concern we have is that these development projects are in line with the heritage protection. We are strongly in favour of maintaining the initial amendment from Thailand. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, do you have any objections?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. Just my misunderstanding because I was talking about the other paragraph the old paragraph 2 before.

Chairperson:

No problem. Do we approve of paragraph 2? Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

I think the paragraph that we are discussing now is paragraph 4.

Chairperson:

Actually paragraph 2.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Paragraph 2 where we have proposed to delete the reference to projects concerning tourism facilities, am I correct?

Chairperson:

No. Ms. Rapporteur, read it out, please.

Rapporteur:

Apologies for the confusions, but right now, we are looking at new paragraph 2 as proposed, just so that we can continue in case there are no interventions with paragraph 4.

Chairperson:

We are on paragraph 2. Are there any objections to the new paragraph 2? This is your proposal Thailand.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Yes, we would like to keep it as we amended it.

Chairperson:

For paragraph 2, are there any objections ? There are none, it is approved. Now, we are moving to paragraph 4.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4 as amended reads: 'Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to develop a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed development projects and a Management Plan (MP) for the property'.

Chairperson:

Can we approve this paragraph 4? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead with paragraph 5.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, Norway had an intervention here to keep the first part of the paragraph.

Chairperson:

They have withdrawn their proposal. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Please excuse me for the confusion. We actually took the floor earlier to keep the original wording of the original Draft Decision. So, we would like for us to keep: 'Notes with concern that development projects for tourism facilities are planned and that some works are reportedly in progress within and around the property'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I think I invite Ms. Rapporteur to clarify.

Rapporteur:

Of course, Mr. Chair. For new paragraph 4 we have two versions. As proposed by Thailand and Kyrgyzstan, the first part of the paragraph is to be deleted and it reads: 'Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to develop a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed development projects and a Management Plan (MP) for the property'.

And we have the proposed proposal by Norway to keep the first part of the paragraph and to read: 'Notes with concern that development projects for tourism facilities are planned and that some works are reportedly in progress within and around the property, and that some of these works have been paused, but welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to develop a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed development projects and a Management Plan (MP) for the property'.

Chairperson:

Okay, it is clear now? Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you Mr Chairman. I think we are talking about engagement and not criticising things and I think here the delegate of Indonesia has said that the development projects outside the core area would be postponed. For me, the important point in this paragraph is that we welcome the effort made by the State Party to develop Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed project and the Management Plan. This is all about constructive engagement. We would like to keep the amendment that we have proposed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just simply to repeat what was already said by the representative of Indonesia, within the territory of the property all development projects have been postponed pending the recommendations from ICOMOS. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My Delegation observes that paragraph 4 is related to paragraph 3 since we are standing over paragraph 3, the Committee may find it necessary to stand over paragraph 4 as well. I submit.

Chairperson:

Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to support the amendment because it also gives the same meaning as that the country is going to submit to the Committee or the World Heritage Centre their proposal and projects, and therefore, we need to support the amendment provided by Thailand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, do you agree to this?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. Could you please clarify to what we should agree? Could you please repeat what are you asking us, please?

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

To clarify the intervention of the distinguished delegate of Uganda, we have not adopted paragraph 3 yet, we just skipped to paragraph 4. Now, to clarify, we still have two options. The first is to strike through the first half of the paragraph supported by a number of Committee members, and Norway to clarify if they would prefer the first part to be kept as the original or not.

Chairperson:

The other members, do they have the same view?

The Delegation of Norway:

Does Norway have the floor, Mr. Chair?

Chairperson:

Yes, you have the floor. I wanted to know whether you agree with the other members proposal.

The Delegation of Norway:

We still have to be a bit hesitant on that one, because we actually heard what the Advisory Bodies told us and we think that the phrase that we have proposed to keep is actually important with regard to the concern described by the Advisory Bodies.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. Now, we have heard the Advisory Bodies and it is clear that there is work under way in the buffer zone. In the same way, we also highly value everything that the State is doing to preserve the OUV of the site. We believe it would be worthwhile keeping the first part of the paragraph because it is the reality, at the same time is welcoming all the efforts made by the State Party to develop Heritage Impact Assessment, as well as the proposed development project and Management Plan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. We would like, with Norway and Guatemala, to keep the original but we wonder if there is a compromise if the other members are agreeable. If we take out '*with concern*' from there and simply we note given the information that is being provided by ICOMOS, the information we received, we do know that there are and were development projects for tourism and that some works have reportedly begun. If we remove '*with concern*', would that be acceptable to Thailand, Oman and other Committee members?

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Chair, again, here we come for a factual difference. The ICOMOS experts tell us one thing and the State Party tell us another thing. Maybe, if I can reiterate the question to the State Party, are there any development project for tourism projects planned, and are there some works in progress within the property? Because we did not get an answer to that. If it is the fact then there is no problem, but there seems to be a difference in appreciating the facts. So, if we could ask the question to the State Party again, with your indulgence. Thank you

Chairperson:

The State Party, please, you have the floor for a brief answer.

The Delegation of Indonesia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I stated earlier, there is no new development project within the core or buffer zone and all the development projects in the buffer zone or outside the buffer zone have been already postponed waiting for the ICOMOS recommendation from the Heritage Impact Assessment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Committee members we have diverging views on paragraphs 4 and 3. So, shall we continue and come back or form a drafting group for dialogue? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Chair, given the substantive differences that we see, I would suggest that a drafting group would be the wisest way to move forward.

Chairperson:

Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

We support the proposal by Ethiopia to set up a drafting group. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China also supports your effort to organise a drafting group. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

We also think it is a good solution to have a drafting group and we would like to have the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre represented in the drafting group as well. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now, I suggest that Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Norway, Guatemala, and Australia form a group. They are the members, of course, ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre can join. Is this okay for you? Okay, no objections. I think Thailand and Norway can be the coordinators. Is that okay for you Thailand and Norway?

The Delegation of Thailand:

Yes. Mr. Chair.

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now let us go ahead with paragraph 5. Maybe for the other paragraphs, the two groups can come back with a consensual text. Is it okay? Oman, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to suggest that this group should revisit all paragraphs for the amended decision except the one already approved. I think it is very important that instead of picking some of the paragraphs, to go through all the Decision except what has already been approved.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this proposal? No, so let us do it this way. You will inform the Secretariat of the Committee about your progress and the time you bring the consensual text back. Let us move on to the next site.

Dear colleagues, I give the floor to Ms. Rössler to read out the cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Asia Pacific region and for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. I would like to indicate that Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.30, site of Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining in Japan is ready for adoption. Furthermore, I would also like to inform that no statements or declarations are expected to be made after the adoption of these Draft Decisions. Thank you. Dr. Rössler you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have the list of properties for adoption without discussion: n° 19, Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (China); n° 20, Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa (China); Zuojiang Huashan Rock Art Cultural Landscape (China); n° 22, Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an – Tian-shan Corridor (China/Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan); n° 23, Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar (India); n° 24, Hill Forts of Rajasthan (India); n° 25, Historic City of Ahmadabad (India); n° 26, Mountain Railways of India (India); n° 27, Susa (Iran, Islamic Republic of); n° 28, The Persian Qanat (Iran, Islamic Republic of); n° 29, Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu (Japan); n° 30, Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining (Japan); n° 32, Town of Luang Prabang (Lao People's Democratic Republic); n° 35, Historical Monuments at Makli, Thatta (Pakistan); n° 36, Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines); n° 37, Old town of Galle and its Fortifications (Sri Lanka); n° 38, Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan); n° 39, Itchan Kala (Uzbekistan); n° 40, Samarkand Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan); n° 139, Angkor (Cambodia); n° 140, Temple Zone of Sambor Prei Kuk, Archaeological Site of Ancient Ishanapura (Cambodia); n° 141, Historic Centre of Macao (China); n° 143, Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy (Indonesia); n° 144, Meidan Emam, Esfahan (Iran, Islamic Republic of); n° 145, Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region (Iran, Islamic Republic of); n° 146, Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champassak Cultural Landscape (Lao People's Democratic Republic); n° 147, Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain and its surrounding sacred landscape (Mongolia); n° 148, Lumbini, the Birthplace of the Lord Buddha (Nepal); n° 149 Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Philippines) and n° 150, Rangiri Dambulla Cave Temple (Sri Lanka). Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections from the Committee on these state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would like now to ask, whether any Observer-Delegations would like to

express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted a Decision without discussion. Uzbekistan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uzbekistan:

Can you hear me Mr. Chairman?

Chairperson:

Yes. Go ahead.

The Delegation of Uzbekistan:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor again. The Committee has just reviewed state of conservation reports and adopted important Decisions on three World Heritage sites from Uzbekistan which are Samarkand Crossroad of Cultures, Historic Centre of Bukhara and Itchan Kala. Although we found that there were some inaccuracies in the Draft Decisions when they were first dispatched, we decided not to argue on them in order to follow the recommendations of the preparatory meeting which took place in June.

We fully understand that this is an extended session and it is extremely busy compared to previous sessions. This is why I made clear of our position to all Committee members and experts before the start of the 44th session. Our position is that we will continue the close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies which we have started in the last years. We are optimistic of the future work of the international Advisory Board on World Heritage properties in Uzbekistan which we are creating this year. It will oversee the management of all World Heritage sites in my country. We are intensifying our cooperation with the Advisory Bodies, just over a month ago, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chairman of the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO visited the ICCROM headquarters in Rome and we signed an important Memorandum of Understanding which includes many important measures including capacity building activities which the Committee is recommending us to execute. We also commend the work that ICOMOS is doing and remain committed to all our obligations under the 1972 Convention and we thank the World Heritage Centre and this Committee for the support in safeguarding our cultural heritage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mongolia, please, you have a two-minute intervention.

The Delegation of Mongolia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Distinguished members of the Committee and State Parties, on behalf of the government of Mongolia, it is our utmost honour to address the floor for the first time in this session. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the honourable Chairperson for the excellent leadership and express our sincere appreciation to the World Heritage Centre and the People's Republic of China for organising the 44th extended session of the World Heritage Committee.

Mongolia welcomes the Decision 44 COM 7B.147 of the Committee on the Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain and its surrounding sacred landscape and is grateful to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for providing recommendations for better preservation of the property.

The government of Mongolia utilises all its resources and capabilities in cooperation with various stakeholders to enhance and implement the management plan for the property. Since the administration of the Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain and its surrounding sacred landscape has been established, the administration office has been operating in full capacity to fulfil necessary duties and obligations to preserve the property in line with the Advisory Bodies' recommendations. Specifically, tourism development and visit, cultural policy and plans are our great concerns and will be developed in line with our national tourism policy. Mongolia also ensures that the management plan will be associated with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Once again, we express our sincere gratitude to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their hard work and collaboration. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words and your comments. Philippines, now, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Philippines:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First and foremost, the Philippines wishes to congratulate China for its work in hosting this Committee meeting. In view of the Committee's Decision 44 COM 7B.149, the Philippines informs that it had submitted an update on the status of the bridge connecting Binondo to Intramuros. In this update, we informed the Centre that the bridge is expected to be completed by 2022.

In its December 2020 submission, the Philippines stated the difficulty in changing the bridge design, given that big part of it is prefabricated. Furthermore, changing the location and the no project option are not viable as this is part

of the metro Manila traffic management Master Plan. While the bridge heights and ramps on the Intramuros side visually effects this quadrant of the buffer zone, it is still a distance from St Augustine Church, at more than half a kilometre away, isolates its direct impact on the property's OUV. As the bridge is an integral part of the Philippines national infrastructure programme, it was important to restart the project in order to supplement jobs creation given the rising unemployment caused by the present pandemic.

Our lines of communication, as always with the Centre and Advisory Bodies, have been opened and we would like to initiate a discussion on the proposed mitigated measures contained in the ICOMOS technical review of submitted documents and what would further be suggested.

In this regard and to reinforce our commitment to the standards that forged the *Operational Guidelines*, we would like to convey to the Committee that some proposed measures, particularly the pedestrianisation of the streets, and in particular, traffic control around St Augustine Church, to mitigate other possible threats to its OUV, are already being put in place. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Sri Lanka, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sri Lanka:

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity. Sri Lanka would like to thank the Chair and congratulates him and thank the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Bodies. I would like on behalf of the Sri Lankan government to ensure that we will continue to cooperate with the World Heritage Committee and collaborate with the Advisory Bodies to improve the conditions of the two World Heritage sites of the state of conservation reports mentioned.

Thank you very much for the support given to our country and our World Heritage sites for so long. We would like to look forward to collaborate with you and work in very close cooperation with the Advisory Bodies. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, let us proceed. With this we are now moving back to the Africa Region. Dear colleagues I suggest we have a ten-minute technical break.

Dear Committee members for the next property to be discussed I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Uganda which requested the state of conservation report on the Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela (Ethiopia) to be open for discussion, to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is to be recalled that the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session requested the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2020 an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and its recommendation for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2021. If it had not been for the Covid-19 pandemic which made it impossible for the 44th session in 2020, the current session would be the 45th session where the said report would have been discussed.

Nevertheless, the State Party of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia has continued working on the request by the Committee. In this regard, Ethiopia submitted regular reports on the project, including a comprehensive report, and held discussions with UNESCO and its Advisory Bodies. The French government, as a bilateral project partner, has also pledged to participate in the next phase of the project through its government agency, AFD, subject to receiving the approval of the updated state of conservation report. Considering the urgent character of this project and since the feasibility study was completed in May 2021, the validation of the results of that study and of the concept design is necessary.

The State Party would then be able to embark on preparation of the preliminary design and project documents comprising of an ESIA, Heritage Impact Assessment, GAP, geotechnical and hydrological studies and other studies that the Advisory Bodies would recommend. The validation in principle would indeed allow the State Party to evaluate the feasibility study into a project and submit the terms of reference and details of the said project as requested by the Committee at its 43rd session in 2019.

Uganda is therefore seeking support of this esteemed Committee to adopt the amendments in the Draft Decision that will enable the State Party to embark on the process described above.

Chair, I request you to allow the State Party of Ethiopia to take the floor at an appropriate stage to provide more clarification. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to invite Mr. Muhammad Muhammad Juma and ICOMOS to respond to this comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Secretariat confirms that the State Party submitted additional information on the 25th of May and 25th of June and on the 6th of July of this year regarding rock pathology and a feasibility study of different options, on how to do shelters to conserve the church from severe rainy season, after the State Party conservation process and the report was already finished. Consequently, we could not integrate the last information provided by the State Party into the already finalised state of conservation report.

However, on the 3rd of June and 7th and 9th of July, the Secretariat organised meetings between the Advisory Body and the State Party to continue the dialogue on how to address the issue of shelters described in the state of conservation report in order to facilitate a process of the project while integrating issue of risks which rose due to the lack of sufficient data regarding the influence of shelters on the microclimate of Lalibela Churches. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, on behalf of ICOMOS and ICCROM I would like to say that we value the dialogue that has taken place recently with the State Party and the World Heritage Centre to discuss ways forward for the conservation of the churches.

The position we are now in is that a decision needs to be made as the current shelters no longer satisfy revised engineering requirements. In considering options for a way forward, one of the limiting factors is the comparative lack of longer-term data. Unfortunately, over the last 20 years the churches have not been regularly monitored under their current shelters. In the last two years, as part of the sustainable Lalibela project, monitoring has commenced. And in March this year, the State Party has provided us with the results of this analysis which is to be welcomed, but it does, however, only provide a snapshot of the situation. What is now being suggested by the State Party is that current documentation is adequate to allow decisions to be made and to justify the introduction of new shelters to cover old churches.

The Advisory Bodies cannot agree that the data presented alone provides reassurance that there will be no new threats brought about by the shelter such as the possible drying of the stones of the churches, adverse micro environments under shelters and unforeseen changes to water management and drainage.

We fully understand that the State Party wishes to react positively to the offer of finance for the provisions of shelters. Furthermore, the local community has long been pressing for something to be done about the existing shelters as they are highly disruptive in terms of their visual impact and overall impact also. New shelters could reduce the sound problems but the visual impact will, of course, remain. The Advisory Bodies appreciate the need for something to be done, but consider that to act now in favour of shelters as a permanent solution on the basis of limited data and understanding of the behaviour of the rock churches and without a fuller analysis of other options beside shelters could bring or would bring risks.

The State Party has requested the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to approve in principle the construction of shelters. In advance detailed discussion of what forms these will take and in advance when the impact assessment is being undertaken [...]

Chairperson:

Please respect the time.

ICOMOS:

I apologise Mr. Chair. I have almost finished. In the view of the Advisory Bodies, such approval can only be given with caveats. If new shelters are to be proposed at this stage, we consider they should be seen as temporary, probably using local materials that could be maintained by the local community. And, secondly, they should be used as a vehicle for a major detailed and long-term monitoring programme of the Churches and surroundings for the basis of a conservation strategy.

I would now like just to reiterate the value of recent dialogue, but to add that unfortunately, we are not quite there in terms, in an agreed way forward. A bit of time would have been beneficial. We would certainly welcome a degree of flexibility in the Committee's decision to allow dialogue to continue. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I noted the request of Uganda to give the floor to the State Party concerned for response. Now, I would like to invite the State Party of Ethiopia to give a brief clarification.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Chair. I would like to thank Uganda for introducing the amendments on our behalf. I would also like to thank ICOMOS for the time it has devoted in our exchanges and the very constructive dialogue we have been having on the study on the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela, we also had regular meetings.

Chair, what we have done over the past two years in the joint Ethiopia-France project is unprecedented in the history of this site. We have conducted a comprehensive two-year study. For the first time, rock samples were taken from the churches and analysed in the finest research laboratory that exists. Captors were installed inside the churches and everywhere in the site to monitor all types of information like crack openings, vibrations, etc.

The results of these studies demonstrate the following: the outer layers of the churches were fragile. The superficial restoration carried out in 2016 with the finishing mortars already ruined and cannot be duplicated at churches. Numerous conservation and restoration initiatives were undertaken in the past decades and most of them were counterproductive.

The State of conservation of the churches are stable when protected by a shelter, but subject to progressive and rapid deterioration. In brief, there is a need to protect the churches and their courtyards given the nature of the rock as demonstrated. We should support the local community by proposing long-term measures for conservation with studies undertaken to show this.

Three designed shelters were proposed for the restoration strategy and the Steering Committee has opted for the light structural design of the canopy, based on the recommendations of the local community and of the scientific committee. For this reason, it is a light shelter covering the hall and irreversible that can be removed any time. Anchorage will not be used inside the churches and their courtyards, as a whole group of churches will be covered at a single step and the anchors will be outside in the near vicinity of the churches. Its shape fits to the hilly environment and allow continuity. Therefore [...]

Chairperson:

Indonesia, please, mute your microphone. Ethiopia, please, continue

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

[...] Lastly, it is a sustainable solution that we chose [...]

Chairperson:

We have some problem with the speaker. We cannot hear your voice, Ethiopia. I will come back to you. Now, I would like to know whether there are any comments? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can see from the ICOMOS report that there have been important and very positive development on the part of the State Party towards improving the State of conservation of the property which is well reflected in the Draft Decision. There remains, however, the issue of long-term conservation, which has to do with the construction of sheltering structures to protect the churches from the climate.

We have received information from the State Party indicating that this solution has been recommended by a scientific committee and accepted by the local community. Considering the improvement that has already been accomplished under the sustainable Lalibela project recognised by the ICOMOS report, we believe we should give the State Party a vote of confidence by endorsing the proposed solution. We therefore support Uganda's amendment to the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Chair. We would like to commend the efforts undertaken by the State Party enhancing protection measures to conserve this exceptional World Heritage site. Of particular recognition is the importance of the involvement of local communities and developing integrated solutions to conservation challenges. In line of that, we express our support to the amendment proposed by Uganda. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor to present our remarks under this site, in support of the proposed amendment tabled by Uganda for Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.118 on the Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela.

Lalibela is in the heart of Ethiopia located 600 kilometres away from its capital Addis Ababa. This complex of eleven churches was built 800 years ago out of a solid volcanic rock. This unique site was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1978. Lalibela continues to be a major site of pilgrimage and worship for many people both from Ethiopia and abroad.

We commend the State Party of Ethiopia for its effort in preserving this site which due to its unique attributes is complex to maintain. Similarly, we welcome the assistance by international partners and the World Heritage Centre for their support over the years to develop sustainable preservation solutions for the site. We commend Ethiopia for the restoration works completed at two of the eleven churches. We welcome the current partnership between Ethiopia and France which seeks to build capacity in such crucial fields as conservation, restoration and research in archaeology.

More importantly, the feasibility study conducted in the context of this partnership has made an assessment of the condition of the site and offered valuable suggestions on the work to be completed. For example, the study has recommended, among others, the complete external protection of the churches by constructing a perimeter shelter, as the current shelters are no longer compliant with prescribed engineering standards and laws. It is crucial that the feasibility study be translated into a project as decided during the 43rd session that was held in Baku in 2019. We particularly welcome the involvement and participation of the local communities in developing a long-term conservation plan for the site and addressing the persistent challenges. As correctly stated, this site is a living heritage for Ethiopia and the local communities. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, to save time can we go directly to discuss the Draft Decision? Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur you have the floor for any amendments on the Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Uganda. You can see it on the screen. There are no modifications proposed for paragraphs 1 and 2.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will approve the text paragraph by paragraph. Do you approve of paragraphs 1 and 2? Are there any objections? I think dear Committee members please cancel your request for the floor please. Just push the button again. Please cancel. That's it. Thank you. Now for paragraphs 1 and 2 with no amendments, do you approve them? Yes, they are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

For paragraph 3, we have a minor mortification proposed by crossing over '*successfully*'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this? There are no objections, it is approved. Go ahead, Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 4.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes, it is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

For paragraph 5 we have a part inserted in the text which reads: 'Also welcomes the development of a dismantling methodology for the existing shelters, notes that the existing shelters have successfully protected the churches from further damages but do not meet the new engineering norms and need considerable strengthening of counterweights [...]' and the rest of the paragraph continues as originally proposed, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6 reads: 'Also notes that the rock pathology research undertaken in the framework of the feasibility study of the bilateral Ethiopian-French project is recommending, on the basis of the scoriaceous basaltic composition of the rock into which the churches are carved and its susceptibility to water penetration, the complete external protection of all churches and their immediate surroundings by permanent shelter constructions; and that such shelters would either need to be bound to the ground by massive counter weights or anchored into the rock'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this paragraph? It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 7 reads: 'Further notes that three anchors based options for the design of shelters were explored and that, based on the recommendations of the scientific committee and the local community to implement the canopy option which would allow to cover all three groups of churches and ensure a long-term conservation and preservation of the site while restoring the damaged parts, the Steering Committee has adopted the canopy option and requested UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to support in principle the use of rock anchors for new shelters'.

Chairperson:

Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. It is just a point of clarification. In the third line of that paragraph, where it mentions the scientific committee, we did not see any reference to a scientific committee in the report and we wondered if it was in fact the Steering Committee which is mentioned further down in the paragraph. So perhaps could Uganda or the State Party clarify that for us?

Chairperson:

Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the amendment that is reflected in this paragraph is an enrichment which gives true perspective where we come from in terms of the attempted conservation methods and it is important for now and posterity, for any reader, to understand the efforts that have been made towards conserving these heritages. As such, it is my hope that this Committee will take this into consideration and approve the amendment in this paragraph. I submit Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor for clarification.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Just to clarify that this is a joint committee composed of Ethiopian and French experts, basically, undertaking the studies, it is a scientific committee.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. This paragraph mentions that the State Party requested UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to support in principle the use of Rock-Hewn Churches new shelters. In the original Decision there is a sort of caveats introduced to reflect some of the points I made earlier.

ICOMOS and the Centre, we would just like to reiterate that we both welcome the dialogue we are having with the State Party, although we have not quite reached agreement on the way forward, as mentioned earlier. We would like to see some acknowledgment that the shelters do bring risks, that can't at this stage be articulated. There is a need to be understanding of those risks before we can, in principle, support the way forward. We would just like to understand whether there is any possibility of introducing some flexibility in the Decision to reflect this matter. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, I want to know whether the honourable representatives of Uganda and Ethiopia have answered your questions. Whether you are satisfied?

The Delegation of Australia:

Yes, we understand now that it is a separate committee to the Steering Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you approve of paragraph 7? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 8 is actually a new paragraph proposed: 'Further welcomes the results of the feasibility study, including the involvement of the local community in the various studies, and the selection of a solution that puts them at the centre'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 9 reads: 'Requests the State Party, in order to allow final validation of the solution, to provide:

- a) The Final Preliminary Design of the canopy option and the detailed restorations planned,
- b) The results of the environmental and social impact study including the Heritage Impact Assessments,
- c) The reports of the additional studies recommended by the scientific committee (geotechnical, hydrological and other studies deemed necessary).'

And we have an amendment proposed by Norway added to the text here: 'Which should all be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decision to realise the solution is taken'. The rest of the paragraph is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any objections? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you Chair. I would just like to clarify that our proposal refers to all the letters a, b and c. All the studies, reports and assessment should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Any objections to this paragraph? Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We thank Norway for this very constructive proposal that we support.

Chairperson:

Okay. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for new paragraphs 10 and 11, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are these approved? Okay, approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 12 reads: 'Takes note of the relevant data on the mitigation measures and modifications applied to the existing temporary shelters submitted by the State Party, including the comprehensive study for the conservation of the Group II area that allows for removing the current shelter at Bete Lebanos'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no changes proposed for paragraph 14.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes, it is approved. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Concerning paragraph 13, we would just like to have a clarification about the minor boundary modification. The Decision 43 COM 7B.145 requested such modifications. Maybe the World Heritage Centre could clarify if this has been fulfilled? Thank you.

Chairperson:

The World Heritage Centre, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We understand that in part of this Lalibela project there is going to be extensive work to be done regarding minor boundary modification, but ICOMOS may want to give more information on this point. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, is this okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

That is fine. Thank you

Chairperson:

Ok. Let us move to paragraph 15.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 15 reads: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Dear colleagues, now we have been through all the text. If there are no further comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.118 adopted as amended ^[grave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. I see none. Let us proceed. Actually, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. I know we are pressed for time, but I wanted to thank the Committee member of Uganda for all their support and ICOMOS and the experts for their constructive engagement. And I want to particularly thank the French government and France which is supporting us on this very, very important project. It is not just a heritage site for us. It is a place where people go to pray every day, many times a day. It is a living site. It is not a site for tourists, it is a site for the people and believers primarily. It is a very, very important site, and I want to thank all of those who contributed in making progress on this issue. If you allow me maybe I can give the floor for the remaining one minute to the head of our Heritage Agency, Dr Mulugeta, if he is online. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you. Since this is the first time I take the floor, I would like to thank the government of China for hosting and superbly organising the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. My thanks go to the Chair of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, the UNESCO Secretariat and distinguished World Heritage Committee State members for the amazing job you are doing.

Excellencies, first and foremost, I would like to thank the World Heritage Committee for, in principle, supporting the use of anchors for the new shelters for the conservation and preservation while restoring the Lalibela World Heritage site. I would like to thank the State Party of Uganda for the co-sponsorship and very excellent delivery of the repair information.

The site of Lalibela Rock-Hewn Churches is unique in that the heritages carved in this precious basalt have the potential to be affected by rainwater and rock ageing. The scoriaceous rocks are known for absorbing water but they do not have expanding and cracking properties like clay. Hence, the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela require protection.

The State Party of Ethiopia would like to confirm that we are most concerned in keeping the OUV for the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela, and we are committed to make all the necessary follow up monitoring and reporting in all steps of the restoration process and thereafter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor. Uganda would like to express its appreciation to the Committee members for their unanimous support for the amendments. This should now allow the State Party to move ahead working with the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies to find the best solution to conserve the property. I thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, now I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the Cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Africa Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. N°2, Historic Town of Grand-Bassam (Côte d'Ivoire); n°3, Aksum (Ethiopia); n°4, Lower Valley of the Omo (Ethiopia); n°5, Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions (Ghana); n°6, Lamu Old Town (Kenya); n°7, Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site (Kenya); n°8, Island of Mozambique (Mozambique); n°9, Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (Nigeria); n°10, Sukur Cultural Landscape (Nigeria); n°11, Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Ruins of Songo Mnara (United Republic of Tanzania); n°12 Stone Town of Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania); n°117, Asmara: a Modernist City of Africa (Eritrea); n°119, Aapravasi Ghat (Mauritius); n°120, Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal); n°121, Fossil hominids sites of South Africa (South Africa) and n°122, Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba (Togo). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, if there are no objections from the Committee on this state of conservation report I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about the properties for which we have adopted the Decisions without discussion. Earth Justice, you have the floor, for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-Earth Justice:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Earth Justice would like to share with the Committee the views from our partner from Lamu Old Town Kenya concerned by Draft Decision n°6.

Save Lamu represents Lamu's indigenous fishing and other groups who form part of the traditional Swahili community. They regret they are unable to join today because of accreditation issues although their request with the administration was made well in advance.

With Save Lamu, we welcome the Decision requests for alternative solutions to the Lamu Coal plant to meet the energy needs of the region. It calls for no further components of the LAPSSSET mega project to be implemented before the revised SEA is completed. However, in May of this year, the State Party completed and launched Lamu Coals increasing ship traffic and turbidity in Manda Bay which is now killing off fish and corals. The latter being a crucial element for Lamu architecture. This endangers the OUV of the site and harms people's livelihoods, culture and sustainable development options.

Further, the State Party continues to make no progress in the impact assessment requested multiple times by the Committee, as well as it continues to ignore the landmark 2018 High Court judgement which found rampant environmental regulatory violation in LAPSSSET.

We, Save Lamu, strongly regret that the Decision delays consideration of adding Lamu to the List of World Heritage in Danger until 2023 and call upon the Committee to follow the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission recommendation to add Lamu Old Town to the List of World Heritage in Danger and to do so in 2022. I thank you for your attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more request for the floor. Let us proceed. I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Arab States Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have n°13, Historic Cairo (Egypt); n°14, Babylon (Iraq); n°15, Erbil Citadel (Iraq); n°16, Petra (Jordan); n°17, Gebel Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region (Sudan); n°18, the Archaeological site of Carthage in Tunisia; n°123, Casbah of Algiers in Algeria; n°124, Tipasa (Algeria); n°125, Qal'at al-Bahrain — Ancient Harbour and Capital of Dilmun (Bahrain); n°126, Ancient Thebes with its Necropolis (Egypt); n°127, Memphis and its Necropolis — the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur (Egypt); n°128, Baptism Site “Bethany Beyond the Jordan” (Al-Maghtas) (Jordan); n°129, Um er-Rasas (Kastrom Mefa'a) (Jordan); n°130, Byblos (Lebanon); n°131, Ouadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz el-Rab) (Lebanon); n°132, Tyr (Lebanon); n°133, Ksar of Ait-Ben-Haddou (Morocco); n°134, Rabat, Modern Capital and Historic City: a Shared Heritage (Morocco); n°136, Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah (Saudi Arabia); n°137, Rock Art in the Hail Region of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia) and n°138 Medina of Sousse (Tunisia). Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there are no objections on the state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. Tunisia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Tunisie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Nous prenons la parole pour la première fois, permettez-moi de vous féliciter de la présidence bien sage et bien éclairée que vous menez à la tête des travaux de notre Comité ô combien important pour toutes les raisons que chacun de nous connaît parfaitement. Je voudrais féliciter les autorités de votre pays, Monsieur le Président, d'avoir si bien organisé les choses, et vraiment nous aurions bien aimé être avec vous sur place pour vivre ce moment important du cycle de vie de nos grandes conventions de la culture au sein de l'UNESCO. Permettez-moi de me joindre à ceux qui, depuis hier, ont exprimé leurs condoléances par rapport aux victimes des inondations que votre pays a connues. Toute notre solidarité. Alors je voudrais remercier, à ce moment-ci, le travail que fait le Centre du patrimoine mondial ; un travail d'accompagnement pour que ces sites inscrits soient protégés, soient portés à la connaissance de tous, accessibles et, surtout, préservés. Cet après-midi, au titre de notre ordre du jour, mon pays a deux dossiers nationaux : celui de Carthage, l'un d'un premiers sites inscrits, et celui de la Médina de Sousse. Les deux sites sont proches de grandes villes, avec une densité, une demande et une pression urbaine certaine, qui posent quelques difficultés à leur gestion. Je voulais souligner ici notre satisfaction quant à la coopération que nous avons avec l'UNESCO et notamment avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial, et l'idée qu'il ne peut y avoir de situation en bonne et due forme, en conformité avec l'esprit de cette Convention, sans la coopération de toutes les parties, notamment l'État partie à la Convention, les experts, mais aussi l'UNESCO à travers le Centre du patrimoine mondial. Je voulais, Monsieur le Président, renouveler l'engagement des autorités tunisiennes à faire de leur mieux pour que la conformité la plus totale avec les règles et les conditions de cette Convention soit observée pour l'ensemble de nos sites inscrits. Merci beaucoup.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words, your sympathy and solidarity expressed to the flood-stricken people in China. Thank you for your comment. I see no more comments. Now, let us proceed.

With this, we are now moving to the Europe and North America region. I now invite Ms. Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre, and ICOMOS to present the reports on the state of conservation of the cultural properties located in this region and opened for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. The OUV of the World Heritage property Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue (Hungary) has been and continues to be impacted negatively by large-scale reconstruction projects in the Buda Castle quarter, as well as a number of other major development projects that collectively and cumulatively diminish the authenticity and integrity of the property and that have been undertaken without consultations with the World Heritage Committee.

The Buda Castle quarter is a significant part of the statement of OUV. The Committee has repeatedly asked for full details and documentation of the work proposed, recalling Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* requesting the State Party to inform the World Heritage Committee of any major interventions in and around the property. The requested information has not been provided and work has carried on.

Following an advisory mission carried out in 2018 and a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission in 2019, in Decision 43 COM 7B.84, the Committee requested the State Party to halt ongoing and planned works

particularly in the Buda Castle quarter. The revised management plan requested by the Committee since 2015, and again in 2019, have not been completed and is still under development. Meanwhile major reconstruction works are ongoing all over the property, but most specifically, at the Buda Castle quarter and resulting in a cumulative negative impact.

Adequate legal framework and management systems and policies are not in place to prevent threats to the integrity and authenticity and OUV of the property. Although some efforts have been made by the State Party, it is not sufficient. Which is why, in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the property merits the inscription in the List of World Heritage in Danger. With your permission Mr. Chairperson, ICOMOS will present its technical comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The main concerns highlighted in this state of conservation report relate to the large scale National Hauszmann Programme. Its aim is to rebuild the area of the Castle to reflect its glory of before World War II. The plan involves removal of the communist era buildings and the reconstruction of large monumental buildings. Thus far, the Royal Riding Hall, in the image, the former stairs and the Guard buildings have been completed. There are proposals to reconstruct the Finance Ministry, seen here, the former Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Castle Reception Hall, the Military High Command building and the Palace of the Archduke Josef. These reconstructions do not recreate the buildings as they once existed, but they are rather concrete copies with façades that reflect the original, but with largely open spaces within.

If the entire Hauszmann Programme was carried out, in the view of the Advisory Bodies the construction of the post-war communist regime will be reversed, an illusion created that does not correspond with historical reality. No detailed documentation beyond plans and photographs has been provided for this major development and no presentation, and the evidence upon which such reconstruction might be based. The State Party argues that its justification for the project lies in its ideological basis in returning Buda Castle to its pre-World War II form, in order for it to better reflect the national identity of the pre-communist era. Buda Castle is certainly of national importance, but it is also a major component of the OUV of the property. These two values are not necessarily incompatible, but to maintain both will need dialogue, clear documentation and major modifications to what is now proposed.

In decision 43 COM 7B.84 in 2019, the Committee acknowledged that the Hauszmann plans represented an imminent threat to the property due to the progressive loss of historical authenticity, and requested it to be halted to allow dialogue on a revised approach. Work has not stopped, with the outcomes that the threats to the OUV have become severe. It is therefore recommended the Committee acknowledges that the property faces ascertained and potential threats, and considers its inscription on the World Heritage List in Danger. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We would like to make an intervention regarding the proposals we have made to the Draft Decision. Chair, with this item yet again, we arrive at the debate on how to develop while conserving the OUV of the World Heritage property. In this case, concerns were expressed regarding the effectiveness of the conservation because of its dynamic urban development results. Observations and suggestions were made by the 2018 ICOMOS advisory mission and the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission regarding the developments of Buda Castle within the framework of the National Hauszmann Programme, the construction of the MOL high-rise building, the organisational structure responsible for the conservation of the property and the management plan.

With maximum consideration to the observations and suggestions of the Committee and the missions, in the last years a great number of specific measures were taken by Hungary that clearly demonstrates its commitment to the Convention, as is shown in the analysis of the Draft Decision. They clarified the fields of responsibilities and made the necessary organisational changes. Fields of State administration were united, a competent new site manager was appointed, created such innovative legalisation as the Act on the protection of the townscape or the Act on the limitation of high-rise buildings. Those can be seen as positive examples even on the international level. The Act on high-rise buildings prevented the construction of all new high-rise building since the adoption. They prepared the Heritage Impact Assessment and the 3D visual impact Assessment of all interventions noted by the missions and the Committee and even the brand-new project being in the planning phase. They presented 1700 pages of scientific documentation.

The preparation of the management plan and the World Heritage designed guide has been underway and has been sped up. World Heritage planning councils were established, also providing an expert study and explanation regarding the historical and cultural symbolic significance of the Buda Castle which has an exceptional social and

cultural impact on the identity of the whole Hungarian nation thus providing solid, ideological foundation for the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP).

To conclude we believe that Hungary has made substantial efforts and steps to comply with the observations and suggestions of the Committee and the Advisory Bodies. For these reasons, the amendment submitted by Ethiopia and co-sponsored by Australia, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Spain, Saudi Arabia and Uganda contains the following important items.

It acknowledges the State Party's efforts to comply with the requests and suggestions of the Committee, the Advisory Bodies and the missions. It closes the issue of the high-rise building in Hungary. There is only one high-rise building located at a distance of two kilometres away from the buffer zone. Since regulations are in place no more such buildings can be realised. It reiterates the importance and urges the preparation of the management plan. If this question is not included yet, the amendment provides additional time for dialogue between the State Party and the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on the issue on the ideology of the NHP, in order to determine whether this approach challenges the authenticity and integrity of the property. Until all clarifications are provided, it should adjourn the decision on in Danger listing.

Finally, I have a question to Hungary if you allow, Chair: When will the management plan be ready and adopted? I thank you.

Chairperson:

Hungary, please. A very brief answer to this question.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear Mr. Chair, Director Rössler, Deputy Director Jyoti, dear colleagues, let me first of all thank the distinguished delegates from Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Australia, Spain, Kyrgyzstan, Uganda and South Africa for their support to the amendment which is so very important for Hungary.

As head of the World Heritage department within the Prime Minister office of Hungary, the institution responsible for the various fields of State administration of cultural heritage protection and building construction, in 2019, I had the honour to personally host the Reactive Monitoring mission.

Distinguished Committee members, Hungary is and has been working hard to comply with the requests and suggestions of the Committee, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS and will keep on doing so until all shadows of concerns will be dispelled. Now, to answer the question regarding the status of the management plan, I invite the Chief Executive Officer of the Knowledge Centre to give its professional status report.

Chairperson:

You have to be concise, you have two minutes.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chair. During the past year, we have completed a very detailed 3D database on both the built and natural environment of the site, on the existing legislation and town planning framework and on all relevant actors and partners, including district municipalities, financial investments, civil organisation, institutions and decision-making bodies. We have analysed the original inscription documentation and identified the attributes which hold and carry the OUV of the property.

Right now, we are getting ready for our first major public consultation in order to finalise the phase of analysing work. After this phase, this fall, we will initiate dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies as well, in order to involve them in our work. According to our set schedules, we will have Management Plan 1.0 ready in December this year which we will also present to public consultation and also to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

To conclude, the Management Plan of the World Heritage property in Budapest will be done and ready at the latest in April 2022. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Dear Committee members, due to the time constraints, I have a suggestion to make: I only to invite those who are not in favour of the amendment of Ethiopia to take the floor. Do you agree? If you agree, first, cancel your requests for the floor, then those who are not in favour please request. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to ask you if we understood correctly. If we directly oppose, we should ask for the floor? We know that there were a considerable number of Committee members behind the amendment, but we still have some important remarks to make and also some comments to provide for the Decision itself. So, with your

indulgence, I would like to hold our intervention and we could return with a few minor remarks for the draft amended Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Maybe, if you agree, we go directly to the amendment?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, Mr. Chair, we can accept doing that, with a certain hesitation, but yes, we can to facilitate the progress of the meeting.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Dear Committee members, we are going to discuss the amendment directly. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. As you can see, the first two paragraphs remain without any modifications.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will go through and approve the text paragraph by paragraph. For paragraphs 1 and 2, do you approve? Yes, they are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3 has a minor modification which starts: 'Welcomes the reorganization of State administration in charge of World Heritage properties', and the rest of the paragraph continues as the original Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

There is a new paragraph 4: 'Takes note of the State Party's efforts to strengthen the planning framework through guidance documents and enhanced coordination of its relevant planning authorities'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? No, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5 reads: 'Also welcomes the consistent commitments and efforts made by the State Party to address urban development issues through legal and regulatory measures taking into consideration the approach of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), notably through the 2018 amendments to the High-Level House Act limiting the height of all new constructions to 65 meters'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6 with a minor wording modification for the consistency: 'Acknowledging that ex post facto law is prohibited in every constitutional state, notes that the amended 'High-Level House Act' is not applicable for the one and only high-rise building construction permit issued before it became law and so the works on the 120- meter-high MOL Campus building located at a distance of 2 kilometres from the buffer zone in District 11 are ongoing'.

Chairperson:

Do you have any objections? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

On new paragraph 7, we have a minor correction instead of 'further note' it is 'also note'. The rest of the paragraph remains as per the original Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8 reads: 'Further notes that the Management Plan could not be finalized as foreseen in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and recalls Decision 39 COM 7B.79, which requested the State Party to finalize, as soon as possible the Management Plan of the property, including details of the protective measures and regulatory regimes and submit it to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 9: 'Notes with concern that as a result of the delay of the finalization of the Management Plan, construction works on a number of major new developments within the property and its buffer zone have continued or have already been completed despite the Committee's request in 43 COM 7B.84, reiterates its request to the State Party to submit all relevant documents including plans, drawings, and HIAs for all proposed projects within the property and the buffer zone to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies until the completion of the updated Management Plan for the property in line with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape'.

Chairperson:

Do you have any objections? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 10 reads: 'Also recalling Decision 43 COM 7B.84, notes moreover that the works relating to the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP) for the Buda Castle Quarter are ongoing, and that the state of conservation of the property might be negatively impacted by planned reconstruction and new construction, which may have a cumulative negative impact on the OUV of the property including its authenticity and integrity, and also requests the State Party to ensure that, in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, any planned larger-scale projects in the immediate and wider setting of the World Heritage property, be submitted to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible, and that adequate time be allowed for thorough review of each project by the Advisory Bodies before any decision is taken'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. We have no objections against this amendment as well as the rest in the text. I would also like to make a short statement. We share the ICOMOS concern about the reconstruction activities undertaken under the National Hauszmann Programme. Indeed, the Venice Charter and the Riga Charter call for preservation of cultural property inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. Article 7 of the Venice Charter states that 'The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of the monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interest of paramount importance'. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair for giving us the floor. To be consistent with what was decided in Baku, in 2019, Norway would like to propose that we could say: 'the state of conservation of the property has been negatively impacted by new construction and planned reconstruction may have a cumulative negative impact on the OUV'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you.

The Delegation of Norway:

This is to be inserted in the above. Sorry to be taking the floor again.

Chairperson:

Yes. Please give the Rapporteur a few minutes to tidy up.

The Delegation of Norway:

'Has been negatively impacted by new construction and planned reconstruction', yes, thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to this? I cannot see any, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 11 reads: 'Acknowledging the efforts made by the State Party to corroborate the ideological basis of the NHP, urges further discussion and close collaboration based on open dialogue between the State Party, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre regarding the interpretation of the justification for the NHP, - namely the desire to return some elements of outstanding importance of national identity within the Buda Castle to its pre-World War II form while at the same time emphasizing that it is also a major part of the inscribed property contributing to its OUV, in order to determine:

- a) Whether this approach challenges the authenticity and integrity of the property,
- b) How the NHP aligns to prevailing international norms and standards of conservation and reconstruction,
- c) Whether there are contradictions between national objectives and international obligations to the World Heritage Convention.'

Chairperson:

Are there any objections or modifications for this paragraph? No, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

The next paragraph is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair, as well as paragraphs 11, 12, 13 and 14.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of the deletions? I see no objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 12 reads: 'Takes note that the State Party has begun to comply with the requests of the World Heritage Committee and recommendations of the 2018 and 2019 missions, and defers consideration of the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger to its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 15 is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 13: 'Reiterates its request to the State Party to consider halting all ongoing and planned works at Buda Castle and invites the State Party to request, as a matter of urgency, and to initiate an (online) ICOMOS Advisory Assistance to develop alternative conservation approaches for interventions in line with international norms for conservation of the OUV of World Heritage properties, for development of the Buda Castle Quarter'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway would propose to retain the original wording '*halt*'. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections on this? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We believe that the amendments as suggested should be retained, meaning the word '*consider*' should be kept, because the State Party is always controlling and anything and everything can be done in a given territory. So, we believe that the word '*consider*' is appropriate.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. This paragraph is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 14: 'Also reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure that, in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, details of interventions that could impact the OUV are submitted with appropriate HIAs, in line with ICOMOS Guidelines, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 18 is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Is this approved? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Final paragraph, new paragraph 16: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Is this approved? It is approved. Dear colleagues, now we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I declare draft Decision 44 COM 7B.49 adopted as amended ^[gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Friends of Fertö Lake, you have the floor, for a two-minute intervention.

Observer-Friends of Fertö Lake:

Thank you very much, Chair, for giving me the floor and the opportunity to speak. Dear Chairperson, delegates, committee members and observers, first of all, I sincerely thank you for accepting my registration, I hope you can hear me as well, and also for the excellent organisation of this ordinary committee meeting under extraordinary circumstances. I was glad to see that the new paragraph 6 acknowledges that ex post facto law is prohibited in every constitutional state, which I sincerely hope will be taken seriously by each party.

However, I would like to highlight that the case of Budapest clearly is an example of how to ignore proper consultation with civil society and professional organisations including UNESCO itself and its advisor ICOMOS. The Covid-19 pandemic is not an excuse for such a practice which, in our view, undermines the important work of World Heritage site managers globally to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of properties. Unfortunately, this example has already been replicated in another site in Hungary, namely the transboundary Fertö Lake/Neusiedlersee World Heritage site, where the Hungarian government, despite widespread opposition of civil society organisation, UNESCO, RAMSAR and the European Commission, currently implements the largest tourism infrastructure project of the country threatening the OUV of the site.

Dear participants, I would like to call your attention to our joint responsibility for the preservation of sites for future generations and implement development projects only in accordance with the Convention rules and the

management plan of particular sites. Management plans, which are either ignored or outdated in the case of Budapest and the Fertő lake, are critically important documents for World Heritage properties.

Finally, I also welcome the point earlier made by UNESCO as well as Norway, as a Committee member, that inscribing a property on the List of in Danger site is not necessarily a negative message, but offers the opportunity to mobilise more resources for careful development and preservation of the OUV. Thank you very much

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chair. Hungary would like to convey its deepest gratitude to the State Parties for their support and cooperation. We are committed to further strengthen our cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and we remain open for dialogue with the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, as you have realised, we have a very heavy agenda, so I would like to kindly ask you to work a little bit longer today until 10:00 pm Fuzhou time or 4 pm Paris time. I thank you for your cooperation and efforts.

I now, once again invite Ms. Réka Virágos of the Europe and North America unit of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to present the report. you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am going to present the property Venice and its Lagoon, Italy. As stated in the description of its OUV, the property Venice and its Lagoon is the result of an interaction between people and the ecosystem of the natural environment over time. Indeed, Venice and its Lagoon form an inseparable whole.

The State of conservation of this property has been reviewed by the Committee since 2014 with regard to the complex challenges and issues that include:

- The negative impacts of mass tourism with its symptom of large ship traffics through the heart of the city;
- Functional transformation of the historic centre and decreasing numbers of local inhabitants, but also
- Inadequate governance and management also resulting in the approval and construction of inappropriate large-scale projects within the property and its setting, human-induced changes in the morphology and the ecosystem of the lagoon, the result of systemic dredging of the lagoon, bad industrial activity, passing of oil tanker, as well as of climate change in the form of severe weather events, frequent high tides and constantly rising sea levels.

The impacts of these complex issues are interrelated and cumulative, and, as the last mission to the property last year confirmed, they pose ascertained and potential threats to the OUV of the property, have economic and social impacts on the local population, and demand concerted and coordinated multisectoral approach engaging a number of different stakeholders, and goes beyond simple mitigation measures focused on resolving individual problems.

The proposal to inscribe the property on the list of World Heritage in Danger is not an attempt to diminish the State Party effort on national regional and local levels, but rather to raise awareness and provide opportunity for a cooperative joint effort for long-term protection of this property by all stakeholders.

Mr. Chair, I am aware that you highlighted a request that last-minute information should not be provided to the Secretariat by State Parties in relation to the State of conservation report and included in the discussion. The Secretariat therefore is only informing you and the members of the Committee that a letter was sent to UNESCO by the Delegation of Italy on the 20th of July, two days ago, concerning its property, because it is an information that has been widely spread already through the media. This information concerns a decree approved by the Italian government on the 13th of July. The decree prohibits from the 1st of August 2021 the transit of ships of more than 25,000 tons from the San Marco Basin, the San Marco and Giudecca Canal and these latter have been declared national monuments to be preserved at the highest level. For the moment, details on how this decree will be implemented and how the large ships over 25,000 tons will be allowed to enter the Lagoon waters and where they will moor is not yet known.

A strategy, with holistic approach about reducing mass tourism to the property and mitigating its highly negative impact for which the large cruisers are but one symptom, still needs to be developed by the State Party. Thank you, Mr. Chair. ICOMOS will now provide further details related to that decision.

Chairperson:

Okay. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. The Committee has over the last seven years recorded four decisions highlighting its increasing concern about Venice and its Lagoon. The State Party has made effort to address some of the issues raised in past decisions, including bringing the MoSE tide defence barrier to 95 per cent functionality.

The willingness of the State Party to find solutions for the large cruise ship problem is commendable. Yet, major questions and challenges remain in relation to potentially utilising the Marghera port which is at best a temporary solution and has its own environmental impacts and challenges.

Honourable members, seeing the acknowledged fragile nature of the lagoon ecology and its critical contribution to the property's OUV, ICOMOS advises that it would be prudent to ensure that any proposals are rigorously assessed before plans for alternatives for large ships are adopted by the Committee. Overexploitation for touristic purposes remain the prime factor threatening its OUV. During 2017, for example, a staggering 97 times more tourists visited the property than it has permanent residents while the property loses roughly 4 per cent of its residents every year.

There has also been a significant loss of historical authenticity in the property as reported by the 2020 advisory mission. Recent developments in the property and high-rise buildings in its future buffer zone highlight that the management and legislative system still do not adequately protect the property's OUV. The acknowledged lack of the essential procedure to notify the World Heritage Centre of development plans and projects in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* illustrates these inadequacies.

The Committee in 2016 and 2017 and 2019 in Decision 43 COM 7B.86 decided it will consider inscribing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the implemented mitigation measures and the adapted management system do not result in significant and measurable progress the state of conservation of this property. Regrettably the desired significant and measurable progress has not yet been achieved.

ICOMOS, in accordance with the analysis and conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, recommends that the property now be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger owing to the complex range of interrelated threats to the OUV. This proposed inscription will assist the State Party by creating a mechanism for intersectoral cooperation and in pressing on all stakeholders and beneficiaries of the OUV of the property, the urgency of their cooperation to ensure the protection and management and therefore the future of the iconic Venice and its Lagoon World Heritage property. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Ethiopia please, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted excellency.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair and sorry. I am taking the floor because Ethiopia is taking the lead in amending the proposed Draft Decision with some other countries.

Mr. Chair, the site of Venice and its Lagoon has a special value within the World Heritage List. The safeguarding campaigns to protect Venice inspired the Convention itself. It is for this reason that we look with great intention, and with great attention and care at this precious site. Based on the information provided by the State Party, on the State Party's conservation report and on the relevant updated information which were shared with members of the Committee, we feel that the Draft Decision does not reflect the reality of the commitment for the protection of this highly important site.

This is why we submitted an amendment which has been drafted taking into account the comprehensive set of information. I would also like to invite the State Party, if you allow me Chair, to present further the most updated information, in particular concerning the issue of large cruise ships which was mentioned by the Secretariat. The decision of the State Party to ban large cruise ships fully implements the most relevant request of the Committee concerning the protection of the site. It is a wise decision, long expected, which testifies to the commitment of Italy to protect this World Heritage property. It is also a sign of the excellent results that can be achieved through positive cooperation and dialogue between the World Heritage Committee and the State Party. This is why we propose a new language in paragraph 5.

Let me also underline that the actions undertaken in the past few months are especially commendable, taking into account the emergency which affected all during the last two years. The previous decision adopted by the Committee in Baku asked: '*Significant and measurable progress in the state of conservation of the property*'. Reading through the documents, progress should be reported as well other reports, apart from the cruise ships issue, on the climate action plan, on tourism management, on high tide defence system and on management plan. These are all very significant progress.

A constant dialogue between the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the State Party is key to advance on the conservation of the site. We appreciate this greater cooperation with which Italy has opted for this dialogue, asking for an advisory mission which has not been requested by the Committee. It was an advisory mission and not a Reactive Monitoring mission. This is why we used the more precise language in paragraph 13.

The amendment submitted by Ethiopia along with others reflects these considerations. It aims at avoiding the inscription on the List in Danger, since we did not see the conditions that would justify this decision. We would rather ask the State Party to keep informing the Committee on the state of conservation of the property in order to access the implementation of the newly adopted measures and take the relevant informed decisions. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, due to time constraints, I suggest that I only invite those that are not in favour of the amendments of Ethiopia to take the floor. So, first of all, I request you to cancel the request for the floor. Oman, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not against the proposal, but I would like to go back to the previous Decision about Hungary because we are cosponsored of that Decision and we were not in the list. When we have written this in the chat box, we have been asked to announce it orally. So, now I would like to announce it orally.

Secondly, I would like to ask you, Mr. Chair, if this is going to happen for all the files and the sites where you do not give intervention to support the files, so we do not need to do our homework and draft interventions if this is going to go like this. I think we need to announce it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The Secretariat will take notes of what you said. Now, with your permission, we go directly to the amendment. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Ethiopia as you can see on the screen. I would like to highlight that in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4, we have no modifications proposed.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will also approve the text paragraph by paragraph. So, for paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5 reads: 'Welcomes the updated information provided by the State Party with reference to the measures adopted to ban ships over 25,000 gross tons, from 1 August, from the San Marco Basin, San Marco and Giudecca channels, and acknowledges the measures approved for a temporary mooring of the large ships and for a long-term solution of the maritime traffic, prioritizing the option outside the Lagoon altogether and redirecting them to other, more suitable ports in the region as a final solution'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections or modifications? I see none. It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, for these paragraphs from 6 through to 11, do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In paragraph 12, it reads: 'Expresses concerns that despite the progress assessed on several issues identified, some important issues remain to be addressed'.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and sorry about that. Norway would like to keep the original wording in number 12 please. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any objections to this proposal? Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. My video stopped you cannot see me but can hear me. Chair, we believe that the second part prejudices the outcome and basically tells us that there is going to be a problem with the property. We are expressing concerns in the first part and despite the progress I do not think that we should prejudice and include 'very significant loss of historical authenticity' as well as 'Important loss of cultural significance'. We do not think this is appropriate and therefore we prefer deleting this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, do you agree with this, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. With hesitation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

So, we can reach consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

From Norway, yes.

Chairperson:

Okay, good. This paragraph is now approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Next paragraph, which was the original paragraph 13, is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 13 reads: 'Takes note of the key conclusions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission and requests furthermore the State Party to report to the World Heritage Centre on their implementation'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this paragraph? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 14: 'Requests moreover the State Party, to develop a proposal in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a set of corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'— we deleted the year — 'and possible decisions on the State of conservation under Paragraph 178 of the *Operational Guidelines*'. I have to propose a small modification for this paragraph, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

Rapporteur:

The correct way would be: 'Requests moreover the State Party, to develop a proposal on a set of corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation' — we move up this part after 'proposal' — 'in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'. And I am not very sure what was meant, what was intended for, in the last part of this paragraph that reads: 'And possible decision on the state of conservation under Paragraph 178 of the *Operational Guidelines*'.

Chairperson:

Is it okay now? Are there any objections or modifications?

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, perhaps the distinguished delegate of Ethiopia could clarify what was meant for the highlighted part: 'And possible decision on the state of conservation under Paragraph 178 of the *Operational Guidelines*'.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you. I do not know why the administrator turned my video off, maybe you could request him or her to turn it back on, it seems to me be bizarre to turn it off. At least the Committee members we should be respected and be seen.

Chairperson:

It is working now.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much administrator. I think the second part can go. The most important thing is that it will be examined at the World Heritage Committee, the last part is not necessary to be on, we will not argue with the Rapporteur if she wishes to delete it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Apologies, just to clarify, I was not intending to propose it for deletion. If there is a clarification to keep it, we can keep it. Just to clarify.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We agree it can be deleted, it is fine.

Chairperson:

Okay. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Thank you. Last paragraph, new paragraph 15: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'. We do not mention the date.

Chairperson:

Okay, is it approved? Yes, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now we have been through all the texts, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.50 adopted as amended ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Italy, first, you have the floor for a two-minute intervention.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you, Chair. Italy would like to thank you and thank all the members of the Committee. Anyone who had the chance to visit Venice can see the integrity of this city, of this monument, of the historical landscape, but at the same time, caring for the lives of the local community is our priority. Italian Authorities are fully committed to safeguarding the unique value of this property. Thank you so much, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Europa Nostra you have two minutes for your intervention.

Observer-Europa Nostra:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of our large movement of heritage NGOs across Europe, including Italy, Europa Nostra would like to remind the World Heritage Committee that in 2016, already, we declared Venice and its Lagoon the most endangered heritage site in Europe.

This is why, today, we would like to commend the renewed commitment of UNESCO and this Committee to urging Italy and all relevant stakeholders to step up their efforts in providing effective responses to so many serious threats to Venice and its Lagoon.

We especially applaud the long-awaited decision by the Italian government to stop the passage of big cruise ships through the Bacino di San Marco and down the Giudecca Canal. This is surely a first step in the right direction, but we await further action that will lead to the big cruise ships leaving the lagoon altogether. There is ample evidence that protecting the fragile ecosystem of the lagoon, which is also vital to the preservation of the historic city of Venice, is simply not compatible with the continued passage of the cruise ships, indeed any big ships, through the lagoon. The mooring of the big cruise ships in Porto Marghera must truly be a temporary and not a permanent alternative solution since it may equally harm the ecosystem due to the further digging of the canals in the lagoon which this solution will entail.

More generally, we plead yet again for the preservation of the integrity and authenticity of Venice and its Lagoon, and for the adoption and the implementation of a holistic long-term plan for their 'renaissance', with the due support of UNESCO and the European Union. This plan must be based on the full implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals, on resolute climate action that puts culture and cultural heritage at its heart, and on due involvement of citizens and local communities.

We are convinced that Venice can cease to be the infamous case of a World Heritage site in danger and become instead a 'success story'. For this reason, Europa Nostra is holding its next European Cultural Heritage Summit in Venice from 22 to 24 September. On this occasion, we shall bring together key civil society voices, both local, national and European, to ring the alarm bell and make further proposals for a better and more sustainable future for Venice and its Lagoon, in the spirit of the recommendations adopted today by the World Heritage Committee.

Distinguished members of the World Heritage Committee, we all know that if we really want to save Venice and its Lagoon, we are running out of time, especially due to climate change. Time for joint action is now. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, World Heritage Watch, you have the floor for two minutes.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Chair. Our statement comes on behalf of six civil society organisations of Venice including Delegazione FAI di Venezia, We are here Venice, Cittadini per l'Aria, Tutta la Città Insieme, L.i.p.u. Venezia and WWF Venezia e territorio.

We deeply deplore the decision taken by the World Heritage Committee not to place Venice and its Lagoon on the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger. The recent decision of the Italian State Party on cruise ship solved only one of the plethora of problems threatening the property. Cruise ships are still allowed through the delicate lagoon and more to the Port of Marghera and the excessive environmental and climate impacts will continue. Shunting the big ship out of sight will still exacerbate the problems of erosion of the lagoon and this could weaken both the buildings and fabric of our town which binds us all together.

The persistent issues afflicting the precarious state of conservation of Venice and its Lagoon have long been associated with a complex and ineffective governance framework. It lacks a long-term vision and strategy involving the local community in order to preserve the Site's OUVs and its attributes, address tourism management, optimize the use of valuable cultural and natural resources, control infrastructure and urban development projects, and reverse the dramatic demographic decline of the Venice population specifically.

No mechanism has been established yet to comply with Paragraph 118 bis or notify the World Heritage Centre of proposals according to Paragraph 172. As a result, projects that will have negative impacts on the OUV of Venice and its Lagoon are being implemented — even in the future buffer zone. The continued effects of certain activities on Venice and the vulnerable Lagoon ecosystem, combined with climate change, are already causing irreversible changes to the site. The Committee has missed a chance to uphold the credibility of the World Heritage List and to trigger the State Party to engage in the vital discussions with civil society [...]

Chairperson:

You are over time.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

I have finished. Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you for your comment. Now, let us proceed. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Hungary which requested the state of conservation report on Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp, Poland to be open for discussion, to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chair. I will be very brief less than one minute. Poland has been actively protecting the remains of the Concentration and Extermination Camp Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi as well as the wider setting of the historical landscape. Poland has been doing so in good cooperation and ongoing dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS despite the difficulties caused by the Covid-19. We commend them for this.

The proposed amendment for the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.52 that Hungary submitted aims at few technical and factual modifications in order to make the Draft Decision fully accurate and up to date. In particular the proposed amendments seeks to:

- 1) Specify the names of two important stakeholders;
- 2) Add an invitation to the State Party to provide full Heritage Impact Assessment documentation for experts review ahead of the planned on-site mission;
- 3) Delete a reference to an information request about pending decision that has, in the meantime, being taken and the World Heritage Centre has been informed accordingly.

The proposed amendments are of technical and factual nature and do not change either the main findings or the conclusion of the Draft Decision. Yet, we believe that there are necessary and important so that the World Heritage Committee's Decision is fully accurate and up to date.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your presentation. Now I would like to give the floor to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to respond to this comment. A very brief answer, you have the floor now.

Secrétariat:

Merci. Monsieur le Président, distingués membres du Comité, le distingué représentant de la Hongrie a effectivement souligné des corrections techniques et des informations inadéquates dans le projet de décision, ayant trait notamment à la terminologie utilisée pour désigner une réunion qui s'est tenue le 19 mai dernier entre les représentants de l'État partie, le représentant de l'ICOMOS et le Centre du patrimoine mondial. Elle est présentée dans ce projet de décision comme réunion préparatoire à la mission de conseil prévue pour le bien. Entre-temps, et pour répondre à votre demande, Monsieur le Président, nous avons effectivement reçu une lettre d'invitation de l'État partie de la Pologne permettant de clarifier que cette réunion tenue au mois de mai était bien la première phase de la mission de conseil qui avait été demandée à deux reprises par le Comité du patrimoine mondial, et donc nous sommes pleinement rassurés que cette deuxième phase de la mission aura bien lieu, nous le pensons, au mois de septembre. Merci, Monsieur le Président. je crois que l'ICOMOS souhaiterait apporter des clarifications sur la seconde partie des questions soulevées par le distingué représentant de la Hongrie. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please, you have the floor for a very brief clarification.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. On Hungary's second request for clarification on the road scheme, ICOMOS considers that further clarification is still needed in the current amended Draft Decision. Currently, the amendment requests full details of the Heritage Impact Assessment for the road scheme set before the mission for review. As ICOMOS cannot assess a Heritage Impact Assessment, we can only assess the project itself, we also need the full details of the project to be submitted at the same time. And if the assessment is requested before the mission, full details, including the full Heritage Impact Assessment, need to be submitted ahead of the mission.

If you would allow me, Chair, ICOMOS would like to suggest a slight amendment to paragraph 5a of the Draft Decision, which perhaps I can read out when that is on the screen. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Committee members, due to time constraints, and also the revision is not abundant, I would suggest we go straight to the amendment with your permission. Okay, Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment submitted by Hungary as you can see on the screen. There were no modifications proposed for paragraphs 1 and 2.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will also approve this text paragraph by paragraph. For paragraphs 1 and 2, do you approve? Yes, they are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3 reads: 'Congratulates the State Party for its efforts to conserve numerous remains of the wider setting of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp complex through the Foundation of Memory Sites near Auschwitz-Birkenau and the recently created The Remembrance Museum of Land of Oświęcim Residents'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? No, it is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Notes the information provided by the State Party on the progress with the planning and design of the south ring road of Oświęcim, including the requested Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Report, but regrets that the HIA was not accompanied by full design details and alignment of the proposed ring road, or by background visual and acoustic assessments, with the result that it currently remains unclear how the project respects the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group, therefore invites the State Party to provide full HIA documentation for review by experts ahead of an on-site mission'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections or modifications? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5 there are no modifications in 5a, paragraph 5b is proposed for deletion and previous 5c becomes new paragraph 5b. These are all the amendments here, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you Chair. ICOMOS would like to propose a minor amendment to paragraph 5a, to allow it to read: 'Submit full details of the Oświęcim southern ring road project, including how it responds to the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group and to the conclusions of the HIA, to allow a review of the project by the Advisory Bodies ahead of an on-site mission'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. For this paragraph 5, do you have any objections or modifications? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications in paragraph 6, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of paragraph 6? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a very minor modification in paragraph 7: 'Welcomes that [...]', the words 'a preparatory' are crossed over, it reads further 'an online meeting on the joint [...]' the rest of the paragraph remains the same.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

There are no changes in paragraphs 8 and 9 Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are they approved? Yes, they are approved. Dear Committee members, we now have been through the entire text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.52 adopted as amended ^[gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. Poland, please, you have the floor. Sorry, actually please wait, I have a point of order in front of me. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, I just wanted to ask you a question on the procedure. You called upon members of the Committee to refrain from taking the floor because we are behind schedule, but then why do you give floor to NGOs. I do not understand, I think that there is no need to remind you that UNESCO is an intergovernmental organisation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will restrict further the floor to be given to the Observers. Poland you have two minutes for your intervention.

The Delegation of Poland:

Thank you. Mr. Chair, I will be very brief. First of all, Poland would like to congratulate the way China is organising this World Heritage Committee session, since we are taking the floor for the first time.

Secondly, Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for this very fruitful cooperation when it comes to the state of conservation of the Auschwitz Birkenau Concentration Camp. And we would like to express our sincere wishes that this work will be ended soon. As it was mentioned, we are looking forward for the second part of the mission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Argentina please, you have the floor for two minutes.

Délégation de l'Argentine

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous voulons vous féliciter pour votre présidence et vos interventions très pertinentes, et féliciter le Comité pour l'adoption de cette décision. Pour nous et pour plusieurs pays, les sites de mémoire sont d'une importance primordiale et cruciale pour l'avenir de notre Convention. Merci beaucoup, et nous félicitons le Comité pour la façon avec laquelle il conduit, dans ces circonstances tellement particulières, l'avancement de notre travail dans le cadre de cette Convention. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of properties for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion in both Europe, North American and the Latin America and the Caribbean. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. n°41, Historic centre of Salzburg (Austria); n°42, Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia); n°43, Venetian Works of Defence between 15th and 17th Centuries: Stato da Terra – western Stato da Mar (Croatia/Italy/Montenegro); n°44, Historic Centre of Prague (Czechia); n°45, Landscape for Breeding and Training of Ceremonial Carriage Horses at Kladubynad Labem (Czechia); n°46, Paris, Bank of the Seine (France); n°47, Gelati Monastery (Georgia); n°48, Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia); n°51, Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro); n°53, Tarnowskie Góry Lead-Silver-Zinc Mine and its Underground Water Management System (Poland); n°54, Royal Building of Mafra – Palace, Basilica, Convent, Cerco Garden and Hunting Park (Tapada); (Portugal); n° 55, Aphrodisias (Turkey); n°56, Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape (Turkey); n°57, Göbekli Tepe (Turkey); n°58, Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey); n°59, Kyiv: Saint-Sophia Cathedral and Related Monastic Buildings, Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra (Ukraine); n°60, Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); n°61, Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); n°151, Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania); n°152, The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Japan, Switzerland); n°153, Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace (Azerbaijan), n°154 Ancient City of Nessebar (Bulgaria); n°155, Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany); n°156, Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata (Italy); n°157, Krzemionki Prehistoric Striped Flint Mining Region (Poland); n°158, Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga (Portugal); n°159, Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation); n°160, Kizhi Pogost (Russian Federation); n°161, Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); n°62, Quebrada de Humahuaca (Argentina); n°63,

Tiwanaku: Spiritual and Political Centre of the Tiwanaku Culture (Bolivia, Plurinational State of); n°64, Pampulha Modern Ensemble (Brazil); n°65, Precolumbian Chiefdom Settlements with Stone Spheres of the Diquís (Costa Rica); n°66, Colonial City of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic); n°67, City of Quito (Ecuador); n°68, National History Park – Citadel, Sans Souci, Ramiers (Haiti); n°69, Historic Centre of the City of Arequipa (Peru); n°70, Historic Inner City of Paramaribo (Suriname); n°162, Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System (Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru); n°163, Brasilia (Brazil); n°164, Churches of Chiloé (Chile); n°165, Historic Quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaíso (Chile); n°166, Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works (Chile); n°167, Port, Fortresses and Group of Monuments, Cartagena (Colombia); n°168, Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panamá (Panama) and n°169, Historic Centre of Lima (Peru). That is it, Mr Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I now declare the Decisions read adopted ^[gave]. Dear colleagues with a heavy agenda we are approaching the end of today's meeting. Considering that there will be the working group on the Budget, I would like to suggest that we stop here. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Have a good rest.

The meeting rose at 4:04:41 pm.

SIXTH DAY – Friday 23 July 2021
SIXTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, welcome back to our meeting. The Bureau of the Committee held its sixth meeting today. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recalled that the Committee had only examined five reports of properties under Item 7B and that we have to examine seven of them today and come back to Borobudur, as soon as the text prepared by the drafting group, which was established yesterday, is available in both languages.

We will therefore start today's session with three sites from Asia Pacific due to time zone differences: 7B.76 Trang An; 7B.90 Great Barrier Reef and 7B.91 the Sundarbans. We will then resume the normal order as follows: 7B.77 Ohrid Region which could not be examined yesterday; 7B.79 W-Arly-Pendjari Complex; 7B.109 Volcanoes of Kamchatka and 7B.110 Western Caucasus.

This is a very heavy agenda for today and as we are running late, the Secretariat has kindly consulted the interpreters and I would like to suggest that we have a prolonged session today by one hour, until 4:30 pm Paris time, if necessary. It is also proposed that there will be no Budget working group today but tomorrow instead at usual time. If there are no objections, we will proceed this way. Okay? Thank you.

Lastly, the Bureau heard a progress report from the chairperson of the working group on the Budget Ms. Zoya Kritskaya.

Dear colleagues, as I did during the Bureau meeting, I would also like to clarify that there was no intention yesterday to prevent any of you from taking the floor during the debate, but rather to invite you, in the interest of time, to reduce, as much as possible, the interventions in case those are only to fully support an amendment during the debate. Obviously, in the spirit of the Convention and its intergovernmental nature, dialogue and debate are essential. All Committee member Delegations are, of course, most welcome to also express themselves and take the floor during the adoption of a draft decision. However, as you all know, we are running late and we cannot extend the session beyond the 31st of July. I may, therefore, at some point, need to restrict the speaking time as follows: State Party Observers to two minutes, other Observers to one minute, depending on the advancement of our work. I thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, we will now resume our work on Item 7B. Before we examine the properties located in the Asia Pacific Region, I would like to give the floor to the Observer-Delegation of Turkey who could not take the floor yesterday at the closing of our meeting, as we did not have sufficient time and no interpretation. Excellency, you have the floor. Unmute your microphone, Excellency.

The Delegation of Turkey:

Thank you, Chair. Regarding Historic Areas of Istanbul, we believe that paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 of the Decision do not reflect the factual situation and outcome of the advisory missions concerning the mosques of Hagia Sophia and Chora. Firstly, according to Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, prior notification to the World Heritage Centre is necessary, when there is a major restoration or new construction which may affect the OUV of the property. Since neither major restoration, nor new construction was foreseen in the context of change of states of Hagia Sophia and Chora, the lack of dialogue cannot be regarded as a source of regret.

Secondly, the conclusions of the two reports of the advisory missions led by Mr. Bouchenaki, special advisor to the Director General stated that the change of status does not have a negative impact on the OUV. Therefore, the wording '*grave concern*' is extremely aggressive and such misuse of terminology lies at the core of the increasing problems we face in the context of the 1972 Convention. After all, it was Turkey that invited the two UNESCO advisory missions. They took place with full cooperation of the Turkish authorities. All relevant stakeholders in Turkey found the opportunity to share their views with Mr. Bouchenaki. Thus, a reason for calling on the State Party is not sustainable.

Paragraph 12 fails to recognise the fact that there is already and existing and close cooperation and engagement with UNESCO. All the more, both advisory mission reports have been made available for Committee members only on the 16th of July. Let alone the lack of transparency, the Decision does not coincide with the outcome of the reports.

It is because of these reasons which clearly showed the degree of politicisation that Turkey has decided to dissociate itself from paragraphs 10, 11 and 12. We strongly urge the Secretariat to clearly reflect our position vis a vis the decision in the Summary Records and put a footnote on the decision about Turkey's dissociation. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The Secretariat will take note of what you said. Greece, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Greece:

Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor and allow me to congratulate you for your wise chairmanship. Mr. Chair, feelings of deep disappointment to the world community were provoked by the unilateral decision last year by a State Party to the Convention to change the status and the use of a Hagia Sophia and Chora Museum and to turn them into mosques without any prior notification to UNESCO, despite explicit and repetitive requests made by UNESCO in reference to Paragraphs 172 and 174 of the 1972 Convention *Operational Guidelines*.

Mr. Chair, as we are all aware, Hagia Sophia and Chora Museums are two monuments inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List since 1985. The seriousness of these developments is reflected upon the reactions of the international community, including UNESCO and the competent international governmental and non-governmental organisations that immediately expressed concern, including the risk that this change of views may adversely affect their OUV.

Mr. Chair, the Decision adopted unanimously yesterday conveys the message of unity and presents a balance between facts and obligations deriving from this Convention. It is a message of responsibility, of peaceful interfaith and intercultural coexistence and inclusiveness that should be transmitted to the world, as an example of the responsible role of this Committee, and of the proper functioning of this Convention.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we firmly believe that no one should use for political or other purposes monuments that transmit an image of universality and peace in the modern world. Thank you, Mr. chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Panama, please you have one minute for your intervention.

The Delegation of Panama:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you Chairperson for giving me the floor. I would like to thank and congratulate the People's Republic of China for the excellent organisation of the World Heritage Committee. Panama reiterates its full commitment to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention on the Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panamá and we would like to thank the Committee.

We have a National Plan for the implementation of the Heritage Impact Assessment. We would like to include this in all the plans and programmes as requested by the Committee for this property. The effects of the pandemic of Covid-19, the quarantine and other measures, have affected the implementation of projects in our sites. The government of Panama through the Ministry of Culture started a programme for economic recovery in Panama in coordination with all the players in charge of Panama Old City. The government of Panama would like to reiterate its commitment for the preservation and conservation of our World Heritage under this Convention. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Cyprus, please, you have the floor for one minute.

Délégation de Chypre :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je prends la parole a propos de l'un des sites les plus emblématiques du patrimoine mondial : le musée et le monument de Sainte-Sophie inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO depuis 1985 sur la base de sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle. C'est un monument symbolique unique, qui doit être protégé, soutenu et respecté. Chypre espère que tous les monuments et sites inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial seront respectés, conservés et protégés au profit des générations présentes et futures. La valeur de ce monument et de ce site est universelle. Il est également du devoir de la communauté internationale de coopérer pour sa protection. Chypre est particulièrement sensible à ce point compte tenu de sa propre expérience tragique. C'est dans ce contexte que Chypre continue d'être préoccupée par la récente décision unilatérale et les actions consécutives du Gouvernement turc concernant Sainte-Sophie, décision qui a été prise sans l'avis du Centre du patrimoine mondial. Des missions consultatives de l'UNESCO ont déjà eu lieu pour évaluer la situation et son impact potentiel sur la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien. En effet, le changement de statut de Sainte-Sophie et sa transformation en mosquée...

Chairperson:

I have to interrupt you. It is the time limit.

Délégation de Chypre :

Je termine juste mon propos. La Turquie doit revenir sur cette décision unilatérale préjudiciable, doit faire preuve de respect envers les normes internationales communes et mettre pleinement en œuvre les recommandations des

missions de l'UNESCO afin que Sainte-Sophie et toutes les composantes de son histoire puissent continuer à être un symbole de respect multireligieux. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je tiens à souligner que l'UNESCO est un forum pour discuter de tous les sujets, mêmes des sujets que l'on dit sensibles. Il n'y a pas de problème à entamer un dialogue pour éviter ne pas confronter que des sentiments et des idées concernant certaines décisions politiques quelconque. Quand il s'agit des monuments, on parle calmement et on discute. Si on ne discute pas dans les forums, où est-ce qu'on pourrait le faire ? Dans la rue ? Donc il n'y a pas de sujets interdits de discussion, s'il vous plaît. C'est une remarque que j'avais à faire.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. As we have a very heavy agenda today, I will not give the floor to other Observers on this item. As indicated, we are now moving to three properties located in the Asia Pacific Region.

For the first mixed property to be discussed today, Trang An Landscape Complex, Vietnam, we have received a request from the Delegation of Thailand to open this report for discussion. I would therefore like, now, to invite the Delegation to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thailand would like to draw the Committee's attention to the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.76 regarding the state of conservation of Trang An Landscape Complex of the State Party of Vietnam. As reflected in the proposed amendment, Thailand wishes to simply propose a slight change by removing some strong words which are '*with significant concerns*' as appear in point 4 line 1, as well as '*strongly*' as appear in point 4 line 2.

We believe that visitation is currently not an issue under the current circumstances for Trang An both in terms of capacity and in terms of negative impacts on the OUV. The State Party of Vietnam has made significant progress on the conservation activities and promotion of values of the site and fully complies with the World Heritage Committee's recommendations and decisions. We have also learned that the inscription has raised awareness of the local authorities and communities about the 1972 Convention.

Therefore, Thailand is of the view that the decision of the Committee should better reflect the actual situation. It should also recognise the efforts made by the concerned authorities and stakeholders in Vietnam to facilitate the effective conservation and management of the property. The proposed amendment would also constructively encourage the authorities and the community to implement the necessary unfinished works recommended by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Body.

Thailand would like to request the Committee to support the proposed amendment and would also like to request the State party of Vietnam, upon permission of Mr. Chairperson at the appropriate time, to make further clarifications. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to invite Ms. Nao Hayashi of the Asia Pacific Unit of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to respond to this comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. As stated in the working document on the property, the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and ICOMOS jointly recognised steady progress achieved by the State Party and its active cooperation in recent years. In particular, the ninth 2019 joint World Heritage Centre, IUCN and ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission recognised that the general condition of the property has improved.

The State Party demonstrated a positive response and strong step towards the necessary focus on the conservation and authentic interpretation of the values of the property by removing constructions judged inappropriate by the Committee, including the replica movie set.

The Management Plan covering the period 2021 to 2026 is in progress and the State Party has firmly committed in conducting the requested carrying capacity studies. We duly note the difficulties faced by the local populations due to the sharp decrease of tourism as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic considering that three fourths of the inhabitants living in the inscribed zone of Trang An earned their living via tourism services.

Therefore, the World Heritage Centre has no objection to the suggested amendment referring to the increase in numbers of tourists, on the basis of shared understanding that this amendment does not alter the guidance provided

by the Decision of the Committee, that the proper planning and control of tourism remain an important challenge in the long-term and hopefully in view of the recovery of the property and surrounding communities from the Covid situation.

After publishing the working document, Mr. Chair, a dialogue meeting was organised with the State Party, the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN during which the State Party provided some clarification on the situation of visitors' numbers.

Mr. Chair, with your kind permission, ICOMOS and IUCN will now provide further comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS please and be very concise.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS has been pleased to collaborate with the State Party, IUCN and the World Heritage Centre on this property for a number of years, including the 2019 mission. ICOMOS would highlight that there is still a pressing need to determine a sustainable carrying capacity for when tourism returns to normal after the implications of the pandemic. But, on the basis of a highly collaborative meeting with the State Party, ICOMOS has no objection to the proposed amendment. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, IUCN, please.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Also, to be extremely brief, we will just associate ourselves with the remarks of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS. I would like to also record IUCN's thanks to the State Party of Vietnam for the dialogue that has taken place and equally to support the amendment, as has been explained so clearly by the distinguished State Party of Thailand. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. I see there are representatives asking for the floor. Dear Committee members, I understand that you need to express your opinions and feelings as well as your solidarity, however, due to the time constraints, without any intention to prevent you from taking the floor, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief on your general remarks, so that we can move quickly to consider the Draft Decision. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all. Mr. Chairman, this is a very simple amendment that has been proposed that we totally endorse. Considering the commitment already demonstrated by the State Party and already acknowledged by the Advisory Bodies in the report. Mr. Chairman, what I wanted to raise here is not only our support, but, as we have already stated in the past, we believe that some strong languages used in this resolution and in others should be more carefully used when addressing States Parties. Mr. Chairman, I think that this is all for the moment. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much and good morning to all. We will be brief, Chair, to manage our time. We fully support the amendments proposed and we would like to be considered as cosponsors as well of these amendments. We highly commend the State Party of Vietnam for the efforts it has made in ensuring conservation and balancing the needs of the community who live of these heritages. And we also share the concern expressed by Brazil that really strong language against States Parties that are showing such tremendous efforts is really counterproductive. Encouraging them really to opt for more conciliatory language and even encouraging States Parties, such as developing countries, when they make such tremendous efforts. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you very much, Chair. Nigeria also wants to lend our support for this amendment, and we want to be cosponsors for this amendment as well. Thank you very much. Just to be brief.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have heard from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies positive comments regarding the amendment provided by Thailand, we support the Decision for this site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.76 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the other amendments and the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment from Thailand, and it was supported by a number of Committee members. As also presented by the distinguished delegate from Thailand, the amendment proposes a minor modification of wording under paragraph 4 only. It crosses over 'with significant concern' and secondly 'strongly' so the paragraph 4 reads: 'Noting that visitation continues to increase beyond previous estimates, urges the State Party [...] and the rest of the Decision remains without any modifications, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Rapporteur. Dear colleagues, as you have just heard from Ms. Rapporteur, there are only minor modifications in the text. Hence, for the interest of time, can I propose it for adoption as a whole? Are there any comments? No comments. So, if there are no more comments or objections, I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM [7B.76] adopted as amended ^[gavel]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Vietnam, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Vietnam:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since it is the first time that Vietnam takes the floor, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the People's Republic of China, the host country, for this extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, and also express our sincere sympathy to the people of Henan province that have been suffering from the flood.

We would like to thank the Delegation of Thailand who put forward the amendment proposal on Trang An's Draft Decision. Our thanks also go to the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN for the fruitful cooperation among us. At our request, the World Heritage Centre has convened a meeting between the Delegation of Vietnam to UNESCO, the management board of Trang An Landscape Complex, ICOMOS and IUCN last week on this matter where we had a friendly dialogue.

We would also like to thank all the Committee members supporting us and we are agreeable that the recommendation by the World Heritage Committee in the Decision 44 COM 7B.76 could help to further conserve and promote the values of the property. As mentioned by the Delegation of Thailand, the minor amendment on the Draft Decision on Trang An Landscape Complex is not a substantial amendment, since Vietnam is aware of the site visitation issue, but it is necessary since the proposed change is to also reflect the reality as well as to recall efforts by the Ninh Binh authorities, where the site is located, and the stakeholders on the effective conservation and management of the property. Vietnam shares the understanding that tourism management remains a long-term challenge in order to balance development and heritage conservation. With that, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your sympathy and solidarity with the Henan people and thank you for your comment. Now, International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage, you have one minute for your intervention. Your microphone is muted.

Observer-International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, indigenous people have the right to participate in decision-making affecting them. The UNESCO policy on indigenous peoples reaffirms that indigenous peoples have the right to full and effective participation in all matters affecting their lives and cultures, and notes that the governing bodies of UNESCO's Culture Conventions can play

an important role to ensure full and effective participation and inclusion of indigenous peoples in the processes of these instruments.

Mr. Chair, it is unacceptable to us that the voice of indigenous peoples is not heard before the World Heritage Committee makes a decision on a property. The decisions taken by this esteemed body have enormous impacts on our lands and territories, our cultures and our lives. We therefore urge the Committee to change its practices and Rules of Procedure to ensure that henceforth, as in previous sessions, representatives of indigenous peoples are consistently given the floor before the Committee takes its decision. Obviously, this applies not only to decisions on the state of conservation of sites but to all decisions affecting us including decisions on nominations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, let us proceed. I now invite Ms. Rössler to read the List of the mixed properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Asia Pacific Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have one, n°75, Tasmanian Wilderness in Australia. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decision readout adopted ^[gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have just adopted the decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed.

With this, we are now moving to the natural properties also located in the Asia Pacific Region. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to Ms. Fanny Douvere of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to present the reports and the state of conservation of the natural properties located in the Asia Pacific Region and open for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the results of the impacts of climate change and water quality, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN conclude that despite many positive achievements and considerable investments made by the State Party, the long-term outlook of the Great Barrier Reef's ecosystem has further degraded from poor to very poor in a short period of five years and the deterioration of the ecological processes underpinning the Outstanding Universal Value of the property has been more rapid and more widespread than was previously evident. The property has further suffered significantly from three consecutive mass coral bleaching events in 2016, 2017 and 2020 with impacts extending to over two thirds of the property.

As evidenced by the most recent reef quality report cards, progress has been largely insufficient in meeting key targets of the Reef 2050 long-term Sustainability Plan. In particular, the water quality and land management targets which further significantly undermine the resilience of the property. Based on the above the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that the property is facing ascertained danger in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* and recommend the World Heritage Committee to inscribe the Great Barrier Reef on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The World heritage Centre and IUCN recall that the World Heritage Committee evaluated the possible inscription of the property on the List in Danger at its annual sessions in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The Committee did not inscribe the property on the List in Danger at its session in 2015, but instead agreed to an ambitious Reef 2050 long-term Sustainability Plan. At the time it requested the State Party to rigorously implement all commitments under the Plan and to demonstrate effective protection of the property backed by scientific evidence by 1st of December 2019.

The evaluation of the state of conservation of the property, as set out in the Draft Decision, is based on a wide range of scientific reports provided by the State party. As detailed in the Draft Decision, the documents were received through seven formal exchanges of information. It included thorough detail on the state of conservation of the property, the progress on water quality and any impacts of climate change, all of which provided unambiguous evidence that the property is facing ascertained danger.

Finally, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN conclude that accelerated action on climate change at all possible levels in accordance with the 1.5° target under the Paris Agreement for climate change and the recovery of the property from poor water quality are both vital and are urgent to secure the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef for present and for future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. With your permission, Chair, IUCN wishes to make additional remarks.

Chairperson:

IUCN, please. Thank you.

IUCN:

Thank you, Chair. The Great Barrier Reef has been intensely considered by the World Heritage Committee for nearly a decade and the framework for assessing its state of conservation at the present session is clear. In the interest of time management, Mr. Chair, I will not repeat further details, as has been presented by the World Heritage Centre, but to echo all of the points that you have just heard. But to summarize, IUCN notes that despite the major efforts that have been made by the State Party that both the current status of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef and the prospects for its future recovery have significantly deteriorated. And this is clearly evidenced in the five-year Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report published by the State Party in 2019.

The property, unambiguously, meets the criteria for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Therefore Mr. Chair, IUCN recommends the Committee to recognize this clear scientific evidence that the property is in danger and to allow all parties to commence the process of establishing Corrective Measures at the earliest possible opportunity. And we see this as the means to take immediate and the most constructive action possible together to support the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to know whether there are any comments? Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The State Party has repeatedly reaffirmed to the Committee its unconditional commitment to the protection of this iconic World Heritage site and further translated this commitment into action, most notably with the adoption of the Reef 2050 long-term Sustainability Plan. We commend the State Party for their mobilisation of resources at the highest level, which is reflected both technically through inter-institutional collaboration, as well as through financial investments totalling three billion dollars and with further announcement of additional investment in various programmes and projects.

The Reef Outlook Report further reflects the clear monitoring mechanisms applied by the State Party and underlines the State Party's transparent approach in reporting any issues ascertained on the property to aid in implementing the appropriate protection measures required to conserve the attributes of the property. For example, the monitoring mechanism has highlighted water quality as one of the key challenges facing the ecosystem of the property which and I quote, '*Remains the most serious threat to the site*'. Could the State Party outline to the Committee the steps undertaken by authorities mandated with managing the property to address this challenge since the last Reactive Monitoring mission to the site in 2012?

We further draw the attention of Committee members to the eminent effects of climate change on natural World Heritage sites globally, as clearly outlined in the IUCN latest Conservation Outlook Report. To be clear, we do not shy away of that fact, nor does the State Party. The Climate Policy Document, endorsed by the Committee earlier in this session, is a reconfirmation by the Committee as to the urgency of climate action and we believe it to be a catalyst into applying climate action across the World Heritage spectrum. And we look forward to that being reflected in the tools safeguarding the credibility of the Convention, such as the *Operational Guidelines*.

In light of that, Mr. Chair, we have submitted an amendment along with 11 other Committee members to consider this property in the 46th session of the Committee, as the State Party has demonstrated clear and unwavering set of actions in response to concerns brought about by this Committee. This World Heritage site expands an area of 34 million hectares which in itself brings its own set of challenges in managing a site of this magnitude. We reiterate our request to the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission, not only to identify any threats to the OUV, but to also report to the Committee as to the effectiveness of the measures taken by the State Party to mitigate conservation challenges.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and we would like to hear from the State Party of Australia to outline to the Committee the steps undertaken by authorities with regards to water quality since the last Reactive Monitoring mission in 2012. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair. Uganda has studied all the documents related to Decision 44 COM 7B.90 in respect to the proposal of IUCN and the World Heritage Centre to have the Great Barrier Reef of Australia placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Chair, despite the unprecedented impacts caused by climate change which have resulted into massive coral bleaches and loss, the information available indicates that their integrity has remained intact and the spatial extent of the World Heritage area has generally remained unchanged.

Uganda has also learned that the Reef continues to be one of the richest and most complex natural ecosystems on earth, and one of the most significant areas for biodiversity conservation. In fact, information indicates that the population trend of the key fauna species is showing a positive skew. It should also be noted, Chair, that the

Australian government has also drawn a comprehensive set of policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency, and fast track the development and uptake of green energy with a sound backing of strong investments of up to 3.5 billion USD for climate change package and another 600 million USD for reduction of pollutants and sediment flow into the Reef. The Australian government has also gone ahead to expand the land under the National Park and protected land along the adjacent coastal areas to avert the impacts of climate change and enhance water quality.

Chair, all these milestones cannot be ignored and it is clear that the State Party has shown strong commitment to the implementation of these Committee's decisions, including through ensuring unprecedented levels of financial support and mobilisation of inter-institutional collaboration.

The placement of the property on the List of Heritage in Danger would demotivate the State Party and all the partners and stakeholders who have been committed to the conservation of this property. Moreover, the most recent decision of the Committee about the property was in 2017 which makes it a short period for the State Party to make significant impacts amid its natural calamities.

In the view of the above, Chair, Uganda does not support the Draft Decision and proposes that the State Party should be given more time to implement the recently drawn plans and policies, as a means of enhancing the protection of the Great Barrier Reef. I rest my case. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, as you have realised that we have a very heavy agenda today and there are still quite a number of Committee members on my List, I would like to kindly ask you to be very brief to speak out your position if it is only to fully support the proposal. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. This is a very important subject item. It is very symbolic also in many ways because it touches what we think is the most important and critical issue, climate change. Climate change poses a challenge to the survival of humanity but it also poses a challenge for the survival of many of our sites, including natural sites. How do we address them?

We believe this has to be addressed globally with global responsibility meaning common and differentiation between developed and developing countries. The Climate Action Plan is a step forward. The Climate Action Plan lacks the production operationalisation, and, concretely, it also lacks financial commitment. We do not believe a single country is responsible for climate change by itself, it is a global responsibility. Therefore, we should act globally and not single out a single State.

We appreciate the efforts of the Australian government with regard to its policies to promote a green energy and to mitigate the effects of climate change. In particular, with regard to the Reef itself. We appreciate the management plan that has been put forward and the financial commitment that has been shown. Therefore, we do not support as well, following Uganda, the Decision as proposed. We think it is too soon. We would like to ask the honourable delegates of Australia one single question: How does the update of the comprehensive site management plan called Reef 2050 Plan address the pressures on the Reef? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you very much. Hungary supports the amendment and wishes to echo all of the previous speakers, but we would also like to add a short comment. Hungary believes that a collective and united action by States Parties is required in taking measures to mitigate the effects of climate change on all World Heritage sites concerned including the Great Barrier Reef.

Australia is already playing a constructive role in the actions to address climate change at the global level. With regard to the fact that the Policy Document on Climate Change on World Heritage will be adopted by the General Assembly at the end of this year, which has raised significant questions set out in Paragraph 36 regarding the properties in the List of World Heritage in Danger, making such decision over the Reef during this session would be premature. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman knows the considerable results and actions being taken by Australia given the numerous challenges that the Reef is facing. We equally share the concerns expressed by the Advisory Bodies and as a consequence is the need for a continued dialogue to address all threats to which the property is exposed.

We therefore welcome and support the draft amended Decision and that a Reactive Monitoring mission visits the property and reviews the progress to uphold the OUV and further assess progress that is made in these regards. Again, Oman strongly supports the amended Draft Decision put forward by Bahrain. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain just now you requested to give the floor to the State Party, so I request you to formulate a question to put to the State Party. Now, the Russian Federation, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is true that the Great Barrier Reef has become one of the most complex and disputed items at this session. We regret that it has provoked some politicised debate and even attacks against the chairmanship of this Committee, something that we consider as totally unjustified. We believe that issues related to the conservation of the Reef should be addressed in a professional way without blaming individual countries for what appears to be a global challenge. In particular, climate change threatens reefs all over the world.

Our Delegation does not contest the technical assessment which is contained in the Draft Decision. What raises our doubts is the recommendation to include immediately the Great Barrier Reef in the List of World Heritage in Danger. This recommendation, in our view, is not fully consistent with the level of dialogue and cooperation between the Advisory Bodies and the State Party. IUCN and the World Heritage Centre have not visited the property in almost a decade. More up-to-date technical advice and scientific information are needed at any rate before in danger listing.

Therefore, we support the amendments to the Draft Decision and hope that the Desired state of conservation and the set of Corrective Measures will be achieved through a closer cooperation with the State Party. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. As Committee members, we should attach importance to the opinions of the Advisory Bodies and scientific evidence and fulfil the duty of World Heritage protection. These important decisions should not be overshadowed by politics. This is not an exercise in what is fair or not. We are all signatories to the same Convention. If a World Heritage site is facing potential or ascertained danger, if the Outstanding Universal Value for which the property was established to protect is threatened, it should be put on the List of World Heritage in Danger and these are the rules that we have all agreed upon.

We would like to highlight that the State Party of Australia have themselves provided the evidence. The Reef Report found the ecosystem's long-term outlook had deteriorated from poor to very poor. The report also said Australia's progress on the Reef 2050 Plan had been insufficient in meeting the key targets. And it said the Plan requires stronger and clearer commitments, in particular on urgently addressing threats from climate change and in improving water quality. The local threats are compounded by the global threat of climate change. The proposed Danger listing should not come as a surprise, it has been on the radar of the Committee since 2012.

We do acknowledge the work which has been done in Australia, but the Great Barrier Reef is proposed to be put on the List of World Heritage in Danger because the Outstanding Universal Value is deteriorating. I know the climate crisis threatening the Reef cannot be addressed by Australia alone. The danger listing is also a collective call for action from all member States. It is not a punishment. It is how we mobilise action and preserve our heritage for future generations. Norway therefore supports the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, St Kitt and Nevis, you have the floor.

The Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis:

Thank you, Minister. I will be brief. St Kitts and Nevis is unambiguously in support of the smallest amendment to the Draft Decision very ably submitted by Bahrain which would remove the recommendation to immediately put on the danger List the Great Barrier Reef and instead proposes a Reactive Monitoring mission for consideration in 2023. The common factor, I think, to the problem we are facing, not just with the Great Barrier Reef but in other cases, is the Covid-19 restrictions and, in general, why we have not had more visits from the UNESCO World Heritage programme colleagues and members to cooperate, to do whatever it takes to be able to ensure these Reactive Monitoring missions can actually take place.

Let me also say that for the Great Barrier Reef, the approach taken by Australia in the face of climate change has a number of relevance and resonance for Small Islands Developing States like St Kitts and Nevis. Particularly the direct action to reduce factors such as improving water quality, supporting the adaptation to changing climate through a number of specific measures. And then we also touch on the importance of members to touch on and support the notion of including and recognising the support, not just the government of Australia, but also the efforts of farmers and the fishing industry who are at the frontline of climate change. In another word in contributing to protecting the reef from impacts of agricultural growth. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef system in the world the most serious and biggest threat to this system is climate change and this is a global environmental issue that affects everyone and everywhere. The importance [...]

Chairperson:

There is something wrong with the microphone.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Okay. Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

It is okay.

The Delegation of South Africa:

The importance of global action for climate change mitigation cannot be overemphasised. Despite these global challenges, Mr. Chairman, the State Party of Australia has invested a lot of resources, time and effort in order to address these issues through the Reef 2050 Plan. We commend the State Party of Australia for this commendable effort and support the proposed amendments as submitted by Bahrain. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We are very happy to celebrate our National Day today with all the members of the Committee. I would like to thank the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for the analysis of the site, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. We do believe that Australia exerted lately many efforts in conserving the Outstanding Universal Value for present and future generations.

However, the Draft Decision suggested the inscription of the site on the Danger List which we believe would be premature and wrong. The challenges faced by the site are complex, and we do believe that we should give Australia time, until next session, and therefore we support the amendments submitted by Bahrain to the Draft Decision. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Great Barrier Reef is among the most precious natural treasures of humanity and it is with deepest sadness that we view the increasing threats that it is facing. Climate change is indeed one of the major challenges of our time and, if we do not work collectively towards implementing the targets set by the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement this is a treasure that will be lost, as will many of our own natural and cultural sites. We agree that the present situation of the site merits our highest concern. And we are aware of some of the recommendations of this Draft Decision.

However, we also perceive that the State Party has strongly committed to the protection of the site and that it has been taking important action towards the long-term sustainability of the site, through the revised Reef 2050 Plan and the allocation of substantive funds for improvement of the system of protection and management of the site.

Will that be enough to save the Great Barrier Reef? We do not know yet, but we can give the Australian government a vote of confidence and send a Reactive Monitoring mission to the site, in order to review the situation and inform

the Committee before action for more far-reaching consequences can be considered. We therefore strongly support the amendment presented by Bahrain. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We have decided to support this amendment. First, we think it gives a vote of confidence to the State Party which confirmed it has undertaken significant action in recent time. We also think it is a very important way of calling on the State Party and the world to say that climate change is the biggest existential threats to us. We are very, very aware of the pressure and the interests of environmentalists to see this go one way or the other. But remember that it is important to be effective. Spain does not feel that a political interest should be brought there. We think that more assessment is needed. Having a Reactive Monitoring mission would enable us to work out whether the Reef 2050 Plan is sufficient in itself, considering that we are discussing Australia with all of its geological specificities. We think that this is the World's Heritage. It belongs to everybody and this as an international and governmental body. It needs to be effective.

We are all fighting for the same thing and that is what we want to save this treasure of humanity. The Reactive Monitoring mission needs to take place as soon as possible, and now it is up to us to give enough time and trust to the process. What we really need from the Australian Government is a commitment and they have demonstrated that they have given that commitment. Now, the idea is to be realistic, to put in place practical policies that will give results that we all want to save this outstanding site. That is why we are in favour of this amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. All the speakers have recognised that Australia has made a significant contribution towards saving the Great Barrier Reef. We want the Advisory Bodies to please recognise these efforts and also withdraw these submissions and agree to send a Reactive Monitoring mission.

I think we can move forward by saving time and I want to lend our support, Nigeria's support, to this amendment and call on the Advisory Body, IUCN, to please go with the majority and let us save time so that a Reactive Monitoring team should be sent to check the state of affairs there. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Comme l'ont déjà dit mes prédécesseurs, il serait prématuré d'inscrire le bien sur la Liste e d'une grande transparence dans les efforts très importants que le pays effectue déjà, mais il s'agit d'un projet colossal, tout comme est colossal le fait que l'ensemble de la planète est victime du changement climatique. Il nous faut donc travailler ensemble, l'État partie avec les experts ; tout le monde doit travailler pour résoudre ce problème, dans la mesure du possible. Il ne s'agit pas d'une chose que l'on peut changer du jour au lendemain. Il faut soutenir le Gouvernement de l'Australie dans cet effort colossal. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, your Excellency. Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor, I will try to be brief and concise. We believe that we have discussed the important and challenging issue of climate change under the Item 7C and most, if not all members share the common understanding that climate change is serious and is already having impacts on our globe as we know it. Climate change cannot be fixed overnight and has been in the making for decades, so we will need to take decades to mitigate the effects. Climate change, as mentioned in Item 7C in the Policy, requires collective action and cannot be addressed by one member State alone.

With that said Mr. Chair and dear members and as mentioned by ICOMOS, Australia, like all of us, acknowledges the seriousness of climate change and therefore has spared no effort to mitigate its impact on the site. We believe Mr. Chair that since the last mission visit was about a decade ago, another mission must be conducted to assist the progress and effects of Australia's efforts before deciding whether or not to add the site to the in Danger List.

Your Excellency, dear members, we have been hearing by the esteemed ICOMOS and IUCN about adding a site to the in Danger List and how much it can provide extra support financially and policies. But in the case of Australia, they have been creating solid policies and abundance of resources to mitigate the efforts of the climate change and implement recommendations by the Advisory Bodies.

In this case, Your Excellency and dear members, we support the amendments presented by the esteemed Delegation of Bahrain and supported by many others. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to address your question as to our direct question to Australia. It was with regards the water quality: What have they done since the last Reactive Monitoring mission in terms of improving water quality and what is envisaged as well in the future to further address this challenge? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Mali, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de m'avoir donné la parole. Nous notons des efforts remarquables de l'État partie, l'Australie, en ce qui concerne la Grande Barrière de corail. L'État partie a un plan d'investissement de plus de 3 milliards de dollars, entre 2014 et 2024, pour mettre en œuvre un plan de durabilité à long terme qui s'étend sur 35 ans. Nous remarquons également que le dernier rapport de l'État partie sur la qualité de l'eau de la Grande Barrière montre que là où de solides programmes d'amélioration de la qualité de l'eau ont été mis en place la tendance peut être inversée. Nous estimons que toutes ces actions et les nouvelles évolutions relatives aux efforts de l'État partie d'Australie doivent être prises en compte, et nous appelons à davantage de consultations auprès de l'État partie avant toute décision d'inscription du site de la Grande Barrière sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Par conséquent, nous appuyons les amendements proposés par le Bahreïn. Nous pensons qu'il ne faut pas inscrire le bien sur la Liste du patrimoine en péril. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Great Barrier Reef is an important World natural heritage which has received increasing attention of the whole world. China noted that the report of the Advisory Bodies highlighted that there was ascertained danger to the OUV of this property. And the state of conservation arose concerns. The related Draft Decision demanded effective actions of the State Party in order to better conserve this common wealth of humankind.

China has listened very carefully to the views of members and noted that many members agreed to offer more time to the State Party for further carrying out protection work. We also noted that some member States stressed the importance of respecting the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies. We support the emerging consensus of this Committee. It is also our hope that the State Party will attach a greater importance to the conservation and be committed to a science-based approach, adopt timely measures for conservation and recovery so as to avoid negative impacts on the OUV of this property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chairperson. It is quite clear following this debate that climate change is a highly important, relevant issue and any coral reef in the world is being affected by human activities. We are very grateful to the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre that have been attracting our attention since 2012 and calling for action on this issue. We are very pained to see the scientific data concerning the situation of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia that is really suffering. This is painful for Australia, for Guatemala for the whole world and should be for the international community. This is an urgent issue.

We also recognise and thank the State Party for the efforts made in terms of conservation of this site. We also hear all the arguments and commitments that have been put forward and we agree that a Reactive Monitoring mission is, of course, a highly important moment because of the results that this provides to the State Party and the international community at large.

Guatemala is a State Party to the Convention and is highly sensitive and is being affected badly by climate change, not only in terms of biodiversity but also other climate effects that are affecting the entire world. This is why we would like to thank the Advisory Bodies for their recommendations and we highly support the draft amendment which highlights the effort made by the State Party. We also call on the State Party to make greater effort in terms of communication and dialogue with local communities. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thailand believes that Australia has made tremendous efforts to conserve and protect the Great Barrier Reef. We should recognise the efforts that have been made by Australia to continue in this positive direction. We believe that more time should be given to Australia to continue making its progress and we would like to support the emerging consensus in support of the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We are also very happy with the emerging consensus which is very wise on our part. But I just wanted to also stress one point. This issue was unnecessarily politicised and unfair pressure was put on the Chair based on fallacies, including in the media, and we absolutely reject that, we oppose it. It is contrary to the spirit of the Convention. It is contrary to the global multilateral system we want to build. And therefore, we wanted to put on record the unfair, unjust and false statements that we saw in some media quarters regarding the Chair on this issue, but we should reject it completely. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, as requested by several Committee members, I give the floor to Australia to answer questions.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and may I thank you for the constructive and respectful way you have led this meeting, and for the constructive and respectful relationship between Australia and China in the World Heritage Committee over many years. Every Australian is heavily invested in the protection of our Great Barrier Reef.

In response to questions by members, I draw your attention to our updated Reef 2050 Plan. It shows where things are going well and where they can be improved. The Plan is a 35-year roadmap that uses science to drive investments in the health and resilience of the Reef. It is underpinned by more than 3 billion dollars and Australia is already taking action on the recommendations of the Draft Decision, including building resilience and reducing the pressures from poor water quality, illegal fishing and coral eating starfish. Investing almost 1 billion dollars in our water quality improvement plan, using world leading science including 150 million dollars for the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Programme, and reducing global emissions through our Paris Agreement commitments where we are meeting and beating our targets.

We have met all our reporting commitments and either fulfilled or made significant progress towards every Committee recommendation since 2012. The first five years of the reef 2050 plan are delivering results. Actions to combat the impact of global climate change on the Reef are front and centre of our Plan. On water quality, we are over halfway towards our sediment target and almost halfway to our dissolved inorganic nitrogen target.

The Draft Decision to immediately in Danger List the Reef, before the Committee has finalized its Climate Policy, makes no sense. Delegates we ask only two things: time for experts to see first-hand our commitment to the Reef, its present condition, and our management. And for the final Climate Policy to provide a consistent framework for addressing the impacts of climate change on all World Heritage properties.

Put simply, without a site visit, no Desired state of conservation, no Corrective Measures and the absence of an agreed Climate Policy, an immediate in Danger listing will only harm the Reef, not protect it. Australia believes our modest amendments to the Draft Decision will maintain respect for the technical advice while also encouraging the hard-working local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on this global icon.

May I sincerely thank the esteemed delegates for recognising Australia's commitment to protecting the Great Barrier Reef and hope that we can reach consensus.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your response. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished delegates of Russia and Ethiopia and others for your support to the true multilateralism and to me as Chairperson. Thank you. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway may also join the emerging consensus, but given that, we could propose some amendments in the text to the amendment proposed by the State Parties. Are we going to go through the amendment by Bahrain and the other countries and then we get back to our amendment?

Chairperson:

Just wait for a moment. I give the floor to IUCN first then we go to the text. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and perhaps, with your permission, I think the World Heritage Centre may wish to make remarks after IUCN. I would just like to respond to four of the points that have been raised in the debate.

Firstly, thanks to all of the members of the Committee and also to the State Party of Australia for all of the comments raised. I think the first comment is just to stress that the advice that we are giving to the Committee is based on really unprecedented information which we summarised in our opening presentation. But, perhaps to comment on the point that was raised about the integrity of the Great Barrier Reef, if I just relate back the assessment of the 2019 Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report which stated: '*Whilst the property's Outstanding Universal Value remains whole and intact, its integrity is challenged and it is deteriorating*', and this is a 2019 report. So, I think it is clear that we have very clear evidence on which we are working to make the recommendations to the Committee.

And secondly, to comment on the criteria for in danger listing. We make our recommendations within the criteria that you provide in the *Operational Guidelines*. I think it is firstly clear those criteria and the existing climate change policy of the World Heritage Convention expect that sites that demonstrate the changing condition that we are seeing would be recommended for the Danger List. So, the criteria are there. But I also think in relation to climate change it is important to underscore that the analysis and the decision do recognise the need for international action, and also the need for national action and for site-level action that is not just geared at the threat of climate change, but is geared at all the other threats that reduce the resilience, in this case of the Great Barrier Reef, to climate change. And the most significant of those are the questions surrounding water quality.

And thirdly, Mr. Chair, I would like to respond to the comments from Nigeria, but also more broadly on the Reactive Monitoring mission. As you know, this had been a recommendation in the Draft Decision to engage in a Monitoring mission. Speaking both personally and for IUCN as a whole, we have been extremely constructively engaged with Australia in a very collegiate and very rigorously technical dialogue around the Great Barrier Reef for a decade and much longer. So, please, be in no doubt that we are fully committed to the technical process and the opportunities for dialogue that a mission would provide. We obviously fully respect every decision that this World Heritage Committee takes. We will be delighted to engage in the mission that is recommended.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, I would like to just address perhaps one point which is also relevant to the amended Decision, which is the question of time. We had not hoped to be in this situation at this Committee, Mr. Chair, since the last significant reflection by the Committee. But we have seen, perhaps, most dramatically through the series of major bleaching events, a much greater deterioration in the Great Barrier Reef and its prospects than we had hoped for. If I just again could quote words from the Great Barrier Reef Outlook 2019 Report of the Australian government, it said then: '*The window of opportunity to influence the reefs [...]*

Chairperson:

You are running out of time.

IUCN:

I am just closing, just concluding. '*The window of opportunity to influence the reefs long-term future is now*'. And I would suggest the Committee reflects on the timetable for its further consideration of this property when it considers the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do believe the World Heritage Centre may wish to comment if there is the opportunity. Thank you.

Chairperson:

The World Heritage Centre, you have the floor for a very brief response.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just very briefly want to support IUCN and the comment regarding the timetable. The distinguished members of the World heritage Committee did indicate indeed that the situation is very serious and very urgent. And just to remind also that over 60,000 local communities and indigenous communities are dependent for their livelihoods on the Great Barrier Reef. A short timetable might also reduce the uncertainty for the many people that are dependent on the Reef. In the interest of time, Mr. Chair, I will leave it with that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.90 concerning this property, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments and the Draft Decision that she has received. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members and as well supported by a number of Committee members during their interventions. If you look at the amendment, we have no changes proposed under paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I suggest that we approve the text paragraph by paragraph. So, paragraphs from 1 to 6 with no revision. Do you adopt them? Okay, they are adopted. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 7 is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the deletion? It is accepted and approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 8 is also proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

There are no modifications proposed in the original paragraph 9, new paragraph 7.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8 reads: 'Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission centred around ensuring that the revised Reef 2050 Plan addresses the threat posed to the property by climate change and determines a pathway for accelerated actions in other areas affecting the conservation of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision? There are no objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no changes proposed for original paragraph 11, new paragraph 9.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

And the final paragraph, new paragraph 10 reads: 'Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This was the proposed amendment that Norway would like to add. We would actually like to keep the dates that we have in the Draft Decision based on the concerns raised by IUCN, and also, to our understanding, the State Party was only requesting a modest amendment and the State Party is also saying that the Reef 2050 Plan has everything under control. We would think that would be doable within a year and not two years. Also, we would have liked a letter brought to attention by the Queensland Deputy Premier to the Prime Minister who agrees on this pathway, so this is the Federal government. We would strongly recommend that these dates are being kept. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision? China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Secretariat and IUCN just read, the text from the Australian government said very clearly the window of action is now. So, in this case, we support the Norwegian Delegation's amendment, we would like to keep 45th session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any objections to Norway's proposal? I see no objection.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, I apologize for interrupting. I just did not read the last part of the paragraph. It was my mistake. Just for the diligence if I may read the last part with the maybe proposed amendment by Norway and China?

Chairperson:

Okay, please.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 10 reads: 'Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage committee at its 45th session, with a view to considering, in case of confirmation of the ascertained or potential danger to its OUV, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.' Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. I think the last part is pre-emptive, so I want to suggest deletion of the last statement so that we can stop at 'session'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

I want to echo the previous speaker. We should not put conditions here, as we discussed in previous decisions. We should not put on a provision to be put in the List of World Heritage in Danger. We should delete that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We support Nigeria in deleting the last part of the sentence from the bit 'with a view to considering' and the last part. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We also support Nigeria and I think Hungary's suggestion that we do not prejudge any punitive measures and therefore being consistent with what we decided in other decisions not to include the last part judging. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. We understand that the proposal by Norway is accepted and this I think would be the only modification. We had supported the amendment as it was. If we had consensus on the Norway's proposal and we are not changing anything else, we will agree with the consensus with that slight modification which I think has been accepted.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. My Delegation would like also to join other members of the Committee in supporting the amendment. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, would you like to join the consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, we will join the consensus.

Chairperson:

Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Now, the discussion is whether to keep the final part of this paragraph or not and I believe there was a consensus for the date of the state of conservation report.

Chairperson:

Yes, do you agree with the date? It is agreed with the date. Do you agree with the deletion of the last part? Okay, it is agreed. So, for paragraph 10, are there any other comments or objections? There are none. It is approved. Dear Committee members now we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.90 adopted as amended ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. WWF Australia you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-WWF:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I make this statement on behalf of WWF and also the Australian Marine Conservation Society and Earth Justice.

The Great Barrier Reef is Australia's iconic natural wonder of great cultural significance to first nations people and a part of our national identity, loved and revered around the world. The Draft Decision by UNESCO's World Heritage Centre to place the Great Barrier Reef on the List of World Heritage in Danger was based on the best available science from Australian and Queensland government reports. It was a recommendation supported by leading reef scientists all around the world and millions of Australians in our three organisations. Regrettably the Decision made by the Committee today delays action by one year. It also removes the consideration of in danger listing.

Despite the delay, the Australian government's first action must be to develop a plan aligned with limiting global warming to 1.5° because that will give the reef a chance. And the Australian and Queensland governments need to step up efforts to reduce agricultural pollution and increase protection for the reefs threatened wildlife. When the committee next considers the Great Barrier Reef in 2022, we encourage you to put science before politics, to put conservation and protection of the world's shared heritage foremost, and to uphold the spirit and letter of the Convention. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Friends of Fertö Lake for a one-minute intervention.

Observer- Friends of Fertö Lake:

Thank you very much. Dear Chairperson and delegates, Committee members and Observers, I would like to support WWF and I would like to highlight various elements said by different Committee members during this meeting. Acting about mitigating and adopting to the challenges of climate change is our joint responsibility as said today. Inscribing an area on the List of in Danger sites shall not be seen as a punishment, but an opportunity to mobilise more resources and public attention was also said today. Politics, including untransparent lobbying, shall not overshadow the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Listing the Great Barrier Reef as an in Danger World Heritage site would have helped to increase public attention to climate change and its terrible impact on our natural heritage even beyond the Reef.

Taking the above into account as a representative of the civil society sector interested in tackling the intertwined challenge of biodiversity loss and climate change, it is a great sadness to hear this Decision of the Committee today which is a missed opportunity to increase wider public awareness on the global impact of climate change. However, I am happy to hear that the Committee members are fully recognising climate change as a threat to our World Heritage sites.

Therefore, I sincerely call the signatories of the World Heritage Convention or at least the World Heritage Committee to issue a joint statement to stop further deterioration of World Heritage sites, including increasing artificial cover versus natural and semi-natural habitats through buildings and roads. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Sorry, I have to interrupt you because of the time constraints. Thank you for comment. Now, let us proceed. For the next property to be discussed, the Sundarbans, Bangladesh, we have received a request from two Committee members. I would like therefore to first give the floor to the Delegation of Egypt to present to the Committee the reason why it made such a request. It will be followed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. But before giving the floor to his excellency, the Egyptian honourable delegate, let me share the joy of celebrations on your National Day. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you. Actually, on behalf of His Excellency the Ambassador, we would like to thank you so much for your greetings and also for giving us the floor in order to present this site. We have actually requested to open discussion on this Agenda Item in order to allow the Committee to take an informed and objective decision on the state of conservation.

We would like to convey first our appreciation to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for the documents they presented for the Committee's consideration. We note that in their joint analysis, the Secretariat and the Advisory Body have mentioned several proactive actions and measures taken by the State Party for the protection and conservation of the property which has ensured that the OUV remained, including its hydrological and ecological process, as well as its biodiversity. This assessment regarding the state of the property is particularly significant considering the fact that this site was recommended in 2019 to the Committee for inscription on the in Danger List. The Committee at that time took the right decision not to put the property on the in Danger List. Six months later, in December 2019, when the Reactive Monitoring mission took place, not only the mission did not find the property in danger rather it came out with the assessment that the OUV remains. This assessment has also confirmed the continued efforts and commitment of the State Party for the preservation of the OUV of the heritage property.

Bangladesh has also undertaken to conduct the Strategic Environmental Assessments for the south-west region of the country in compliance with the Decision of the Committee and it is expected to be completed by next month, in fact, Mr. Chair within a few weeks. There are several other measures to enhance protection of the property's OUV, such as constant patrolling and also in conservation: increased fresh water flows into the property and to establish a long-term ecological monitoring system in view of building climate resilience.

Most importantly, Bangladesh has been taking measures to eliminate risks of negative impacts from large-scale industrial and infrastructural projects in the vicinity. However, while there is an appreciation for Bangladesh positive and proactive measures which have created positive impact on the OUV of the property, the concerns expressed

with regard to infrastructure and industrial developments appear for us to be exaggerated and not consistent with the mitigating and protecting measures already put in place for those projects.

Again, the State Party here had been asked to incorporate the recommendations of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission into the Strategic Environmental Assessment which is about to be completed, as I have just mentioned, within a few weeks. Understandably, there will be no time for the State Party to implement the Decision if it is taken as it has been drafted. And this is why we have proposed some amendments. These amendments at the end reflect the positive assessment that was made by IUCN and the Secretariat in a better way. I thank you Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I give the floor to the Delegation of the Russian Federation. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chairman, thank you. Since Bangladesh is a frontline country to climate change impacts and challenges, we commend Bangladesh for its proactive measures plans and strategies to address these challenges. We also commend the State Party for having taken several initiatives and actions in line with the previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee for the protection and conservation of the heritage property. We welcome the finalisation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the southwest region of the country and expect it to be completed by August 2021 despite the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic. We appreciate the State Party for having undertaken this project as per the Decision of the Committee, although it is not required under their national legislation.

We have also noted some concerns expressed by the Secretariat and the Advisory Body concerning development of three power plants in the vicinity of the property which they consider having potential to threaten the OUV of the property. The explanations provided by the State Party in their state of conservation report and in response to the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission, we believe, should assuage any concern the Committee members might have. We believe these commendable actions of the State Party need to be recognised and duly reflected in this Committee's decision. We need to strike a balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability. The State Party which has taken commendable effort for the protection of the property needs to be encouraged and not threatened with danger listing.

The amendment proposal put forward by our Delegation along with the Delegations of Egypt, China, Kirgizstan, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and several other countries has been tabled with the view to bringing consistency between the situation on the ground and the decision we take. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to invite Mr. Guy Debonnet and IUCN to respond to this comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Committee, since its 38th session in 2014, has consistently raised concerns on the state of conservation of this property due to the increasing large-scale industrial developments around it. Including the construction of several coal-fired power plants, the development of the Mongla Port, as well as the resulting increased traffic and dredging of the Pashur river.

At the 43rd session, in 2019, the Centre and IUCN recommended for the site to be inscribed in the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee did not follow this recommendation, but requested the State Party to invite a new Reactive Monitoring mission. That mission was conducted in December 2019 and concluded that while the property's OUV remains present, the property continues to be threatened by possible impacts from large-scale industrial developments. These impacts could cumulatively affect the OUV if no further measures are taken based on a comprehensive impact assessment.

In the Committee's Decision 41 COM 7B.25, the Committee had requested the State Party not to proceed with any large-scale industrial or infrastructural developments before a Strategic Environmental Assessment was completed as per Committee's request. While the State Party has not given approval for any new large-scale developments, the ongoing developments were not halted, as was requested by the Committee. The examples are the three coal-fired power plants, as well as the ongoing expansion of the Mongla Port which is resulting in increased need for dredging and further increased traffic on the Pashur River.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment which is currently underway and supposed to be finalised this year, as mentioned by the distinguished delegates of Russia, will be a crucial instrument to inform future decision-making. It should also look into the cumulative impacts of existing and future large-scale development. And it is crucial to ensure that only those developments which are not negatively impacting the OUV of the property will be authorized.

Therefore, it is recommended that the World Heritage Committee review at the next session, if the SEA is completed and if mechanisms are in place, to ensure that the Strategic Environmental Assessment is informing the decision-

making on new large-scale industrial projects and avoid future further impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. IUCN also would like to provide some comments thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN please be concise.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will not repeat the information that has just been presented by the World Heritage Centre, but simply to emphasize the importance of completing the Strategic Environmental Assessment. That is the way to assess the impacts of all developments before proceeding those of our individual and cumulative impacts. Specifically regarding OUV, we know that the Sundarbans is recognised as being one of the world's largest deltas supporting mangrove ecosystems maintained by natural sedimentation, so the OUV is directly linked and potentially threatened by the ongoing expansion of the Mongla Port, but in particular the resulting increase of shipping and related dredging that can create the likelihood of impacts on sediments, create water and noise pollution and also create the risk of shipping related incidents. Dredging and shipping is one of the important issues, Mr. Chair, that needs to be addressed in the SEA and that is also what has been previously requested by the Committee and recommended in the 2019 mission.

In relation to the biodiversity values recognised under criterion (x), this is an area that supports exceptional biodiversity including endangered species. There are a number of changes that are impacting those values, including through increased salinity due to a reduction in fresh water flow from the Ganges and salt water intrusion. This is an additional reason why all of the threats to the property should be addressed to ensure that it maintains its resilience. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. I see there are representatives asking for the floor. Dear Committee members, I want to stress once again, due to the time constraints without any intention to prevent you from taking the floor, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief on your general comments, so that we could move quickly to consider the Draft Decision. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for the analysis and conclusion of the state of conservation report submitted by Bangladesh. We commend the State Party for the actions taken in compliance with the earlier decisions of the Committee, particularly with regard to the protection and conservation of the heritage site. We commend the State Party for their close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other relevant stakeholders to complement its efforts to strengthen management of the property, their commitment to carry out the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the southwest region of Bangladesh and implement other Committee's decisions.

Bangladesh is a developing country. It is also one of the most climate vulnerable countries. We are aware of the challenges of a developing nation like Bangladesh to provide a decent living condition for its 160 million plus population in a relatively small land area. To achieve sustainable growth, the country has the responsibility to provide its citizens affordable and reliable energy. In doing so, Bangladesh deserves our appreciation for carrying out economic development while pursuing environmental sustainability.

We believe these commendable actions of the State Party need to be recognised and duly reflected in this Committee's decision. We need to strike a balance between economic growth and heritage preservation, especially the infrastructure projects that are aligned with the SDGs to provide the basic needs for humankind, such as electricity, as was discussed in Baku, in 2019, and the Committee agreed upon not to inscribe it in the in Danger List.

The amendment proposal put forward by our Delegation along with the Delegations of Egypt, the Russian Federation, China, Kyrgyzstan and Thailand has been tabled with a view to bring consistency between the situation on the ground and the decision we take. We hope that the Committee will agree with our amendment proposal, so that we can have a decision as amended. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Oman Delegation noted and welcomed the progress and positive achievement of the State Party to enhance protection of the property's OUV through the implementation of various measures including

new initiatives, strengthened patrolling and species conservation, steps taken to increase fresh water flows into the property, and to establish a long-term ecological monitoring system in view of building climate change resilience. The Delegation also appreciated the positive coordination between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to strengthen proactive planning for better management of the property and further requests the State Party to make efforts to implement all the other recommendations made by the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission, and previous Committee's decisions.

Taking into consideration the positive achievements and great commitments of the State Party to enhance the protection of the OUV, the Oman's Delegation supports the recommendation listed in the amended Draft Decision to request the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022 an updated report on the state of conservation of the property. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is another case in which the question of balance between conservation and development comes into discussion. We have, on the one hand, an extraordinary mangrove forest that needs to be preserved in its beauty and biodiversity, and on the other, a densely populated low-income country that needs to find a path towards economic and social progress. Conservation and development should not be incompatible, conservation enhances development and development provides resources for conservation. We must find the adequate synergy between conservation and development. As we have said before, this is an issue that must be discussed in further depth by the Committee.

We would not favour in danger listing of this site at this time and we support the amendment presented by Egypt and other Delegations. Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. Let me also join you in first congratulating our brothers and sisters from Egypt for their National Day. Mr. Chair, we support fully the proposal and the amendments presented by Egypt and supported by many Delegations. And we would like to be included as co-sponsors of these amendments. Bangladesh is a country that is facing a triple challenge: challenge of alleviating poverty for its more than 160 million people; the challenge of climate change which is affecting it particularly and the challenge of heritage conservation. We applaud this developing country's effort to balance and manage these three challenges and it should be encouraged and not be punished for undertaking in such a remarkable way, and addressing in such a remarkable way, the three challenges.

The report itself clearly indicates that the OUV of the sites is maintained. The country has shown willingness and a desire to cooperate with the experts and has invited a mission which itself asserted the OUV has not been affected. Therefore, we call upon the Committee to actually applaud the efforts of the government of Bangladesh, and we urge the experts to understand that countries have to feed their people and development projects cannot be stopped because, at the end of the day, the people matter most. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The Sundarbans is the largest continuous mangrove ecosystem in the world and has contributed greatly to combating against climate change. As one of the most densely populated countries in the world, Bangladesh has made a tremendous effort in conserving this natural heritage while balancing its development. I would just like to assure you, dear colleagues, that among OECD member States there are on average 38 people per square kilometre of land area but this figure in Bangladesh is 1240.

My Delegation has got a vivid memory that during the 43rd session of the Committee, the distinguished representative of Bangladesh showed a photo of the rivers on the screen and said: '*Those white lines going down the green pages you call them rivers we call them mothers, because Bangladesh is nourished by rivers*'. The commitment of the State Party to conserve this property has been well reflected in not only their words, but also their solid actions. Therefore, to be very brief, it is important to acknowledge the work conducted by the State Party and China joins the other Delegations in supporting the proposed amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the comment. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary welcomes the progress that has been made by Bangladesh between the last two Reactive Monitoring missions in 2016 and 2019 addressing the issues raised by the 2016 report, such as the progress made towards the completion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the southwest region which are considered as important steps towards the implementation of the previous decisions of the Committee. Hungary also welcomes the recent biodiversity conservation efforts of the State Party within the property which resulted in positive trends in the population of the Bengal tiger, one of the flagship species of the Sundarbans World Heritage site.

In light of the above, Hungary supports the amendment of the Draft Decision submitted by Egypt and other distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. We would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for their analysis of the State Party's report and for their interventions today. We also join that intervention that pointed out that Bangladesh still faces huge developmental challenges and the government is committed to eradicate poverty by 2030, the target date of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

The Kyrgyz Republic is pleased to cosponsor the amendment submitted by Egypt, the Russian Federation, China, Saudi Arabia and Thailand, and believes that the amendment represents a balanced approach to economic development while paying due regard to the environmental sustainability and adequate protection of the heritage property by the State Party. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair. Uganda is not comfortable with the way the Draft Decision is written whereas the State Party of Bangladesh has done quite well in most areas. The mixed feelings expressed by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre in paragraphs 3, 4, 8, 9 and 11 of the Draft Decision water down those milestones. In addition, Chair, paragraph 13 has been written with the predetermined position of placing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The submission of the state of conservation report by the State Party and its eventual review by the World Heritage Centre should not be delisting the property, but to give guidance on how the management of the property should be enhanced.

In view of the above, Chair, Uganda supports the amendments provided by Egypt, Russia, Saudi Arabia, China and Thailand. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Nigerian Delegation appreciates the efforts being made by Bangladesh, and like the other speakers have said, we know how conservation and development have to go hand in hand. We are co-joining other countries like Egypt to support the amendment put forward and we encourage Bangladesh to continue in their drive to see that this site is well maintained. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. In view of the time constraints, I wish to say that Thailand shares the views expressed by fellow Committee members regarding the efforts and commitment of the State Party of Bangladesh to conserve the world's largest mangrove forest ecosystem and many other endangered wildlife species depending on it. Thailand has always held the view that economic development and environmental sustainability can and should go together. Thailand, therefore, is pleased to support the amendment submitted by Egypt. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you for giving me the floor. Guatemala would simply like to bring out the importance that the biosystem has for mangrove. Because for its fragility, it is important for the conservation of marine coastal species and because it is effective in fighting the effect of climate change. For these reasons, Guatemala would like to congratulate IUCN and the State Party for the work they have done. Many thanks.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Bosnia Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine soutient la proposition de l'amendement. Vu ce que mes prédécesseurs ont dit, je n'ai rien à ajouter, sauf à encourager le Bangladesh à continuer dans ses efforts, qui sont importants pour le Bangladesh ainsi que pour l'écosystème au sens large. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I see no more questions in the comments. I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 70.91 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment submitted by a number of Committee members. I will just wait a second until it is shared on the screen, here it is. We have no changes proposed for paragraphs 1 and 2, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph, so for paragraphs 1 and 2, do you agree? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Notes with satisfaction the conclusion of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission that the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including its hydrological and ecological processes and its biodiversity, remains present'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision? Okay, approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Notes that possible impacts from large-scale industrial developments may result in a high risk for the property's OUV if no further measures are taken based on a comprehensive assessment of existing and possible future negative factors and pressures'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South-West region of Bangladesh should provide an adequate planning instrument for all future large-scale industrial development in the vicinity of the property', and the rest is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We might agree with some of the amendments, but we have a suggestion for a new wording if I may.

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Norway:

'Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the south-west region of Bangladesh should provide adequate planning instruments'[...]

Chairperson:

Can you speak slowly, so that the Rapporteur can take note.

The Delegation of Norway:

I will try to read slower. 'Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the south-west region of Bangladesh should provide an adequate planning instrument to ensure that all large-scale industrial development in the vicinity of the property will not adversely impact the OUV'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Australia would like to support the amendment of Norway. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur, is it okay now, have you tabled that?

Rapporteur:

Shall we read it out loud, Mr. Chair? Just to make sure.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South-West region of Bangladesh should provide an adequate planning instrument to ensure that for all future large-scale industrial development in the vicinity of the property will not adversely impact the OUV'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision? Norway, again, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Sorry we have a bit of a problem with the sound. Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, it is okay now.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe I did not express myself clearly enough, but it would remove the word 'future' it would be 'all large-scale industrial development'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you accept the revision? There are no objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications [...]

Chairperson:

Sorry, Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could we read this out loud another time because I think we did not well understand the point.

Chairperson:

Which paragraph?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

The word 'future'. 'Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South-West region of Bangladesh should provide an adequate planning instrument'. Because if we add the word 'future', it means that we are dealing with the retroactive law. Because the Strategic Environmental Assessment it would be ready by August 2021. So, I do not think it is suitable to put 'all the large-scale industrial development' and to delete the word 'future'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you Chair. This is also to support Russia. I would like to thank Norway for the amendment. However, we are not in agreement with inserting the term 'future'. The SEA is meant to have a vision for the project. We do not believe that the last amendment put forward by Norway is on it. And we can accept the term exactly as our amendments or in the first intervention before, but not the last one. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you. In short, we support what was said by Egypt and Russia that it should not be applicable retroactively and that it concerns only future projects. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We accept that the word 'future' is deleted. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. So, for this paragraph 5, are there any other comments? There is none, they are approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for original paragraphs 5, 6 and 7, new paragraphs 6, 7 and 8, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay. It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 9 reads: 'Also notes with satisfaction that the State Party has not given environmental clearance or permission for any large-scale industrial development adjacent to the property since the adoption of Decision 41 COM 7B.25'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

For the new paragraph 10, original paragraph 8, we have a minor modification: 'Further notes with satisfaction that 20 large-scale' and the rest of the paragraph continues as the original Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you approve? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 11: 'Noting that the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission report was made available only on 16 June 2021, further requests the State Party to make efforts to fully implement all the recommendations made by the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission and previous Committee decisions'.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We suggest deleting to 'make efforts' otherwise we are fine with this amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Australia supports the suggestion of Norway.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision, modification? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 12: 'Welcomes furthermore the efforts made by the State Party to advance the SEA for the South-West region, now scheduled for completion in August 2021, urges the State Party to ensure that the findings of the SEA form the basis for future decision making on development that may impact the OUV of the property, and requests moreover the State Party to submit the final SEA, including the Strategic Environmental Management Plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN and subsequent examination by the Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Yes, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 13: 'Also notes the ongoing expansion and dredging operations near Mongla Port would require additional maintenance dredging and are likely to increase traffic on the Pashur River, and also urges the State Party to ensure that no further decision is made for any new large-scale industrial and/or infrastructural development, which may influence the OUV of the property, until the SEA for the South-West region of Bangladesh is completed'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway would agree with some of the amendments but we would like to keep some parts of the old wording. Would you like me to read out the sentence?

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

I start from 'And urges the State Party to ensure that no further decision is made for any new large-scale industrial or infrastructural development' — and we would like to keep — 'which may influence the OUV of the property, including further development of Mongla Port or any other development that might further increase traffic on the Pashur River until the SEA for the south-west region of Bangladesh is completed'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Australia again supports the addition suggested by Norway.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. We regret, we do not agree with the last addition by Norway and the main reason is that we do not believe that it would be useful to specify in advance what the SEA will have as results. So, we prefer to have the text as amended. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We support the comments by Egypt. This inclusion of the last part, as suggested by Norway, prejudices what the SEA would be and presupposes that these development projects, it actually implies, may affect the OUV. It would be incorrect if it stated clearly that anything that influences the OUV of the property should stop until such time, as the SEA is conducted. That should suffice and we should not prejudice anything.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chair. We also support Egypt and Ethiopia. We said before that we should not prejudice. So, we would like to maintain the previous sentence, the previous amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. We support what the distinguished representative of Egypt suggested. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Saudi Arabia, please. Your microphone is off we cannot hear your voice. It should be unmuted. No sound still, I will come back to you. China, first, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Chair. We support the text on the screen. So, we stick to the previous original amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Saudi Arabia, if it is okay with you.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

We support Egypt, Ethiopia, Oman, Russia and China. We do not want to prejudice and this is a principle that we have agreed upon in previous decisions. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair. We support Egypt's proposal to retain the paragraph in the sentence. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

We support Egypt, Ethiopia and others to leave the original text as it was.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Now, Norway, please, would you like to join the consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We see that we are a minority, so we will join the consensus. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Good. Are there any other comments on this paragraph? There are no more. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New Paragraph 14: 'Expresses satisfaction on the progress made by the State Party in addressing issues raised by the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission over the construction of the Rampal power plant, but notes with concern that the development of the large-scale industrial projects which could potentially impact the property's OUV in the absence of the SEA continues to advance'.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving us the floor again. We can agree with some parts of this wording, but we would like to suggest an addition or a change at the end. If I could read out: 'But notes with concern that the development of the large-scale industrial projects which could potentially impact the property's OUV should not proceed before completion of an SEA in line with Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Again, Australia would like to support the amendment suggested by Norway.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We voice our support to this addition as well.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any objections to this suggestion? Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I have failed to read the amendment on the screen, I do not know where it is exactly. If Norway can just say it again or the Rapporteur can say it again, please?

Chairperson:

It is coming. Norway, please, read it again.

The Delegation of Norway:

Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair. I start from 'But notes with concern that the development of the large-scale industrial projects which could potentially impact the property's OUV should not proceed before completion of a SEA in line with paragraph 118 bis in the Operational Guidelines'. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Egypt is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. If you can just give us one minute, I would be thankful.

Chairperson:

Yes. Maybe we will continue and we come back to it. Okay, go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Next paragraph which is the original paragraph 12 of the Draft Decision is proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this deletion? It is accepted. Now, we come back to that paragraph. Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. It is fine with us and we thank Norway for this amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other objection or comments? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

I am not sure I understand Chair the last part of the sentence as amended by Norway. We note with concerned that development projects should not proceed, that is the meaning of the sentence, but English is not my first language so maybe someone who speaks better English can enlighten us. 'We note with concern that it should not proceed'.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, perhaps I could read it out, just to help.

Chairperson:

Okay, you can read it out.

Rapporteur:

Okay. I am just reading the second half of the sentence: 'But notes with concern that the development of the large-scale industrial projects which could potentially impact the property's OUV should not proceed before the completion of the SEA in line with Paragraph 118 bis of the *Operational Guidelines*'.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

If it is okay for the English speakers, it is okay for me.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Okay, so can we approve it? Okay, it is approved. Ms. Rapporteur, please, go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Apologies. New paragraph 15: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay it is approved. Dear Committee members, now we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.91 adopted as amended ^[gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Bangladesh, please.

The Delegation of Bangladesh:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we take the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate the government of China for an excellent organisation of the session and the excellent manner that yourself, Mr. Chair, have led the deliberation of the session. I would also like to thank and express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Delegations of Egypt, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, China, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Uganda, Nigeria, South Africa and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as the Delegations of Guatemala and Norway for the support extended to the amended text.

I would like to reiterate our commitment to safeguard the OUV of the most important natural heritage that we have, the Sundarbans. It is not only our commitment, as we consider the property as a national pride, we would like to also assure the members of the Committee with regard to our commitment to continue to engage with the Advisory Body and the Secretariat in maintaining the OUV of the property and enhancing our cooperation and collaboration for the conservation of the heritage property itself.

On behalf of the government of Bangladesh, on our personal behalf, I would like to, again, thank the Committee and we wish to continue our strong partnership with the Committee, with the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler for some clarifications. Before I give the floor to Dr Rössler, the National Committee for Saving the Sundarbans you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer- National Committee for Saving the Sundarbans:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The National Committee for Saving the Sundarbans would like to remind the committee that the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the properties' OUV continues to be threatened by possible impacts from large-scale industrial development. This includes the power plants at Rampal, Kalapara and Patuakhali.

Decision 41 COM 7B.5 recalled ensuring that any large-scale industrial and or infrastructure developments will not be allowed to proceed before the SEA has been completed. This SEA must be done with scientific integrity and full participation, which is currently not happening, and must be reviewed by the Committee at its 45th session. When an OUV is found threatened, the property must be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Ecological degradation of the site by large-scale industries will create a vicious cycle for Bangladesh facing climate change that must not be allowed to take hold. I thank you for your attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. World Heritage watch you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We welcome and fully support the statement of the national coalition for saving the Sundarbans. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler for some clarification.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I would like to raise two points. One concerns this debate on sustainable development and the balance with the Outstanding Universal Value and other developments at these sites, and I refer to the general debate which was raised by some of the Committee members. I find this very important and I would like to underline that in 2015, the General Assembly adopted the Policy on Sustainable Development and World Heritage, and in this case, as the ambassador of Bangladesh knows very well, we did something which really, I think is a very good way forward. We did a master class together with the authorities of Bangladesh, our office in

Dhaka, and the World Heritage Centre team. I participated myself and I think this master class on sustainable development looked into the way forward for the World Heritage sites, but also for the country overall in this regard. We obtained extrabudgetary funding for this. So, I would like to say this because it is a good model to move forward on this debate.

The second point I would like to raise concerns the discussions we had at the beginning of our session today. I would like to underline that non-Committee members cannot make amendments to Draft Decisions, this can be only done by members of the World Heritage Committee. Statements made by Observers will be reflected in the Summary Records, there is no way we would make footnotes or anything else to Draft Decisions. Now, I would like to encourage Observers, Observer-Delegations, NGOs, etc. to also submit their statements to the World Heritage Centre, so that we have an accurate reflection in our Summary Records. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, let us proceed. I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the mixed properties located in the Africa Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. We have the following sites: N°71, Ennedi Massif: Natural and Cultural Landscape (Chad); n° 72, Cliff of Bandiagara (Land of the Dogons) (Mali); n° 170, Maloti-Drakensberg Park (Lesotho, South Africa); and n° 171, Ngorongoro Conservation Area (United Republic of Tanzania). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on the state of the conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have just adopted the Decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the mixed properties located in the Arab States Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. We have: n°73, The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq) and n°74, Wadi Rum Protected Area (Jordan). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the decisions read out adopted ^[gavel]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties. Turkey, please you have the floor. Excellency, your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of Turkey:

Yes.

Chairperson:

It is all right, okay now.

The Delegation of Turkey:

Mr. Chair, thank you very much again. Turkey disassociates itself from two paragraphs of the Decision adopted in the absence of relevant riparian countries entitled The Ahwar of Southern Iraq. We have strong reservations for paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Decision. These two paragraphs are unacceptable for Turkey, as they entail directly the sovereign rights of my country. We regret that the Decision has been drafted without taking into account the concerns and comments of relevant riparian States Parties. The involvement of third parties without inaccurate data and knowledge in ongoing cooperation process between the riparian countries is counterproductive and misleading. The adoption of the Decision is an apparent proof of politicisation which is regretful. Therefore, paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Decision are null and void for Turkey. Regardless of this Decision, Turkey will continue to closely cooperate with Iraq also for the protection of the marshlands. We strongly urge the Secretariat to clearly reflect our position in the Summary Records and put a footnote on the Decision about Turkey's disassociation from paragraphs 6 and 7. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. The Secretariat will take note of what you said just now. Now, Iraq, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Iraq:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving Iraq the floor for the first time. I would like to congratulate China for hosting this World Heritage Committee meeting. We would also like to express our thanks to the World Heritage Centre and the advisory mission for their efforts and their concern about The Ahwar of Southern Iraq property.

Mr. Chair, I would like to tell you that Iraq supports the Decision 44 COM 7B.73, but with a reservation about what was stated in paragraph 7b. Because Iraq is a downstream country and is affected by the fluctuations of water flowing from the upstream countries. So, there is a need to amend this paragraph. Finally, I would like to clarify that one of Iraq's priorities is to maintain the property of Ahwar and its ecosystem. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Your remarks have been noted. Now, Iran, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Iran:

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for allowing me to take the floor. First of all, I would like to recall that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been faithful to all the UNESCO Conventions it is party to, and my government is committed to fulfilling its duties in this regard. Although the Resolution on The Ahwar of Southern Iraq has been adopted by the esteemed members of the Committee, I would like to briefly draw your attention to the following points. Given the considerable work carried out by IUCN, as well as the complexity of the situation in the region, it would be appropriate for Iran to have also been informed, prior to the submission of the report, on the status of the property to the World Heritage Centre.

Secondly, as this issue is very important in bilateral relations and regional cooperation, it was necessary to discuss the report and the draft resolution in order to properly clarify the various aspects of the situation of the property.

Thirdly, Iran has already informed the Committee, as well as the Director of the World Heritage Centre, of its position on the report and items 6 and 7 of the Draft Resolution and requests the Committee that this position be reflected in the Summary Records of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Your remarks have been noted. Now, World Heritage Watch you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Representing Save the Tigris, a coalition of civil society organisations from nine countries concerned with the protection of The Ahwar of Southern Iraq, we would like to comment on the current Draft Decision. On 12 of May 2021, the World Heritage Centre received two notes from the State Party of Turkey relevant for The Ahwar. They included clarifications regarding recent transboundary water management between Iraq and Turkey, as well as notes on the alterations of the Iraqi marshes over time. We call on the World Heritage Committee to make these notes publicly available for civil society. We support the call to suspend work on the whole dam as soon as possible.

The State Party of Iraq has relaunched this damn project without adequate transparency or consultations. We welcome the request of the World Heritage Centre to request the States Parties of Iran, Iraq and Turkey to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. we believe the World Heritage Centre should request for this Assessment to focus specifically on existing and planned dams and the Tigris-Euphrates Basin. We would recommend the World Heritage Centre to request the State Party of Iraq to take measures to further strengthen law enforcement in the Marshes in order to break biodiversity. Particularly [...]

Chairperson:

Sorry to interrupt you. It is time. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler for some clarifications.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I wish to thank the Observer-Delegations of Iraq, Iran and Turkey for their comments. These will be duly reflected in the Summary Records of the session. I think in the chat you have also received the email to which you can address any of your statements. As explained before, changes to Draft Decisions or to the Decisions just adopted by the World Heritage Committee cannot be done by Observer States. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, I suggest that we have a ten minutes' technical break.

Let us proceed. I now invite Ms. Stefanie Grüssinger of the Europe and North America Unit of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to present the report on the state of conservation of the mixed property located in this region which has been open for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I will continue with the transboundary mixed World Heritage property natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region located in Albania and North Macedonia.

The state of conservation of the property natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region is being reviewed by the Committee since 2014, when the Committee considered in Decision 38 COM 7B.58 that planned large-scale infrastructure projects were likely to have a significant direct and indirect impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. Ascertained or potential danger to the property has been acknowledged by the Committee in 2016, in Decision 40 COM 7B.68, and in 2017, the Committee considered in Decision 41 COM 7B.34 that the overall state of conservation of the property is increasingly vulnerable and that if priority recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission of April 2017 were not implemented within a two-year time frame, so until 2019, the property may face potential danger in line with Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

In 2019, with the approved significant boundary modification to include the rest of Lake Ohrid located in Albania, the Committee requested in Decision 43 COM 8B.9 both States Parties to invite a joint World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission. And also in 2019, the Committee considered the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger in case of confirmation of danger to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in the aforementioned Decisions and in Decision 43 COM 7B.36.

The mission then took place in January 2020 and concluded that, although efforts have been made by both States Parties in order to address the recommendations and decisions of the Committee and previous missions' recommendations, such as the one of 2017, many of these recommendations have not been implemented. Several have only been partially or insufficiently implemented and many of them have not been addressed at all. And moreover, new threats have been identified during the mission.

The transboundary property continues to suffer from an accumulation of negative changes and uncoordinated developments which have occurred over the decades and which have led the property's integrity and authenticity to be vulnerable. Thus, in view of the Secretariat, ICOMOS and IUCN, the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

With your kind permission, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to propose to give the floor first to IUCN followed by ICOMOS, in order to provide further elaboration on the threats to the natural and cultural values. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for this presentation and now ICOMOS then IUCN. Please, be concise. You have the floor.

IUCN:

IUCN, very briefly Mr. Chair, recalls for the nature conservation values that the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that, whilst efforts have been made on matters such as improved wastewater treatment, the establishment of waste collection systems and control of invasive species, these are not yet addressing the threats that have been identified to the property's natural values, and as such, the hydrology and biodiversity of Lake Ohrid remain exposed across the entire lake ecosystem, including to the discharge of pollution to tourism-related pressures, to the impacts of uncontrolled urban development and the inappropriate exploitation of coastal zones. Mr. Chair, ICOMOS will continue on the cultural values.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. While welcoming the immediate actions in some areas made by both States Parties, ICOMOS, nevertheless, considers that the progress made has not been at all commensurate with the scope and extent of the many threats facing the OUV of the property, nor does it capture the urgency of the situation, or begin to halt the increasing degradation. ICOMOS considers that without a clear and agreed change of direction, the OUV of the property will not be sustained in the face of the rapidly progressing irreversible threats that it now is under. Halting and reversing the cumulative degradation will take considerable concerted efforts over a long-time span. To achieve this, we consider that a clearly defined strategic recovery plan is urgently needed with short, medium and longer-term actions, adequate resources, a transboundary approach, and a clear vision for the property. The Committee needs to be assured that a new direction is in place through a commitment to develop and deliver such a plan.

ICOMOS considers that inscription of the transboundary property on the List of World Heritage in danger is justified, in terms of the very high and extensive vulnerabilities that this property faces. But it also considers that the process

of in danger listing could help with the development of recovery structures that are so urgently needed. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. Dear Committee members, due to the time constraints, once again, I have to emphasise and also kindly ask you to be very brief on your general comments. Thank you. Now, Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear colleagues of the Committee, States Parties of Albania and North Macedonia, Norway would like to make this intervention simply to remind ourselves of the fact that this issue was widely discussed during our last Committee session in 2019. Despite other positive changes, the documents tell an alarmingly similar story to the one that we learned back then. And we are sorry to state that today, two years later, the OUV with its attributes is even further eroded and threatened.

Back then, the majority of the Committee granted the extra year that the States Parties asked for and within which they promised they would turn the negative development in another direction. Back then, Norway gave in for the consensus, of course, stating the following and I quote this is from 2019: *'Willingness to dialogue and collaboration will be essential taking into consideration the grave situation the World Heritage property has been facing for quite a long time. Therefore, in the future, we expect to see the following: two States Parties that collaborate on all levels and that represent the World Heritage property together, regardless of the challenges, taking into consideration the severe decay and the uncontrolled development of the property, we also expect to see two States Parties that have done and continue to do their utmost to ensure that the OUV is not further weakened'*.

Mr. President, we see no proof of such. We see no proof of the State Parties wishing to do their utmost for the unique and yet universal heritage. Finally, and therefore, we refer to the Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* and we support the original Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to support both the States Parties of North Macedonia and Albania and their pursuit to improve the legal processes and management structures of the site, as well as the demolition of unauthorized structures on the site itself. This outstanding Lake is a major European biodiversity hotspot, an ancient aquatic ecosystem.

Having said that, we remain concerned with the technical aspects presented by the Advisory Bodies which highlights numerous threats to the site of the Ohrid Region. The Lake has been facing pressures resulting from pollution, urbanisation, waste management issues and agriculture, alongside tourism having caused degradation of the water quality of the Lake as well as affecting the species found in it. The Advisory Bodies have noted other threats to the site since 1988 resulting from increased economic and demographic developments and excessive construction which continued to increase year on year in addition to four proposed infrastructure projects within the site.

An integrated conservation approach linking both culture and nature is urgent, and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required prior to developing a strategic recovery plan. It is our view that the Draft Decision presented appropriately reflects the comments aforementioned and therefore, we support the Draft Decision as is. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia commends the States Parties for their efforts in addressing the recommendations of previous Advisory and Reactive Monitoring missions to the property. We do, however, note the concerns of the Advisory Bodies about the state of conservation of the property, in particular in relation to inappropriate developments.

We urge the States Parties to fully implement all the recommendations of the 2019 Committee Decisions 43 COM 8B.9 and 43 COM 7B.36. We are pleased to see a recommendation in the Draft Decision that calls on the two States Parties with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to develop a Strategic Recovery Plan with an action plan that clearly sets out to find aims and outcomes to mitigate threats to the OUV of the property with a set of Corrective Measures. We consider that a joint planning approach is essential for the protection of the OUV of this transboundary property and urge the States Parties to prioritise developments of the strategic recovery plan. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, we would like to commend the States Parties who, in spite of serious adversities, such as a devastating earthquake in November 2019 and the pandemic of Covid-19, continued their efforts for the implementation of the recommendations stemming from corresponding World Heritage Committee Decisions and the Reactive Monitoring mission. Both countries commit to develop a detailed joint strategic recovery plan with an associated phased action plan that sets out clearly defined aims and outcomes to mitigate threats to the OUV with a set of Corrective Measures, including a time frame for the implementation and which would provide an overarching transboundary political and institutional framework for addressing identified threats facing the property.

This plan is supposed to be presented to the World Heritage Centre by February 2022. We recognise that there are still important aspects that require continued attention, in order to ensure that this exceptional site is duly preserved and protected. However, we believe that the proposal to include the property into the List of Heritage in Danger would be an untimely and counterproductive step.

In our view, the Committee would approve a fair decision if it encourages the States Parties in their commitment to implement the Corrective Measures recommended by the World Heritage Centre in the best possible way. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary welcomes the steps taken by North Macedonia and Albania to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region World Heritage site, by both countries, in particular their efforts to demolish illegal structures as well as their joint high-level commitment to developing the strategic recovery plan together with a phased action plan. Hungary highly appreciates the efforts made by both countries to ensure the legislative framework and to initiate the sanitation and rehabilitation of the Lake Ohrid basin water management system. It is also noted with satisfaction that North Macedonia suspended building permits between July 2019 and February 2020.

On this basis and in the view of the challenging circumstances limiting the implementation of the World Heritage Committee's previous decisions, including the earthquake in Albania at the end of 2019, Hungary supports the amendment of the Draft Decision submitted by Bosnia-Herzegovina, in order to allow sufficient time for the States Parties to implement their joint efforts to prevent the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. Aware of the need for stronger action since 2017, North Macedonia has made progress regarding the protection of the Ohrid Region and remains fully committed to doing so going forward. Since the property was extended to the Albanian part in 2019, Albania has improved its planning in line with its commitment in protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in conformity with its World Heritage status. Further, both countries have established transboundary coordination bodies at local and central levels which they have committed to improving and making it fit for purpose, as noted in the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission.

Having noted the progress achieved over the past two years, and under exceptionally difficult circumstances for both countries, we consider it necessary that the Ohrid Region should not be inscribed on the in Danger List. We support the amendment proposed by Bosnia to provide the States Parties with sufficient time to continue their work.

We note that both countries foster a cooperative and open relationship with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, which is commendable and an example of good cooperation. Therefore, we consider it necessary that North Macedonia and Albania be given more time to continue the good work in which they have embarked and acknowledged the progress and commitment they have demonstrated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

Thank you, Chair. I just want to stress that the Ohrid Region is a unique site in Southeast Europe with mixed property covering a large territory. It needs protection and it is very complicated to ensure its protection and management. There are a lot of challenges. We acknowledge that the States Parties have committed to turn to the international community to seek international assistance and expertise, whatever it needs. We, as my predecessors said, in the past two years, can note the progress achieved in the activity of the two States and what is very important is the cooperation between two States for the whole region and this exceptional site.

If we allow to forget all these efforts to put the site on the in Danger List, it is very much discouraging not only for the two States, but also for many other similar situations in which people, in which states, in which a region needs help, support and to be encouraged not to be forgotten. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Chair. At its 43rd session in 2019, the World Heritage Committee adopted such a negative modification of these limits and this property became transboundary which is the prerogative and the action of the two countries to protect this precious property. China congratulates them on the work that has been done. The protection of a transboundary property requires coordination between the two countries and the difficulties are necessarily greater.

China would wish to have more time given to both States to be able to coordinate and implement the Committee decisions, as well as the recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission, so as to properly protect this property.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Good afternoon and thank you very much. Guatemala would like to recognise the efforts that have already been carried out. We also would like to point out how urgent and necessary it is to protect this property. It has already been stated that it is under ever-increasing threats. We see that bringing together international effort could allow us to have positive impact on this mixed property. But for this, it is necessary to go on working together. We also note the reports from ICOMOS and IUCN.

We would therefore be in favour of the original Draft Decision, as noted by Norway, the subject has already been discussed. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to the World Heritage Centre.

Secrétariat :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je voulais simplement faire une remarque générale sur l'esprit du projet de décision qui a été soumis à l'attention des distingués membres du Comité, et peut-être aussi pour aller dans le sens des distingués représentants de la Russie et de l'Arabie saoudite. Le projet de décision qui est présenté non seulement répond à l'analyse factuelle, scientifique et technique faite par le Centre du patrimoine mondial et par les organismes consultatifs, mais il répond aussi à l'esprit de la Convention, et en particulier le paragraphe 177 des orientations des biens, pour lequel une éventuelle inscription sur la Liste en péril permet de donner un signal fort et encourager, accélérer la coopération et la coordination entre tous les États concernés par un bien. En ce qui concerne cette coopération, je souhaite rappeler à l'attention des distingués membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial l'excellente coopération qui s'est développée entre les deux États parties et le Centre du patrimoine mondial, et c'est bien sûr dans cet esprit que nous continuerons à travailler avec ces deux États parties. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

Thank you, Chair. I think it would be useful to give the floor to the representatives of the two countries, North Macedonia and Albania, to tell us the reason to explain more about the situation on the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I hope you can formulate a question for the States Parties to answer. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

There is no question, just to ask them to explain the reasons of the time they need and what they are ready to do, what they can do in this time.

Chairperson:

After the Committee members. Now, Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a bit of the same doubt in our mind as others. We need perhaps to hear from Albania and North Macedonia. Reading the report, we see the progress there has been, and we were wondering if really putting them on the List would not be helpful because we should not consider the in danger listing as something negative. In certain situation, on the contrary, it can bring more international attention and assistance.

Given the time that they have been asked for, we wonder if there can be significance progress made or not in the said time. We wish to be helpful. We looked at the original request. We have to see whether we are really doing them a favour by keeping them on the List. We have to see how to bring about the necessary international support. And we would also support the question that was asked.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to the States Parties. Albania first, you have the floor, be brief.

The Delegation of Albania:

Thank you. Distinguished Chairperson, dear Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, dear members of the World Heritage Committee, dear ambassadors, dear colleagues, dear participants, by decision at its 43rd session in Baku in July 2019, the World Heritage Committee decided on significant boundary modifications of the World Heritage property natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region by extending the property across the border to Albania. Shortly after that, in November 2019, Albania suffered the consequences of a devastating earthquake. The consequences of which we are trying to recuperate to this day. We are working vigorously in all sectors, so that those affected can overcome the shock, not only move into new homes, but also build a better future in the new urban centres we are building.

While recovering from such grave event, Albania, like the rest of the world, was isolated because of the Covid-19 pandemic and all of our attention was focused on saving lives. The report of the Reactive Monitoring mission, which visited the property in January 2020, was only just seven months after the Decision taken in Baku and two months after the earthquake. Despite the work accomplished by the two States Parties, the report recognises that there are still important aspects that require continued attention, in order to ensure that this exceptional site is duly preserved and protected.

For this property, as for any other inscribed on the World Heritage List, which is faced with a difficult dilemma between the need for development and the permanent need for protection and preservation, there is need for continued patient discussions based on clear commitments conducting to verified results. Albania and North Macedonia have informed the member of the Committee that they are fully aware of the serious issues, but stand ready to accelerate their work to properly deal with all vulnerabilities and potential threats.

The State Party of Albania highly appreciates the recommendation of the joint Reactive Monitoring mission, welcoming the mission commitment to the protection of the OUV and agreeing in principle on its recommendations. Despite this, we ensured that in the period immediately after the inscription until now, a period that coincides with the Covid-19 pandemic, the state of conservation of the property has not deteriorated. In view of the above we would like to emphasize briefly as follows: Regarding illegal construction, over the last year all illegal construction along the lakeshore [...]

Chairperson:

Due to the time constraints, I am sorry, I have to interrupt you.

The Delegation of Albania:

Okay. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Now, I give the floor to North Macedonia, please be concise, brief.

The Delegation of North Macedonia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Republic of North Macedonia is exceptionally proud to have the Ohrid Region inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage and to have recently celebrated 40 years since its inscription. We remain fully committed to maintaining the World Heritage status for the property and to ensure its protection conservation and sustainable management.

Over the last two years, North Macedonia continued to intensify its efforts to implement the Committee's decisions. While we remain aware that further efforts are needed to address identified vulnerabilities and threats, I would like to highlight some of the major efforts undertaken and what we have done despite the human and financial constraints caused by the health pandemic.

The management plan was adopted and is being implemented without significant hurdles. The first stage of the sanitation of the waste water management system is completed. Funds are being secured for the next stage, as well as for the extension of the system to the Albanian border. The struggling railway plans have been stopped until the proper analyses are conducted and an alternative connection point is agreed upon with Albania and in consultation with the Centre and the Advisory Bodies. The Lake shores are being cleared of illegally built structures along the full length of the coast. a process which continues and which will be expanded throughout the property. The Studenchishte Marsh, a Ramsar site, will be protected as a nature park under domestic legislation. Temporary protection has been effectuated until the end of the legislative process.

Since 2019, driven by the care for the Ohrid Region, North Macedonia and Albania have developed an even closer relationship. Going forward, we have committed to produce a joint Strategic Recovery Plan and to improve the bilateral management structure to make it for purpose. And we are fully committed to protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake Ohrid Region. By working ever closer together, we are determined to make the management of the heritage site an example of cooperation and good neighbouring relations.

For these reasons Mr. Chairman, we urge the Committee to provide us more time. In return, we pledge to fulfil our obligations and ensure the integrity and authenticity of the Ohrid Region for ourselves and for future generations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.77 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment submitted by snia-Herzegovina as shown on the screen. We have no modifications proposed to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, shall we adopt the text paragraph by paragraph? Okay, no objections. So, for paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 with no revision, do you agree? Okay they are agreed. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a minor modification proposed for paragraph 4: removing 'over the past six years' and adding 'past missions' recommendations', Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have another minor modification proposed for paragraph 5: removing 'utmost' and just mentioning 'expresses concern'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for paragraphs 6 and 7.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, they are approved.

Rapporteur:

We have a minor modification proposed for paragraph 8: removing 'poor' and inserting 'insufficient implementation'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 9.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is agreed. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 10 reads: 'Further considers that a continued erosion of the attributes combined with the continuing impact of the development in both parts of the transboundary property may represent actual and potential danger to the property, according to the Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* which need to be immediately and properly addressed individually by the States Parties, but also through a more robust and higher level of coordination among them'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this paragraph? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 11 of the original Draft Decision is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would just like to add that we, of course, also acknowledged the positive actions taken and we also have sympathy with the suffering that the States Parties have endured during the earthquake and the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it seems to and we note the arguments from our distinguished colleagues in the Committee, we understand that we are now moving towards consensus of the adoption of this new amendment, and we are granting it, if I understand correctly the States Parties two more years before the in danger listing is considered. If this is the fact, Norway will not again go against the consensus, of course, but Norway would have, however, like to disassociate itself from such decisions. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Dear Committee members, from now, on the deliberation, I can see that we have diverging views for the text, so to avoid lengthening debates and the deadlock you may need more time for dialogue. As Chairperson, I would like to propose establishing a drafting group with all the concerned parties, including the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Is it okay for you? Norway or the other Committee members, do you agree to constitute a drafting group?

The Delegation of Norway:

That is okay for Norway if that is necessary. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Other colleagues, if you have no objection then we can go this way. Can I suggest that Norway, Bahrain, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Russia constitute the drafting group and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies join the group. And maybe Bosnia-Herzegovina and Norway, you can co-convene the meeting. Is it okay?

The Delegation of Norway:

That is okay, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Bosnia-Herzegovina, is it okay for you?

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Oui, nous sommes d'accord.

Chairperson:

Okay, agreed. You will inform the Secretariat and the Committee about your progress and the time that you wish to bring the consensual text back. Thank you. We leave the item open and then we proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the properties located in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. Mr. Chair, we have: n°78, Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche (Mexico) and n°172, Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu in Peru. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave!]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see none. Let us proceed.

With this, dear colleagues, we are now moving to natural properties also located in the Africa Region. For the first property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Guy Debonnet of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to present the report on the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The next site is W-Arly-Pendjari Complex of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. Unfortunately, the state of conservation of this property is increasingly impacted by the growing insecurity in the Sahel region. Examples are the murderous attack of the 9th of August 2020 in the vicinity of the property and the ambush on the 27th of April 2021 of an anti-poaching patrol.

Several terrorist groups are reported to be active in different parts of the property and this has led to the evacuation of all protection staff from the Arly and W parks in Burkina Faso, as confirmed by the State Party on the 7th of July 2020. With the total absence of management presence in these components of the property, the OUV is faced with potential danger, as defined in Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Consequently, it is recommended that the Committee inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

It is hoped that the danger listing will contribute to alert the international community of the critical situation of the property and support the three States Parties in preparation of a road map to improve the state of conservation of the complex. Thanks to the financial support from Norway, the World Heritage Centre is working with the three States Parties and its partners in the organisation of national and regional consultations and a high-level meeting to develop this roadmap.

We want to underline, once again, that the inscription of sites on the Danger List can bring many benefits to the conservation of sites, especially, in the case of armed conflict and insecurity. In similar cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali or Côte d'Ivoire, to name a few, the danger listing contributed to focusing the international attention on the threats to the properties, as a result of the conflict, and made it possible to mobilise political and diplomatic support for their conservation. It facilitated the interventions of UNESCO through the United Nations channels, including through active peacekeeping operations and contributed to the mobilising of important financial support for their conservation.

I also want to note that the World Heritage Centre and IUCN had a meeting with the States Parties of Benin and Burkina Faso on the 21st of July. In the meeting, the States Parties informed the World Heritage Centre and IUCN that, although they acknowledge the benefits of the danger listing, they would like more time to ensure the conservation of the property. IUCN would also like to intervene on this site, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the presentation. Now, IUCN, please.

IUCN :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Il est essentiel qu'un système de gestion soit mis en place dans l'ensemble du bien transfrontalier afin de protéger et de gérer efficacement sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle, notamment sa riche biodiversité et ses écosystèmes variés. Malheureusement, Monsieur le Président, l'absence récente de gestion dans les composantes Arly et W au Burkina Faso, qui a résulté de l'insécurité dans la région, représente clairement un danger potentiel pour la VUE du bien. Les impacts négatifs de l'insécurité mettent le bien dans une situation de mise en péril, malgré les efforts des États parties et de leurs partenaires pour protéger et gérer efficacement ce

bien du patrimoine mondial. À cet effet, la recommandation d'inscription du bien sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril est une opportunité pour renforcer l'appui technique aux trois États parties et à leurs partenaires de conservation face à ces menaces majeures. Enfin, l'UICN remercie l'initiative prise par les trois États parties à travers un dialogue avec l'UICN et le Centre du patrimoine mondial pour appréhender davantage ce contexte difficile dans lequel se trouve le site. L'UICN s'engage à accompagner toutes les initiatives de préservation nécessaires. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Observer Ohrid SOS, I have noticed your request for the floor, but as we have a drafting group on the item, I suggest that you take the floor after the decision is made.

Observer-Ohrid SOS:

Can you tell me when that will be, please?

Chairperson:

I will tell you in time.

Observer-Ohrid SOS:

Thank you.

Chairperson:

I would like to know whether there are any comments. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. South Africa is taking the floor to seek an amendment to the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.79 regarding the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex (WAP). We are objecting to the proposal to inscribe this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. We have submitted our proposed amendments to the Draft Decision for the Committee's consideration. The reasons provided by the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for proposing to inscribe the site in the Danger List are largely related to the security situation in the Sahara region and its impact on the site. The W-Arly-Pendjari Complex is a natural transnational property shared between the Republic of Niger, Burkina Faso and the Republic of Benin in West Africa. It is one of the very few transnational properties on the World Heritage List.

In November 2019, pursuant to the World Heritage Committee's Decision 41 COM 8B.3, the three States Parties prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre an extensive report on the state of conservation of the Complex. In the report, the States Parties highlighted steps undertaken to address a range of challenges, including those related to security. They acknowledged the problem of security due to terrorist activities in the sub region and its impact on the security of the site. However, the States Parties have instituted a series of measures to mitigate these risks. For example, they have, among others, increased the joint surveillance and protection patrols of the Complex, in collaboration with the respective defence and security forces; strengthened the capacities of the military personnel and agents in techniques and equipment appropriate for the operations of the Complex; and have deployed the military brigades at strategic locations in the vicinity of the Complex. Steps have also been taken to intensify the fight against poaching, gold searching and transhumance in the area. More trained and equipped surveillance officers have been recruited and management units of the Complex have been provided with the relevant patrol equipment.

The States Parties are of the opinion that the security concerns should be viewed in the context of the overall security challenge faced in the region. Similarly, we should also acknowledge great efforts by national, regional and international partners to address this problem and create conditions that are conducive for development.

The W-Arly-Pendjari Complex has a huge potential to be a source of tourism and development in Niger, Burkina Faso and Benin. In inscribing this site in the List of World Heritage in Danger, it will send a wrong message to the people of the sub region. Throughout this session of the World Heritage Committee, Delegations have called for the implementation of the conventional and *Operational Guidelines* in a balanced manner putting people and development at the centre of our efforts.

We request this site not to be inscribed in the World Heritage in Danger List and that the World Heritage Centre should continue dialogue with the States Parties. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair, and I will be very brief. Chair, the Delegation of the Republic of Uganda has reviewed the analysis and Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.79 in respect to listing the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex on the List of World Heritage in Danger. My Delegation realised that both judgements, the WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add and their analysis, do not provide adequate information to guide decision making by this Committee. Despite the information given relating the presence of terrorist activities on the territory of Burkina Faso, no information has been given on whether the same situation is faced by the State Parties of Benin and Niger to determine the extent of terrorist suspicion.

There is also no information about the status of the biodiversity to determine whether the property has deteriorated or not, as guided by Paragraph 176e of the *Operational Guidelines*. We also were reliably informed that the last time the monitoring team from the World Heritage Centre was on site was in 2004.

In these circumstances, Chair, placing the property on the List of World Heritage properties in Danger without adequate information and in the absence of the Desired state of conservation plan, it would be premature for this Committee to take such a drastic decision. In light of the above, Chair, my Delegation does not support the Draft Decision. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. Speaking also along the lines of what was expressed by my colleagues from South Africa and Uganda, we do not support the Decision as it stands, the Draft Decision, and support the amendments introduced by South Africa which we are co-sponsoring. We do this because we are opposed to the listing on the in Danger List. As was stated earlier, the site has not been visited by our experts since 2004. That is a very long time. Secondly, there is no or lack of information on the actual deterioration of the property. Thirdly, there has been extensive efforts made by the States Parties to address the challenges, namely the security challenges, terrorism in the Sahel, in terms of increased joint surveillance, strengthening the capacity of security personnel and also in addressing the challenges of poaching.

In light of all these elements we are against the enlisting on the in Danger List. We support the countries' efforts to address the challenges that they encounter, and we also thank the countries that are providing support. Thanking Norway for all what they are doing to ensure that this magnificent transboundary site remains as is. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Chair. China welcomes the efforts undertaken by Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. During the meeting, in 2019, which aimed to draft the report, China recognises the efforts that have been undertaken by the three States Parties. China regrets the insecurity situation in the property and expresses its condolences to the families of the eco-guardians who lost their lives in the mission.

China believes that World Heritage must play the role of a bridge to promote mutual understanding, peace and sustainable development. China proposes that when the security situation allows it, a joint mission should be undertaken as early as possible, in order to find a concrete solution to improve the protection of the property.

Since this transnational property requires greater coordination, and bearing in mind the impact of the pandemic, China proposed to give more time to the States Parties and not inscribed this property on the World Heritage in Danger List. China supports the amendment of South Africa. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Mali, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Selon le rapport de la plateforme intergouvernementale sur la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques, la nature décline globalement à un rythme sans précédent dans l'histoire humaine, et le taux d'extinction des espèces s'accroît, provoquant des effets graves sur les populations humaines du monde entier. À la lumière de la lecture et de l'analyse des documents concernant les biens naturels, nous prenons acte des efforts consentis par les États parties et les partenaires pour la conservation de la diversité biologique à travers la gestion durable dans ces aires protégées exceptionnelles de l'Afrique subsaharienne. Sur la base des constats faits et de l'importance de la conservation des aires de biodiversité d'envergure dans un contexte de lutte contre le changement climatique, nous soutenons les recommandations des trois États parties, Bénin, Burkina Faso et Niger. Nous demandons au Comité du patrimoine mondial de ne pas inscrire le site naturel transfrontalier W-Arly sur la

Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Nous suggérons plutôt un accompagnement accru de la communauté internationale à travers l'UNESCO pour l'élaboration d'une feuille de route réaliste en vue d'améliorer l'état de conservation du complexe et pour la mobilisation des ressources nécessaires afin de sécuriser le site. Par conséquent, nous soutenons le projet d'amendement proposé par l'Afrique du Sud. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Saudi Arabia.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, perfect.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Mr. Chair, in the interest of time, I will not take too long. We support the amendment proposed by South Africa for the aforementioned reasons by all the member States before us, and we would like to give more time to the States Parties while appreciating the efforts made by them to conserve and preserve this transnational site. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Nigeria please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Nigeria joins South Africa and other countries to say that this transboundary natural site is a very good site and we need it on the World Heritage List not on the World Heritage List in Danger. We join our voices to others to allow these three countries more time, so that whatever additional conservation works need to be done they will be able to do it, considering some of the challenges they are facing including wars and other things going on in the West Africa Region. We support the amendment by South Africa and other States Parties that have spoken before Nigeria. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway appreciates the important actions taken by the States Parties to address the threats of the property and notes that they would need more time to implement measures to fully protect the Outstanding Universal Value. Norway acknowledges and encourages these efforts and we will not oppose the amendment proposed by South Africa.

We do, however, note with great concern the security situation and the potential impact on the OUV and we believe that this deserves the greatest attention by the global community. We would like to highlight the comments made by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN that inscribing site on the List of World Heritage in Danger allows the World Heritage Committee to allocate immediate attention and assistance to in danger properties. We have experienced this to be an effective mechanism most recently demonstrated by Salonga in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We, therefore, ask the States Parties concerned to take this into account, should the property face the same challenges next year. At the same time, we would like to express our deepest sympathy regarding the critical security situation in the Sahel region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Allow me first to thank you for the kind words addressed to my Delegation on the occasion of the National Day. I would also like to thank other members of the Committee for their kind words and congratulations.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to support the intervention of South Africa and the amendments presented to the Draft Decision on the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex. The States Parties undertook excellent effort in the last few months to enhance the status of the site. We believe that we should give more time to the current fruitful dialogue between

the World Heritage Centre and the three States Parties namely Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. We believe that the inscription on the in Danger List without adequate information would be premature and wrong.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to draw the attention to the fact that there had not been a visit to the site since 2004 which would be a prerequisite for us to take such a decision, especially in light with the valuable information provided by these three States Parties. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Australia would also like to express our appreciation for the actions of the States Parties in addressing the difficult situation in this property and agree with the proposals for a Reactive Monitoring mission. We would also like to indicate our support for the clearly emerging consensus about not in danger listing this property.

I would also like to join the distinguished delegate from Mali to express our sincere condolences to the families of the eco-guards who were killed while conducting their duties to protect this important property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman would also like to extend its support to the amendment to the decision presented by South Africa with other member States. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We wish to join the consensus because we believe that it is indispensable that a property of this type is protected. And we acknowledge that a mission has not been carried out in the country in recent years. We wish to congratulate the countries for the effort undertaken and to thank Norway for their support in the financing of this project. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more questions and comments. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.79 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment proposal from the distinguished Delegation of South Africa. The first four paragraphs, namely paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 are without any modifications, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Committee members we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. So, for paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 do you approve? Okay, they are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a very minor modification under paragraph 5 by removing 'and'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6 reads: 'Also considers that in the light of increasing insecurity and the resulting relative absence of management presence in the two Arly and W components of the property in Burkina Faso, the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property may be affected if the current security measures taken are not effective'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

The original paragraphs 7 and 8 are proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the deletion? Okay, there is no objection, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have no modifications proposed to the original paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, Mr. Chair. These will be the new paragraphs [...]

Chairperson:

Do you agree with these paragraphs? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 13 will read, 'Requests in addition the State Party to invite as soon as possible a joint World Heritage Centre - IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to evaluate its current state of conservation'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved.

Rapporteur:

Last paragraph, a minor modification by removing the date of the session. The rest of the paragraph is remaining the same, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is agreed. Dear colleagues, now that we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.79 adopted as amended ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Benin, you have the floor.

Délégation du Bénin :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Mesdames et Messieurs les délégués, chers collègues. Je voudrais remercier très sincèrement, au nom des trois États parties du Burkina Faso, du Niger et du Bénin, et vous exprimer toute notre gratitude à la délégation de l'Afrique du Sud et au coparrains; pour avoir accepté d'introduire notre requête; ainsi qu'à tous les pays partenaires, membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, pour l'adoption du moratoire que nos États parties ont souhaité quant à l'inscription à cette session du complexe W-Arly-Pendjari sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Ce moratoire, sollicité par les États parties que nous sommes, et qui reconnaissent du reste le bien-fondé de la question sécuritaire par rapport au bien, tient compte des efforts soutenus et engagés par eux, collectivement et individuellement, afin de satisfaire substantiellement aux recommandations du Centre du patrimoine mondial et de l'UICN. Je voudrais les rassurer, au nom des trois États parties, de notre volonté de poursuivre nos efforts pour renforcer les actions et mesures de sécurité et de protection du bien engagées, avec la participation des populations locales, ainsi qu'avec la gestion professionnelle par des structures spécialisées en vue de sauvegarder la valeur universelle exceptionnelle de ces sites transfrontaliers. Un dialogue permanent sera par conséquent maintenu avec le Centre et l'UICN en vue d'une mission conjointe de suivi réactif pour évaluer le bien dans un délai à convenir d'un commun accord. Monsieur le Président, nous vous réitérons nos remerciements pour la qualité de conduite des débats dont vous faites montre depuis le début de cette session, et nous saisissons l'occasion également pour remercier l'ensemble de nos partenaires qui ont soutenu nos amendements introduits par l'Afrique du Sud. Merci de votre bienveillante attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. There are no more requests for the floor. Now let us proceed. I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of natural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Africa Region for which reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have n°80, Okavango Delta (Botswana); n°81, Simien National Park (Ethiopia); n°82 Lake Malawi National Park in Malawi; n°83 Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (Senegal); n°84 Cape Floral Region Protected Areas in South Africa; n°85, Rwenzori Mountains National Park (Uganda); n°86, Serengeti National Park (United Republic of Tanzania); n°173, Dja Faunal Reserve (Cameroon); n°174, Sangha Trinational (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo); n°175 Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley (Kenya); n°176 Simangaliso

Wetland Park (South Africa); n°177 Mosi-oa-Tunya/Victoria Falls (Zambia, Zimbabwe) and n°178 Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas (Zimbabwe). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see no request. Let us proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of natural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Arab States Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. We have n°87, Banc d'Arguin National Park (Mauritania); n°88, Socotra Archipelago (Yemen) and n°179, Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park (Sudan). Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see no request. Let us proceed.

I now invite Dr Rössler to read the list of World Heritage located in the Asia Pacific States Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. We have n°89, Gondwana Rainforests of Australia (Australia); n°92, Keoladeo National Park (India); n°93, Komodo National Park (Indonesia); n°94, Lorentz National Park (Indonesia); n°95, Western Tien-Shan (Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan); n°96, Sagarmatha National Park (Nepal); n°97 Dong Phrayayen-Khao-Yai Forest Complex (Thailand); n°98, Ha Long Bay (Viet Nam), n°180, Greater Blue Mountains Area (Australia); n°181, South China Karst Phase 2 (China); n°182, Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Area (China); n°183, Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area (China); n°184, Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (India); n°185, Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (India); n°186, Shiretoko (Japan); n°187, Landscapes of Dauria (Mongolia, Russian Federation); n°188, Chitwan National Park (Nepal) and n°189, Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park (Viet Nam). Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. If there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation report, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about one of the properties for which we have adopted the Decision without discussion. I see no request. Let us proceed. Dear colleagues, I suggest we have a five-minute technical break.

Let us proceed. For the next property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Guy Debonnet of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to present the reports on the state of conservation of the natural properties located in the Europe and North American region and opened for discussion. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The next property is the Volcanoes of Kamchatka in the Russian Federation. During the Reactive Monitoring mission which took place in August 2019, the mission team was informed of the planned construction of a new large-scale tourism resort, the Three Volcano Park, which will include a geothermal resort, ski infrastructure, a panoramic complex, tourist camps and hotels, a marine terminal for cruise ships and a new highway to connect the marine terminal to the resort. According to the information presented to the mission, a significant part of this infrastructure will be constructed inside the south Kamchatka Nature Park and thus inside the property, including the cruise ship terminal which is planned in Russkaya Bay, a pristine fjord included in the property.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN considered that this development would result in a severe deterioration of the natural beauty and scenic value of a part of the property, and therefore, constitute an ascertained threat to the OUV of the property, if the project is allowed to proceed. The State Party also confirmed on April 15, 2021, that in June 2020, the governor of the Kamchatka region signed a resolution changing the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park on the national law to exclude the areas where the development is planned. Thus, taking away the legal protection of part of the World Heritage site.

The removal of the legal protection of part of the World Heritage site constitutes a clear potential danger to the property in line with Paragraph 180b of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore recommended that the Committee inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Centre confirms that it received a letter from the State Party on the 15th of July 2021, confirming that the proposed hydropower plant on the Zhupanova River and the proposed fish channel, which would both constitute a threat to the Kronotsky component of the property, have been abandoned.

On July 16th, the State Party also withdrew the proposed minor boundary modification of the property. While we welcome these developments, we note that, so far, the State Party did not confirm that they would reverse the changes to the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Reserve, which were done by a resolution of June 2020, and therefore, these areas were taken out of the reserve but remain today in the property without legal protection.

Hence the conditions for inscribing this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger remain valid. IUCN also has some remarks to give on this site Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your presentation. IUCN, please, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. IUCN would first wish to thank the State Party of the Russian Federation for the dialogue that has taken place during the last days of the World Heritage Committee and these follows the welcome news that actions have been taken on some of the threats to the property, as was just outlined by a colleague from the World Heritage Centre.

We note that there are a number of issues regarding the state of conservation of the property that are long-standing and have been subject to past Committee requests and mission recommendations. These require action now, as noted in the Draft Decision, including in relation to integrated management of the property, changes in zoning that reduce protection status, the lack of formal buffer zones, and the lack of adequate measures to manage tourism.

But, Mr. Chair, as noted by the World Heritage Centre, the most immediate issue is the proposed Three Volcano Park development which could result in clear negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The modification of the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park at the national level appears to result in the removal of legal protection of a part of the property, apparently linked to the development, and thus, constitutes a clear danger to the property in line with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. As such, Mr. Chair, the criteria for this site to be considered for the in Danger List are clearly met. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Now, I would like to know whether there are any comments. Dear Committee members, once again due to time constraints, I kindly ask you to be brief and concise. Now, Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We propose amendments to the Draft Decision on the property Volcanoes of Kamchatka, Russian Federation, based on additional information given by the State Party as the plans for the hydropower development at Kronotsky State Nature Reserve and for the fish channel construction to connect the Kronotskoye Lake and the Bering Sea have been rejected.

Referring to the previous Committee Decisions, the State Party notified that both projects were considered fundamentally unacceptable. The State Party also officially informed the World Heritage Centre about its wish to withdraw their minor boundary modification for the property. The withdrawal, therefore, guarantees the federal protection regime for all components of the property within the boundaries approved by the World Heritage Committee.

In this regard, we propose amending paragraph 4 of the Draft Decision to read as follows: 'Expresses its utmost concern about the confirmation by the State Party that the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park have been modified at national level, thereby removing the legal protection of part of the property, and recalls that such removal of the legal protection of part of the property constitutes a clear potential danger to the property in line with Paragraph 180(b)(i) of the *Operational Guidelines*'.

Amended paragraph 5 of the Draft Decision to read as follows: 'Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property'. Then we propose deleting paragraph 6 replacing former paragraph 7 with the text, that in order to save time I will not read now, but we can come back to it when we go to the Draft Decision.

Then, we also propose replacing new paragraph 7 former paragraph 8 with the following text: 'Welcomes the information that the plans for the construction of a hydroelectric power station in the vicinity of the Kronotsky State Nature Reserve (KSNR) and for the construction of a fish channel in KSNR to connect Kronotskoye Lake with the

sea have been rejected, and notes with satisfaction the confirmation by the State Party that both projects have been deemed fundamentally unacceptable'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we understand from the IUCN report that three reasons have been presented for the inscription of this site on the List of World Heritage in Danger: the modification of the boundary of the South Kamchatka Nature Park, a tourist resort project to be partially constructed inside the park and plans for the construction of a hydroelectrical station and a fish channel in the vicinity of the property.

According to the information received from the State Party, no resort project will be allowed inside or adjacent to the site before an Environmental Impact Assessment is carried out, guaranteeing that there will be no impact on the OUV. And the plans for a power station and a fish channel have been rejected. There remains only the issue of the possible legal impact of the boundary modification which must be clarified.

We will therefore recommend a Reactive Monitoring mission visit to the site in order to assess the situation or report back to the Committee, before any decision with more far-reaching consequences can be considered. We therefore support strongly the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be as brief as possible. Hungary supports the amendment submitted by Kyrgyzstan not to add the property to the World Heritage List in Danger, as the two major and long-standing issues raised by the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission report, the construction of the hydroelectric power station and the fish channel between the Kronotskoye Lake and the sea, will not be implemented. Regarding the Three Volcano Park, which is a potential threat to the property, Hungary suggests the Committee give more time to the State Party and let it conduct the necessary legal procedures to assess the impacts of the planned tourism development project on the OUV of the property.

We also have a question to the State Party in relation to another conservation issue, mining. We would like to ask the State Party to provide the Committee an update in relation to the planned mining activities within and outside of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We support the amendments submitted by Kyrgyzstan and also want to be considered as co-authors of this amendment. We do not accept putting the site in the in Danger List. As was stated, the three reasons invoked are no longer there, whether it is the hydropower development or the fish channel. The issue of the tourism development is subject to fact assessment, as we said. And to this end the monitoring and Reactive mission would be the most appropriate course of action at this stage.

We would like to commend the Russian Federation for their ability to manage and strike a balance between tourism development and, of course, heritage protection. We thank them for the initiatives they have taken which are very important.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Australia notes that the matter about the proposed construction of the hydroelectric power station and the fish channel seems to have been resolved. We were advised by the State Party that construction on the Three Volcano Park would not commence until the impact of the proposed project on the OUV of the property is assessed, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment in line with IUCN and World Heritage Centre's Advice Note on Environmental Assessment. We suggest that these differences in opinion about the status of the Three Volcano Park should be resolved through a World Heritage Centre, IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Thailand would like to share the views expressed by previous speakers. We welcome the efforts of the Russian Federation to preserve and protect the OUV of the World Heritage site of the Volcanoes of Kamchatka and its commitment to implement the Decisions of the Committee to improve the management of the property in a holistic manner.

We also noted that the State Party of Russia has informed the World Heritage Centre of its plan to withdraw any plan for minor boundary modification of the World Heritage property, revealing that this action reaffirms the federal protection regime for components of the property within the boundaries approved by the World Heritage Committee.

We encourage the State Party, Russia, to continue working closely with the Advisory Body and the Reactive Monitoring mission on the Environmental Impact Assessment for proposed construction of any large-scale projects in the vicinity of the World Heritage site. Thailand, therefore, supports the proposed amendments to the Draft Decision proposed by the Kyrgyz Republic. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear Committee members, China would like to second the amendments as co-authors regarding the property Volcanoes of Kamchatka in the Russian Federation. We have received additional information on the measures the State Party has taken to comply with the decisions of the Committee. The State Party's efforts to preserve the Volcanoes of Kamchatka World Heritage property should be commended. We are also informed of the significant changes in Russian environmental legislation. We welcome the State Party's willingness and readiness to continue dialogue and constructive work with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN on the conservation of the unique natural areas. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to support the amendments presented by Kyrgyzstan to the Draft Decision related to the property Volcanoes of Kamchatka, and we would like to join the list of co-sponsors.

The efforts of the Russian Federation to preserve the status of this site should be acknowledged, as well as the valuable information it has provided regarding the proposed constructions. We welcome the ongoing dialogue between the Russian Federation, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN on the site, and we support the amendments which ask for a Reactive Monitoring mission be invited to visit the site before taking any decision on its inscription on the in Danger List. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. South Africa is in support of the draft amendment by the Kyrgyz Republic and supported by many Delegations that spoke before us. We would like to thank the State Party of the Russian Federation, for the submission of information on the boundaries of all components to the World Heritage Centre and commends the State Party for expanding its anti-poaching activities within the property and continue the monitoring of such activities of key species. South Africa further welcomes the information that an agreement to address potential threats of fish poaching has been reached between all the interested parties and there are no mining activities inside the boundaries of the property.

We welcome the confirmation by the State Party that the plans to construct a hydraulic hydroelectric power station in the vicinity of the property and a fish channel to connect Kronotskoye Lake with the sea have been abandoned. We also support the proposal that the State Party should invite the joint World Heritage Centre, IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Due to the explanation given by Kyrgyzstan and other supportive intervention, Oman supports the draft amended Decision and request the site not to be listed on the World Heritage List in Danger, and therefore, also would like to join the cosponsoring. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. Nigeria recognises the efforts of the Russian Federation on the measures taken on the Volcanoes of Kamchatka and we also want to support the draft amendments submitted by Kyrgyzstan. We also want to support the proposal for the Reactive Monitoring mission to go and visit the World Heritage site. Nigeria supports the Draft Decision. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. We join the voices of the esteemed Committee members in supporting the proposed amendment by Kyrgyzstan. We believe that the State Party has taken the necessary steps to overcome the challenges to preserve the site, and we welcome the dialogue between the Russian Federation, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you sincerely for allowing us to take the floor for a second time. I would just like to follow on from my distinguished colleague and just to clarify for the Committee that following a constructive dialogue with the State Party, we now consider that in danger listing inscription should not occur at this meeting and we should provide the State Party with the opportunity as my colleague has indicated to have a joint IUCN, World Heritage Centre Monitoring mission to understand the situation first-hand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We commend Russia for rejecting the plans for the fish channel and the hydropower station and for withdrawing this minor boundary modification. But still, there are some concerns considering this lack of legal protection and we consider this as a potential threat to the property and that Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* is fulfilled. But, however, we can join the fellow Committee members in order to reach consensus, provided that no building and construction projects that could compromise the Outstanding Universal Value of the property Volcanoes of Kamchatka are given permit and we have a slight comment to paragraph 6 when we go there on the draft amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. I see no more questions in the comments. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.109 concerning this property. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment proposal from Kyrgyzstan, Thailand and China. The proposed amendment does not suggest any modifications in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members we will approve the text paragraph by paragraph. So, for paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, do you approve? Okay, they are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In paragraph 4, the amendment proposes removal of the sentence starting with: 'And therefore a case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We just want to clarify to the Secretariat that we want to be added as co-authors of these amendments. So, please, add Ethiopia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any objections? No, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5 reads: 'Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 6 of the Draft Decision is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the deletion? Okay, there are no objections, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6 reads: 'Also expresses its serious concern about the proposed tourism resort project, Three Volcano Park, which is planned to be partially constructed inside the South Kamchatka Nature Park component of the property, and requests the State Party not to permit any construction of such kind and scale neither inside the property nor immediately adjacent to the property, if such construction could have negative impact on the property's OUV, which should be assessed as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for each proposed project, in line with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note: Environmental Assessment'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Actually, we have a small suggestion for this proposal, for this new paragraph 6 and it is concerning the last part of it. In order for the Decision to be consistent, we suggest to use the same wording in paragraph 6 as used in paragraph 9d of this Decision. If I could read the last part and if you keep the first part and then: 'Requests the State Party not to permit any construction of such kind' — and then — 'and to ensure that all projects planned in or near the property are subject to rigorous HIA and fully assess the potential impact', and then you use the same wording and as in paragraph 9d. The Secretariat could help me if you just copy that.

Rapporteur:

If I may, distinguish delegate of Norway, could you clarify which part of the paragraph should be deleted in this case after this addition? And perhaps, if you could read out one more time so that we can make sure everything is well noted.

The Delegation of Norway:

I think it is in this paragraph 9d. We have lost the end because we have in 9d: 'In line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before a decision is taken which is difficult to reverse'.

Rapporteur:

Could the Delegation of Norway confirm this is what was meant with the amendment?

The Delegation of Norway:

Maybe I should read the whole paragraph? It reads from top of the blue text: 'Requests the State Party not to permit any construction of such kind and scale' — and then — 'and to ensure that all projects planned in or near the property are subject to rigorous HIA and fully assess the potential impact in relation to OUV in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before a decision is taken which is difficult to reverse'. Thank you.

Rapporteur:

Okay. May I ask after 'this' and 'to ensure' could you read very slowly, please?

The Delegation of Norway:

'And to ensure that all projects planned in or near the property are subject to rigorous HIA and fully assess the potential impact in relation to OUV'.

Rapporteur:

Just a second please, we are just copying the text.

Chairperson:

I think, in the meantime, I will give the floor to Kyrgyzstan.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We agree with this amendment to our amendment. Just one small question: what is the difference? We have rigorous and not rigorous EIAs? Do we need this word '*rigorous*'? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, can we cross out this word?

The Delegation of Norway:

It was to have consistency within this decision wording.

Chairperson:

Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we can take a decision on this paragraph for this amendment, can our colleague from Norway let us know if bringing to this paragraph the small a or small b letter that we had in 9 means that we are going to repeat it? Are we going to have the same text twice in the same resolution? Or we are going to delete one of them?

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Have it kept in both places because it is for different issues.

Chairperson:

Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We do not see and share the logic of keeping the same thing in two parts of the Decision. Either we keep it here or we keep it in the other part of the Decision, as was mentioned by my colleague from Brazil, but we will find it difficult to accept it in both places. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway.

The Delegation of Norway:

We can go back to the original amendment text on paragraph 6, it is okay.

Chairperson:

Okay. So, we keep the original. Are there any other comments for this paragraph? There are none. Okay it is approved. Ms. Rapporteur go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7 reads: 'Welcomes the information that the plans for the construction of a hydro-electric power station in the vicinity of the Kronotsky State Nature Reserve (KSNR) and for the construction of a fish channel in KSNR to connect Kronotskoye Lake with the sea have been rejected, and notes with satisfaction the confirmation by the State Party that both projects have been deemed fundamentally unacceptable'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this revision? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In new paragraph 8, we just have a consistency adjustment, adding 'also'. The rest of the paragraph is as in the original Draft Decision, Mr. Chair, so are paragraphs 9, 10 and 11. Can we just scroll down? Just one word changing but everything else is as in the original Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Do you approve? It is approved. Dear colleagues now we have been through all the texts, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.109 adopted as amended ^[gave!]. I would now like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. Russia, please. Your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

I am sorry. Mr. Chairman, dear colleagues, we would like to thank the Committee members for their support and their trust in our commitments to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value of the property Volcanoes of Kamchatka. As it was previously said, we are ready to continue efficient dialogue and cooperation with the Advisory Body and the World Heritage Centre which was rather fluent before the pandemic. But, over the last year and a half, this flow of dialogue was interrupted and resumed only some months ago on the eve of this session.

We hope that the Reactive Monitoring mission could visit the property very soon and to present clear and objective overview of the current situation, taking into account also the Environmental Assessment. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer- IIPFWH:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The IIPFWH (the Indigenous Peoples Forum) reads this Statement on behalf of the all-Russian Aboriginal Forum Network to convey their deep concern in connection with the situation with the World Heritage property, Volcanoes of Kamchatka.

More than 15,000 hectares were excluded from the Southern Kamchatka Nature Park, which is the part of the World Heritage property to accommodate the large-scale commercial resort Three Volcano Park by the Russian authorities and the private sector. This approach not only violates procedures but also contradicts the basic principles of UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention. Indigenous peoples's experience and opinions were not taken into account when making this decision.

One of the objectives of this World Heritage Site is to maintain and preserve the traditional way of life of the indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. The removal of the protected status by a part of the natural park territory [...]

Chairperson:

I am sorry to interrupt you due to the time constraints.

Observer- IIPFWH:

I Just wanted to say that while we accept the World Heritage Decision, we supported the IUCN and World Heritage Centre's proposal to move the Volcanoes of Kamchatka to the List of World Heritage in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, sorry. I will give no more floors to Observers due to the time constraints. Now, I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the natural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List located in the Europe and North America Region for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have: n°99, Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine); n°100, Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland); n°101, Pirin National Park (Bulgaria); n°102, Gros Morne National Park (Canada); n°103, Plitvice Lakes National Park (Croatia); n°104 Durmitor National Park (Montenegro); n°105 Central Sikhote-Alin (Russian Federation); n°106 Golden Mountains of Altai (Russian Federation); n°107 Lake Baikal (Russian Federation); n°108 Virgin Komi Forest (Russian Federation); n°190 Wood Buffalo National Park (Canada); n°191 Doñana National Park (Spain) and n°192, Gough and Inaccessible Islands (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now if there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gavel].

Now, I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the natural properties for which the reports are proposed for adoption without discussion. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. n°111, Iguazu National Park (Argentina); n°112, Iguaçu National Park (Brazil); n°113, Galapagos Islands (Ecuador); n°114, El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve (Mexico); n°115, Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection (Panama); n°116, Pitons Management Area (Saint Lucia); n°193 Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize); n°194, Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks (Brazil); n°195, Pantanal Conservation Area (Brazil); n°196 Area de Conservación Guanacaste (Costa Rica); n°197 Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves / La Amistad National Park (Costa Rica, Panama); n°198, Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (Mexico) and n°199 and Canaima National Park (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now if there is no objection from the Committee on this state of conservation reports, I declare the Decisions read out adopted ^[gavel].

Before we conclude Agenda Item 7B, we still have to adopt the Omnibus Decision regarding the state of conservation of properties for which all issues have been successfully addressed by the States Parties and which do not require any discussion by the Committee. I invite Dr Rössler to read the list of the properties from the Omnibus this year. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Great Wall (China); Comoé National Park (Côte d'Ivoire) and Tai National Park (Côte d'Ivoire). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you very much. if there is no objection from the Committee, I declare the Decision 44 COM 7B.200 adopted ^[gavel]. Observers, your requests for the floor have been taken note of. I will give you the floor afterwards when the occasion comes up.

Dear colleagues with a heavy agenda we are approaching the end of today's meeting. I would like to suggest that we stop here and commend you all for your efficiency and the spirit of consensus. We will resume with Western Caucasus tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time and for Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am. Before I conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are any general announcement to make.

The Secretariat:

Not from my side Mr. Chair. Just that the drafting groups let us know where they stand. Maybe in Paris they have some something to add? No further information, they are all shaking their heads. So, there is no further information to be shared. Okay, thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now, thank you all. Have a good rest. See you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 4:29:39 pm.

SEVENTH DAY – Saturday 24 July 2021
SEVENTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

I am glad to see you all today for our daily meeting. This morning, the Bureau of the Committee had its seventh meeting. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the work progress. Although we have made some headway with a longer meeting yesterday, we did not manage the examination of Agenda Item 7B. We will, therefore, start our session today with a review of 7B.110 Western Caucasus. We will then review the outcome of the drafting group established on the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.142 Borobudur Compounds. As for the outcomes of the drafting group established on the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.77 on the Ohrid Region, we will review the text as soon as it is ready in the two languages, sometimes today or tomorrow morning.

Once we have concluded these items, we will start with our normal items as follows: opening of general Item 8, Item 8A Tentative List, then we will start Item 8B on Nominations to the World Heritage List. In this regard, you have all received by email the indicative calendar for the examination of nominations. It is also available on the World Heritage Centre website. I would also like to remind you all that the working group on the Budget will take place today from 4.30 until 5:30 pm Paris time using the same Zoom link as the plenary meeting. Thank you very much.

Now, we resume our work on Item 7B. As indicated yesterday, we will start with the report on Western Caucasus in the Russian Federation. Before we do that, I would like to give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre who has a clarification to make. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good morning and afternoon to all of you. Just a general reminder. Note that in line with Rule 23.2 of the Rules of Procedures, Committee members can only author amendment proposals and cosponsoring is therefore not an option of the proceedings of this Committee. I know you do that for other bodies, but that it is not the case here for this Committee. Committee members can co-author an amendment in cooperation with author submitting Committee members and all co-authors should then be copied in the exchanges with the Rapporteur.

Should a Committee member wish to express its support to a submitted amendment, you are welcome to do so and to mention it during the plenary and during the adoption of the Draft Decision itself. In case a Committee member wishes to add its name as a co-author before the discussion starts on a Draft Decision by email, please ensure not to resend the entire amendment to avoid any confusion. This is really important for our Rapporteur to avoid any confusion. If a Committee member expresses support to a proposed amendment when the relevant Draft Decision is under discussion this will be then indicated on the screen. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Dr Rössler, for this very important clarification for the smooth conduct of our work. And for the Observers requesting for the floor yesterday, I will give you one minute later along with the item to be discussed.

For the first property to be discussed, I would like to give the floor to the Delegation of Thailand who requested the state of conservation report on Western Caucasus, Russian Federation, to be open for discussion, to present to the Committee the reason it has made such a request. Excellency, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thailand would like to refer to the Draft Decision regarding the Russian property of Western Caucasus and proposes to make amendments to paragraph 5 to reflect the latest development on this particular site. The proposed amendment is based on the information provided by the State Party that the three enclaves in the Lagonaki Plateau area will not be excluded from the boundaries of the heritage site. However, there are still some technical issues that require the State Party to submit updated maps and coordinates to the World Heritage Centre. Thailand, therefore, would like the Committee to support the proposed amendment of paragraph 5 which appears in the amended text. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to invite Mr. Guy Debonnet and IUCN to respond to the comment. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The World Heritage Centre confirms that it received a letter from the State Party on the 13th of July, this month, stating that it is ready to correct the boundary clarification it has submitted leaving the enclaves in the Lagonaki Plateau as part of the World Heritage property. It will therefore be necessary for the State Party to submit an updated boundary clarification for review by the World Heritage Centre, taking into account the comments provided by the World Heritage Centre on the originally submitted boundary clarification and comprising high resolution maps that meet the technical requirement.

It will also be important to ensure that the updated clarification stays within what can be considered as a boundary clarification, and that there are no major changes compared to the boundaries of the originally inscribed site. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN further note that there remain concerns about construction of a mountain resort on the Lagonaki Plateau. The World Heritage Committee has repeatedly stated that the construction of a large-scale infrastructure within the property, including on the Lagonaki Plateau, would constitute a clear case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Centre so far has not received more information on this project. In this respect, we are also concerned about the reported creation of a biosphere polygon on the Lagonaki Plateau which would also include the ecologically sensitive Fisht-Oshten mountain massif. It is therefore important to clarify the current legal protection regime of the whole Lagonaki Plateau, in order to ensure that all areas within the World Heritage property as inscribed benefit from the required level of legal protection.

Mr. Chair, I can also mention that we had a number of constructive meetings with the State Party during the session to discuss these issues and we believe that the Reactive Monitoring mission will further create opportunities to continue this dialogue. IUCN has also some comments on this report. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN, please, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. To be very brief, I think the situation has been very clearly explained to the Committee both by the distinguished Delegation of Thailand and the World Heritage Centre. For IUCN, we would also like to very much welcome the decision to not proceed with the enclave in the boundary clarification, and we think the Reactive Monitoring mission that is proposed in the Decision could give an opportunity to ensure that the updated clarifications stay within what is a boundary clarification, and no major changes are proposed to the original inscribed site. We look forward to that opportunity and also thank the Delegation of the Russian Federation of the opportunities of dialogue that have taken place during this Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would like to know whether there are any comments. I see there are representatives asking for the floor. Dear Committee members, today, I would like to once again ask you to be very brief, so that we can move quickly to consider the draft decision. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and good morning, to all. Mr. Chairman, we welcome the information provided by the State Party confirmed by the Advisory Bodies in the sense that there will be no exclusion of the three enclaves on the Lagonaki Plateau on the property. Which was the issue that motivated the concerns expressed in paragraph 5 of the Draft Decision. This being the case, we can certainly support very strongly the draft amendment to this paragraph as presented by the Delegation of Thailand. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning to all. I will be very brief. We support the amendment proposed in paragraph 5 by Thailand. The information provided by the State Party is a positive move that should be recognised. The three enclaves are included and we also commend the very constructive dialogue between the State Party and the experts. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, and afternoon, we also join this amendment, we support it, as it looks a better reflection of the situation of the property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to support the amendments submitted by Thailand regarding the Russian property of the Western Caucasus. These amendments take into account the clarification provided by the Russian Federation on the boundaries of the property. We wish to seize this opportunity to commend the State Party efforts in conserving the site as well as the dialogue it has had with the IUCN and the World Heritage Centre. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning and afternoon to all. Dear Committee members, China would like to support the amendment regarding the Russian World Heritage property of the Western Caucasus. We believe that Russia in compliance with the Committee's decision has submitted the materials on the clarification on the boundary of the property. In doing so, we welcome Russia's information that it agrees with IUCN findings and is ready to keep the three enclaves as part of the property. We also welcome the readiness of the State Party to continue a dialogue as constructive work with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN on the conservation of the unique natural areas. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. In addition to what has been said, Oman also encourages the State Party to take into consideration all the concerns raised by the World Heritage Centre and Consultative Bodies. This gives the State Party the opportunity to continue its effort to protect the OUV and for the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1st of February 2022 an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, and implementation of all concerned decisions for examination by the World Heritage Centre and the Committee. Therefore, we support the amended paragraph 5 of the Draft Decision by Thailand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. To be brief, South Africa supports the amendment by Thailand in respect of the property in the Western Caucasus. We welcome the clarification on the boundary of the property by the State Party and encourage and welcome constructive dialogue between the Advisory Bodies, the Secretariat and the State Party. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. We support the amendment presented by Thailand for the aforementioned reasons by the distinguished colleagues and representatives. We commend Russia for its efforts and we encourage continuing dialogue between the member State and the Advisory Bodies along with the World Heritage Centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Nigeria wants to lend our voice to the Draft Decision as amended by Thailand and supports the Draft Decision just like other Committee members before. And Nigeria has spoken to and encourages the Russian Federation to continue with the work and then liaise with the Advisory Bodies on the boundary adjustment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I see no more questions in the comments. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.110, concerning this property. Before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As it was mentioned. We have an amendment submitted by Thailand. The amendment concerns only paragraph 5 of the Draft Decision. Original paragraph 5 is proposed for deletion and new paragraph 5 reads: 'Also welcomes the information provided to the World Heritage Centre by the State Party during the present session of the World Heritage Committee, stating that there will be no exclusion of three enclaves on the Lagonaki Plateau area from the property, and requests the State Party to submit an updated boundary clarification, taking into account the comments provided by the World Heritage Centre and comprising high resolution maps that meet the current technical requirements, for review by the World Heritage Centre'. The rest of the decision's text remains unchanged. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Committee members, as you have just heard from Ms. Rapporteur, there were only minor modifications in the text, hence for the interest of time, can I propose it for adoption as a whole? Are there any comments? There are no objections. It is approved. If there are no more comments or objections, I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM7B.110 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me express my gratitude to the Advisory Bodies and to the colleagues of the Committee for their support and confidence. Once again, I would like to express our deep satisfaction for the resumption of constructive dialogue of the State Party with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre. I am sure that we will continue this dialogue for the sake of meeting all recommendations made by the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property. Greenpeace Russia, you have the floor.

Observer- Greenpeace Russia:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor. I am speaking on behalf of Greenpeace Russia and WWF Russia. The Western Caucasus World Heritage property is of great concern to us for many years. In addition to what is stated in the Decision new threats are constantly emerging. There is active discussion on the large-scale infrastructure construction plans for the territories adjacent to the property, including those that were supposed to be developed during the Olympic construction. At that time the World Heritage Committee asked to prevent construction in this area because it contributes to maintaining the OUV of the property. Now, these plans have been revived. Also, information appeared about government plans on the construction of a highway crossing the territory of the property. We believe that a joint World Heritage Centre-IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission is absolutely necessary. It is the only way to alleviate the entire set of threats. We thank the distinguished World Heritage Committee for supporting the main items on the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more requests for the floor, so let us proceed. Dear colleagues, you will remember that during our work the day before yesterday, we established a drafting group on the Decision of Borobudur Temple Compounds. I understand that an agreed text has been prepared by the members of the drafting group, with the assistance of the Secretariat and ICOMOS, and that this text is now ready for us to look at in both languages. I therefore now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 34 COM 7B.142 concerning this property, but before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to take us through the text. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As you also mentioned, the drafting group reached a consensus and finalised the text of the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.142. The agreed text is shown on the screen. It was distributed by email yesterday in both English and French languages. We have not received any further amendments to it.

If it is agreeable to you, Mr. Chair, and also to the members of the Committee, due to the time constraints, I will not read the text and you may wish to adopt it at once. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? There is no objection. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.142 adopted ^[gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegation would like to express themselves about this property and if the Observers wishing to speak yesterday still request for the floor. Indonesia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Indonesia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry we had a technical problem. Indonesia would like to thank Thailand and Kyrgyzstan and also other Committee members for the amendment to the Draft Decision. As has been said by other Delegations, Borobudur is of great importance for Indonesia and its people.

While remaining fully committed to protect the OUV of Borobudur Temple Compounds, the government of Indonesia is also compelled to continuously improve the quality of life and living standard of the local community. Particularly important in this context is the public infrastructure that supports the life of Borobudur people. Undertaking infrastructure works such as building pedestrian sidewalks and upgrading roads for the local communities in the villages surrounding Borobudur Compounds will help the local economy during the pandemic.

Indonesia, once again, would like to reiterate our commitment to preserving the OUV of all World Heritage properties in Indonesia including Borobudur Temple Compounds in accordance with the principles of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. Indonesia also requests the Secretariat of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to immediately release recommendations on our proposed development project that has been submitted by the government of Indonesia in our comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment and also state of conservation report in April 2021.

Although Indonesia committed to pause major development projects in the core zone, Indonesia could not prolong this postponement because the developing project is of great importance for the local community. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Canada, please you have the floor.

Délégation du Canada :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Comme c'est la première fois que le Canada prend la parole, j'aimerais saisir cette occasion pour remercier la Chine d'avoir accueilli cette réunion, et le Comité pour son adoption de décisions sur l'état de conservation de deux sites canadiens du patrimoine mondial. Mes commentaires concernent le Parc national de Wood Buffalo. Le Gouvernement du Canada reconnaît la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du Parc national Wood Buffalo et s'engage à sa protection pour les générations futures.

In 2017, the government of Canada led a collaborative effort with indigenous provincial territorial partners to develop a multiyear action plan to address the state of conservation of the park. This plan was commended by the Committee at its 43rd session in 2019. The government of Canada is investing more than CA\$87 million to implement commitments including: strengthening park management in collaboration with indigenous partners, enhancing research monitoring and management to the Peace Athabasca Delta using science and indigenous knowledge and establishing new mechanism to support improved water management.

There has been noticeable progress since 2019 with more than half of the 142 action plan measures now completed or under way. The Committee's decision on Wood Buffalo National Park underscores the complex environmental challenges face by this World Heritage site. It also creates opportunities for the State Party and its partners to continue to work with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre to ensure implemented temporary progress is recognised, as we continue to put in place long-term solutions. We look forward to working with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to plan a second Reactive Monitoring mission at an appropriate time where we can demonstrate progress to date.

I wish to thank the Committee for its recognition of our ongoing efforts for the conservation of Wood Buffalo National Park. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Romania, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Romania:

Chair, sorry, I think it was a mistake. I would like to have the floor for 7B.99. Sorry.

Chairperson:

Now is okay. WWF Spain you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-WWF Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Doñana has gone back 50 years in time and its threat as a National Park was declared. Time is running out now for the marshes and the species of Doñana. In 1989 a WWF and IUCN mission warned that groundwater withdraws would have a detrimental effect on Doñana. It has taken 32 years and a ruling from the European Court of Justice for the administrations to announce that they will implement measures to prevent this damage by 2024. The Spanish administration spent more time and effort in denying the evidence in their own data than in solving problems that were well-known.

WWF hopes that UNESCO's recommendations will not take so long to be fulfilled. By 2023, we want the Spanish administrations to carry out more actions for the conservation of Doñana. The protection of Doñana was a milestone and the conservation work has continued up to the 21st century on time to avoid its collapse in the 21st century. It is more than urgent to act to prevent Doñana from being proposed in 2023 on the World Heritage List in Danger. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Romania, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Romania:

Mr. Chairperson, Madam Executive Director, Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to express our sincere appreciation and congratulate UNESCO and the People's Republic of China for organising the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

In 2017, we joined the transnational Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe and, in 2019, we had the Reactive Monitoring mission of UNESCO and IUCN when the Romanian authorities have provided all the necessary support based on the principles of transparency and objectivity. Despite this, the content of the report did not reflect entirely the reality.

Regarding the Item 7B.99 of the Agenda, we would like to raise the attention to the following pending issues:

- The need to find an adequate balance between environmental protection and respect the rights of local communities in line with the principles of sustainable development. The Romanian authorities disagree with any limitation of the rights of local communities to have an adequate standard of living, which also includes their protection against the effects of natural disasters, safe public access on roads and drinking water.

- The need for a differentiated and gradual approach to the buffer zones management, especially that in the case of the Romanian cluster Domogled - Valea Cernei, where the buffer zone has the largest surface within the serial transnational property, more than 50,000 hectares. Thus, the only feasible alternative to meet the recommendations of the report is to re-analyse, in some specific cases, the boundaries in order to reshape them to fulfil the preservation of the OUV of the site.

We express our belief to find a common understanding for reaching a harmonised approach in order to match the technical requirements with the best available solutions. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor on Item 7B.99.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Your comment has been noted. Now World Heritage Watch you have the floor for one minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will speak about 7B.199 Canaima National Park (Venezuela). On behalf of SOS Orinoco and ourselves, the current existence of gold mining within the Canaima National Park is an irrefutable fact, despite the efforts made to make people believe that what is seen today is the trace of a past activity. It is an ongoing activity that has been increasing since 2016, verifiable by simply analysing satellite images available for free. This illegal mining activity significantly affects the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage site. The Reactive mission should pay particular attention to the non-existent management or performance of the park administrator/custodian, the National Parks Institute (INPARQUES), which does not have any structure nor budget in place that would allow it to effectively guard an area the size of Belgium or Albania. SOS Orinoco would be happy to provide any additional evidence to the Reactive Monitoring mission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Venezuela, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr. Chair. We find it unfortunate that this work has been done in this context with an NGO that is only interested by political interest. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has a long history of cooperation with the World Heritage Committee and commitment to the Convention. Abundant information is available as to how the OUV is being preserved. We have been having an eco-socialist project which is compatible with the principles of sustainable development. In spite of all of the grave effects of the pandemic this has been continuing. We would like to show that 99.97 per cent of the National Park is being upheld in its contemplative state and that in protecting the National Park, there has been three additional staff hired bringing the number to practically 200.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, this organisation, SOS Orinoco, has been presented has an 'impartial NGO', actually it tends to bring about political interference working closely with the fascist sector of the Venezuelan State manipulated by Washington. We have seen it in this park and elsewhere. There are draconian measures being imposed by the United States and this is following a fascist agenda with clear political interest, and they are preventing the Committee from doing its important work. Venezuela is committed to the preservation of World Heritage sites and will continue working with the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would, like to support the statement by the distinguished representative of Venezuela. I fully agree that the critics and accusations made by the NGO Orinoco have a political motivation and these critics have no scientific or technically verified basis. Again, we believe that politically-engaged NGOs which objectives are not the World Heritage but fighting legitimate government that they do not like, should not be considered.

Chairperson:

Russia, did you finish?

The Delegation of Russia:

Yes.

Chairperson:

China, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China would also like to support the statement made by the State Party of Venezuela and supported by the Russian Federation. China agrees with the conservation method measures taken by the State Party to preserve the property. Their efforts need to be commended. The NGOs, all NGOs need to be really impartial. We cannot accept the politicisation of the debate. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the comments of the previous speakers and the concerns you expressed. They are well noted. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We also commend the efforts being undertaken by the State Party to preserve the property. As in all other cases, we do not think politics should have anything to do with heritage preservation and protection. It should be the objective of all of us to preserve heritage, and therefore, politicisation should be avoided, at the very least at this forum. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to support the statement made by Venezuela on this point. And we think that the measures taken by the State Party to preserve the property should be commended and we also believe that we do not have to politicise the work of our Committee. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brazil commends the efforts made by Venezuela in the preservation of this important area which is neighbouring our country. We believe that the dialogue established between the State Party and the Advisory Bodies is fluid and is moving with respect. We are against any politicisation of these issues in this Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. We join all the previous speakers in welcoming efforts made by the State Party of Venezuela in preserving this property. We also welcome the constructive engagement and cooperation between the Secretariat, the Advisory Bodies and the State Party. We do not think it is the best way or approach politicising a matter which is about conservation of heritage sites. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comments. They are all well noted. Sweden, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Sweden:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Sweden the floor. I am making this joint intervention on behalf of the following twelve countries: Belgium, Denmark, Colombia, Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and Sweden.

Let me start by congratulating you on your prominent leadership with which you have been conducting this meeting. We are grateful to the People's Republic of China for hosting this meeting. Our gratitude also goes to the distinguished members of the Committee, as well as the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for their valuable scientific expertise which constitutes a fundamental part of the World Heritage system.

We would like to share some of our observations made during the discussions concerning Item 7B. We hope that this will be considered in the deliberations ahead, not least concerning nominations and the nominations reform.

Firstly, the international community has agreed that conservation of World Heritage is of utmost importance for sustainable development, confirmed in policy documents adopted and in the 2030 Agenda. We need to advance our understanding of what it means to treat heritage as a finite resource in the context of sustainable development.

Secondly, we have observed a worrying trend of hesitancy in using mechanisms available under the Convention, such as in danger listing and sending Reactive Monitoring missions at an early stage, often against the advice of the Advisory Bodies. We urge the Committee to help change the negative perceptions of these important tools and all be reminded of successful examples, bearing in mind the importance of respecting the rules that we have adopted and regularly revised.

Finally, we are anticipating caution ahead when it comes to nominations where the OUV has not been proven or fully established. Inscribing sites prematurely will have a severe impact on future state of conservation reporting and on the overall credibility of the Convention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comments, they are well noted. Now, River Without Boundaries, you have the floor for a one minute for your intervention.

Observer-Rivers Without Boundaries:

Thank you, Your Excellency, for letting me speak on behalf of the Lake Baikal. The ecological crisis unfolding at the Lake Baikal is complicated by the crisis in management. Therefore, we want to congratulate the States Parties concerned and the Committee members on adopting a comprehensive Decision that addresses most urgent threats and provides a road for improving overall management of the property and the basin on which it depends. We hope that now the States Parties concerned will without any delay decide how to implement your decision to address the current crisis. To save Lake Baikal we all need to improve timely communication on the key issues, including communication between States Parties and civil society organisations as legitimate stakeholders who also assist participation by local communities. We are deeply concerned, with a request to silence NGOs expressed by one of the States Parties at this session. To assist the implementation of your wise decision, we pledge to cooperate with all actors and we look forward to in-depth assessment of progress on each issue in Kazan next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more comments. Dear colleagues, now we will start with our agenda Item 8 devoted to the nomination process and the Draft Decision 44 COM 8. I invite Mr. Alessandro Balsamo Head of the Nominations Unit at the World Heritage Centre to briefly present Document 8. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. At its 42nd session in its Decision 42 COM 8, the Committee decided to establish a new general Item 8 to allow discussion on different aspects inherent to the nomination process. This year, Document WHC/21/44.COM/8 is divided into seven parts and has two information documents associated with, plus another document available through a web link. For time constraints in my presentation, I will not present all of these.

In terms of the reflection on the reform of the nomination process, last Saturday you have heard the presentation of the Chairperson of the ad hoc working group which took the lead in further elaborating on the proposed concrete changes prepared by the small drafting group convened to undertake this task. We do not need to handle the substance of the presentation and I like the consensual character of the ad hoc working group outcome. As you know, the related Items 11 and 12 have been opened at the same time, while the reform, particularly the introduction of the Preliminary Assessment in the nomination process are discussed in the context of the consultative body created to deal with the budget.

Concerning the reflection on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories, the document includes as Annex 1 the report of the experts meeting that was held in Paris on 4-6 December 2019, organised by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre thanks to the financial support of the governments of Australia, France, Kuwait and the Republic of Korea, as well as in kind support of the African World Heritage Fund. The meeting brought together 29 experts from different constituencies and backgrounds from all regions of the world. Annex 2 is an independent study on sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memory which was prepared at the request of the World Heritage Centre with the financial support of the Republic of Korea.

For the third component of the reflection encouraged by the World Heritage Committee to further deepen its analysis and broaden the participation of experts in this new reflection, ICOMOS prepared a second discussion paper on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts and the World Heritage Convention. The outcomes of the reflection process undertaken so far is unanimous in considering that sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories do not relate to the purpose or scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*.

On 18 January 2021, the Secretariat organised an online information meeting to present the outcomes of the three components of the reflection. And ahead of this, in November 2020, a special webpage was created on the Centre website to gather the documents related to the reflection. 236 participants registered for the online meeting and 153 from 81 different States Parties actively participated. The main concerns raised at that meeting was that States Parties were not included in the reflection process. In this sense, given the broad spectrum of interest covered by this topic, it was suggested, maybe, that the reflection could be undertaken by the General Assembly of States Parties.

I will just terminate this brief presentation by mentioning that in Document 8 also includes an independent analysis of the Global Strategy which is available as an online document. This analysis was prepared in light of Decision 43 COM 8 of the World Heritage Committee and Resolution 22 GA 9 of the General Assembly recommending that considerations be given to using the opportunity of the 50th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, in 2022, to undertake our reflection on the Global Strategy. The findings could serve as a basis for further reflection on this very important topic. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo, for your presentation. I would like to inform you that this Item will remain open to take into account the debate and all comments held under Agenda Items 8A, 8B, 8C 8D and 8E. As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3 the Committee decided that the Agenda Items 8A, 8C, 8D and 8E would be adopted without debate. The Draft Decision 44 COM.8 will be adopted once we have completed the examination of Items 8A through 8E. Just before proceeding with this Agenda Item, the Advisory Bodies wish to make a joint statement. I give the floor to ICOMOS to read the joint statement. ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Je me permets de faire cette déclaration sur le document 8 au nom des deux organisations consultatives, l'UICN et l'ICOMOS. L'UICN et l'ICOMOS souhaitent mettre en lumière trois éléments principaux du document. Premièrement, la réforme du processus de proposition d'inscription. L'UICN et l'ICOMOS continuent de soutenir fermement la réforme en cours du processus de proposition d'inscription. Cette réforme vise à restaurer et à renforcer la crédibilité et l'équilibre de la Liste du patrimoine mondial par le développement de propositions d'inscription de qualité pour des sites qui présentent un fort potentiel pour démontrer une valeur universelle exceptionnelle. Nous considérons qu'il s'agit de l'une des réformes les plus importantes du système du patrimoine mondial. L'accent mis sur le renforcement du dialogue entre les États parties

et les organisations consultatives à un stade en amont du processus de proposition d'inscription permettra de réduire les risques et les coûts globaux liés à l'élaboration de dossiers ayant peu de chances d'aboutir. Deuxièmement, l'ICOMOS et l'UICN souhaitent souligner l'importance des zones tampons pour soutenir la valeur universelle exceptionnelle des biens. Cela a déjà été reconnu par le Comité au point 7 sur l'état de conservation, y compris la nécessité d'améliorer leur conception et leur efficacité en termes de protection et de gestion. En ce qui concerne les propositions d'inscription, même si l'établissement de zones tampons n'est pas une obligation des orientations, leur efficacité pour protéger l'environnement immédiat des biens a été démontrée. Ainsi, l'UICN et l'ICOMOS suggèrent que les conseils et références portant sur les zones tampons soient revus et mis à jour. Finalement, l'ICOMOS a contribué à la réflexion globale demandée par le Comité sur les sites associant mémoire de conflit récent et autres mémoires négatives et conflictuelles par sa participation à la réunion d'experts de 2019 et par la production d'un deuxième document à la demande du Comité. Ce nouveau papier a été préparé sur la base d'une vaste consultation dans toutes les régions du monde. Il tente de répondre aux questions soulevées dans le premier document et examine la façon dont la Convention du patrimoine mondial pourrait prendre en compte ces sites et si les questions doctrinales pourraient empêcher une telle prise en compte. L'ICOMOS reste à la disposition du Comité du patrimoine mondial pour participer à toute discussion ultérieure sur ce sujet. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your comments. I would like to know whether there are any comments on these agenda items. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have seen that Uganda requested the floor. I will request Uganda to speak first. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Uganda, you have the floor first.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. The Delegation of Uganda submitted amendments to the Draft Decision on the sites associated with memories of recent conflicts as outlined in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8. The item relates to three decisions of the World Heritage Committee during its 42nd session namely Decisions 42 COM 5A, 42 COM 8, 42 COM 8B.24. We took note of an expert meeting on sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memory organised by the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France on 4-6 December 2019.

Thanks to the commitment of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of South Africa at the 42nd session with a view to contributing to the global reflection on World Heritage nominations related to such sites of recent conflicts on the African continent, a meeting of African experts and an inter-ministerial meeting were hosted by South Africa on 6-9 April 2021. Chair, the said meeting reviewed the report and recommendations of the experts meeting on the matter held in Paris, between 4-6 December 2019, the ICOMOS paper on the said sites, the World Heritage Convention and the study by O. Beazley and C. Cameron of 2020.

The meeting differed from the experts' conclusion agreeing that the sites associated with memories of recent conflicts have instead great potential related to the purpose, spirit and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*.

Chair, given the above divergent views among experts, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre regarding how the sites associated with memories of recent conflicts relate to the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*, Uganda proposes an amendment to the Draft Decision to broaden the scope of the reflections to accommodate other views not currently reflected in the existing report. The amendment requests that the outcomes of the broaden reflection be documented by the Secretariat for attention of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would firstly like to thank the Secretariat for the detailed and well-prepared expert studies that have been presented to this Committee on the issue of memory sites. These studies pose important questions for reflection, such as how to establish the Outstanding Universal Value of a site when it is the object of different, sometimes, conflicting perceptions. It also raises concern that should not be taken lightly about the risk of divisiveness and politicisation that may result from the nomination of memory sites to the World Heritage List. However, we would not share the conclusion that these sites do not relate to the purposes and scope of the 1972 Convention, nor will we agree that they contradict the broader purpose of UNESCO to build the foundation of peace,

and the inclusion of 18 such sites on the List can only support this view. In fact, one of these sites, the Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site, has been inscribed by Brazil on the World Heritage List as a site of conscience to help confront painful memories in order to seek peace and reconciliation with the past. We will thus not uphold the exclusion of the whole category of memory sites from the nomination process. In this sense, we welcome the contributions to this debate that has been made by our friend from the Africa group and support their view that we need to broaden the scope of reflection on this issue, to accommodate perceptions that are not currently reflected in the existing report.

For this reason, and taking into consideration the necessity of thorough examination of this topic by the States Parties to the Convention before the final decision is adopted, we present an amendment that complements the amendment from Uganda, which we endorse strongly, proposing the creation of an open-ended working group to discuss the question and present its conclusion to the 45th session of the Committee.

Although presented by Brazil, we would like to stress that this proposal also reflects views expressed by different States Parties to the Convention including members of this Committee as well as Observer countries. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia would like to begin by acknowledging the significant number of nominations in this session and commends the States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the Centre for progressing these during what has been a very challenging time with the global pandemic.

Looking ahead to the 50th Anniversary of the Convention next year, we recognise the need to progress the aim of the Global Strategy for a representative balanced and credible World Heritage List. We still have a long way to go to address the underrepresentation of many States Parties on the World Heritage List. In this regard, we recognise the professional standards of the Advisory Bodies and their detailed and informed evaluations and the importance of their role in this technically based Convention, including initiatives such as the recognition of mixed properties and cultural landscapes and the good work they are doing in building capacities in Small Islands Developing States. We would also recognise here the need to increase the active participation of indigenous people and local communities in the nomination process and in having their values recognised on the World Heritage List.

For these reasons, Australia has championed the introduction of the Preliminary Assessment. We, like other Committee members and States Parties who contributed to this reform, see the enormous benefits it will have both in contributing to the aim and objectives of the Global Strategy and to successful outcomes for States Parties in the nomination process. We acknowledge that the Preliminary Assessment will have a cost. However, in the medium to long term, this reform will result in a reduction of budgetary pressure by reducing the overall cost of nomination and future state of conservation reporting. We see it as an investment in the future of the site. In relation to the issue at the utmost importance for the future of the Convention, is the question whether sites associated with recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the Convention. This decision is before us at this session to decide and how best to progress the dialogue.

We thank Uganda for their amendment and, in particular, their suggestion or proposal for future regional based dialogue on this matter. If needed, we would be pleased to be part of a drafting group to resolve the text of this Decision. Australia is also working with other States Parties on an amendment to this Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have some technical problems, but hopefully you can hear me. Distinguished members of the Committee, dear colleagues and State members of the Convention, our aim for this session, as it was in Baku and in Manama, is to do our best for the integrity of the Convention and accomplish what is expected from us as Committee members. We should never compromise the OUV and the highest scientific standards and we should not bend the potential of the scientifically based mechanism of referral and deferral. Norway has noted that several countries have withdrawn their nominations and we complement this decision. These countries are Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, Greece, Latvia, Slovenia and Spain.

Secondly, we are all aware of the World Heritage List being unbalanced. There are far more European sites and cultural heritage sites than natural and mixed sites. During our time in the World Heritage Committee, this list has become even more unbalanced. 48 new World Heritage properties were inscribed in Manama and Baku. Of these 48 World Heritage sites, and only in order to show the gap, nearly half are in Europe, only three are African and only three are from the Latin American and Caribbean Region. Again, of the 48 inscriptions, 37 are cultural sites, seven are natural and four are mixed sites.

The Committee has an important job to do. At the last Committee meeting in Baku, we endorsed a nomination reform which asked for actions providing long-term results. The ad hoc working group successfully chaired by China has worked very hard to follow up on the Baku Decision on Preliminary Assessment. This reform will bring dialogue between the parties implicated and provide early advice, guidance and ensure that high quality nomination meeting the highest scientific standards are presented for evaluation and consideration by the Committee. We also believe that the reformed nomination process when rightfully done will economise the process itself and contribute to less politicisation. We look forward to the discussions on Preliminary Assessment and the implementation of the reform which we consider crucial in order for the Global Strategy for a balanced and credible World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We would also like to join Uganda in supporting its proposal for modification on the Decision regarding the inscription of sites associated with recent conflicts. Mr. Chair, all proposals, we believe, should be analysed on a case-by-case basis based on the merits and potential OUV. As a matter of principle, no candidate should be a priori excluded from review and no organ is entitled to declare the content of a memorial as divisive by nature before any analysis. Declaring all sites related to recent conflicts are by nature associated with negative memories and therefore rejecting candidacies before any specific review falls short, we believe, of UNESCO standards of objectivity and transparency in decision-making. The role of consulted experts is to guide, inform consideration to the World Heritage Committee raising possible risks associated with any proposal should be guided, neither block nor frustrate action by the Committee. The World Heritage Committee must uphold all the highest standards of fairness and equity and avoid any bias or double standard. Rules and exceptions should be applied equally to all proposals. The current scenario of admission of exception is in contradiction with UNESCO's basic standards of transparency and equity.

We align ourselves with the African World Heritage Fund recommendations by which African Ministers recommended that the World Heritage Committee should give a fair and equal opportunity to sites associated with memories of recent conflicts for inscription as World Heritage, as these sites support the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. By doing so, the World Heritage Committee and States Parties avoid pre-empting their current and future potential in demonstrating credible OUV, authenticity and integrity, as well as protection and management systems. Such sites have a facilitating role in achieving the above shared principal rights. It is with these principles in mind that we fully support the proposal put forward by Uganda. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Chairperson, the government of South Africa takes this opportunity to thank the People's Republic of China and the World Heritage Committee for organising such a successful Committee meeting under such unprecedented circumstances. In 2018, during the second session of the World Heritage Committee in Manama, Bahrain, I made a commitment that the government of South Africa will host an expert meeting on the relationship of sites of memories of recent conflicts to the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*, in order to contribute to reflections on this subject. This commitment was informed by the second session's resolution calling for a thorough philosophical and practical reflection process on whether and how sites associated with memories of recent conflict relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. This commitment was also informed by the divergent views in this matter within the World Heritage community.

The Republic of South Africa and the African World Heritage Fund, therefore, hosted a virtual African expert meeting and inter-ministerial meeting on sites of memories associated with recent conflicts and the World Heritage Convention on 6-9 April 2021. Chairperson, these African experts and an inter-ministerial meeting concluded that sites of memories associated with recent conflicts do relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. This is so, as some of these sites have forged our common destiny as nations, continents and the globe, they promote a shared purpose and scope for the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines* and support the constitutional purpose of UNESCO.

One of the philosophical foundations of South Africa's new democracy and the new nation that we are building is reconciliation. A value and principle which underpins the shared purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines* and support the constitutional purpose of UNESCO, and therefore, our framework of intervention on sites of memories of recent conflicts have to be underpinned by that foundation. The conceptual framework on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts that guided both the experts meeting in Paris in December 2019 and the subsequent study, has included negative and divisive memories and cannot therefore be correct. South Africa, therefore, supports the amended decision presented by Uganda which recommends that the Secretariat incorporate the outcomes of all the reflections of sites of memories of recent

conflicts in their final report for the consideration by the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I wish to submit for your consideration, Chairperson, and acceptance, and I thank you for your attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, the floor is to Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. This is a very sensitive issue and if you allow me, as an Ambassador but also as a former diplomat, I have taken part in a lot of discussions on historical memory and I know how sensitive the topic is. I share the views of the Ambassador of Uganda and I understand what they are putting forward. The issue is not just understanding what they are putting forward, but we need to think about the repercussions on the rest of the world. We have a vocation this year, the General Conference will take place before the 45th session of this World Heritage Committee and therefore this would allow us, if we could, to come up with a working group which could draft some clear conclusions on how we could address this issue part of the Convention and ahead of the 45th session. Because it is important to take into account memory in order to build peace and coexistence as was referred to by the South African delegate.

The world cannot live without memory. We need to build our future and our present and for this we need to address the past. We need to ensure that this memory makes our coexistence better and therefore recognising the universal value of each nomination requires a deepened discussion ahead of the General Conference. We understand the comment put forward by our colleague, however, we need to prevent any form of dispute on these issues, so we need to save time for reflections ahead of this General Conference so we can come up with a concrete proposal to the 45th session. The proposal made by Australia seems good to us and, as was mentioned by the Ambassador of Brazil, we wish to join the consensus, of course. However, we require the support of all the Committee in order to do this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. The Republic of Nigeria would like to join fellow member States in the amendment proposed for this Decision while acknowledging and appreciating the great effort from the Secretariat to undertake the reflections on this subject. It is also noted with great concern that the diversity of views amongst experts is not reflected in the final report of the Paris meeting in Document INF8.1, nor in its subsequent study as in Document INF8.2.

Mr. Chair, the conclusion that sites associated with memories of recent conflicts do not relate to the purpose and scope of the Convention only reflects the position of one group of experts, the majority in the Paris meeting, but not necessarily the views of all experts engaged in the reflection. For instance, the list of participants of the Paris expert meeting reveals a concerning disproportion of regional representation. This has contributed greatly to the exclusion of divergent views in the conclusion put forward in the report.

Mr. Chair, consequently, it is therefore considered that the conclusion in the Draft Decision does not reflect all the specificities and diversities of views of experts from different regions. Hence, Nigeria supports the amendment of this decision to include reflections on the subject matter by other groups. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, The Thai Delegation would like to share a few points. We believe that the 50th Anniversary of the Convention in 2022 will serve as an opportunity to undertake a reflection on the Global Strategy. The deliberations on the impact of the Global Strategy should focus on addressing the remaining and significant challenges in order to encourage and subsequently to lead to a representative and more regionally balanced and credible List of World Heritage sites.

In order to achieve a balanced List of World Heritage site, Thailand wishes to emphasise the importance of capacity building and enhanced knowledge exchange. A closer dialogue between the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and States Parties is therefore crucial. Second, Thailand supports a two phase nomination process which includes a Preliminary Assessment as a first phase of the nomination process. The Preliminary Assessment process would enhance dialogue between States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies at an early stage of the nomination process. Strengthening the capacity building to improve quality of nominations should be the key focus.

Thirdly, with regard to the nomination of sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories, Thailand is of the view that it should be in line with the purpose of UNESCO which is to foster world

peace, education and reconciliation among people's nations. Therefore, an approach to nomination must be sensitive, inclusive and include dialogue towards reconciliation and harmony among all States Parties and stakeholders concerned. We would welcome Brazil's proposal for an open-ended working group.

Lastly, regarding the deliberation on the concept of buffer zones. While recognising that the establishment of buffer zones is relevant and enhance effective conservation of the OUV of a World Heritage property, guidance and common understanding of what constitutes an effective buffer zone should be developed and it should not be mandatory for the purposes of nomination or the consideration of the state of conservation report. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. Guatemala wishes to thank those that took part in improving the nomination process. Some issues have been discussed as part of this global discussion [...] *[Inaudible due to technical issues]*

[Written contribution, translated from Spanish, at the invitation of the Chairperson as the overall delivery was not possible]

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate the effort made to review and improve the nomination process. We understand the difficulties expressed as a result of this global reflection. We hope that the recommendations issued will help to improve the nomination process, improving the quality of the dossiers, to avoid so many amendments being made to the draft decisions during future meetings of the Committee. We certainly have a problem when so many draft decisions and amendments vary so radically, as it shows that we are working with different criteria for evaluating nomination dossiers. We must remember that our work must be carried out under scientific and objective criteria, so there should not be such a difference between the evaluations of the Advisory Bodies and the experts of the Committee members. Of course, in some cases, amendments are necessary to improve some aspects, clarify certain details or raise new recommendations, but the radical transformation of decisions should not be the most common way of working in the evaluation of nominations by the Committee. Regarding sites of negative memories, we agree with the observations made by other members of this Committee, since in many cases, spaces of memory can help contemporary society, especially future generations, to resolve some differences inherited from negative events, for the construction of peace through recognition and justice. Finally, we hope that the proposed improvements, capacity building and the suggested preliminary assessment will help to fulfill the overall strategy to achieve a representative, balanced and credible list. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Excuse me. Guatemala, there is no interpretation. Thank you for your comment, but I did not hear the interpretation, I would like to ask you to send your intervention to the Secretariat because we did not have any interpretation. Next is Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We support the intervention and amendments submitted by Uganda on the Draft Decision related to the sites associated with memories of recent conflicts. We thank the Secretariat for convening the experts meeting on this topic in December 2019 and the information session held earlier this year. There is considerable evidence that sites associated with memories of recent conflicts not only have the potential of OUV, depending on the narrative put forward, but also fulfil the shared principles of UNESCO. They can promote peace and reconciliation and intercultural dialogue which are all in line with the UNESCO Constitution and with the spirit, purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention. We do not understand the different arguments raised on this important issue, Egypt is opposed to any form of politicisation of the organisation and it is therefore of the utmost importance that we, as Committee members, adopt clear criterias for possible inscriptions of such sites. I thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Chair. China commends the efforts undertaken by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies as regards the reform of the nomination process and improving representation as well as studies on sites associated with negative memories. China believes that the pandemic has had very complex impacts on conservation work and proposes new challenges when they come to nomination and evaluation processes. We wish to see the Advisory Bodies strengthening cooperation with States Parties and exploring innovative working methods to overcome challenges in order to complete evaluations in time. China also wishes to

strengthen the geographical representation of experts and also to see more young experts taking part in the work of the Advisory Bodies, in order to bring greater diversity and dynamism.

China is pleased that the Salonga National Park was removed from the World Heritage in Danger list. This is a very good piece of news. However, China also observes that the number of nominations of African sites are very few, despite the aim of the reform which is to improve the geographical balance. In reality, the results expected have not been achieved. The geographical imbalance has actually accentuated. China wishes the Advisory Bodies and the States Parties to work together to strengthen the representation of African nominations. China wishes to thank experts and the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies who have undertaken studies on sites of memories associated with recent conflicts. In our views these studies are necessary and call for better geographical balance among experts.

2020 will be the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. On this occasion, we hope all States Parties can undertake a deep reflection on the state of our Convention and how to conserve the OUV. We wish to strike a balance between sustainable development and conservation. We also wish to strengthen representation of the African World Heritage and to ensure research on World Heritage progresses in order to open up a new chapter in the conservation of World Heritage. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to ask Dr Rössler to answer the questions.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair and thanks to all of you for this very important debate. We very much welcome the comments by the Committee members. We also noted that on the sites of memories associated with recent conflicts a number of Committee members including Brazil and Spain and others refer to a potential risk and sensitivity and that further dialogue is really required.

You know that over time the World Heritage Committee has moved very carefully in this regard starting from the first inscription of Auschwitz in 1979 to meetings we had over time. We discussed it with you, we had the presentations of different reports on the 18th January. I think what is important, and you have underlined that in your interventions, is that the threshold of the OUV needs to be kept in mind, and also, I think what is very important is the global scope of this Convention.

In terms of the reformed process of nominations and the Preliminary Assessment, I would just like to recall that this Document 8 is linked to the other documents 11 of the ad hoc working group, 12 of the *Operational Guidelines* and 14, and we may be come back once the Budget group has come to its conclusion.

I would like to be very brief, although I could say many things, Mr. Chair, on the matter of the Global Strategy which was mentioned by a number of you. When we looked at the Global Strategy in 1994, we had a number of expert meetings and the idea was to work towards a credible and balanced and representative World Heritage List. We looked into two different areas. One was the regional representativeness and the other one was categories. As you have seen with that study on the categories, we achieved quite an improvement because new categories were looked at. We now have more modern heritage, industrial heritage including from Africa with an inscription from Burkina Faso recently and we have cultural landscapes in different regions of the world. But it did not address, as much as we had hope at the time, in 1994, the regional imbalances for many, many reasons. Europe and North America still have around 50 per cent, a little bit lower, 49 per cent and some, but the imbalance persists. It is absolutely crucial that we further discuss this point and I would like to leave it at that.

Maybe Mr. Balsamo would like to add on the point raised by Nigeria, etc. on the experts meeting we had in 2019 and the balance of the representation at this expert meeting. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I now give the floor to Mr. Balsamo.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to add to the participation of experts to the expert meeting that took place in December 2019 in Paris. We actually worked three months, three full months, to look for experts that have both the expertise of the World Heritage Convention and on sites of memories associated with recent conflicts. We have found experts from all the region as I said in my first presentation. Actually, it was one of the most balanced meetings also concerning gender. Bear in mind, when you look at the list of participants that United Nations participants are not representing their countries. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, I see no more comments or questions from the Committee members. As we are not reaching a Draft Decision today, I kindly ask Observers to speak later after the Decision is made on the 30th of July.

We can now proceed with our next Agenda Item. Dear colleagues, dear friends, we are now proceeding with our Agenda Item 8A. The relevant document is Document 8A. As you will remember, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you to proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decision 44 COM 8A. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received no amendments.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8A adopted ^[gave]. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now time to consider nominations of properties to the World Heritage List. I now invite the Secretariat to present the relevant documents and read out the list of nominations for which factual errors notifications have been received and to add some explanations. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you Chair. I would to recall that the relevant document concerning nominations are WHC/21/44COM/8B and WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. The Advisory Bodies evaluation can be found in the following information documents: for ICOMOS WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B.1 and WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B.Add; for IUCN WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B.2 and WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B.2.Add. Let me also recall that document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.3 presents the list of all nominations received by 1st of February 2020 and 1st of February 2021, including those by examination by the World Heritage Committee at its standard 44th session and those foreseen for examination in 2021 and 45th session in 2022 with the indication of those deemed complete. Document WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B4 presents factual errors identified by States Parties in the Advisory Bodies' evaluations and was distributed to you on Saturday, the first day of the Committee session.

I will now read the list of nominations for which factual errors notifications concerning the related evaluation have been received: Republic of Korea, Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat; Thailand, Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex; Austria / Belgium / Czechia / France / Germany / Italy / United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, The Great Spas of Europe; China, Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan; Germany, Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt; India, The Glorious Kakatiya Temples and Gateways – Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Palampet, Jayashankar Bhupalpally District, Telangana State; Iran (Islamic Republic of), Trans-Iranian Railway, Mongolia, Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites, the Heart of Bronze Age Culture; Saudi Arabia, Cultural Rock Arts in Himā Najrān; Spain, Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences; Turkey, Arslantepe Mound; Uruguay, The work of engineer Eladio Dieste: Church of Atlántida; Gabon, Ivindo National Park; Bosnia and Herzegovina / Czech Republic / France / Italy / Montenegro / North Macedonia / Poland / Serbia / Slovakia / Switzerland, Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (extension of 'Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe'); Côte d'Ivoire, Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire; France, Nice, capital of Riviera tourism; Germany, ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz; Germany / Netherlands, Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Lower German Limes; Japan, Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan; Jordan, As-Salt - The Place of Tolerance and Urban Hospitality; Mexico, Franciscan Ensemble of the Monastery and Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption of Tlaxcala (extension of 'Earliest 16th Century Monasteries on the Slopes of Popocatepetl'); Poland, Gdańsk Shipyard – the birthplace of 'Solidarity' and the symbol of the Fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe; Russian Federation, Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales.

We also received two notifications after the deadlines which were not accepted and therefore not included in Document 8B.4. However, as these concern factual corrections to the statement of the OUV, ICOMOS kindly agreed to review them. The two notifications concern the Cordouan Light House, France and Padova Urbs Picta - Scrovegni Chapel in Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles, Italy.

Before the presentation of the concerned nominations by the Advisory Bodies, the Secretariat will announce the related factual errors and notifications received. If the notification of factual errors has an impact on the proposed statement of the OUV, the consequent amendment is already included in the text of the related Draft Decision. Only notifications received by the statutory deadline and submitted in appropriate form of annex 12 to the *Operational Guidelines* have been made available in Document INF.8B.4. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Are there any objections? Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

^[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Chair. We would like to share a thought with you. We have an evaluating body and in the difficult times we have been living through with the pandemic, when everything is difficult for everyone, we are trying to go ahead with the work we have to do. What we see here are a greater quantity of discrepancies in certain evaluation than we usually do. We have seen it in the evaluation of Paseo del Prado. I think it is worth

mentioning it now because there has been another candidacy withdrawn, which given the posture that we have seen on discussions on technical evaluation report on a site is something needed to be added.

We consider if we see the errors contained in dialogue with ICOMOS, if we have subjective differences as to aesthetic judgments or value judgments, I think it is difficult simply to state that flatly. I do not think when we can talk about what is happening in the property or not happening, we can say the proposed property entirely coincides with a biosphere property but we cannot say that either. There are serious contradictions here that are mathematical. You cannot say that 4 equals 10. I think this cannot be the only possible basis for an inscription, but at the same time, I think there is a lack of dialogue here.

We need to see how many of the evaluations made and the instruments used can be improved because if we go on with this increasing number of discrepancies then I think we will see with the Committee many more modifications that there were before, and I think this will weaken everyone's concerns. This was meant to be an honest reflection on the withdrawal of one of our candidacies, on another one which we disagreed about. We try to be upfront and clear about this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Is there any other comment? I see none. Now, I will ask Mr. Balsamo to make some clarifications. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Well, Chair, I do not think there was a precise question asked to be answered. It was more Spain presenting its position on the withdrawal of Ribeira Sacra, Lugo and Orense and following their technical advice as they always did. If there was a precise question, I would be happy to answer.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more comments. Let us proceed and move to the first Draft Decision concerning proposed changes to the names of properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List. I invite Mr. Balsamo to present the changes.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. The proposed name changes of the names of properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List are included in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B. For this session we have received four proposals and to save time, we will present all of them and deal with the related Draft Decisions all at once.

First proposal, at the request of the Australian authorities, the Committee is asked to approve a change to the French and English name to the property Fraser Island inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992. The name of the property becomes K'gari (Fraser Island) in English and K'gari (*Île Fraser*) in French.

Second proposal, at the request of the Kazakh authorities, the Committee is asked to approve a change to the English and French name of the property Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004. The name of the property becomes Petroglyphs of the Archaeological Landscape of Tanbaly in English and *Pétroglyphes du paysage archéologique de Tanbaly* in French.

Third proposal, at the request of the Saudi Arabian authorities, the Committee is asked to approve a change to the English and French name of the Al-Hijr Archaeological Site (Madâin Sâlih) inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008. The name of the property becomes Hegra Archaeological Site (alHijr/Madâ' in Şâlih) in English and *Site archéologique de Hegra* (al-Hijr/Madâ' en Şâlih) in French. Please note that the text of the document for this name change includes a typo in the French name but this has been corrected in the Draft Decision on the screen.

Fourth proposal, at the request of the Spanish authorities, the Committee is asked to approve a change to the English and French name of the property Archaeological Ensemble of Tarraco, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000. The name of the property becomes Archaeological Ensemble of Tarraco in English and *Ensemble archéologique de Tarraco* in French.

Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.1, 44 COM 8B.2, 44 COM 8B.3 and 44 COM 8B.4 are on page 1 of both English and French version of Document 8B. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Are there any questions? I see none. Let us proceed. Now I invite you to adopt Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.1, 2, 3 and 4. Before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decisions proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments to the Decisions.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.1, 8B.2, 8B.3 and 8B.4 adopted ^[gavel].

Our next point deals with the withdrawals of nominations to be examined by the Committee at this session. I invite Mr. Balsamo to read the list of nominations withdrawn at the request of the concerned States Parties. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you Chair, after the publication of Document 8B in which was already the withdrawal of the nomination of The Coptic Monasteries of Wadi al-Natrun by Egypt, we received notification of the following withdrawals: Dominican Republic, Historical and archaeological site of La Isabela; Ethiopia, Holqa Sof Omar: Natural and Cultural Heritage (Sof Omar: Caves of Mystery); Greece, Fortress of Spinalonga; Hungary, from the serial transnational Frontiers of the Roman Empire; Latvia, Grobiņa archaeological ensemble; Slovenia, Classical Karst; Spain, The Ribeira Sacra, Lugo and Orense and the Russian Federation minor boundary modification on Volcanoes of Kamchatka. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Are there any comments? I see none. Let us proceed. Dear colleagues we will now begin with the examination of nominations. I would like to take this opportunity to recall that Committee decisions are based on objectives and scientific considerations and any appraisal made on its behalf must be thoroughly and responsibly carried out. The Committee recognises that such decisions depend upon a) carefully prepared documentation, b) thorough and consistent procedures, c) evaluation by qualified experts, d) if necessary, the use of experts' referees. The Committee is requested to examine the Draft Decisions presented in the relevant documents and in accordance with Paragraph 153 of the *Operational Guidelines* to take its decision. I wish to stress that for a referred nomination there is no new nomination file to be prepared and there is no evaluation mention of the relevant Advisory Body to the site.

Also, as recorded by the Committee in its Decision 42 COM 8 in compliance with the Convention and the *Operational Guidelines*, OUV is recognised at the time of inscription of a property on the World Heritage List and no recognition of OUV is foreseen prior to this stage. I would like to appeal to you all for a strict respect of these important rules during our debate and our decision-making. As you know, considering the latest withdrawals, currently we have 39 nominations to examine between today and Wednesday, as well as 17 minor boundary modification proposals. Given the circumstances of holding this meeting online and the consequent reduce length of the session, we need to apply a strict schedule.

For this reason, I would like to suggest that the examination of nominations that are recommended for inscription and that do not present any particular potential issue be dealt with in a way to avoid repetition of interventions aimed only at congratulating the concerned State Party. To this extent, I will ask for the cooperation of all Committee members and Observers alike to approve the inscription by acclamation and congratulate the State Party in the chat.

Before starting the examination of nominations, I invite Mr. Balsamo to provide some explanations about the order we will be following for the examination. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. As you know, this year, we will be examining two cycles of nominations, those that were proposed to be examined by the Committee in 2020 and those proposed to be examined in 2021. We will first consider the 2020 nominations and then continue with the 2021 nominations. To accommodate the time difference, nominations from the Asia and the Pacific Region will be examined first. And nominations from the Latin America Caribbean Region in the later part of the daily session.

The order of examination of nominations is listed on pages 5 and 6 of both English and French versions of Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B and a more specific timetable indicative for the examination of the nomination was sent to you on 12 of July last. Please note that this timetable is indicative and the exact time at which the individual nomination will be examined will be adjusted according to the progress of the debate. If the daily debate ends earlier than planned, the examination of the nomination originally scheduled at 1:30 pm on the afternoon of the following day will be bought forward. An updated version of the provisional timetable will be available on the World Heritage website after its session. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Just before proceeding with the examination of nominations, the Advisory Bodies wish to make a joint statement concerning the evaluation process of nominations. I give the floor to ICOMOS to read their joint statement. ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Je m'exprime au nom des deux organisations consultatives, l'UICN et l'ICOMOS. L'UICN et l'ICOMOS tiennent à exprimer leur sincère gratitude envers les États parties pour l'excellente coopération déployée pour mener à bien le processus d'évaluation dans cette situation de pandémie mondiale sans précédent. Bien que la COVID-19 ait eu un impact sur le calendrier de certaines évaluations, l'UICN et l'ICOMOS se réjouissent du fait que la plupart des missions techniques d'évaluation ont pu être réalisées dans le respect des conditions sanitaires et de voyage ainsi qu'en conformité avec les orientations. Ce travail a pu être réalisé grâce au soutien supplémentaire extraordinaire fourni tant par les États parties que par les organisations consultatives et grâce à la flexibilité de tous les experts impliqués. L'UICN et l'ICOMOS notent que la pandémie de COVID-19 continue de poser des défis pour les prochaines évaluations et nous comptons ainsi sur la coopération des États parties concernés. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues with your permission I would like to propose a technical break for ten minutes.

Dear colleagues, we will now start the examination of sites proposed for 2020. I am going to call on ICOMOS and IUCN to be concise in their presentations. Thank you in advance for your cooperation. The first nomination we will examine is Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, Saudi Arabia. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS to present this nomination I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to announce that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination which is to be found on page 49 of the Document INF8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān in Saudi Arabia. For this evaluation ICOMOS has received a letter on factual errors notification and has acknowledged some of these errors. Located in an arid, mountainous area of southwest Saudi Arabia, the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān includes a substantial collection of high-quality rock art depicting hunting, fauna, flora and lifestyles in a cultural continuity for a period of 7,000 years. It contains also archaeological sites, ancient wells and a toll station of the main Arabian desert south-north caravan route. Through additional information provided during the evaluation period, specificities of the nominated property, including historical context and cultural sphere within the regional context, were defined and assisted to demonstrate the significance of Ḥimā Najrān in terms of the artistic quality and the represented ancient beliefs and traditions throughout a long span of time. The nominated property demonstrates Criteria (iii). Criteria (i), (ii) and (v) have not been met.

This serial nomination consists of six component parts within a single buffer zone. It encompasses the region's largest and most significant concentration of rock art and rock inscription sites. Through exchanges of additional information during the evaluation period, ICOMOS concludes that the boundaries of the nominated property are adequate and encourages the State Party to advance archaeological research in the buffer zone. The requirements of integrity and authenticity have been met. The property is protected at the highest national level as an archaeological monument. The management plan identifies clear sets of objectives and responsibilities. The state of conservation of the nominated property is adequate.

In summary, ICOMOS' key concerns relate to the boundary adjustment, developing a conservation programme and strengthening of the management system. Indeed, the boundary of the buffer zone could be enlarged to include Jabal al-Kawbab and part of Jabal al-Qāra, which are adjacent to the proposed buffer zone, thereby adding a hill area that contains many important sites. The database of site records for all components of the property and the buffer zone should be completed and made accessible to the property staff. An overall conservation programme is needed, and the efficiency of the monitoring programme should be improved. The management system requires staff on site and in local offices with expertise and relevance specialisation, such as heritage management and rock art conservation. The management plan and the tourism management plan should be fully aligned.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the nomination of Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, Saudi Arabia, be referred back to the State Party for the following main reasons:

- Provide a map showing the inventoried heritage sites within the nominated areas and buffer zone;
- Enlarge the buffer zone to include Jabal al-Kawbab and parts of Jabal al-Qār;
- Complete and make accessible to staff a database of site records for every known rock art and inscription site;
- Create and implement a conservation programme and a monitoring programme and engaging additional staff;

- Carry out Heritage Impact Assessments for all projects related to tourism activities in Najd Khayrān before their implementation.

ICOMOS has included a number further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property such as the restoration of the aboveground walling for the wells and water channels at Himā. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. I see there are representatives asking for the floor. Dear Committee members, I understand that you need to express your views, opinions, feelings and solidarity, however, due to the time constraints, without any intention to prevent you from taking the floor, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief on your general comments, so that we can move quickly to consider the Draft Decision. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to begin by thanking the State Party of Saudi Arabia for nominating this outstanding property to the World Heritage List. It is a testimony to many civilisations. It is also one of the largest concentrations of rock art and non-architectural rock inscriptions that this esteemed Committee has ever considered for inscription.

Rock art reflects humankind's rich spiritual and cultural heritage and has great significance to its creators and their descendants. It also opens us large windows into the lives and beliefs of our ancestors. Their narrative transcends boundaries and speaks of humanity survival and man's need to leave an imprint of his life such as carving the stone. The passage of human groups through the Himā region led to the establishment of an unparalleled and historic library of rocks which includes large number of rock art and inscriptions describing Arabia from the socioeconomic and political components. The site of Himā Najrān is not just an archaeological site of exceptional importance that transcends its OUV, it is a living tradition of rock art and epigraphy production. In addition, more than 100,000 rock art and inscription cover Himā Najrān which spans an area in excess of 130 km².

This site represents historic humanity in its physical evidence of human presence in Arabia with different stages of human development displayed on rock art panels, ready to be studied and explored. Activities of humans such as hunting, gathering and dancing are depicted with artistic inscriptions that date back to the Stone Age, Bronze Age and the period of Arabian Kingdoms. ICOMOS evaluation reconfirms these exceptional values and the assessments clearly confirmed that the site meets all requirements for inscription as described in the *Operational Guidelines*. Mr. Chair, members of the Committee, we believe that the site of Himā Najrān warrants an inscription on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway congratulates Saudi Arabia with this nomination. Distinguished members of the Committee, Norway would like to say a few words, as we are starting our work on Item 8B. Norway observes that many amendments are submitted which move the Draft Decision towards inscription contrary to the advice and Draft Decision proposed by the Advisory Bodies. There are good scientific reasons for a referral and in particular a deferral. These mechanisms are here to assist the State Party in preparing nominations which meet the conditions of OUV and hence be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Unfortunately, these tools are not always use as intended to help the State Party with presenting a complete and successful nomination.

The signals given by the Committee not using the tools mentioned is that their existence is ignored and experts' advice seem to be less relevant. Hopefully, the nomination reform will help us to solve these challenges. Norway will, in our work in this Committee, emphasize that all recommendations and requests in the evaluations and Draft Decisions and only justified criteria should be retained in the amendments and decisions to be made. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would like to thank the Delegation of Bahrain for the clarification that has been presented to the Committee concerning this nomination. We also thank the Delegation of Saudi Arabia for the information that we have received concerning the measures that have been adopted in order to comply with the Advisory Bodies' requests in order for this site to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

We understand the State Party has accepted all recommendations made by ICOMOS and has already started their implementation in the short time that has lapsed since the report was made public. Besides having received the clear commitment of Saudi Arabia, the Committee will also be able to access the State Party actions, as the amendments proposed by Bahrain also request that a report on the implementation of the recommendations be presented at its 46th session.

In our view, this is more than sufficient for inscribing the Himā Cultural area on the World Heritage List with a new name suggested by ICOMOS and accepted by Saudi Arabia. We are, therefore, glad to support these amendments and inscription of this site. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their comprehensive assessment report submitted to the Committee. I also wish to thank the State Party of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their tremendous efforts developed in preparing the nomination dossier for the Himā Cultural area.

In fact, the Himā Cultural area is a unique example of extremely well-preserved petroglyphs that cover more than 7,000 years. The beautiful human and animal figures and the inscriptions carved on these exceptional panels left a testimony of the culture of the ancient caravans for the Arabian Peninsula and are of particular importance in the records of ancient language and writing systems: Musnad, Aramaic-Nabatean, South-Arabian, Thamudic, Greek and, of course, Arabic.

In addition to the cultural development, the animals and plants represented in the petroglyphs inform us also about the climatic and environmental change and how they impacted the local landscape and ecological changes. For these reasons, the importance of this property is not limited to the State Party, but also it can be directly extended to all countries of the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East which were closely interconnected through ancient caravan roads. All considered there is no doubt that we support fully the amendment proposed by the Delegation of Bahrain and we are totally confident in the capability of the State Party of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to implement the recommendations by ICOMOS and submit an updated report on the progress to the World Heritage Centre by the end of 2022. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor. Australia supports the inscription of the property on criterion (iii). The serial property presents some profound testimony to human life along the ancient caravan road. We also welcome the inscription of a third rock art site on the World Heritage List and with this increasing the regional representation of this extraordinary and ancient form of human communication and expression. With the honourable representative of Russia, we also note that the recommendations of the Draft Decision have all been included in the amendments and the State Party is committed to actioning these recommendations. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. The Russian Delegation would like to highlight the significant effort of the State Party of Saudi Arabia in the documentation, conservation and management of this impressive and at the same time complex archaeological site. These efforts allow now the international community to enjoy the unique rock art and archaeological heritage of Himā Najrān.

We strongly believe that the inscription of this property would contribute to sustainability and conservation as well as to the international recognition of the rock art sites represented in the World Heritage List. The high level of professionalism and capacities of Saudi Arabia would ensure the conservation and management of this property in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. We would like to clarify that the State Party has provided maps of inventoried sites and all that is pertaining to the site archaeological rock art survey stored in the research centre as well as the regional museum in Najrān. As you know, later in the course of this session, the Russian nomination of Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea will be presented for your attention. That is why we have complete notion of all difficulties connected with the preservation of prehistoric sites as well as their outstanding importance for human history and development.

Therefore, we urge to inscribe the property on the World Heritage List enriching the representation and diversity of prehistoric sites on the List and promoting the interchange of expert knowledge in this respect. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to express our support and agreement to the amendments put forward to inscribe Himā Najrān on the World Heritage List. We commend the State Party for its efforts and commitments to sustain proper management and conservation of this site among others by strengthening its capacities.

The State Party has launched various programmes to build specialist capacities of staff through the development of a research centre for rock art studies as well as the current implementation of capacity building programmes with international partners to enhance expertise which includes on the ground training. The State Party has ensured local professionals are involved in all expert field work and programmes to advance their knowledge and skills. They are also endorsing academic scholarship in the field of conservation and rock art and have ensured that all relevant data specific to the site and rock art in general is accessible to researchers.

We, therefore, agree with the proposed amendments and would like to see the site inscribed on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Egypt would like to sincerely congratulate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the submission of the nomination of the site Cultural Rock Arts in Himā Najrān for inscription on the World Heritage List. We also wish to thank ICOMOS for their assessment of the nomination. As is shown in the amendments presented to the Draft Decision, we believe that the site should be inscribed in this session. Mr. Chairman, we noted the ICOMOS recommendation to extend the buffer zone to include Jabal al-Kawbab parts of Jabal al-Qāra. We would like to ask the State Party to provide more information about this recommendation. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We also fully support the amendments put forward by Bahrain and sincerely congratulate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for bringing forth for inscription this very important site which is really a common heritage of humanity. This is the largest concentration of rock art, at least in our inscription list there is not such site. The OUV is undisputable, the State Party has taken measures to comply with the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies, it has shown strong commitment to ensure that there are sufficient management systems and conservation programmes. We, therefore, believe that this site should be inscribed during this session.

Mr. Chair, we are also of the view that the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies are just recommendations, they are not carved in stone, but in this case, the recommendations were followed through and therefore there are no reasons why this site should not be inscribed at this session. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. According to the ICOMOS evaluation, the property bears an exceptional testimony to a long series of cultural traditions, arguably to the Palaeolithic and at the very least to the Neolithic and stretching from then until the present day. People passed through, left a pristine record of their presence and passage in the form of rock inscriptions and rock art. The former in some cases describing their living context and environment. The themes in the rock art reflecting the changing character of the environment and how they adapted to it.

We note the ICOMOS recommendation regarding carrying a Heritage Impact Assessment for any projects related to tourism activities at the property before they are implemented. Based on the State Party latest update, there are no tourism development projects taking place and, in case of potential tourist development project, the State Party has expressed its commitment to implementing them as clearly explained in the amendment. This is manifested through a number of royal decrees which clearly stipulate that there should not be any removal, modification or

damage to the historical or archaeological sites and monuments. In addition, the Saudi Bureau of Antiquities Museum and Urban Heritage also clearly outlines the protocols and standards to which concerned government authorities must commit.

As ICOMOS evaluation also declares, the legal protection of the nominated property is adequate. We also note that the State Party has incorporated peer methods in their capacity building programme, to ensure staff across all Saudi Arabia inscribed World Heritage sites, as well as sites on the tentative and national lists are equipped with the skills and understanding needed to perform their duties.

In view of all of the above, Hungary supports the amendment submitted by Bahrain regarding the inscription of Himā Cultural area on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii) as one of the most impressive archaeological sites in Saudi Arabia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thailand would like to express our appreciation to the State Party of Saudi Arabia for investing its efforts and resources for the protection and preservation of the nominated property with its deep historical roots. In particular, we commend the effort by the State Party in its commitment to provide accessibility and integrity of data for the nominated property. We value data that is consistent and periodically updated to ensure the effective monitoring, conservation, protection and management of the property. The digital database will provide an up-to-date information on the site and is available to staff and research professionals via various partnerships both at the national and international level.

Thailand, therefore, fully supports the amendment proposed by Bahrain on the inscription of Himā Najrān on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. Spain has always looked at this site with the experience of Spain which is great in terms of rock art, as you all know. What we see, in the interest of this amendment, is that we have the full commitment of the State which, of course, responds to any doubts that the Advisory Bodies may have had. We believe that the State Party is perfectly capable of fulfilling those commitments and therefore we do not need to dwell on other arguments that have been brought forward by the Advisory Bodies.

This site is an excellent example of rock art site. It is complex but it is also an open-air museum. It requires its own conservation strategy that will integrate the various assets that the property presents. ICOMOS has referred to issues and, if this is the right moment, we would like to put a question to the State Party concerned. What does the State Party plan with regard to conservation concerning capacity building? This would give us some information. We are absolutely convinced that they are capable of fulfilling their commitments and this may respond to some of the queries put by ICOMOS and we are favourable to the inscription of this site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you Mr. Chair. The Hima region of Saudi Arabia is renowned for the quality and density of its rock painting and carving including outstanding rock art and pictures dating back to over seven thousand years. Carvings expressing human interactions, beliefs, traditions and the relationship with the challenging environment have OUV. The integrity, authenticity and the state of conservation has been acknowledged by the Advisory Bodies.

Therefore, China supports the amendment proposed by Bahrain and hopes to congratulate Saudi Arabia. We also hope that the State Party will further strengthen its communication with the Advisory Bodies and further enhance its conservation management and capacity building after the inscription, so as to effectively protect this valuable heritage.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. The floor is to Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, le Mali appuie pleinement l'amendement proposé. Nous tenons à souligner que l'État partie a initié le développement de la première phase qui se concentre sur l'analyse de recherches archéologiques et archivistiques pour garantir le respect des meilleurs principes de conservation, en particulier pour entreprendre la restauration des puits et des canaux d'eau, comme recommandé par l'ICOMOS. C'est pourquoi le Mali souhaite que ce bien soit inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving us the floor. We will be brief. South Africa thanks the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for the extensive report on the Himā which is a reservoir of high-quality rock art. We thank Bahrain for clarifying some of the concerns raised in the report. We have noted that the Advisory Bodies have made only few recommendations which the State Party of Saudi Arabia has accepted and it has already implemented some of them. We thank the State Party of Saudi Arabia for its strong commitment in this regard. We thus support the proposed amendment by Bahrain and endorse the recommendations to inscribe the site on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Nigeria expresses its satisfaction with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for presenting this site to the World Heritage List. We know that rock art is a special type of heritage and this one is so vast. We are satisfied with the recommendations of ICOMOS and, like other Committee members have said, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is ready to comply and to take the necessary actions concerning the conservation of this site. We join our voices to other Committee members to say that this site should be inscribed in this session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. I will be very brief since I have largely been pre-empted by my colleagues. Uganda joins other Committee members supporting the inscription of Himā Cultural area on the World Heritage List. The State Party has successfully clarified to ICOMOS the main points that were raised by the said Advisory Body. Moreover, the State Party has committed to implement effective management procedures for this site. Since the State Party has committed to take action on almost all recommendations by ICOMOS, my Delegation supports the amendment proposed by Bahrain. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much Mr. Chairperson. Before I make my intervention, I would like to confirm that you can hear me, as previously it seemed I was not very audible.

Chairperson:

We can hear you.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much indeed. First of all, we would like to congratulate the State Party for the nomination of the site that is highly relevant to the study of rock art in history of humanity. This is a serial site which bears witness to a variety of cultural traditions. They have themselves called it a library set in stone. We believe that indeed this is a place where history is written in stone. Several texts have confirmed there is an enormous corpus of petroglyphs that shows climate change. This registry is not only a registry of the past and also the present, it is important to indicate that it could be a challenge to avoid new inscriptions or drawings that would question the OUV which justifies criterion (iii). According to the ICOMOS evaluation, criteria (i), (ii) and (v) are not justified. The

serial nature of this site is adequate and justified and we would like to ask the State Party to implement the various recommendations in the Draft Decision.

We believe that this site should be referred to the State Party so that they could make adjustments and implement the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies, nevertheless, we are in a position to be able to join the consensus which is quite clear and obvious for this nomination that is to say to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will ask ICOMOS to give some clarifications. You have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il n'y avait pas de questions adressées précisément à l'ICOMOS, mais je peux confirmer que, comme présenté dans l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS, nous avons considéré que le critère (iii) était justifié. Effectivement, le site est un témoignage exceptionnel sur une longue série de traditions culturelles sous la forme d'un vaste corpus d'art rupestre préhistorique et historique, d'inscriptions rupestres et de vestiges archéologiques. Sur la base des déclarations que les membres du Comité ont fournies, nous avons compris que l'État partie avait déjà engagé des mesures pour répondre aux recommandations de l'organisation consultative, et donc l'ICOMOS apprécie les efforts déployés par l'État partie pour répondre à ses recommandations. Cependant, comme l'ICOMOS n'a pas eu l'opportunité d'évaluer les informations additionnelles qui ont été fournies, il serait nécessaire qu'il y ait une attention particulière qui soit portée sur trois points afin d'assurer une gestion solide du bien. Ces trois points concernent le travail sur la documentation, qui doit être accompagné de l'élaboration de cartes adéquates, d'une base de données opérationnelles et d'une identification plus détaillée de l'ensemble des attributs du bien. Je souligne « l'ensemble des attributs du bien » puisque l'État partie a bien voulu accepter le changement de nom, et ce changement de nom en fait a été demandé afin de refléter tous les attributs que ce bien contient, et pas seulement les sites d'arts rupestres. Je reviens sur les points nécessitant une attention particulière, donc la documentation, le programme de conservation qui doit être élaboré et intégré au plan de gestion et, finalement, le programme de suivi qui doit être rendu opérationnel, avec des indicateurs clés qui permettront de suivre l'état de conservation de l'ensemble des attributs du bien ainsi que les menaces identifiées. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. Dear Committee members, I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.11, but before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendment on the Draft Decision she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amendments were submitted by a number of States Parties as shown on the screen. We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 1.

Chairperson:

Committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 has no amendment, do you approve of it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes Ḥimā Cultural Area, Saudi Arabia, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii)'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the revision? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' and in here we have brief Synthesis, Criterion (iii), Integrity, Authenticity, Protection and Management Requirements texts.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We have a small comment on this paragraph under sub paragraph 'Protection and Management Requirements'. There is a sentence that we propose to delete. The sentence which starts with 'A

monitoring programme that identifies measurable key indicators, periodicity and responsible authorities is required'. We believe that this sentence should be removed, since such monitoring programme is already an integral part of the previously mentioned conservation management strategy of the site. We do not see a need for it to be singled out. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur have you got it?

Rapporteur:

We could not catch the sentence could the distinguished representative of Egypt read it again, please? And in which paragraph shown on the screen does it apply to?

Chairperson:

Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

It is a very long paragraph, as you know. It is under the subtitle 'Protection and Management Requirements' and it is the second paragraph under subtitle and the sentence on line 10. The sentence starts with 'A monitoring programme that identifies measurable key indicators, periodicity and responsible authorities is also required'.

Rapporteur:

Perhaps it was from a previous amendment. We cannot find it on this statement. Regardless, may I highlight that this is a provisional statement which will be updated later.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Okay. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

You are okay. Thank you. Committee members, do you approve of this? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4 reads: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

a) Setting up an adequate documentation system and developing an operational and up-to-date database for the property to ensure monitoring of its state of conservation, including:

i) Updated maps showing the boundaries of the property component parts, the buffer zone and precise location of the inventoried heritage sites reported from the inscribed areas and buffer zone,

ii) A database of site records for every known rock art and rock inscription site inventoried in the property and the buffer zone with clear maps, within a GIS,

b) Compiling a list of attributes of the OUV considering that the list will be indispensable for the conservation, management and monitoring of the property,

c) Carrying out Heritage Impact Assessments for any projects related to tourism activities and infrastructure at Najd Khayrān before they are implemented,'

Original d) is proposed for deletion, new d:

'd) Creating and implementing a conservation programme and engaging additional staff with specialist training in heritage management, archaeology and rock art conservation,

e) Creating and implementing a monitoring programme that identifies measurable key indicators, periodicity and responsible authorities,

f) Undertaking restoration of the above-ground walling for the wells and water channels at Ḥimā, based on comprehensive archival and archaeological research'.

Could we scroll down? This is the end of paragraph 4, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you allow me just to come back to point 'b', it might be useful to add 'Compiling the list of all attributes' just to ensure that all attributes are included and not only the rock art sites. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Committee members, do you accept these modifications? Okay. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5 reads: 'Also recommends the State Party to advance archaeological research in the buffer zone, and to consider the option of extending the property in the future, in case information comes to light that contribute to the understanding of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with the modification? Yes, it is approved.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through the whole text, if there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.11 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Saudi Arabia on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Saudi Arabia, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to start by expressing my country's deep appreciation to the esteemed Committee members for their incredible support. Our thanks extend to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their constructive collaboration to inscribe Himā Cultural Area on the highly regarded World Heritage List.

We are sincerely honoured to see this precious historic site inscribed to be shared with the whole world. It is indeed an amazing manifestation of civilisation. It is indeed a place with an Outstanding Universal Value. Himā Cultural Area is dear to many in my country and having it recognised globally will further strengthened the local community pride and sense of belonging. The journey of this site recognition is a part in my country deep belief in the value of sharing humanity treasures. A principle embedded in a historic and systematic approach of conservation, promotion and meaningful inclusion.

That journey was led by the Ministry of Culture and spearheaded by the Heritage Commission supported by our National Commission and the solid backbone of Najrān municipality and the local community. Reaching this beautiful momentum is not the end of the journey. We will spare no effort to continue and enhance the diligent management and conservation of Himā Cultural Area. Today, Himā Cultural Area is joining five other treasured World Heritage sites in Saudi Arabia and hopefully many more to come. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you and once again congratulations. Now, I invite, ICOMOS to present the transnational nomination of The Great Spas of Europe, Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Before I give the floor to ICOMOS, first I give the floor to the Secretariat, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to announce that we received two factual errors letters concerning the evaluation of this nomination which are to be found on pages 25 and 26 of document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Voici la présentation de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS portant sur les grandes villes d'eaux d'Europe, Allemagne Autriche, Belgique, France, Italie, Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, Tchéquie. Concernant cette évaluation, l'ICOMOS a reçu une lettre d'erreur factuelle qui a reconnu certaines de ces erreurs. Diapositive

suivante. Les grandes villes d'eaux d'Europe comprennent les stations thermales internationales les plus prestigieuses, témoignant du phénomène du thermalisme européen qui prospéra entre 1700 environ et les années 1930. Le bien proposé pour inscription présente un important échange d'influences et d'idées innovantes liées à la médecine, à la balnéothérapie, à l'architecture thermique et aux installations de loisirs, qui s'expriment matériellement par une typologie urbaine centrée sur les sources minérales naturelles et par des exemples importants d'architecture, tels que les salles de pompage et les halls des sources conçus pour exploiter les ressources naturelles en eau minérale et permettre de les utiliser pour les bains et les cures d'eau thermale. Diapositive suivante. L'analyse comparative démontre que, sur plus d'un millier de lieux pouvant être décrits comme des villes thermales à la fin du XVIII^e siècle dans toute l'Europe, le bien en série se distingue par son influence sur le développement des villes d'eaux et de la balnéothérapie, non seulement en Europe mais aussi dans d'autres parties du monde. Au travers des échanges d'informations complémentaires avec les États parties au cours du cycle d'évaluation, l'ICOMOS a conclu que le bien proposé pour inscription répond aux critères (ii) et (iii). Diapositive suivante. Le bien en série comprend 11 villes situées dans 7 pays européens. Les conditions d'authenticité et d'intégrité ont été généralement satisfaites. Les ajustements de délimitation de certains éléments constitutifs et de leurs zones tampons doivent être finalisés. Le grand nombre de projets de développement reçus pendant le processus d'évaluation soulève certaines inquiétudes quant aux effets négatifs potentiels sur les conditions d'intégrité. Ainsi, le projet de décision comprend des recommandations sur la manière dont les États parties peuvent renforcer les mécanismes de protection et de gestion afin de répondre à ces préoccupations. Diapositive suivante. La protection juridique est appropriée en général, mais quelques lacunes mineures doivent encore être résolues pour certains éléments constitutifs. Le système global de gestion de l'ensemble du bien est bien conçu, mais son efficacité devra être évaluée sur la durée. Le système de suivi devrait être détaillé davantage afin de préciser certains indicateurs et de mieux prendre en compte les facteurs affectant le bien. Au niveau des éléments constitutifs, tous les plans de gestion locaux doivent être officiellement approuvés et mis en œuvre dès que possible. Diapositive suivante. Voici un résumé de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS portant sur la valeur universelle exceptionnelle mis en avant pour le bien proposé pour inscription. Diapositive suivante. En conclusion, l'ICOMOS recommande que les grandes villes d'eaux d'Europe, Allemagne Autriche, Belgique, France, Italie, Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, Tchéquie, soit inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial sur la base des critères (ii) et (iii). Un certain nombre de recommandations additionnelles ont été intégrées au projet de décision afin de renforcer la gestion et la conservation du bien sur le long terme. L'ICOMOS recommande également que le nom du bien en anglais soit modifié. Diapositive suivante. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Dear colleagues, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection for the interest of time, I propose that we move on directly to the Draft Decision. Do you agree with such a proposal? I thank you for your cooperation. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.16. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur, please

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I therefore declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.16 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Representatives of the States Parties you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you. Czechia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Czechia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the coordinating State Party for the nomination, we would like to invite you to listen to the speech of the Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic delivered on behalf of all submitting countries and followed by expressions of thanks from the Lord Mayors and Mayors of this component Spa towns spoken in their native languages. We hope for your indulgence as the video is a little bit longer than two minutes. Thank you for your attention, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, please.

The Delegation of Czechia:

Mr. Chairperson, dear members of the World Heritage Committee, dear colleagues, ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of all submitting countries that have collaborated in this nomination, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Czech Republic, I would like to express our sincere thanks to ICOMOS for its positive evaluation and to the World Heritage Committee for the decision to inscribe our serial transnational property, The Great Spas of Europe onto the World Heritage List. The inscription recognises the

exceptional significance of the European Spa phenomenon and highlights the remarkable values of Spa culture and architecture. It is a great honour for us and an inspiring example of transnational cooperation partnership between all seven countries involved.

We are aware of the importance of sustainable preservation and presentation of this cultural heritage for future generations and we are committed to ensuring that our common World Heritage property is conspicuously managed in the spirit of the Convention. The local communities in the Spa towns, the citizens and experts enrolled for many years in the preparation of the nomination have all been waiting and watching for the confirmation of the OUV of the property and are participating with us right now.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. And now, I would like to briefly give the floor to the Lord mayors and mayors of all the spa towns involved. *[A video is played with all Mayors delivering a message of gratitude in their own languages]*

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Cordouan Light House France. But before, I give the floor to ICOMOS to present this nomination, I give the floor to the Secretariat, Mr. Balsamo, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to announce that, as said already in the introductory part of 8B, a notification was received later than the deadline for this evaluation of factual errors. It has an impact on the OUV and ICOMOS agreed to review this. The correction is already integrated in the text of the statement of OUV. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS

Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS concernant le phare de Cordouan, France. Diapositive suivante. Construit sur un plateau rocheux peu profond à l'embouchure de l'estuaire de la Gironde, le phare de Cordouan a été érigé au XVII^e siècle et modifié au XVIII^e siècle pour la signalisation maritime. Il a été proposé pour inscription pour sa forme architecturale monumentale unique, combinant l'inspiration de modèles anciens et de leur langage maniériste exprimés par une qualité de construction exceptionnelle et un programme décoratif symbolique. L'analyse comparative a démontré l'importance exceptionnelle du phare en tant qu'édifice spécialisé exceptionnel répondant à des besoins utilitaires ayant permis de grandes réalisations techniques, architecturales, stylistiques et symboliques. Les critères (i) et (iv) ont été justifiés. Diapositive suivante. Le bien proposé pour inscription comprend le phare, les voies de navigation historiques, et les affleurements rocheux qui font surface à marée basse. Les conditions d'intégrité et d'authenticité ont été remplies. Les attributs ont été soigneusement identifiés et utilisés pour définir les délimitations du bien proposé pour inscription et de la zone tampon, fournissant ainsi une base solide pour la protection et la gestion. Diapositive suivante. Le phare est classé monument historique depuis 1862. Les dispositions juridiques et de planification fournissent des mécanismes de protection de la zone tampon, où le développement éolien est exclu. La protection efficace de la zone tampon dépend de la coordination et de la cohérence des outils de planification dans le but de protéger la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du phare. Le système de gestion est adapté et a été éprouvé. Un plan de gestion a été préparé pendant le processus de proposition d'inscription, couvrant les principaux objectifs de gestion. La formalisation de l'engagement des acteurs clés de la gestion permettrait de renforcer le système de gestion. L'état de conservation est globalement bon et fait l'objet d'un suivi. Le taux de détérioration est toutefois élevé en raison de l'environnement marin inhospitalier, et des programmes de restauration continuent à être mis en œuvre. La recherche sur le système hydrosédimentaire est essentielle pour assurer une bonne gestion de cette dynamique. Diapositive suivante. Voici un résumé de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS concernant la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien proposé pour inscription. diapositive suivante. Pour conclure, l'ICOMOS recommande que le phare de Cordouan, France, soit inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial sur la base des critères (i) et (iv). Un certain nombre de recommandations additionnelles ont été proposées pour le projet de décision afin de favoriser la conservation à long terme du bien. Diapositive suivante. Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear colleagues, as I said just now, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, for the interest of time, I propose that we move directly to the Draft Decision. Do you agree with such a proposal? Okay. I thank you for your cooperation. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.17 but before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr Chair. No amendments have been received.

Chairperson:

Okay. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.17 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate France on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. France, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

Délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La France remercie les membres du Comité, les organisations consultatives et le Centre du patrimoine mondial pour l'inscription du « Versailles des mers », qui permet d'enrichir le patrimoine mondial d'un nouveau type de bien. L'État français, propriétaire du bien, et les porteurs de projet s'en réjouissent vivement. Je passe la parole à Son Excellence Pascale Got, présidente de l'organisme de gestion du phare de Cordouan.

M^{me} Pascale Got, Présidente du Syndicat mixte pour le développement durable de l'estuaire de la Gironde :

Merci. Nous ne pouvions rêver plus belle annonce pour le phare gardien de l'estuaire de la Gironde. Votre reconnaissance offre un nouveau sacrement au phare des rois. Son architecture grandiose guide les marins. La prouesse d'ingénieurs a permis d'élever le phare en symbole politique, scientifique, historique et maritime. Cordouan, au XXI^e siècle, c'est toujours cette belle volonté humaine qui conduit aujourd'hui à son inscription. Je remercie très sincèrement les services de l'État, la région Nouvelle-Aquitaine, les départements de la Gironde et de la Charente-Maritime, l'Association du phare de Cordouan et tous les habitants de nos territoires. Oui, c'est un grand jour pour nous tous, qui mêle à la fois fierté et émotion, et sur son plateau rocheux, Cordouan, avec ses gardiens, illumine désormais toutes les rives du monde. Cette inscription au patrimoine mondial nous oblige pour des générations. Soyez assurés que nous y répondrons.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Congratulations once again. Dear Committee members, I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Germany. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS, I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found in page 33 of Document INF8.B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is a presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Germany. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter on factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors.

Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt is an Artists' Colony that was created in 1899, designed and built by its artist members as a centre for the newly formed movement in architecture, Arts and Crafts then emerging, its expansion for successive international exhibitions held in 1901, 1904, 1908 and 1914 are a testimony of early modern architecture, urban planning and landscape design, all of which were influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Vienna Secession.

The comparative analysis demonstrates the significance of Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt in terms of innovative architecture and urban landscape in the early 20th century and innovative ensemble of living, working and exhibiting in a modern urban landscape. The nominated property is an important contributor to innovative, experimental and functional architecture, interior furnishings and landscape designs through its international exhibition and can be considered a forerunner of architectural modernism. It demonstrates criteria (ii) and (iv). The nominated property is located at the highest elevation above the city of Darmstadt in west-central Germany. It consists of two component parts with one buffer zone. During the course of the evaluation exchanges between ICOMOS and the State Party resulted to adjustments to the boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zone. The additional information on the conservation history of each building within the nominated property which were submitted by the State Party in response to the interim report confirms conditions of integrity and authenticity. However, the location that is proposed for a visitor centre within the boundaries of the nominated property seriously undermines the integrity of the property regarding the sightlines and potential traffic pressures.

The nominated property including the buildings, landscapes and artworks is defined as a cultural monument and the legal protection is adequate. ICOMOS considers the management system adequate. Conservation measures are missing a conservation management plan that ensures a consistent conservation approach, particularly for privately owned property. Vehicular traffic and parking within the property should be carefully monitored and controlled with expected growth of visitor numbers.

In summary, the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List and Criteria (ii) and (iv) have been demonstrated. The legal protection and management of the property are generally adequate. The key concern is related to the location of the visitor centre within the boundaries of the property that would impact the integrity of the property. To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Germany, be referred back to the State Party for the following reasons: Relocate the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property with careful consideration to the property's integrity regarding sightlines and vehicular traffic impact. ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Having presented the work of Roberto Burle Marx, Brazil's famous architect and landscape artist for evaluation at this Committee, our country is very much interested in this nomination by Germany of the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt. An outstanding early 20th century ensemble of experimental buildings and landscapes that represent a prototype of Modernism.

According to the Advisory Bodies' evaluation, the nominated property constitutes a testimony of the artistic and social reforms of the time and an important contributor to innovative, experimental and functional architecture, innovative room furnishings and landscape design. ICOMOS recognises, moreover, that the nominated property may be considered a forerunner of architectural Modernism, particularly the organic architecture that spanned the 20th century. The Advisory Body confirms the OUV of the site based on criteria (ii) and (iv), as well its conditions of integrity and authenticity. There is, however, one single concern that prevents ICOMOS from recommending the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List, the visitor centre that was originally supposed to be built inside the boundaries of the property. For this reason, the Advisory Body recommended the referral of the nomination.

Well, the State Party took due note of the recommendations and proceed as requested by ICOMOS, the original planning of the Centre was abandoned and a new design prepared for an alternative location outside the boundary of the property which takes specially into account the integrity of the site in terms of preserving sightlines and the sustainable new regulation for introducing negative vehicular traffic impacts.

The conditions set by ICOMOS for the inscription of Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt in the World Heritage List is therefore met. The relocated centre does not have a negative impact on the visual integrity of the site or its sightlines, does not affect the visual integrity of its attribute and does not impact vehicular traffic, as there is no parking allowed inside the property and the parking in the buffer zone is controlled. Besides, the centre is now integrated in the vegetation of the eastern slope which is clearly set back from the nominated property.

We can thus strongly recommend the inscription of Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt on the World Heritage List on the basis of the revised Draft Decision forwarded to the members of the Committee by the Brazilian Delegation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway congratulates Germany with this successful nomination of Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt. We particularly appreciate the effort undertaken in the period since the evaluation of the property until the present day in addressing the main concern of ICOMOS related to the location and scale of the visitor centre and other issues related to traffic in particular.

We would like to ask for insertion in the amended Draft Decision that the Committee requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre the documents for the new project developed for the visitor centre, the new approved building plan 032, and detailed information on the impact of vehicular traffic. Further, in the final paragraph, we would kindly ask for the submission of the report by 1st of December 2021 so that the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS can review the information before the visitor centre is actually built. These very minor issues have already been sent to the Rapporteur. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. In artistic architectural heritage traditions, evidence of a unique prototype of Modernism is a greatly celebrated virtue, particularly in surviving tangible historical built fabric. In this connection

the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt artist colony is a nutshell of this passing and aesthetically and tangibly impressive architectural heritage and history of early 1900s.

As such, Mr. Chairman, the content in paragraph 3d of the Draft Decision claiming the absence of real content of history and conservation does not arise since these properties have been conserved sustainably up to today. Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, the proposed amendment distinguishes the fact that it is through exceptional practices of conservation, management and urban planning that this site artistic and architectural complex has demonstrated and still demonstrates a consistent conservation approach and sustainable strategy protecting all the architectural ensemble of this nomination. This is clearly indicated in the proposed amendment and under criterion (ii). Hence the amendment resolves the argument contained in paragraph 3a of the Draft Decision. In addition, Mr. Chairman, the continued functionality in terms of timeless exhibition and celebrated ambiance of cultural, commercial and spiritual activity linking the private ownership and the public conservation services highlighted in the amendment under criterion (v) and the statement of OUV are yet further evidence of the pointlessness of paragraphs 3b and 3d of the Draft Decision.

As far as a visitor centre is concerned, the concerned State Party remorsefully acknowledges the necessity to relocate it outside the property boundaries and the guarantee to report appropriately to the World Heritage Centre while the property is hopefully inscribed on the World Heritage List. Hence Mr. Chairman, my Delegation advises dropping the referral status of Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt and instead recommends the inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We support the amendments put forward by Brazil and the recommendation that this exceptional site be inscribed at our current session. The Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt artistic architectural heritage has global significance. Its OUV is recognised by the experts and the only issue which could have impeded its inscription has been addressed with the original plan of the centre abandoned. Therefore, there is no need for us to put this item on referral and we put forward, as suggested by Brazil's amendment and supported by Uganda, the site to be inscribed. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much. In this regard, we would like to recognise that this site is really one of the cornerstones when it comes to understanding the Modernist movement of the 20th century and also the underpinnings of the artistic movements that came together to join all of those different currents of art, modern art, and the whole of the Modernist movement depends on this site, that is why we would like to see this site inscribed. We can see this in many different examples. That is why Guatemala would like to join this growing consensus and support the proposed amendment. Also, as was mentioned by Norway, we do have a slight modification which we think is very important. When we go through the Decision, paragraph by paragraph, we will be making our point known at that time. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. Our Delegation has been co-authored of this nomination and we confirm our satisfaction for the successful presentation of this property. As far as we understand, the major concern expressed by ICOMOS about the information centre was addressed by the State Party and no longer exists. Allow me to add that the property also has a great spiritual significance conveyed by the Russian Chapel on the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt. The Russian revival style of church with gold onion domes was built in 1897-1899 by the architect Leon Benois and used as a private chapel by the last emperor Nicholas II whose wife, Alexandra, was born in Darmstadt. It was built with Russian stones and some people claim built on soil from Russia brought by train. The Church was used by the Russian Royal family during regular visits to the Tsarina's childhood home. Today, it is the centre of the Russian community in Darmstadt.

I would like to congratulate the State Party on the protection of the site and the conservation done in the few past years. The work has been carried out with great respect for material and substance. I also appreciate that the planning for the visitor centre of the property has been abandoned. We fully support the inscription of this nomination to the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

I will not be long as the previous speakers have mentioned the concern by ICOMOS which has been addressed by the State Party and we commend their efforts to preserve the site. Therefore, we support the inscription at this session. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman would like to join other States Parties to support the inscription of this site during this session and ask the State Party of Germany to fulfil and respond positively to ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for the remaining of the information. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I cannot see any more questions in the comments. ICOMOS, would you like to have the floor?

ICOMOS:

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il n'y avait pas de questions directement adressées à l'ICOMOS. L'ICOMOS apprécie ce que les membres du Comité ont bien voulu exprimer quant à la localisation du centre des visiteurs en dehors de la zone du bien, vers la zone tampon. L'ICOMOS apprécie les changements qui ont été apportés par l'État partie afin de répondre à la recommandation de l'organisation consultative. Comme l'ICOMOS n'a pas pu évaluer le projet en lui-même et les nouvelles informations qui ont été soumises, il serait important que ce nouveau projet soit soumis comme faisant partie de la documentation sur laquelle on pourra ensuite faire des commentaires. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I see no more questions in the comments. Dear Committee members I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.18. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Brazil as shown on the screen. We have no modifications on paragraph 1.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will approve the text paragraph by paragraph. For paragraph 1, do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Germany, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv)'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? No objection, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value ' this is highlighted as a common practice we use the standard text in here and it will be edited automatically to every

paragraph 3 when the amendments deviate into inscription. The paragraph lists: Brief Synthesis, Criterion (ii), Criterion (iv), Statement of Integrity, Authenticity and Protection and Management Requirements.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4 lists the recommendations. We just had 'nominated' removed, the rest of the paragraph is as in the original Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? I see no objections it is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5. As mentioned by the distinguished delegate from Norway there is a proposal. I will first read the amendment from Brazil and then we will look at Norway's proposal: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022 an updated report on the relocation of the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Norway's proposal is the following: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2021[...]— there is a minor correction there, Mr. Chair. If the report is to be reviewed at its 45th session, then the report should be submitted by 1 February as per Paragraph 169.a of the *Operational Guidelines*. '[...] an updated report on the relocation of the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property, the new approved building plan 032 and detailed information on the impact of vehicular traffic for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session'.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much. Now, I wanted to come back to what was mentioned concerning the possible impact of the new visitor centre and the traffic of vehicles. I would also like to add within the proposal 'sightlines and vehicular traffic impact' because it was also mentioned the impact of this new construction being on a hill for the property. I would like that to be added into the text. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. Just, maybe, to clarify one point in relation to what would be useful to receive as I mentioned earlier, is that ICOMOS did not have the opportunity to review the new project developed as such for the visitor centre. So, it might be useful if the updated report that will be submitted by the State Party include the next project that is being developed for the visitor centre and include as well the new approved building plan 032.

This is just to add that the project itself, the design of the project. it would be useful if this could be submitted by the State Party so that considerations are given on the project itself. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to, at this stage, request the State Party to tell us if they need a time frame given. December 2022, is it adequate enough for the State Party to come up with all these requested documents and plans? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our initial comment was related to the year which has been corrected by the Secretariat. Thank you for that. The second comment was the omission of the new plans of the visitor centre, that was touched upon by ICOMOS.

Related to the question by the previous speaker our distinguished colleague, I think, possibly, if that is an issue, we could ask the State Party for clarification on that specific matter. We know that the approved building plan was already adopted in, I think, February this year. So, this is available. And, also, the plans for the new visitor centre are far advanced to our knowledge based on the information we have received from the State Party. So, we consider that this timeline should be sufficient from our experts' perspective, but it could be useful to hear the State Party on that. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to the State Party to answer the question.

The Delegation of Germany:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much to the World Heritage Committee. We are ready to cooperate very closely with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre with regard to the new planning process. We just started, there are no final plans approved, therefore we are looking for close cooperation with ICOMOS and we are ready to prepare and submit the first report on the new planning by 1st of December 2021.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your clarification. Dear Committee members, do you accept the modification on this paragraph? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Chair. I really want to thank the colleagues for all the elements that have been introduced here, that enrich and clarify the proposal and, of course, the State Party. Therefore, we are in agreement with all of this. I just want to ask about the sightlines and traffic impact, is that the right location for the amendment? I cannot understand the sentence. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much. Let me just clarify. I think it is 'impacts on vehicular traffic and on sightline'. Actually, 'on the sightline'. Let me write it down for you in the chat. That is it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Sorry for taking the floor again. It was just to remind the Rapporteur of the intervention from ICOMOS on the plans for the visitor centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr Chair. Sorry to intervene again. This is just what I wanted to add. It would be important that after 'The updated report on the relocation of the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property, including the new project developed for the visitor centre'. If I may add something following the intervention by the State Party, it would be important that the timeline is revised for 1st December 2021. This is what we have understood from the State Party.

Rapporteur:

If I may. In line with the *Operational Guidelines*, paragraph 169a, if the plans are to be reviewed during the next session, the earliest we can ask for the report is 1st of February 2022. But it is not going to change the fact that it is going to be reviewed at the next session. Following the additions, Mr. Chair, if I can read out the text as agreed as far as I understood.

Chairperson:

Yes, I request you to read out the text of paragraph 5.

Rapporteur:

Okay. 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022 an updated report on the relocation of the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property, including the new project developed for the visitor centre, the new approved building plan 032 and detailed information on the impact of vehicular traffic on sightlines for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session.'

Chairperson:

Do you accept this paragraph? Okay, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now we have been through all the text. If there are no other comments, I now declare the draft Decision 44 COM 8B.18 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Germany on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Germany you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Germany:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving us the floor again. I would like to thank the World Heritage Committee for this Decision, I would like to thank ICOMOS for the evaluation and the recommendations which guide us in the right direction. I would like to hand over to the head conservator of Hesse who is responsible for the conservation of the site.

Head of Conservation of the State of Hesse:

Dear Mr. Chair, as a representative of the State of Hesse, I would like to thank you very much for including the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt in the World Heritage List. This crowns the effort of all those involved who have initiated and accompanied the nomination over many years. It is a special honour for the Republic of Germany, for the State of Hesse and the city of Darmstadt. I am very pleased with this positive result and from which we hope to gain many benefits for the future. I can reassure that all those involved are aware of the high level of responsibilities that you have just entrusted to us. The postponement of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee by one year has given us additional time, which we have been able to use to relocate the visitor centre outside the site to the buffer zone, to develop a new concept to avoid traffic impact on the site. In the realisation of this new project, we will of course involve ICOMOS international as a consultant and keep you informed of the progress.

I would like to say thank you to the World Heritage Centre for the very good cooperation and rapid flow of information. My professional thank goes to ICOMOS international for the evaluation and the well-formed expert opinions. I am very pleased with this positive and wonderful result and I cordially invite you to visit the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much and once again congratulations. Dear Committee members, now, I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination of 'Padova *Urbs picta*', Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel and Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles, Italy. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS to present this nomination, I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr Balsamo, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. As we announced in our introduction of Document 8B, we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination, but later than the deadline, so it is not included in Document INF.8B.4. But ICOMOS revealed that there was a small correction to the related Statement of OUV which already has been integrated in the text that we have. This was just to announce this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of ICOMOS evaluation of 'Padova *Urbs picta*', Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel and Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles, Italy. The serial nomination presents eight complexes of building from the 14th century which constitute an exceptional group of artworks. With the fresco cycles architecture illustrating many innovations in the artistic lineage and canons of fresco paintings at that period. It further exhibits a new capacity in capturing human figures including individual features displaying fact and emotions to composition of complex narrations with spatial perspective and *trompe l'oeil* which were influential in the development of arts.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property justifies criterion (ii), but that the proposed criteria (i) and (iii) are not justified. The nominated property is composed of four component parts all located within the inner wall city of

historic Padua. Boundaries and shared buffer zones are adequate. ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets the conditions of integrity and authenticity. The upper three bands of fresco in Palazzo della Ragione were reconstructed in the 15th century and will need better presentation and interpretation.

All complexes which house the frescoes of the property are under the strictest protective measures laid down by Italian law. An overall management system was introduced establishing close coordination between the different bodies that own the fresco cycles. The management plan should be further augmented, as committed by the State Party, to contain currently missing context including visitor management and risk preparedness.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property. ICOMOS recommends that Padova Urbs picta', Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel and Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles, Italy, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (ii) and has included a number of recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid in the long-term conservation of the property. ICOMOS also recommends that the State Party gives consideration in changing the name of the property to become: Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear colleagues, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there are no objections, for the interest of time, I propose we move on directly to the Draft Decision.

Dear Committee members, I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.20. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

We have received no amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.20 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Italy on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Italy, you have the floor for a two-minute statement.

The Delegation of Italy:

Mr. Chair, I would like to thank you and all the members of the Committee for the nomination of this wonderful property, Padova Urbs picta, with the hope that this, like the other inscription we celebrate in this session, will be a light of hope for our future. Mr. Chair, with your permission, I give the floor to the Italian undersecretary for Culture Ms. Lucia Borgonzoni and to the mayor of Padova Mr. Sergio Giordani. Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

Mrs. Lucia Borgonzoni, Deputy Secretary for Culture:

Dear President, Excellencies, honourable member of the Advisory Bodies, on behalf of the Ministry of Culture, I would like to express my satisfaction with the positive outcome of the procedure. Padova represents an exceptional example of Italian cultural heritage. The Ministry has been interested for many years in the protection, monitoring and conservation on the Scrovegni Chapel thanks to the valuable expertise of the Central Institute for Restoring in Rome. The Padova inscription enriches the Italian World Heritage List.

Thank you all. I am now pleased to give the floor to the mayor of Padova, Mr. Sergio Giordani.

Mr. Sergio Giordani, Mayor of Padova:

Good afternoon, I join my colleagues to thank everyone who has inscribed Padova and Fresco Cycles to become part of the UNESCO's World Heritage List. This recognition brings a lot of joy and also great responsibility towards the whole world. Thank you for the institutions who own the site, in addition to the city council, the Accademia Galileiana, Basilica e Convento di Sant'Antonio, Delegazione pontificia e veneranda e Diocesi di Paolo. I thank the Ministry of Culture and the University of Padua for their scientific contribution and also the Veneto Region for their support for the project.

But above all, I want to thank the people of Padova, working together and setting their goals for the project. These frescos are part of the identity of the city and the people of Padova are proud of this asset which we now share with the world. For us, today marks the start of a new commitment to the world.

I thank you all personally on behalf of the beautiful city of Padova and on behalf of Italy. Thank you, *grazie*.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Once again, congratulations. Dear colleagues, with a heavy agenda but an extremely efficient way of working, we are approaching the end of today's meeting. Considering there is the working group on Budget,

I would suggest that we stop here. Let me congratulate once again the newly inscribed properties and the States Parties paying efforts for them.

Dear Committee members, thank you very much for your cooperation and efficiency. We will meet tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time. For the Bureau member we will meet at 11:00 am. Before we conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if they have any general announcement to make.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just would like to remind everybody that we have the Budget working group meeting tonight or this afternoon, Paris time, and I am looking forward to seeing you all there. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you and have a good rest. See you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 03:31:32 pm.

EIGHTH DAY – Sunday 25 July 2021
EIGHTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Francisco Voss (Guatemala)
H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, distinguished delegates, good morning from Paris, afternoon, and evening in China, and welcome to the rest of the world. It is my pleasure to welcome you all today for our daily meeting. This morning, the Bureau held its eight meeting. During this meeting the Bureau reviewed the progress of work and it was recalled that we have to finalise the examination of two state of conservation reports. As soon as it is ready to be displayed on the screen in the two languages, we will examine the text resulting from the work of the drafting group which was established on Friday regarding Draft Decision 7B.77 on the Ohrid Region.

Yesterday, the Committee has opened General Agenda Item 8 on the nomination process which touched upon a number of issues. It was also suggested that, in this regard, Committee members hold discussions within an informal drafting group in order to present a consensual text on the 30th of July when we come back and close this item.

The Committee has also examined Item 8A on Tentative List. On Item 8B, on the nomination of sites to the World Heritage List, the Committee has proceeded with the change of the names of four properties and has inscribed five new properties on the World Heritage List. I take this opportunity to congratulate once again all States Parties concerned.

Now, we will resume our work with the examination of Item 8B in the order the nominations are indicated, as circulated yesterday and available on the World Heritage Centre website. Also, the Director of the World Heritage Centre recalled the need for Committee members to consult in view of the forthcoming election of the next Bureau of the World Heritage Committee on Agenda Item 16. I would also like to remind you that the working group on Budget will take place today from 4.30 until 5:30 pm Paris time using the same Zoom link as that for the Bureau and plenary meeting. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, distinguished delegates, let us now resume the examination of nominations. Let us continue with the next item in the timetable for today, Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China, China, Decision 44 COM 8B.15. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination. Before I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. Just to remind the Committee that we received a factual error notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination which is to be found on page 30 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is a presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China, China. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter on factual errors and has acknowledged some of its errors. Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China is a revised documented serial nomination that reflects the way in which the town arose as a global maritime emporium between the 10th and the 14th centuries. The additional component and the revised narratives have made clear the economic and territorial system that developed and ensured Quanzhou success.

The comparative analysis demonstrates and explains the key factor of Quanzhou ability to become an exceptional maritime hub in a highly competitive context in the Song-Yuan China. Of the three proposed criteria, only criterion (iv) has been justified but on all component parts.

The series include 22 component parts located near the coast and inland in the Fujian province. It includes institutional facilities, religious sites and temples, transportation structures such as bridges, docks, kilns, and pagodas. Integrity and authenticity have been met for the wholeseries. Given the highly dynamic area where all the components are located, a robust protection from development of all attributes and all their setting is needed, as well as a strong interpretation programme of the whole series and each component part. The component parts of the nominated series have four different forms of national or provincial designations. Protective measures are

guaranteed through a four-tier administrative system and guidance at the national provincial and municipal levels. The management system appears adequate but, given its complexity and multiple actors, it needs continuous active coordination. The management plan is a good basis for coordinated management but further work is needed on attributes and to strengthen the link with the specific management tools for individual components.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China, China be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iv) and has identified a number of recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid for the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Now, I would like to know whether you have any comments regarding this nomination. I see none. Now, let us move on and I invite you all to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.15. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have no amendments for this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. As everybody is in agreement, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.15. adopted as a whole ^[gavel]. Thank you very much. Let me congratulate China on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. China, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. First of all, please, allow me to thank the Committee for this decision of inscribing the Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China into the World Heritage List. I would like to thank the Centre and the Advisory Bodies for all their work for this. The Chinese government pays great importance to this nomination.

Today, the mayor of Quanzhou, the Chairperson of the national Commission and the Secretary of the Committee of the CCP and also the representative of the province are present. Now, if you allow, I will pass the floor to the representatives of China.

Representative of China:

Today, the inscription of Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China, China, on the UNESCO World Heritage List brings great joy and encouragement for all the Chinese people. On behalf of the Chinese government, I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the World Heritage Committee for its recognition of the property and pay warm tribute to ICOMOS for its scientific and rigorous evaluation.

As President Xi Jinping stressed in its congratulatory message to the session on the 16th of July, the World's cultural and natural heritage sites are significant achievements of civilisation, government and nature evolution and serve as a format to promote exchange and mutual learning among civilisation.

Since the existence of the World Heritage Convention, China has always worked closely with other States Parties and relevant international organisations to preserve our inherited treasure of humanity. In the future, China will continue to keep its commitment to and take more responsibility for world cultural heritage by enhancing the conversation mandate under international organisation. We are willing to make due contribution to the exchange and mutual learning among civilisations and our community for the shared future of mankind. Thank you.

Representative of Quanzhou:

[Interpretation from Chinese] On behalf of the city of Quanzhou and the population of 8.7 million I would like to thank the Committee for their support and for the inscription. The inscription is only the starting point. We will show our responsibility and make our strong commitment to preserve this heritage and the OUV of this invaluable property for better use and to better pass down the heritage and share the benefit will all humanity. We warmly welcome all of you to Quanzhou. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Once again, congratulations to China. Let us continue with the next nomination. The Glorious Kakatiya Temples and Gateways – Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Palampet, Jayashankar Bhupalpally District, Telangana State, India, Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.12, but before I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this notification is to be found on page 34 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor now.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of The Glorious Kakatiya Temples and Gateways Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, India. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors.

The temple of Rudreshwara, popularly known as Ramappa Temple, is a sandstone built Shiva temple with pillars of carved granite and dolerite. Its sculptures illustrate regional dance custom of Kakatiyan culture. The temple complex is located in the wider landscape historically shaped by dharmic tradition and composed of irrigation systems and water reservoirs which also enabled the functional use of the temple. The boundaries of the nominated property have an area close to six hectares and delineate the temple walls. And its square shape buffer zone measures just above 66 hectares. In ICOMOS' view, the temple complex cannot be separated from its wider landscape setting, including not only the water distribution system but also the forest reserve, agricultural fields and smaller temples. The nominated property enjoys sufficient protection. However, the wider landscape setting does not. Conservation efforts are largely satisfactory although a programme-approached for conservation is urgently needed. The finalisation of the draft integrated conservation and site management plan is yet to be completed.

In summary, with its current focus on the main temple, ICOMOS considers that this nomination does not meet the requirement of OUV. In ICOMOS' view, Rudreshwara Temple needs to be seen as the centre of the largest Kakatiyan ensemble which illustrates various facets of Kakatiyan culture, tradition and architecture engineering and artistic production.

The present focus does not provide a representative picture of the multifaceted achievements of the Kakatiyan dynasty and therefore criterion (iii) cannot be justified. Likewise, criterion (i) lacks adequate documentation for the claim that this single temple could best represent the artistic mastery of the Kakatiyan empire. ICOMOS considers that only a redefined nomination approach of Rudreshwara Temple in its larger historic dynamic context as the economic and functional basis of the temple may have potential to demonstrate OUV. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that integrity cannot be demonstrated and that the boundaries require to be significantly enlarged.

In conclusion, ICOMOS recommends to defer the property to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre requested:

To redefine the nomination approach to include the wider context of Rudreshwara Temple and, accordingly, undertake a significant enlargement of the property boundaries to encompass all attributes of Kakatiyan architecture engineering achievements in the wider landscape;

To develop the comparative analysis in line with the selected nomination approach to compare the property with other testimonies of the Kakatiyan dynasty and other dynasties in the Deccan India;

To revise the justification for inscription based on the most appropriate criteria and provide adequate legal protection to the wider complex.

ICOMOS is concerned about touristic developments, in particular along the shore of Ramappa Lake, and requests the State Party to undertake Heritage Impact Assessment for any project before its approval. ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid in the redefinition and long-term conservation of the property. ICOMOS considers that such a revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation and report. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. I have also been informed by a letter from the Russian Federation that, in compliance with Rule 22.7 of the Rules of Procedure, they wish India to take the floor. I will allow the comments first from the country and then allow the Russian Federation to have the floor. Thank you.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. India compliments the People's Republic of China for hosting the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee and thanks the Committee and ICOMOS for their support and guidance from time to time. Since ICOMOS raised some issues, I would like to address them.

India has provided information and documentation of the temple complex, creation of a management committee for areas even beyond the designated buffer zone and the Integrated Conservation Management Plan (ICMP) for the conservation and management of this unique living 800-year-old temple. Temple priests, local village councils and state level authorities have ruled its management. ICMP delineates the processes involved. The State government

of Telangana has initiated a process of creating a special development authority to ensure the protection of much larger areas comprising other Kakatiyan period structures, the lake and the wider natural setting. This 12th-century temple is under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), a 160-year-old organisation responsible for the conservation of nearly 3,700 monuments of India including India's two of 28 World Heritage properties. The Rudreshwara temple has survived major outbreaks for more than 800 years because of its unique foundation using sand box technology. Many say a several degrees shifts in the flooring has been stabilised by this technology. It utilises floating bricks, has hard dolerite stones carved into magnificent statues polished with a metallic finish retaining its lustre even after 800 years. Quite fascinating.

India demonstrates the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by its credibility in conservation, capacity building, communities and communication. Lastly, India is committed to ensure the preservation of the OUV of the Rudreshwara Temple and ensure the implementation of ICOMOS suggestions. This temple is located in India but it belongs to humanity and it should be inscribed. Thank you, Chair, for your time.

Chairperson:

Thank you, India. Now, I am recalling what I just mentioned before about the request of the Russian Federation in compliance with Rule 22.7 of the Rules of Procedure. Russia can you let us know your position regarding allowing India to take the floor?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, I wanted to make an introduction in order to present our amendments on this property and also ask some questions to the State Party.

Chairperson:

Thank you, distinguished delegate. Can we just allow the countries that have raised their hands and then I will give you the floor again so you can ask the questions to the State Party of India. Okay? Thank you very much. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Chair, I am a bit puzzled by the procedure we are following. There is an amendment presented by Russia, that amendment has been co-sponsored by many Delegations. I think it would be fitting as a proper procedure to allow Russia first to present it as the lead amendment drafter. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Agreed. Russia, please, present the amendment.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to outline that substantial progress has been made by the State Party in order to meet the requirements for inscription. First of all, a new nomination approach has been introduced, according to which, the temple itself is considered together with its wider setting on the basis of criteria (i) and (iii) which according to the ICOMOS evaluation have strong potential to be met.

Criterion (i) has been strengthened on the basis of additional research in order to demonstrate the unique combination of artistic and engineering features of the property. Criterion (iii) was justified in line with a new nomination focusing on wider setting as well as integrity requirements. Following ICOMOS's recommendation, criterion (ii) was excluded.

In conformity with the new nomination approach, the territory of the nominated property and its buffer zone is expanded. In order to formalise the expansion of the nominated property, the minor boundaries modification mechanism will be applied. This task is included in the Draft Decision. The State Party has already launched the necessary procedure.

On 14 of July 2021, the ASI was handed over. The land belonging to two smaller temples located adjacent to the central monument, Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple. It is an efficient way to provide the necessary levels of protection and management to the monuments and sites in the setting of the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple. On the 22nd of July, the same year, the State government of Telangana established a Management Committee for the temple. It is headed by the Secretary of Tourism and will oversee the implementation of the conservation management plan in an integrated manner.

The conservation measures on site are based on detailed scientific research and international best practices and standards. For instance, the State Party has conducted research work within the Warangal Institute and with Cambodian partners. We can see that the property itself is of outstanding beauty, value and integrity. The criteria for inscription of authenticity and integrity requirements are fully met and justified according to the new nomination approach. The State Party has been positive and forthcoming in addressing ICOMOS concerns on national and regional levels.

Therefore, we believe that the property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Mr. Chair, may I ask you to kindly give the floor to the representative of India in order to provide an additional information about the future plans on conservation and management of the property as well as about the local community involvement. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, distinguished delegate. India, I am sorry to ask you again to repeat your statement.

The Delegation of India:

Excellency, at this point the experts from the ASI of India will be speaking.

Chairperson:

Okay.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and for letting us speak. I will be brief. The property is conserved and managed by the ASI and we are under our own National Act on Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites Preservation adopted in 1958, amended in 2010, and our own conservation policy here to conserve this monument. We have conserved the monument as per its original fabric even in the process of conservation, the aspect of floating bricks and the sand box technology has been used by ASI.

Mr. Chair, other aspects include a buffer zone. We would like to inform that in discussion with the State authorities a Palampet Special Development Committee has been constituted which takes care of the much larger setting of the temple complex just to ensure that the pristine aspect of the property is maintained and there is no impact on the larger context.

As far as the points regarding documentation are concerned, India would like to inform that adequate architectural and structural documentation has been carried out. Conservation plan is in place and has been practiced by ASI, and also the aesthetic aspect such as documentation carried out by ASI. Of course, it is a work in progress, and we continue to improve upon it and do laser scanning and all that.

At the end, I would like to mention that the monument preserved by ASI, although it is federally structured, the intergrated plan talks about stakeholders' consultation and the concept of a living temple involving the priest to the village communities to the State authorities, tourism, ASI, all are on board working towards the preservation and the management of this property. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, I give the floor to Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Kyrgyzstan would like to congratulate the State Party on the nomination of yet another beautiful site that represents its rich heritage of architecture and culture. The 12th-century medieval temple of the Kakatiyan dynasty is a site with evident OUV. Be it on ground of technical sophistication or its artistic finesse, the compendium of pictures and associated literature that the State Party shared with us is remarkable and breathtaking.

Our technical experts have carefully examined the State Party's additional submissions in the backdrop of ICOMOS recommendations and concerns. We believe that the State Party has been successful in constituting and implementing all requisite measures. For some of the recommendations, the State Party has already initiated a series of measures which will be rolled out in coming months and days. There has been significant progress on the justification of criteria and integrity which has been acknowledged by ICOMOS itself. the minor boundary modification obligation is being initiated and necessary legal and administrative activities are already under way. In the past two weeks, the concerned State government has undertaken important steps ensuring conservation and local stakeholders' participation.

In the view of these, and given the State Party continuous commitment in implementing and accommodating ICOMOS recommendations, Kyrgyzstan believes that the nominated site deserved inscription. Mr. Chair, Kyrgyzstan supports inscription of the site. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We thank the State Party of India for introducing the wonderful history of the Kakatiyan dynasty. The OUV rests on three pillars: criteria, integrity and authenticity, as well as protection and management, and all three must be present in order to justify the OUV. Norway in this regard recognises the significant potential in this nomination and we commend the State Party for its efforts. But there is also much left to do, we will try to explain our position.

ICOMOS very thorough and very concise evaluation identified several potentials for this property on criterion (iii). This potential rests not solely on the temple as such, but rather on a reconfigured approach of the landscape with the temple. Putting the temple into its larger context with carefully planned landscape, as an ideal landscape, would be an approach which we consider would fully show the remarkable vestiges of the destiny with the spiritual overtones materialising in a functional way through the surrounding landscapes and related attributes.

Yet, what we have in front of us in the proposed amendment suggesting the inscription of the property is an approach which only focuses on the temple. We ask ourselves, can this, unfortunately, be seen as an opportunity loss on the World Heritage List if inscribed as proposed? We would truly welcome a reconfigured nomination as unique witness to the Kakatiyan dynasty which will include all the smaller shrines and temples and sophisticated water distribution and irrigation system, cultivated land, the lake and the wonderful scenery. As it is presented now, Norway fully concurs with the analysis and conclusions presented in the evaluation and supports the original Draft Decision. Our main concerns in technical terms are related to the justification for criteria and the issues related to integrity. We wish to emphasize that ICOMOS clearly finds that many attributes which could potentially convey OUV for the Kakatiyan dynasty as whole are not included. The technical merit of the temples utilising sand box technology and the exceptional technology for producing the floating very large, yet, strong bricks and the impressive granite and dolerite decorative elements are not sufficiently compared with other temples and structures utilising the same techniques. Although the State Party has supplemented the comparative analysis, the features do not in themselves justify the inscription on the World Heritage List yet.

The ICOMOS evaluation with its recommendations provide a very strong foundation for the State Party to come back with a wonderful nomination which has a fully justified place on the World Heritage List showing the full story of the Kakatiyan dynasty. Norway therefore supports the original Draft Decision for deferral, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for this comprehensive assessment report that has been submitted to the Committee. I would also like to complement the State Party of India for choosing to nominate the Ramappa Temple which is rightly considered as the zenith of Kakatiya arts and architecture and for the tremendous efforts that have been devoted in preparing this nomination dossier.

This property represents a testimony of the Kakatiya style arts and architecture. It shows the significant interchange of cultural value through India historical tradition. Frankly, I believe this site would be a great addition to the World Heritage List. India has respected ICOMOS concerns and has even created a management committee at State level under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Tourism to the State government of Telangana and Special Development Authority. At the local level under the chairmanship of the district magistrate, both committees have been mandated with the task of representing much larger areas comprising the lake, hills and its nearby villages, etc. Furthermore, we are also fully confident that the State Party of India will implement all the technical guidance that was provided by the Advisory Bodies.

We therefore are convinced that the property of Ramappa Temple meets the necessary OUV, meets the criteria and has also maintained integrity and authenticity. We recommend the proposed nomination of this property for inscription. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to see you chairing our proceedings this morning. We have before us a magnificent 800-year-old temple Rudreshwara (Ramappa) built on a foundation of sand box and light-weight floating bricks conceived in the form of the lotus and blending in three-dimensional figures the treatment of divine human, animal, flora and geometrical designs. This certainly is a masterpiece of human creative genius, criterion (i) for inscription.

The Advisory Bodies recognised the strength of the nomination on the basis of criterion (iii) as there is no doubt that the temple is the best surviving example of Kakatiya culture tradition. This criterion by itself justifies the OUV of this

site. Nonetheless, ICOMOS questions the strategy adopted by India in this nomination and argues that the approach should also include features for the historic dramatic context as well as the economic and functional basis of the temple. We believe Mr. President, this is actually for the State Party to decide, just as it is for India to decide what name they choose to give to their own site although we recognise that India has already accepted the name proposed by ICOMOS.

The other technical issues raised by the Advisory Bodies have been mostly addressed by the representative of India and by the Russian Delegation in the presentation of the amendment. But we would like to emphasise that the State Party has agreed to most of ICOMOS recommendations and is already working on their implementation.

This site is managed by the ASI, a much respected 160-year-old organisation responsible for monuments in India and in other countries in South Asia. But the State Party will also contribute special authorities for protection of this site and its buffer zone, ensuring permanent consultation with all stakeholders including local communities and the temple clergy.

Mr. Chairman, we believe this is the time to inscribe Kakatiya (Ramappa) Temple on the World Heritage List and strongly support the amendment presented by the Russian Federation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil. The floor is now to Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-Chairman. We would like to commend India for the nomination of the Kakatiya Rudreshwara temple (sorry for mispronouncing it) which has all the components that present its OUV. The State Party, in the additional information provided to ICOMOS, has clearly presented its commitment to safeguard the property and the buffer zone. Our experts have examined the document presented by the State Party including the documentation of the nominated property, creation of a Special Development Authority even beyond the delineated buffer zone, and an implementable Integrated Conservation Management Plan for the conservation and management of this 800-year-old temple. It is worth noting that this 12th-century temple is under the protection of the ASI, the temple priests and local villagers and various state level of authorities have all got an input in the management of this property. Thus, the State Party has the strictest implementation to the strategic objective of the World Heritage Convention i.e., the five Cs: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communities and Communication.

We would also like to support India's nomination for the inscription of the temple as shown in the draft amendment presented by the Russian Federation that we co-authored. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Egypt. Spain, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Hello, I am here in Madrid. We want to congratulate the State Party on its excellent nomination and thank Guatemala for chairing this morning's proceedings. We also want to recognise the State Party's efforts in putting this site forward for nomination on the World Heritage List and we do think that the Ramappa temple is an outstanding temple.

We know that the significance has not been understated and the technical floating bricks that I never heard of before is evidence of this. The way in which the Ramappa temple fits with its surrounding area is of great importance and when we received the information and the images sent by India, we felt that this remarkable site has preserved its beauty despite the centuries that have gone by.

In light of what we have heard from the representatives of India, and in light of all the efforts to protect and safeguard the site, we feel that enough is being done and we would like to issue a vote of confidence to the State Party and therefore we support the proposed amendment.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Spain. I give the floor to Thailand.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, Thailand would like to commend the State Party of India for its outstanding effort in archaeological conservation. India has worked hard to preserve a number of centres of eminence for temples art and culture and architecture in India, in particular the Ramappa temple.

The Ramappa temple is a living memory of the Kakatiyan cultural, architectural and artistic creation. The Kakatiyan style of art and architecture as seen through artistic and cultural embellishments is outstanding. The property presents unique construction and technological achievements, for example the use of floating bricks and sand box technology in foundations and carvings. Therefore, Thailand is of the view that the nominated property has credible condition that attest to the OUV and meets the conditions of integrity and authenticity. Moreover, we also take note that the State Party has undertaken necessary management and conservation measures as recommended by the Advisory Bodies. These swift actions reflect the commitment of the State Party to work closely with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on the conservation and management plan and the Heritage Impact Assessment to ensure long-term protection and management.

Thailand would like to support and cosponsored the draft amendment to inscribe the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple on the World Heritage List.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Thailand. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Ramappa temple is a living memory of the legend of Kakatiya which significant artistic and architectural achievements have maintained their forms for over 800 years. The property maintains the authenticity for form, design, craftsmanship and function and use, material and construction techniques associated with tangible cultural heritage and displayed on the buildings and cultural traditions of the Kakatiya Empire.

As my distinguished colleagues have said before, India has made substantial and remarkable efforts to comply with recommendations of ICOMOS. It is fully committed to continue this work. In view of the above, Hungary supports the amendment regarding the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Hungary. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Saudi Arabia would also like to congratulate India for the nomination of the significant Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple to the World Heritage List. India has given humanity some of the most outstanding cultural monuments. It has already inscribed several temples on the World Heritage List, all of them being a physical manifestation of the human creative genius in their own ways. This temple was built by the Kakatiya Dynasty. It is another of such manifestation that India has presented to the world today.

Furthermore, in line with ICOMOS recommendations, the State of Telangana, where the nominated site is located, has constituted a Palampet Special Development Authority with the local stakeholders to manage the buffer zone and to ensure the protection of all adjoining structure linked with the site.

Mr. Chair, my Delegation would like to support the inscription of Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple in the World Heritage List. The fact that this 12th-century temple continues to be a place of worship for the communities living nearby and a centre for their faith and festivals, makes it a compelling case of an ever evolving and sustained property. It is also worth mentioning that, although the significant monument was built in the 12th century, it forethought an earthquake resistant technology that has enabled it to survive for more than 800 years.

My Delegation would once again congratulate India for their commitment to share India's cultural wealth with the whole world. And we would like to support the proposed amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Saudi Arabia. Now, South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving us the floor. India submitted to the World Heritage Centre the proposed inscription of the Ramappa Temple under criteria (i), (ii) and (iii). This is the main Shiva temple in a larger temple complex which includes smaller temples and mandapa structures, all constructed during the Kakatiyan period.

After careful consideration, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies had recommended this nomination for deferral due to a few identified shortcomings in the dossier. However, the State Party has been able to extensively address most of the concerns addressed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and as such, South Africa strongly supports the immediate inscription of this property on the World Heritage List.

South Africa is satisfied that the following activities among others undertaken by the State Party are sufficient to justify the inscription. Criterion (i) was strengthened on the basis of additional research in order to demonstrate the

unique combination of artistic and engineering features of the property. Criterion (ii) was removed and criterion (iii) is justified in line with a new wider context nominations concept. The extension of boundary modification was initiated to ensure the temple is considered together with its wider setting, retaining high visual and functional integrity. The management and conservation method could be further addressed in the existing Integrated Management Plan based on ICOMOS detailed recommendations and a Palampet Special Development Authority was newly instituted to ensure regulated development and appropriate zoning to maintain the serenity and natural beauty of the surrounding of Ramappa Temple.

As such, Mr. Chairperson, we support the amendment to the Draft Decision submitted by the Russian Federation and other cosponsors for the inscription on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, South Africa. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Vice-Chair. My Delegation would like to thank the government and people of India for bringing this to the World Heritage. It is a truly outstanding heritage site. We believe that this site meets both criteria (i) and (iii). It is a manifestation of a masterpiece of human genius in terms of creativity and also of spiritual value for the communities. It is astonishing for us that ICOMOS actually does not recommend the inscription of this site, also quite revealing in many ways. Having said that many of the recommendations that have been put forward by ICOMOS have been addressed by the government of India, whether it is concerning the safeguard property measures, challenges or concerns regarding the buffer zones, we sufficient information has been given by the government.

We, therefore, support fully the proposal, the amendment put forward by Russia, and would like to inscribe this site and enrich our List as it is truly a World Heritage. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Now, Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. As per the design, architecture, typology, morphology, associated structure and engineering integrity and as well as functionality, aesthetic accomplishment and ambiance, the Kakatiya Temples and Gateways are obvious descendants of all other testimonies of the Kakatiya dynasty. Hence, this strong virtue of authenticity, philosophically, logically, conceptually and contextually justifies the inscription on the World Heritage List under criteria (i) and (iii).

In this regard, Mr. Chairman, the proposed amendment is cognisant of the entire site's cultural landscape with its boundaries and buffer zone with the five queries raised in the paragraph of the Draft Decision. Furthermore Mr. Chairman, the site is conceived as a community centre and its general conservation management and planning falls under scope and possibly weaves in the site such a protection regime blending in its holistic environmental conservation regulations spanning the expanse of Lake Ramappa, its irrigation networks and their visual and scenic preservation measures.

Mr. Chairman, all these crucial nitty-gritties are comprehensively articulated in the site's well-crafted statement of OUV to the extent of not warranting any further revision of this nomination, and as well as deploying an expert mission for this particular purpose. Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, the amendment is precise in nurturing comprehensive and a current strategic conversation, tourism and risk management plan conducive to the mitigation of any excesses of the site's visitor numbers and yet accommodating compatible future visitor infrastructure development. Mr. Chairman, the amendment is also credible in matters of in built and well-articulated conservation philosophy, associated Heritage Impact Assessment, conservation excellence for mandapas, temples and stabilisation mechanisms for even but smaller significant structures on the periphery of the property poised for inscription.

In conclusion, therefore, Mr. Chairman, Uganda joins previous speakers in strongly supporting the inscription of the glorious Kakatiya Temples and Gateways on the World Heritage List. I rest my case, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Uganda. Now, Mali, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous souhaitons féliciter cette candidature indienne qui reflète un solide engagement de l'État partie de l'Inde, le Grand temple vivant de Rudreshwara, populairement connu sous le nom de temple Ramappa, constitue un témoignage des créations culturelles, architecturales et artistiques kakatiyennes. Nous notons que des progrès substantiels ont été accomplis par l'État partie pour satisfaire aux exigences d'inscription,

notamment en ce qui concerne la justification des critères d'intégrité du site. Une nouvelle approche des propositions d'inscription basée sur les recommandations de l'ICOMOS a également été reformulée pour justifier des critères déjà appréciés par l'ICOMOS. Au vu de tout cela, et sans être exhaustif, nous soutenons l'abrogation d'une décision afin d'inscrire le temple Ramappa sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Mali. Guatemala, you have the floor please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. At the outset we should like to thank the State Party for having prepared this nomination and the Advisory Bodies for their analysis conducted. I would not like to repeat everything that has been said concerning the interest, value and the worth of this outstanding site. Without any doubt, this element really ought to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. And in ICOMOS analysis, they had actually demonstrated the potential of this site under criteria (i) and (iii) and yet they had a few technical recommendations and management mechanisms to put forward.

Having received the additional information from the State Party, we can see in a favourable light all of the effort undertaken by the submitting party. Therefore, we had seen that there was a recommendation for referral instead of deferral, so back to the State Party so that they can better the nomination. Then, having the State Party to come back to the Committee to ensure an even better and stronger nomination file. However, we will not stymie consensus, if there is a consensus emerging from the floor. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Australia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia acknowledges the global value of the Ramappa Temple Complex as a masterpiece of human creative genius and an exceptional illustration of the artistic architectural and engineering achievements of the Kakatiya dynasty. We thank India for bringing this property forward for consideration by the Committee. We recognise the efforts of the State Party in addressing the evaluation by ICOMOS and their commitment undertaking actions necessary to ensure the future protection and management of this property.

On that basis, Australia will support the emerging consensus to inscribe the property on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to thank the State Party of India for presenting to the World Heritage List this important historic monument. In view of the documents communicated for this nomination, our initial assessment was that this site would have benefited from a referral recommendation in order to address the nine recommendations put forth by ICOMOS. Having heard the interventions of Committee members and the additional information presented to us by the State Party of India, we align ourselves to the consensus to be reached by the Committee and reaffirm our confidence in the State Party of India to address the technical recommendations put forth in the original Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bahrain. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Vice-chair. India is one of the ancient civilisations and China welcomes India's nomination of the glorious Kakatiya Temple and Gateways for inscription on the World Heritage List. China thanks ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for the extensive work carried out. The Chinese Delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Ambassador from India for the effort for this nomination.

China is willing to join the consensus reached by the Committee and supports the amendment put forward by Russia and other countries. We hope that India will do its best for this property in accordance with the recommendations from ICOMOS. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, China. Now, Bosnia, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

La Bosnie-Herzégovine se joint au consensus émergent. Nous n'allons pas répéter ce qui a été déjà dit, simplement que notre recommandation reste celle des autres, à savoir la nécessité d'une étroite coopération de l'Inde avec les experts afin de faire voir toutes les valeurs de ce bien, qui sont indiscutables, et de pouvoir ouvrir ce site à un grand nombre de visiteurs et de scientifiques. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bosnia-Herzegovina. ICOMOS, you have the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. ICOMOS notes that a large number of Committee members would like to see the property inscribed at this session. In response to Ethiopia, why we have not supported or proposed inscription, it is simply because we see this as very premature right now, with possible implications on the long-term conservation of the property and, in particular, the outstanding surrounding Kakatiya landscape around the property.

At present, no OUV has been demonstrated and none of the three criteria have been satisfied. In terms of criterion (i) the questions were specifically based on the comparative analysis, and that it was not clearly demonstrated that Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple could indeed be the best example of this particular mastery produced during the Kakatiyan dynasty. In terms of criterion (iii) where ICOMOS indeed sees potential, this site and components of this site were not sufficient in terms of integrity, as the boundaries corresponding to the walled temple complex seem too small to contain all the attributes that would make a possible contribution to the justification of criterion (iii).

Also, integrity is not demonstrated at this stage and if criterion (iii) is the basis for inscription, a significant expansion of the boundary would be necessary, which ICOMOS could only evaluate with a mission to the site. When ASI assures that the temple is well protected, this is indeed the case as it refers to the walled temple compound, but there is no adequate level of heritage protection for the wider surroundings of the property, although it is indeed in the Special Development Area and ruled by the Special Development Authority put in place.

Yet, ICOMOS observes growing pressure with regard to tourism developments in this area. Lastly, Russia referred to additional material that has been submitted with regard to a revised evaluation approach. This unfortunately was not available to ICOMOS and could not be evaluated at this stage. Brazil referred to a name changed proposed by ICOMOS. ICOMOS has not proposed a name change, although we agree that the initial proposed name is rather lengthy. However, ICOMOS would make the name change dependent on the nomination approach taking to the property. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. I see no more questions or comments. I would then like to ask Norway if they would like to join the consensus.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. Having listened very carefully to all the interventions that have been made, including two interventions from the State Party, Norway supports the sentiments as expressed by ICOMOS, but we will not enact our role as a watchdog for the credibility of the Convention and the *Operational Guidelines* any further. To this end, we have submitted some technical revisions for the amendment which is supported by the majority of the Committee. We will not go against the consensus that is building. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Therefore, now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.12. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments, as we have heard, on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members. I will just wait until it shows up on the screen. Here it is. The first paragraph of the Decision remains unchanged, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. I invite all delegates to revise and adopt the decision paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1, do we agree? It is adopted. Ms. Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2, in here, Mr. Chair, we have directly used the updated name of the property if the Committee Members wish to go ahead with the updated name it can be mentioned directly in here and we do not need new paragraph 6

in that case. The paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana, India, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (i) and (iii)'.

Chairperson:

Have you got any comments, do you agree? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3 reads: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then we have Brief Synthesis, Criterion (i), Criterion (iii), Integrity, Authenticity and Management and Protection Requirements, the text included in here is on a provisional basis. This is all for paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? It is adopted. Next one please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

a) Submitting a minor boundary modification of the extended boundaries of the property and the buffer zone with a view to including relevant wider context of the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple.' In here we have already tried to integrate additions that the delegate from Norway also mentioned. Apologies, Mr. Chair, it is a bit confusing in here. Perhaps the distinguished delegate of Norway could just mention their intervention in here.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. I will try to read out our proposal: 'Submitting a boundary modification of the property and the buffer zone with a view to including all attributes of the wider dharmic functional landscape context which determine the site location and enable the functional views of the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple.' Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

In here it looks like it is a new 4a, but it is included as an insertion within the paragraph. Shall we continue or shall we go sub paragraph by sub paragraph in here, Mr. Chair?

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Rapporteur. ICOMOS, first, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Regarding the minor boundary modification requested, ICOMOS has a concern that the two criteria seemingly adopted have rather different directions as to the OUV considered. While criterion (i) can only apply to the sculptures of the temple, criterion (iii) can only apply to the wider dharmic and historic context that is mentioned within this Decision. But an extension seems contradictory to what is implied in criterion (i). While ICOMOS mentioned that both criteria could be justified at a later stage, it assumed that both criteria could be justified according to the nomination approach taken separately, but not in combination with each other. As here, two very different narratives would be recognised which require different boundaries for each of them.

If criterion (iii) is being included and favoured by the Committee then certainly the dharmic context and the functional landscape context of this site would be what is necessary. ICOMOS would very much appreciate to have the opportunity to assess the enlarged boundary of such context by means of a mission to the property. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Ms. Rapporteur is the recommendation coming from ICOMOS included in the paragraph?

Rapporteur:

ICOMOS made a comment on the criteria, we already adopted this paragraph, so we can continue with paragraph 4b, if you allow. For 4a we now have two options. The original amendment submitted by a number of States and the modification proposed by Norway. Perhaps we can get the decision for this point, Mr. Chair, and then continue so that we do not get confuse.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Rapporteur. ICOMOS has raised their hand. Please, go ahead ICOMOS before we continue.

ICOMOS:

ICOMOS just wanted to confirm that our concern is regarded to criterion (iii), as captured by the Norwegian proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much ICOMOS. Can we read again paragraph 4, Ms. Rapporteur, please?

Rapporteur:

I will read the proposed modification from Norway. Paragraph 4 starts with: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following: a): Submitting a boundary modification of the property and the buffer zone with a view to including all attributes of the wider dharmic functional landscape context which determine the exact location and enabled the functional view of the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) temple.'

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would suggest that the recommendation from Norway is included in the previous one. If we have a sub-literal 'a' it would be included. Is that correct?

Rapporteur:

It is correct.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

From my understanding this brings a major change, therefore, we prefer taking the original amendment which mentions a minor boundary modification. Thank you, Chair

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. ICOMOS, you raised your hand.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. ICOMOS would like to recall that a minor boundary modification would not allow for a mission to the site. I would also like to highlight that there is a reference to the functional use of the Ramappa temple. And perhaps what is meant is that it is the functional use, as there is a strong dependence between the landscape and the use in terms of water irrigation system and agricultural fields. The views would not necessarily be functional although they might be relevant in terms of site perspective as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am a little bit confused here, I thought we had already passed over this process. I would stick with the original amendment and support what our colleague from Ethiopia has just said. Let us keep it as it was originally. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I believe that we, here in the Committee, do not at present have sufficient information to determine whether this would be a major or a minor boundary modification or a greater boundary modification. This would be established by the State Party following a study that would need to be made on the site. Guatemala, therefore, would like to support the proposal tabled by Norway that does not state whether the boundary modification would be minor or major.

Chairperson:

Egypt has the floor now. Please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to support what has been proposed by the Ambassador of Ethiopia and that of Brazil. We should stick to minor modification. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Egypt. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. We support Brazil and Egypt and we prefer the original formulation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, please, we give Bahrain the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe, in light of what ICOMOS has just clarified, the proposal by Norway and Guatemala is the way forward. And again, to bring to the diverging views of the Committee and to move forward with the consensus. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you very much. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Oman would like to go with the majority consensus that we stick with the minor change of the boundary.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to go with the majority of what was submitted by Ethiopia, the minor boundary modification. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. We would like to join the majority. We agree with Ethiopia, this must be a minor modification. We understand the good will of Norway and its proposal but we believe that we also heard ICOMOS about the difficulty of organising a visit on the site. We would agree with the majority and we believe that this would be in line with what we are pursuing here. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Spain. Bosnia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine est pour garder le texte original de l'amendement.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Bosnia. Now Norway, I would like to ask you if you would like to make a comment or join the consensus in this particular phase? Thank you.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that it is of the utmost importance that we get a very concrete clarification from ICOMOS, also the assistance of the Secretariat, as we have been pointed to the paradox related to the two criteria that have been agreed on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Therefore, if Norway still insist in their position, I would suggest that a drafting group may be established, but before we decide it, ICOMOS has the floor for a comment.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would like to respond to the question posed by Norway regarding the contradictory criteria and I hope to be clearer than the last time.

When ICOMOS evaluated the proposed property, we saw potential in both criteria (i) and (iii) to be demonstrated at a later stage and hence, we recommended that the nomination approach be revised. And depending on the revised approach taken by the State Party either criterion (i) or criterion (iii) could be justified.

Criterion (i) could have been justified through further augmented comparative analysis of these sculptures and artistic component of the Rudreshwara temple itself as mastery of specific depiction of dance cultures in the Kakatiyan empire.

Criterion (iii), on the other hand, relates to the temple as a functional complex and this cannot be separated from its wider natural surroundings and cultural context including the forest reserve, the water reservoir, irrigation system, villages, agricultural fields and several other temples that swarm the surroundings of the property and contain outstanding attributes of the architectural engineering and artistic achievements of the Kakatiya Empire.

This is why ICOMOS recommended to the State Party, to approach the nomination through the consideration of criterion (iii) and extend the boundary and composition in terms of the value basis of the property. I hope this clarifies Norway's concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I give the floor to the Secretariat, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to remind you that a minor boundary modification is one of which that does not have a significant impact on the extent of the property or affect its OUV. So, given also the combination of criteria in this case and the different attributes we are talking about, I think it would be wiser to leave it open to the State Party to submit either a minor boundary modification or a larger. Just to mention a boundary modification would be wiser.

Chairperson:

Okay, Thank you. Just before giving the floor to Oman I would like to ask Norway, if you are satisfied after the explanation from ICOMOS and the Secretariat?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. Thank you to ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for highlighting exactly our concerns in this decision-making. This is also why we are very hesitant towards changing our position on this very important matter. For the rest we are more or less in line with the consensus that has developed, but this is a very important matter to keep open because this is really going to the core of what is possible to do within a minor boundary modification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Oman, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you Chair. Oman is not in agreement to take the amended Decision to a drafting group and therefore I think we need to resolve the issue here, it is a minor issue. We need to do it here and take a decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We also do not agree to take this to a drafting group because this is a difference in terms of our appreciation of this site and its OUV. The recommendation or the advice by ICOMOS is that the OUV criteria is not met by the temple itself and that the wider setting (water system, etc.) has to be included. We agree with the proposal submitted by India as submitted, and as agreed on consensus that the temple itself has OUV. We listen to the recommendation; we disagree with the recommendation of ICOMOS. We decide. We take their advice and we disagree with it. This is a conceptually important subject matter. Through this amendment we are trying to embark on the decision we made regarding the OUV and value of the temple in order to include the wider area of the temple. We disagree with it and we decide on it. In order to be consistent with ourselves, we have to agree that only a minor boundary modification is possible. Thank you very much Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Now, please, I give the floor to Kyrgyzstan and then Egypt.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. After hearing the clarification from ICOMOS, we still think that we keep the original amendment. We agree with a minor boundary modification.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Egypt, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We listened carefully to the clarification given by ICOMOS and the Secretariat and I think that it could accommodate the concerns raised by the Delegation of Norway. Therefore, we do not believe as well that we need a drafting group to look at this matter. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I will try to help. I think there is a growing consensus to keep the original. I think if you would just take out the word 'minor' and leave 'Submitting a boundary modification of the extended [...]', leave the whole text and leave it to the State Party of India to see what would be the best way forward in accordance with the *Operational Guidelines*. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Bosnia, please, then Thailand. Bosnia, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Nous n'avons pas changé d'opinion, à savoir que la Bosnie est pour que le texte reste tel quel. Les petites modifications dont on parle sont toujours possibles avec la coopération et l'entraide entre les experts de deux pays. Cependant, certaines choses appartiennent à l'État qui propose l'inscription ; c'est à l'État lui-même de prendre une décision concernant les frontières du site. Mais le monument tel quel a une valeur universelle exceptionnelle, il n'y a pas de doute à ce sujet. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bosnia. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Chair. The Thai Delegation would like to support the original amendment as proposed by Ethiopia. We believe that there is an emerging consensus on this issue and we do not think there is a need to go to a drafting group. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. We would like to thank the Secretariat for its assessment and we would agree to accept the original amendment if the word '*minor*' is deleted. Because, precisely, that is the aspect that the State Party must determine. The State Party has the capacity and the right to determine that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Guatemala. Norway, please, would you like to consider and join the consensus?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. Please allow us to be very clear and I hope it was clear from our very first intervention that we fully acknowledge the values and the potential of this remarkable site.

Please, dear Committee members, we are not in disagreement on the value of the site and its potential. All we have asked for is for this tiny, tiny item to be left open, while the State Party has been able to work with its nomination and process further according to the recommendations proposed in this amendment. It could be possible to solve this matter through a minor boundary modification or, if it requires, significant boundary modification, but that should be up to the process the State Party is initiating. That is all we ask for that it is left open. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We also thank both Norway and the Director for their flexibility. So long as we maintain the initial amendment by taking out just the word '*minor*', we are comfortable with it. For us, that is acceptable, that would give us, as said by Norway, the flexibility needed and gives proper and new recognition to the OUV of the site as proposed by India which we have agreed. So, we can leave with just taking out the word '*minor*' in the original Draft Decision as a consensus. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ethiopia. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Secretariat and Ms. Rössler for this suggestion to delete the word '*minor*.' I think that if we delete the word '*minor*' we are going to accommodate all the positions that have been raised here, because we are going to give the State Party the capacity in a dialogue with ICOMOS to define the boundaries and any modification to this site. We will support the original amendment without the word '*minor*.' Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chair. We also believe that the proposal made by Dr Rössler is very acceptable and will accommodate the concerns of everyone. We support it as we think it would be a very good compromise. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Egypt. Norway?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to thank all the distinguished colleagues and also the Director of the World Heritage Centre for making this proposal which we can fully agree on. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Norway. Therefore, Ms. Rapporteur, can we go back to the paragraph and apply the consensus?

Rapporteur:

Of course, Mr. Chair. Just for diligence, I am reading it again: 'Submitting a boundary modification of the extended boundaries of the property and the buffer zone with a view to including relevant wider context of the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is adopted. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4b: 'Finalising the Kakatiya Heritage Trust (KHT) research on comparison of Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple and other Kakatiya temples and extend it in regional and international contexts'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4c: 'Finalising the integrated conservation and management plan as well as updating the tourism development plan, to integrate risk preparedness strategies, visitor management at festive events with overcrowding, and cautious assessment criteria for approving any additional visitor infrastructure in and around the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4d: 'Ensuring the constitution and functioning of Palampet Special Area Development Authority in order to provide effective management and adequate protection' — in here we have an insertion proposed by Norway — 'to all attributes of the larger dharmic and functional temple complex' — then we continue with the original amendment — 'and to the buffer zone and all supporting Kakatiya period features'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Next.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4e: 'Expanding the programmed conservation approach to cover the additional architectural and engineering features, including Ramappa Lake bund, the water distribution and irrigation channels, and the smaller temples in the wider temple setting'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4f: 'Undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments for any projects located near the property, in particular the development projects near the Ramappa Lake'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4g: 'Providing a schedule and detailed methodology for the reassembly and conservation of Kameshwara Temple following the principle of anastylosis'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4h: 'Undertaking capacity building for local community and the temple priest so that they have the necessary skills to contribute to the management of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5, Mr. Chair: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2023' — in here we have an insertion proposed by Norway which is to change the date to '2022' — 'a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for discussion by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.' This is the standard continuation of the paragraph, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Do you have any comments? Do you agree?

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, just to clarify, we have to decide on the year that this report is supposed to be submitted.

Chairperson:

I see no comments, so I assume that everybody agrees on the date proposed. Do you all agree? It is adopted.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair the adopted date is the report to be submitted by 1 December 2022.

Chairperson:

Yes, this is what has been agreed. We have been through all the paragraphs of the amendment. I would like to declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.12 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Thank you very much to all the delegates and all the members of the Committee for this fruitful, intense and profound dialogue in which we all gained a new site. Let me congratulate India on behalf of the whole Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. India, you may have the floor for a two-minute statement. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Until yesterday, in fact until 11:20 am today, the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple belonged to the Palampet village. But today, because of this historical decision that the member States of this Committee have taken, the Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple belongs to the whole world, it belongs to humanity. It is not just a temple property of Palampet village or the State of Telangana or of India. It is now the property of humanity.

I congratulate all of you. I congratulate my dear brothers and sisters. I congratulate the people of the village of Palampet. It is a victory of all of us, in fact, the endeavours of the local village council, the state government of Telangana, the government of India, the officers of the ASI, the officers of various departments and works, the Delegations we have interacted with, the officers of the various Delegations we have interacted with. I really congratulate all of you for your advice for your suggestions. I even thank ICOMOS for your excellent recommendations that India is adopting. We appreciate the comments by Director Rössler. I know she is going to retire this September. I really thank her for years and years of service and guidance, thank you Mr. Balsamo and we thank you, Your Excellency, for having conducted this meeting in such a good manner.

It is a great day, today and I know that the 1.3 billion people of India are rejoicing along with the whole world. Thank you so much everybody, I cannot have words to express my thanks anymore. Thank you, thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, India. And thank you to all of you. Let us continue with our Agenda. The next item is the Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran, but before I do so, I will give the floor to the Secretariat. Please, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this notification is inserted in page 44 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

This is a presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of notification of factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors.

Trans-Iranian Railway connects the Caspian Sea in the north-east with the Persian Gulf in the south-west. It crosses different geographic regions and climatic areas. The construction started in 1927 and was completed in 1938 by the collaboration between the Iranian government and 43 construction contractors from many countries.

Despite additional information provided during the evaluation process, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis did not establish the significance of the nominated property with regards to the proposed justification for inscription in relation to the railway innovation. An interesting aspect of the Trans-Iranian Railway would potentially lay, not necessarily in terms of the history of the railway techniques, but rather in the fact that it represents a modern State power in the 20th century in a specific context of non-colonised Asia.

ICOMOS considers that both proposed criteria (ii) and (iv) have not been justified at this stage. Thorough documentation of the tangible features and deeper analysis of their culture significance with regard to a different narrative are needed.

The nominated property is divided into two segments, the northern line and the southern line. It is 1,394 kilometres long and typically 34 metres wide including bridges, tunnels, stations and ancillary buildings. The property is flanked by buffer zones and landscape zones. ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of its buffer zones and landscape zones are adequate and that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met. The property is registered on the National List and enjoys the highest level of national protection. The buffer zone and the landscape zone are protected by the Department of Environmental Law. The main conservation challenge is to balance measures to address the safety and operational viability of the railway, on the one hand, and the conservation of the heritage features, on the other hand.

In summary, the comparative analysis does not justify the consideration of this property for the World Heritage List, and criteria (ii) and (iv) have not been demonstrated at this stage. Protection of the nominated property can be considered adequate but its management is not adequate at this stage. A balance should be thought between the operational aspect of the railway and the conservation of the heritage values of the nominated property. The Iranian Cultural Heritage and Trust and Tourism Organisation should be given an effective position in the main decision-making level of management of the property. An overall conservation management plan should be created for the nominated property, including the railway, as well as historical and architectural associated features.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran be deferred for the following main reason:

- The need to expand the scope of the nomination to focus on the role of the Trans-Iranian Railway in the modernisation of the country. This requires revisions of the comparative analysis, the justification for inscription and the criteria focusing on the most appropriate one;
- The need for a complete inventory and a deeper analysis of the culture significance of all tangible features of the property;
- The need to establish a conservation plan and reconsider the organisational hierarchy to ensure that decision-making regarding the nominated property's cultural heritage is positioned at the most effective level.

ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. ICOMOS considers that such revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Now, I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination? I give the floor to the delegate of Kyrgyzstan.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The value and significance of the Trans-Iranian Railway from the perspective of the creative aspect of technology represent an important heritage illustrating the transformation into modernity in the Middle East and Central Asia. Trans-Iranian Railway exceptional skilled labour in the field of mountain railways, due to its extensive work extending from the north to the south of the Iranian plateau, has led to cultural diversities along this range. Many of these communities and settlements were not accessible before its construction. The Trans-Iranian Railway played a cultural bridge and a multidimensional border between Eurasia in the north and the Arab countries, the Indian subcontinent, East Asia and East Africa.

There is no doubt that this railway is not only a highlight to both railway and transportation engineering history, but also is an inseparable part of Iranian history and heritage. The narrative technological and engineering achievements in the early 20th century in the region are clearly visible following the construction of this railway in its many bridges, tunnels and other related constructions which were built at different altitudes with various gradients. All this technical achievement as well as the social, economic, industrial and cultural growth of Iran and the region in addition to international trade and transactions are undeniable.

Given the various historical, cultural and technical references, as well as the control of the Trans-Iranian Railway in certain period of contemporary history, these examples of the significance of the property leads us to believe that the Trans-Iranian Railway meets all requirements of OUV. The evaluation report of ICOMOS indicates the potential and positive aspect of the Trans-Iranian Railway for inscription. According to the ICOMOS report, the authenticity and integrity and conservation and management of the nominated property have been met. And as the recommendation regarding the management plan was clarified in the additional information submitted by the State Party, probably, it may have not been considered by the Advisory Bodies. In this regard, as the property is a national heritage and all activities aimed at conservation and management plan are carried out. Therefore, it seems there is an appropriate balance between measures, that address the safety, and the conservation of its cultural resources. We believe that the strong commitment of the State Party for the conservation of the OUV, management, integrity and authenticity of this property in an area under development pressure is remarkable.

In conclusion, considering all the aspects of this dossier and the additional information in reference to the reports submitted by the State Party, as well as many instances in the evaluation report and the potential of the Trans-Iranian Railway for inscription together with the fact that it meets the requirements of OUV, we believe it is eligible for inscription. Thus, we strongly support the Trans-Iranian Railway for inscription on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Kyrgyzstan. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. For all train admirers this proposed nomination is of extraordinary interest with that of the engineering knowledge overcoming nature. Despite engaging stories and an interesting tangible culture connected to the Trans-Iranian Railway, the Advisory Bodies have pointed out that the nomination dossier needs a reorientation to fulfil the proposed criteria (ii) and (iv), and that there is only some potential in criteria (iv), the way we understand it.

The Committee's task is to ensure that the OUV of a property is fulfilled if or when a property is inscribed on the World Heritage List. In this case, without a proper OUV confirmed, there are several steps to be taken for the State Party to finalise its nomination proposition. Norway urges the State Party to come back with a revised nomination.

On this background Norway supports the Draft Decision of deferring the proposed nomination back to the State Party. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. This large and complex site is an example of the process of modernisation that were made possible through technological innovation, and it has the potential to make an important contribution to the representation of the 20th century heritage of the World Heritage List. However, at this stage, the potential OUV of the property has not been demonstrated. As Norway has just alluded, neither criterion (ii), nor criterion (iv), for which the property was nominated, have been justified although ICOMOS does suggest criterion (iv) may be justified through refining the narrative around the railway, as a vehicle of modernisation, and in particular, the impact of the railway on Iranian social, economic and cultural life.

We encourage the State Party to work with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre to revise and refine the justification for OUV under criterion (iv) and to define the attributes that demonstrate this criterion, and, on this basis, to bring forward a revised nomination. We also encourage the State Party to develop a conservation plan for the property that will ensure the cultural values of the railway are protected and balanced against the operational aspect of the railway. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Australia. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We support the amendment put forward by Kyrgyzstan and agree that this unique site should be in our World Heritage List for the reasons that have been mentioned by my colleague from Kyrgyzstan. The authenticity and the integrity are beyond dispute. The protection is provided by the State Party. As a site that symbolises modernisation in a developing world, we consider it as a very essential site. Not only for that part of the world but throughout the developed world.

Therefore, we urge colleagues to support the amendment put forward by our colleague from Kyrgyzstan and to inscribe this very important site on the World Heritage List. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Oman, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Let me start by complementing the efforts of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. The Delegation of Oman also wishes to acknowledge the considerable efforts made by the State Party in the preparation of this nomination. Oman notes that ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met. Legal protection is generally satisfactory, visitor management is adequate, and there is a recognition of positive management and benefits for local communities along the railway.

Oman also acknowledges all clarifications provided by the State Party in response to the rest of the concerns raised by the Advisory Bodies. Clarification of issues related to the comparative analysis of justification of the criteria, OUV, attributes, conservation and monitoring management plan are addressed by the State Party.

Taking the commitment and effort of the State Party, Oman strongly recommends that the Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran is to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. We also urge the State Party to further open discussion with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for any information and clarification needed. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President. The Trans-Iranian Railway is a marvel of modern engineering. It also played an important historical role during World War II. I had the pleasure myself to visit it when I was Ambassador to Iran and I was very impressed.

I am glad to have the opportunity to say a word here on behalf of this extraordinary site. We understand from the ICOMOS report that conditions for integrity and authenticity, as well as protection of the property, have all been met. According to the document, there are improvements to be made on the part of the management system which needs to balance conservation measures with the requirement of a railway that remains in activity. But these should not constitute an obstacle for inscription, rather an additional reason for recognition of the importance of the Railway.

The real question here is whether the property has the necessary attributes for OUV. Like few other landmarks, a railway is exactly the type of construction created to favour human interchanges, criterion (ii), and this railway in particular served as a bridge between the cultures of Central Asia and the Arabic Peninsula by being the product of the interchange of ideas between East and West in the field of architecture and landscape blended into the creative new architectural style.

It also unequivocally represents a major stage in history, the human technical and economic transformation that West Asia underwent in the early 20th century, criterion (iv). In our view the inscription of the Trans-Iranian Railway on the World Heritage List is well merited and well justified. We firmly support the amendment proposed by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil. I would just like to make a small recommendation for the sake of time and efficiency. If you have raised your hand and you have the same comment as previous speakers, please make it short. Thank you very much for your understanding. Now, I give the floor to the Russian Federation, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our experts have analysed the nomination of the Trans-Iranian Railway and consider it to be a very interesting project which has high potential and merit, and we would very much like to see it on the World Heritage List. It is not the first time that properties associated to railways are inscribed. At this moment there are about ten such properties, including functioning railways in Austria, India, Switzerland and Italy.

The Trans-Iranian Railway is unique by its technical and engineering aspects, its strategic significance, as well as being an important milestone in the modernisation and integration of the country. It is about 1,400 kilometres long it crosses four different climate zones and has hundreds of bridges and tunnels, some of them extremely sophisticated from a technical viewpoint.

This railway also has historic significance since it connects the Persian Gulf with the Caspian Sea. It was used by the allies during World War II to supply food to the Soviet Union. Moreover, this railway has important intercultural significance because it serves to connect many regions and subcultures.

Therefore, given all these important aspects, we recognise the OUV of this property. And we also note with satisfaction that ICOMOS has recognised its integrity, authenticity, boundaries and protection. We hope that Committee members will support this nomination and adopt the decision accordingly, and we hope that the State Party will continue its close cooperation with the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr. Chairman. We are going to be very quick. Just to say that the candidacy seems to be well presented and documented and we have ICOMOS's recommendations as well. However, we need to take into account that, in this category, we only have very few properties, we only have four. We are talking about a railway which is still working. We need to be able to show that a property can be preserved, conserved and at the same time be useful for the community. It covers certain number of kilometres, as was said, and also provides a whole series of tunnels and bridges which are also examples of cooperation in engineering at the time it was built at the international level.

We think that, over and above the obligations we are sure the State Party would go on respecting, the inscription mentions a series of obligations to go on preserving the heritage. We consider therefore that this property should be inscribed. It would only be the fifth in its category and we may have to talk about the scarcity of this type of nomination and see how we can rectify that later on. In any case we should go on with this and we are in favour of it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Spain. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, and thank you for giving us the floor. The Trans-Iranian Railway line is a masterpiece of engineering excellence straddling different landscapes, eight different regions and uniquely connecting the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. South Africa would like to commend the Islamic Republic of Iran for undertaking such an innovative project which exemplifies, more than many other properties, the struggle to manage and conserve the integrity and authenticity and OUV of a site, while at the same time adapting to a changing environment and facing development pressures, environmental pressure and natural disasters.

Since the 2021 ICOMOS evaluation of the nomination report, the State Party has conducted additional research and implemented some of the recommendation into the original draft Decision, such as strengthening the criteria used and expanding the information related to the management of a very complex site.

South Africa agrees that this important property should be listed in the World Heritage List as submitted and proposed by Kyrgyzstan. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, South Africa. Now, Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Uganda commends the Republic of Iran for presenting the Trans-Iranian Railway for nomination and notes with much satisfaction the past and present role of the historic Trans-Iranian Railway in the modernisation of Iranian economy. The accompanying statement of OUV conveys a richly and factually constructed justification for its inscription on the World Heritage List, instead of deferring inscription as suggested in the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13.

Chair, the property inherent pieces of built heritage spanning over hundred railways stations, numerous tunnels, small and large bridges and historic industrial and utility elements, together with varied engineering heritage ingredients, demonstrate unique technological, architectural, economic and social characteristics, and masterpieces of transnational engineering.

Furthermore, Chair, the statement of OUV outlines a fitting sustainable community centred conservation management plan that surpasses previous versions in ensuring timelessness of this tangible transportation heritage for now and posterity. It also guarantees relevant monitoring and conserving all its heritage elements to point to a necessary visit of an expert mission for this nomination and inscription purposes.

For this reason, Uganda joins the previous speakers in supporting the amendments to Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13 with no further hesitation and to henceforth inscribe the Trans-Iranian Railway on the World Heritage List. I submit Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Uganda. China, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We thank the State Party of Iran for nominating this valuable asset for inscription on the World Heritage List. China has carefully studied and evaluated the report of the Advisory Bodies and additional information provided by the State Party of Iran. We hold the view that it meets criteria (ii) and (iv). The Trans-Iranian Railways is a good example of interchange of human values. It gives rise to a mixture of Iranian western architecture style. It also contributed to the economy and the trade growth by speeding transportation which led to the revival of the cultural era of historical routes such as the Silk Road and the essential connection with West Asia during the early 20th century and later on with European countries. The integrity of the Trans-Iranian Railway has been preserved with a proposed core zone that contains all the characteristics of its OUV. The Trans-Iranian Railway is a living and dynamic industrial engineering structure that enjoys a high degree of authenticity.

China therefore supports the amendments proposed by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, China. Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thailand welcomes the nomination of the Trans-Iranian Railway. The Railway has played an important role in the social, economic, industrial and cultural growth of Iran, as well as serving as an important route for international trade promoting cultural interactions with Western Asian countries and beyond.

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation would like to take this opportunity to address a few specific questions to the State Party of Iran. First, how has the comparative study been done? Second, what is the state of management of this property? And third, what role has the Trans-Iranian Railway played in the modernisation of the country? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much Thailand. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Mr. Chair, Hungary believes that the Trans-Iranian Railway is a unique site in the sense of the mixture of architecture and industrial sites and, on the other hand, because it was constructed through international projects including many architects and engineers from all over the world. The Trans-Iranian Railway has a very unique architecture of style, its building and connecting architecture combine the architectural values of Eastern and Western cultures. In this sense it is the very first industrial World Heritage site in Iran. The railway connects abandoned territories in Iran from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, thus connecting the most isolated people. Its cultural, political as well as socio-economic value is therefore outstanding.

Iran has made substantial efforts to comply with the ICOMOS recommendations and is fully committed to implement them. In the view of the above, Hungary supports the amendments submitted by Kyrgyzstan regarding the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Hungary. Bosnia-Herzegovina, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Nous sommes favorables à l'inscription de ce bien. Pour ne pas répéter ce qui a déjà été dit, je vais dire simplement que, à part l'aspect technique de ce bien, dont nous avons parlé, il y a l'aspect culturel, qui signifie l'ouverture d'une porte de plus, pour nous rendre plus proches les uns des autres. Et je suis dans l'attente de l'ouverture d'autres portes, que ce soit en Asie, en Afrique ou ailleurs dans le monde ; des portes qui nous faciliteront une connaissance meilleure des différentes cultures, et qui permettra un échange plus intensif entre elles. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bosnia. Mali, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Les lignes de chemins de fer traversent différents climats et paysages, à travers des zones arides ou fertiles, les terres de diverses zones géographiques. Comme cela a déjà été dit, les gares sont parfois conçues en harmonie avec les paysages environnants. Le chemin de fer transiranien ne fait pas exception à cet égard. Le chemin de fer transiranien a ainsi conduit à la création et au développement d'activités culturelles spéciales et à des interactions dans tout l'Iran. Nous notons que le site répond aux critères d'intégrité et d'authenticité selon le rapport de l'ICOMOS, et sans vouloir revenir sur les autres interventions, nous appelons le Comité à donner un avis favorable à son inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment. Please, I would like to ask ICOMOS to answer and take the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I think the question raised by the distinguished delegate of Thailand was more towards the State Party rather than ICOMOS. In any case, ICOMOS might pick this opportunity to clarify its position concerning the potential of the property and also recognising that there is an emerging consensus towards inscription of this property among Committee Members. ICOMOS has not seen in relation to criterion (ii) how an important interchange of human value in the field of development in architecture, technology, monumental art, town planning or landscape design, the railway can contribute to. In the sense that, of course, the railway has linked different regions but the criterion (ii) refers to specific aspects in which a property needs to demonstrate interchange of human values. That is why ICOMOS has not seen this criterion to be justified, also in the future.

On the other hand, criterion (iv) has not been found and demonstrated in relation to the innovation, but ICOMOS through the evaluation process has identified, as promising for the Trans-Iranian Railway, the possibility to justify consideration for the World Heritage List under criterion (iv) in relation to its role in the expansion of modern state in the 20th century and also in the modernisation of Iran. And in this way, ICOMOS has identified a potential for the Trans-Iranian Railway to justify criterion (iv) but under a different perspective. In this regard the change of perspective has also an impact on the potential attributes that can support a revised focus on the nomination.

For this reason, a deferral was considered the most adequate recommendation at this stage. That is perhaps the first comment that ICOMOS would like to raise. There might be a few technical comments and recommendations that might be needed if the Committee goes towards an inscription. That is basically what ICOMOS would like to raise at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to give the floor to the State Party to respond to the question that was stated by the Thai Delegation. Iran, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Iran:

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, all colleagues from different countries, first of all, I would like to thank ICOMOS for endeavours and efforts made for this project and respect the endeavour of the World Heritage Centre too. I would like to thank our brother country Kyrgyzstan for having raised the amendment and to thank the cosponsors and supporters on the floor. Anyway, I also would like to thank the States criticising and to thank ICOMOS for its explanations because we respect all the recommendations for better conservation of this property of World Heritage and, of course, we are always ready to fulfil our mandate for preserving this World Heritage in case of inscription. We are ready to cooperate more with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre to fulfil the demanded mandate.

Concerning the questions asked by the distinguished delegate of Thailand, I would like to say that concerning the comparative analysis, based on the characteristic of the Trans-Iranian Railway as the largest transportation structure before the end of World War II, these studies covered wide range of important global railway comparative analyses built on the history of railways from two points of view quantitative and qualitative. We hope, in parallel with other railways registered as World Heritage, to have tried to fulfil all demanded information and, especially, in the additional information sent to ICOMOS.

Concerning the state of management of this property. I would just like to say, because of the lack of time, that we are ready to make any clarification about this management, as we have stipulated in the documents sent to ICOMOS and the States Parties too. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Iran. I would like to ask Norway and Australia if after hearing the comments they are willing to join the consensus.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia will go with the consensus of the Committee.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Norway, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to make it clear, we think this is a wonderful cultural history that should be told, but our intervention has been that the OUV was not fulfilled. Saying that, we have seen the move on the floor and we will not oppose the consensus though we are a bit hesitant. I guess that would not come as a surprise to the Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. I do not see any more comments or questions. I now, invite the Committee to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13. But before doing so, I ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment from the distinguished delegates of Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Oman and Bosnia-Herzegovina as shown on the screen. Paragraph 1 has no modifications, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. I would ask the Committee to adopt the Decision paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1, can we adopt it? Yes, it is adopted. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes the Trans-Iranian Railway, Islamic Republic of Iran, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv)'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is adopted. Next, please.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value', then we have here Brief Synthesis, Criterion (ii), Criterion (iv), Integrity, Authenticity, and Protection and Management Requirements. This is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with paragraph 3? It is adopted.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Documenting, monitoring and conserving the historic buildings and other elements that are no longer in use,
- b) Preparing a Heritage Impact Assessment of the planned electrification of the Tehran Garmsar Bandar-e Torkaman line,
- c) Encouraging community involvement by means of the full and effective participation of a wide variety of stakeholders and rights-holders'.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see Norway would like to take the floor. Please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Could we please ask ICOMOS to comment on paragraph 4 please?

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. ICOMOS, you have the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. As I have announced in advance, it might be useful at this stage to be a bit more specific about what type of documentation would be necessary. Because ICOMOS has identified that, indeed, the State Party has made inventories, but those inventories are not sufficient yet as a basis for conservation. Perhaps a formulation that says '*Complete the inventories through thorough documentation of all tangible attributes as a comprehensive basis for conservation*' might help.

Perhaps point 2 could expand and not be limited to those elements that are no longer in use. Because at the moment point 4a only concerns buildings and elements that are no longer in use. ICOMOS would like to see this expanded towards all attributes, all of those that are still in use. If this would be acceptable for Committee Members as a specification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. I would like to give the floor to Ethiopia. Please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I am a bit baffled, because this part of the Decision was not amended, it is the Draft as it was initially. What has prompted the need for amending one's own draft. That is my question. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I am a little confused because we cannot see the original Draft Decision here. As far as I understand this was not part of the original Draft Decision. I thought there was another paragraph 4b and a paragraph 4d and 4e in the original Draft Decision, and they do not appear to be on the screen at the moment.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much. I go with Ethiopia. We think this is the original paragraph and recommendation, otherwise we need explanation from the Rapporteur. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Please, Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify that this new paragraph 4 is actually new. There were different a, b, c, d and e in the original document and therefore we can see what can be taken from the ICOMOS information into a new paragraph 4. Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see the hand of Ethiopia. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

This is getting even more confusing. Just to have clarity. Could we have on the screen, the original draft and the proposed amendment in that beautiful blue that we have all the time? So that we can be clear on what has been added and subtracted to the paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur can you solve this, so we can look at it and includes the ICOMOS recommendation?

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify. We had the original paragraph 2 of the Draft Decision requesting to the State Party a set of measures to be taken which was counting from a to e. But with the inscription, this part was deleted with the amendment received. Then we have the additional recommendations a to c which were included in the original Draft Decision. In line with what ICOMOS mentioned, I can see that it was in the original 2b. If it is agreeable

to the Committee, we can add to the recommendations to the State Party: 'Completing the inventories and thorough documentation of all tangible features'.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, you have the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. This recommendation indeed was part of the paragraph that has been deleted with the proposed inscription. What ICOMOS would like to retain from this paragraph 2b, as the Rapporteur has kindly read out, is to create or at least complete the inventory and thorough documentation of all tangible features that could address the cultural heritage elements with the same level of detail as the engineering elements. Meaning that it would serve the purpose of the conservation of all these elements. There is the central part that was referred which 'Considered the cultural significance in relation [...]', this can be skipped because it belongs to the new approach that ICOMOS was suggesting. But what remains valid is the development and the completion of an inventory useful for the conservation of all tangible features and the cultural heritage elements for the Trans-Iranian Railway.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We agree with the amendment proposed by the Rapporteur. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia would also like to keep the original paragraphs 4d and 4e. 4d is establishing a conservation plan to complement the existing management plan, etc. and 4e as well. We think they are important and should go in the Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We agree with the addition that was made by ICOMOS, that is valid. But are we taking subparagraphs from another paragraph and adding it in? This is what I think we are doing and it is not correct in terms of procedure. This was not included in paragraph 4. The previous paragraphs have already been adopted. Therefore, we can suggest a new paragraph, but we cannot say this was in the original paragraph 4, that is not correct. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia, for this clarification. Norway, you have the floor please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Chair. We would like to echo Australia in this case, as we understand it, paragraph 4 was deleted in the amendment sent by Kyrgyzstan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur, can we see the Draft Decision and see how it is going based on what the distinguished delegate from Ethiopia suggested?

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, to clarify. As the paragraph proceeds, we have the recommendations always at the end of inscription decision. If we are going to take some parts from the requested paragraphs then we just repeat it in paragraph 4, it is not actually going back but adding to the recommendations in here, as also suggested by Australia and Norway. Just to complete, Mr. Chair, the previous paragraph because it is now incomplete: 'And completing the inventories through thorough documentation of all tangible features to address the cultural elements (such as buildings) with the same level of detail as the engineering elements'.

I would actually suggest this as a new subparagraph, not to be added to b, that is, of course, up to the Committee Members, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms Rapporteur. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Since the Draft Decision and the recommendation include the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment for the planned electrification on the Tehran— Garmsar—Bandar-e Torkaman line and since this was a recommendation from ICOMOS when ICOMOS was recommending the property for referral, as it is becoming an inscription, it might be helpful to have a final point that demands the State Party to report back and transmit this Heritage Impact Assessment report to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation, and, perhaps, the standard recommendation under which these types of nominations, when nominations are recommended for inscription, become an inscription they have to send a report back at a certain date. As I think it has been recommended in a number of cases for other similar situations.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Chair. I think that paragraph 4 has inserted a lot of elements that we are not in agreement with. I would like to go to the previous suggestion which is a, b and c and now we can see c becoming d with the addition of the Rapporteur. But we are not in agreement for e and f former d and e. I think we should stick with previous three elements that were in and the addition of the Rapporteur. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. I would like to comment on 4e. I agree with the honourable delegate from Oman that we can delete this because the establishing of a conservation plan has been done already and it was mentioned in my intervention. And we think that reconsidering the organisation of the hierarchy should be deleted too. Because this is too much detail. We cannot say what kind of hierarchy they should have or not, this is up to the State Party. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I see no more comments. Can we go to paragraph 4 please, Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

As it stands, Mr. Chair, paragraph 4 reads: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Documenting, monitoring and conserving the historic buildings and other elements that are no longer in use,
- b) Preparing a Heritage Impact Assessment of the planned electrification of the Tehran— Garmsar—Bandar-e Torkaman line,
- c) Completing the inventories through thorough documentation of all tangible features that address the cultural elements (such as buildings) with the same level of detail as the engineering elements,
- d) Encouraging community involvement by means of the full and effective participation of a wide variety of stakeholders and rights-holders'.

Paragraph 4e and f are proposed for deletion but if you decide to keep them. 4e reads: 'Establish a conservation plan to complement the existing Management Plan, with the objective of better ensuring the appropriate balance between measures that address the safety and operational viability of the railway, and the conservation of the nominated property as cultural resource'. And 4f: 'Reconsider the organizational hierarchy to ensure that decision-making regarding the nominated property's cultural heritage is positioned at the most effective level.'

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, I see your hand. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, I would just like to address a further question to ICOMOS about the emphasis in including what is now paragraph e on the need for a conservation plan. As I understand from their evaluation report, this was because the railway is being managed currently for its operation as a railway, but it also needs to take note of its cultural value. I would suggest that if we do keep this paragraph that the final line becomes 'The conservation of the OUV of the property', as this is going to be inscribed as a cultural site. But I would like to ask ICOMOS for a little bit more clarification about why they saw the need for this conservation plan. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. ICOMOS, please, can you answer the question from Australia?

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Indeed, the point raised by Australia is important for ICOMOS exactly for this rationale. The need for having address the cultural dimension of the Trans-Iranian Railway as an operating system but also as a cultural heritage. Each of the railway activity needs to take into consideration the conservation of the OUV of the property. If there is a consensus towards having this principle established rather than establishing a conservation plan, that would be agreeable for ICOMOS. But it is very important that this Trans-Iranian Railway is not just managed and treated as just an operating railway but as a heritage operating railway.

Therefore, conservation and attributes become very important on any activity concerning its management, maintenance, adaptation and upgrading. Thank you Mr. Chairman I hope I have clarified ICOMOS position for the distinguished delegate of Australia.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Therefore, I would suggest that we agree on paragraph 4 as it stands since it includes most of our comments and points of view. Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am sorry for taking the floor again. Can we ask the State Party to clarify on the question of management and conserving their property? Is it a public only operated railway and is it managed as a heritage railway? May I ask this question? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Kyrgyzstan. Iran, can you answer the questions please?

The Delegation of Iran:

Yes. Chairperson, Excellencies, since this property is registered on the National Heritage List and has been legislated by the legislation governing cultural heritage and at the same time following the regulation of the Iranian legislation for railways and transportation, all the activities and interventions related to this property should be according to these two regulations. For example, the core buffer zones are protected by two ministries, the Ministry of Road and Urban Planning and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

As the Trans-Iranian Railway is an operational railway, its freight and passenger function are under the responsibility of the Islamic Iranian Railway Company, when it comes to applying the management plan and conservation and protection of the property as well. Since this property is under the protection of the National Iranian Heritage legislation, any intervention related to it needs to be approved by that Ministry. Therefore, there is a close collaboration between responsible organisations to implement the management of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Chairperson, that was my understanding from the report from ICOMOS that this property is protected at the highest level. Given the clarification that the State Party has provided, we see no need to retain this paragraph d.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chair. After the clarification from the State Party and also the comment from South Africa, I do also think that we do not need e and f. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I will be brief. In line with what was said by South Africa and others we also see no need for having paragraphs e and f. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms Rapporteur, can we note it on the Draft Decision, please. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am sorry for taking the floor again. But, could we clarify, is it an existing conservation plan already or not?

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Iran, can you respond to the question, please?

The Delegation of Iran:

Yes, thank you for giving us the floor again. Yes, we have a conservation plan for this railway. As I said it is a cooperation between several relevant ministries. I would like to say that when two ministries are engaged in the conservation of this railway, the supervision on the issues going the appropriate way is guaranteed because of the fact that it is a multidimensional and multipartite supervision of the railway. That is why I suppose that from a national point of view, also, engaging several ministries in supervision of the protection and conservation of this railway make sure of its guaranteed protection.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Iran. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Having followed this debate with interest and very great attention and having received the explanation by the Iranian representative that I thank very much, I will support the deletion of sub paragraph e and f in accordance with what my colleagues from Ethiopia, South Africa, Kyrgyzstan and Oman have already proposed. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil. Australia, would you agree with the consensus?

The Delegation of Australia:

Having heard the clarification from the State Party now, I am happy to go with the consensus and delete those two paragraphs. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. Therefore, we have paragraph 4 as amended so far. If we all agree with it and I cannot see any more comments, it is adopted.

Rapporteur:

I am terribly sorry, Mr. Chair, but we have this standard text requesting an updated report as last paragraph. I wanted to check if the Committee members would like to add that standard text as shown on the screen.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. That was exactly what was requested to be added. Can you read paragraph 5 as proposed, please?

Rapporteur:

Of course. New paragraph 5: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

I see two hands raised. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we agree with the standard ending paragraph.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Kyrgyzstan. Norway, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, we support this final paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. New paragraph 5 is agreed. It is adopted. Therefore, as I do not see any more comments, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Again, I would like to thank you all for this intense and good dialogue and understanding. Let me congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Iran, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of Iran:

Thank you. Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Committee members, Excellencies, dear colleagues, please allow me to express my gratitude to you, Mr. Chair, for your very wise leadership of this session. I would like to avail myself on this opportunity to extend my thanks to the distinguished Committee members as well as to the World Heritage Centre, Dr Rössler and her colleagues and the related Advisory Bodies, namely ICOMOS for the endeavour devoted to our nomination, the Trans-Iranian Railway. I express my particular thanks to the Republic of Kyrgyzstan for its sponsorship, as well as to other cosponsors of the nomination and supporters, and to all Committee members who have supported it which has cumulated to its successful inscription.

The Trans-Iranian Railway as an outstanding manifestation of the industrial heritage of humanity narrates the story of international know-how and experience and its interaction with Iranian architectural and industrial knowledge. The Trans-Iranian Railway dates back to the beginning of the Qajar dynasty and showcases the exceptional industrial transformation in the region while having a considerable impact on regional social, economic, cultural and political transformations.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the world community along with the Iranian nation on this occasion marking the inscription of the Trans-Iranian Railway on the World Heritage List. I take pride to the fact that Iran is considered among the active participants of the 1972 Convention and I am convinced that this inscription, among many others, will contribute towards respectful safeguarding of the heritage of humanity and increase awareness on the concept of the Outstanding Universal Value.

Mr. Chairperson, I would like to bring my brief address to an end by, once again, expressing my gratitude to the host country, the People's Republic of China for so successfully hosting this most productive extended session of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Iran. This has been quite an intense and prolong dialogue. I suggest that we all take a five-minute technical pause. Thank you very much.

Dear Committee members, let us reconvene by continuing with Item 44 COM 8B.14. I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites, the Heart of Bronze Age Culture, Mongolia. But before I give the floor to the Secretariat, Ms. Rössler, please you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I think we have the Ohrid item ready. Just to tell you that we have the documents which we are ready to look at after the Mongolian case depending on the situation. We will see where we stand. Just to tell you that the documents are ready and have been translated. On, this I will give you the floor back and I think Mr. Balsamo will take on from there. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you Dr Rössler. Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. I think we are on the nomination of Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites, the Heart of Bronze Age Culture, Mongolia. This is to say that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 48 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites, the Heart of Bronze Age Culture, Mongolia. On this evaluation ICOMOS has received a letter on factual errors.

The serial property of Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites includes numerous examples of high quality megalithic monumental art created by Eurasian nomadic peoples, related to ceremonial and funerary culture and located in a context of complexes, that include *khirgisuurs* or burial mounds. The Deer Stone Monuments exhibit an extraordinary variety of both highly stylised and representation engravings of stags.

While the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property on the World Heritage List, the analysis should be consolidated with clear criteria used consistently and clearly articulated and presented. The serial nominated property is located in Central Mongolia and was originally composed of three component parts. After exchanges between the State Party and ICOMOS, a fourth component has been added. With this new configuration, the nomination should be updated in terms of new areas for the property and buffer zone. The conditions of authenticity and integrity for the whole series as well as the component parts have been met.

The protection and management need improvement. Risk management and tourism plan should be completed. The protection administration should be staffed and resourced and the management plan fully implemented. The local community should be supported in effective protection and management. Conservation measures could be appropriate but additional measures should be considered. No further restoration of deer stone should be undertaken without a robust conservation methodology.

In summary, criteria (i), (iii) and (iv) are not justified at this stage because the context and understanding of the property is not yet adequately presented. Especially, its overall narrative providing an adequate and balanced understanding of the various attributes, their relationships and meaning. The justification is too focused on Deer Stones and not on the whole archaeological complexes which include other substantial attributes, notably, the *khirgisuurs* or burial mounds. The boundaries of the buffer zone of the Uushigiin Övör component part should be extended to the south. In addition, protection, conservation and management need improvement to ensure the long-term conservation of the property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends the nomination on Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites, the Heart of Bronze Age Culture, Mongolia be referred back to the State Party for the following main reasons:

- Revise the overall narrative to reflect the whole of the archaeological complexes and consequently align the justification for inscription on this new basis.
- To consolidate the comparative analysis, adjust the boundary of the buffer zone for one component part and provide updated information on new areas.
- Provide comprehensive legal protection, fully implement the management plan and provide personnel and resources for the protection administration.

ICOMOS has included further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. In addition, ICOMOS recommends that the name of the property be amended according to the revised narrative and that the 'Heart of Bronze Age Culture' be removed from the title. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. I would like to ask if there are any comments for the nomination. I see none. Therefore, let us proceed to the Draft Decision. Actually, there is a hand raised. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you. Can you hear me? Thank you, Mr Chair. I would just like to make a brief statement in relation to this property. I understand that the time of the Committee is very important.

Australia would like to recognise the considerable efforts of the State Party to date in preparing the nomination for the property and commend them for bringing forward the nomination to the World Heritage List for the property of Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites. It is clear to Australia that the State Party has been engaging with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre in a collaborative manner to address queries and respond to request for additional information and they should be highly commended for engaging in such a positive manner. Australia

would like to encourage the State Party to undertake the activities requested in the Draft Decision and wishes to express [...]

Chairperson:

Thank you, Australia. I will continue, as another Delegation had their microphone open and Australia is having some technical issue. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We just would like to endorse the State Party of Mongolia for loyally following the advice given by the Advisory Bodies. Norway wishes the honourable State Party every success with revising the proposed nomination in accordance with the recommendations in the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Australia, we come back to you following the technical problem.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to encourage the State Party to undertake the activities requested in the Draft Decision and wish to express our disappointment that we will not be a member of the Committee at the 45th session where we are confident a favourable outcome will be forthcoming. Being inscribed on the World Heritage List is an incredible accomplishment for a State Party, however history also shows that inscription is the start of the management journey of a World Heritage property. Effective management can only be achieved where a clear set of values are recognised for a property and where the narrative for the property is directly related to these values.

The technical advice of ICOMOS seeks to resolve these matters and provide a solid foundation for the management of the property post inscription. We would like to highlight to the Committee the additional management pressures that come along with the inscription to the World Heritage List in instances where a property narrative is not clearly defined and where the justification for inscription is incomplete and where the statement of OUV is still being finalised.

We encourage the State Party of Mongolia to see the value in an additional period to crystallise these matters and commend them for choosing to work within the *Operational Guidelines* and for respecting the integrity of the overall nomination and inscription process. On this basis Australia is supportive of the Draft Decision as proposed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I do not see any more comments. I invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13. Ms. Rapporteur, have you received any amendment to the Draft Decision proposed?

Rapporteur:

We have no amendments for this Decision Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I propose that we adopt this Decision as a whole. If you have no comments and are in agreement then we consider it adopted. Therefore, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.13 adopted ^[gave]. Thank you very much. Now, I would like to give the floor to the Chairman of the Committee from the Republic of China to take over as Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Excellency, thank you very much for presenting the nomination just now. Notably, thank you for congratulating China on behalf of the entire Committee. Dear Committee members let us proceed with our Agenda Items. We will start with the only item 7B left which is the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. Before this, I give the floor to Mongolia. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Mongolia:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. The State Party of Mongolia is highly grateful to the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS for their valuable and comprehensive recommendation on the Deer Stone Monuments and Related Sites for the site nomination. We have taken into account the Advisory Bodies recommendations.

Firstly, the government of Mongolia has organised the Mongolian National World Heritage Committee meeting to discuss the detailed way to implement the recommendations. Secondly, as a result, the government of Mongolia has founded a special working group including representatives of all the government ministries such as the Ministry

of Nature and the Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Urban development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture which have been working on implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Bodies as of today.

Thirdly, our government agrees with ICOMOS [blank in the recording]. Fourthly, we have taken action to relocate the tent hotel in Uushigiin Övör area to outside the buffer zone. Fifthly, Mongolia is taking comprehensive legal protection on Deer Stones in accordance with our law on cultural heritage protection as well as the World Heritage Convention's *Operational Guidelines*. Local authorities have strengthened protective measures around the area. This nomination was to be discussed in 2020 but postponed due to the pandemic. Notwithstanding, we are grateful that Deer Stone Monuments which encompasses 80 per cent of the total Deer Stones in Mongolia is being discussed today by this session. This nomination is very significant, Mongolia will keep on working and taking necessary measures to implement the recommendations. We strongly believe that this site will be inscribed at the next 45th session. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, World Heritage Committee members and the Advisory Bodies.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, you will remember that on Friday we established a drafting group on the Decision of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. I understand that an agreed text has been prepared by the members of the drafting group with the assistance of the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies. This text is now ready for us to look at in both languages. I therefore invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.77 concerning this property, but before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to take us through the text. Ms. Rapporteur you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The agreed text of Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.77 is shown on the screen. It was distributed by email this morning as well. We have not received any further amendment to it, Mr. Chair. If it is agreeable to you and to the members of the Committee, in order to save time, I propose not to read the text and you may wish to adopt it at once, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. As said by Ms. Rapporteur, since this is a consensual text, I take it that we can adopt it at once. Have you got any comments or objections? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7B.77 adopted [gave]. I would like to ask whether any Observer-Delegations would like to express themselves about this property. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Egypt would like to express its support for the consensus reached on the amendment of the Draft Decision on the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region property. We commend the joined efforts and cooperation of Albania and North Macedonia for the implementation of the recommendations stemming from the corresponding decision of the World Heritage Committee and the Reactive Monitoring mission, as well as the commitment of both States Parties to develop detailed strategic recovery plan for the site, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

We underscore the necessity of providing Albania and North Macedonia more time to properly implement all the recommendations noted in the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission report taking into consideration the significant effect of the global pandemic on the basis of the recommendation. In this regard, it has been important for the Committee to avoid inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger during the current Committee session. I thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Albania, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Albania:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair for giving Albania the floor. This gives us the opportunity to congratulate China and you Mr. Chair, for the organisation of this session. Albania would like to thank all the members of the Committee for this Decision and in particular, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary, the Russian Federation, China, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Egypt, who we just heard, for their valuable effort and work leading to the compromise text which was just adopted.

Mr. Chair, we are fully aware that both States Parties to this exceptional property need to work harder, to do more, deliver better and faster in order to identify and recognise threats and vulnerabilities of this mixed transboundary property Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. We are absolutely aware that only decisive actions, coordinated and well-timed will help address issues identified. We stand ready to continue our work with the Centre and the Advisory Bodies, as well as an improved transboundary coordination process with North Macedonia, the

other State Party, as clearly spelt out in the joint declaration of the ministerial meeting held in Ohrid just a couple of weeks ago on the 12th of July this year. We thank the Committee members for their understanding and support.

Finally, Mr. Chair, let me reiterate Albania full and solid commitments to implement convincingly and in full the Decision just adopted and make sure that everything is done for the protection and conservation of the OUV of the transboundary property Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, North Macedonia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of North Macedonia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Let me also congratulate you on the exceptional stewardship of this meeting especially under these extraordinary circumstances. As the Minister of the Environment on behalf of the Republic of North Macedonia, I want to thank the Committee for their considerate and careful deliberation on the case of the Ohrid Region.

We are grateful that the Committee has acknowledged the efforts made by North Macedonia and Albania and therefore provided us with the necessary time. Hence, we consider that this is an additional responsibility to continue to make the significant steps towards the protection, conservation and sustainable management of this property, as has been recommended by the UNESCO Committee.

North Macedonia would like to especially thank Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Russian Federation for their support in this endeavour, as well as the Delegations of China, Saudi Arabia, Hungary, Spain and Egypt. We continue to be thankful for the continued friendly and constructive advice and support provided by the colleagues from Australia and Norway as well.

Both North Macedonia and Albania remain fully committed to protecting the OUV of the Ohrid Region. By working together, we are determined to make the management of this site an example of cooperation between two countries, ensure the authenticity and integrity of the region and pass it on to the next generations.

Rest assured, we will involve the local authorities, we will kindly ask all the NGOS to support us and help us achieve all the recommendations. We are looking forward to actually coming back with a positive report in the very near future. Once again, thank you for your support and your consideration.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I thank the States Parties comments and commitments as well as your support to me as Chairperson. Now, Ohrid SOS you have the floor for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-Ohrid SOS:

First, with reference to yesterday statements of several States Parties on civil society, we remind the World Heritage Committee that you depend on us to retain some part of your dwindling credibility and protection capacity.

Second, civil society should be speaking about decisions not only after they are made. Third, in 2019 with your Decision you poured two more years of concrete on the Lake Ohrid coasts, two more of spill into its waters and two more years of trash into the unsealed landfills in its watershed.

You also accepted two more years of excuses of misrepresentations and flimsy plans of a genuine protection to exploitation only. Now, you have in all likelihood decided for the same. OUV concerns all of humankind. When will you realise that you, yourselves, are losers from this too? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, with this, we have now completed examination of agenda Item 7B. Let us proceed.

I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination of Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, Spain. Before I give the floor to ICOMOS, I would like to give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We have received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination. This notification is included on page 53 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, Spain. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter on factual errors and has acknowledged some errors.

The nominated property of Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro combines nature and culture in a 200-hectare park-like cultural landscape which includes the prototype of a Hispanic Alameda (tree-line avenue) as well as an example of a new idea of urban space and of an urban development model from the enlightened Absolutist period of the 18th century. It illustrates the aspiration for a utopian society during the height of the Spanish Empire.

A comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List at this stage. ICOMOS does not consider that the property represents a new type of category of cultural landscape and does not consider that the methodology for the comparative analysis is appropriate. The proposed values and attributes are the result of an overly complex construct allowing comparison to be made with only parts of the property, but not with the whole.

The proposed criteria have not been demonstrated for the nominated property. However, based on the materials presented by the State Party during the evaluation process, ICOMOS considers that the Paseo del Prado could have the potential to meet criterion (ii) and possibly also criterion (iv) as a prototypical tree-lined avenue. This possibility would need to be further established through a robust comparative analysis.

The nominated property is located in the centre of Madrid and comprises a large former Palace Garden, botanic gardens, a major tree-lined avenue (*Alameda*) and an inner urban neighbourhood. The nominated area has been revised in response to the interim report. And clarification should be provided on the inclusion or not of some facades and whole buildings into the new delineated areas. No buffer zone has been proposed. The conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage because criteria have not been adequately justified, but the conditions of authenticity have been met.

Conservation measures are adequate as well as the outline structure and approach for a monitoring system. But it still needs to be further developed and implemented. A legal protection of historic gardens and buildings is sufficient but could be strengthened, and a buffer zone should be defined. The management system appears satisfactory although an interpretation strategy for the overall property should be developed, and community involvement enhanced.

In summary, ICOMOS considers the nominated property as a whole does not demonstrate a strong and consistent unifying theme that elevates it historically or in visual or design terms to OUV. The comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property and integrity is not demonstrated at this stage. None of the proposed criteria are justified at this stage. Criteria (ii) and (iv) could possibly be justified for the Paseo del Prado but are not demonstrated at this stage. The boundaries are not adequate and protection and management are adequate but could be improved.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends the Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, Spain, be deferred for the following main reasons:

- Reconsider the nomination strategy for the property focused on the context of Hispanic *Alameda* (tree-lined Avenue) and its influences in Latin America and beyond;
- Revised the comparative analysis, justification for inscription, criteria and boundaries in the light of the revised focus of the nomination; and
- Delineate a buffer zone for the property.

ICOMOS considers that such a revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site. ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Dear Committee Members, due to time constraints, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief in your general comments. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Please, bear with us as I am presenting the amendment. We are looking today at the nomination of Paseo del Prado and the garden of Buen Retiro, an innovative and untypical nomination. It is an ensemble of complex structured over five centuries comprehending simultaneously the capital green heart and a centre of arts and sciences. The significant theme of the property concerns the introduction of nature into the city with the creation of green spaces in the urban environment for the unrestricted enjoyment of citizens which today, and more so in the current circumstances, is considered essential and necessary for the well-being of local communities. This vision is well-supported by IUCN in their report and therefore is a key factor that has not been reflected in the World Heritage List and is of unquestionable importance.

The Paseo del Prado and the garden of Buen Retiro is an outstanding place, a cultural landscape where nature meets the arts and sciences since centuries ago, increasing its presence with museums of great importance, such as the Prado, Thyssen, the Arte Reina Sofia museums, that treasure works of art universally agreed on from masters like Picasso, Goya, Velasquez, Rubens, etc. The site also includes incredible scientific institutions such as the Royal Botanical Garden recognised by the IUCN as notable from conservation and training point of view, the origin of outstanding botanical expeditions on Spanish and American flora linking both contents.

These attributes have endowed the property with a special character that makes it a place where work together, not only nature and arts and sciences, but also politics with the parliament, and the economy with the Bank of Spain. And an incredible list of cultural, scientific, economic and civic institutions all of them present in this civic and sustainable space which has shown, as IUCN noted, that nature and the city is vital for the cohesion of the community and citizenry, and contributes significantly to social well-being since existing until today.

The universal nature of the Paseo del Prado is clear. It constitutes the very first green space in a European capital. It is an irrefutable fact that it is the first European model and the precedent for them all, especially for Latin America, where it seems to have stretched to the extent of being an influence for the *Alameda* of Mexico, the first public park in all America back in the 16th century, and in the following centuries with many *alamedas* like Paseo Del Prado in Havana, Cuba, that even has the same name.

Mr. Chair, dear Committee members, when we speak about value, we clearly see that this ensemble consist of various parks brought together to form a complex, yet united, wonderful mosaic. A boulevard, an urban park, a botanical garden together with roads, ornamented elements, monumental buildings and many, many more. All of these attributes of a singular site that contains universal values. The inscription of this magnificent site with this unique complexity will definitely enrich the diversity of the World Heritage List. This space is an epitome of nature and culture, geography and history, of individuals and groups, of universal and identity values. Overall, an example of a type of urban cultural landscape that is not yet presented on the List.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, dear Committee members, ICOMOS proposes to reduce the space only to the boulevard itself. If you would like to give the floor to the State Party to present their arguments that explain the complex as a whole and not as a reunion of different parts. To reduce the property to a mere tree-lined boulevard would be to misunderstand its complexity and value. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our main issues have been considered here. Whether this site has OUV or not, the ICOMOS assessment states that at least criterion (ii) could be recognised as an OUV for the site. Due to the influence of the *Alameda* in the development of cities, especially in Latin America. As a Latin American, I can attest to the fact that the *Alameda* of Spain had an influence in the structure of urban cities in Latin America. That is unquestionable.

That also goes for criterion (iv). It illustrates two relevant periods of human history. The Absolutism in the 16th century and in the Enlightenment in the 18th century. This is significant for the history of Spain, Latin America and the world. It is also reflected in artistic movements and the scientific developments of these periods which are very visible in the Royal Botanical Gardens and the museum which attests to criterion (vi). In any case, any of these criteria could be confirmed as recognising the OUV of this site.

In addition, ICOMOS has issued some recommendations for inscription of the site and some of these issues have been addressed by Saudi Arabia. We agree with Saudi Arabia and we support its proposal for the amendment of this site. If you allow me, Mr. Chair, we would also like to ask the State Party, Spain, to address some of these points, specifically on the issue of the legal protection of this site, considered by the Advisory Bodies in a strange way, as being sufficient but deficient. Therefore, could we ask the State Party to clarify the legal protection, which in the ICOMOS report, was reported as being deficient. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. As requested by the Committee members, I will give the floor to the State Party and kindly ask you to focus on the questions raised, after the Committee members. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway has read the document carefully and we also had several bilateral meetings with Spain regarding the nomination. We would like to complement our Spanish colleagues for open and fruitful discussions. I have to admit that I have been many times to Parque del Retiro and Jardin Botanico and I know how

wonderful it is. However, and with reference to the initial statement on Item 8B made by Norway yesterday, this is another nomination with great potential, yet, still in the making. In our opinion, there is still some work to be done.

Finally, moving from deferral to inscription is not in compliance with the Convention neither the *Operational Guidelines*. And Norway finds it therefore logical and fair, that it would be deferred back to the State Party. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please, actually, Ethiopia, you have the floor first while waiting for Thailand.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We intervene to support the proposal made by Saudi Arabia in amending the Draft Decision, so that this wonderful site can be inscribed on the World Heritage List. We believe, as was stated by previous Delegations, that criteria (ii) and (iv) are met and that the State Party is undertaking sufficient legal protection.

Chair, we do not need to go into extensive details for the sake of time, but the cultural and natural input of this site has been well recognised. Its contribution to other parts of the world in terms of urban development is also recognised. Therefore, we suggest moving this to the inscription list and we also believe that it is within the mandate and in line with the *Operational Guidelines* to inscribe it. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our Delegation has great sympathy for this nomination and we would like to see it on the List of World Cultural Heritage. There are few cities in the world where one can find such concentration of culture, science and history on a relatively small territory. Three world-famous museums, El Prado, Thyssen Bomemisza, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Academy of Science, the Royal Botanical Gardens and many more historic buildings of extraordinary beauty which are the symbol of Madrid architecture. And the unifying factor is, to my mind, the unique urban landscape that makes up the image of integrity of the property.

I would say that the title of the property is extremely correct and precise. The landscape of Arts and Sciences. Obviously, Paseo del Prado is also the meeting point of at least four centuries of Spanish culture and fine arts. For me, as a person who spent ten years of my life in Madrid, it is difficult to understand how this part of the city could lack the OUV. I call upon the Committee Members to have a fresh look at this property. And with all due respect to the Convention and the *Operational Guidelines*, to appreciate it as a unique and original nomination which could enrich the notion of World Heritage.

This is why we support the amendment to the Draft Decision and we would like to have a consensus on this interesting and promising nomination. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Reflecting on the Draft Decision to defer the inscription of Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, on the World Heritage List, Uganda is convinced that the proposed amendments to instead inscribe the two in one property on the List are satisfactory, comprehensive, adequate and technically proficient in their scope, justification and other related content.

Chair, citing the supposed narrowness of the concept of Hispanic *Alameda* and its influence in Latin America as claimed by the Draft Decision, the amendment on the contrary proclaims a solid and comprehensive statement of its OUV accompanied by a proposal of background and history of the site and the justification of inscription under criteria (ii) and (iv).

Furthermore, Chair, as far as the nominated sites boundaries, buffer zone, monitoring system, historic building documentation, conservation management planning system are concerned, the proposed amendment demonstrates the recognition of the essentials for any heritage site seeking inscription. Herein, Chair, the concerned State Party considers its willingness to comply with these requirements to the extent that is not necessary, to evoke some expert mission to visit the site at this point in time.

Chair, the above cited reflections are convincingly stated in the amendment statement of the OUV which appears sufficient in scope, content and conservation effort. For this reason, therefore, my Delegation joins fellow Committee members in support of the amendment to drop deferring of the nomination and instead to have the site inscribed on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the State Party of Spain for the tremendous efforts devoted to preparing the nomination dossier for this site. The property was proposed to be nominated mainly based on criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi).

For what concerned criterion (ii), there is no doubt that this site in Madrid has responded to a novel seminal interpretation of the open landscape going back to the 16th century. It can be regarded as the first rational attempt embodying natural elements into an urban landscape. With the added value of having science and culture presented by adjoining major museums and parks.

According to criteria (iv), this site can be regarded as the sum of the typical values embedded by the Renaissance and by the Enlightenment, in fact creating a new social and culture environment that actively promoted the harmonisation of architecture, science and nature and culture, self-improvement of the citizens and visitors. It embodied the idea of democratisation of knowledge that was at the basis of these two crucial periods.

For criterion (vi), the idealistic model that led to the creation of this site that was exposing all citizens to art, culture and sciences is undeniably one of the founding principles, if not the main founding principle, of our modern society. In addition to the beautiful urban landscape that this model allowed to create, the ideas it conveyed, all property at the basis of adoption in different region of Spanish Americas as a town development model.

Last but not least, the State Party of Spain has also demonstrated the great capacity in rapidly operating on properly following the recommendations of the Committee, thanks also to a solid legal framework that allowed a quick implementation of effective intervention. Therefore, Mr Chairman, Oman would like to support the amended proposal to inscribe this site at this session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, as you have realised that we have a very heavy agenda today, I have a long list of Committee Members requesting the floor. I have noticed that quite a number of Committee members are in favour of the amendment. So, I suggest that those who are not in favour of the amendment, I give you the floor to save time. Do you agree? I suggest you cancel the request for the floor, then those who are not in favour I give you the floor. I see every member is in favour, so I suggest we go to the Draft Decision directly. Okay? ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. I think there was a point for the State Party to make some comment as well. If I could just respond from the point of view of ICOMOS to a couple of matters.

Firstly, with regard to the issue of protection. Some comments were made about what ICOMOS view was. What we said was that the legal protection of the historic gardens and buildings is sufficient though it could be strengthened. There are some final stages of legal protection which are still to be completed and that was the purpose of that comment. Of course, we are also requesting or suggesting that a buffer zone should be defined for the property.

To the main and substantive issues that I wanted to respond to, the key issue for ICOMOS with this nomination is establishing a robust justification for OUV supported by an adequate comparative analysis. ICOMOS considers that the nominated property as a whole does not demonstrate a strong and consistent unifying theme that elevate it historically or in visual or design terms to OUV. The nomination dossier attempts to find such a theme and there were fruitful exchanges with the State Party on that matter, but unfortunately, it artificially brings together distinct areas which, while geographically close, have a common history which diverged some 500 years ago.

While the nomination dossier suggested a number of unifying themes in response to the ICOMOS interim report, the State Party restated the justification with the key concept being the introduction of nature into the urban environment, a point noted by several Committee members. Two of the main parts which might portray that theme, the Paseo del Prado which was first established as a tree-lined public walk at least in 1540 and remodeled in the 1760s to the 1770s and also the Buen Retiro which were Palace Gardens for the King from the 1630s, with public access beginning in the 1760s, and full public access being provided from 1848. These few brief facts beginning to indicate the different origins, functions and histories of these major parts of the property underpin the difficulty in justifying a strong and consistent unifying theme.

Finally, on the other hand, ICOMOS does consider that the Paseo Del Prado on its own has a strong narrative of potential OUV as a prototypical and highly influential tree-lined avenue and this should be the focus of a revised nomination and I think this point was picked up by a number of Committee members in their interventions. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. I wish to start by congratulating ICOMOS for the work undertaken to evaluate this property put forward by Spain. We take into account the proposals put forward. We wish to hear from the State Party to have more information about some of the major issues regarding the nomination.

That being said, Chair, the influence of Spanish *alamedas* in Latin America, I would like to request the State Party of Spain to provide more information on this, if you will allow it. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, as requested by Committee members I give the floor to the State Party, Spain, to answer the questions. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. This is the first time we are taking the floor today. We are at Museum del Prado in Madrid. This is a very complex nomination and I thank the Delegation of Saudi Arabia for taking into account our proposed amendment. It is an innovative nomination and that perhaps explains why we are having so much difficulty understanding it. We need to accustom ourselves to this type of nomination as this is unprecedented and that is because we lack experience. We've only had one such nomination in this list which was Rio de Janeiro. These types of nominations require major support and support has been provided by Madrid.

We are seeing lots of different involvement in this site not just the Park. We are seeing science, arts coming together, language coming together. The Spanish language with the 23 Latin American academies that are in dialogue so you can see the influence throughout the world. There is a dialogue between language and science and the Botanical Garden which is part of the Retiro. I would say that it is, if you allow me to say it, the sexiest botanical garden in the world, it has thousands of different species. And it has an incredible selection of species that you no longer find on other continents.

You have asked us to fulfil some requirements to be inscribed on the list. However, if you said to us to rip out a lung, we would not be able to do this. The problem is that we cannot do this in this case, we cannot separate these different elements, the Paseo Del Prado is part of a whole and it has been for years. The existing map that has been around for three centuries shows this has always been the case. We cannot rip out a piece of Madrid, just so we can inscribe it on the List.

We have fulfilled all the requirements that you have asked from us and, in addition, we have proposed a buffer zone. So, as you asked, we do have legal provisions, it is inscribed as a cultural site of cultural interest in Spain. All of these elements show that there is a perfectly good protection, and, as was mentioned by the colleague from Guatemala as well as Saudi Arabia, the *alamedas* have had major influence in Latin America, in Cordoba, in Argentina, in Chile, in Havana. Throughout Latin America you have examples of how the *alamedas* have been modelled worldwide. What I would say is that when people say I go from Madrid to the sky, I ask why would you want to go to the sky when you have Madrid. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for answering the question. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.21. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. We have no changes proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, I have a suggestion. Now, with a heavy agenda, we are approaching the end of today's meeting. Considering that there will be a working group on Budget, I would like to suggest that we stop here and remind you that we need to step up our effort and quickening our pace tomorrow. Also, we have to leave the amendment for debate tomorrow.

Once again, I thank His Excellency Mr. Vice-Chairperson and commend his excellent leadership. Committee Members, thank you very much for your cooperation. We will meet tomorrow at 11.30 Paris time and for Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am.

Dear colleagues, as you have realised, we are running late on schedule. After consulting with the Secretariat, I have to kindly ask you to prolong our work tomorrow for one more hour. I will announce it during tomorrow's Bureau

meeting. Thank you very much. Before I conclude today's meeting, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are any general announcement to make. Dr Rössler you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. You announced already that we have the Bureau meeting. Sorry, you have the Budget group tonight, I invite everybody to come to the Budget group. I think there are three Committee members who would like to speak. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Yes. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is only a comment because I thought we were going to go through the Draft Decision and we only have two minor comments on paragraph 4a and 4c for the Draft Decision on Paseo Del Prado.

Chairperson:

We will talk about it tomorrow.

The Delegation of Norway:

I know, but is Paseo del Pardo adopted? Sorry about the misunderstanding.

Chairperson:

No. We will have the debate tomorrow on the text.

The Delegation of Norway:

I am sorry. We will talk about it tomorrow.

Chairperson:

I have taken notes of the requests for the floor from Committee Members. I will give you the floor when we resume our meeting. So, Oman, do you want to speak now or tomorrow?

The Delegation of Oman:

I would like speak now for thirty seconds.

Chairperson:

Okay, you have the floor, no problem.

The Delegation of Oman:

This Decision is straight forward and I join Norway for the very small modifications, if we could add five minutes, it is not the end of the world, we could end this Decision and we could start tomorrow afresh. It is my suggestion. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

I concur with the wisdom of my brother from Oman, I think we can finish this fairly quickly and start afresh with a new decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I also agree with Norway, Ethiopia and Oman that this is just a minor modification suggestion, so we can take it and we start afresh tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. As requested by the Committee members, we can go through the text. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, Spain, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi)'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this paragraph? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' Can we scroll down? Then: Brief Synthesis, Criterion (ii), Criterion (iv), criterion (vi), Integrity, Authenticity and Management and Protection Requirements.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this paragraph? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:' There are no changes for 4a and 4b and I continue with 4c. We have an amendment and minor modification proposed by Norway just for the clarity of the reading: 'c) Clarifying the last property delineation, specifically the extent to which the buildings and their façades at the edge of the property are included within the revised boundaries, and to clearly identify the attributes included'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with this subparagraph? Are there any objections? I see none. Go ahead

Rapporteur:

Sub-paragraph 4d: 'Establishing an adequate buffer zone according to the option provided by the State Party on the basis of the Historical Centre in the Madrid General Urban Development Plan (PGOUM)'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with this subparagraph? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Minor modifications proposed by Norway as well on 4e: 'Undertaking further studies to achieve an appropriate balance of conservation with intensive uses, while ensuring the protection of OUV'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4f: 'Considering diverse general actions in order to improve integrity regarding vegetation and some of the urban fabric, especially pavements, in the Paseo del Prado'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this subparagraph? It is agreed.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4g: 'Finalizing the listing process for all buildings, as, although some of the listings as BICs are already integrally protected, the finalization of the process has been somehow delayed'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay. It is approved.

Rapporteur:

Sub paragraphs 4h and 4i remain as in the original proposal 4d and 4e, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay. It is approved.

Rapporteur:

And we have the proposal of standard paragraph 5: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.' These are all the amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this paragraph? Yes, it is approved. Now, we have been through all the text. If there are no other comments, I now declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.21 adopted as amended ^[gavel]. Let me congratulate Spain on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Spain, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to all the Committee members and the experts, the authorities of Madrid, the cultural authorities, the Foreign Ministry and all the Committee members with whom we have exchanged and dialogue. Huge efforts have been made which have been rewarded. Here, we see that we have an absolute consensus in the case of this property and it is, as we said before, an obligation that the mayor is taking to preserve this heritage for humanity with all necessary and possible means.

We would like to congratulate and thank the members of the Committee, the City of Madrid, the Kingdom of Spain for this very specific site being made part of the World Heritage. We would like to thank Saudi Arabia for its amendment and other Committee members as well. Let me give the floor to the mayor of Madrid who would like to greet you.

The Mayor of Madrid Mr. José Luis Martínez-Almeida:

[Interpretation from Spanish] With great emotions and even greater thankfulness, I would like to express our thank to ICOMOS, to the World Heritage Centre and to the Committee because today, in these times of pandemic, in a city where great suffering has taken place in the last 18 months, we have a reason to celebrate.

Finally, Madrid has a site inscribed on the World Heritage List. I said to the Ambassador just now to thank him and the government and the Town of Madrid and the technical team of townhall which has done excellent work. We have now our dream come true. It began in 2014 and it has become reality in 2021. We have a ratification of this and we will soon make sure that Madrid will live up to its responsibilities.

Chairperson:

Congratulations once more. Dear colleagues, before I conclude the meeting today. I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are general announcement to make. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Some side events to be announced by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and Director. The side event on coordinating conservation of World Heritage and Natural Protected Areas organised by the host country is at 3.30 to 5.00 pm Beijing time and 9.30 to 11.00 am Paris time. This is tomorrow Monday 26 July. There is also a side event on the Role of the Ranger in Protecting and Managing the World's Natural Heritage organised by WWF. That would be 10.00 to 11.30 pm Beijing Time or 4:00-5:30 pm Paris time, also, tomorrow, Monday 26th of July. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, have a good rest and see you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 3:26:36 pm.

NINTH DAY – Monday 26 July 2021
NINTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, it is my pleasure to welcome you all today for our daily meeting. This morning, the Bureau of the Committee held its ninth meeting. During this meeting, the Bureau reviewed the progress of our work. I recall that yesterday was a very busy day with the inscription of four new properties on the World Heritage List and the referral of one nomination back to the State Party.

The Committee also finalised Agenda Item 7B with the adoption of the Decision on the Ohrid Region. I also informed the Bureau members that today, we will resume the examination of Item 8B in the order in which they are indicated on the calendar circulated yesterday, and available on the World Heritage Centre website and which accommodates the different time zone.

Lastly, the Bureau heard a progress report from the Chairperson of the working group on the Budget, Ms. Zoya Kritskaya, who also indicated that the next meeting of the Budget working group will be on Tuesday at the usual time.

Dear Committee members, as there was a question raised during the Bureau meeting concerning a drafting group on Item 8, I would like to take this opportunity to seek your opinion on this matter. Maybe it is a good way to form a drafting group with participation of Committee members proposing the two amendments. I would like to invite Uganda and Brazil and Australia and Norway to set up such drafting group and I hope you will bring a consensual text back to the plenary session when we close Item 8 on the 30 July. Is that okay for you? Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Good morning, Mr. President, and to all. Thank you for giving me the floor. Of course, this is an important issue and Brazil is engaged in this issue with other colleagues. I understand that we can reach a consensus on this language and we are, of course, prepared to work in this working group in order to come up with a language that may be suitable to all. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? It is okay then. Of course, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies will be welcomed to join and to help forge consensus. If so decided, thank you. If there are no more comments and before we start our plenary meeting, I would like to remind you that due to the delays in our work, we will have a prolonged session today until 4:30 pm Paris time. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, we now resume the examination of nominations. I now invite IUCN to present the nomination Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island, Japan. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning and afternoon to everybody. IUCN recommends the Committee to inscribe Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island on the World Heritage List under criterion (x). IUCN's evaluation of this property can be found on the pages indicated on the slide. This nomination was first submitted in 2017 and received a deferral recommendation by IUCN in 2018. The nomination was withdrawn at the request of the State Party and a new nomination submitted in 2019. The renominated property encompasses five entirely terrestrial component parts of more than 42,000 hectares of subtropical rainforest in the inland areas of four islands on a chain located in southwest Japan. The nominated property contains terrestrial natural habitat of outstanding importance for in situ conservation in the unique and diverse biodiversity of the archipelago's inland areas. Sub-tropical rainforests of the nominated property are the largest remaining in the region and harbour a very rich fauna and flora. These include approximately 57 per cent of the terrestrial vertebrates of the biodiversity hotspot of Japan including 44 per cent of species endemic to Japan as well as 36 per cent of Japan globally threatened vertebrates.

Regarding the integrity, protection and management of the nominated property, IUCN considers that all requirements of the *Operational Guidelines* are met and welcomes the State Party response to IUCN past recommendations. Nevertheless, IUCN notes a number of threats that may have the potential to affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and acknowledges the State Party commitment and action to address them as demonstrated in supplementary information submitted by the State Party.

IUCN therefore considers that the nominated property meets natural criterion (x) as well as integrity, protection and management requirements and thus recommends that the Committee inscribe the nominated property. To ensure that the nominated property maintains its integrity, IUCN recommends that the State Party be requested by the Committee to further enhance protection and management in regard to tourism, road traffic, river restoration and logging. This is outlined in the Draft Decision which can be found in Document 8B as shown on the slide. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. Dear colleagues, as we are examining a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, and considering that we have a really heavy agenda today, therefore to leave more time for those nominations that may require lengthy debate, with your permission, I would like to propose that we go directly to the Draft Decision. Do you agree with this suggestion? Okay. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.5. Dear Committee Members, as you are aware, concerning the nomination 8B.5, a dialogue took place and the concerned parties agreed to have a technical reference in the introductory paragraph. This does not change anything in the substance of the Draft Decision. I trust that you agree with me on this matter and that you appreciate such a positive outcome. Therefore, I propose that we adopt the Draft Decision with these adjustments and consensual text by the parties concerned. Now, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments and, as you just said, there is a consensual text, so you may proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decision as a whole. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ms. Rapporteur. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.5 adopted ^[gavel]. Let me congratulate Japan on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Japan, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Distinguished members of the Committee, Excellencies, friends, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the member States of the Committee, IUCN and the World Heritage Centre for the inscription of Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island on the World Heritage List.

These islands are important habitats for many endemic and endangered species. The inscription of the natural property on the World Heritage List is an opportunity to reaffirm our determination to safeguard this unique and rich biodiversity. Please, allow me to take this opportunity to share with you a video message from His Excellency Shinjirō Koizumi Minister of the Environment of Japan making a statement on behalf of the parties and people involved in the nomination process in Japan.

Mr. Shinjirō Koizumi, Minister of the Environment of Japan:

^[video] I am Shinjirō Koizumi the Minister of the Environment, I cannot express how happy I am to hear of the Committee's decision to inscribe Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island on the World Heritage List.

I am truly grateful to all the respected members of the Committee, IUCN, the Secretariat and everyone involved in this nomination process. This inscription builds on the momentum of the worldwide effort to conserve global biodiversity. Because these islands host precious habitat of outstanding and endangered species wild fauna and flora.

This inscription means that we will have to step up our work to manage and conserve this biosphere site. The government and our partners will work hand in hand guided by the Committee's decision and IUCN's report. Please, come to visit this beautiful World Heritage site once the pandemic is over. See it yourself, they are blessings of nature and be part of the movement to conserve precious biodiversity. Thank you very much. *Arigatou*.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I invite IUCN to present the nomination of Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat, Republic of Korea, but before I give the floor to IUCN, Mr. Balsamo, please you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Just to remind the Committee that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination which is to be found on page 3 of document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat has been nominated under natural criteria (viii), (ix) and (x). IUCN is recommending the Committee to defer this nomination so it can be significantly revised to potentially demonstrate OUV under criterion (x). The evaluation of this property is on the pages indicated on the slide.

The nominated property is located on the eastern side of the Yellow Sea on the southwestern and southern coast of the Republic of Korea and comprises four component parts with Shinan Getbol containing approximately 85 per cent of the total area nominated which is a total of 128,000 hectares. This is an area with a high proportion artificially hardened coastline and most major rivers are modified through river barriers. The nominated property has only a narrow terrestrial buffer zone and is in many places surrounded by heavily modern high landscapes. Focus of the nomination is the diversity of the tidal flat ecosystem and associated physical and ecological features and processes as well their high biodiversity.

IUCN considers that the property does not meet criterion (viii). We note the diversity of the inter tidal mud flat system but consider that the selection limited to mostly small component parts lacks sufficient scale to adequately capture this diversity.

We consider the nomination also does not meet criterion (ix). IUCN notes that the nominated property supports nationally and regionally significant values. However, there are several comparable examples along the world's coasts both in tidal mud flat systems of enormous ecological complexity but often at much larger scale and with more intact overall ecosystems.

In relation to criterion (x), IUCN recognises that the nominated property includes some of the critical stopover sights for several globally threatened species of migratory birds along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. It is also home to 47 species endemics to the Yellow Sea and five endangered marine invertebrate species. More than 2,000 plants and animal species have been recorded. However, the nominated areas partially or fully omit priority sites for biodiversity conservation such as Ramsar sites, key biodiversity areas and sites selected as priorities in the Flyway network. Therefore, the nominated property does not fully meet integrity requirements but with revisions could do so.

In summary: the property, as nominated, does not demonstrate the criterion (viii) and (ix) could be met, and to meet criterion (x), we consider further extension of the boundaries component parts would be required so as to include areas crucial for biodiversity conservation and supported by sufficiently sized and increased buffer zone areas with adequate protection and management arrangements. While the protection and management approaches are considered appropriate in the areas proposed, there are a number of significant challenges when considering the wider protection of the process and the ecosystems.

Mr. Chair, in concluding, we would like to acknowledge the dialogue with the State Party that has been taking place since the nomination was submitted. Especially, on the actions they wish to take to address the concerns identified in the IUCN evaluation, including the plans that are proposed for the second phase. In relation to the response on factual errors, although there are two, I think, minor factual points, most of that exchange does in fact outline some of the differences of opinions and also plans for further phases considered.

Mr. Chair, we would like to draw the Committee's attention to Decision 43 COM 8B.3 of 2019 which considered the migratory bird sanctuaries in the Yellow Sea located in China, and phase one of the proposed nomination in China. The Committee's decision at that time made some recommendations that are relevant to the present nomination.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the Draft Decision can be found in Document 8B on the pages as shown on this slide and it contains IUCN's recommendation to defer Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat to allow the State Party to prepare a new nomination focused on criterion (x). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. First of all, I would like to apologise for having my camera turned off which is due to technical issues. The Kyrgyz Republic would like to thank IUCN for its very thorough and comprehensive evaluation of the Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat nomination.

While pointing to the need for boundary expansion, IUCN has also recognised in its report, the critical contribution of the nominated property to biodiversity and its conservation on regional and global level. In this regard the Kyrgyz Republic has submitted an amendment to the Draft Decision of the Getbol based on criterion (x). In this amendment we have also suggested a small revision of the name of the property to make it plural: Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats in reflection of the State Party's opinion.

The Kyrgyz Republic wishes to draw the Committee's attention to the irreplaceable value of the nominated property within the global efforts to conserve biodiversity. The nominated site supports more than 100 species of migratory water birds and more than 200 species of marine invertebrates. The OUV of the property is also highlighted in the letter to the Committee Members signed by 78 international biodiversity conservation organisations and experts including, among others, Birds Life International and Wetland International asking to support the inscription of the Getbol nomination.

The Getbol sites are located along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, one of the most threatened Flyways in the world. The Kyrgyz Republic believes that a World Heritage inscription would offer a powerful tool for managing these developing pressures threatening these sites that are critical for so many migratory birds and are critical for conservation of biodiversity. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Australia acknowledges that the nominated property is important for birds migrating along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway which spans at least 21 countries across two hemispheres from the Antarctic, Southeast Asia and Australasia. As a country on this Flyway, Australia has demonstrated its commitment to migratory bird conservation as a signatory of bilateral agreements with other Flyway countries, including the Republic of Korea and is a member of the Flyway Partnership.

We find much value in the assessment and guidance embodied in the Draft Decision prepared by IUCN and note the proposed amendments include a framework to support the Republic of Korea bringing forward a phase II nomination for consideration by the World Heritage Committee. We consider vital that all the important bird areas and key biodiversity areas in the regions that are currently not included in the property or its buffer zone are protected as soon as possible via government arrangements that recognises the imperative of mitigating the actual and potential threats to all migratory birds using Korean tidal flats, especially, the threats of new development and climate change. In addition, this site should be included in the phase II nomination.

We note the importance of supporting local communities so that their traditional ecological knowledge can be used to enhance the property. Inscription of this site under criterion (x) —the same criterion under which the migratory bird sanctuaries along the coast of the Yellow Sea in the Gulf of China, where one property was inscribed — offers the potential for development of a transboundary serial nomination that incorporates the major migratory bird sites of the Yellow Sea enhancing the OUV of all these sites.

As a partner in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway partnership, Australia would welcome an opportunity to participate in a workshop to consider this option at an appropriate time after this meeting. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. Chair, the Getbol ecosystem is considered endangered on the IUCN Red List of ecosystems. It is of international importance as a stopover site along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway one of the most threatened Flyways on the globe. It also overlaps with four Ramsar sites and three UNESCO biosphere reserves. The nominated property supports a total of 2,169 marine invertebrate species, 47 of which are endemic to the site and 5 are endangered. Out of the 102 bird species using Getbol as their stopover site, 27 are threatened with extinction and registered on the IUCN Red List, including the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper with fewer than 415 visuals on this planet. Getbol hosts 56.3 per cent of the Republic of Korea seawater bird species on the IUCN Red list.

Such an important ecosystem, Chair, cannot be left in the hand of pressure and industrial developments. We appreciate the existence of some gaps in the nomination, but the inscription of this property will provide a much-needed instrument for site protection.

Uganda therefore does not support the Draft Decision prepared by IUCN, rather, my Delegation has aligned itself with an amendment moved by Kyrgyzstan and supported by ten other Delegations, to have Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat inscribed on the World Heritage List. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thailand has carefully reviewed the report by the State Party and noted the global significance of the Getbol property under criterion (x). We welcome the Republic of Korea long standing effort for the conservation of migratory birds

along the East Asian-Australasian flyway. The nominated property is one of the most important stopover sites for migratory birds along the Flyways and does hold great significant for the global biodiversity.

Thailand has connection with the nominated property as its Spoon-billed Sandpiper also flies to Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries after breeding in Siberia and Alaska. Along their journey, they stop at the Yellow Sea tidal flats and the nominated Getbol site.

In this regard, it is important to take note that the Spoon-billed Sandpiper is one of the most threatened bird species depending on the nominated property with only approximately 400 remaining worldwide. We are pleased to note that the State Party is committed to presenting an integrated management system to conserve and preserve the property for the sake of biodiversity and all the different species that lands on the nominated property.

Therefore, Thailand supports the Kyrgyz Republic's proposal for the inscription of Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, we would like to thank the prominent experts from the IUCN for their thorough evaluation of the nomination. Being aware of the gravity of the situation related to the issue of conservation of migratory birds, we are pleased to have this opportunity to participate in a discussion on the protection of one of the world's most important habitats for threatened bird species. As you all may know, migratory birds provide an important marker of biodiversity and many countries, including the Republic of Korea, are making great efforts on behalf of the conservation of birds through diverse forms of international partnership.

Huge number of the birds migrating along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway stop to rest and feed at the Getbol site including 27 threatened bird species registered on the IUCN Red List. Given the irreplaceable role of the nominated property in supporting the threatened birds we need to recognise that there is no time to lose in preparing advantageous conditions for its protection.

We wish to emphasize that the most important factor in this regard is the strong commitment expressed on numerous occasions by the State Party. As IUCN has recognised in its evaluation report, the Republic of Korea has done a wonderful job of repairing and protect ecosystems and operating in an effective and stable manner. We would also like to applaud the State Party for unveiling clear plans for possible expansion of the property. Given all of this, the Russian Federation would like to support the immediate inscription of the nominated property for the sake of its timely protection. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman would like to thank IUCN for this useful report recognising its critical contribution to the conservation of biodiversity. We would like to express our endorsement for the amended proposal by the Kyrgyz Republic, and without repeating what has been said by Kyrgyzstan and others, we are convinced of the OUV of the nominated property under criterion (x).

Therefore, Oman commends Korean efforts for managing and conserving the four component parts of this serial property by implementing relevant laws which effectively restrict damaging activities, and for the understanding of the State Party in agreement with the request of the Committee. Also, taking into consideration the global conservation significance of their Flyway and the critical importance of the Yellow Sea Region habitat for the survival of many species of water birds.

For the above reason and what has been said, Oman strongly supports the immediate inscription of the Getbol property. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning to all. We also support the amendment put forward by Kyrgyzstan and supported by many Delegations regarding the immediate inscription of this very important site. A site whose OUV is clearly demonstrated under criterion (x), a site which is so critical for biodiversity effort specifically for migratory birds. It is one of the most important habitats for many threatened species of bird and we do not understand, in our collective effort to safeguard biodiversity, why we are not taking urgent action in encouraging

States like Korea which are undertaking very noteworthy and remarkable action in terms of protective systems as well as the extension plan for the property.

Therefore, in the view of what has been said, we support the inscription of this site during our current session. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, we thank the Advisory Body for their careful analysis and excellent presentation of the nominated property. We would like to highlight that the different sites of the Hungarian protected area network serve as important rest areas for many migrating bird species. Therefore, we are fully aware of the challenges and difficulties in relation to the protection and management of such sites located on the Flyways of migratory birds.

Hungary appreciates the statewide bottom-up approach and the commitment of the Republic of Korea to further develop the nominated property during phase II towards an enlarged series of site complexes with a functional buffer zone.

In agreement with Kyrgyzstan and a number of other Committee members, Hungary supports the inscription of the Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat on the World Heritage List based on criterion (x). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to commend the Republic of Korea for submitting the nomination Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat. We would like to thank IUCN for the assessment of the nomination. Egypt supports the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan to the Draft Decision and the immediate inscription of the site on the World Heritage List based on criterion (x). This inscription will further enrich the World Heritage List. It is worth noting that the Republic of Korea has indicated their firm commitment to protect this property and, in this respect, we would like to strongly support the amendment presented with the Draft Decision. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. the second of a two-phase nomination process which started with the inscription in 2019 of The Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of the Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China (Phase I). It reflects a concerted approach to the Yellow Sea which also involved the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway partnership. UNESCO's role in fostering the conservation of biodiversity is also highlighted here.

As the Advisory Bodies recognise the nomination potential on the basis of criterion (x), IUCN expressed concern, however, about the delimitation of the site which was considered insufficient to contain all areas of significance for protection of biodiversity. According to the information received from the State Party, the designated site corresponds to 90 per cent of the national coastal wetland protected area which is not a small percentage. But the Korean government has also demonstrated its willingness to follow up on IUCN's recommendation and adjust the boundaries of the site and of its buffer zone.

The attributes that justify the OUV of the site based on the importance of the conservation of biodiversity as the protection of threatened species should not depend only on the expansion of the area. Either they exist in the 90 per cent already included in the site, that seems to me the case, or they would not exist at all, and they would not be a point for deferral.

For these reasons and considering the nomination also satisfies other technical criteria, such as protection and management, we support the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan and recommend the inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler of the Secretariat to make some announcement.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The webpage of UNESCO is very slow, if you cannot reach the livestream you can go in the YouTube channel and maybe my colleague can write the address in the chat.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everyone. Nigeria would like to applaud our colleagues at IUCN for drawing this informative report. We would also like to commend the Republic of Korea for the dedicated effort it has made over the last ten years towards inscribing the Getbol property on the World Heritage List with a view to better protect the migratory waterbirds that depend on the nominated components for their survival.

Nigeria is one of the countries along the Mediterranean-Black Sea Flyway and is a member of the Agreement of the African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds. We have learnt from experience of the immense significance of habitat protection in our effort for the conservation of migratory birds and biodiversity with the Niger Delta within our territory. We have come to clearly understand how landforms created by River sedimentation, like the nominated property, these are unique ecosystem often an essential habitat for migratory birds to rest and feed.

While supporting the considerable relevance of IUCN's recommendations, Nigeria would like to stress that a World Heritage inscription is the most effective and necessary measure to protect the nominated property from harm by the area's growing development pressures. The nominated property is a treasure housing marine invertebrates as well as a critical stopover site for migratory birds including many internationally important species such as the Eurasian Oystercatcher. In this sense, we believe that the nominated property has OUV under criteria (x). The materials circulated by the Republic of Korea confirms that the State Party is fully committed to better protecting the nominated property based on highly specific plans.

Nigeria would like to give its enthusiastic endorsement to the State Party's efforts and wholeheartedly support the inscription of the Getbol Korean tidal flood, one of the most important natural habitats anywhere in the world. Thank you, Chair. I support the amendment.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now Bosnia-Herzegovina you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Bosnia-Herzegovina is supporting the amendment made by the Kyrgyz Republic. We would like to add our voice to these amendments because as my colleagues have already said this is an important site and we respect what the Republic of Korea did in this site. This inscription would encourage future efforts. So, we support the amendment made by the Kyrgyz Republic. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to thank IUCN for their detailed evaluation. Saudi Arabia would like to join others in supporting the amendment proposed by the Kyrgyz Republic. The nominated property provides a home for an astonishing number of species more than 2,000 invertebrate species live and get on site among which are 47 endemic species, including the unique evolutionary unique Tigre Crab among others as mentioned by our colleagues here today.

Furthermore, the nominated property supports an amazing 27 threatened species of birds from the IUCN Red List. The highest number among the 148 stopover sites along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF). Many shore birds using the EAAF stop only once on their difficult migration from Australia and New Zealand to Siberia and Alaska. One of these species, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper has a tiny surviving population of only about 400 individuals worldwide, classified by IUCN as critically in danger.

This clearly demonstrates how essential it is to protect the nominated property for the purpose of conserving migratory birds in general and endangered one in particular. Believing in the power of the World Heritage inscription as an effective tool against development pressure, Saudi Arabia would like to endorse the immediate inscription of the nominated property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[interpretation from Spanish] Good morning, Chair, thank you very much for giving me the floor. Guatemala wishes to express its recognition for the nomination of this site, the Koran Tidal Flat. We believe that this property is a very important site for endangered species and it makes up a critical international site for the conservation of thousands of areas of migratory zones. The biological importance of this site is great. We wish to support the original Draft Decision as in the *Operational Guidelines* so that the State Party may comply with all the recommendations for inscription, however, our State Party will support consensus. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, I will give you the floor after others. So, Bahrain please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you. Mr. Chair. Just not to repeat what previous Committee members have expressed in terms of the positive aspects of this nomination, we agree with the consensus that the Committee has reached, to inscribe this property therefore we support the amendment proposed as well. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman [...]

Chairperson:

There are problems with the signal. We cannot hear you. I can come back to you. Now, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes, it is okay. Please, there are still some problems.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Now it is okay, go ahead.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. South Africa, first, would like to applaud IUCN for preparing the informative report on the Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat. Mr. Chairman, I cannot overemphasize the importance of this particular site from biodiversity and conservation point of view as other Committee members alluded to.

We understand, Mr. Chairman, that the Republic of Korea has dedicated many efforts over many years to enter the nominated property into the World Heritage List. The State Party has now also committed itself to future conservation efforts by unveiling its plans for the phase II of nomination. South Africa has also learnt that there are growing calls for the nominated property with new activities such as the construction of renewable energy devices and infrastructure for tourism. South Africa views these calls as sufficient to warrant immediate action by the World Heritage Committee to ensure that this important staging ground for migrating bird species is protected. Mr. Chairman, South Africa also appreciates the State Party's commitment to the expansion of the property in a phased manner to include additional components. This should further strengthen the OUV of this property.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to add our voice to those advocating for the immediate inscription of Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat as proposed in Decision 44 COM 8B.6. We hope that the significance of Getbol as an irreplaceable heritage for threatened bird species and critical stronghold of biodiversity will soon be more appreciated within the global community. I thank you, Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China appreciates the in-depth inspection and scientific assessment by IUCN on this nominated property. China appreciates the efforts that were made by the Republic of Korea in the conservation of migrating bird and they endorse this nomination and the systematic conservation of migrating birds in the East Asian-Australasia Flyway in the future. China joins the consensus with most Committee Members and support the inscription of Getbol, Korean Tidal Flat on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Chair. Kyrgyzstan joins voices with the other Committee Members who expressed their compliments to the Republic of Korea's commitment in addressing the recommendations, by IUCN and that is why we would like to request the representatives of the Republic of Korea to comment on this amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, the Republic of Korea, you have the floor, to be very brief.

The Delegation of the Republic of Korea:

Thank you, Chair. First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the government of the People's Republic of China for the wonderful organisation of the meeting. I would also like to thank the Kyrgyz Republic and other Committee members who co-sponsored or supported this amendment.

The Korean government fully endorses IUCN recommendation for the boundary extension of this nomination which will bring great benefit for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitat. We have undertaken a vigorous study and draw up a concrete phase II nomination plan including more sites on the southwestern coastal Korean Peninsula as was suggested by IUCN. We have already obtained full commitment for this supplement plan from the relevant local government, and will present the fulfilment of the plan to the Committee subsequently in 2025.

I would also like to highlight that the conservation of Getbol is an imminent issue. Getbol is an important stopover site in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway for the endangered birds. The area is under growing pressure from multiple factors, such as development demand, climate change and land reclamation. The Korean government has been making considerable effort to keep these risks under control.

Still, inscription of Getbol at this session is a much-needed impetus to all the stakeholders of these areas in support of stronger conservation measures. Having said this, Mr. Chairperson, the Korean Delegation would sincerely ask for support of the Committee for the inscription of Getbol. We believe its inscription will contribute significantly to the protection of this critical migratory habitat for future generations. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I do not see any more questions and comments. I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.6. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendment on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. We have no modification to paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will go through the text paragraph by paragraph to approve it. Paragraph 1 do you approve it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats, Republic of Korea, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (x)'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then we have Brief Synthesis, Justification of criterion (x), integrity and Protection and Management Requirements. This is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4: 'Underlines the global conservation significance of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and the critical importance of the Yellow Sea region habitat for the survival of many species of waterbirds'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Notes that the decision to inscribe the property is made on the understanding that the State Party is in agreement with the following requests of the Committee, which should be implemented in time for consideration at its 48th session in order to fully address the requirements of the Operational Guidelines:

- a) Submit a single Phase II nomination to include nine additional components in order to further strengthen the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of this property, fully taking into account a comprehensive overview,
- b) Clearly demonstrate the boundaries of each component in Phase II to meet integrity requirements, providing evidence that the boundaries sufficiently cover all attributes related to the stated OUV,
- c) Present an integrated management system and plan to conserve attributes at national and local levels, including for Phase II,
- d) Ensure that there is no further development that would have negative impacts on the attributes of conservation significance in each component of the nominated property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with this paragraph? Australia, please. Your microphone is on mute.

The Delegation of Australia:

Can you hear me now? Thank you. We would like to propose an additional amendment to clauses a and b. I will take 'a' first. We think that the words 'comprehensive overview' should be deleted and replaced by 'to the evaluation of IUCN'. Sorry just 'the evaluation of IUCN'. Thank you. Would you like us to go ahead with b?

Chairperson:

Yes. Go ahead.

The Delegation of Australia:

Where it says after 'Clearly demonstrate the boundaries of each component in Phase II', we would like to have an additional clause inserted: 'And proposed extending boundaries and/or buffer zones of the existing property if necessary to meet integrity requirements [...]'.
'

Chairperson:

Do you accept the revision? There are no objections it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

The following two paragraphs are proposed for deletion, Mr. Chair, original paragraphs 3 and 4.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the deletion? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6: 'Notes with appreciation the confirmed commitment demonstrated by the State Party and local authorities to decide to participate in Phase II, as an integral part of the inscribed property'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

We have a minor modification in new paragraph 7 original paragraph 5. Instead of saying 'Also encourages' we say 'Encourages'.

Chairperson:

Do you Agree? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8: 'Requests IUCN to closely cooperate with the State Party to ensure that the future nomination can satisfy the requirements provided in Paragraph 5 and the target in Paragraph 7 of the present Decision.'

Chairperson:

Do you agree? IUCN, please.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. May I first note and thank the Republic of Korea for their comments. I think in relation to this paragraph, this needs to be worded so that the request is to the State Party. It could only be the State Party that can ensure a future nomination. I think, with respect, the drafters of the amendment has put IUCN and the State Party in the wrong place. It should read: 'Request the State Party to closely cooperate with IUCN', because the State Party would make the future nomination, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Do you accept what was said? It is approved. Dear colleagues, now, we have been through all the text. If there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.6 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate the Republic of Korea on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. The Republic of Korea you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of the Republic of Korea:

Thank you for giving me the floor. As the head of the General Heritage Agency of the Republic of Korea, I am thrilled to have Getbol our nomination as a success story inscribed on the World Heritage List. I deeply appreciate our colleagues from the Kyrgyz Republic and all members of this Committee for recognising the outstanding significance of the Getbol.

The Getbol is an international critical natural heritage that sustains an extraordinary diverse range of species. The conservation of the Getbol for global biodiversity is, of course, indispensable and irreplaceable, particularly considering the immense challenges humanity is facing with the impacts of climate change. My agency is fully committed to closely cooperate with all relevant stakeholders who support the conservation of the Getbol, and to ensure the success of the Phase II nomination.

Once again, I thank all of you for supporting the inscription of the Getbol. Our ambassador to UNESCO would like to make some comments thank you very much.

His Excellency Mr. Kim Dong Gi:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Let me express our sincere gratitude, first to you, Mr. Chair, for your able leadership to guide our way successfully through this extended session. I also deeply thank the Committee members for their invaluable support for the inscription of the Getbol.

I would like to reiterate that the inscription of the Getbol at this stage is a truly meaningful encouragement to all the stakeholders of this area for better conservation of the biodiversity. I am also convinced that this would certainly be good news for the endangered migrating birds of the East-Asian Australasian Flyway such as the Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

Our particular appreciation goes to the Advisory Body and its experts for their thorough assessment and constructive suggestions that made possible the improvement of our initial nomination. The trust of this Committee in the OUV of Getbol and our commitment to its conservation will remain cherished along with the full implementation of the pledged plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I also see two Observers requesting the floor. Please, be very brief. Now, ISPB you have the floor.

Observer-ISP:

Excuse me chair maybe it would be better for the EAAFP to speak first.

Chairperson:

Okay, EAAFP, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted.

Observer-EAAFP:

Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes.

Observer-EAAFP:

I am sorry for the confusion. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to take the floor. On behalf of the EAAFP, we congratulate the World Heritage Committee on the inscription of the Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats. This will help secure the habitat of the Yellow Sea Region for the millions of migratory birds including many globally threatened species in the world most imperilled Flyway. We offer our wholehearted gratitude to the Kyrgyz Republic for the pivotal role they have played in leading a solution as regards the Secision of the Committee and to the other States Parties who co-signed the amendment, and to our host, including IUCN and the government of the Republic of Korea, plus all the associated local governments of the property. Congratulations.

We, EAAFP, together with the wider international conservation community look forward to the ongoing journey with all stakeholders and stand ready to support the Republic of Korea in fulfilling their future plan of Phase I and Phase II as part of the transboundary approach for the Yellow Sea and to secure all our shared heritage. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Birdlife International, please.

Observer-Birdlife International:

Thank you, Chair, to allow me to speak for Birdlife International, as a member of the EAAFP and IUCN including our 118 national partners especially those of the Flyways and countries of your Committee.

We offer our profound congratulations and thank you for your inscription of Getbol, especially to Kyrgyzstan and to the Republic of Korea for their nomination and remarkable efforts to improve it in response to the valid IUCN evaluation. As seen also with your 2019 inscription of China, Phase I Yellow Sea Coast, only this Convention can motivate such huge immediate and tangible effort for migratory bird conservation with unsurpassed levels of concrete joined up from local to global actions for biodiversity.

We hope the exemplary efforts of China and Korea will inspire similar action for all the worlds Flyways. Meanwhile, we offer our support with the Phase II nominations as well as management of Phase I. The road to the inscription we celebrate today and in 2019 began with the 2012 resolution of the IUCN World Congress hosted by the Republic of Korea, helped by the resulting IUCN led Yellow Sea working group.

We hope before too long, there will be a nomination to be considered from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more requests for the floor. I now invite IUCN to present the nomination of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex, Thailand. The Draft Decision concerning this nomination can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. I give the floor to IUCN. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor first.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, to remind that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination which is to be found on page 10 of Document INF.8B.4. Then, I also want to provide some technical information to this Committee.

In compliance with Decisions 39 COM 8B.5, 40 COM 8B.11 and 43 COM 8B.5, on the 21 April 2020 a joint communication from the special procedure branch of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner was sent to the State Party of Thailand, to the World Heritage Committee, World Heritage Centre and IUCN relaying concerns from the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people, the working group on forced and voluntary disappearance, the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights

obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human right defenders.

On the 30 June 2021, another communication from the special procedure branch of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner was sent to the State Party of Thailand, to the World Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN. Again, relaying concerns from the Special Rapporteur on the issues of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human right defence and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people. Both these communications have been provided to the World Heritage Committee. In addition, the World Heritage Centre received a number of letters and petitions, from associations, foundations and NGOS also conveying concerns concerning the Karen community within the Kaeng Krachan National Park. Thank you Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thailand nominated the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex first in 2014. The Committee has referred back the nomination three times in 2015, 2016 and 2019, to allow the State Party to respond to a range of concerns on values, boundary changes and issues regarding local communities and human rights. Previous evaluations documented in detail the significant natural values of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex and the area that surrounds it. The Committee also took note of the nominated property strong potential to meet criterion (ix). Following boundary changes on the western perimeter of the property, the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex now comprises an area of a little more of 408,000 hectares which represents a reduction in area of slightly more than 15 per cent compared to the original 2014 nomination. The status of the original buffer zone is also unclear to IUCN.

The Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex sits in an ecological crossroads of overlapping zoogeographical subregions and, therefore, hosts a highly significant biodiversity, including endemic and threatened species. Eight species of wild cats and the critically endangered Siamese Crocodile, endangered tigers and Asian elephants can be found in the area. IUCN notes that the revised configuration results in a step boundary of straight lines along the western edge of the nominated property which does not follow ecological principles, reduces its connectivity conservation and the coverage of some significant area for nature conservation.

We conclude, however, that extremely important values undoubtedly remain, but, for many species, the reduced areas proposed now for inscription has exiled high conservation value areas and habitat from the site. IUCN considers that this needs to be verified through an evaluation mission that is part of a full evaluation process enable through a deferral.

Without a full evaluation process and the only evaluation mission almost seven years ago, IUCN is not in a position to be conclusive on whether the revised boundaries are provided for a site fulfilling integrity requirements. While IUCN takes note of recent legislative changes pertaining to the protection and management of the nominated property and the involvement of local communities, we are not in a position to assess their effectiveness within the limited scope of a referral procedure.

Mr. Chair, IUCN has twice recommended referral of this property and now recommended twice to defer the nomination following the boundary modifications and the fact that this process has moved well beyond the normal time frames of a referral.

In conclusion, the rationale for IUCN current deferral recommendation relates to several points:

- First, the need to validate in the field and in close dialogue with national experts, boundary changes and the impact on attributes of OUV;
- Second, the need to evaluate changes in the legal framework protecting the nominated property.
- Thirdly are issues related to concerns raised by local communities and in accordance with Paragraph 123 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

IUCN notes that you, the Committee, has stressed in your past decisions the need for the State Party to explicitly address in full the concerns that have been raised by a number of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights who have made a series of statements on this nomination, as we have just heard from the World Heritage Centre. These concerns were consistent with the principles of free and prior and informed consent and were framed around demonstrating that all concerns have been resolved in full consultation with local communities. Information available to IUCN suggests, at present time, that this situation has not been achieved. But we contend it is for the States Parties and the relevant Special Rapporteurs to consider this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr Chair. The nomination of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex is not a new item since the first submission in 2014, it has been presented for discussion during numerous Committee's sessions. It is worth noting that, in the report, the Advisory Body recognises the potential of OUV of the nominated property with rich flora and fauna comprising endangered and critically endangered species.

In its last decision at the 43rd session in Baku, in 2019, the Committee referred the nomination back to the State Party in order to accomplish three main tasks: to revise the boundaries of the property based on an agreement between the States Parties of Thailand and Myanmar; to prepare and submit a revised comparative analysis demonstrating that the reduced area of the nominated property would be sufficient to meet criterion (x); to demonstrate that all concerns have been resolved in full consultation with the local communities in accordance with Paragraph 123 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The comprehensive information provided by the State Party led our experts to conclude that all the concerns raised by the Committee have been addressed, despite the difficult situation caused by the pandemic, and the good faith and will to collaborate with the World Heritage Centre and the IUCN regional office in Bangkok. We commend the continuous effort of the State Party.

For over seven years, Thailand has been constantly working on the inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex on the World Heritage List. It has fully implemented the Committee's decisions and recommendations with significant development over the past two years. Therefore, we do not see any reasons to put forward new conditions for inscription that would not encourage the State Party to further continue with good progress. Such conditions moreover undermine the credibility of our Committee which referred this nomination in Baku.

Bearing in mind the mandate of the Committee, we consider that the pressing need to preserve biological diversity and threatened species must prevail. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to ask you to give the floor to the State Party to make necessary comments and explanations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Excellency, can you formulate a question for Thailand, then I will let the other Committee Members take the floor first. Norway, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

My question, Mr. Chair, is: What did the State Party do to fulfil the previous sessions' Decisions on this nomination? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. Norway recognises the importance of this rich forest area and its potential as World Heritage. We further commend Thailand's consistency in nominating Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex as part of the State Party's implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Norway considers that the connection between the United Nations Human Rights mechanism and the World Heritage mechanism is unavoidable. This has also been confirmed through three previous Committee's Decisions. For the Committee to be able to make an informed decision, we ask the Chair to give the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people whose mandate is to report and advise on human rights under the United Nations Human Right Council the possibility to speak before the discussion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I do not see the United Nations Rapporteur raising his hand. Maybe we will go on with the Committee members. I see it now. First go on with the Committee members and then give the floor to the United Nations Rapporteur.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to the Committee members. Now, Ethiopia please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Mr Chair. There are two issues before us. First of all, the issue of procedures, the distinguished delegate of Norway asked the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people to speak, I have no problem with him or her speaking, the problem is that, he or she should speak after we have adopted the Decision as is practiced in our Committee work. Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence, I would request that we, Committee members, be first respected, and then we decide on this issue as is customary with other Observers and that the distinguished representative of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people can speak afterwards, after Committee members have made the Decision, and we will very gladly hear him and listen to whatever issue he may rise.

I submit to you this proposal that we listen to the Special Rapporteur after the Committee members have discussed the issue and after we have adopted our Decision. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to commend Thailand for submitting the nomination of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex. I would like to thank IUCN for their assistance on this nomination. Kaeng Krachan covers four areas encompasses parts of three provinces. The complex has rich and valued biological diversity. It holds valuable species that are recognised as being globally significant and endangered.

Egypt supports the amendment presented on the Draft Decision for the immediate inscription of the site on the World Heritage List based on criterion (x). This inscription will further enrich the World Heritage List. It is worth noting that Thailand has indicated its firm commitment to protect its property, and in this respect, we would like to strongly support the amendment presented to the Draft Decision.

Before I conclude, Mr. Chairman, and to respond to the proposal made to invite the Special Rapporteur to address the Committee. We welcome, of course, the Special Rapporteur, but I fully agree with my colleague from Ethiopia that the Special Rapporteur should address the Committee after the adoption of the Draft Decision. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I start my intervention, I would like to support the proposition by Ethiopia and Egypt that we give the floor to the Observer-Special Rapporteur after we decide on this site. Thank you.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Delegation of Oman takes note of the amended Draft Decision 44 COM 8B. Add and welcomes the detailed information submitted by the State Party. How important is this site complex to be inscribed in the World Heritage List? The nominated property meets the criterion (x) because of its location reflecting the unique mixture of different zoogeographical subregions and floristic provinces. The complex is the world's only home to the plants and species which are only found in this complex. In addition, the complex maintains healthy populations of globally important endangered wildlife species.

One of the most important evidence is the presence of the critically endangered species of Siamese Crocodile in Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (KKFC). It is one of the few locations in only five countries worldwide where such species still exist in the wild, in addition to other critically endangered species. The property protects the head watershed of many important rivers and encompasses six forest types which cover more than 96 per cent of the nominated area. As a result of complex topographic climate and ecosystem, there are more than 700 animal species reported in the complex. The biodiversity of flora and fauna is extremely rich, safe and sufficient for the species to thrive. Therefore, the integrity is very much intact with the full protection of the KKFC and sound management plan with the relevant laws and regulations.

Oman also appreciated the significant actions taken by the State Party for the protection and management of the complex by different relevant legislation and the management capacity and conservation effectiveness which meets the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines*. That is the legislation of the Worldwide Protection and Conservation of 1992 and its amendment as well as the adoption of the National Park Act (2019) and Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act (2019) which represent a significant paradigm shift in Thailand's environmental conservation policy to strike a balance between nature conservation and sustainable utilisation of resources.

Also, we noted and appreciated the understanding of the State Party in addressing the issue of the Committee according to the 43 COM 8B.5 Decision. We think it fulfils the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Therefore, the Oman's Delegation encourages and supports the amendment to the Decision and urges all Committee members to support the inscription of this site, as well as requesting the State Party to report the progress to the World Heritage Centre. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair, and good morning. We would like to congratulate Thailand on their perseverance which we see here and in other Committees as well. After the recognition of the OUV and the intervention by the World Heritage Centre. I think we would agree with Norway that it would be good for us to hear from the United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights. Thank You, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We appreciate and thank IUCN for their analysis and assessment. Saudi Arabia would like to shed light on an important aspect of this nomination which is the State Party effort towards inclusion of local communities. Many initiatives have been put into action by the State Party to improve the livelihood of the local communities, including improvement of basic infrastructure, agriculture and livestock, healthcare and hygiene, arts and culture and ecotourism resulting in enhancement of their quality of life and well-being in a sustainable manner. Most areas have been equipped with public utilities including electricity and water supply as well as fundamental education for children.

Given the information provided to the committee by the State Party, we are of the view that on the issue of the rights of the local communities, the concerned Thai authorities have taken necessary action to strengthen inclusive and widest participation of the local communities in the nomination process, in accordance with Paragraph 123 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Resources have been invested to enhance the quality of life without compromising the traditional way of living. Mechanisms are in place to address land rights of the local communities in a fair and non-discriminatory manner to ensure that the work in progress will be followed up with the participation of all stakeholders.

Therefore, Saudi Arabia would like to endorse immediate inscription of the nominated property. Mr. Chair, discussing the intervention of the esteemed Human Rights Rapporteur, I would like to second what my colleagues have been saying and to keep the consistency of our assessment. We believe that they can kindly provide the valuable information after the decision has been taken by this esteemed committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving us the floor. South Africa wishes to applaud IUCN for preparing this informative report. We would like to support the amendment as proposed by the Russian Federation, China, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and other co-authors. The Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex has rich biodiversity as the result of the amalgamation of four zoogeographical subregions as well as four floristic provinces. The nominated property is a habitat of more than 700 species of fauna. Among these, IUCN species on the Red List of which eight endangered species and four are critically endangered.

As confirmed by the UCN report, Chairperson, the nominated property holds a remarkable range of mammals, birds and reptiles from this region including the endangered Asian elephants and species of cats, including tigers. As one of the most diverse countries in the world and a global leader in the issue of biodiversity conservation, South Africa regards the protection of this vital habitat of endangered species of paramount importance. As reported, Mr. Chairman, the United Nations Environmental Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre has confirmed the global significance of the biodiversity of this site and that it is part of the biogeographical regions that are not yet well represented on the World Heritage List.

As such, we would like to add our voice to those advocating for the immediate inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex, as per amendment to the Draft Decision 44 COM 8.7. Regarding the request to grant the United Nations Rapporteur an opportunity now, we have no objections to the proposal provided it is only at the end of the discussions by member States. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mali please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le Mali voudrait saluer les efforts du Secrétariat et des organes consultatifs sur cette candidature. Le Mali voudrait souligner que, depuis plus de sept ans, la Thaïlande travaille de manière cohérente et de bonne foi en faveur de l'inscription du complexe forestier de Kaeng Krachan en tant que site du patrimoine mondial. Elle a pleinement mis en œuvre les décisions et recommandations du Centre du patrimoine mondial, avec des développements importants au cours des deux dernières années. Nous sommes convaincus que l'inscription de ce bien assurera non seulement sa protection, sa conservation et la sauvegarde pour les générations présentes et futures, mais qu'elle contribuera également aux objectifs et à la mission principale de la Convention du patrimoine mondial. Par conséquent, nous appelons le Comité à donner un avis favorable à son inscription. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the fourth time this site comes to the attention of this Committee having been referred three times in former session. Each time, we see significant progress on the part of the State Party. Perhaps this is finally the time to end this process and to inscribe the property on the World Heritage List. When this item came up for discussion in Baku, the Committee's Decision for referral indicated that it was satisfied with the site OUV and other technical criteria. So, we see no point in having to debate all over again.

The question is whether the Party has complied with the requests of the Decision 43 COM 8B.5. We have been satisfied with the information provided by the State Party and also from what we have heard from Russia and other Delegations that spoke before us on the technical issues. We would raise no objections to the inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex on the World Heritage List.

In regard to the intervention of the United Nations Rapporteur, Brazil agrees with the Delegation of Norway that it would be very interesting and timely to hear his statement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Chair. The previous reports of IUCN have already documented the OUV of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex. Regarding criterion (x), the nominated site protects a number of mammal, bird and reptile species, including species that are globally endangered as well as endemic and rare species. The site is part of a number of ecologically conservation areas and areas for protection of biodiversity. Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex is protected by adequate legislation, the revised boundaries also have very significant value. The measures undertaken including patrols are appropriate. The State Party is currently working actively with local communities to find consensus.

Therefore, China believes that the OUV has been demonstrated, the integrity, authenticity have also been fulfilled. China supports the inscription of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex on the List.

China also supports Ethiopia, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Mali as regards the proposal for leaving the Observers the floor after the decision is made. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please. Your microphone is muted. We cannot hear you.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and sorry.

Chairperson:

It is okay now.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Nigeria wants to lend a voice to other Committee members who have said that this Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex is a site that should be added onto the World Heritage List. We are in support of the amendment to the Draft Decision as put forward. Like other Committee members said it is about time after this site has been deferred. We feel that at this session, it is time to inscribe it, considering the values this site would bring to the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. We do not wish to lose time repeating the ecological wealth of the property, the importance of its biodiversity as well as the environmental services that it already provides without needing to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. That is very important because the site is already offering important ecological services for local communities and the world over. Therefore, without forgetting the ecological and natural importance that the site already has and that has been demonstrated and a well-accepted and recognised value, we wish to address the issue as to why it has not been inscribed on previous occasions.

Therefore, we support the motion that we should have an updated report on the human rights situation in the area. Because for Guatemala, as for other members of this Committee, communities and their well-being are just as important as World Heritage. There is no point in protecting cultural and natural heritage if we are not protecting the lives of communities who have a permanent relationship with that heritage. Therefore, we wish to second the proposal that has been supported by three States Parties and request an updated report before taking a decision on the inscription of this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. I am taking the floor for the second time because I only spoke on the circumstances on this item and only on procedural issues. Mr. Chair, I wanted to really thank Thailand for its patience, its perseverance, and that after several years, it is still asking this Committee to inscribe this site which OUV has been affirmed without any equivocation. It is sad that every time a country makes every effort to meet the conditions of what is required, the goal post seems to be shifting, changing, in order to ensure that this site does not get listed. It is very sad. It is also a clear demonstration of double standard that we have seen and have been witnessed in the working of the general arrangements of inscription dossier.

Mr. Chair, as was highlighted by previous Delegations, Thailand fully complied with what was asked at the 43rd session as was clearly and eloquently elaborated by the Ambassador of Russia. It provided the necessary information on the revised boundary, it provided the necessary analyses in the reduced area, it had extensive and demonstrated consultation with local communities and it made investment to improve the lives of the local communities. Therefore, giving the OUV of this important natural site and the commitments of the State Party, we fully support the inscription of this site at our current session. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, at the request of some Committee members and also in consistence with our practice, I now give the floor to the State Party, and also Committee member, Thailand, to answer questions and make responses.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thailand wishes to respond to the question raised by the distinguished Delegation of Russia. I just want to say that throughout the past seven years, Thailand has been working strenuously and honestly with all the stakeholders for the inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex or KKFC. We have fully implemented every decision and every recommendation as prescribed by the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee. We believe that the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex deserves to be inscribed.

What we have achieved, I am highlighting here: first, on the question of the boundary of the property, we have confirmed the mutual understanding with Myanmar as announced at the 43rd session. On the right of the communities, to which all of us attach importance, we have ensured the participation in the management of the property, as evidenced from their representation in the protected areas. We have engaged the local community in an inclusive consultation process regarding the inscription of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex and, also importantly, we have endeavoured to provide land for livelihoods for all the local communities in the KKFC, including the ethnic communities. In addition to that, public utilities, such as solar energy, water supply, internet connectivity, medical and education facilities, as well as occupational and vocational training have been provided. In fact, there is a host of government agencies continuing to undertake many development projects to improve the livelihood of the local communities. In fact, the IUCN office in Thailand and other international partners have been supporting projects in the property.

Mr. Chairman, having myself served as the president of the United Nations Human Rights Council, I want to say that Thailand fulfils its commitment to human rights. However, when it comes to the purview of the World Heritage Committee, we strongly believe that a clear distinction should be made between the rights of the local communities

under the Convention and these specific human rights case which must be addressed under the due process of law and the relevant human rights mechanism.

Mr. Chairman, could I be very frank? We believe that most of these issues have been addressed or clarified but they are constantly rehashed or revived for the purpose of preventing the inscription. Throughout this process, we have also engaged constructively and closely with the IUCN headquarters in Switzerland and its regional office in Bangkok. In Bangkok, IUCN has a regional office and they have participated in many of the site visits. On the OUV, I also want to say that we have made a recent comparative analysis of the OUV which has confirmed the rich biodiversity in terms of wild animal species and rare and endemic species remain fully intact.

Mr. Chairperson, I think our concern with the Draft Decision of the Advisory Body is that it has added new developments, which is tantamount to shifting the goal post, namely the establishment of an independent third-party arbitration body, which is unprecedented, infringing upon Thailand domestic sovereignty.

Mr. Chairman, given all the efforts that Thailand has made, milestones that we have achieved throughout the past seven years, we believe that we should move towards the inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex.

I want to say at the end, that the inscription is by no means in itself an achievement because it places greater responsibility on us to work even more closely with UNESCO, IUCN and other stakeholders in the conservation and protection of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex. And particularly ensuring the rights to the livelihood of everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the response. Dear colleagues, it seems we have different views concerning the timing to give the floor to the United Nations Special Rapporteur. I would like to ask Dr Rössler for clarification first.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. If I could just sum up the situation. There were number of Committee members, including Spain, Norway, Brazil and Guatemala, who wish to hear the United Nations Rapporteur prior to the decision-making. South Africa also said after the discussion. So, we had the discussion of the Committee members. There were a number of other Committee members, Ethiopia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and China, who wish to hear the United Nations Rapporteur after the decision is taken. Now, you have Rule 22.4 of the Rules of Procedure and this is quite clear. It is your prerogative as to when you wish to take the floor. Sorry, Mr. Chair, that is the situation. You can take a decision as you may wish to see fit. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Dear Committee Members, what would you prefer? Can we take it that the majority of the Committee members prefer to let the United Nations Special Rapporteur intervene later? Are there any objections? Okay. It is so decided. Now, I cannot see any more requests for the floor.

I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.7. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. We have no modification proposed for the first two paragraphs, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. We would have preferred to hear the Special Rapporteur, but we take note of the information provided by the State Party of Thailand. However, this does not allow us to make an informed decision. Having read the recent press release from the United Nations Human Rights Special Procedure branch in Geneva, we cannot see any other solutions than to encourage the State Party to invite the Special Rapporteur to visit Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex and, as soon as possible, send their revised nomination document for evaluation by UCN.

For Norway it is not possible to have nominations where there are unresolved human rights issues. Such fundamental questions need to be resolved before decisions can be made in the World Heritage Committee. As a committee, we have the responsibility to also ensure that Paragraph 123 of the *Operational Guidelines* related to indigenous people and local communities is addressed.

We therefore support the Draft Decision, we cannot support the amendment for inscription. Neither would it be appropriate to form a drafting group or voting on this particular case. Norway, therefore, asks to adjourn the debate on this site until the 46 COM once a new nomination is submitted. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Mr. Chairman, you know, as I mentioned, I am a former Chair of the United Nations Human Rights Council and I fully respect the role of this special council. But we have made several clarifications on how the problems have been addressed. Some of them are old cases that keep coming back. We have made clarification with the previous Special Rapporteur on indigenous people. We have made two clarifications with the present Special Rapporteur. We have presented our clarification on the floor on the United Nations Human Rights Council. Our clarifications are containing additional information that we provided as part of the nomination. We have made clarifications about these issues, but, regrettably, our clarifications have never appeared in any of the joint communication by the special procedure. I think we have done what we should do, what we must do. You know, as I said, again, Thailand believes and respect fully human rights obligations.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, in front of us there is a procedural motion for adjournment of the debate if I understand. Do you have any comments on this? Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We heard, I would say, the large majority of countries expressing their support for the inscription of this site. Perhaps to be pragmatic and perhaps to understand what is the will of the Committee deciding things, we are against adjournment, against any working group, against anything, but deciding on this issue at this session during the current sittings. Mr. Chair, we would like you to listen to the voice of the large majority that expressed themselves and clearly stated that they wanted this site to be listed at this current session. I urge you to move forward with the adoption of the amendment tabled before us. I thank you Chair.

Chairperson:

Russia, please, you have the floor. We will come back to you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr Chair. We think the inscription of this site will do more for the reporting and assessment. Delaying the inscription does not serve the human right issue and therefore, we urge for the inscription in this session without delay. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Russia, it is okay now to speak? Russia it seems to be working.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, it is a procedural matter. First of all, all the documents were available and every Delegation could get to know. Secondly, we are against adjournment if there is no consensus then we should put this question to vote. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, your Excellency. I have a kind of concern with regard to the consistency and the integrity of the decision taken within this esteemed Committee. As we recall, in Baku, the decision was to refer the inscription based on certain recommendations to be taken by the Thai authority. We believe that these measures have been taken and we do not think that going back to a referral is the right decision. We think that it contradicts what this Committee has decided every year. I do not have an explanation to this Excellency. Mr Chair, we would like to take a decision during this session to inscribe the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, actually Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to join previous speakers in supporting the inscription of the property during this meeting. We think that we could take this decision today. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My Delegation has listened to all the debate very carefully. For this issue of human rights, there are important. But United Nations has this Human Rights Council to discuss human rights related issues. For this Committee, we would conduct our work based on scientific evidence and on our professional judgement. I would think that I totally agree with the previous Delegations. We support the idea to inscribe this site on the World Heritage List. I would also like to think that it is more proper to make the decision at this time, at this session. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I would like to ask Russia to clarify if you are asking for a vote or we move on to the substance and continue with the decision?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, my intervention was a reaction to the proposal of adjournment. But I am not against continuing to discuss the substance of the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

So far, I have not seen any Committee Member seconding the procedural motion. Shall we continue to discuss the substance and the Decision? There are no objections. We continue with the Decision. Ms. Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amendments proposed are integrated on the screen. The first two paragraphs of the Draft Decision are without any modifications, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving us the floor again. Norway cannot support any other outcomes than a deferral, we take note of the emerging consensus among our fellow Committee members. We respect the decision-making processes of this Convention and we will not make any further interventions. Nevertheless, Norway cannot subscribe to this Decision. We are therefore obliged to say that Norway dissociates itself with the Decision and asked for it to be reflected in the record of the meeting. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much Mr. Chair. The Secretariat has taken note of it and this will be duly reflected in the record of the meeting. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. For paragraphs 1 and 2, do you approve of them? They are approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Shall I continue, Mr. Chair?

Chairperson:

Yes, continue.

Rapporteur:

Original Paragraph 3 is proposed for deletion and new paragraph 3 reads: 'Inscribes Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex, Thailand, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (x)'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept this paragraph as amended? It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4 is new: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then we have Brief Synthesis, Criterion (x), Integrity and Protection and Management Requirements. This is the end of paragraph 4, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 5 is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the deletion? It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Notes that the decision to inscribe the property is made on the understanding that the State Party has addressed the issues raised in Decision 43 COM 8B.5, thus fulfilled the requirements of the Operational Guidelines, and will continue the work in progress on the following issues:

- a) Mutual understanding on the revised boundaries of the property based on agreement between the States Parties of Thailand and Myanmar,
- b) Ensuring related conditions of integrity, protection and management,
- c) Ensuring consultations with the local communities on their livelihoods and their active engagement in management of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 6 is proposed for deletion. New paragraph 6 reads: 'Notes with appreciation the commitment and continued efforts by the State Party in working with local authorities and communities in safeguarding the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? It is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7: 'Encourages the State Party to identify opportunities to collaborate with the State Party of Myanmar in transboundary conservation and management of the highly significant nature conservation values of the region, with a view to considering a future extension of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8: 'Also encourages the State Party to strengthen dialogue and consultation with IUCN in preparation for a regular review of the general state of conservation, including expert missions'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? It is approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

Proposed paragraph 9: 'Requests the State Party to report the progress and the results of related action in implementing the decision 44 COM 8B to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022'. Mr. Chair, in here, we

have the proposal to use the standard text: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations'. If the Committee agrees as well, we have to clarify if it is going to be by examination of the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session or by reviewed by IUCN. This is to be clarified, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Russia, please, can you clarify? Norway, please. You wanted a footnote in the summary or here?

The Delegation of Norway:

It is okay in the summary.

Chairperson:

Okay. Russia can you clarify the question from Ms. Rapporteur? Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, what do you want to ask me? I did not understand.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, can you repeat?

Rapporteur:

Of course. The last paragraph is requesting the State Party to report on the progress. We have the standard text that we used in all other previous decisions. We propose to use this text which reads: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations' and then for the continuation of this text, we can either request an examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session or the report can be submitted for review by IUCN. These are the two options.

Chairperson:

Is it clear?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

We think it would be better to put for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear Committee members, do you accept this paragraph? It is approved. Dear Committee members, now we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.7 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Thailand on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Thailand, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to give the floor to our Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment to express our appreciation to all the Delegations.

Mr. Varawut Silpa-archa, Minister of Natural resources and the Environment:

Mr. Chairperson and members of the World Heritage Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Kingdom of Thailand, I would like to convey our heartfelt appreciation and a really big thank you for all your support and time taken towards inscription of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex. For many, it is just another inscription of a World Heritage site but to us this inscription reflects the commitment and devotion of those who have committed over 16 years of their lives to show the world that we, the people of Thailand, should preserve this complex for mankind for generations to come.

This inscription is not the end of our work, on the contrary, it marks the beginning of a lifelong work to sustain, preserve, restore and ensure the rich biodiversity of all living being on the complex, from plants, animals as well as humans. Thailand has duly noticed the remarks and suggestions from all the States Parties and would like to ensure everyone that we have been working tirelessly to accommodate all the remarks and concerns despite some repeated criticism that we have been neglecting those remarks.

We wish that the concerned parties could come and visit us to see with their own eyes what Thailand has done and is doing for the people of KKFC, instead of just reading some reports or listen to some hearsay. Many tasks have been completed and fulfilled while some are more time consuming than others. Thailand would like to reaffirm to

everyone our undeterred commitment of constructively resolving community forest issues and forest management for the benefit of all citizens of the world and not someone or anyone in particular.

Thailand has placed utmost importance to the perseverance of our forest complexes by ensuring the coexistence of humans and nature. We believe that for mankind to survive into the next century we need to respect nature's way and not vice and versa.

Having said that, I would like to reiterate our commitment to work with our friends and partners to preserve this world for its true owner the future generations. Mr. Chairperson, and members of the World Heritage Committee may I, once again, humbly thank you all for all your kind support. *Khàawp khun khrap.*

Chairperson:

Thank you for your statement. Now, Myanmar, please, you have the floor. Your microphone is on mute.

The Delegation of Myanmar:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the first time the Delegation of Myanmar is taking the floor; I wish to commend the People's Republic of China and the Secretariat of the World Heritage Committee for holding this 44th session. The Myanmar Delegation also wishes to offer its deepest condolences to the people of China and those in many parts of the world that have suffered from loss of life and massive damage to property due to floods and landslides recently.

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation appreciates the Committee's decision on Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex adopted earlier as fully reflected by the Decision. The Myanmar side expressed concerns over the territory integrity constantly raised over the years to the Thai side and to the Committee with regard to the Myanmar-Thailand boundary in the area where Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex is located. Still, I wish to underscore that the decision adopted at this session concerning KKFC should not prejudice Myanmar rights in the future definition of the land boundaries between the two countries in particular areas. In this connection, Myanmar duly takes note of the Thai side commitment conveyed through many channels that the inscription of Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex in the World Heritage List is without prejudice to the Myanmar rights as regards the land boundary and the law.

Last but not least, my Delegation looks forward to cooperating with the member States and the World Heritage Centre at a time when conducive environment has developed for Myanmar to inscribe the adjacent forest area in the region of Tenasserim in Myanmar on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Thank you for your sympathy and solidarity for the people in the flood-stricken areas in China. Thank you for your comment. Now, the United Nations Human Rights Council, you have the floor. Rather the United Nations Special Rapporteur you have the floor.

Observer-United Nations Special Rapporteur:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Distinguished delegates and indigenous people representatives, I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. As the Special Rapporteur, I have the mandate to promote the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. It is also the moment with my presence to remind UNESCO and its member States and the World Heritage Committee of your commitment and responsibility to respect the rights of indigenous people in the important decision you took today and you will take in the future.

It is regrettable that your current working method do not allow indigenous people to participate in decision-making processes which clearly affect their right and the future of their land and resources. To ensure credibility, a working method needs to be brought in line with United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Specifically, I have requested to speak today regarding concerns that my mandate has expressed on repeated occasions over the nomination of the Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex. Sustainable and human rights-based conservation cannot be carried out when indigenous people continued to be harassed, criminalised, displaced and their land rights traditional practice and culture are denied. No good faith consultation can ever be carried in such miserable circumstances. Concerns over Kaeng Krachan have escalated this year with new allegations against Karen continued to be reported.

In accordance with the IUCN recommendation, I am very sorry that your decision was not postpone until a nomination was in compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people and its own *Operational Guidelines*. They require the government of Thailand to, inter alia, halt ongoing violation against Karen and ensure accountability for past abuses; undertake good faith consultation based on recognition of Karen land rights traditional practice and culture. This is essential in order to seek their free, prior and informed consent. Ensure that future conservation of the Kaeng Krachan is based on effective participation of the Karen through management and equitable benefit sharing provided in the pending monitoring access to the park.

I reiterate the willingness of my mandate to undertake an official country visit to Thailand to advise on the situation. I thank you for your attention, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage you have the floor and be very brief.

Observer-IIPFWH:

Thank you. Mr. Chair, we strongly object both to the decision to inscribe Kaeng Krachan and the way this Decision has come about. The Decision represents one of the lowest points in the history of the Convention and indeed in the history of UNESCO. It tramples upon the most fundamental principles and purposes of UNESCO, as well as those of the United Nations Charter. It also tramples upon the dignity and human rights of the Indigenous communities in Kaeng Krachan.

The nomination process was accompanied by blatant human rights abuses, which have been strongly denounced by human rights bodies. The Karen were never able to meaningfully participate, and no efforts were made to recognise their relationship with the land within the OUV.

This Decision is not the result of sound expert judgment based on the purposes of this Convention, good heritage practice and the principles of the Sustainable Development Policy. It is the result of highly politicised lobbying and horse trading based on the economic interests of Committee members.

This decision-making culture strongly undermines the credibility of the Convention and UNESCO, and the effectiveness of protection strategies.

We urge the General Assembly of States Parties to take steps to bring the decision-making of the Committee in line with the principles and standards of the United Nations and UNESCO, a human rights-based approach and the aims of the World Heritage Convention. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more request for the floor. Let us proceed. I now invite IUCN to present the nomination of Colchic Rainforests and Wetlands, Georgia. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Chair. IUCN evaluation of this property is on the pages indicated on the slides. In its evaluation, IUCN recommends the Committee to inscribe Colchic Rainforests and Wetlands on the World Heritage List under nature criteria (ix) and (x). The Colchic Rainforests and Wetlands are nominated as a serial property comprising seven component parts for a total area of more than 31,000 hectares and a buffer zone of almost 27,000 hectares.

The Kintrishi-Mtirala component part is dominating the Colchic Rainforests with a mostly dense mosaic of 23 forest associations for the prominent evergreen understory. The other component parts are lowland sites with a mixture of Colchic lowland forest and wetlands. The nominated property is characterised by astoundingly complex and diverse forest structures, peatland accumulations, high levels of endemism and intraspecies diversity. It is an invaluable example of the long-term manifold, long-term evolutionary processes of forest biota over at least 10-15 million years.

The extensive wetland areas along the Black Sea coast exhibit exceptional mires which have led to the recognition of distinct culture mire regions which included unique exclusively refined mires. The nominated property represents a distinctive area of outstanding biodiversity within the wider Caucuses global diversity hotspot. It boasts approximately 1,100 species of vascular and non-vascular plants as well as almost 500 species of vertebrates with an extremely high proportion of endemic species for a non-tropical, non-island region including globally threatened species.

IUCN, therefore, considers that the nominated property meets natural criteria (ix) and (x). The nominated component parts all exhibit adequate levels of integrity. Threats to the nominated property currently appear to be low, and thus, threats that do exist are subjected to appropriate management measures. Opportunities exist to further strengthen the buffer zone arrangement with the submission of a minor boundary modification in the year term which, Mr. Chair, IUCN also proposed to include in the Draft Decision.

The Draft Decision can be found in Document 8B as shown on the slide and contains IUCN recommendation to inscribe the Colchic Rainforests and wetlands, Georgia on the World Heritage List under natural criteria (ix) and (x). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. Dear Committee Members, as we are examining a property recommended for inscription, if there are no objections and considering we have a really heavy agenda today, and to leave more time for those nominations that may require lengthened debate, with your permission, I would like to propose that we go directly to the Draft Decision. Do you agree with this suggestion? I see no objections. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.8. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.8 adopted ^[gave]. Thank you very much. Let me congratulate Georgia on behalf of the entire committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Georgia, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Georgia:

Dear Mr. Chairperson, distinguished Delegations, thank you for giving us the floor. On behalf of Georgia, first, we would like to present our condolences to the People's Republic of China on the loss caused by the devastating flooding that claimed a lot of innocent lives. We send our deepest sympathy to Your Excellency and to the families of the victim during this tough period of mourning.

Speaking at the 44th session of UNESCO World Heritage Committee as the representative of the Georgian Delegation is a remarkable pleasure for me. I am thanking all the Committee members for making this session one to be specially remembered for in years to come.

The Colchic Rainforest and Wetlands is the first nomination of a natural property by Georgia. This is unprecedented as a natural property in Georgia has never been nominated to the World Heritage List. Although the country is represented by three cultural sites inscribed as UNESCO cultural heritage showcasing Georgia vibrant and ancient culture.

The nomination has been made in 2019. The history of the Georgian nomination began years ago when the government of Georgia led by the Minister of the Environment protection and Agriculture and the Agency for Protected Areas launched an initiative to nominate Colchic Forest and Wetlands for UNESCO World Heritage site. We are extremely appreciative of the work of IUCN and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Convention which undertook huge work to evaluate the nomination of the site. Allow me to express our sincere gratitude to the experts, IUCN and the Advisory Bodies as a whole for undertaking the work and for the positive evaluation of the nomination of the property.

Meanwhile, I would like to underline the work of local and international experts. For years, during the evaluation, local scientists and researchers have devoted all their energy for the report for successful nomination. And all their support would not have happened without the finesse technical and expert support of the German government, WWF and others that we are so thankful for.

Let me ensure you that Georgia will continue as before to contribute to the promotion of shared values and mutual respect that UNESCO was created and tend for. Furthermore, we are ready to make all necessary actions for fulfilling the recommendations and the requests indicated in the Draft Decision. I thank you for this historical decision on behalf of our ancient country. I thank you personally for your kindest action. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your sympathy and solidarity expressed for the people in flood-stricken areas of China. Once again, congratulations. Now, I give the floor to River without Boundaries for a very short intervention.

Observer-Rivers without boundaries:

Thank you for giving us the floor, Mr. Chairman. The Rivers without Boundaries Coalition congratulates Georgia and the Committee for the protection of ancient wetlands and forests at the lower reaches of the unique and biodiverse Rioni River, the last river hosting populations of six endangered species of sturgeon and recognized as international Key Biodiversity Area.

The spatial design of the property, although justified from the management standpoint, is still clearly missing the Rioni River itself, which is flowing unprotected in between disconnected pieces of the World Heritage property. A gap between protected areas in place of a major river is a common flaw in World Heritage site design, also found at the Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan or Lena Pillars World Heritage sites.

Here it threatens to become a missed opportunity to protect key biodiversity. From all natural features found in the area, the Rioni River Ecosystem and species requiring most immediate protection from existing and planned dams, sand and gravel mining, industrial development and poaching.

We welcome plans of the State Party to include the Rioni River into the Kolkheti National Park. We also call for urgent readjustment of existing dams and planned Namakhvani hydropower cascade to safeguard and enhance conditions for sturgeon spawning and natural flood pulse. We hope this does not happen too late to rescue unique freshwater biodiversity. Thank you for your attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I suggest that we have a ten-minute technical break.

Dear colleagues, let us resume. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination of Arslantepe Mound, Turkey, but before I give the floor to ICOMOS. Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. To remind the Committee that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 54 of Document INF8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Arslantepe Mound, Turkey. For this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors and has acknowledged some factual errors.

Arslantepe Mound is an archaeological tell located in the Malatya plain providing archaeological evidence testifying to its occupation since at least the 6th millennium BC and until the late Roman period. It presents a unique window into the Late Chalcolithic period recording a specific moment in time which testifies to a late life and early forms of state administration. As a result of a sudden and violent destruction of the Palace and settlements in the late 4th millennia, Arsalantepe can be seen as an exceptionally well-preserved testimony of the establishment of governance and administration system which does not stand out in terms of its innovation compared to other ancient early centuries, but is impressive in its state of preservation. The augmented comparative analysis and additional research undertaken justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List. Criterion (iii) has been demonstrated.

The nominated property has an area of 4.85 hectares. The property boundaries are indicated as drawn around the outer most extension of the archaeological town and known archaeological evidence. Yet, ICOMOS recommends undertaking further surveys to the north-east of the site where surface evidence was found outside the property boundary. The area of the enlarged buffer zone is adequate but requires rigorous implementation. Conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met.

While the protection of the property is sufficient, it requires a comprehensive conservation strategy and plan to be developed and linked to a future cautious excavation strategy which should be based primarily on non-invasive methodology and designate undisturbed areas which are not planned to be excavated. The management plans should be augmented to capture the specific responsibilities of the different management partners in line with actions and activities envisage achieving the strategic objective formulated.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that although the property demonstrates criterion (iii), criterion (ii) is not justified and criterion (iv) not demonstrated at this stage. Key concerns relate to the lack of a comprehensive approach to conservation and the need of a more cautious excavation strategy. In addition, the local management capacity needs to be strengthened.

ICOMOS recommends that Arslantepe Mound be referred back to allow the State Party to put in place the mentioned conservation and management required and redefined a conservation approach based predominantly on non-invasive research methodology. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Dear Committee members, due to the time constraints, without any intention to prevent you from taking the floor, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief in your remarks. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Based on the evaluation of ICOMOS, the Draft Decision referred the nomination file back to the State Party. However, regarding the OUV of Arslantepe, ICOMOS considers that the site presents an exceptional testimony to the life to early administrative elite and their relationship with the wider public. There is a lot of detail in architectural and archaeological evidence found at Arslantepe which is highly unusual. The site central role in the region is testified by the monumental Palace complex.

The architectural language aimed at receiving and displaying new types of political performances and new official expressions of the exercise of authority to codify places is totally unprecedented. The walkway displayed not only declarations on the walls but figurative motive transmitting ideological important and highly meaningful messages to everyone entering the Palace. Thousands of clay seals found in situ, in the Palace, have allowed to reconstruct a very sophisticated and innovative bureaucratic system. This is a unique testimony of the emergence of a State

bureaucracy and accountability before any writing was invented by using the seals as documents of transactions informed and the identification of the authors of these transactions in a highly developed and advance administrative system.

This is the reason ICOMOS confirmed the nominated property provides a complete and vivid picture of society and daily life of the early administrative regime in the Late Chalcolithic era. It considers that criterion (iii) has been justified. Besides, the Palace, as any other monuments at the site, is distinguished by its authenticity and integrity and is extraordinarily well-preserved thanks to the excavation methodology and conservation and protection practices strategically carried out in the course of time.

The adobe structures do not have too much deterioration problem, this reveals that the preventive approach in place is effective. Therefore, ICOMOS also confirms the impressive stage of conservation of the Late Chalcolithic evidence when compared to other settlements of the time. Moreover, the Italian La Spezia University with support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey conducted a comprehensive archaeological mission for the conservation of adobe structures for many years.

Having examined the recommendations of ICOMOS and the commitment of the State Party in terms of the current stage of research, conservation and management, we support this nomination to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, under criterion (iii). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Uganda supports the amendments to Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.22. From a meticulous scrutiny which my Delegation has executed, there is no doubt that a comprehensive and sustainable management plan for the property is well articulated in the statement of OUV contained in the amendment.

Chair, the fears raised by the Draft Decision concerning every sector and the accompanying buffer zone are taken care of by the amendment which also draws in an architectural expertise to manage a new revised roof design in harmony complementing with all the sections, as well as proficient rainwater drainage and risk mitigation. It also surfaces to conclude that the concerns of boundary limits to the north and west of the property in question and its key architectural interests are also well protected together with the mitigation of atmospheric and climatic erosion in the previous excavated areas as stressed in the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment is resolute, document all activities on the site with varied state of the art visual anthropology as diverse as still photography and videography with Heritage Impact Assessment measures. In conclusion, Uganda joins other Delegations in support of the amendment to inscribe Arslantepe Mound, Turkey on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. I would like to start by thanking Kyrgyzstan for the thorough introduction for this site. Oman notes the tremendous effort made by the State Party in the preparation of the nomination of the Arslantepe Mound. This site provides important insight into the earliest form of the State administration dating back to the late Chalcolithic period. In comparison with other settlements within the region, the site enjoys an outstanding state of preservation. Many of its remains are still in situ. The state of conservation is also confirmed by the comparative analysis.

Furthermore, Oman has noted the fact that the condition of integrity and authenticity of the property have been met and that its OUV is justified by the identified attributes. Oman, therefore, considers this OUV and extraordinary state of preservation of the property as a justification to consider the Arslantepe Mound for inscription in the World Heritage List today. Oman would also like to encourage the State Party to consider the concerns and recommendations by the Advisory Bodies. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Advisory Bodies have clearly identified the OUV of the site based on the criteria for which it was proposed for inscription. It praises its impressive state of conservation, has considered the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met. It also recognised that the monitoring system addresses all relevant areas. There is certainly room for improvement, especially as concerns the management plans. But we do not find issues that should constitute an objection for inscribing the site in this session.

We support the amendment presented by Kyrgyzstan and recommend Arslantepe Mound for inscription on the World Heritage List. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. We would like to thank ICOMOS for its evaluation and thank the State Party for preparing this nomination. We think that this Mound is the best testimony to outstanding archaeological traces of our past administration, particularly right through to the early Roman period. It is an extraordinary lengthy piece of stretch of time. Along with other members of the committee, we think that it would be of great importance to recognise all of these important and outstanding characteristics of this site. In particular, as concerns its stage in human history and early administrative situation of the time. We think that the ICOMOS evaluation says that there are certain aspects of management and protection that need to be improved and we feel that, as long as those are respected, then, this site has a lot of potential to attest to the OUV.

We would like to encourage the State Party to bear in mind all of the recommendations in the original Draft Decision. We feel that there is an emerging consensus moving towards inscription and we would like to join that consensus. Thank you, Sir.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The unique value of the Arslantepe Mound has been evidenced in extensive research and the activities of archaeological Italian missions and other European missions for 60 years. The research activities and papers have documented the dynamism of scientific publications. It can be said that there is a strong and ongoing collaboration between the local Turkish and Italian professionals which is very commendable.

As ICOMOS indicates in its evaluation the archaeological evidence and findings are exceptional regarding the state of conservation of the property. The on-site preservation of the monumental and adobe structures is impressive and it strengthened by the comprehensive management of the property. We welcome the further excavation programmes and plans for the next decades to better understand the mound in the past. Turkey has made substantial effort to comply with the observations and suggestions of ICOMOS.

In view of the above, Hungary fully agrees with the amendment submitted by Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Chairman, Hungary suggests the inscription of this impressive archaeological site on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I will be brief. We thank Turkey for nominating this site for inscription which we believe the OUV is demonstrated. And, also, the evaluation of our experts has clearly shown that criterion (iii) is demonstrated. Therefore, we support the amendment put forth by Kyrgyzstan to inscribe this magnificent site at our current session. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine appuie l'inscription de ce site et l'amendement du Kirghizistan. De toute façon, le travail des archéologues va continuer. On a déjà dit pas mal de choses, je ne vais donc pas les répéter, mais je voudrais ajouter une chose qui me semble importante. Quand on a un site comme celui-là, on est heureux de le découvrir et de le faire voir aux générations futures, et le travail des archéologues et des spécialistes qui l'étudient ne s'arrête jamais. On étudie toujours des sites qui ont plusieurs centaines d'années ; c'est un travail continu. Et puis il y a un élan de la part de l'État de Turquie dont il faut profiter ; il faut encourager le travail à venir. La colline du Lion a sa place sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Norway, you will be surprised I guess, would like to make a small comment. Arslantepe Mound is a very interesting site, and among its many features, it opens knowledge about early State formation, important to understand past societies. In the Draft Decision it is stated that OUV, authenticity and integrity is met for the proposed nomination of Arslantepe.

On this background, Norway will not oppose the consensus in this case. We would just like to have a minor adjustment in the amended paragraph 4 and suggest a few additions to paragraph 4a and g. The text has been sent to the Rapporteur, so I guess that is okay. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. China endorses and thanks the ICOMOS assessment of the OUV of the Arslantepe Mound. This heritage site is a key testimony of the history of human civilisation, as just said by the Norwegian Delegation. China appreciates the effort made by the Turkish government for conservation of this site. The present and current management plan is very important for the activities concerning tourism and conservation management and archaeological studies. And this plan is in line with the requirements for World Heritage conservation management.

China therefore recommends the inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. At the same time, we note more recommendations put forward by ICOMOS regarding the physical protection of this site. Therefore, we encourage the State Party to continue to strengthen the current effective working mechanism and to carry out more exploration and practices to implement the Convention and the concept of the Convention. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to put our support for the amendment as previous speakers said.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous voulons féliciter l'État partie de la Turquie pour cette proposition d'inscription. L'ICOMOS reconnaît que le site répond au critère (iii). Le site du Tell D'arslantepe a été proposé depuis 2014 pour une inscription au patrimoine mondial, l'État partie a fourni d'intenses efforts pour sa préservation, et sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle est prouvée. Nous demandons donc que ce site soit reconnu. Merci beaucoup.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.22. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendment and the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment submitted by Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Mali, Hungary and China, Mr. Chair. It is now on the screen. We have no changes proposed for paragraph 1.

Chairperson:

Okay. Paragraph 1 is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes Arslantepe Mound, Turkey, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii)'.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Yes, it is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then we have the Brief Synthesis, Criterion (iii), Integrity, Authenticity and Protection and Requirements. This is the end of paragraph 3.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:'. Some of these letters are moved from the original paragraph 2 as highlighted in here.

a) Preparing a conservation strategy and plan for the property,' – here is an addition proposed by Norway – 'including a cautious strategy for anticipated archaeological research and excavations,' – end of the proposed addition – 'that determines protocols, priorities and procedures for all forms of conservation, excavation and maintenance interventions needed,

b) Augmenting the management plan to include local management roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, a comprehensive risk assessment and risk preparedness plan,

c) Strengthening the local management capacity under the coordination of the site manager,

d) Providing clarifications on the new arrangements allowed in A3 zone with the enlargement of the buffer zone,

e) Reconsidering the design of the proposed new roof shelter by providing more views of different sections, detailing the connection between the old and new roof and how the new roof will address places where the rain water mostly accesses the site, and submit it for further review,

f) Undertaking further surveys to determine the exact extension of archaeological findings towards the north and west of the property and on that basis, if necessary, extend the boundaries of the property in line with the indications of archaeological ground surveys in these directions,

g) Studying unsheltered areas previously excavated and the edges of the present protective shelter to ensure minimum exposure of earthen architectural remains to weathering phenomena,'

Norway has a proposal in here, original paragraph 2d to be kept. In case it is kept I will read it out:

'h) Undertaking a periodical detailed photographic documentation of all the site structures and objects, where needed, augmented by drawings indicating positions and exact features of elements of specific significance, as a baseline for monitoring and risk and disaster management processes,'

Last letter of this paragraph: 'i) Undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments for any new visitor infrastructure or museum buildings before any decision is taken, to assess their potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you have any comments? Oman please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, I do not think the amended paragraph by Norway is suitable unless we need these photographs during the reporting but not periodically. I do not see any need for a photographic documentation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Any other comments? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We also support the comment by my brother from Oman. We do not think it is appropriate it is included here.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a short comment on 'd'. We do not oppose this amendment, but we believe this has already been done and just in case we can ask the State Party to answer this subparagraph 'd'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could we ask for clarification by the Secretariat please?

Chairperson:

Yes, please. Maybe, ICOMOS, you can have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. This paragraph was in the original recommendations that ICOMOS gave. We have received no additional information indicating that the detailed photographic documentation and when needed drawings have been undertaken in the meantime. We recommend this for future monitoring and in case that disaster strikes the site which, of course, we do not hope will happen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. Yes, this proves that this paragraph is needed. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you again, Chair. My question is to ICOMOS: what is the purpose of this paragraph? When do you need the detailed photographic documentation? Is it for the assessment during the reporting or it is only sending the photographs? We need clarification from my side. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I think I first give the floor to Turkey to make some clarification. Turkey, please.

The Delegation of Turkey:

Can you hear us?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can hear you.

The Delegation of Turkey:

May I speak?

Chairperson:

Yes, answer the question.

The Delegation of Turkey:

I am Marcella Frangipane, I have been the Director of this excavation for more than 30 years. I think I can answer this point. We have millions of photos and drawings and documents in each detail and level. These documents are given to the Ministry of Culture of Turkey and to the General Directorate of the Museum and Monuments. Moreover, for the past years we have been conducted, on a regular basis, laser scanning photography on the Palace buildings with the precise objective of conservation. In order to see from one year to the other which kind of changes we could see in the photo and our restorers can intervene. We can follow this advice without any problem. This is what I meant.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Ethiopia, please, you want the floor?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. Based on the explanation of the State Party, we can live with maintaining this paragraph. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Oman, please, do you agree?

The Delegation of Oman:

I do, thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, are you okay?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

We are in agreement to keep that paragraph as is.

Chairperson:

Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

We can keep it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

We have reached consensus. Dear colleagues for these paragraphs, do you have any other objections? I see none. They are approved. Continue.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5 reads: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.' That is all, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Dear colleagues, now that we have been through the whole text, if there are no other comments, I declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.22 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Turkey, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Turkey you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Turkey:

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, esteemed colleagues, I would like to wholeheartedly thank all the Committee members and all the experts for their support and acknowledgement of the OUV of Arslantepe Mound. It is an exceptional testimony to the emergence of the earliest State society in these eras and in the world.

This Decision will further enhance our commitment to the conservation and preservation of Turkey's rich cultural heritage. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Turkish authorities and, of course, the Ministry of Culture, as well as the current and former head of the excavation team, Dr Francesca Balossi Restelli, and Professor Dr Marcella Frangipane, for their impeccable work. They have diligently pursued the work over so many years.

I also would like, if you allow me to pass the floor to our Ministry of Culture for a brief intervention who will pass the floor to these well-known archaeologists. I would also like to present my profound sympathy to China for the floods in Henan province which caused the tragic loss of lives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Representative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey:

Dear Committee members, on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, I would like to thank you for your support for the inscription of Arslantepe Mound on the World Heritage List. I also would like to thank the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS whose work was very important.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is deeply committed to the protection of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. All relevant stakeholders, local authorities and Italian archaeological missions from the University of Rome have worked in close cooperation and collaboration for the better management and protection of the site. Therefore, we thank the Malatya Planning authority and Malatya municipality.

This year is the 60th anniversary of the exploration of the Italian La Spezia University in Arslantepe. So, special thanks to Marcella Frangipane who has conducted the excavation at Arslantepe for 30 years and the Director of the excavation team, Dr Francesca Balossi Restelli. Now, I give them the floor.

Ms. Marcella Frangipane:

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, and to the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS who visited us and contributed with their advice. I think this moment is very, very important for us, for Turkey, for Italy, for the World. I am really moved, I can confess. It is the end of a long process of construction of knowledge and of preservation of this knowledge and also the transmission of this knowledge and to the people.

I just want to conclude by giving my sincere thanks to all the institutions that have supported us for so many years. The Turkish institutions: the Ministry of Culture, the General Director of Monuments and Museums, the local Malatya municipality and Museum directors, but also the Italian institutions that have supported us in the course of these many years: the Italian ambassador, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and La Spezia University, of course.

I just want to conclude with my warmest thank for the people of Malatya and from the village. Because without them, we could not have obtained these results. Our workers and their families and the entire village people and the Malatya people, thank you very much to them. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much and congratulations again. I would also like to thank His Excellency the Turkish Ambassador for his empathy and solidarity expressed for the Chinese people in flood-stricken areas. Now, let us proceed.

I invite ICOMOS to present the significant boundary modification of the World Heritage property Defence Line of Amsterdam to become the Dutch Water Defence Lines of Netherlands, Netherlands. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Dutch Water Defence Lines Netherlands. This is a major boundary modification of this serial property Defence Lines of Amsterdam inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996 on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (v). It proposes to add 85 kilometres new Dutch water lines and also small extensions and reductions of the Defence of Amsterdam to become the Dutch Water Defence Lines.

Altogether, the Dutch Water Defence Lines represents a 200-kilometre-long defence system built between 1815 and 1940 to protect administrative and economic resources of Holland by applying the knowledge in hydraulic engineering developed since the 16th century by the people of the Netherlands.

The comparative analysis has demonstrated that the nominated extension supplements the OUV of the World Heritage property by showing how the sophisticated knowledge of the local hydrology and geomorphology has been harnessed to modify, in an exceptional manner, the landscape for defence purposes by building throughout multiple generations an outstanding defence system which integrates water management facilities, arrangement of the landscape and military fortifications. The nominated extension contributes to enhancing the way the three agreed criteria convey the OUV of the inscribed property.

This serial extension consists of one large component part including the new Dutch water lines and three smaller additional components. It includes inundation fields, hydraulic installations, fortifications and military posts. All meant to work in concert. The major boundary modifications all envisage the reduction of seven component parts of the inscribed Defence Lines of Amsterdam due to some developments that have compromised the authenticity of small portions of the inscribed property.

Since 2011 and 2016, the legal framework has been strengthened and, in combination with the National Strategy for the spatial planning, it appears now adequate to address the challenges for the protection and conservation of heritage and the need for development. Although complex, with the multiple actors involved and the considerable dynamicity of the area in terms of development, the management systems are adequate. However, considerable coordination, communication and management effort would have to be deployed by the site holder and the State Party. Ad hoc planning instruments might be needed in specific areas, such as Utrecht, to address comprehensive new development pressures. Conservation is overall good, although some areas are vulnerable to high

development pressures. Effective conservation measures are in place, particularly for the water management system and the fortification. It would need to be extended to the landscape.

In summary, although the nominated extension contributes to enhancing the OUV of the inscribed property, the conditions of integrity and authenticity will be met only when the boundaries of the nominated extension near Utrecht will be revised to include all elements that make the water lines and the visual relationship.

ICOMOS welcomes the proposal for a buffer zone. However, the current rationale is rather mechanical and not tailored to specific needs of the property. A thorough revision is needed to expand a 50-metre-wide strip on the inner side and redesign buffer zones on the outer side, and defining *ad hoc* protection mechanism. Six of the proposed reductions could be acceptable, but only on the condition that the excluded section will be included in the buffer zones and measures will be put in place for the long term of some aspects of integrity and authenticity.

However, the seven proposed reductions at Geniedijk Dike cannot be approved as it impaired the integrity of the inscribed property. Due to the sheer size of the property and nominated extension and the high dynamicity of the area, an assessment of the coherence of existing planning provisions with a need to ensure the protection of OUV in the long-term is necessary as well as ad hoc planning tools to manage comprehensive development pressures.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the Dutch Water Defence Lines (The Netherlands) be referred back to the State Party for the following main reasons:

- Revised the boundaries of the proposed extension near Utrecht,
- Exclude the proposal for reducing Geniedijk dike, exclude all other six proposed reductions in the buffer zone and provide protection and long-term recovery and ad hoc measures;
- Revised thoroughly the buffer zone and the complete protection mechanism;
- Assess the coherence of existing planning instruments with the need for protecting the OUV of the property and the proposed extension.

ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Kyrgyzstan, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to start by thanking ICOMOS for their evaluation of the Dutch Water Defence Lines. It is a substantial advice which underlines the OUV of the property. ICOMOS is of the opinion that the proposed extension is a completion of the property of the Defence Lines of Amsterdam which was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996. With its nomination, the Netherlands shows its commitment in preserving a heritage site which consists of many different elements and which is located in a highly dynamic area. This is not an easy task as it requires seeking a continuous balance between protection, urban context and especially challenging and contemporary moves of society.

ICOMOS concluded its advice with the notion that extra care needs to be given to ensure protection from development outside the property and the buffer zone. This led ICOMOS to advise to refer the nomination.

We have consulted with the Netherlands on this advice, the State Party indicated they did tests use in the past year and especially in the last months to solve the issue raised by ICOMOS. The State Party shared information on this solution including new maps. The border of the property and the buffer zone have been amended in line with ICOMOS advice. The issue of protection on their inventories have been solved or are on the verge of being solved. The Netherlands has ensured that it is able to ensure the necessary legal and special mechanism for the require protection.

Kyrgyzstan is assured that all concerns raised have been answered and all the recommendations by ICOMOS have already been implemented. After analysing the information received, we propose to amend the Draft Decision and inscribe the Dutch Water Defence Lines on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. My Delegation observes that the revised boundaries of the proposed extension spanning all heritage defence elements up the water line are well captured in the statement of OUV. In addition, the active engineering models within the principal elements of the site and their special inbuilt self-preservation mechanisms and these are serviced by technologies that are all carefully related together with planning, administrative, defensive, scenic and grand panorama ambiance, all recognised in the said statement of OUV.

Mr. Chairman, this defensive system is one among the most sophisticated original maritime defensive engineering marvels of the world. The little oversights which the draft statement seems to have characterised are philosophical, contextually and technically taken care of in the highlighted OUV, as well as the site's technical artistry and amazing working conditions of associated forts, dikes, sluices pumping stations, canals and inundation polders in the overall sustainable conservation management and planning paradigm. Hardly any other sites have registered the exceptionality of this rare interdisciplinary heritage.

Therefore Mr. Chairman, my Delegation strongly supports inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We wish to commend the State Party for presenting this highly interesting and very complex nomination project, seven components of existing alternatives are proposed to be taken out through the significant boundary modification, while a significant number of added components in some constitute the extended nomination presented to us as the Dutch Water Defence Lines.

There are some very important concerns highlighted in the thorough and precise evaluation from ICOMOS. One is related to issues in the buffer zone and the protection of certain components and the wider setting, and most importantly, the request for more functional approach to the buffer zone which is very static. As proposed, important considerations are related to the areas which are taken out of the original property. Five of these reductions are considered okay by the evaluation. The component parts suffer loss of authenticity and integrity. Two of the components are proposed to be taken out due to irreversible change and loss of values gradually since inscription in 1996.

Due to extensions of industrial areas in Schiphol airport, the areas are limited but we wish to express our strong concerns for this proposal which in fact may indicate that we are attempting to keep ourselves out of issues related to conflicts between development and protection of World Heritage. Removal of some areas are not compensated by addition of others. Importantly, ICOMOS considers that the component should not be part of the reduction.

We also take notes of concerns related to the integrity of the nominated property. In that the defence lines will be extremely narrow at certain rather long segments. There are also concerns related to pressure coming from urban development housing projects and motorway developments. Such challenges must be solved with the main priority being the preservation of the OUV. We take good note that the State Party has taken several steps towards implementing the requested evaluation and we wish to ask for specific clarifications from ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre possibly on these matters. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would also like to start by thanking the World Heritage Centre and its Consultative Bodies for all their efforts. Oman would like to congratulate the Netherlands for all its successful efforts that have so far been made regarding the proposed extension of the Defence Lines of Amsterdam.

The ICOMOS evaluation of the cultural and mixed property report acknowledged the amendment made by the Netherlands with regard to the extension of the Defence Line of Amsterdam. Overall, ICOMOS considers that the proposed justification for inscription of the nominated extension with its attributes is coherent with the justification and the OUV of the Defence Lines of Amsterdam.

The inscribed property in terms of comparative analysis of the new extension is considered to be appropriate to justify its consideration for approval in the World Heritage List under the Dutch Water Defence Lines. It is also considered to justify criteria (ii), (iv) and (v). Moreover, the State Party conducted a number of effective and positive constructive measures for the nominated extension. The same applies with regards to the protection and management plans deemed to be adequate to protect the OUV of the proposed extension and its integrity and authenticity.

Taken all these positive initiatives and efforts into account. The Oman Delegation firmly supports the approval of the nomination of the extension of the Defence Lines of Amsterdam to include the new Dutch Water Lines and become the Dutch Water Defence Lines, the Netherlands, in the World Heritage List. Oman encourages the State Party to continue cooperation and discussion with the World Heritage Centre and the Consultative Bodies. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I have a long list of speakers requesting for the floor. I have noticed the emerging consensus on the amendment. For the sake of time and in the interest of it, and also it is an extension of the Lines, can we directly go to the Draft Decision? There are no objections. We go directly to the Draft Decision. ICOMOS, please you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Apologies for asking the floor but the distinguished delegate of Norway had a question for ICOMOS to which we would like to respond and clarify.

ICOMOS has analysed case-by-case the seven proposals for reductions. And after lengthy debate within the ICOMOS panel, it has decided to accept six of them because these reductions were not impacting the Outstanding Universal Value of the property already inscribed. Nevertheless, ICOMOS has requested that these six reductions be included in the buffer zones and provided with ad hoc measures for the recovery in the long term of aspects of their integrity and authenticity. One of the proposed reductions, although limited, was critical in terms of potential reduction and the undermining of the OUV integrity and authenticity and has not been accepted by ICOMOS.

On this rationale, ICOMOS has not made any balance between the major boundary modification, in terms of large addition, in comparison to the small reductions. Meaning, we have assessed each of them in their own merit. And ICOMOS has also considered that there should not be further deterioration and no further reduction could be accepted for this property. Meaning that the issues that were raised about these small reductions were to be considered in the context of what happened even at the time of the nomination and inscription of the property and that should close the matter of potential revision of the boundaries in the future.

I hope that we have clarified the point raised by the distinguished delegate of Norway. ICOMOS posed itself the question about possible precedents and concerns about considering expansion as a way of balancing reduction which was not the case in the ICOMOS debate. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the explanation. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.23. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment submitted by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. There are no modifications proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee Members, we are going through the text paragraph by paragraph to approve it. Do you approve of paragraph 1? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Approves the significant boundary modification of the Defence Line of Amsterdam to include the New Dutch Waterline and become the Dutch Water Defence Lines, Netherlands, on the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (v)'

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value'. We can now skip the components of the OUV statement.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Rapporteur:

This is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with it? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

a) Strengthening the protection of the landscape dimension, particularly in key sections of the Dutch Water Defence Lines, e.g. in the Utrecht area and Laagraven especially, through ad-hoc plans that enhance the historic landscape features and mutual visibility among the defence elements' Sub paragraph 4b b is proposed for deletion.

New 4b: 'Providing the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS with upcoming projects, including the final option for the A8-A9 junction, for review,

c) Finalising all sensitive area analyses and embed their conclusions in planning instruments,

d) Strengthening the visibility and interpretation of the Defence Line of Amsterdam and its proposed extension,

e) Providing the six reductions of the property, including the buffer zone, with ad-hoc mechanisms that prevent further pressures and offer the opportunity to recover in the medium—or long-term, at least part of the memory of their past conditions through careful design and landscaping,

f) Making an inventory of all current planning provisions in force for the property and the whole buffer zone, and assess whether they are coherent to sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the revision? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5. At the beginning of the paragraph, there is a proposed addition by the distinguished Delegation of Norway: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022 detailed maps at an appropriate scale showing revised boundaries of the property and the buffer zone, and clarifications concerning the status of the project of the housing development near Woudrichem and also' — this is as originally amended by Kyrgyzstan et al. —: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with this? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

I think that the addition of Norway can be acceptable if we delay it. I mean February 2022 is in five or six months it is too soon. Either we take it out or we extend it further. That is my suggestion. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Taking into consideration the comment of the distinguished colleague from Oman, would it be possibly appropriate to ask the State Party to comment on their ability before we make the decision? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. The Netherlands, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Netherlands:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we can fulfil the deadline of 1 February 2022, so, it is okay with us.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes. Thank you so much for this clarification.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other comments? No. It is approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.23 adopted as amended [gave]. Let me congratulate the Netherlands on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. The Netherlands, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of the Netherlands:

Thank you Chair. We would like to complement the People's Republic of China with the excellent organisation of this Committee. Also, I would like to congratulate you personally for your work as Chairperson of this important Committee meeting. We express the thanks of our government and I can assure you that we will do everything to meet the deadlines mentioned. I would like to hand over to a representative of the National Authority who involved in this magnificent project: "Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank the members of the Committee on behalf of the provinces of North Brabant, Gelderland and Nord-Holland for your trust in the Dutch Defence Lines. We are thrilled with the extension of our World Heritage site. As you all may know, in the Netherlands, water is a big part of our day-to-day lives. We have seen horror with flooding and very recently again in the province of Limburg but also all over the world. Our hearts go out to all those affected. The Dutch people have learnt to live with the dangers of water and, now, with climate change, we all have to come together to face the challenge of rising water and flooding. But we also learnt to work with water, use it to our advantage. With this World Heritage nomination of the Dutch Defence Lines, we can show what water can do for us through an ingenious system of water management. In the early 19th century, we were able to use the water for the protection of our country. We were able to flood parts of our land a way that the enemy was not able to go through on foot or by boat. A unique part of our history that we treasure. We are determined to protect, preserve and strengthen the Dutch Defence Lines as we have done since 1996 with the Dutch Defence Lines of Amsterdam. I happily invite the world to come and see this unique World Heritage site in the Netherlands. Thank you."

Chairperson:

Thank you and, again, congratulations. Now, let us proceed. Dear colleagues, we will now examine the transnational nomination, Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Danube Limes (Western Segment), Austria, Germany and Slovakia. I give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. This is to present the technical information which is relevant for the examination of this Item and which is not included in Documents 8B and 8B.1. The Secretariat received a letter from the Prime Minister's office of Hungary dated of the 8th of June 2021, addressed to the Director of the World Heritage Centre. In this letter, Hungary, while announcing its commitment to further strengthened its cooperation with the Danube Limes States Parties and the World Heritage Centre and to remain open for dialogue in compliance with Paragraph 152 of the *Operational Guidelines*, withdrew from the nomination of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Danube Limes (Western Segment).

In a letter dated of the 14 June 2021, and addressed to all the distinguished members of the World Heritage Committee, the States Parties of Austria, Germany and Slovakia wished to clarify their positions in the unilateral withdrawal from the transboundary serial nomination of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire by Hungary and reaffirmed their continuous commitment to their joint Danube Limes dossier and the projects of the overall Frontiers of the Roman Empire cluster.

I would like to recall that the *Operational Guidelines* foresee a timeframe for the evaluation of nominations and provided that the evaluation should not take into account or include any information submitted by the concerned State Party after the 28th of February in the year in which the nomination is considered and that this deadline should be rigorously enforced.

The withdrawal of 98 Hungarian component parts out of the original 175 from the nomination of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, The Danube Limes (Western Segment) entail quite a substantive modification of the geographical boundaries of the property proposed for nomination, and of the components that were evaluated by ICOMOS.

On the 7th of July 2021, ICOMOS addressed a letter to the World Heritage Centre stating that following the withdrawal of the component sites in Hungary, the composition of the series has been altered. And the analysis is being now updated, the ICOMOS evaluation currently included in Document WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B.1 can no longer be seen as relevant. In this respect, dear Mr. Chairperson, I believe that ICOMOS wishes to provide more detailed explanations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Now, I would like to invite ICOMOS to take the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. This is a statement by ICOMOS on the Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Danube Limes (Western Segment) submitted by Austria, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia. The ICOMOS evaluation concluded that this segment as nominated could justify Outstanding Universal Value. The nominated segment was seen to satisfy conditions of integrity and authenticity in terms of how the component sites related to each other to their geographical surroundings and the historic associations, while a comparative analysis justified consideration of this segment on the World Heritage List.

Following the withdrawal of the component sites in Hungary, the composition of the series has been significantly altered. And this analysis is now outdated, with a result that ICOMOS considers its evaluation currently can no longer be seen as valid. I would now like to set out how this withdrawal has impacted on the nominated series.

The structures of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire vary considerably between different parts of the Empire. A nomination strategy for Europe was developed by European States Parties and this proposed several segments of the frontier would be nominated with each reflecting different responses to geography, military uses and degrees of survival. As originally nominated, the Western Danube Limes was seen to reflect the specific characteristics of the Middle European River frontier in terms of these parameters. And the comparative analysis in the nomination dossier clearly confirmed its exceptionality.

It was seen to justify Outstanding Universal Value for the way it reflected, in an outstanding way, all elements of the well-balanced complex River Danube defensive system, in an area that was particularly susceptible to ongoing incursions. And specifically, how the Empire consolidated its northern frontiers at the maximum extension of its powers through complex military tactics relating to major battles that secured its frontiers.

The original series extended to just under 1,000 kilometres and included 175 component sites in the four States Parties. The recent withdrawal of Hungary from the nominated series means that some 400 kilometres of the Western Danube Limes have been removed which is just under half its length. But, as the sites in Hungary were particularly dense, over half of the component sites have been withdrawn as you heard, that is 98 out of 175.

The much shorter length that remains cannot reflect precisely the same overall characteristics of the overall western Danube military system, nor can the remaining component sites be seen to reflect the more extensive defensive systems that characterise the longer length or the distinctive characteristic and responses to major military campaigns that shaped the Empire, many of which were evident within the Hungarian sites.

In summary, the original comparative analysis demonstrated that the original series could be seen as distinct in contrast to other sections of the Roman Frontiers. We do not have a revised comparative analysis to show what characteristics might be reflected in the shorter length that are not present elsewhere. In terms of the other requirements that need to be satisfied to justify the Outstanding Universal Value, ICOMOS has not assessed how the criteria might be justified for the reduced series nor how integrity and authenticity might be satisfied in terms of the revised series as a whole, rather than for individual sites. Thus, overall, the Outstanding Universal Value for the reduced series has not been evaluated. In ICOMOS' view, given the substantial changes that have been made, it cannot be the same as for the original series.

In these circumstances, Chair, ICOMOS is not able to offer an evaluation for the series as it now stands for consideration by the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS. Dear colleagues, as we just heard, we are in quite a special situation regarding this nomination. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you also to ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for providing information and clarifications. First of all, we would like to express our regrets and our deepest sympathy for the situation that has occurred for the four States Parties involved. The Committee is now in the same situation as we have been in the 43rd session in Baku, a situation repeating itself but with some very significant differences. In 2019, one component in Hungary was withdrawn, this unfortunate situation ended in the creation of a drafting group and a compromised Decision where the Committee referred the nomination back to the States Parties. To allow them to review it which they did in the best manner and full cooperation with ICOMOS and the World Heritage centre.

This year, 98 components in Hungary, equating to more than a half of the total components, are withdrawn. We have seen minor adjustments in nomination before but this situation is unprecedented. This fact has significant consequences for the proposed nomination and we cannot handle this differently from how the committee did at its 43rd session. Norway finds it impossible to inscribe what has so significantly changed without new considerations related to the justification of OUV and related assessment by ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre. We simply do not understand how we can consider inscribing a nomination for which we have documentation that does not correspond to the facts on the ground. An evaluation which is no longer valid as we have just been explained.

Half of the nomination's components are no longer included and it must have implicit consequences for the justification of the OUV with clear references to Paragraph 137b of the *Operational Guidelines*. We fear that the

Committee is creating a very dangerous precedent in considering the possible inscription on this nomination. We therefore wish to ask for very specific feedback from the World Heritage Centre, followed by ICOMOS, in order for us to try to understand what we are about to do, which consequences it may have and the possible precedent effects such a Decision may create.

Norway does fully acknowledge that the Frontiers of the Roman Empire are a significant and highly valuable project and we truly wish to welcome a new and revised nomination dossier coming back to the Committee for the successful inscription in 2022. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, ICOMOS can you answer, but first Oman please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Chair. Only for clarification, as I understood from the World Heritage Centre, this site now is not presented for inscription. So, I do not know what we are discussing now. Can we have clarification? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. I think I can put together the two questions coming from Oman, but also the questions from Norway. Norway was asking, if I can recall exactly, what we are about to do. As it was already specified, we are in a rather unprecedented situation. I do not know what are the intentions of the Committee. I know that, of course, the Committee is free to take whatever direction it wants, but let me recall that we have many things that have changed during the years concerning the nomination process including formats, deadlines and so on, *Operational Guidelines* and different versions of the *Operational Guidelines*. But there is one thing that has not changed since the beginning of the *Convention* is that there is a nomination which is put forward by one or more States Parties. There is an evaluation and then the Committee may examine this.

In this situation, this sequence is no longer in front of us, as the document of the nomination that we have in front of us, in this case, is not any longer what, let us say, the reality of things described to us with the withdrawal of 98 component parts as was said. This basically concerns half of the site. It is an unprecedented amendment to the nomination consequently also the evaluation by ICOMOS cannot be seen as relevant anymore.

Therefore, we are really in a really, really difficult situation and if I can also recall one of the questions of Norway was: what consequences this may have? If the Committee will go for an inscription of this site, this will also be unprecedented because it will be the first time in the history of the *Convention* that we will have a site for which we will not have an equivalent evaluation for the inscription. And it will also set a very dangerous precedent for the system because it will show that things basically could be amended on the spot. Because we do not have in front of us the document that goes with this proposal. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification and the response. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick question to our experts. Our understanding is that this site has been evaluated three times, that the OUV has been secured or at least deemed to be relevant. Now, we have a modification of the original proposal which the experts deemed to be a significant modification. To my understanding, there is no hindrance by the *Convention* for the Committee, and it has also happened in the past, to approve nominations on which there have been modifications. But what you are telling us, if I understood you correctly, is that the changes are so substantial that it will be difficult to consider this inscription. But is there anything in the *Convention* guidelines that hinders us from considering a file which has been examined and which you have also submitted as being apt as an OUV site? Is there anything that hinders us from passing a decision on such a nomination? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Concerning this nomination and in view of discussions under way, Spain would like to state on the one hand that we are before an unprecedented situation, we have never seen it in the Committee, but this nomination is an independent nomination. It is integrating into a different nomination and will give rise to further nominations and the OUV is the same for all its parts. We have a situation that is different from other nominations that are unrelated.

The Committee in Bahrain, as well as here, heard the report from ICOMOS saying that this property did have OUV and that inscription was recommended. The selection of the parts of States Parties participating in the various phases of the nomination happened depending on the situation in which the various member States were. So, we have a situation which is completely different from a nomination that could stand alone. The various parts are in this unprecedented situation because neither is without any components that can help us solve the situation. We have three States Parties that are now in a very complicated situation because a fourth State Party has decided to withdraw its part of the nomination. We are perhaps in an exceptional situation.

This might be an opportunity to look to the *Operational Guidelines*, so that we are not to find again this type of very complex legal situation that is problematic in the cases of transboundary nominations. Thank you, Sir.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As ICOMOS has recognised the OUV of the site and all the technical conditions and recommended the site for inscription twice. I believe the only issue that remains to be addressed is whether the withdrawal of the Hungarian components of the nomination constitutes an impairment to the OUV that has already been established.

Considering that the nomination itself does not represent the total of the new themes but one segment of a transboundary serial property that would be completed in different phases, it does not appear to us that the withdrawal of one specific part of this segment should be an obstacle for inscription of its other parts, as long as the different attributes that convey OUV remain present. We would like to ask questions to the States Parties, if you allow us. Can the States Parties clarify if the strategy chosen for the presentation of the nomination in different phases has historic or scientific reasons? And can they explain whether the attributes that convey the OUV of the sites remain present in what would amount to the new first case of this process. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is a very complicated issue. As we have heard from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, all the sites have had their measurements changed. Therefore, as one party has withdrawn, one state, Hungary, now, we want to ask the remaining three countries if they want to go further with this nomination. I think we should suggest that the file is to be deferred and returned back in order to readjust all what is required and to be brought back to this Committee, in the next Committee, next year. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. I think I will follow my colleague from Brazil who asked very pertinent questions to both ICOMOS and I also think the States Parties. The OUV of the site was already recognised twice. Now, the withdrawal means, as ICOMOS said, a significant part of the site is withdrawn. But, is it not possible to go ahead with inscription on a phase-by-phase basis? Is that something that is unheard of that is inconsistent with our rules? We will get their expert advice. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. At the request of the Committee members, the States Parties Austria, Germany and Slovakia, you have the floor to answer the questions.

The Delegation of Austria:

Thank you, Chair, with regard to the time restraints, Austria will speak on behalf of all three States Parties. Kindly allow me to pass the floor to our expert Mr. Rene Ployer, Roman archaeologist and co-author of the study of the nomination file in order to explain the question related to the attributes of the OUV.

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

The Delegation of Austria:

Dear Committee members with reference to the attributes, allow me to clarify that the Danube Limes consist of different military installations, like legionary fortresses, forts, fortlets, watchtowers and bridgeheads as well as of the remains of civil settlements. The section without Hungary still encompasses all those types of components. In addition to these, and regardless of the role of the components of Hungary, the current section also encloses some rare and specific components indicating the high relevance of the places in Roman times and thus constituting important attributes of the OUV. These are health spas, city gates forming part of today's urban fabric, triumphal arch, an amphitheatre in remarkable good conditions and some still in use for cultural events, an exercise arena, the only of its kind outside ancient Rome, early Christian installations and the governor's Palace. These components is of exceptional uniqueness and together with the others are evidence for a strong OUV.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair. I have listened carefully to the interventions and what ICOMOS said and the questions that the States Parties or Delegations posed. I think what we find is quite surprising, as for the past 20 years experts of ICOMOS have worked on this file and twice it was recommended. Now, we are faced with a situation where we are told that half of the components have been withdrawn. And we are unable to indicate whether this withdrawal has significantly reduced the OUV of the property. I think we have just heard the States Parties who have nominated the file indicating that in their view, the OUV has not been diminished. Can I pose this question again to ICOMOS? Given what the States Parties have said, and given your knowledge of all the components, how would you rate? Would you say you would agree that there is some Outstanding Universal Value that is appreciable within this site? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I will give the floor to ICOMOS after the other Committee members have taken the floor. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is, if I can say, a unique situation that we are faced with. There is no doubt that there is an OUV in this site. The question that we are hearing and with clarification from our colleagues from Austria, again, this site after the removal of Hungary sites or parts, does it contain no OUV at all? That is the first question.

The second question: is this a precedent? I mean for us to react to such recommendation and take a decision in this regard. Has this taken place before? Maybe, we would like to hear from the Secretariat or ICOMOS if this has taken place before, so that we can be in line and take a proper decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before I finish, I would like to give the floor to the Austrian expert, if you allow me, to explain further because their voice was not clear. Is there an OUV that can be nominated and inscribed after this removal? Thank you very much.

The Delegation of Austria:

Thank you for giving us the floor again [...]

Chairperson:

No, I have not given you the floor.

The Delegation of Austria:

Excuse me.

Chairperson:

Egypt, please, you have the floor first.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Indeed, it is not an easy file but I followed the discussion carefully and also listened to the clarification given by ICOMOS and also by the States Parties. I understood that this file was recommended twice and I believe what is proposed today is logical. The Committee adopts a provisional statement of the OUV for the moment. A further extension of the site could be envisaged in the future in line with the nomination strategy. And I am also looking forward to hearing from the States Parties for additional clarification on a number of issues raised by members of the Committee. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please. Sorry, Australia, please, first.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. We have listened carefully to the discussion, and on balance, we think the proposal to refer this property will provide a clear way forward to allow the three States Parties to revise the nomination and bring it back to the Committee for consideration next year.

We observe that the proposed amendment to inscribe the property includes paragraphs that request the States Parties to adjust the nomination and ask the Advisory Bodies to also adjust their evaluation, but after the property is inscribed. This is highly unusual and reflects the components in the referral process. We have just heard that the property being considered has also changed substantially and that the Advisory Bodies are unable to provide a valid evaluation for the Committee to consider, which is the basis of Article 11.1 of the Convention. We, therefore, consider the proposal suggested by Oman to refer is an appropriate way forward for the States Parties and for the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. I think the questions earlier asked to the States Parties of Germany, Austria and Slovakia: is it very clear that the OUV has not changed significantly? So, the withdrawal of one of the States Parties has not changed the OUV too much? I think the next question is whether the Committee would look at this revised proposal to look at the submission and consider the submission based on the fact that Hungary has withdrawn. If that is possible, and I think it is an unprecedented situation, and if there is no legal issue in this respect, I think the Committee can look at it. And especially now, we ask ICOMOS to tell us if the OUV has been tempered significantly or not. Then, from that, we will also be able to be guided and based on the information from the States Parties, we can take a decision. We do not need to defer to another session. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Spain would like to insist again that this nomination is not independent, it is related to other previous nominations. There was a study that established that this was a very large nomination and it was better to do it by phases. So, if there is an OUV for associated elements, they have to do with the nomination that have already come through as well as those to come. There are several elements for this nomination. There still should have their OUV, even if those of the associated elements are no longer included. Thank you, Sir.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda please, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted. There is a problem it seems. We cannot hear you. Uganda we cannot hear you.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Hello?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can hear you.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my view is not very different from that of most of the colleagues. Because the question now is: does the reduction in the number of components negatively impact the OUV of the remaining components? And, if the OUV is not negatively impacted, what do we expect the States Parties to do after this nomination has been referred back to them. Are they going just to delete the reference to the State of Hungary and its components? What do we expect them to do? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. We sincerely appreciate the input and the discussion and the good debates and all the questions that have been raised on the floor now. And the recognition of this very difficult situation expressed by all our distinguished colleagues. We also thank our colleagues from Oman for suggesting a referral seconded by Australia which we consider very wise in the unprecedented situation.

Just to make clear, as mentioned initially, we fully acknowledge the significance of the property, we just simply struggle with understanding the merits of the OUV in this situation. If we could be allowed to make a comparison, if this was a natural site, half of the property and half of the endemic species are taken out of the valuation; are the merits to justify the OUV still intact? The 98 components that are no longer parts of this inscription possibly, are there without any value in the original nomination dossier and justification from OUV? This is a highly relevant question and I think it is very important that we give the floor to ICOMOS to clarify this for us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor first to Austria at the request of the Committee members to have further response.

The Delegation of Austria:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor again. Allow me to try to clarify the question concerning the OUV and if it is still there after the withdrawal of the Hungarian components.

First of all, allow me to say that the segment, which is now before you, does not stand alone. It is meant as the first inscription of a phased approach that will lead to a one common World Heritage property called the Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Danube Limes (Western Segment), it will be complete only after the inscription of the last segment. Then the property will reach from Germany to the Black Sea. The first approach was necessary due to the different preparedness of the States Parties to put forward the nomination. Therefore, the current section includes four States Parties that are ready to go and four will follow.

Hence, we are of the opinion that the Outstanding Universal Value has to be linked rather to the significance of the nominated sites than to its sheer number. And also, the composition of the components cannot be altered because this is fixed by the position of the archaeological sites.

But, allow me, once again, to clarify the significance of the attributes of the OUV. The Danube Limes consists of different military installations, legendary fortresses, forts, fortlets, watchtowers and bridges. All the components appear in the complete section of the Danube Limes stretching from Germany to the Black Sea. The section without Hungary now, will still encompass all those types of components. And now in addition to these and regardless of the withdrawal of the components in Hungary, the current section also encloses some very rare and specific components indicating the high relevance of the places in Roman times and thus constituting important attributes of the OUV such as health spas, city gates in urban fabric, an amphitheatre in remarkable conditions, some still in use for cultural events, even a governor's Palace. And, therefore, these components are of exceptional uniqueness and together with others bear evidence for a strong OUV. I hope this clarified the questions in case this should be not the case, please, ask again.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your response. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine

Merci, Monsieur le Président. J'ai déjà eu une partie de réponse à des questions que je voulais poser, mais je voudrais demander aux autres membres du Comité : puisqu'on a déjà reconnu la valeur universelle exceptionnelle de ce projet, en quoi est-ce que cette valeur pourrait être réduite dans la situation où un, deux ou trois pays décident de se retirer de la candidature ? De toute façon, c'est un projet qui a une valeur : ces installations existent bel et bien. Si on rate cette possibilité de faire de quelque chose, ce projet, qui est intéressant et de grande valeur pour l'ensemble des pays de l'Europe centrale, pourrait disparaître, et je ne voudrais pas que cela arrive. J'aimerais donc faire en sorte que cela continue à devenir un sujet auquel nous nous intéressons, ainsi que les autres pays qui défendent ce projet, parce que je ne pense pas que la valeur peut diminuer avec une décision de retrait d'un pays ; cela ne peut pas changer le fait que ces installations et tout ce qui représente cette frontière, le *limes* romain, existent, de toute façon. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to begin by commending all the States Parties involved in this nomination which is a reflection of their dedication to inscribing this important site on the World Heritage List, and as our

colleague from Norway as stated, we had extensive deliberations during the last Committee session over this nomination. I think it is obvious where Committee members stand and there seems to be diverging positions.

To us it is not just one State Party that has withdrawn from this nomination. What we have is a situation where ICOMOS as well has withdrawn its evaluation from this process. In light of that I think the question in front of the Committee is: does it wish to adopt a decision without the evaluation of ICOMOS that is relevant as per their introduction remarks? I do not think we question the values of the property. It is a complex property, it is a serial property that will no doubt be, eventually, listed on the World Heritage List. It is an ambitious property that not only covers the European segment but other segments including in Asia and Africa. I think it is important to take that into account. And, perhaps, the clarifications are not just required from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, I think particularly in the amendment proposed by member States there is a section that requests ICOMOS to adjust its evaluation report. Perhaps, they can elaborate on that as well,

Even if we inscribe this site, how are we asking ICOMOS to re-evaluate its report, since the evaluation report is only relevant prior to inscription? I think these are all questions that need to be answered before we move forward. We took into account as well the general position of some Committee members to inscribe this property and I think it is a reflection on their support to have it on the List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Apologies again for taking the floor, but I would really like to echo the sentiments of our colleagues from Bahrain. We are genuinely struggling as a Committee member to understand how we can consider a property that does not have what we understand to be a valid evaluation, in light of the significant changes that has undertaken this property. We would very much like to hear from ICOMOS regarding these points and to hear from them on this matter. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. All the questions have been put on the table. ICOMOS, it is time for you to make the responses.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. I hope you will allow me to try and address quite a number of significant points that have been raised by the honourable delegates.

First and foremost, I think, there is the question that was raised by several States Parties: is there any OUV left at all in what is being nominated? Here, I would like to stress that, first and foremost, ICOMOS is not writing this property off. We would be willing and very keen to see the Frontiers of the Roman Empire as a whole progress in a very meaningful way.

Just to come back to the starting point. What we have before us is a nomination that has been significantly reduced. In ICOMOS's view, removing over half the components means that the attributes that reflected OUV as set out on our evaluation, half of them are no longer there. In those circumstances we cannot say that the OUV is still there in terms of the way the criteria are justified nor in terms of integrity, nor in terms of authenticity, in the way that attributes have to reflect the values of the property.

In our view, the reduced nomination certainly does not have Outstanding Universal Value. But then the related point that has been asked is: does the reduced property not have any OUV? Here I think it is important to stress that ICOMOS has not evaluated this reduced property. So, we are not saying it has OUV or it does not have OUV, what we are saying is that the OUV in the reduced property cannot be the same as the OUV in the original property that was put before us. In that regard, I would like to pick up the point that was made, I think first by Spain, about the idea that this is a first nomination of a larger sequence, the OUV is the same for all its parts. And, here, I would like to point out that, in ICOMOS's view, is most certainly not the case. The nomination strategy I mentioned in my original presentation, perhaps, I could just explain that in a little bit more detail.

For the Frontiers of the Roman Empire in Europe, the States Parties got together and undertook a very detailed thematic study, and on the basis of that devised a nomination strategy which was presented to the Committee. This strategy set out very clearly that the intention was to define segments of the Frontier which were particularly characteristic of different responses to the Roman military arrangements. And that these segments would be put forward to justify OUV. But each of those segments would have different OUV. There was not one shared OUV for all the segments. They would be linked by the concept of the Frontiers that each of the segments, if inscribed, would have a distinct Outstanding Universal Value. That would not mean that none of the segments could be extended. And certainly, the possibility of major boundary modifications could be envisaged. For example, if it was decided that one of the Danube segments, if inscribed, could be extended. But shortened extension would have to be evaluated by ICOMOS and it could be the case that the Outstanding Universal Value of the original nomination would have to be modified to accommodate the extension.

I would like to go back to stressing very clearly that there is not one OUV that can be applied across the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, piece by piece, as it were. Now, if I can turn to the points that have been raised by Saudi Arabia in terms of implications. Because ICOMOS does consider that there are profound implications in the situation that we have in front of us. If this reduced property is considered by the Committee without any evaluation by ICOMOS this would set a very difficult precedent. Because the reduced property cannot be said to be defined in the nomination dossier, as over half of the sites have been withdrawn, and nor can it be said to justify OUV that was put forward in the original nomination.

If the Committee considers this a different nomination rather than the one that was officially nominated, this could mean that a nominated property does not have to be evaluated in any formal way before being presented for the Committee, and nor does it have to submit in advance for the Committee according to the statutory guidelines. We consider the implications of such an approach do need extremely careful consideration.

In terms of the other implications that arise from the proposed Draft Decision. That is the request for ICOMOS to adjust its evaluation. I would like to say that ICOMOS cannot retrofit its evaluation to fit a reduced series. Such an amended evaluation would have no validity as an ICOMOS report, as it would not reflect the due process of evaluation through assessment by a wide range of experts or any approval by the ICOMOS panel. ICOMOS does not believe that it is in a position to retrofit its evaluation.

Finally, if I may, I would like to address the question that was asked: what happens next? ICOMOS strongly supports this overall Frontiers of the Roman Empire nomination approach, and the recent discussions on extending this to countries in the east of the Mediterranean and in North Africa. It is important that progress is made. We do not consider that we should be reaching any sort of full stop. If the reduced property is not inscribed at this session. We do think that it is possible to work with all States Parties to consider an alternate way forward to maintain the progress of these very important nominations on a segment-by-segment basis. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the response and clarification. Now, I wanted to give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. I think, there were a couple of comments and one or two questions that were raised during this debate that was more on the procedural aspect of this situation. One comment from Saudi Arabia who asked whether this happened before. Maybe, as I said in my first intervention, this has never happened before at least in these dimensions. We are talking about half of a site which has been removed after the evaluation was completed. And we know that in the past we had very minor changes of serial nominations to which, maybe, were taken out a few components, sometimes also in agreement with ICOMOS or IUCN. But this kind of change after the evaluation never happened, and especially, also the fact that the nominating State Parties between what we have in the nomination in front of us and what will be eventually discussed have changed. This has never happened before.

Another thing I wanted to say is that Bosnia-Herzegovina talked about the fact that this project, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, as a project may have OUV, but, however, we know that the Committee may and also takes note of the nomination strategy, as it did in this case in 2017, where it took note of the nomination strategy for the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. However, the World Heritage system always requires this system by which you put forward nominations and there is an evaluation and there is an examination. For each of this segment there should be a separate process. So, we cannot say if the overall project of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire may have OUV in all the segments would have OUV automatically. Otherwise, all the Silk Road sites could be inscribed right away.

One of the things that was also mentioned by Bahrain about eventually adjusting the evaluation after its withdrawal. But, again, the evaluation in the World Heritage process for nomination comes before inscription. We never had an evaluation that was adjusted after eventually an inscription. This would be really impossible to do.

Lastly, just to say whether the OUV has changed significantly with this withdrawal of half of the component parts for this site, is a question to which the Committee should respond. In the World Heritage system, it is about the Committee to respond to this kind of question about the OUV. I think this really relates and impinges a lot on the credibility of the system. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo, for your clarification. Now, may I invite the legal adviser to clarify if there are any legal objections for the evaluation of this file after major modification. Legal adviser, you have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. I hope you can hear me and good evening for you.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you very much. I think Mr. Chair that the situation has already been clearly described by the many speakers, and in particular, the positions of both ICOMOS and the Secretariat has been clearly exposed, exhibited to the members of the Committee. As was mentioned by several speakers before, this is an unprecedented situation which is not explicitly provided for under the Convention, nor under the *Operational Guidelines*.

Having said that, Mr. Chair, at the end of the day, the situation is to be guided by Article 11 Paragraph 2 of the Convention which reads as follows: '*On the basis of the inventories submitted by States Parties the Committee shall establish, keep up to date and publish under the title World Heritage List, a list of properties forming part of the cultural heritage and natural heritage, as defined in Articles 1 and 2 of this Convention which it considers as having Outstanding Universal Value in terms of such criteria as it shall have established*'.

At the end of the day, Mr. Chair, the question is whether the Committee is satisfied and convinced that the current property, as it stands before it today, has Outstanding Universal Value under the criteria that it has itself established, in particular under the *Operational Guidelines*. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, China, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The Chinese Delegation listened very carefully to all the views expressed by the previous speakers and members, and the clarifications and explanations given by ICOMOS and the Secretariat as well as the views of the legal adviser. We believe that the OUV of this project was confirmed originally. However, regretfully, very regretfully, according to the views expressed by ICOMOS and the Secretariat, after the withdrawal of Hungary, at present, the nomination dossier of this project is not updated any more. Therefore, the report of the Advisory Body does not have any relevance and nor has the recommendations of the Secretariat.

Therefore, we do not have any basis to discuss of this project at the current session of this meeting. In the face of all those challenges and difficulties, China suggests creating a working group in order to have an in-depth analysis of the following steps of this project in order to provide a solution to the unprecedented situation after we have spent a lot of time discussing this Item on this Committee. Therefore, we propose to create a working group.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. I would like, first, to thank ICOMOS for their clarification and I would like to thank the Secretariat as well for the clarification. I have a question with regard to the OUV as per segment which has been referred to by ICOMOS in the evaluation. I would like to give the Austrian experts the floor to explain more about the OUV based on the segments. I still do see, Mr. Chairperson, that there are a lot of valid points being put forward, with not much of an obvious solution, on how to find the backbone to rely on, and it is up to us, as Committee members, to take the decision based on our judgment.

Therefore, after giving Austria the floor and, of course, our colleagues member States, maybe, we could look at the Draft Decision or the amendment proposed by Spain and co-sponsored by others. Maybe it can shed some light on how to go forward and build our discussion more constructively and avoid delaying the discussion further. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We thank all who gave us clarifications. From the comments of the legal adviser, we understand that for Articles 11 and 12, the OUV is established by the Committee and we are sovereign in doing so, whether ICOMOS recommends or not recommend is not the decisive factor.

Secondly, we talked about the unprecedented manner of a situation where there is a discrepancy between a file and an evaluation report. But, have not such discrepancies occurred in the past before? I am told that the file of the Beech Forest is also one in which inconsistency was seen and nonetheless, the experts recommended the partial inscription. So, inconsistency seems to be consistent in this case. Therefore, we do not also agree with that opinion.

Thirdly, as was stated many times before, I think it was Austria which mentioned it. What we are asking here is a nomination by phases. One Delegation said that the Frontiers of the Roman Empire extend even beyond the European territory to Asia and Africa. If this is the case, what is hindering us from inscribing a segment contained

in the countries which have already been evaluated by the experts to inscribe it? Unless we are in a situation where we say the experts have the files the way they want them, everything they say we approve with which we do not agree with. In that case many of the files have to be rejected and we have no nomination that will be inscribed, unless we say, no, there has been an evaluation that has been done already, yes, it is for part of the segment, but that part of the segment is part of a bigger whole. It is a nomination process in phases, this is nothing unprecedented and we would go ahead and inscribe the part that is there, and it is within our right, as clearly elaborated by the legal adviser earlier.

Having said that, Mr. Chair, I may have one question if you allow me. The phased approach for nominations, is that against the current rules or the *Operational Guidelines*? Our understanding is that it is not. If that could be clarified for us. Again, just to be clear and precise, yes or no. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Norway please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor again. We sincerely thank all the colleagues at the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for substantial clarification on this matter. I think we need to remind ourselves that OUV is given first at the time of inscription and to our knowledge we have not recognised the OUV for this nomination. That would be the starting point.

We also heard ICOMOS very clearly stating on the direct question: does the reduced property have OUV and the answer is we do not know. The same goes for us, we simply do not know. Which is why we fully support the very wise suggestion by our distinguished colleague from China in establishing a drafting group to work on a decision that could help us to solve this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I think we can all recognise that the site associated with Frontiers of the Roman Empire are highly significant but we need to have a nomination we can support and we are looking for a pathway to do so constructively. Given that we have heard different opinions on the matter and noting this is an unprecedented and serious situation, we support the proposal by our colleagues from China to form a drafting group. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have been following the discussion very carefully from different opinions, as well as those from the Secretariat and the legal adviser. Now, I would like to hear from Hungary what is their position: are they objecting the inscription of this site after the withdrawal? I want to hear from them. As well as I would like to hear from Germany: what is their status because they are also raising their hand. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, in fact some Committee members have put forward some questions. I wanted to say something. I listened very carefully to your discussion, the opinion, the viewpoint of the Committee members, ICOMOS, the Secretariat, the States Parties, we can see this is an unprecedented matter and very serious critical matter. It takes some time for such an important matter. If we do not have sufficient time to think about it to find a proper way forward, maybe it is not very proper. So, as proposed by China to avoid lengthening the debate and a deadlock, you may need more time for dialogue. Anyhow, for this session, we still have several days to go. I would like to propose establishing a drafting group formed with all parties concerned including the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Body. Do you agree? Are there any objections? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

I have no objection for this drafting group on the provision that the four States Parties originally submitting this file are part of it including Hungary. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

We support your decision, and we would also like the States Parties involved to be present. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Are there any other comments? No. So, maybe I suggest Saudi Arabia, Spain, Norway, China, of course, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and the four States Parties. But I think the Committee members should be the formal members. The other members are Observers. Saudi Arabia, Norway, you could co-chair this group. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you for giving us the floor again, Chair. And thank you for providing us with the trust and the confidence you have in proposing to chair. We would kindly ask for assistance also possibly from Australia to ensure that we have some native English speakers in the group to support us in the work, as this will be a very complex decision for us to be able to produce. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much Chair. We agree with the idea of creating this drafting group and we will be happy to see it composed of all the members that you mentioned as well as Australia. On Spain side, we just want to underscore that this is an unprecedented situation and we are going to need to eventually modify the *Operational Guidelines* so that this situation does not arise again. We have to make sure that we have good relations between all States Parties and what we have heard from the legal adviser and what we have seen in the text gives us no clear way out.

That is why, once the States Parties have submitted a transboundary nomination, we are going to have to make sure that we can cater for such eventuality in the future. Because we have three countries that are being affected by the withdrawal of a fourth and each country is sovereign and can make its own decision. But if we are talking about a transboundary evaluation which has been evaluated up to a certain point, then we see this late withdrawal. Obviously, it affects the others. Let us make sure that the necessary modifications are made.

Now, we are looking at the very complex issue of inscribing or not inscribing a property after such a lengthy progress. Remember that all these considerations need to be borne in mind when evaluating transboundary properties in the future.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Anyway, I will leave you to have a concrete consultation to set up the drafting group. Norway, is it okay? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

We would just like to confirm that we would be pleased to join the drafting group if that is acceptable. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I suggest the two chairs convened for the composition of the group to find a careful balance. I leave this task to you. You will inform the Secretariat of the Committee about your progress and the time you wish to bring a consensual proposal back. Thank you. We leave the item open.

Dear colleagues, let us proceed to the next item. I now invite ICOMOS to present the transnational nomination Colonies of Benevolence Belgium and the Netherlands. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is a presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Colonies of Benevolence, Belgium and the Netherlands. From 1818, the society of Benevolence founded agricultural colonies in rural areas to create an alternative to the living conditions of the urban poor. The colonies featured orthogonal roads, ribbons of houses and small farms and communal buildings. The property bears testimony to an exceptional and nationwide enlightenment experiment in social reform and its influence. The property is an outstanding example of the process of transforming its poorest landscapes and citizens through a utopian process of social engineering. Through exchanges of additional information during the evaluation period, ICOMOS concludes that the overall comparative analysis justifies consideration of the property. And Criteria (ii) and (iv) have been justified.

The nomination comprises four former colonies, three in the Netherlands and one in Belgium divided into three component parts. The conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met. ICOMOS agrees with the revisions to

the boundaries of the component parts brought by the States Parties in comparison to the previous nomination dossier. Communications occurred during the evaluation process between ICOMOS and the States Parties with regards to the issue of buffer zones. And while appreciating the existing protection mechanisms, ICOMOS considers that a buffer zone should be provided for the property as a protection to the immediate setting through a minor boundary modification request.

Protection is adequate for individual buildings and is generally adequate for landscapes. But this should be enhanced. The management system seems effective but an ongoing challenge would be to manage the property as a unified whole, especially, to ensure that conservation approaches evolve in the same direction. Conservation measures are generally satisfactory. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property.

To conclude: ICOMOS recommends the Colonies of Benevolence, Belgium and the Netherlands be inscribed as a cultural landscape on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv). A number of further recommendations are included in the Draft Decision regarding establishing a buffer zone, protection management and conservation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as it is a property recommended for inscription. If there is no objection, I suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision. Are there any objections? No. Let us go directly to adopt the Draft Decision. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.25. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments for this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I therefore declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.25 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Belgium and the Netherlands on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscriptions of this property on the World Heritage List. Belgium and the Netherlands you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Belgium:

Mr. Chair, dear Committee members, thank you very much for inscribing the Colonies of Benevolence on the World Heritage List. Allow me to briefly say a few words on behalf of the Flemish partner in this joint World Heritage nomination. The Colonies represent an important aspect of our social history. A history that had a profound impact on the landscape in the northern part of Flanders and the Netherlands. Today, there are cultural landscapes of great significance. I am grateful and honoured that the World Heritage Committee recognised this significance.

Mr. Chair, the success of today is also the result of a constructive collaboration with ICOMOS, following the Committee's decision to refer back its nomination. We would like to thank the Advisory Body for its commitment and open mindedness to work with the two States Parties involved. As you know, only four out of seven former Colonies of Benevolence are inscribed today. We hope to consult with ICOMOS in a couple of years to see whether an extension of the property with the former colony of Merksplas is conceivable.

Mr. Chair, this was a joint collaboration with the Netherlands. I would like to thank our Dutch partner in this nomination for their investment and constructive collaboration. In the spirit of this good partnership, allow me to pass the floor to Cees Bijl, President of the steering group. Thank you very much.

The Delegation of The Netherlands:

Mr Chair, dear Members of the Committee, I would also like to express our gratitude for inscribing the colonies of the Netherlands on the World Heritage List. I had the great honour to chair the Dutch Belgian steering group of the nomination for the last five years. The coming together of the nomination was a long-term affair in which many were involved. It would take me too long to address all who have contributed to thank them. But let me just say that I am very grateful to all of them.

Mr. Chair, the Colonies of the Netherlands was a social experiment in poverty relief. They are still remembered well. Maybe this new World Heritage property can be a sign of hope that shows how humanity has tried in the past to improve the living conditions of poor and vulnerable people. Of course, today, the beautiful green landscape they left behind are there to be discovered by new generations. I would like to invite you all to visit them.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chair, by assuring that we will start on the Committee's recommendations and report back in 2023. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations, once more. Dear colleagues, with a heavy agenda we are approaching the end of today's meeting. Considering that there will be a working group on Budget. I would like to suggest that we stop here. Congratulations again to all the inscribed World Heritage sites. I also encourage you to work on the unprecedented nomination to find a desirable solution. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

We meet tomorrow at 11:30 Paris time and for Bureau members we will meet at 11:00 am. Before I conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are any general announcements to make. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify for the Budget group, because we had a prolonged session the Budget group will take place tomorrow and not today. Thank you very much. See you tomorrow.

Chairperson:

Thank you, have a good rest. See you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 04:35:45 pm.

TENTH DAY – Tuesday 27 July 2021
TENTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all today for our daily meeting. This morning the Bureau held its 10th meeting. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recorded that during its prolonged meeting yesterday, the Committee inscribed six new properties on the World Heritage List and approved one extension. I take this opportunity to congratulate once again all the States Parties concerned. A drafting group has also been established on Draft Decision 8B.24. We will come back to it later during the session once an agreed text is ready for adoption. Again, I wish to highlight that this is an unprecedented situation which requires a serious follow-up and forward-looking. I count on your efforts and wisdom in this regard.

I also inform the bureau members that, today, we will resume the examination of Items in 8B in the order in which they are indicated on the calendar circulated yesterday and available on the World Heritage Centre's website. These updated calendars take into account the various time zones to the best extent possible. I take this opportunity to inform you that due to the very heavy agenda still ahead of us, I see no other option but to have a session extended by 30 minutes today. Until 4:00 pm Paris time. As well as one hour prolongation tomorrow until 4:30 pm Paris time. I am also pleased to understand that the consultations I called for among Committee members regarding Items 8.11 and 8.12 are progressing, in view of presenting a text for adoption on Friday. Many thanks for your diligence.

Before concluding this summary of the Bureau meeting, I wish to remind you all that there will be another meeting of the Budget working group tonight from 4.30 until 5:30 pm Paris time, under the able chairing of Ms. Zoya Kritskaya. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, we now resume the examination of nominations. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination of Dholavira: a Harappan City, India. The nomination can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the ICOMOS evaluation of Dholavira: a Harappan City, India. Strategically located on Khadir island harnessing water, harnessing raw materials for mass production and for facilitating trade, the ancient city of Dholavira was occupied between around 3,000 to 1,500 BCE and acted as the southern centre of Harappan civilisation. While sharing the common features of typical Harappan cities, the nominated property also displays distinct characteristics such as its advanced water management system, extensive use of stone for construction, preconceived city planning, multi-layered defence system, stratified social order, large scale and high-quality beads manufacturing, unique burial traditions and external trade with other civilisations.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that Dholavira is an outstanding example of city planning, a prototype Bronze Age urban settlement. It contributes significantly to the overall understanding of the Harappan civilisation. Criteria (iii) and (iv) have both been demonstrated. Criterion (ii) has not been justified.

This nominated property comprises of fortified city and a cemetery to the west of the city. The city consists of a castle, a bailey, a ceremonial ground, a middle town and a lower town. The entire city is fortified by a wall with bastions at regular intervals. All the attributes are within the property area. Rich artefacts have been obtained from the excavation campaigns and the requirements of authenticity and integrity have been met. During the evaluation period, the buffer zone was extended to cover the entire west strip of Khadir Island.

The legal protection and management system of the property are adequate. There would be enhanced by the development of legal provisions for the archaeological remains in the extended area of the buffer zone, as well as by guidelines for developmental and conservation needs.

This is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property. To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that Dholavira: a Harappan City, India be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (iii) and (iv) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as it is a property recommended for inscription, and notably to leave more time for those nominations which may require lengthy debate, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision. Can we agree on such a proposal? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.35. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendment, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none? I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.35 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate India, for the second time in this session, on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. India, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of India:

Thank you, Excellency. On behalf of the entire State of Gujarat and the people of India, I thank UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee. Now, I will say this one sentence in the Gujarati and Hindi languages ^[One sentence in Gujarati/Hindi is spoken]. I request the Director General of the ASI to kindly thank the Chair and colleagues.

Ms. V. Vidyavathi, Director General of the ASI:

Thank you, Chairperson, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, at the outset India would like to thank the Chair for the remarkable efforts in making this extended session possible in the midst of an ongoing pandemic. The inscription of Dholavira as a World Heritage site is a matter of tremendous honour and pride for India. Dholavira is the first Indian site of the glorious Harrapan civilisation to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to all the members States of the World Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and everyone associated on this happy occasion. India extends its warm welcome to all of you to visit Dholavira. To experience the magnificence of the sentinels in stone and brick, watching us down from over 50 centuries. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Once again, congratulations. Now, I would like to proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Cultural Landscape of Hawraman/Uramanat, Islamic Republic of Iran, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is a presentation of the evaluation of Cultural Landscape of Hawraman/Uramanat, Islamic Republic of Iran. The Cultural Landscape of Hawraman/Uramanat provides exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition of the semi-nomadic agropastoral way of life of the Hawrami people, a Kurdish tribe that has inhabited the region since about 3,000 BCE. This outstanding cultural tradition is manifested in the ancestral practices of transhumance, the mode of seasonal living in Havars, steep-slope terraced agriculture, soil and water management, traditional knowledge for planning and constructing steeply terraced villages, and a rich diversity of intangible heritage; all reflecting a harmonious coexistence with nature.

The comparative analysis demonstrates the outstanding significance of the property in terms of continuity and complexity of the semi-nomadic agropastoral practices and settlements adapted to the rough mountain environment. Vertical seasonal migration practice by Harami people is considered an exceptional mode of transhumance which can be dated back to the neolithic and earlier. ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets proposed criteria (iii) and (v) and the proposed criterion (iv) has not been justified.

The property is composed of two component parts, the central eastern valley and the western valley integrated within a buffer zone. The main attributes being the steep sloped tiered villages and their systems of terraced orchards transhumance routes and seasonal shelters. The condition of integrity and authenticity of the whole series as well as of individual component parts have been met.

The management system and existing legal protection are considered to be robust and efficient for the long-term conservation of the property which would need to be strengthened with mechanisms for managing change and with comprehensive study of the special interrelationships of all features of the property and its buffer zone. Plans and strategies are prepared and implemented through a collaborative and participatory approach. The conservation monitoring mechanisms are well established and adequate to the needs of the property. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV.

ICOMOS recommends the Cultural landscape of Hawraman/Uramanat, Islamic Republic of Iran, to be inscribed on the World Heritage List of Cultural Landscape on the bases of criteria (iii) and (v). Further recommendations are included in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision.

Can we agree on such a proposal? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation and understanding. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM8 B.36. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.36 adopted [gave]. Let me congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for the second time in this session, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Iran, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Iran:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Distinguished Committee members, Excellencies, dear colleagues, I wish, first of all, to take this opportunity to congratulate the chairperson for successfully holding this 44th session of this Committee during challenging times. On behalf of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iranian Nation, I wish to express my thanks to the Committee for the inscription of the Cultural Landscape of Hawraman/Uramanat in the World Heritage List.

Our thanks also go to ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre which following expert investigations prepared the report and the relevant documents for the Committee's consideration. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my congratulations to the people of the Iranian provinces of Kurdistan and Kermanshah in which this site is situated. And extend my thanks to the dedicated work of national and local authorities responsible for this nomination. The inscription of this site will contribute to increasing the social visibility of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and indeed the Committee. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Once again, congratulations. Let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination of Jomon Prehistoric Sites in northern Japan. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination which is to be found in page 95 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Jomon Prehistoric Sites, northern Japan, Japan. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors.

The Jomon Prehistoric Sites comprises settlements and burial areas, ritual and ceremonial sites stone circles and earthworks that represent the pre-agricultural sedentary lifeways and complex spiritual culture of the Jomon people of northern Japan. The Hunter fisher-gatherer culture developed from 30,000 BCE to 400 BCE and continuously adapted to changing climatic conditions and increasing social complexity without adopting an agrarian culture.

The comparative analysis demonstrates the significance of this very early development of pre-agriculture sedentarism that evolved from emergence to maturity in more than 10,000 years. The nominated property demonstrates criteria (iii) and (v).

This serial nomination is made up of 17 archaeological sites located in very favourable environmental conditions of the Tsugaru Strait and settled in a variety of land forms, including hills, low lands near rivers or bays. The requirements for authenticity and integrity have been met. Nevertheless, recommendations have been included on the necessity to continue work on removing or mitigating the impact of existing non-compliant elements at some of the sites.

The legal protection of the property is adequate and has proven to be effective, such as the suspension of construction work that would have damaged the archaeological context as shown. Issues with land ownership are being addressed by the State Party and will be resolved over the next five to ten years. The management system provides a coherent overall structure as well as flexibility for local conditions. Furthermore, it joins different levels of government in the decision-making processes and effectively involves the local population.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that Jomon Prehistoric Sites, northern Japan, Japan, be inscribed in the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (iii) and (v) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as we have done with the previous properties with recommendation for inscription, can we go directly to examine the Draft Decision? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your understanding and cooperation. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.37. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.37 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Japan for the second time in the session, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Japan you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Distinguished members of the Committee, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the member States of the Committee, ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for the inscription of Jomon Prehistoric Sites in northern Japan on the World Heritage List.

This property is a precious testimony to prehistoric lifestyle as well as an elaborate and complex spiritual culture. We reaffirm our determination to preserve this important cultural heritage together with our local partners involved. Please, allow me to invite Mr. Shingo Mimura Governor of the Aomori Prefecture to make a statement on behalf of all the parties and people involved in the nomination process in Japan. Governor Mimura, please, take the floor.

Mr. Shingo Mimura Governor of the Aomori Prefecture:

I am Shingo Mimura, the Governor of Aomori. I am truly pleased that Jomon Prehistoric Sites in northern Japan have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. On behalf of our partners, the local government and the people of this region, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of you. And to everyone who has supported us through the nomination process.

These archaeological sites tell us the story of a peaceful cooperative society where people lived in harmony with nature thousands of years ago. This way of life has universal value providing insights for the realisation of sustainable development goals today. We will do our utmost to protect this heritage, communicate its value to the world and provide memorable experiences to visitors. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Congratulations, once more.

The Delegation of Japan:

Thank you, thank you.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Roşia Montană Mining Landscape, Romania. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the evaluation of the Roşia Montană Mining Landscape, Romania. Located in the Apuseni Mountains, the Roşia Montană Mining Landscape, contains the most significant extensive and technically diverse underground Roman gold mining complex currently known in the world. With over seven kilometres of ancient underground workings so far discovered that represent pioneering aspect of the technical history of mining. Dating from the Roman occupation of Dacia, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE, the mines also reflect innovative techniques developed by skilled migrants Illyrian-Dalmatian miners, while in the surrounding landscape there are prolific Roman remains including some 10,000 artefacts that provide an extraordinarily vivid picture of technical and cultural practices in this ancient frontier mining community.

The comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List. And the nominated property demonstrates criteria (ii), (iii), and (iv), as a fossilised mining landscape.

The nominated area is a single landscape that encloses all the key known Roman remains both underground and on the surface. The current agropastoral use of the landscape appropriately protects these archaeological remains. The small buffer zone offers further protection from the periphery of the site. The requirements for authenticity and integrity have both been met, but both are highly vulnerable to any new mining activities. In 1971, open-cast mining by the State mining company destroyed a series of Roman era open-works.

More recently, in 2004, over 250 mostly domestic properties were demolished in preparation for the resumption of open-cast mining by a joint venture between a commercial company and the State mining company. This proposed development involved four large open-cast mines which, if implemented, would have destroyed the Roman remains on the property. The government effectively stopped the mining in 2014, following a sustained local campaign. With the result that the commercial company took the matter to the World Bank arbitrators claiming US\$4.4 billion in compensation from the Romanian government. This arbitration process is still ongoing. The current situation is that the commercial company has a license until 2024, but currently has no valid permit to undertake mining. Although the possibility of a permit being achieved has not been ruled out, a further potential threat is new small-scale mining.

The legal protection in place is adequate but the current lack of comprehensive zoning and planning regulations is a cause of concern as these are needed to control all developments including mining permits. As the present state of conservation of the underground mining works is variable and some surface archaeological site features are also in poor condition, there is a need for a conservation plan to be developed that sets out a framework and action plan for conservation interventions right across the property.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property. As it stands, integrity and authenticity are adequate but are highly vulnerable to any resumption of active mining. There is no certainty that mining will not be resumed. Adding to the uncertainty over large-scale open cast mining, there are now two other areas of concern. First the possibility of small-scale mining highlighted in the management plan. Secondly, the current lack of adequate planning regulations to constrain future mining activities.

ICOMOS considers that these ongoing uncertainties can be considered as ascertained threats to the property in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and that the property is faced with specific and proven imminent danger which could lead to a significant loss of historical authenticity and cultural significance, if these potential threats were to become realities.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that Roşia Montană Mining Landscape, Romania, be inscribed in the World Heritage List as a Cultural Landscape on the basis of criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv). And at the same time, that the property be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. ICOMOS further recommends that a Reactive Monitoring mission be invited to the property to establish the Desired state of conservation and a programme of Corrective Measures to remove the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. It also recommends that the State Party give urgent consideration to halting approval of mining permits at the property and developing, as soon as possible, planning controls that further prevent mining at the property and to submit these in draft to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS. ICOMOS has also included a number of additional recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property.

Finally, ICOMOS considers that inscription of this property in the World Heritage List in Danger should be seen as an opportunity to gain the attention and support of the international community for its protection and conservation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. I see none. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.26. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.26 adopted [gave]. Let me congratulate Romania, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Romania you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Romania:

I am pleased to represent Romania at this 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, exactly on the day of the 65th anniversary of Romania's membership to UNESCO. I would like to express our gratitude to the Committee, to ICOMOS and their expert teams and to the international community at large which has strived for the preservation of this site for two decades. Also, the numerous expert who worked tirelessly on the nomination file and in the field, those from Romania and those from abroad, we thank you.

Today's inscription of Roşia Montană Mining Landscape on the World Heritage List represents an opportunity for Romania and a challenge as well. The property placed at the heart of the Romanian culture represents a shared European legacy and now the world. We welcome a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property together with the necessary international cooperation and support for the benefit of the protection and the conservation of the site. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dr Rössler, you may have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to Romania. I just wanted to make sure that everybody understands the Decision. It is an inscription on the World Heritage List and on the List of World Heritage in Danger. In this regard we had some issues in fully following your statement due to some technical interference, so we would very much appreciate receiving your statement at the Secretariat. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you.

The Delegation of Romania:

We will send it.

Chairperson:

Let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, As-Salt - The Place of Tolerance and Urban Hospitality, Jordan. The Draft Decision concerning this nomination can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation for this nomination. This is to be found on page 96 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of As-Salt – The Place of Tolerance and Urban Hospitality, Jordan. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors.

A substantially different nomination rationale for the nomination As-Salt to the World Heritage List has been developed by the State Party since previous examinations by the World Heritage Committee in 1995 and 2017. In the mid-19th century, the As-Salt region grew in wealth and prominence due to late Ottoman reforms and the influx of prosperous merchants from Nablus Syria and Lebanon. Skilled trade and craft people transformed the city creating a distinctive urban morphology and social traditions.

The comparative analysis demonstrates the historical and geo-cultural significance of the city illustrating the influences of the Ottoman reforms on modernisation and the emerging regional identities. Based on the tangible and intangible attributes documented by the State Party, the nominated property demonstrates criteria (ii) and (iii).

The property includes the historic urban core of the city surrounded by a buffer zone. Included are more than 650 significant historic buildings, the setting and a distinctive urban morphology that features an intricate network of public stairways, alleys, squares and streets. This urban form demonstrates the transformation of the city and is associated with local cultural traits systems of social support and a lack of segregation between Muslims and Christians. The requirements of authenticity and integrity have been met. Despite some intrusive contemporary developments, the integrity remains vulnerable to the pressure of new development and losses of intangible cultural practices and traditions.

Baseline documentation of the attributes of the properties has commenced and is an important priority for continued work. The legal protection is appropriate and is implemented through the city core special regulations. The management system is adequate and the long-term commitment to conservation by the As-Salt greater municipality is evident. Further recommendations aim to further strengthen the management system through condition assessment, Heritage Impact Assessment, maintenance, guidance to private owners and strategies for the continuing cultural practices.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed OUV of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that As-Salt – The Place of Tolerance and Urban Hospitality, Jordan, be inscribed in the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iii) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as with what we have been doing for previous properties with recommendation for inscription, can we go directly to examine the Draft Decision? I see no objections. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.34. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.34 adopted [gave]. Let me congratulate Jordan, on behalf the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Jordan, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Jordan:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. As this is the first time for us to take the floor, we would like to thank China for organising this 44th session. Today is a very special day for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to take this opportunity to thank the World Heritage Committee and the staff of the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies.

Jordan is delighted and proud today to have As-Salt – The Place of Tolerance and Urban Hospitality inscribed on the World Heritage List and have its OUV presented to the whole international community. In this regard I would like to reiterate that the City of As-Salt is amongst the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan top priority given its importance in demonstrating characteristics of tolerance and joint habitation between Muslim and Christian communities, urban hospitality and urban social welfare. All these are attributes are conserved and managed according to international standard; a physical manifestation of the value of tolerance and joint habitation between Muslims and Christians.

Additionally, the outstanding architecture ensemble demonstrates cultural exchange and technical know-how that resulted in a unique mix of vernacular, regional and higher-class architectural style. As you know, we have tried to inscribe As-Salt in 1995 and in 2017, and finally in 2021, which indicates Jordan's commitment and adherence to the protection and sustainability of the OUV. Today, we are committed as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in preserving and presenting As-Salt as a case, not only for Jordan, but to the whole world.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, I can thank the community that has supported throughout the process. I, once again, thank you again on behalf of the Hashemite Kingdom and the people of Jordan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, once again congratulations. Let us proceed. I now invite, ICOMOS, to present the nomination, Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire, but before I give the floor to ICOMOS for the presentation, Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

Secrétariat :

Merci bien, Monsieur le Président. Nous avons reçu une notification d'erreurs factuelles concernant l'évaluation de ce dossier, qui se trouve à la page 65 du document INF.8B.4. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the ICOMOS evaluation of Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire. For this evaluation ICOMOS has received a late letter on factual errors and has acknowledged some clarifications.

Eight small mosques characterised by earthen construction, protruding timbers, vertical buttresses and tapering minarets reflect a distinct architectural style that originated in the Empire of Mali around the 14th century and spread south into Sudanese Savannah from the 16th to the 17th centuries along with traders and Islamic scholars. The mosques became religious centres as well as a focus for trade and cultural exchange, particularly between the cities of the River Niger Delta to the north and the forest areas to the south. And they have survived through persistent maintenance by local communities.

Although this highly distinctive architectural style is also found in mosques within the neighbouring countries of Burkina Faso, Ghana and southern Mali, ICOMOS considers on balance that the comparative analyses currently provided does allow consideration of the serial property as it stands for the World Heritage List.

The boundaries of component sites have been drawn tightly to encompass only the main buildings and original courtyards of the mosques. As the surroundings of the mosques are places where activities related to the cultural significance of the mosques and their functions were and are still practiced today. This should be recognised and included in the boundaries. The buffer zones are slightly wider rectangular areas but their boundaries do not encompass the nearby urban surroundings. Given the urban pressure that is already impacting on these mosques, together with pressures to accommodate new mosques linked to different schools of Islam, the current boundaries cannot be said to be sufficient to protect settings of the mosques or to allow them to continue to be perceived as dominant in their surroundings. The fabric of the mosques is highly vulnerable due to the lack of regular maintenance, the introduction of new materials and the weakening of traditional techniques. Only a few of the mosques, now, have adequate conservation and four are in urgent need of recent work being reversed as a result of the use of unsuitable materials. There are considerable challenges to be met in reviving and relearning traditional practices.

Although the eight mosques have been included on the inventory of national cultural heritage, it is clear that this protection only extends to the buildings themselves. Currently, other laws and town plans do not offer adequate constraints to stop inappropriate encroachment in the immediate vicinity of the mosques. The 2020-2025 Management Plan does not show how the systems and methods of centuries-old conservation — held and practiced by local communities who have ensured the conservation of mosques from generation to generation — will be sustained. Nor is it clear, how the plan will relate to the town plans which currently promote development or whether the latter will be redrafted. The conservation of the mosques is thus highly vulnerable to both the fragility of traditional practices and the lack of protection and regulation for their surroundings. Conservation plans for each mosque are needed to define precisely how conservation will be addressed and implemented.

In summary, ICOMOS considers that the eight mosques are extraordinary survivors and have the potential to justify OUV and satisfy criteria (ii) and (iv): once various measures have been taken to remove threats to integrity and authenticity; once the boundaries have been adjusted and once protection conservation and management systems have been strengthened. While the intentions, expressed in the supplementary information to support capacity building for masons to form them into professional associations and to collaborate with other countries on training in earth architectural techniques, are all to be welcomed, this needs to be translated into a clear robust, operational system. And, in the meantime, urgent measures are also needed to reverse recent damaging interventions. Equally urgent is the need for measures to protect the setting of the mosques that constrain inappropriate development.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire be deferred:

- In order to allow the State Party to enlarge the boundaries for each component site and their buffer zones;
- To strengthen the protection of the buffer zones through amending local plans and relevant local regulations;
- To complete conservation plans for each mosque;
- To define an overall conservation approach for the whole series that includes proposal for major projects, and
- To design projects to reverse recent inappropriate interventions.

ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property and the revision of the nomination. ICOMOS considers that such a revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. There was a question from Paris whether there is an issue with raising their hands. Could somebody just raise their hands, just to check whether it is working? Okay, I can see it is working. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, we just got worried.

Chairperson:

Okay, that is fine. Dear colleagues, I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We are thankful to the government of Côte d'Ivoire presenting this case and we do not concur with the conclusions of ICOMOS. We are of the view that this site should be inscribed immediately at our current session because it meets criteria for inscription (ii) and (iv).

We believe that the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has brought all the necessary clarifications and taken the necessary legal measures to address the concerns of ICOMOS whether it is regarding the boundary issue, buffer zone issue, the management system as well as threats to integrity and authenticity.

Therefore, in view of these measures that have been adequately addressed by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, we are for the amendments that have been presented to inscribe this site immediately at our current session. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Chairman. At the outset, I would like to commend Côte d'Ivoire for the nomination of the Sudanese style mosques and the assessment of ICOMOS. As co-author of the amendment presented to the Draft Decision, Egypt believes that it would be of utmost importance for the Committee to inscribe the site on the World Heritage List.

Mr. Chairman, the buffer zones of the site offer protection against inappropriate development. National laws or decrees of Côte d'Ivoire classify the Sudanese style mosques on the national cultural heritage and thus reinforced the protection of the property and its environment. The plan of preservation of the Sudanese style mosques is currently being developed. This plan defines the architectural components and the perimeter of protection of the property in series within a range of 300 metres around the mosques and blocks.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that this property meets all the criteria and we think that it will be of utmost importance for the Committee to inscribe the site on the World Heritage List during this session. I thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman recognises the importance of the nomination of Sudanese style mosques of northern Côte d'Ivoire. Consisting of eight mosques showing unique Sudanese architecture style which are considered as important testimonies to the trans-Saharan trade that, over time, facilitated the expansion of Islamic culture to the seven regions of Western Africa. According to ICOMOS evaluation, this nominated property has the potential to justify OUV under criteria (ii) and (iv) and the identification of its potential attributes is comprehensive and its current state of conservation is satisfactory.

Oman, therefore, acknowledges the considerable effort made by the State Party in the preparation of this nomination. Oman also notes and welcomes the updated information and clarification provided by the State Party in response to the concerns raised by the Advisory Body. In its additional document, the State Party has also clarified issues related to the delimitation and protection, buffer zones protection of the mosques and their urban context, the management system and conservation.

Taking this commitment and effort from the State Party into account, Oman recommends that the nomination, Sudanese style mosques in the northern Cote d'Ivoire is to be inscribed in this session on the World Heritage List. And requests that the State Party follow the recommendations of the World Heritage Centre and of the Advisory Bodies for the remaining of the recommendation. Therefore, we want to be co-authored of the amendments of this Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Chair. The Chinese Delegation thanks the State Party for nominating this property to the World Heritage List. We also thank ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre for their reports. The nomination of the eight Sudanese style mosques represents a distinct architectural style that was introduced into the Empire of Mali in the 14th century and developed in regions to the south. There are important materials witnessed to the introduction of trans-Saharan trade that facilitated the expansion of Islam and Islamic culture to the Savanah region.

The ICOMOS report recognised that the nominated property can demonstrate criterion (ii) which is exhibited in important interchange of human values and criterion (iv) which definition is: to be an outstanding example of a type of building, of architectural ensembles, of landscape which illustrate significant stages in human history, though ICOMOS believes that they have the potential to better demonstrate more of those criteria. ICOMOS report is also concerned about the adequacy of the boundaries and management plan. After evaluating the report and additional information provided by the State Party, my Delegation expresses our commend for its effort in preserving the site,

including the training of traditional masons. The decrees to provide for buffer zones and establishment of the management system and the financing of the nominated property.

These measures clearly reflect the State Party long-term view in its commitment to sustainable conservation of the property. We are satisfied that the State Party will further enhance its capacity in preserving this site.

Mr. Chair, Africa is underrepresented on the World Heritage List, accounting for only 12 per cent of all inscribed sites worldwide. It is therefore more urgent than ever that the irreplaceable heritage of the continent be protected and preserved for the future generations. Therefore, my Delegation supports the amendment put forward by Mali. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I now give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Sorry to interrupt the debate. Just to let you know that there have been issues with the webpage of the World Heritage Centre. If you are watching this session, you can do it via YouTube, please. I think my colleagues have posted the link on the chat. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues, as you have realised, we have a very heavy agenda today, there are still a great number of Committee members on my speakers' list. I would like to kindly ask you to be very brief, to speak out your position if it is only to fully support or second the proposal made by the previous colleagues. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. I shall try to be brief so as to give you enough time. I would like to echo what was said by the previous speakers and particularly what was said by China and Ethiopia as concerns the Côte d'Ivoire nomination, but also, more broadly, Africa.

Yes, we know Africa is underrepresented on the List and we think the asymmetry needs to be offset. African nations are doing what they can to put forward nominations even if they are at disadvantage in terms of technical capacity. Therefore, I do think, in this case, a lot has been done on the part of the State Party, and we need to bear in mind the additional information provided by the State Party in terms of the concerns relating to the management plan and the urban plans. Also, when you look at the local communities and their involvement and the capacity building underway, it should relieve some of the Advisory Bodies' concerns.

This is Côte d'Ivoire, this is Africa, we have had a lot of commitment demonstrated and I think that there is no doubt in everybody's mind as to the unique characteristics and qualities of this nomination. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. Norway has reviewed the document carefully and we are impressed by the property and its architecture role and functions. We acknowledge that the nomination in front of us has great potential. However, and from our perspective, we find it is still in the making as integrity and authenticity have not been fully met due to the vulnerabilities of the attributes. Once again, we would like to refer to our initial statement on 8B, and once again, we would like to underline that moving from deferral to inscription is not in compliance with the Convention nor the *Operational Guidelines*.

Norway would therefore like to see the nomination be deferred back to the State Party. That being said and taking into consideration that there is an amendment presented by Mali and co-authored by more than 15 other Committee members, Norway will not go against consensus.

Finally, and when going through the draft amendments, we propose that paragraph 2 from the original Draft Decision be put back, the matter has already been communicated to the Rapporteur. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Perfect. We thank ICOMOS for their analysis and assessment. We would also like to highlight that the maps attached to the nomination dossier show two protection zones. The first is the core zone and the second is the buffer zone. The delimitations are made so that the buffer zones encompass the lot or block and the surrounding urban areas.

This provision is reinforced by the following two decrees. Decree numbers 22 and 121 of January 29, 2020, on the classification of mosques and its Article 5 which states that in order to preserve their integrity and their insertion into their natural and historical environment, and is defined as a protective parameter for each classified mosque, this parameter includes the lot or block on which each mosque is built and all other associated constructions.

The other and the second decree number 88413 from April 20, 1988, on the classification of sites and monuments of the historic city of Kong protects the small mosque, the tomb of Moskowitz and the entire area around the great mosque, including in addition to the said mosque, the old hut, the old market, and the hut of Binger, the small mosque as well as the tombs of Imams. Articles 2 and 3 of the said decrees stipulate the monuments mentioned in Article 1 of this decree as well as their immediate surroundings from a whole known as the Classified and Protected Area of Kong to be preserved intact.

Mr. Chair, the boundaries of the mosque sites, as defined by the classification decree mentioned above, considered all elements related to Sudanese style mosques, these buffer zones are well adapted and cover eight mosques that span over 13,000 m². With that said, Mr. Chair, we support the amendment to inscribe the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Australia thanks Côte d'Ivoire for bringing forward this nomination and we thank ICOMOS for their evaluation. As previous speakers have already noted, the property will make a highly significant addition to the representation of African properties and to the earthen architecture World Heritage List. The architecture is exceptional and ingenious, as are the traditional skills and the knowledge that created and conserved these mosques. We understand the mosques are highly valued by local communities.

In their evaluation, ICOMOS identified several conservation and management issues, the additional information provided by the State Party indicates that they have responded to some of the recommendations of ICOMOS with the establishment of a legal management structure for the entire series, the allocation of funds for conservation and capacity building and traditional skills, and we applaud these moves.

Chair, having examined the maps, and notwithstanding previous intervention by our esteemed colleague from Saudi Arabia, we do have concerns and do share some concerns with ICOMOS as the boundary of the component of the actual nominated area is very tightly drawn. We acknowledge that there is currently little development pressure and that there is a legal protection over the buffer zone as we just heard. We will encourage the State Party to consider minor boundary modifications to expand the actual boundaries of the inscribed property around each of the component and ensure that the mosques in their settings have the highest level of protection. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we welcome the nomination of this remarkable cultural site by Côte d'Ivoire. The addition of this 14th century Sudanese style earthen mosques blending African and Arab architectural techniques and beliefs will certainly enrich our List and contribute to augmenting the indispensable presence of Africa in it. The Advisory Body recognised the strength of this nomination under criteria (ii) and (iv). ICOMOS however raised concerns about the technical requisite of integrity and authenticity which it does not consider 'fully met'. Regarding the limitation of the boundaries of this site which seems not to 'fully encompasses the future of the mosques' and about conservation which is 'just about satisfactory'.

We understand from this analysis that even if technical requirements are not optimal, these are not sufficient reasons to justify postponement of the inscription of this site on the basis of a supposed gap between what is considered 'satisfactory' and 'fully satisfactory'. The only issue, Mr. President, that would seem to present a certain challenge regards management arrangements that ICOMOS believe should be operational and strengthened with a clear timeline for the road ahead.

In this regard, Mr. President, I will request that you allow us to ask the State Party for clarification on this point: is the management system operational and expanded with a clear timeline for achieving stable conservation conditions? Mr. President, Brazil supports very much the inscription of this site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members have taken the floor. Now, Mali, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je voudrais tout d'abord remercier le Secrétariat et les organes consultatifs pour les efforts consentis dans le cadre de leur évaluation. Les mosquées de style soudanais situées dans la moitié nord ivoirienne se caractérisent non seulement par leur architecture de style soudanais, mais aussi par le fait qu'elles sont les témoins matériels d'échanges dans l'espace culturel mandé et sénoufo. En outre, implantées dans un pays qui fut d'abord animiste, puis chrétien, elles représentent une expression pertinente de la diversité culturelle, du dialogue interconfessionnel et de la coexistence pacifique entre les peuples. Aussi, le bien a été proposé à l'inscription selon les critères (ii) et (iv), avec les conditions d'authenticité et d'intégrité reposant sur la préservation des formes primitives de construction, par l'utilisation des matériaux de construction locaux, et d'un savoir-faire ancestral. Des tests juridiques nationaux et internationaux incitatifs à la sauvegarde de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle, l'homogénéité de l'environnement structurée autour d'événements socioculturels, l'implication des communautés locales dans la gestion des édifices. Le dossier d'inscription a été soumis à l'expertise de l'ICOMOS qui a fait ressortir que la série de mosquées proposées pour inscription a le potentiel pour justifier une valeur universelle exceptionnelle, et que le bien proposé pour inscription a le potentiel pour répondre aux critères (ii) et (iv). Cependant, il a été émis certaines recommandations et préoccupations. En outre, aux trois premières préoccupations de l'ICOMOS, l'État partie de Côte d'Ivoire a énuméré une suite de textes juridiques mis en vigueur entre 1988 et 2020 qui règlent toutes les questions liées à la problématique de la délimitation et aux zones tampons. Les préoccupations relatives aux délimitations et à la protection émises par l'ICOMOS dans son rapport d'évaluation trouvent leurs réponses dans les textes réglementaires, notamment le décret 2020-121 du 29 janvier 2020 portant classement des mosquées, le décret 88-413 du 20 avril 1988 portant classement des sites et monuments de la ville historique de Kong, la loi 87-806 du 26 juillet 1987 portant protection du patrimoine culturel national. Concernant les points 4 et 5, un organe de gestion dénommé « secrétariat exécutif de gestion des mosquées de style soudanais du Nord ivoirien » a été créé par l'arrêté 03/MCIAS/CAB du 26 juin 2021. Ce secrétariat est doté d'un budget de fonctionnement pour la mise en œuvre du plan d'action du système de gestion. Une dotation de 100 millions de francs CFA sera mise à sa disposition pour l'exercice 2022. Nous pensons que le bien mérite d'être inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en raison des efforts de l'État partie pour corriger les erreurs factuelles et adopter les mesures correctives édictées par l'ICOMOS et le Centre du patrimoine mondial. Mais l'importance capitale pour cette inscription pour la cohésion sociale en République de Côte d'Ivoire et pour la pérennisation d'une culture de la paix et de la tolérance dans l'espace subsaharien. En effet, le projet d'inscription de ces mosquées est soutenu et suivi de près par toutes les composantes communautaires et fédère absolument l'intelligentsia et les leaders d'opinion. De surcroît, l'architecture de terre subsiste dans ces zones grâce à des mosquées construites en terre, étant des lieux de culte, les formes utilisées sont souvent repris dans les constructions privées. De ce qui précède, le Mali sollicite le soutien des membres du Comité pour l'inscription dudit bien sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial afin d'encourager l'État partie à le sauvegarder. Les mosquées de style soudanais du Nord ivoirien constituent les derniers témoins encore existants du style soudanais fédérateur de l'espace ouest-africain, autour desquels se font la paix et la cohésion sociale. Enfin, je voudrais vous prier, Monsieur le Président, de bien vouloir donner la parole à l'État partie de la Côte d'Ivoire et l'inviter à donner quelques précisions supplémentaires par rapport à ces amendements, et surtout à nous éclairer davantage sur les dispositions juridiques et réglementaires qui règlent les préoccupations relatives aux délimitations et à la protection des mosquées de style soudanais du Nord ivoirien. Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Just now, as mentioned, I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Uganda supports the amendments proposed by Mali, despite the old and low levels of technology with which these component pieces of heritage were built. They registered excellent and rare Sudanese style architecture semiotics of design, impressive construction traditions, ornamentation artistry, imagination, monumentalism and innovativeness of their crafters. Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, these attributes are vividly highlighted in the statement of OUV which profusely and productively ushers in the amendment. Unlike the absence of sustainable conservation management practices already implied in paragraph 2.h of the Draft Decision, the amendment evidentially demonstrates the timeless and compact living tradition of this conservation management regime which this set of cultural heritage property continues to enjoy.

Hence, Mr. Chairman, it suffices from my Delegation to sum up a plea that there are ongoing indigenous transgenerational conservation management practicum in sufficient magnitude which pervade the Sudanese style

mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire, in situ, in the proposed amendment under criteria (ii) and (iv). In conclusion, therefore, Mr. Chairman, my Delegation recommends inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Mr. Chairperson, my Delegation shares the views expressed by fellow Committee members in supporting the inscription of the Sudanese style mosque in northern Côte d'Ivoire on the World Heritage List. The Advisory Body considers that the nominated series of eight mosques has the potential to justify the OUV with necessary actions.

We appreciate the State Party's commitment to carry out important projects recommended by the Advisory Body and incorporate necessary measures related to the management and conservation of the mosques in the government work plan 2021. We further welcome the State Party's effort related regulations and legislation to enhance protection of the property on issues related to delimitations, buffer zones as well as the consideration of the surrounding spaces traditionally associated with the mosques and all elements related to them. In this respect, Thailand is cosponsoring and would like to support the amendment introduced by Mali. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson, for giving us the floor. South Africa supports the inscription of the Sudanese style mosques on the World Heritage List. As clearly articulated by the State Party in the nomination file, the sites are sufficiently protected by a sound legal and regulatory framework guaranteeing not only the integrity of its boundaries but also regulating its management. These Sudanese style mosques are protected by the national heritage law and are thus inscribed in the country's national Cultural Heritage List. No public or private work may be undertaken on these mosques without prior authorisation from the Minister of Culture. Such approval may only be granted if the planned renovation will enhance and safeguard the property.

Further, any construction to be undertaken must comply with the urban special town-planning regulations. They are also classified by law as part of the historical sites and monuments of the City of Kong, which protects all the core attributes of the site such as the small mosque, the tomb of Moskowitz and its surroundings, the old hut, the old market as well as the tombs of Imams.

Mr. Chairperson, the Sudanese Style mosques of the northern Côte d'Ivoire has been operationalised through a three-tier management system comprising the executive with the executive secretariat, the regional directorate in charge of culture and the local management committee composed of trained and qualified masons, members of the holding families and members of the Muslim community. The management system is formalised by an inter-ministerial decree that specifies the role of each entity of the management system and highlights the co-management of the property by the State through its structures in the local communities.

South Africa believes that the nominated eight mosques meet the OUV requirement. The comparative analysis is satisfactory and the nominated property meets criteria (ii) and (iv). We therefore support the amendment of the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.23 as submitted by Mali. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, our Delegation considers as a matter of principle to increase the presence of African properties among the sites of World Heritage. We believe that the Sudanese Style Mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire is precisely one of such cases which deserve encouragement and support. We take note with satisfaction that ICOMOS carried out the technical assessment mission to the property in August and September 2020, and as a result, recognised the nominated mosques have the potential to justify OUV.

We also commend the State Party for addressing the concern of ICOMOS about the delimitation and protection of the property. Several legal regulatory instruments were adopted for this purpose. Measures were also taken to ensure the conservation of the property. The management system is being put in place. Important finance is previewed for the Action Plan for 2020-2025. We are thankful to the representatives for additional information on this subject.

In conclusion, we support the amendment presented by Mali and approve the inscription of the eight Sudanese style mosques on the List of World Heritage according to criteria (ii) and (iv). Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. Nigeria wants to align with previous Committee members and Nigeria wants to highlight a little bit in detail the issues of management system that was raised by ICOMOS. The management system actually is made up of operations at three levels. There is the Executive Secretariat for the management of the Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire created by decree n° 3/MCIS/CAB of 26 June 2021, on the organisation and functioning of the Executive Secretariat for the management of Sudanese Style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire. This Secretariat has an operational budget, as was mentioned earlier, for the implementation of the management system Action Plan which is an allocation of CFA100 million which was left over from the project to safeguard the mosque. And that will be made available to the mosque management secretariat for the year 2022.

Then, there is the Regional Directorate in charge of culture for which also the relevant decree n° 57 of June 2020, set the general framework related to the attribution organisation and functioning throughout the territory. The Regional Directorate works in collaboration with those of construction and tourism. They participate in the four quarterly meetings of the local based committees. They integrate the mosques in their policy of organisation of the local cultural heritage.

Then, there is also the local based management committee also formalised by order n° 005 of the 20th of January 2020, concerning the attribution, organisation and functioning. These committees are composed of traditional masons, members of founding families and members of Muslim communities. These committees ensure the continuation of the traditional conservation system, the traditional system for regular conservation and maintenance of mosques based on families remaining fully in place. In Kong, we have the Konaté and Barro families in Tengréla the Cissé family and in Sorobango and Kaouara the Ouattara family, in Samatiguila the Diaby, Savané, Samassi Soumahoro Camara and Berté families, in Nambira we have the Traoré family and in Kouito the Fofana family. These families are supported by management committees composed of members of the Muslim communities and traditional masons.

Therefore, Mr. Chair, Nigeria supports the draft amendments to inscribe the Sudanese style mosques in this session. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. We commend the State Party for this nomination and we support the amendment proposed by Mali and other Delegations. And also, we think that we can add recommendations on boundaries and management as it was proposed by the Norwegian Delegation and some other Delegations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The cultural, religious and architectural significance of the site merits recognition. As stated by previous Committee members, an inscription confirms the will of this Committee to work towards a more balanced World Heritage List in a continent which is highly under represented on the List. We also take into account the recommendations made by ICOMOS and we would like to see them reflected in the Decision, in order to provide better protection, conservation and management of this important site. This will coincide with the original paragraph 2 of the original Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous soutenons l'amendement du Mali pour l'inscription de ce bien sur la Liste. Je tiens à souligner la nécessité des efforts à faire afin de surmonter le problème de la sous-représentation des pays africains et d'autres régions du monde. Il nous reste donc un effort à faire, qui est un effort constant pour améliorer la situation en relation avec ce déséquilibre, et pour rendre des monuments jusqu'à présent méconnus du public, pour leur donner la place qu'ils méritent. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much. Guatemala recognises the exceptional contribution of the Sudanese style architecture on the entire continent. We have seen that the Advisory Bodies have presented various recommendations and we believe that they should be looked into as soon as possible to protect this property. On the other hand, we also understand that we need a better geographical balance for the World Heritage List and a better representation of Africa. This is why we will not oppose the consensus which we see emerging. We would like to congratulate the State Party for their achievements. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to give the floor to the State Party, Côte d'Ivoire to answer the questions. Now, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Côte d'Ivoire :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Côte d'Ivoire vous remercie, et je souhaite donner la parole à notre expert.

Expert de la Côte d'Ivoire :

Merci bien, Monsieur le Président. Les préoccupations relatives aux délimitations et à la protection soulevées par la délégation malienne trouvent leurs réponses dans les textes réglementaires, notamment le décret n° 2020-121 du 29 janvier 2020, portant classement des mosquées, qui vient renforcer la protection du bien et des éléments qui lui sont associés. Nous avons également le décret n° 88-413 du 20 avril 1988, portant classement des sites et monuments de la ville historique de Kong. Et nous avons également la loi 87-806 de 26 juillet 1987, portant protection du patrimoine culturel national dans les dispositions prenant en compte la protection du bien et son insertion dans son environnement. Nous avons également la loi 2019-576 du 26 juin 2019, instituant le Code de la construction et de l'habitat. Ces mesures règlent les questions liées aux délimitations, aux zones tampons, à la prise en compte de l'espace environnant traditionnellement associé aux mosquées, ainsi que de tous les éléments ayant un lien avec elles. Sur les cartes jointes au dossier de nomination, il y a deux zones protégées : la zone principale et la zone tampon. Ces zones sont incluses dans le lot ou l'îlot. Sur les cartes, les lots ou les îlots sont délimités par des voies et rues sur lesquelles il est interdit de construire. Ces voies et rues représentent un cordon de protection des lots et îlots contre la construction.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to ICOMOS.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS welcomes the clarification by the State Party and their commitment to further enhance capacity building and to strengthen management and protection for these extraordinary survivals. Our concerns in the ICOMOS evaluation were to ensure that the mosques are robust enough to meet and address the acknowledged vulnerabilities and development pressures in the years ahead. In our view, strengthening and supporting traditional practices, developing conservation plans and ensuring the protections of the settings are needed. So, the mosques can continue to dominate their surroundings as living dynamic places.

We do welcome the progress that has been made since the 28th of February. We do consider though that the recommendations in the original Decision are still relevant particularly relating to conservation plans and strengthening management as well as addressing local regulations in respect to development. We do hope that what we consider these forward-looking recommendations can be supported by the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. Dear Committee members, I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.33. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment submitted by Mali co-authored by a number of countries if I am not mistaken, the Delegation of Oman also asked to be added as co-author. We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 is approved.

Rapporteur:

One clarification for English, the name of the property in English is aligned with the official translation as it was reflected in the original Draft Decision and ICOMOS evaluation report. As such the paragraph 2 reads: 'Inscribes the Sudanese style mosques in northern Côte d'Ivoire, Côte d'Ivoire, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv)'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value', and we have the Components of the Statement, Criterion (ii) and (iv), Authenticity, Protection Management Requirements, and here is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve of this paragraph? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

As explained by the distinguished delegate from Norway and supported by a number of Committee members, we have the recommendations moved from original paragraph 2 to new paragraph 4 from 'a' until 4 'h'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We would like to seek the comments of the State Party on these recommendations. We feel that some of them are not adequate, but we would like to have their take on what is recommended here. Thank you.

Chairperson:

The State Party, Côte d'Ivoire, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Côte d'Ivoire :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de nous donner la parole. Concernant les recommandations, nous avons déjà dit, en ce qui concerne la recommandation 1, nous avons déjà précisé les délimitations qui ont été faites; Par contre, si la question revient ici, c'est que l'État partie voudrait y ajouter que l'on pourrait travailler à agrandir légèrement les limites qui ont été proposées dans le dossier. S'agissant de la recommandation f), « compléter les plans de conservation pour chaque mosquée », effectivement, l'État partie travaillera à le faire. Mais l'État partie a précisé qu'un plan général de conservation a déjà été fait, et donc il n'est plus question que dans les recommandations il soit question de faire un plan général de gestion. En revanche, nous attirons l'attention sur le fait que nous avons fait un plan détaillé pour chacune des mosquées. Voilà quelques commentaires que nous voulions apporter aux recommandations qui ont été faites.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just one very small point. If the State Party is being asked to enlarge the boundaries, perhaps, mentioned should be made of a minor boundary modification in this text.

Chairperson:

Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

If this is acceptable for the Committee members, we can just, maybe, change the wording 'Consider enlarging the boundaries as a minor boundary modification for each component part'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Okay. Yes, I will give two minutes to Ms. Rapporteur. Are there any other comments for this paragraph? Ms. Rapporteur, is it okay for you?

Rapporteur:

Almost. It is done right now, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

This paragraph has been approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Final paragraph, since we are recommending the State Party to take into consideration the recommendations, we ask: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.' Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.33 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. This is also the first inscribed property from Africa. I am sincerely glad to welcome the new inscription for a more balanced and representative World Heritage List. Côte d'Ivoire you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

Délégation de la Côte d'Ivoire :

Merci. Monsieur le Président de la 44^e session élargie du Comité du patrimoine mondial, honorables membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial. Je voudrais, au nom de l'État partie de Côte d'Ivoire, féliciter la Chine pour la parfaite organisation de cette réunion, et je voudrais lui témoigner notre infinie gratitude suite à l'inscription des mosquées de style soudanais du Nord ivoirien sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO. Cette décision que vient de prendre le Comité est la reconnaissance des efforts déployés par le Gouvernement ivoirien. Ces édifices religieux de grande valeur, dont le moins ancien est centenaire, revêtent une importance capitale pour les communautés détentrices, pour qui cette décision du Comité est le signe d'une ère nouvelle. Nous sommes conscients que plusieurs défis restent à relever, c'est pourquoi je voudrais rassurer le Comité du patrimoine mondial que le Gouvernement ivoirien, dirigé par le Premier Ministre, Patrick Achi, prend toute la mesure de la décision du Comité et s'engage à mettre en œuvre toutes les activités contenues dans le système de gestion de ces biens en série. Il s'engage également à traduire les recommandations formulées par le Comité en plan d'action pour assurer une gestion efficiente de ce patrimoine. Merci au Fonds du patrimoine mondial africain pour tous les efforts consentis durant tout le processus qui a conduit aujourd'hui à l'inscription des mosquées de style soudanais sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Consciente du rôle ô combien important que joue le Fonds pour soutenir les pays africains, la Côte d'Ivoire s'engage à soutenir pour sa part le Fonds, à l'instar des autres pays africains. Aux pays membres du Groupe africain et à toutes les délégations permanentes auprès de l'UNESCO, l'État de Côte d'Ivoire vous remercie pour tout le soutien que vous avez bien voulu lui apporter. L'inscription de ces édifices religieux est un défi, non seulement pour la Côte d'Ivoire mais pour l'ensemble du continent africain et pour tous les pays. Notre pays, la Côte d'Ivoire, travaillera au respect de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien. Nous adressons un remerciement tout particulier à la délégation permanente du Mali, membre du Comité, qui a porté et soutenu le dossier et proposé l'amendement au projet de décision. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you and congratulations, once more. Now, Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le Mali remercie les membres du Comité pour leur soutien, le Secrétariat de l'UNESCO, les organes consultatifs et les experts pour les efforts abattus, et les appuis qui ont permis de prendre en compte les nouveaux amendements que nous avons soumis. Le Mali félicite chaleureusement la Côte d'Ivoire et l'encourage à continuer ses efforts conformément aux recommandations de cette décision. Les mosquées de style soudanais constituent non seulement un joyau architectural très précieux pour l'Afrique, mais elle représente aussi une raison, notre raison, d'être ici, c'est-à-dire des éléments de renforcement de la paix et de la culture de la paix. C'est ça, l'esprit de l'UNESCO. Je vous remercie encore, une fois de plus.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

Délégation de l'Éthiopie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. À mon tour je souhaite remercier la République de Côte d'Ivoire pour avoir soumis ce dossier pour nomination. Bien évidemment, tous les membres du Comité l'ont appuyé dans le souci de rééquilibrer la Liste du patrimoine mondial, pour qu'elle devienne réellement mondiale. Nous sommes à cet égard très contents de l'esprit qui prévaut au sein du Comité, c'est à dire de privilégier le scientifique sur le bureaucratique et de faire en sorte que les monuments qui méritent d'être inscrits du fait de leur apport à l'humanité soient inscrits, et ne soient pas englués dans un processus bureaucratique long, qui souvent est cause de péril de ce même patrimoine que l'on veut protéger. Donc merci au Comité, merci pour son appui à l'Afrique, et c'est ainsi que l'on changera définitivement cette Liste pour qu'elle devienne réellement représentative de l'humanité tout entière. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Colleagues, just now, due to some technical dysfunction, we have missed the request of a statement concerning the inscribed property of Roşia Montană, Romania. With your permission, I now give the floor to Europa Nostra. Please, you have the floor.

Observer-Europa Nostra:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course, we are congratulating all States Parties for the heritage sites that have been inscribed on the World Heritage List at this Committee session. Indeed, Europa Nostra wishes to make a statement on Roşia Montană mining landscape.

On behalf of our large movement of civil society committed to cultural and natural heritage, from all over Europe, including Romania, Europa Nostra congratulates very warmly the State Party and its citizens for the inscription of Roşia Montană mining landscape both on the World Heritage List and simultaneously on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

This is a true milestone in the wide mobilization of heritage stakeholders to ensure a sustainable future for this exceptional cultural landscape. We can only applaud the Romanian authorities for their determination to stand by their cultural and natural heritage, to stand by the local community of Roşia Montană, and to stand by the engaging and convincing voices of civil society that have not spared their efforts to campaign to save Roşia Montană.

Alongside ICOMOS and other international heritage organisations, Europa Nostra has gladly provided our support to this campaign, among others by placing in 2013 Roşia Montană on our very first List of seven Most Endangered sites in Europe. At that time, we were not optimistic about the future of Roşia Montană, but we were impressed by the determination of the local community and civil society not to stop resisting the plan for gold mining by a multinational company that would have destroyed and had a devastating impact on Roşia Montană cultural landscape.

Eight years later, our joy cannot be bigger to see UNESCO recognizing the Outstanding Universal Value of this exceptional historic mining landscape. Congratulations to UNESCO and ICOMOS for their support! May this case become an important message sent also to the world of business and economy that short-term business interest cannot prevail over the long-term interests of our cultural and natural heritage and the related local communities.

We also applaud the decision to put Roşia Montană on the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger. This constitutes a rightful urgent call to all stakeholders, from local and national to European and international levels, to gather necessary expertise and resources for developing a holistic plan for the future of Roşia Montană.

We especially urge the European Union to provide necessary support to the Romanian authorities to ensure a truly sustainable and inclusive revival of this World Heritage site, with due involvement of local communities and civil society and in accordance with the excellent recommendations just adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

Europa Nostra stands ready to contribute to these efforts. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Committee members. Let us proceed, I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Nice Capital of Riviera Tourism, France, but Before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

Le Secrétariat :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous avons reçu une notification d'erreurs factuelles concernant l'évaluation de ce bien, et cette notification est à la page 86 du document INF.8B.4. Merci.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Voici la présentation de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS sur Nice, capitale du tourisme de riviera, France. L'ICOMOS a reçu une lettre d'erreurs factuelles pour cette évaluation et a accepté ces erreurs. La ville de Nice témoigne de l'évolution de la station climatique hivernale, villégiature d'hiver, influencée par sa situation au bord de la mer Méditerranée et sa proximité avec les Alpes. À partir du milieu du XVIII^e siècle, la douceur du climat et le cadre pittoresque de Nice attirèrent de plus en plus de familles aristocratiques, qui prirent l'habitude d'y passer leur hiver. Bien que certaines comparaisons auraient pu être davantage développées, l'ICOMOS considère que l'analyse comparative a bien démontré l'importance historique de Nice en tant que station climatique hivernale dotée d'une réputation cosmopolite, principalement au XIX^e siècle, et ce à un degré plus élevé que d'autres sites influencés par des phénomènes culturels similaires. L'échange d'idées et d'influences provenant de ce phénomène se reflète principalement dans son architecture, à travers la variété des styles architecturaux, des conceptions et des décorations des bâtiments. Pour ces mêmes raisons, le bien proposé pour inscription répond au critère (ii). Le bien proposé pour inscription comprend la majeure partie du front de mer de la baie des Anges, une grande partie de la plaine de Nice et une partie des collines environnantes. Au cours du cycle d'évaluation, les échanges entre l'ICOMOS et l'État partie ont abouti à des ajustements de délimitations afin de mieux refléter la situation des attributs véhiculant la valeur universelle exceptionnelle potentielle. Des révisions supplémentaires seront nécessaires afin de refléter la situation des attributs associés à la période qui exprime pleinement l'importance de Nice en tant que station climatique hivernale. Les conditions d'intégrité ne sont donc que partiellement remplies à ce stade. Au moment où le panel de l'ICOMOS a formulé ses recommandations, et sur la base des informations fournies par l'État partie au cours du processus d'évaluation, la désignation et la protection juridique du bien proposé pour inscription en tant que site patrimonial remarquable n'avaient pas été entièrement approuvées. L'ICOMOS considère que la protection juridique du bien sera adéquate lorsque ce mécanisme juridique sera mis en place. Certains aspects du système de gestion pourraient être améliorés, notamment en ce qui concerne les ressources humaines, de contenu du plan de gestion et d'une meilleure collaboration entre les différents acteurs responsables de la gestion du bien proposé pour inscription. En résumé, les conditions d'authenticité ont été démontrées, mais les conditions d'intégrité ne sont que partiellement remplies à ce stade. Le critère (ii) est justifié, mais les critères (iv) et (vi) n'ont pas été démontrés. La zone tampon est considérée comme adéquate, mais les limites du bien proposé pour inscription nécessitent des ajustements supplémentaires ; la protection juridique n'est pas encore entièrement en place ; certains aspects du système de gestion doivent être renforcés. Bien que l'ICOMOS accepte les clarifications fournies par l'État partie dans la lettre d'erreurs factuelles en ce qui concerne l'étendue de la Promenade des Anglais, il souligne la nécessité de revoir les délimitations du bien, lesquelles ne se limitent pas à cette question. En conclusion, l'ICOMOS recommande que Nice, capitale du tourisme de riviera, France, soit renvoyé à l'État partie pour les raisons suivantes: réviser davantage les délimitations du bien proposé pour inscription afin qu'elles reflètent le cadre temporel historique compris entre 1760 et les années 1930 et la situation des attributs principaux qui expriment de manière significative l'échange d'influences, essentiellement en relation avec les évolutions de l'architecture ; finaliser et approuver officiellement les désignations du bien proposé pour inscription comme site patrimonial remarquable afin d'assurer une protection juridique appropriée. L'ICOMOS recommande également que le nom du bien soit modifié pour devenir Nice, la ville de la villégiature d'hiver de riviera. De plus, l'ICOMOS a inclus un certain nombre de recommandations supplémentaires dans le projet de décision afin de renforcer la conservation du bien sur le long terme. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Ethiopia, please.

Délégation de l'Éthiopie :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Nous avons soumis, au nom de l'État français, des amendements sur le projet de décision qui demandent à ce que ce patrimoine exceptionnel soit inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial à cette session. L'ICOMOS lui-même a reconnu la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien sur la base du critère (ii). Les dimensions urbaines, paysagères et architecturales exceptionnelles du bien sont clairement démontrées. L'ICOMOS a exprimé deux préoccupations. La première concerne la protection du site et notamment l'entrée en vigueur du dispositif juridique français du site du patrimoine remarquable, un dispositif qui permet une protection du bien par une action conjointe des services de l'État français et de la ville de Nice. Or, le 30 juin 2021, le Conseil métropolitain a adopté à l'unanimité l'entrée en vigueur de ce dispositif, qui permet donc une protection du site. Par conséquent, cette préoccupation est adressée. La deuxième préoccupation concerne les modifications du périmètre. Une première concerne la place Garibaldi, et la deuxième concerne la Promenade des Anglais à l'ouest de la rivière Magnan. L'État partie propose de retenir la recommandation de l'ICOMOS concernant la place Garibaldi. Il considère que l'aménagement de cette place royale n'est pas stricto sensu lié à la fonction de villégiature d'hiver, donc sa soustraction permettra de rendre ce dernier plus homogène. Par contre, nous pensons que la partie ouest de la Promenade des Anglais doit être maintenue dans le périmètre, car la suggestion formulée par les experts de l'ICOMOS concernant la Promenade des Anglais se fonde sur une erreur factuelle. Monsieur le Président, je donnerai la parole à l'État partie pour qu'il nous fournisse des explications plus détaillées sur la protection juridique en relation avec ce site, mais permettez-moi de dire: ce site est vraiment exceptionnel parce qu'il change le paradigme souvent avancé, à savoir, vous avez un patrimoine, puis ensuite vous avez du tourisme. Or ici il s'agit de la villégiature, c'est-à-dire du tourisme, qui a donné lieu à un patrimoine exceptionnel. À ce titre,

compte tenu également de l'emplacement du lieu, c'est à dire dans ce monde méditerranéen où l'échange et l'ouverture sur l'autre sont essentiels, l'apport venu d'ailleurs a fait ce patrimoine. C'est un message formidable, pour aujourd'hui et demain, pour que cet ensemble méditerranéen porte un message qui corresponde à l'esprit de notre Convention. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I will give the floor to the State Party after Committee members. Dear Committee members, due to the time constraints, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief. Now, Egypt please.

Délégation de l'Égypte :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Je serai vraiment très bref. L'Égypte se félicite que l'ICOMOS reconnaisse la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien niçois sur la base du critère (ii). Toutefois, l'ICOMOS recommande que la proposition d'inscription soit renvoyée à l'État partie pour deux points principaux. Premièrement, le site patrimonial remarquable, dispositif juridique français permettant dans le cadre du plan de gestion la protection du bien pour une action conjointe des services de l'État français et de la ville de Nice, n'est pas encore entré en vigueur. Deuxièmement, l'ICOMOS recommande de réviser davantage la délimitation du bien proposé afin de mieux l'adapter à la définition de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle à partir du seul critère (ii), mais aussi de prendre en compte une période de constitution du bien qui irait de 1760 à 1939, et non pas de 1760 à 1949, comme le proposait l'État partie. Dès lors que ces deux recommandations de l'ICOMOS ne remettent pas en cause la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien proposé, l'Égypte souhaiterait entendre l'avis de l'État partie sur ces deux points soulevés par les experts de l'ICOMOS. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. The elasticity of this site historical timeframe from 1760 to 1930s was rich, dynamic and profusely vibrant not only intangibly, but as well as its character, geography and associated boundaries replacements and cognate buffer zoning since culture is not a static phenomenon. As such, Mr. Chairman, the boundaries delineated in the proposed amendment are emblematic of these very attributes in expressing the interchange of influences pertaining particularly to the property's historical architectural prosperity. Furthermore, Chair, the modification of these boundaries never occurred, and to date, this liveable process occurs in a legal conservation planning management regime. This very regime also ensures most proficient community participation, buffer zoning, inventorying of the properties, pieces of heritage architecture and as well as their adaptive reuse, preservation of the authenticity of the interiors and exteriors and minimisation of unauthorized additions, subtractions and or alterations.

Chair, this whole defence is clearly represented in the statement of OUV and associated criteria for nomination as proposed in the amendment for its nomination and inscription on the World Heritage List which my Delegation strongly supports. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Chairperson. Thailand would like to express our support for the inscriptions of Nice, winter resort town of the Riviera on the basis of criterion (ii). The site fulfils the criterion of showing evidence of considerable exchange of influence during given period or in a given cultural area on the development of architecture or technology, monumental arts, city planning or landscape creation. However, we have learned that the Advisory Body has some observation on the protection of the property. Thailand recognises that there have been positive developments by the authorities concerned to address the issue with protective urban regulations coming into effect this month. With this in mind Thailand supports the inscription of Nice on the World Heritage List at this session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please.

Délégation du Brésil :

Merci. Nous ne voyons, Monsieur le Président, aucun obstacle à l'inscription de ce site sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. L'organisation consultative a reconnu sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle sur la base du critère (ii), puisque la ville de Nice réunit de façon singulière les influences culturelles héritées de différents pays dans son architecture et ses paysages diversifiés et cosmopolites, qui font d'elle la capitale de la riviera française. L'ICOMOS approuve également cette analyse comparative et atteste de la pertinence de ces conditions d'authenticité, de

conservation et de gestion. Il a émis des recommandations visant à une amélioration, mais elles ne font pas obstacle à l'inscription de ce site sur la Liste. Il existe deux motifs pour lesquels l'organisation consultative recommande un renvoi au lieu de l'inscription du site. Le premier concerne la légère divergence qui se réfère à la période historique de la ville, la réduisant de dix ans, ainsi que les ajustements correspondant à ses limites. L'État partie a accepté les propositions de l'ICOMOS concernant la période et a partiellement incorporé les ajustements des limites suggérées, tout en présentant les justificatifs appropriés pour maintenir une partie des limites originales, lesquelles correspondent effectivement à la période historique proposée. Le second motif demande que la ville de Nice, avant de devenir un site du patrimoine mondial, soit désignée comme site patrimonial remarquable par la loi française afin de lui assurer une protection juridique adéquate. Il s'agit là d'une demande légitime et l'État partie a fait tout son possible afin d'y répondre à temps pour cette session. Les mesures juridiques demandées ont été en effet approuvées à l'unanimité par le Conseil métropolitain de Nice et sont entrées en vigueur le 15 juillet dernier. Il n'y a donc aucune raison, Monsieur le Président, de retarder l'inscription de ce site sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Nous soutenons de ce fait l'amendement proposé par l'Éthiopie. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Kyrgyzstan supports the inscription of Nice on the World Heritage List. Our Delegation wishes, if France agrees, to follow the last part of the ICOMOS recommendation concerning the management plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Excellency, Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor again and let me start by thanking the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies for their great efforts in studying and analysing this site. I would also like to thank my experts who are members of the Delegation of this meeting for their effort to study both the ICOMOS assessment report and the amended Draft Decision.

Mr. Chair, as stated in the nomination dossier, the nominated property represents an important example of the merging of British, Italian, French, Russian and other cultural influences resulting in a diversity of architectural style, designs and building decoration that expressed the cosmopolitan character as a winter climatic resort particularly during the 19th century. Also stated by ICOMOS, the property as an OUV.

In its response, France welcomed and acknowledged the ICOMOS recommendations compiled and responded to the ICOMOS point of view about criteria (ii). It accepted the 1930s as the limitation of the winter resort town of Nice; accepted, also, to remove the Garibaldi Square. It undertakes to provide the map of this revised delimitation reflecting the OUV according to criterion (ii). With regard to the west of the Magnan valley, we support the view of the State Party that this part is to be included in the boundary of the nominated property.

Therefore, this shows strong commitment and we complement the State Party for ensuring the protection of the OUV of the nominated property and its integrity and authenticity. Considering the positive opinion about the OUV of the property under criterion (ii) and the readiness and willingness of the State Party to comply and accept all recommendations from ICOMOS, as per its document nomination, Nice responded to the questions asked by ICOMOS.

Mr. Chair, the Oman's Delegation sees it as a strong file and supports the immediate inscription of Nice at this session of the World Heritage Committee. I thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Nice Winter resort town of the Riviera is a heritage site combining the characteristics of French, English, Italian, Russian and other cultures and reflects the diversity of architecture styles, designs and decors. China appreciates the effective dialogue with the Advisory Body. Criterion (ii) is justified, the requirements for authenticity and integrity are met and the management system is adequate.

We express our special appreciation to the Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolitan Council for having adopted unanimously on the 30th of June 2020 the protective urban regulation which entered into force this month. China supports the inscription of this property on the List.

Mr. Chairperson, I would like to add that the city of Nice is a twin city with Xiamen in China and Kulangsu: A Historic International Settlement inscribed on the List in 2017, bearing a clear testimony to the meeting of different cultures

and the dissemination of different cultures. China will strongly support the exchanges between the two cities. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. Our Delegation welcomes the position of ICOMOS recognising the OUV of the city of Nice. This recognition is important for us due to the long time and massive Russian historic presence in that city and the region since the middle of the 19th century. Our fellow countrymen and women not only made a significant contribution to the social and cultural life of Nice, but also left important architectural monuments like Saint Nicholas Cathedral, thus having contributed to the OUV of the city.

I would also like to underscore the importance of Nice as a recommended place for medical treatment of lung disease, in particular, tuberculosis, which was a deadly disease in the 19th century. To be precise, Nice not only served to entertain the European aristocracy but also was a place where human lives were saved.

With this in mind, we support the immediate inscription of this property on the World Heritage List and the corresponding amendments presented by Ethiopia. We believe that the remaining issues raised by the Advisory Body could be settled in the coming months if they have not been already settled on the year of the Committee session.

At the same time, I would like to ask the State Party the following question: as far as we know, ICOMOS proposed to modify the title of the property, what is the position of the State Party on this particular subject? Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after a while to answer the questions. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. The Delegation of Guatemala would like to thank and say how much they value the work done by the Advisory Bodies studies and recommendations. Our Delegation would also like to thank the State Party for the work it has done and presented in this nomination, on the pre-existing urban nucleus and human settlement dedicated to an urban and cosmopolitan beach resort on the Riviera which has the privilege of a winter climate which character meets between mountain and the Mediterranean and is very special.

We would also like to appreciate the way the environment has been included in these considerations which are relevant to us today. We, also, need to appreciate that the State Party has wished to apply the recommendations made by the Advisory Bodies. For us, it seems that in the future we will do as you suggested, Mr. Chairman, we should arrive at a consensus and approve the amendment, so as to put Nice on the List, so that all of humanity and States Parties may work further on the maintenance of this specific and beautiful site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, as you have realised, we have a very heavy agenda today. There is still quite a number of Committee members on my list. I would like to kindly ask you to be very brief to speak out your position. If it is only to fully support or second the proposal made by the previous colleagues. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Now, Hungary please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. According to the ICOMOS evaluation, the nominated property presents an important example of the merging of British, Italian, French, Russian and other cultural influences resulting in a diversity of architectural styles, design and building decorations that express its cosmopolitan character as a winter climatic resort particularly during the 19th century. Thus, the nominated property meets criterion (ii). Moreover, the ICOMOS evaluation report also validates the comparative analysis.

France has made remarkable efforts to comply with the recommendations made by ICOMOS during the nomination process. However, there remain two issues where ICOMOS suggested the nomination to be referred. In its answer sent to the Committee member, it clarified that to avoid the gap in the perimeter of the nominated site, France has removed the Garibaldi square from the property core zone on its buffer zone. On the other hand, the protected urban regulations of remarkable heritage site were approved by the metropolitan council at the end of June. Thus, the important reason for the referral of the nomination is no longer valid.

To conclude, Hungary supports the amendments submitted by Ethiopia regarding the inscription of Nice winter resort town of the Riviera on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (ii). Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will ask the State Party to answer the questions after Committee members. Now, South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. South Africa strongly supports the inscription of Nice on the World Heritage List. We thank the State Party for submitting this exemplary site which, as the distinguished delegate of Ethiopia said, aptly demonstrates the nexus between heritage and tourism. We have noted that ICOMOS has raised two concerns. One on the legal protection and the second on boundaries. We welcome the clarification provided by Ethiopia that, on the 30th of June, the municipality of Nice incorporated the relevant national law into its regulations in order to offer sufficient protection to the site.

Regarding the boundaries, we have also noted that the observation is based on a factual error which the State Party will clarify. With these remarks we support the amendment, as proposed by Ethiopia, in order to inscribe this site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Delegation of Nigeria appreciates the recommendations made by ICOMOS and also the responses from the State Party which shows that Nice has OUV and should be inscribed on the World Heritage List based on criterion (ii). In addition to what other committee members have said and the amendment put forward by Ethiopia, the Delegation of Nigeria wants to support the amendment and agrees that Nice should be inscribed on the World Heritage List in this session. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le bien proposé pour inscription représente un exemple important de la fusion des influences culturelles britanniques, italiennes, françaises, russes et autres, résultant en une diversité de styles architecturaux, de conception et de décoration du bâtiment qui expriment son caractère cosmopolite en tant que station climatique d'hiver, en particulier au XIX^e siècle. Ce bien répond à notre avis à des critères d'intégrité et d'authenticité et, afin d'assurer la préservation de sa valeur universelle exceptionnelle, un plan de gestion comprenant les mesures de protection, de conservation et de développement à mettre en œuvre sera élaboré conjointement par l'État partie de France et les autorités locales et régionales concernées. Au vu de tout cela, nous appelons le Comité à donner un avis favorable à son inscription. Merci.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine soutient l'amendement de l'Éthiopie pour l'inscription de Nice. Cette ville porte un esprit méditerranéen et la capacité de rester cohérente avec ses traditions et les valeurs qui la recommandent pour l'inscription, c'est cette valeur universelle et le message qu'elle porte à travers les siècles de son existence. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Chair. I will be brief. I would first like to thank ICOMOS for their evaluation and recommendations and given the report that was submitted by ICOMOS and what we have heard and seen from the State Party with regard to the implementation of these recommendations whether they are being implemented or already implemented, we think that this site justifies being inscribed with an OUV under criterion (ii). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I will be very brief and to say that Australia is delighted to be able to support the inscriptions of Nice, this beautiful city with its multiple architectural styles and a kind of symbol of lots of countries coming together in leisure and spending time together. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I would like to ask the State Party to take the floor to answer questions raised by the Committee members. You have the floor.

Délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, et merci à tous les membres du Comité qui se sont exprimés en faveur de cette inscription. Avant toute chose, Monsieur le Président, je souhaiterais présenter notre solidarité avec les familles des victimes de la catastrophe naturelle qui sévit en ce moment en Chine. Je souhaiterais aussi vous remercier pour cette présidence remarquable de la 44^e session du Comité que vous effectuez. En réponse aux questions qui me sont posées, je voudrais dire que nous nous félicitons que l'ICOMOS reconnaisse la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien proposé, et accepte de se ranger à son avis d'inscrire le bien uniquement au titre du critère (ii), car ce critère prend en compte la dimension urbaine et paysagère aussi bien qu'architecturale. La France accepte également la limite de 1939 comme fin de période de constitution du bien ; ce décalage de dix ans sur deux siècles n'a toutefois pas d'incidence sur la limitation du bien étant donné qu'il a été très peu construit durant la période de la guerre et de l'après-guerre, entre 1939 et 1949. Les statistiques de datation du bâti, qui figurent dans le mémoire transmis à l'ICOMOS en février 2021, démontrent que l'ensemble du bien présente, selon les secteurs, entre 60 et 95 % de bâti façonné par la villégiature cosmopolite d'hiver, donc antérieure à 1939. Toutefois, la France a examiné avec soin deux propositions de modification du périmètre suggérées par l'ICOMOS, qui portent l'une sur la place Garibaldi, l'autre sur la Promenade des Anglais à l'ouest de la rivière Magnan. Nous retenons la recommandation de l'ICOMOS concernant la place Garibaldi, car l'aménagement de cette place royale n'est pas stricto sensu lié à la fonction de villégiature d'hiver, et sa soustraction du périmètre permettra en outre de rendre celui-ci plus homogène. En revanche, nous estimons que la partie ouest de la Promenade des Anglais doit être maintenue dans le périmètre, car la suggestion amenée par l'ICOMOS concernant la Promenade des Anglais se fonde sur une erreur factuelle. En effet, contrairement à ce qui figure dans le rapport, la Promenade des Anglais n'était pas avant 1939 limitée à l'ouest par la rivière Magnan. Le prolongement de la Promenade à l'ouest de la rivière était prévu dès 1882, et c'est pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, donc avant 39, que la Promenade des Anglais a été de fait prolongée sur l'ensemble de la baie. La France a d'ailleurs relevé l'erreur factuelle contenue dans le rapport d'évaluation de l'ICOMOS. Il n'y a donc pas de raison de modifier le périmètre, car ce secteur de la Promenade des Anglais contient de nombreux édifices remarquables et représentatifs de la villégiature d'hiver de riviera. Nous nous engageons à fournir dès à présent une carte du nouveau périmètre qui reflète la valeur universelle exceptionnelle au titre du critère (ii), puisque les attributs de la VUE sont présents dans tous les secteurs inclus à l'intérieur du périmètre du bien. Concernant le site patrimonial remarquable, la France peut vous annoncer qu'il a été adopté officiellement et rendu exécutoire par délibération du Conseil métropolitain de Nice le 30 juin 2021. S'agissant du nom, nous nous soumettons à la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de reconnaître le bien au titre du patrimoine mondial sous le nom Ville de villégiature d'hiver de riviera. Enfin, la France s'engage, si Nice était inscrite sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, à transmettre d'ici la fin de l'année 2022 un rapport répondant notamment à ces dernières recommandations de l'ICOMOS. L'inventaire aura été complété et fera état des intérieurs remarquables ainsi repérés ; et de nouvelles protections individuelles au titre des monuments historiques intérieurs et extérieurs porteurs de la VUE auront été établies. Conformément aux recommandations, la France s'engage également à évaluer l'efficacité du plan de gestion et à l'adapter avant 2025 avec de nouveaux indicateurs de suivi des facteurs affectant le bien. En matière de gouvernance, la France rappelle le dispositif institué sur l'ensemble de son territoire appliqué à tous les biens du patrimoine mondial: il crée des commissions locales et leurs déclinaisons en divers comités et groupes de travail scientifiques. Ces outils facilitent en effet la bonne coopération entre les parties prenantes de la gestion du bien. La France rappelle également l'engagement pris par la ville de Nice de maintenir une mission spécifiquement dédiée à la protection et à la valorisation du bien, rattachée directement au maire de la ville. En conclusion, Monsieur le Président, nous vous remercions et nous remercions les membres du Comité pour la reconnaissance au patrimoine mondial cette année de Nice, la ville de villégiature d'hiver de riviera. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words, your sympathy and solidarity for the Chinese people in the flood-stricken areas. Thank you for your response. I want to clarify, Mali, you are requesting for the floor?

Délégation du Mali :

Non, j'ai déjà pris la parole. Je soutiens l'amendement.

Chairperson:

Bosnia-Herzegovina, you are requesting the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

No, it is okay. It was from the last time. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. ICOMOS, do you have any comments or supplementary information?

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. ICOMOS wishes only to underline that the factual error that has been noted by the State Party of France concerned the fact that historical cartography provided in the nomination dossier was not detailed enough for ICOMOS to really understand to what extent the Promenade des Anglais was already conceived before the timeframe that ICOMOS considered relevant for the justification of inscription. With the clarification provided, ICOMOS is satisfied and thanks the State Party for the fruitful dialogue that we had during the evaluation process. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. I now, invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.38. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment submitted by Ethiopia and co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes Nice, Winter Resort Town of the Riviera, France, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (ii).'

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3. 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' and we have the components in French.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4: 'Requests the State Party to revise the boundaries of the property to reflect the historical timeframe between 1760 and the 1930s, and the mapping of the key attributes that significantly express the interchange of influences, mainly in relation to developments in architecture'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

a) Completing the ongoing inventory of built heritage, which will serve as a solid basis for conservation and management purposes [...] I will not actually read through all the text Mr. Chair, it is in the original Draft Decision paragraph 3.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Original paragraph 4 is proposed for deletion, new paragraph 6. 'Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2021, a revised map indicating the boundaries of the property and the document officially granting the required national-level protection, Site Patrimonial Remarquable'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7: 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Yes, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now, that we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.38 adopted as amended ^[gave!]. Let me congratulate France for the second time in our session, on behalf the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. France, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

Délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je voudrais vous remercier encore une fois chaleureusement, et remercier infiniment tous mes collègues, amis, membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial pour le travail de soutien qu'ils ont apporté à l'ensemble des candidats tout au long de cette 44^e session. Je remercie l'ICOMOS et le Centre du patrimoine mondial pour leur engagement au service de la Convention de 1972 et de ses États membres. Enfin, je me réjouis vivement, avec M. le maire de Nice, Christian Estrosi, qui nous suit de l'endroit où il se trouve, son représentant pour le patrimoine, le maire adjoint, M. Gérard Baudoux, et Jean-Jacques Aillagon et son équipe de la mission Nice patrimoine, qui ont porté ce dossier de bout en bout pour cette sublime reconnaissance de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle de la ville-jardin, celle du cosmopolitisme et des échanges d'influence considérables. Nice est désormais une ambassadrice de l'UNESCO et nous nous en félicitons profondément. Je passe la parole à M. Jean-Jacques Aillagon et ensuite à M. le maire adjoint.

Jean-Jacques Aillagon :

Monsieur le Président, je m'associe aux remerciements de l'ambassadrice. Je dois vous dire que je suis très heureux, également en ma qualité d'ancien ministre de la culture de la République française, que Nice figure désormais sur la Liste des biens du patrimoine mondial ; ces biens qui sont des révélateurs de la singularité de chacune de nos cultures, dans le respect de la diversité des cultures, et ces biens également qui appartiennent à toutes les femmes et à tous les hommes de la Terre.

Gérard Baudoux :

Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les membres du Comité, je me réjouis bien évidemment à mon tour, au nom de la ville de Nice et de son maire, Christian Estrosi, de l'honneur qui nous est fait par cette inscription de Nice, la ville de villégiature d'hiver de riviera, sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Enfin, Christian Estrosi et moi-même, dédions l'insigne honneur qui nous est fait par l'UNESCO aux Niçoises et aux Niçois, avec qui nous partageons la responsabilité et le devoir de conserver précieusement pour les générations à venir le patrimoine de cette ville désormais inscrite sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

Chairperson:

Merci et félicitations. Dear colleagues, I suggest we have a technical break for ten minutes.

Dear colleagues, let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Sítio Roberto Burle Marx, Brazil, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Sítio Roberto Burle Marx, Brazil. Sítio Roberto Burle Marx is a property which comprises extensive landscape gardens and buildings which was a laboratory for landscape architect and artist Roberto Burle Marx reflecting the experimental fusing of modernist artistic ideas with native tropical plants to create garden designs as a living work of art. The property demonstrates an important interchange related to landscape design and a profound impact on the development of what is now known as modernist tropical garden design. It is an outstanding example of a landscape demonstrating the development of this new type.

Thanks to additional information and documentation provided by the State Party during the evaluation process, the amplified comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property and criteria (ii) and (iv) have been demonstrated.

The nominated property area includes all attributes of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. That is to say extensive landscape gardens with integrated buildings and lake clustered on sloping land above native forest. The conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met although the attributes are vulnerable to incremental change over time.

Although the property is protected, effective protection for the setting and views needs to be enhanced in relation to urban expansion. A conservation plan is needed and should be based on a clear identification of attributes and baseline data as the basis for conservation strategies. ICOMOS also recommends the management plan reflect the defined attributes. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal value of the nominated property.

To conclude: ICOMOS recommends that Sítio Roberto Burle Marx, Brazil, be inscribed on the World Heritage List, as a cultural landscape on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv). A number of further recommendations are included in the Draft Decision regarding documentation conservation planning, management and protection. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision. Can we agree on such a proposal? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.27. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.27 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Brazil, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Brazil, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a great moment for us, an exceptional recognition for the lifetime work by Roberto Burle Marx and a message to the world on what can be accomplished when art and science join hands for the creation of beauty and the preservation of biodiversity. We are celebrating here in Rio de Janeiro and all of us in Brazil. It is a victory for all of us and I am very proud to be here, as this is my first World Heritage Committee, to be able to thank the Committee, the Secretariat and ICOMOS for this extraordinary result.

You will now see a brief message from Mr. Mario Frias our Secretary for Culture and Mrs. Larissa Peixoto, President of our national Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute, IFAN, who worked so hard for the preparation of this nomination. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. ^[video in Portuguese].

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations once more. Let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Chankillo Solar Observatory and ceremonial centre, Peru. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Chankillo Solar Observatory and ceremonial centre, Peru. The Chankillo archaeological site is located on the north-central coast of Peru and was in use for a relatively brief period between 200 and 250 BC. The constructions at the site including a line of 13 cuboidal towers which functioned together with natural features as a calendrical instrument. The Chankillo is distinguished from other examples of astronomical sites by its great age, size and by the fact that lines in several towers span the entire solar rising and setting arc so that it functions throughout the year. The nominated property demonstrates criteria (i) and (iv) but does not meet criterion (v).

This nomination contains Chankillo and the Cerro Mucho Malo whose southern slope becomes the natural marker to form a continuous astronomical horizon. The two component parts are embedded in a large buffer zone that protects the view shaded. The requirements for authenticity and integrity have been met. The site still allows a present-day spectator to observe and understand the function of the Chankillo solar observatory. The boundaries of the two component parts of the nominated property were defined on the basis of arc astronomical considerations. Separating the two parts is a strip of agricultural fields that are linked to the bed of the Casma River.

The nominated property has been declared national cultural heritage and the process of legal physical sanitation has been concluded. The nominated property has a recently approved multi-sectoral decentralised and participatory management plan. The conservation challenges have been clearly identified. In the Draft Decision, ICOMOS has included a recommendation to develop a long-term conservation programme. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the Chankillo Solar Observatory and ceremonial centre, Peru, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (i) and (iv) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as for the previous properties recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision. Is that okay with you? I see no objections. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.29. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.29 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Peru, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Peru, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Peru:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, I wish to express my solidarity for the flood in Henan. I wish to say that our country, Peru, is distinguished by its extensive biodiversity which has been the result of an ancestral civilisational process. Diversity that is reflected in the sites that are inscribed on the World Heritage List. For example, the most recent site registered in 2009-2014 the Sacred City of Caral-Supe and the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System.

Today, I would like to welcome with special gladness the inscription of the Chankillo archaeological complex on the World Heritage List which continues strengthening our national identity and ratifies Peru's commitment through its Ministry of Culture to continue working on sustainable management of our cultural and natural heritage and with the firm intention to achieve the commitments that we have assumed with the 1972 Convention.

These commitments have also allowed us to strengthen in a balanced manner our Tentative List updated in 2018 with sites such as the Santa Bárbara mining complex, Cultural Landscape of the Sondondo Valley, Rural Temples of Cusco of these systems islands and islets and Guaneriras points including the national reserve to Caramamarca. They are all examples of our cultural and natural heritage with the potential to be nominated in the near future.

Finally, I would like to express the deepest gratitude to the World Heritage Committee for its decision to register the Chankillo archaeological complex on the World Heritage List. This nomination fills us with pride, especially taking into account that we are very close to celebrating the bicentennial independent anniversary of my country. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

I thank you for your statement and once again congratulations. Now, let us proceed. I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, the work of engineer Eladio Dieste: Church of Atlántida, Uruguay. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. Just to remind the Committee that we received a notification, a letter, concerning factual errors included in the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 58 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS de l'œuvre de l'ingénieur Eladio Dieste : Église d'Atlántida, Uruguay. Pour cette évaluation, l'ICOMOS a reçu une lettre d'erreurs factuelles et certaines erreurs ont été

acceptées. *Diapositive suivante.* Inspirée de l'architecture religieuse médiévale italienne, l'église d'Atlántida, avec son beffroi et son baptistère, est l'une des expressions architecturales la plus aboutie, obtenue par l'application de techniques de construction innovantes grâce auxquelles de nouvelles réalisations spatiales, plastiques et de construction ont été réalisées. L'analyse comparative élargie fournie par l'État partie à la suite du rapport intérimaire de l'ICOMOS démontre l'importance de l'église d'Atlántida en tant que réinterprétation exceptionnelle d'un type ancien et complexe de bâtiment par une innovation de construction enracinée dans la tradition de construction de l'Amérique du Sud et répondant aux besoins locaux. Le critère (iv) a été démontré, mais pas le critère (i). *Diapositive suivante.* Le complexe de l'église est situé à Estación Atlántida, près de la ville d'Atlántida, à 45 km de Montevideo. Le complexe comprenait à l'origine une maison paroissiale et avait été conçu autour d'une place, avec des espaces verts, qui n'a pas été construite. Malgré quelques changements limités, les conditions d'authenticité et d'intégrité ont été remplies. Au cours du processus d'évaluation, les attributs ont été affinés et expriment désormais de manière spécifique la valeur du bien proposé pour inscription. Au cours de l'évaluation, les échanges entre l'ICOMOS et l'État partie ont abouti à l'ajustement des parcelles cadastrales du bien proposé pour inscription et à l'extension de la zone tampon, qui est désormais appropriée et dotée d'un mécanisme de protection. *Diapositive suivante.* La protection juridique est garantie par la désignation de protection la plus élevée. La zone tampon élargie offre également des mécanismes de protection juridique au niveau national. L'intégration du mécanisme d'évaluation de l'impact sur le patrimoine sera nécessaire pour renforcer la protection. Le système de gestion est globalement approprié, bien qu'un rôle plus clair pour le comité exécutif et des mécanismes d'implication régulière des communautés locales soient souhaitables. L'inclusion de certaines mesures pour la gestion des visiteurs sera bénéfique. Globalement, le bien proposé pour inscription est dans un état de conservation acceptable. Seul le baptistère devrait faire l'objet d'interventions, qui ont été planifiées et qui font partie du plan global. Un financement régulier est important pour assurer l'entretien à moyen et long terme du bien proposé pour inscription. *Diapositive suivante.* Voici un résumé de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS concernant la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien proposé pour inscription. *Diapositive suivante.* Pour conclure, l'ICOMOS recommande que l'œuvre de l'ingénieur Eladio Dieste : Église d'Atlántida, Uruguay, soit inscrite sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial sur la base du critère (iv). Un certain nombre de recommandations additionnelles ont été proposées dans le projet de décision afin de favoriser la conservation à long terme du bien. *Diapositive suivante.* Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members, for this property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection and no specific comments on it, shall we move on to the Draft Decision? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.30. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.30 adopted [gave]. Let me congratulate Uruguay, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Uruguay, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Uruguay:

[*Interpretation from Spanish*] Many Thanks. We greet you from Montevideo, Uruguay, with great happiness and pride. We thank the Chairman of the Committee and his team and the wonderful host, China, for this session of the meeting. We would also like to thank the UNESCO Committee and team who have supported us, always teaching us more about preservation of cultural property throughout the world and also the ICOMOS technical team. For us, this is a festive occasion.

It is a great joy for our country to see such a simple element with its light structure that lets light through that beautifies the territory. This work by an engineer that designed many other works in our country using a technical way of working that was also the work of the hands of many immigrants that came to live in our country and became a part of its reality, Italian and Spanish and many other origins of people. At a time when all different types of work were done, agricultural, industry, the religious side of life that made it possible to insert all of this into nature as well and the enormous strength and the sometimes lightness of this that can be only sympathise, I think, by saying that this is a grandiose activity that fills Uruguay with pride.

This is the third property that we inscribed, the first was in 1995 with the Historic Quarter of the City of Colonia del Sacramento and Fray Bentos Industrial Landscape and we feel great commitment in preserving these properties and have a management plan which is up to the task. We have learned very much from these two previous properties and I think we will go on learning how to preserve and to multiply and open to the world the richness of our country. So that, these lovely things made by the hands of human beings can belong to the future of other human beings. Many thanks and, if you allow me, we would also say that we will organise a popular fiesta to celebrate. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you and congratulations once again. Let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, Chile. The Draft Decision concerning this nomination can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, Chile. The Chinchorro Culture, the society of marine hunter gatherers who lived on the northern coast of the Atacama Desert from approximately 5450 BCE to 890 BCE, successfully adapted to extreme environmental conditions. Archaeological sites associated with the Chinchorro are recognised for having the oldest known artificially mummified human bodies.

The comparative analysis supports consideration of the nominated serial property of the World Heritage List. The archaeological remains bear a unique testimony to the complex spirituality of the Chinchorro Culture and the nominated property meets criterion (iii). Furthermore, the archaeological finds suggest that the nominated property has the potential to be considered an outstanding example of the interaction of a marine hunter-gatherer group with one of the world's driest environment, criterion (v).

The serial property includes three components the Faldeo Norte del Morro de Arica, just outside the main urban area of the city of Arica and Colón 10 site museum with in situ burials which is located within the urban fabric of Arica. These two components are united in one buffer zone. The third component is Desembocadura de Camarones, located about 100 kilometres south of Arica in a rural environment.

The different legal protection mechanisms at the property are adequate, nevertheless, some processes are still pending. The management system and the management are well thought out and complete in terms of covered as well as stakeholders' involvement.

In summary, while the conditions of authenticity have been met, the conditions of integrity of the whole series and of the individual component parts are difficult to assess due to insufficient information concerning the distribution of archaeological sites, finds and areas of archaeological potential. The boundaries of the Faldeo Norte del Morro de Arica component and the Desembocadura de Camarones component and buffer zone need adjustment. Elements of the legal protection are still pending. Including the nature sanctuary declaration, the renewal of the regulatory plan of the city of Arica and the Desembocadura de Camarones sectional plan. Furthermore, there are ownership disputes and illegal settlements in the Cadura Cameron component, the conservation measures and monitoring are not fully satisfactory at this stage. The management system and management plan are adequate but they are still work in progress and untested.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that settlements and artificial mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, Chile, be referred back to the State Party for the following main reasons:

- Provide a more complete understanding on how the settlement and adaptation aspects of the Chinchorro Culture are expressed, especially in support of criterion (v);
- Ensure that the highest available level of legal protection is in place for each of the nominated serial components;
- Resolve the relocation of the illegal settlement in the Desembocadura de Camarones component, adjust the boundaries of the components and the buffer zones as needed, in order to ensure the integrity of the property after carefully reviewing the extent, distribution and interrelationships of the archaeological evidence, as well as the new and existing legal protections;
- Finalise, approve and make operational the management plan and management system.

ICOMOS has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

[Interpretation from Spanish] It is with great satisfaction, Mr. Chairman, for Brazil to be able to present to the Committee, together with Guatemala, a proposal for amendment for the inscription of this extraordinary site on the List.

The settlement of Chinchorro Culture bears witness to human presence in the region of Arica and Parinacota 7,000 years ago around 5,400 BCE. And these remains have been passed on to us today thanks to the development of complex practices of mummification which are the oldest known mummification techniques for human bodies anywhere in the world. The candidacy presented by Chile is the result of admirable research work undertaken by

the Tarapacá University over a period of almost 20 years which has generated great interest in the local, national and international communities. This nomination evaluation has met its OUV under criterion (iii).

It also gives us a unique vision of the complex spirituality of a culture which has disappeared but existed for four millennia. ICOMOS recognises, moreover, the strong potential of the property for criterion with evidence of interaction of a culture of marine hunter-gatherer in one of the most arid and hostile landscapes in the world. The Advisory Bodies also considered that the authenticity of all the items presented as well as its individual items is satisfactory.

Concerning the integrity of the property, ICOMOS has sent additional information to the State Party but also indicated that adjustment of the boundaries in some components of the site would strengthen the protection and integrity of the site. This information requested was presented and the readjustment of the boundaries were accepted and incorporated in the site except a small site that does not contain any archaeological items.

Concerning requirements for protection and management, all the central elements are considered to be in their proper place but some additional clarifications have been requested. The State Party has explained that the property received the highest level of legal protection possible in Chilean law as an archaeological monument under the national monument law and a specific agency, the Chinchorro framework corporation was created by the Ministry and its management plan has been already delivered on the 11th of June to ICOMOS.

All of these requirements of the Advisory Bodies having been met, it seems to us that referral is no longer necessary and for this reason, Brazil recommends the Committee inscribe this property, which enriches, not only Chile, but all of us in the region and the List. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr. Chairman. We thank ICOMOS for their evaluation and we congratulate the State Party on their preparation for the nomination file. As it has already been indicated by the distinguished delegate from Brazil, scientific research carried out allowed us to be aware of the cultural characteristic of the Chinchorro Culture prolonged development of hunter-gatherer who lived in a desert area over a period of almost 4,000 years. It calls on us to recognise their great capacity to a hostile environment and to use marine resources. These archaeological sites and human bodies that have been mummified are among the oldest mummies that we are aware of in the world today. We see that the OUV of the different components show natural and cultural evidence of the importance of the site on the coast of the Atacama Desert where the Chinchorro people lived and prospered.

The ICOMOS evaluation showed that the conservation is viable and that the nominated site bears unique witness to the historical complexity of the Chinchorro Culture expressed through cemeteries where these mummies have been found. We consider on this file that, along with ICOMOS, criterion (iii) is justified and there is great potential for justification of criterion (v).

We therefore support the amendments to the Draft Decision so that we may proceed to the inscriptions of the site on the World Heritage List. This file is a step forward to rebalance the List and to make it into a more representative process regionally speaking. For Latin America it would be a great joy to see one more site inscribed on the List. Finally, we are also certain that the State Party will implement the recommendations included in the Draft Decision as they have already shown up until today. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Mr. Chairman. The very clear and simple position that we are used to hearing from our delegate from Brazil means that we do not have much to add, nor in the amendment. We would simply like to support the positions shown by Brazil and Guatemala for amending the text. As Brazil said the criteria for authenticity and others are recognised, they also see the potential of criterion (v) and we are aware of the situation of the management plan which has already been presented to ICOMOS. The legislation of the country does not always adjust in time to the demands that are made by heritage bodies but we know, given the capacity of management the State Party, Chile, has, we have no doubt that it will be to follow up and support the amendment presented by Brazil and Guatemala. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to thank Chile for the nomination of this site for inscription on the World Heritage List as well as ICOMOS for the assessment they provided. The site that we are considering fulfils, from our point of view, the required criteria for the inscription in this session, especially criteria (iii) and (v). The archaeological remains of the site present testimony and ideas about the afterlife of this civilisation. The archaeological sites associated with the property are famous for having the oldest known artificially mummified human bodies.

Of course, Mr. Chair, you could imagine the importance that, I, as Egyptian, could attach eventually to mummified human bodies. Furthermore, the legal protection of the nominated serial property, as it had been presented by the State Party, covers both the national and local levels. Thus, Mr. Chair, we strongly support the inscription of this site in the current session and we fully align ourselves with the amendment presented by Brazil. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. You can see that the archaeological site related to the Chinchorro Culture is known in history as the oldest artificially mummified human remains which make them exceptional not only in the world but also in the World Heritage List. These are the oldest mummies ever found anywhere in the world. Their natural preservation and mummification technique is also unique and the oldest in the world. The discovery of the mummies is unique for humanity and the OUV of the Chinchorro mummies is unquestionable. As recommended by ICOMOS, the archaeologists applied scientific research methods to explore, conserve and further study mummies and preserve them for the future generations.

Concerning the management plan and the management system being developed in accordance with the World Heritage Convention. The measures implemented in line with ICOMOS recommendations submitted in the document prepared by the Ministry of Culture Arts and Heritage and the Chinchorro Corporation as well as the University of Tarapacá are judged satisfactory. To conclude Hungary supports the amendments and the inscription of the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you. China would like to thank you for everything you have done for this evaluation and we are also very pleased about the work that has been done for protection by the State Party who feels the property is the best example of interaction between marine hunter-gatherer and nature. Following ICOMOS evaluation this property meets criterion (iii) in terms of authenticity and the mechanisms of protection are in place.

China agrees with those who have already spoken to support inscription on the List. We hope that the State Party will cooperate and strengthen cooperation with the Advisory Body after inscription, so as to further improve follow up on this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The archaeological sites associated with the Chinchorro Culture are best known for having the oldest known artificially mummified human bodies dating around 4,000 years old. The last evaluation report by the Advisory Body underlines that this property constitutes an exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition and a civilisation.

Mr. Chairperson, this nomination is the result of a collective research work that has been undertaken over the last two decades. It revealed that the Chinchorro Culture had developed a complex relationship between people in both living and dead environment. The artificially mummified bodies are unique because of their complexity, age and aesthetics. With regard to the protection and the management, we have learned that necessary measures and regulations have been put in place to provide maximum legal protection to the property. Furthermore, the Chinchorro Market Corporation has been established as a mechanism to handle the management of the archaeological site and the management plan.

Therefore, Thailand considers that with its outstanding values the site of settlements and artificial mummification of Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, Chile, deserved to be inscribed on the World heritage List. For this reason, Thailand supports the amendment proposed by Brazil and Guatemala. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving the floor to Ethiopia. I would like to show my appreciation for this archaeological site and extend our support to the amendment made by Brazil and Guatemala. Thank you so much, without taking much time.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. I have taken the floor to concur with many other members of the Committee who have supported the amendment presented by Brazil and Guatemala. The Chilean nomination on the Chinchorro Culture seems to us to be an interesting project which would deepen our knowledge of pre-Columbian culture as part of the universal culture. In the different reasons given for inclusion on the List, following criteria (iii) but also (v), it seems as if they had been written especially for this site.

We think the inscription could encourage the State Party to fulfil the relevant recommendations of ICOMOS, especially given the information that the Brazilian has given us. Some of these measures apparently have already been respected. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. The suggested nomination is of great interest no doubt about that. Without going further into the proposed nomination and taking into consideration all well-spoken interventions about the property, we would like to say that Norway supports primarily the Draft Decision to give the State Party the possibility to fulfil the complete nomination, in particular to adjust the scope considering criterion (v) and welcomes back the revised nomination. Saying that, we will not oppose the majority of the Committee. We would like to ask ICOMOS for their comments on the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you for your comment. First, I will give the floor to the State Party, Chile, to answer the questions posed by the Committee members. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. This is the first time Chile is taking the floor, so we would like to congratulate China for the organisation of the 44th session in these exceptional circumstances and the excellent way in which this meeting is taking place. We would also like to express our solidarity with China for the flooding which happened in the central part of the country.

The property nominated, Chinchorro, presents a hunter-gatherer marine society which settled on the coast of the Atacama Desert. They lived there for many millennia. This is a very serious nomination which contains different components and parts. I will mention the first two which concern urban areas, Arica and Camarones, and these components are among the oldest mummification in the world.

The Chinchorro Culture has lived together with its natural environment and artificial mummification which testify to the Chinchorro Culture. This is the fruit of research undertaken by the University for almost two decades and which has raised interest at local, national and international levels. There is considerable potential for this property in terms of OUV: for the marine culture in one of the driest areas in the world, we can also see the cemeteries where the Chinchorro mummies are to be found. So, criterion (iii) is fully respected and ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre requested Chile reinforced measures so that criterion (v) may be fully met.

We also consider that the authenticity and visual characteristics are fully satisfactory. This property of the Chilean State has already the highest possible protection that heritage can have for recognised archaeological sites falling under the relevant national law. Added to this are further measures for historic and natural sites. This site has been defined as a protected area under the Chilean environmental law and has all the necessary environmental evaluation procedures. This legal protection is also what is given to other sites inscribed on the List.

The Chinchorro Culture site also covers the three different components nominated Arica, Camarones and Tarapacá. The management plan has also been implemented for other initiatives. Thanks to this work, we have already been

able to present the management plan for approval by the national management council. We consider that for the Convention, we will be able to consolidate the different means to be implemented on the different sites concerned.

We would also like to thank the Advisory Bodies for the work they have done on the recommendations which we have taken on board to further increase the protection we give the site. As for the municipal planning process in Arica, local bodies have also promised to put forth an instrument that will give a further expression to these different forms of complementary preservation, archaeological and others, above and beyond those that are laid down in the Monuments Law of Chile.

We have sent this information to ICOMOS and the Committee on the 1st of July and we hope that the Committee will be able to act for the Chinchorro site and includes it on the List. Chile accepts its commitment to implement all the different recommendations made by the Advisory Bodies. Many thanks, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. And thank you for your kind words for the people of China affected by the floods. Now, I give the floor to ICOMOS.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. We welcome the additional information provided by the State Party in relation to ICOMOS recommendations. As a means of strengthening the integrity of the property in particular the extension of the boundaries of two component sites and the buffer zone. But we do need further clarification of these measures such as updated maps in order to confirm these changes. We also consider that clarification is needed on the changes to law 17288 that has been made and details of the newly approved regulatory plan of the city of Arica. As well as further information on the agreement and timetable for the removal of illegal settlements in the Desembocadura de Camarones component, so these are moved outside the buffer zone.

We hope the Committee will support the inclusion of these four points in the Decision. With your permission, Chair, ICOMOS would like to suggest additions to the recommendations on these matters when we reach the Draft Decision discussions. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.48. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment submitted by Brazil and Guatemala as shown on the screen. There are no changes proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes the Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, Chile, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (iii) and (v)'

Chairperson:

Is this approved? Yes. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. Takes note of the following provisional Statement'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Yes. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4 lists the recommendations from 'a' until 'i'. Mr. Chair, this is as in the original Draft Decision recommendations from original paragraph 4 I believe.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. As mentioned earlier, ICOMOS would like to make recommendations to add four small points to this section and I will read them if I may:

- 1)'Submit the newly approved Regulatory Plan of the city of Arica,
- 2) Provide updated information on the changes to the current cultural heritage legislation (Law No. 17,288 of National Monuments) and a time frame for its adoption,
- 3) Provide updated information on the agreement and timetable to relocate the illegal settlement in the Desembocadura de Camarones component part outside the buffer zone,
- 4) Provide updated maps in an appropriate scale, and topographic maps showing the revised boundaries of the Desembocadura de Camarones component part property and of the buffer zone,
- 5) Providing updated information on the implementation of the Management Plan'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I give some time to the member States and the Rapporteur to table the revision.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, this is way too fast for us to take note and I can see that it is not exactly the same as in the original Draft Decision paragraph 2. If I may ask to dictate very slowly, so that our typists could take note.

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

Rapporteur:

If the Committee members also are in agreement, of course.

Chairperson:

Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. According to our understanding this is the original item and paragraph. I do not know why we want to now insert an amendment which is not proposed for change from the author of the amendment, Brazil. I do not know why you want to add these paragraphs that are in the original Draft Decision. This is my question.

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair, if I may clarify.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Rapporteur:

We have in the original paragraph 2 certain recommendations for the State Party to implement additional recommendations in paragraph 3 of the original Draft Decision. Paragraph 3 is exactly as it is in here, but what ICOMOS is adding is reverted from the original paragraph 2 which was not included in the recommendations, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Yes. Oman, is it clear to you?

The Delegation of Oman:

I would like Brazil to comment on that. They are raising their hand.

Chairperson:

Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chairman, these inclusions that are proposed by ICOMOS were deleted in paragraph 2, so they are now revised as those. I would like to request my colleague from Chile to comment on these three new additions that ICOMOS are trying to bring back from paragraph 2 to paragraph 4. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Okay. Chile, please, you can take the floor to be very brief.

The Delegation of Chile:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We think that what ICOMOS is requesting — we wish to thank them in passing for their work — they are suggesting that we could implement heritage actions in Chile in line with the recommendations, therefore, there is no problem in terms of updating the Committee on this.

Now, regarding the Chinchorro project, we are currently undertaking a project with the Ministry. This could be updated to the Committee as well. Chile does stand ready to provide information on revised boundaries, and, as regards the implementation, we are currently undertaking work on this and will be pleased to share this with the Committee and the Advisory Body. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, is this okay with you?

The Delegation of Brazil:

Yes, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Okay. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. Listening to the two previous interventions by the State Party, we believe and we agree with the delegate from Brazil. As regards not including what was in the initial Decision, the State Party has been committed to these actions and in point 5 we are requesting an update that should be delivered by a specific date. We heard that the State Party is committed and is fully committed to the actions. Thank you very much, Sir.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, ICOMOS please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. ICOMOS would just like to clarify that we are actually not reinstating the original text form paragraph 2. We are proposing text which reflects the additional information that has been produced by the State Party. So, we are really asking for clarification and updated information to be submitted to confirm the developments and changes that have been put forward by the State Party. I would just like to clarify that. And I can read in more detail what we are proposing if you wish.

Chairperson:

Yes, please.

ICOMOS:

I will read slowly: 1) 'Submit the newly approved Regulatory Plan of the city of Arica, 2) Provide updated information on the changes to the current cultural heritage legislation (Law No. 17,288 of National Monuments) and a time frame for its adoption'.

Chairperson:

Slowly, please.

ICOMOS:

Point 3.

Rapporteur:

Just a second. I apologise, we are still on point 2.

ICOMOS:

Okay. I reiterate the points: 1) 'Provide updated information on the changes to the current cultural heritage legislation (Law No. 17,288 of National Monuments) and a time frame for its adoption', is that okay?

The next point:

2) 'Provide updated information on the agreement and timetable to relocate the illegal settlement in the Desembocadura de Camarones component part outside the buffer zone,

3) Provide updated maps, to an appropriate scale, and topographic detail showing the revised boundaries of the Desembocadura de Camarones component part and of the buffer zone'. The final point is:

4) 'Provide updated information on the implementation of the Management Plan'.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, is it okay now?

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our team is still trying to finalise, so that we can discuss the final wording once it is completed. Just two more minutes.

Chairperson:

Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have heard, it seems there is no problem for the State Party of Chile to include these additional points from the original Decision. Norway supports including these points. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As said by Guatemala, I think if we need to insert what has just been dictated by ICOMOS, we need to put them in paragraph 5 during the reporting. I do not see any reason why they are inserting these in paragraph 4 since we deleted them from paragraph 2. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. Sorry to take the floor once again. I just wish to request that we give floor to the State Party to comment on these last suggestions from ICOMOS supported by Norway. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. I give the floor to the State Party, to clarify this point. Chile, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Chile:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. As we mentioned before, on these points that we are developing we can provide updates and additional documentation to ICOMOS as requested. We need to identify clearly the time frame and the way in which to do this, but we would not have any problem doing this. On the contrary we are undertaking these measures and will be happy to share an update, and, as mentioned by Brazil and Guatemala, in December 2022 we will be happy to provide this update. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. So, is it okay for you, Guatemala, and for other parties, any objections? There are no objections. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, a report on the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.48 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Chile on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Chile, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Chile:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. On behalf of Chile, I would like to thank the World Heritage Committee and specifically Brazil and Guatemala as well as the other States Parties who supported the inscription of Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region, on the World Heritage List. We also would like to thank ICOMOS and the Secretariat for their great work, support and recommendations that they provided during the evaluation process.

This decision to inscribe the seventh Chilean site on the List is a landmark and we receive it with joy and a sense of responsibility. This is the result of strengthened efforts of various stakeholders to protect and enhance the testimony of the disappeared Chinchorro Culture and it showed the most ancient mummification strategy in humanity. The Chinchorro Culture was developed over 7,000 years ago by marine hunter-gatherer who settled in the Desert of Atacama which is the most arid of the world and the testimony of this has been preserved thanks to the climatic conditions in the north of Chile.

This nomination is the culmination of 20 years of work began in 1998. This World Heritage was included for the first time on the tentative World Heritage List. The University of Tarapacá with the State undertook research with the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage as well as the regional government and local and national institutions. These heritage sites benefit from the highest level of protection in Chile.

In addition to this, Chile has also advanced taking major steps to improve the knowledge, management and effective protection of the site. An administration officer has been appointed at the University of Tarapacá and at the Desembocadura de Camarones municipality and a management plan has been developed as well as a territorial plan for the City of Arica among other actions.

This nomination recognises the OUV for the settlements and the sophisticated practices of mummification of the Chinchorro Culture. It represents an incentive to work with the local community to address future challenges of our shared heritage.

Once again, we would like to thank China, the Committee and the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies whose recommendations we will implement reiterating our commitment as a State Party for the preservation of this exceptional site for all of humankind. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you and congratulations once again. Dear Committee members, let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the significant boundary modification to Earliest 16th Century Monasteries on the Slopes of Popocatepetl, World Heritage property to include a Franciscan Ensemble of the Monastery and Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption of Tlaxcala, Mexico. The Draft Decision concerning these nominations can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. But before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this extension and this notification also includes some parts that have some impact on the text of the statement of OUV. We, therefore, already included these corrections in the text which is on our screen. And the notification is to be found on page 97 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Voici la présentation de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS qui porte sur l'ensemble franciscain Notre-Dame de l'Assomption de Tlaxcala, en tant qu'extension des premiers monastères du XVI^e siècle sur les versants du Popocatepetl, au Mexique. Concernant cette évaluation, l'ICOMOS a reçu une lettre d'erreurs factuelles et a reconnu certaines de ces erreurs. L'ensemble franciscain du monastère et de la cathédrale Notre-Dame de l'Assomption de Tlaxcala fait partie du premier programme de construction lancé pour l'évangélisation et la colonisation des territoires du nord du Mexique. C'est l'un des trois monastères encore existants qui témoignent de cette période. Les deux autres sont inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Tout en se conformant au modèle architectural général, l'extension proposée présente des caractéristiques uniques, que l'on ne rencontre pas dans les autres monastères, notamment les atriums sur différents niveaux, une tour isolée et un plafond mudéjar en bois. L'extension proposée contribue à renforcer la manière dont les critères (ii) et (iv) transmettent la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien inscrit. Au cours de l'évaluation, des échanges entre l'ICOMOS et l'État partie ont abouti à des ajustements mineurs des limites. Cependant, des ajustements complémentaires sont nécessaires afin d'intégrer des zones autrefois occupées par l'atrium inférieur et le verger. Les conditions d'authenticité et d'intégrité sont remplies, mais elles sont vulnérables en raison des questions liées aux délimitations et à la protection de l'environnement du bien contre les effets négatifs potentiels du développement. Un système électrique obsolète présente des risques d'incendie considérables, en particulier compte tenu de l'importance du plafond en bois. L'État partie a commencé à mettre en œuvre des mesures pour traiter ces risques. Le système de gestion de l'ensemble franciscain pourrait être amélioré pour renforcer les dispositions de gouvernance et les règlements d'urbanisme afin de protéger les points de vue depuis et sur le monastère. Un cadre de gestion général pour l'ensemble du bien inscrit, y compris l'extension proposée, devrait être développé. Voici un résumé de l'évaluation de l'ICOMOS sur la façon dont l'extension proposée renforce la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien inscrit. En conclusion, l'ICOMOS recommande que l'extension des premiers monastères du XVI^e siècle sur les versants du Popocatepetl pour inclure l'ensemble franciscain du monastère et de la cathédrale Notre-Dame de l'Assomption de Tlaxcala, au Mexique, soit approuvée sur la base des critères (ii) et (iv). Un certain nombre de recommandations ont été introduites dans le projet de décision afin de renforcer la conservation du bien sur le long terme. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members for this property recommended for inscription and which is also an extension of a World Heritage site, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we also move to look at the Draft Decision. Can we agree on this? Okay. I see no objections. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.49. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.49 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Mexico on behalf of the entire Committee for the extension of this property.

Mexico, now, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Mexico:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate China for the organisation of this meeting and you for your excellent conduct of it. Also please receive our genuine solidarity with China for the people affected by the floods. Mexico would like to thank for their invaluable support the distinguished Committee members meeting here as well as the support received from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS and experts evaluating bodies for the inscription of this convent complex, extraordinary in nature, as an extension of the monasteries of the 16th century on the slopes just below the volcano of Popocatepetl,

This was made possible through the work done by the many people involved in this process, the government of the State, the municipality of Tlaxcala, the Institute of Anthropology and History and the Ministry of Culture. To talk about the meaning of this inscription, I should give the floor to Lourdes Herbert from the National Institute of Anthropology. Thank you once again.

Ms. Lourdes Herbert, National Institute of Anthropology:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many thanks, Ambassador. 17 years of shared effort are now concluding to arrive at this act of justice for the monumental complex which was the beginning of the evangelisation of the new world. The Convent Complex was the first monastery built in the valley of Tlaxcala and Puebla and worked as a spiritual, political, architectural and aesthetic expression of the Franciscan order. We are dealing with a singular work which was the result of people dealing with new ways of being, articulating styles and iconography of pre-hispanic and European art.

Distinguished member States, the first monasteries of the 16th century of Mexico gave new meaning to spaces and were the access to population just coming into being. The decision to include this site recognised indigenous moves to have dialogue with the Europeans thoughts and that they have survived up until today. These invaluable monuments have exceptional spiritual value for these regions. Mexico together with its authorities and the society of Tlaxcala committed themselves to designing and implementing innovative and integral processes for conservation and restoration of this property for its survival and so that everyone from all countries may enjoy them. We thank you as a country.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your support and solidarity towards the Chinese people in the flood-stricken area. Once again, congratulations to you. Dear colleagues, we are very good at time management today, we can continue with the nomination initially foreseen for tomorrow. With your permission, I would like to continue. Okay? I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Lower German Limes, Germany and the Netherlands, but before that, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Balsamo. You have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this notification has actually some impact on the text of the Decision which is already included in our screen. The notification is on page 94 of Document INF8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Lower German Limes, the Netherlands and Germany. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors.

At its greatest extent the Roman empire stretched 7,500 kilometres across Europe to northern Africa. Several sections have been inscribed in the World Heritage List. The lower German Limes was the earliest line of defence of the Roman empire and provided an impermeable frontier from the 1st until the 5th centuries. Almost all attributes are located entirely underground. The comparative analysis is based on the 2017 thematic study for the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. This segment is distinctive because of its long use and dynamic lowland river environment, leaving well-preserved organic material and structural remains associated with numerous military and civilian functions. The property demonstrates criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv).

The property extends approximately 400 kilometres across the former alignment of the lower Rhine River. There are 106 components in 44 clusters located within both urban and rural areas. The authenticity of the nominated components is generally very high. The integrity of the series is satisfactory although minor revisions to some boundaries and buffer zones have been agreed in principles with the States Parties in order to reduce their vulnerability.

Legal protection is in place for all components. Although some designations are in progress due for completion in 2021. The Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage cluster provides international cooperation across inscribed and other segments. Coordinated management for this nomination is provided by a joint Dutch-German management group overseen by an intergovernmental committee. The management plan establishes a common framework and individual management plans are being developed. Recommendations have been provided by ICOMOS for the establishment of common heritage impact assessment processes and guidance on reconstruction and visualisations.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. In conclusion, ICOMOS recommends that Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Lower German Limes, the Netherlands and Germany, be inscribed in the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as it is a property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection, I would like to kindly suggest that we go directly to examine the Draft Decision. Can we agree on such a proposal? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.40. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.40 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Germany and the Netherlands, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. The representative of the two States Parties you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of the Netherlands:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Netherlands, I would like to thank the World Heritage Committee for inscribing the Lower German Limes on the World Heritage List. We also thank ICOMOS for the evaluation of this nomination and especially for organising the two-week technical mission in difficult circumstances.

We are very happy with the inscription of the Lower German Limes because for this nomination we have been working together with a very large international network. Working together not only with people from the lower German Limes but with archaeologists and others all around the Mediterranean on the larger projects of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. An ambitious project in the spirit of the Convention, bringing together people from around the Mediterranean from Scotland until Morocco. We are proud to be part of that important project.

We will now show you messages by video from the Vice governor of the province of South Holland and our German partner of the State of North Rhine Westphalia and Rhineland Palatinate with whom we celebrate this inscription. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Willy de Zoete, Southern Holland Regional Minister for Cultural Heritage:

Standing between the historical collection of the national museum of antiquities in Leiden, I thank UNESCO for granting the lower German Limes in the Netherlands and Germany the status of UNESCO World Heritage. My name is Willy de Zoete, regional minister in the province of Southern Holland, chair of the joint Limes Committee. We are very proud that our application brought local and regional communities together in the international effort to preserve the history of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire for future generations.

Ms. Ina Scharrenbach, Minister of Regional Identity, Communities and Local Government, Building and Gender Equality of the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia:

Thank you for including us in the UNESCO World Heritage family. We are proud and grateful. I also want to thank the incredible team and all our partners who made this possible. Together, we will protect and develop the German Lower Limes the way an international heritage deserves. This former border will bring us closer together in the future. Thank you.

Mr. Roger Lewentz, Minister of the Interior and Sports of Rhineland-Palatinate:

The Roman heritage holds particular significance for Rhineland-Palatinate. Therefore, we would like to thank UNESCO for recognising the lower German Limes as World Heritage. We would also like to thank our partners for their excellent cooperation, together we are committed to caring for this important heritage of humankind.

Mrs Ulrike Lubek, Director of the Rhineland Regional Council:

My sincere thanks go to the World Heritage Committee for the decision to inscribe the Lower German Limes on the World Heritage List. This is an honour for the 19 municipalities in the Rhineland and a reward for the great commitment for our state services and for our archaeological heritage. Thank you.

Ms. Henriette Reker, Mayor of the City of Cologne:

The preservation of our cultural heritage is important to us, a city community. We have set up an education plan in order to preserve and to keep our knowledge about this heritage. Your decision is reassuring to us on this path. We are grateful and proud and I would like to thank you.

Dr Erich Classen, Director of the LVR-State Service for Archaeological Heritage:

I am very grateful to all those involved in working towards the inscription of the Lower German Limes. I look forward to promote protection and public awareness of this transnational serial World Heritage together with our partners along the Frontiers of the Roman Empire.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Once again, congratulations. Now let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz, Germany, but before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We received two factual errors notifications concerning the evaluation of this nomination which are to be found on pages 88 and 91 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. ICOMOS, please, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz, Germany. Located in the former imperial cathedral cities of Speyer, Worms and Mainz in the upper Rhine Valley. The ShUM sites have been nominated for they bear exceptional witness to Jewish community life in the diaspora and to the formation of the fundamentals of ascension of Judaism in the Low and Middle Ages with a long-lasting impact until today. The expanded comparative analysis has demonstrated the outstanding significance of the nominated series as testimonies to the emergence of the Ashkenazi cultural tradition and the interchange with the hosting culture resulting in prototypical architectural forms. All proposed criteria have been justified although not all proposed arguments have been retained.

The SHUM site is a serial property comprising four component parts. The Speyer Jewry-Court, the Worms synagogue compound, both including rare and almost intact medieval mikveh and two ancient cemeteries in Worms and Mainz. Despite the losses suffered by the monuments of the nominates series and taking account of the theme of the nomination, the condition of integrity and authenticity have been met. Some recommendations intend to sustain understanding and interpretation of the historic development of the nominated series. The boundaries of the buffer zones are acceptable but developments outside some of them need to be monitored carefully.

The legal protection is guaranteed by a combination of federal and state legal mechanisms as well as by bonding local provisions which are being revised and also cover the buffer zones. The management system appears adequate but an overall strategy for the interpretation of the nominated series as a whole is key for the understanding of the Outstanding Universal Value. Conservation is overall adequate but all sections of the cemeteries need to receive the same level of care. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation for the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz, Germany, be inscribed in the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii), (iii) and (vi) and ICOMOS has identified a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you ICOMOS for your presentation. Dear Committee members, as what we have done for previous properties with recommendations for inscription, can we go directly to examine the Draft Decision? I see no objection, thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the draft Decision 44 COM 8B.39. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.39 adopted ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Germany on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Germany, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Germany:

Mr. Chair, members of the World Heritage Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure for me to speak to you and express my sincere thanks on behalf of the State of Rhineland Palatinate for inscribing the ShUM Sites of

Speyer, Worms and Mainz, on the World Heritage List. I would also like to thank ICOMOS for the positive recommendation and the professional and constructive evaluation.

This is an exceptional honour for us and we are overwhelmed by the decision. It is a very special moment for everyone who was committed to the protection and preservation of the property communicating its importance and drafting the nomination documents over the past few years. The inscription of the ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz on the World Heritage List is an acknowledgement of the cultural achievements and creative powers of European Jews during the formation of Ashkenazi Judaism which is still alive and thriving today. Not only have the ShUM Sites been part of the cultural heritage of the cities Speyer, Worms and Mainz for more than a thousand years, the architectural designs and structures of the religious monuments and cemeteries went trendsetting throughout Ashkenazi.

Be sure, we are fully aware of our responsibility to preserving this unique heritage. Now, we look forward to continuing our work accepting the challenges sustainable preservation and presenting this heritage to the world. Everyone involved is committed to protecting our World Heritage site and preserving it as a part of the heritage of the world. To pass on to future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen once again, thank you very much for recognising the ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz, as World Heritage. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Once again congratulations. Dear colleagues, with a heavy agenda, we are approaching the end of today's meeting. Considering that there will be the working group on Budget I would like to suggest that we stop here. Once again, let me congratulate the World Heritage sites inscribed today. Thanks to your efforts and efficiency I see no need to prolong the meeting any more.

However, I would like to encourage the drafting groups established for different topics to carry on their consultations to forge consensus and to find a wise way forward. Thank you very much for your cooperation and efficiency, we will meet tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time and for Bureau Members we will meet at 11:00 a.m. Before we conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are general announcements to make. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to all sites for the inscription today. Just a reminder that the Budget group will meet from 4.30 until 5:30 pm tonight and we will see you all at the Budget group. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, have a good rest, see you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 3:53:49 pm.

ELEVENTH DAY – Wednesday 28 July 2021
ELEVENTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all today for our daily meeting. This morning, the Bureau held its 11th meeting. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recorded that during its prolonged meeting yesterday the Committee inscribed 13 new properties on the World Heritage List, including one also on the List of World Heritage in Danger and approved one extension. Let me congratulate once again all States Parties concerned.

The drafting group established on Draft Decision 8B.24 has met once more today and I encourage its efforts. We will come back to it later during the session once an agreed text is ready for adoption. I also informed the Bureau members that today we will resume the examination of Items 8B in the order in which they are indicated on the calendar circulated yesterday and available on the World Heritage Centre website. This updated calendar takes into account the various time zones to the best extent possible.

I take this opportunity to inform you that due to the very heavy agenda still ahead of us, we may need to consider having a prolonged session today until 4:30 pm Paris time, unless, of course, we are as efficient as yesterday. I will advise you in the course of the day.

After concluding Item 8B, we will move to Items 8D, 8E and 9A. All proposed for adoption without discussion. Regarding Item 8C which was initially foreseen to be examined today at 2:45 pm, I informed the Bureau that we will need to shift it to later on tomorrow, as the Secretariat needs a bit of time to finalise the related document and share it. Item 12 will also need to be adjusted accordingly to also be examined at the same time on Friday. Can you hear me now Committee members?

The Delegation of Oman:

Yes, we can now.

Chairperson:

Okay I go on. I will repeat this paragraph again. The Bureau heard a report from the Chairperson of the Budget working group during which she informed the Bureau that the group had now concluded its work and that Draft Decisions 11 and 12 would also need to be adjusted accordingly to be examined at the same time on Friday. I look forward to their outcomes as well. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, we now resume the examination of nominations. I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination the Porticos of Bologna, Italy. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the ICOMOS evaluation of the Porticos of Bologna, Italy. The serial nomination focuses on the portico as a typology which, although spread worldwide, is considered to find its most complete representation in Bologna. Spanning a period from the 12th to the 20th centuries, the twelve component sites reflect different portico type ensembles as well as urban and social functions and chronological phases. They have been selected as the most representative of much larger assemblage of porticoes within the city of Bologna.

Originally constructed to enlarge domestic space as set out in municipal statutes dating from 1288, they later came to be appreciated as shelter against the weather as prime locations for merchant activities and as they spread across the city as a key characteristic of Bologna's urban form.

Despite the additional information received throughout the evaluation process, the comparative analysis fails to present a robust justification of the limited selection of component sites. Particularly, when it comes to more recent porticoes or for the chronological perspectives that has been adopted. In addition, the comparisons do not clearly justify how the porticoes selected should be considered to stand out, either in terms of the influences they exerted over other places or the type of architectural ensemble. Twelve component sites consist of an ensemble of porticoes and their surrounding built areas all located within the municipality of Bologna.

During the course of the evaluation, exchanges between ICOMOS and the State Party resulted in adjustment to the boundaries to include the buildings of which the porticoes are a part as sections of the surrounding urban spaces. Despite these changes to the boundaries, underlying issues remain and also some components were extended to areas that were not visited by ICOMOS technical evaluation mission.

While the State Party's efforts to expand the areas of the component sites are appreciated, ICOMOS considers that the fundamental nature of the series remains unchanged with the catalogue of porticoes. The functional links between the component sites have not been sufficiently justified and that it remains unclear why the nominated property can be seen to reflect an urban system.

In summary, none of the proposed criteria have been justified at this stage. The role that the municipal statutes of 1288 played in laying the foundation for the development of porticoes at the time has not been sufficiently explained and documented in terms of how they influenced the evaluation of porticoes from architectural elements to fully covered walkways with an urban function. The conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage, mainly because of the issues related to the selection of component parts and the definition of their boundaries.

The current legal protection is inadequate since only two of the components are designated at national level. No specific management system has been developed for the nominated serial property although the historic centre of Bologna is managed in its entirety from a heritage perspective. And while a management plan has been developed it is rather more theoretical than operational.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the Porticos of Bologna be deferred to the World Heritage List for the following main reasons:

- The need to refocus the justification for inscription to reflect an urban system of covered walkways which define the urban identity of the city of Bologna and contribute to its sense of place and social dynamics;
- Further research should be undertaken on the role the municipal statutes of 1288 had on the relationship between public and private spaces in the medieval city;
- Further documentation is also needed on the evolution of the porticoes from an architectural element of the building into covered walkways with an urban function;
- The boundaries should be revised to reflect the functional links between covered walkways;
- All component sites should have the highest level of protection available;
- The management and monitoring system should be revised and strengthened in the light of a refocus nomination.

ICOMOS considers that such a revised nomination would be to be considered by an expert mission to the site. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. I see representatives asking for the floor. Dear Committee members, due to the heavy workload today, I have to kindly ask you to be very brief, so I thank you for your understanding and support. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, good morning to all my colleagues, good morning to you also. Mr. Chairman, this is an innovative nomination which presents a unique concept of urban development that evolved since the 13th century maintaining the same standard of style and craft in the identity of the city Bologna. Like most things that are innovative, this nomination has had to face many challenges since the moment of its conception. Different methodological approaches would have been viable, but the State Party after listening to the representative of the local community and the experts from the renowned University of Bologna preferred the novel idea of a serial nomination focusing on the famous Porticos of Bologna.

In its interim report, ICOMOS did not favour this approach and recommended the extension of the perimeter of the site in order to include additional elements from each urban context. Although, this signals a different perspective, the State Party accepted the comments provided by the Advisory Body and duly adjusted the boundaries of the property. When you find it convenient, Mr. President, we would like to hear more details from the State Party on the difference of approaches.

In this different perspective, we do not see an essential divergence between the Advisory Body and the State Party on the substantive aspect of this site. Its potential for Outstanding Universal Value was recognised by ICOMOS and we understand from what we read, and in the report, and from the information received from the State Party those two criteria may be duly justified. Criterion (ii) as the Porticos of Bologna have been throughout history an open space for human interchange and social and cultural values, and criterion (iv) as the porticoes are an exceptional symbol for the special architectural typology the porticoes inherit from ancient history and refashioned medieval Europe since the 12th century.

In fact, with 62 kilometres of Porticos, Bologna is the only city in the world that can boast of such large variety of these elements encompassing wide temporal art in the history of architecture. The Advisory Body has also considered that the necessary conditions of authenticity have been met. Considering integrity, there remains the difference of perspective as to the boundaries that result from the methodological approach adopted. But ICOMOS agreed that conservation measures are appropriate.

Finally, as regards protection and management, the evaluation seems to contain a few inaccuracies as the entire nominated area is protected by municipal regulations and national protection measures based on the code of cultural heritage and landscape which affords the highest level of protection to control heritage.

There is also a management plan in place with a steering committee responsible for the administration of the property. So, we do not understand the reservation expressed in the report. Perhaps the State Party may also give us further clarification on this point, if you allow it, Mr. Chair.

To conclude, we understand that the fundamental divergence between the Advisory Body and the State Party in this nomination lies, not in the nature of the site, but in a more formal, perhaps academic, discrepancy on the question of how to describe it. It should not lead us simply to defer the nomination, but rather to reflect more deeply about the ways we have been doing things, here, in this Committee session. We have seen new challenges, new issues, new approaches. Maybe the approach adopted by the State Party does not conform exactly to our usual frames of analysis, but it does not mean that the approach is wrong or should that invite us, instead, to consider broadening our own perspective. Our view is clear Mr. Chair, we gladly recommend the Committee to inscribe the Porticos of Bologna on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler for some announcement.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Sorry to interrupt the debate but apparently there are again issues with the webpage, so my colleagues will put the links to the YouTube channel in the chat. For your colleagues from the different Delegation following via the webpage they can go to the YouTube channel. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. We would like to highlight the significant experience of the State Party in conserving, managing, protecting and promoting World Heritage, and to thank Italy for the submission of this nomination file which aims at introducing a new architectural element to the List of World Heritage. We are also grateful to the Advisory Bodies for their assessment and evaluation.

In order to present the value of this complex property, the State Party chose a serial approach which describes how the porticoes system is a unique feature of the City of Bologna. The portico is an architectural element adopted in many cities, but it has found its most complete representation in Bologna from the 12th century to present time. More interestingly, in Bologna, the porticoes have shaped the social life and the identity of the city. This is, in our view, the most significant aspect of this candidature which focuses on the social interactions and cultural life which thrived thanks to the porticoes system.

We understand that during the dialogue on this candidature, ICOMOS acknowledged the potential OUV. Based on the recommendations from the Advisory Bodies, the State Party made some important modification to the nomination file. I would ask the State Party, if you allow me, Mr. Chair, to explain what they did to answer ICOMOS recommendations that emerged during the dialogue. And, finally, based on this rationale, we support the amendment aimed at the inscription of the site, together with some recommendations to the State Party, which should be addressed through a fruitful dialogue with the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members. I hope the State Party can focus on the questions. Now, Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Very good day to all distinguished colleagues. Norway has with great interest reviewed the nomination dossier for the Porticos of Bologna. The twelve components claimed to represent the concept and development of the porticoes in the last 900 years. It is indeed a very narrow phenomenon being proposed and we wish to express our concerns for the narrow approach in the nomination itself, only including the porticoes and not the surrounding urban and social context within which the porticoes are an integrated system. One architectural element of the façade is singled out from the buildings it belongs in and its relations to the urban pulse of the city.

We note that the boundaries have been adjusted after the site visit but that deems the current considerations related to authenticity and integrity more or less irrelevant as these extensions are not part of the valuations. Based on the available information, we struggle with seeing how each of the component specifically contribute significantly to the OUV in accordance with Article 137 of the *Operational Guidelines*. And we also wish to recall the World Heritage

expert meeting on serial nominations in 2010 which concluded with a warning against presenting catalogues where clear definitions of the functional links between the components are omitted.

Justification for referral is in our opinion very sound and well-founded. The nomination would clearly benefit from further work and reconfiguration in line with clearer considerations and recommendations. We would indeed truly welcome a revised nomination. Norway therefore supports the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. Good morning to all. We support the amendment put forward by Brazil to amend the Draft Decision with the view to inscribe this very important site together with some of the recommendations at our current session. Here, we thank Italy for submitting this nomination file which aims at introducing a new element on the List. Looking at the pillars of the OUV, both criteria (ii) and (iv), for us, are duly satisfied based on the explanation given by the State Party. For the porticoes as an open space of public use and social relation and as a sign of a significant phase in human history for architecture.

Bologna presents an unparalleled total length of porticoes of 62 kilometres. It is the only city in the world that boasts such a great architectural variety of these elements as well as a remarkably long temporal arc across which they were created. The State Party chose a serial nomination but accepted, Mr. Chair, the comments provided by the Advisory Body in the interim report, and thus, extended the perimeter of the site in order to incorporate a broader urban context as key parts of the city of Bologna.

The State Party might implement further boundary revisions after inscription also with the assistance of an advisory mission as reflected in the amendment that was submitted by Brazil and to which we fully subscribe.

Mr. Chair, since the 13th century when a municipal status made it a mandatory construction, the porticoes of Bologna have evolved as a system together with the city itself. The potential value of this candidacy seems to be recognised by ICOMOS itself with the evaluation that led to the noting of deferral, which seems to focus more on the methodological aspect than on the substance, if we may say. We deal here with an academic confrontation on how to describe this property and not on the nature of the site itself which is of outstanding universal significance.

We will have two questions, Mr. Chair, if you allow us. The first question to the State Party: we understand that there might have been misunderstandings on the measures implemented regarding protection, for this reason, we would like to ask the State Party to elaborate on how the site protection system works. And the second question, if you allow us, Mr. Chair, would be to explain to us what the State Party did to answer the recommendations of ICOMOS that emerged during this dialogue. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the State Party the chance to take the floor to answer the questions after the Committee members. Now, Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to thank Italy for nominating the Porticos of Bologna on the World Heritage List, as well as ICOMOS for its assessment. The serial nomination represents unique, historic and architectural features and also a social model, a place of integration and exchange in which the main actors of a city, namely the citizens, the migrants and the students lived and shared time and ideas, relationships and thoughts. We do believe that this inscription will enrich the World Heritage List, and we support the amendments presented by the Ambassador of Brazil for the inscription of the site in today's session based on criteria (ii) and (iv). Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman would also like to thank the State Party, Italy, for preparing the nomination dossier for this property. This property has been proposed for nomination based on criteria (ii) and (iv) as you have heard. These criteria require the existence of important human values in architecture, monuments, arts, town planning and landscape design. We believe that this site positively responds to all such requirements. The 62 kilometres of historical porticoes coherently summarised in the twelve selected components represent in fact a unique original architecture solution to harmonise the private property with the public demands for spaces for interaction. The great success for this solution led to its legal regulation and extension of the entire city already in the medieval time, resulting in the creation of that unique urban landscape that still characterises the city.

Chairman, Excellencies, criterion (iv) requests that the property can be regarded as a type of structure representing a significant stage in human history. Again, we believe that this property fully meets this criterion. This can be considered a major component in the success of Bologna as a multicultural city of learning. In fact, they allowed visitors and students from the entire Europe to benefit from the dissemination of knowledge provided by the Alma Mater students, the oldest university in the Western world. Of course, the movement of students of architecture across Europe led to the widespread distribution of this architectural solution. Still, this site represents the highest example of the complex structure and a social model and its exceptional preservation through the centuries.

For these reasons, Oman strongly supports the immediate inscription of this important property in the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, as you have realised, we really have a very heavy agenda and there are still quite a number of Committee members on my speakers' list. I would like to kindly ask you to be very brief, if it is only to fully support or second the proposal made by the previous colleagues. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Now, Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous voudrions d'abord adresser nos félicitations à l'Italie pour cette proposition d'inscription des Portiques de Bologne. Nous notons qu'aucun doute n'a été exprimé quant à l'importance exceptionnelle et universelle de ce bien basée sur la définition du portique comme un espace privé à usage public, qui est une caractéristique essentielle pour la potentielle valeur universelle exceptionnelle, qui est la base même de l'ensemble des propositions d'inscription. Par ailleurs, cette inscription constitue une question très importante pour les communautés fortement impliquées et intéressées par la proposition d'inscription, et placées au centre du processus de gestion, comme le souligne également l'ICOMOS. Par ailleurs, il faut souligner l'engagement de l'État italien à adapter et à améliorer le projet de proposition d'inscription en suivant les recommandations reçues de l'ICOMOS. Enfin, en acceptant la suggestion d'étendre davantage le périmètre initialement limité aux portiques, il a été décidé, avec la documentation supplémentaire envoyée avant le 28 février 2021, d'élargir le périmètre des parties constitutives du bien en incorporant, comme demandé, un contexte urbain plus large en tant que partie clé de la ville de Bologne. Ce sont là des efforts considérables qu'il faut prendre en compte et qui nous permettent de donner notre avis favorable à l'inscription de ce bien pendant cette session. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Saudi Arabia please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the interest of time and to honour your request I will be very brief and would like to support the consensus to inscribe Bologna on the World Heritage List in this meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary would also like to join the States Parties supporting the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thailand supports the amendment proposed by Brazil to inscribe the Porticos of Bologna in the World Heritage List as it meets out the requirements of OUV and the conditions of authenticity and integrity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are sorry for taking the floor again. We are aware of the amendment for inscription, we do hear the sentiment where the room is moving. But first, we would like to express our concerns for the

management and protection of the property which must be in place for the OUV to be recognised. And further, our recommendation for the Committee members in favour of moving the Decision would be to consider first and foremost a referral. But, if it is still hoping to inscribe, it should be limited to the inscription solely on criterion (iv), as the information provided in our opinion for criterion (ii) is not supported by evidence. The influences suggested by the State Party are very general. Some refer to works of artists dating from a period when some of the components did not even yet exist and there is limited evidence as to sites influenced by the nominated porticoes. This is a clear example that further work is needed to fully comprehend and appreciate the significance of the porticoes and the proposed values and we regret this push towards inscription.

We have some questions to ICOMOS: in the amendment for inscription a mission is requested, we need a clarification on this, what type of mission should be sent, and further, the boundaries are changed how can that be addressed? And, thirdly, we wish to ask for further comments on the concept here of a catalogue versus serial site. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to the State Party, Italy, to answer the questions raised by the Committee members. Please, focus on the questions and try to be brief. Italy, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. At the outset, I would like to express our solidarity with China for the flooding that affected your country and thank the Committee members for their comment and questions. In this regard, I would like to confirm the commitment of the Italian authorities in this project at all levels. Mr. Chair with your permission, I give the floor to Professor Ceccarelli of the University of Bologna. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Professor Ceccarelli, University of Bologna:

Mr. President, distinguished members of the Committee, Italy always takes into great consideration the technical opinions of ICOMOS implementing all their recommendations. We required an additional consultative meeting which testifies to our engagement in the dialogue.

Following ICOMOS recommendations, the boundaries of the component parts of the site were extended to incorporate a broader urban context, in order to move from the architectural point of view toward a better representation of an urban system of covered walkways. We were able to create a synthesis, a compendium, not a catalogue of the entire system of Bolognese arcades, reflecting and selecting the most authentic, best-preserved and most significant components, according to a criterion of representativeness. This was done in accordance to the Global Strategy and by distinguishing the relevant theme from the over-represented category of the historic centre. In addition, Italy supplied a detailed explanation regarding the damage and reconstruction after the Second World War. Clarifying that the impact on the selected components of the site was minimal.

As requested, Italy also provided additional information about the statutes of 1288 which imposed and regulated the construction of the porticoes in Bologna and were unique in medieval Europe. Starting from the medieval city, this model developed and involved in multiple ways through the entire early modern and modern periods. Italy is prepared to further provide any remaining details on this topic.

The serial property is fully protected on both national and local levels. A large number of buildings and urban spaces are listed under the national code of cultural heritage and landscape, and any intervention must be approved by the Ministry of Culture. Likewise, city planning includes safeguarding measures for the single buildings as well as for the broader territorial context. In Bologna the protection and planning have a long-standing tradition and represent an internationally recognised model.

Finally, very useful tools are the municipal guidelines which support both the private owners and the local government in managing and maintaining the porticoes. In fact, active and effective participation of the community is one of the strongest points of this nomination. Italy assures the Committee of its utmost commitment to implementing all the additional recommendations that the Committee would give us with the inscription of the site. We would be grateful to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for any further suggestion. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your sympathy and support towards the Chinese people in the flood-stricken areas. Thank you for your response and clarification. Now, I give the floor to Guatemala. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Hello and many thanks. I'd also express that Guatemala considers the Porticoes of Bologna are a recognised symbol at the national level and also shows the interaction of the different social groups and the architectural qualities which can be seen in Bologna. We would also like to say how much we appreciate the report presented by ICOMOS. Though, we do not see the need to isolate the porticoes from the entire series of built structure, because the porticoes are precisely created so as to bring about this interaction between structures.

We think, therefore, it would be better to have a more integral focus and a framework that would allow us to reach a consensus. We would also, once again, like to congratulate the State Party for all the efforts they have made and their progress. We think it has been a very open dialogue. I think if we arrive at a compromise, the need to take on board all the recommendations made by ICOMOS concerning the protection of the property and the OUV is very important. Many thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

I want to be very brief. Bosnia-Herzegovina strongly supports the amendment of Brazil regarding the Porticoes of Bologna. I do not want to repeat what all my colleagues said about this important urban structure. It is important to have academic debates about these issues, but at the same time, we have to encourage local governments to invest more efforts in promoting the values they have on their site. So, we need this energy from both sides, from the government, from academic structures and from, of course, international organisations like UNESCO. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I now give the floor to ICOMOS. You have the floor.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, I would like to stress that ICOMOS consider that this property has the potential to demonstrate OUV, and we do agree with what many States Parties have said, that the large number of kilometres of porticoes in Bologna are an extraordinary ensemble. Our concern is that the catalogue of twelve porticoes cannot adequately reflect this enormous and prestigious and important urban system. Certainly, the boundaries [...]

Chairperson:

Please continue.

ICOMOS:

Certainly, the boundaries have been adjusted, but that adjustment meant that it was just not the portico aspect that was nominated but the parts of the individual buildings to which they were attached were included. This has not extended [...]

Chairperson:

Mali, please, I think we have a problem with your microphone. ICOMOS, please. go ahead.

ICOMOS:

[...] extended the boundaries in a limited way that has been undertaken, has not turned this catalogue of porticoes into an urban system. And that is what the ICOMOS considers is needed to fully reflect the way that the porticoes permeated the city and shaped its character as well as contributing to its social and economic functions. This cannot be accommodated within the limited range of the catalogue that has been so far nominated. We understand from the intervention of the State Party, and also from what is indicated in the revised Decision, that it is the intention of the State Party to enlarge the nomination to reflect more of the urban system and to acknowledge the fundamental influence [...]

Chairperson:

Mali, I think your microphone is not muted. Mali, yes. ICOMOS, you go ahead.

ICOMOS:

Thank you. We understand from the State Party they have the intention to take account of our recommendations and enlarge the nomination to reflect the urban system and acknowledge the fundamental influence and importance of the unique statutes of 1288 which influenced and shaped the development of the city. We are disappointed that this cannot be achieved through a deferral or even perhaps through a referral. Because shifting the nomination from a catalogue to an urban system will bring the need to revise boundaries, to consider the selection of components and to refocus the Outstanding Universal Value. And we consider that it is not easy to achieve this after inscription has taken place.

If the Committee is so minded to move for inscription, we would like to comment that we do not consider that criterion (ii) has been justified on the basis of the information that has been provided. There is no detailed documentation provided. The type of influence the porticoes might have had in different parts of the world or on any interchange of

values or overall, any specificities on how that influence might be seen and understood. We also consider that, if the property is inscribed, it would be highly unusual to ask for an advisory mission post-inscription, to ask the Advisory Bodies to give further advice on the way the nomination should be reshaped. So, we hope the advisory mission can also be reconsidered. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Brazil, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have listened very carefully and with great interest to the whole debate that has just happened now, and we would like to recognise that the proposal that shows flexibility by Norway that this site could be inscribed only under criterion (iv) is acceptable for us and seems to be also acceptable for the State Party. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.41. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment submitted by Brazil and co-authored by Bosnia-Herzegovina as shown on the screen. We have no modifications proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will approve the text paragraph by paragraph. So, for paragraph 1, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes The Porticoes of Bologna, Italy, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv)'. However, I would like to ask Brazil's confirmation whether we are going to turn it to the sole criterion (iv) or not?

Chairperson:

Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Our preference Mr. President, of course, is that we inscribe it under criteria (ii) and (iv), but we have listened to Norway and they have shown flexibility in this regard, and we also want to show our flexibility, therefore, if it is okay for Norway, we can accept their proposal just on criterion (iv).

Chairperson:

Okay. Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. We think this is very wise and we thank the distinguished colleague from Brazil for this proposal.

Chairperson:

Okay. For this paragraph, do you approve? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value', we have Brief Synthesis — we will have to remove criterion (ii) — Criterion (iv), Integrity, Authenticity and Protection and Management requirements. This is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, its approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4: 'Requests the State Party to:' — this is moved from the original paragraph 2e —, a) 'Further research and document the role that the Municipal Statutes of 1288 had on the relationship between public and private spaces in the medieval city, marking one of the decisive moments in the history of the capacity of the public authorities to assert their power and political control over the administration of a city,

b) Revise the boundaries to reflect the interconnections of the portico system, by incorporating the functional links between the covered walkways within the perimeter of the property, in particular, in order to include the entirety of some streets (SantaCaterina, Baraccano, Santo Stefano) and the landscape surrounding the portico and the Basilica of San Luca,

c) Ensure that all component parts that constitute the property will have the highest level of protection available,

d) Further strengthen the management and monitoring system,

e) Consider inviting an advisory mission to the property to assist in the implementation of the above recommendations'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Okay, it is approved. Go on. Sorry, Norway please.

The Delegation of Norway:

I am very sorry, Chair, as you already made a decision, but we are still a bit uncertain about the matter of the mission. Taking into account ICOMOS comment on that, could we just quickly ask for clarification, with your indulgence, and if not, we will take our question back, of course. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Will you ask a question?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you. It relates to the question we had as to what type of mission is appropriate to assist in these matters. We would ask for clarification from ICOMOS very quickly and your indulgence. Thank you.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. We consider that this is rather unusual to consider an advisory mission after the property has been inscribed. We are certainly used to having advisory missions to look at recommendations for a referral but not after an inscription, so, it would be very little unclear to quite what the objectives that mission would be. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. The confusion is still there, but we do not wish to impede the progress any further. I think we will leave this in the hands of the Committee and distinguished colleagues. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Okay, Ms. Rapporteur. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New Paragraph 5. 'Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Do you approve? Okay, approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.41 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Thank you very much. Let me congratulate Italy on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Italy, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Italy:

Thank you very much to you and to all members of the Committee for this inscription. I invite everyone to enjoy the history of this beautiful city under the protection of its porticoes. With your permission, Mr. Chair, I give the floor to the Italian Deputy Secretary for Culture, Ms. Lucia Borgonzoni, and the representative of the municipality of Bologna. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you.

Ms. Lucia Borgonzoni, Deputy Secretary for Culture:

Excellencies, President, honourable members of the Committee and of the Advisory Bodies, special thanks to China for the organisation and to the Chair. It is a great honour for us to be here especially for me because I was born and raised in Bologna. Thank you for the trust you gave us. The Porticoes of Bologna represent an extraordinary cultural heritage, a model of private space for public use. A place of excellence for social relation.

The porticoes reflect the identity of the city with a strong sense of community participation who played a central role in this nomination. The Ministry of Culture will continue to support the City of Bologna in the protection and development of this heritage; a heritage for the city and for the entire world. Congratulations Bologna. Now, I leave the floor to the representative of the Mayor of Bologna, Ms. Orioli.

Ms. Orioli, representative of the Mayor of Bologna:

Mr. President, distinguished members of the Committee, I would like to thank all of those who have committed to this extraordinary work which has been recognised as deserving inscriptions on the UNESCO World Heritage List. I would like to thank the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the permanent Delegation and the municipality of Bologna that I have the honour to represent.

Above all, I would like to thank all the citizens of Bologna because they were essential in this nomination process and their role was crucial to preserve this extraordinary heritage. A testimony of how a private asset might contribute to the public good, recognising its social use together with the urban one.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the institutions represented on the steering committee that worked together intensely and actively in the construction of this project. We are aware that this recognition is a great honour and it is also a great responsibility to the world. We will continue to protect with renewed energy the heritage of the porticoes of Bologna that humanity looks at. Bologna has always been a city opened to the world and it is even more so today. Thank you for this recognition.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Once again congratulations. Let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, Gdańsk Shipyard – the birthplace of “Solidarity” and the symbol of the Fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe. The Draft Decision concerning the nomination can be found in document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. Just to recall that we received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 99 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of Gdańsk Shipyard — the birthplace of “Solidarity” and the symbol of the Fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe. On this evaluation, ICOMOS has received a letter of factual errors. The nominated Gdańsk Shipyard includes part of the former Gdańsk Lenin shipyard created after World War II by merging the historical imperial and the Schichau Shipyards and then replanned in the communist era. The area has been nominated under criterion (iv) and (vi) and has been presented as a large-scale workplace reflecting associations with the emergence of the independent Solidarity trade union movement which, after a decade of peaceful strikes and negotiations with the communist state, led to Poland freedom from communism in 1989. The State Party deems that these events triggered a domino effect that ultimately led to the fall of the Iron Curtain and to the unification of Europe. The nomination dossier presents these events as being of outstanding universal significance for the way they altered the course of history.

The nominated property consists of a part of the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard and includes buildings, structures and a network of internal streets, railway tracks, slipways and open spaces which are deemed to reflect communist planning and the main functions of a large-scale industrial shipbuilding facility. It also includes Solidarity Square

with the monument to the fallen shipyard worker of December 97 and the wall with commemorative plaques. The buffer zone encompasses a portion of Ostrow island railway that separates the city from the shipyard with the south of the boundary follows the limits of the shipyard itself.

The nominated dossier gives an account of the links between building and some spaces of the shipyard with activities of Solidarity but direct associations between the purported impact of solidarity on the above-mentioned changes have not been clearly set out. The role of Solidarity in the fall of the Iron Curtain, the end of the Cold War and the unification of Europe cannot be directly and explicitly read and understood at the nominated shipyard. So, it is difficult to define what would be the potential attributes able to satisfy integrity and to understand which attributes would convey the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. Therefore, it is unclear whether boundaries would be adequate, although ICOMOS notes they have been drawn tightly.

A range of protective designations apply to the nominated property and plans exist to strengthen them. However, existing plans predated the nominated nomination and this large-scale building development in the nominated area and in the buffer zone which are both mostly in private ownership, 90 and 80 per cent respectively. A management plan coordinator has been appointed with the task force at the National Institute of Cultural Heritage but no management structure or steering committee has been established yet. The draft management plan does not seem to have reached the necessary level of maturity and consolidated agreement on its content. The state of conservation of the nominated property is uneven and the immense pressures from massive building development and redevelopment of the disused former industrial area will inevitably impact adversely on the tangible and intangible dimensions of the shipyard.

Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. The extensive comparative analysis has not succeeded in demonstrating how the shipyard layout architecture and distribution of functions and operations would differ from any other large-scale industrial shipyard, and therefore, is able to tangibly reflect communist planning. Nor has the comparison demonstrated how the shipyard as an exceptional example of communist planning would reflect the events it is said to be associated with. It remains difficult positioning the action of Solidarity within the wider 20th century context and establishing their significance. Any assessment of the place's significance has to take cognisance of the value of the action that the place represents. In ICOMOS' view, it is too early to make a judgement as the historical period of the second half of the 20th century within which comparison will have to be made are yet to be defined.

Neither criteria (iv) or (vi) have been demonstrated. The nomination dossier clearly states that the place is preliminarily significant not as either a building or a specific architectural or technological ensemble, but as a large-scale industrial production ensemble example of communist planning that provided fertile ground for the emergence of the Solidarity movement. Therefore, the Gdańsk Shipyard is essentially a place of association. The nomination has not demonstrated the tangible and direct associations between the shipyard and the impact of Solidarity on the fall of the iron curtain, the end of the Cold War or the unification of Europe. Expanding Solidarity's role beyond Poland appears problematic and is challenged by other appraisals of these events.

The requirements of integrity and authenticity have not been met in terms of Gdańsk Shipyard being able to tangibly reflects the proposed justification for inscription. Additionally, current envisaged developments are likely to have a considerable negative impact on the nominated property. In terms of protection and management, ICOMOS acknowledges the efforts made by the State Party, but an agreed vision for the future of the nominated property as envisaged seems still to be missing, nor is it clear what could be the way forward whether planning provisions can be modified and development proposals downsized. ICOMOS considers that, given the pressure, the high percentage of privately owned built assets and the need for further dialogue, a consensus has not been achieved yet. Neither the protection nor the managing instruments can guarantee the effective outcomes in terms of conservation and protection of the nominated property.

In summary, and beyond the technical issues, serious challenges emerge from this nomination although the focus of the dossier is a perceived positive outcome on the action of Solidarity as a freedom movement. ICOMOS notes that events with which solidarity is associated might be considered divisive at the global level. More importantly, the events this nomination wishes to commemorate are still very recent, even the dramatic changes and complex processes that these events triggered. Memories are still evolving, some of the protagonists of these events are still alive and historic interpretation differs, as there is no consensus about whether Solidarity or other freedom movements and protests in the former Eastern bloc can be seen as a decisive trigger of the fall of the Iron Curtain, the collapse of Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

This poses challenges and risks with regard to the possibility of crystallising in a definite manner the scale and scope of the Solidarity movement as it would require for World Heritage recognition. The legacy of Solidarity has already received international recognition under the memory of the World Register and the European Heritage label. These programmes, however, have different rationale and requirements than the World Heritage Convention. ICOMOS finally notes that the nature of the nomination related to memorialisation of and association with Solidarity as a liberation movement suggests that other programmes might be more suitable for the nominated property than the World Heritage Convention.

To conclude and bearing in mind Article 12 of the World Heritage Convention, ICOMOS recommends that the Gdańsk Shipyard the birth place of Solidarity and the symbol of the fall or the Iron Curtain in Europe, Poland, should not be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Russia, please, you have the floor. Your microphone, Excellency, is muted.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Sorry. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our Delegation fully shares the assessment of the site by ICOMOS and supports its final recommendation. Both are well-founded, since this nomination first appeared a long time ago under different titles and ICOMOS had enough time and opportunities to study it with necessary attention and care. We take note that the last technical evaluation mission visited the property quite recently in January of this year. The main problem with this property is the fact that it focuses not so much on the shipyard itself with its architecture and other structures but rather on its political history and ideological approach of the State Party. It is precisely what raises objections against this nomination. The Outstanding Universal Value of the property cannot be based on something that cannot be universal by definition. A one-sided and politicised interpretation of recent history.

Mr. Chair, let me just remind you about a number of situations in UNESCO, including this Committee, when different and contested interpretation of history led to great difficulties and even crisis within this organisation. I am asking the distinguished members of the Committee: do we need more of that?

Finally, there are plans to establish a working group on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts and other negative or divisive memories. Do we need to anticipate the results of its work by approving a clearly politicised nomination? Therefore, we support the opinion of ICOMOS and approve the recommended decision about non-inscription. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. Regarding this nomination, I would like to make a few general points. First, and to start with, I would like to underline that the universal international significance of the Polish trade union movement, Solidarity, is commonly known and not contested and acknowledged by everyone. It has also been confirmed by the UNESCO community several times. For example: the sustained importance of solidarity and its influence on the democratic transformation of Europe and worldwide was demonstrated in UNESCO's publication *History of Humanity*. Similarly, in the Memory of the World Register UNESCO has already acknowledged the Solidarity presence by '*The turning point which was of primary importance to the history of the world*'.

Against these backgrounds, we do understand the doubts expressed by Poland concerning the assessment and recommendation of ICOMOS. Second, we also need to take into consideration, that president Lech Walesa, a shipyard worker and the first Chairman of Solidarity, was awarded the Nobel Peace prize in 1983 for, I quote again: '*The campaign in favour of universal human rights and the achievements of crucial significance for work towards strengthening the freedom of organising in all countries*'.

I just want to remind ourselves that Mr. Walesa now unambiguously supports the effort to add the Gdańsk shipyard to the World Heritage List. Third, Hungary wishes also to highlight that the significance of the Gdańsk shipyard as a technical monument has also been acknowledged by the substantive opinions of independent non-governmental organisations, for example Europa Nostra and Industrial Steel and Engineering Heritage Committee, in the scope of the accomplishment of criterion (iv).

Taking into account all this, and this is my fourth and concluding point, the fact that we are dealing with the tangible cultural heritage of an industrial complex with 200 years of continuous ship building tradition and its eventful history, we, as members of the World Heritage Committee should give the State Party of Poland the opportunity to clarify the Outstanding Universal Value of this site. To that end, Hungary recognises the validity of consideration of Gdańsk Shipyard to be inscribed to the World Heritage List at some stage and has accordingly submitted a Draft Decision for deferral.

In this amended Draft Decision, the State Party of Poland would be requested to revise the focus of the nomination to corresponding comparative analysis, the justification for inscription and its reflection to the criteria and the respective boundaries. Furthermore, the State Party would also be requested to complete the survey of the physical condition of the historic building and other tangible attributes and undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment for any investment project located within the boundaries. The revision of the local spatial development plan is also requested.

To summarise, Chair, in our view, the requested revision of the nomination dossier will provide the Committee with a more accurate basis to make an informed decision on this nomination. And in light of all these, our Delegation believes that a deferral will give the State Party additional time to eliminate all existing concerns. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. As you know, traditionally, Spain has never discussed inscriptions and we consider that the reasons should be explained clearly. In this proposal we are seeing that there are different focuses, the technical focus, Russia also made several comments on this respect. What we would like to suggest is the State Party to take the floor to explain why they want to put forward this nomination and why they put the focus on highlighting Solidarność activities knowing that they may be difficulties regarding the historical interpretation. We believe that the State Party should take the floor to explain what are the reasons for this nomination. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members to answer the questions. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. Chair, having reviewed the submissions in respect to the nomination of the Gdańsk Shipyard the birth place of Solidarity and the symbol for the fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe, Poland, Uganda noted that the State Party needed more time to streamline and properly determine the comparative analysis, justification for site inscription, the realignment of the boundaries and the selection of the right criteria.

In this regard, my Delegation supports the deferral of the examination of the nomination to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, to, just like my distinguished colleague of Hungary elaborated, revised the focus of the nomination, complete the survey of the physical conditions of historic buildings and undertake a complex conservation programme to improve the state of conservation of the Gdańsk Shipyard. Moreover, Mr. Chairman, since this Committee will later in this session be examining a Draft Decision on the sites of memories of recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories it would be premature and presumptuous to decide not to inscribe accordingly. Therefore, my Delegation supports the amendment to the Draft Decision proposed by Hungary. I rest my case.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think, in response to this question, we would like to raise, for the benefit of the Committee and to help frame this discussion, a Decision that the Committee made in 2018 not to review sites that may be considered sites associated with memories of recent conflicts until the Committee had reached a decision on how to proceed. There are some fundamental questions in relation to this policy matter. Namely, whether and how sites associated with memories of recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of this Convention.

I would also note that some Committee members are proposing a compromise in relation to a deferral, but we would also ask the Committee to note that a decision not to inscribe is based on the technical evaluation of the nomination as it does not meet any requirements of the OUV, whereas a deferral recommendation implies the potential for OUV. We would see these two strategies to be in conflict with one another. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. What we have in front of us is indeed a very difficult case. We wish to emphasise from the outset that the World Heritage Convention is a site-based Convention and our intervention emanates from this fact. Norway fully recognises the importance and role of Solidarność in the significant contribution it played in our recent history as it unfolded during the 1980s, but that appears to be an intangible dimension in the context of this nomination to a site-based Convention.

Gdańsk Shipyard has now, in different configurations, been evaluated for the third time with evaluations in 1997, 1998 and 2007 coming to similar conclusions as the current with recommendations to not inscribe. The technical merits of the nomination as a technical industrial architectural heritage site are not found to meet the criteria proposed. And the evaluation highlights significant issues related to integrity, authenticity, state of conservation as well as protection and management. In addition to considerable and unclear development plans which may threaten the OUV potentially further. Norway therefore supports the original Draft Decision. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Chair. The Chinese Delegation fully subscribes to ICOMOS evaluation on the Gdańsk shipyard and joins the interventions made by Spain, Russia, Australia and Norway. We know that the 1972 Convention aims to protect intangible physical properties. Against this background, the State Party is putting forward a superficial interpretation of a recent period rather than focusing on the value of the buildings, therefore submitting a highly politicised nomination. If such politicised and highly divergent nominations were to be promoted from non-inscription to deferral, this would pose a potential risk to our future work.

We understand the enthusiasm and the efforts undertaken by States Parties to propose nominations. However, for the nomination of this Gdańsk Shipyard, ICOMOS already delivered a non-ambiguous scientific evaluation. ICOMOS considers that this nomination does not fulfil the proposed criteria (iv) or (vi) and therefore does not have OUV through physical attributes. It is clear that the Advisory Body considers that the proposed site does not fulfil the OUV criteria. China wishes the Committee to respect the opinions of the Advisory Bodies who have put a great deal of work into these evaluations.

Regarding Hungary's amendment, we know that the amendment requests the State Party to redefine the aim criteria, comparative analysis and boundaries of the proposal. China considers that these recommendations would amount to reorganising the dossier and go beyond the remit of deferral.

China supports maintaining the advice of the Advisory Body and believes that, on the basis of this advice, there is no need for further technical advice. China believes that this property should not be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, please.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous soutenons l'amendement de la Hongrie, surtout l'esprit qui en découle. Il s'agit d'un mouvement, c'est ce que reflète cette discussion, et nous comprenons aussi l'émotion que cela provoque. Donc je pense qu'il faut donner du temps à l'État de Pologne, qu'il faut donner du temps à l'UNESCO et aux experts de l'UNESCO pour clarifier un peu si oui ou non cette valeur universelle existe. Il a déjà été dit que ce mouvement, qui était un mouvement pacifique, a épargné les vies de beaucoup de gens. C'est pour une bonne raison que Lech Wałęsa a obtenu un prix Nobel. Tous ces éléments, et bien d'autres, nous mènent à considérer qu'il faut y réfléchir tout en comprenant l'énergie, l'émotion qui est derrière tout ça. Et ce n'est pas pour rien si c'est la Pologne, ce n'est pas pour rien si c'est la Hongrie, quand on parle de cette émotion, de ce qui est, disons, l'arrière-plan émotionnel et politique. Mais, de la même façon, un mouvement pacifique d'une telle envergure a sa place dans notre mémoire et dans la mémoire collective du monde. Un mot pour conclure: à quoi bon avoir peur des sujets délicats dans les forums de l'UNESCO ? Il faut d'abord faire la différence entre ce qui est délicat et ce qui ne l'est pas. A quoi bon mettre un obstacle à une meilleure connaissance de ce bien, qui existe vraiment. Que nous l'acceptons ou pas, il est là et il existe, et c'est important pour l'histoire de la Pologne, c'est important pour l'histoire d'une grande partie du monde, et du monde aussi. Donc ne pas fermer la porte à cette exigence, à cette énergie qui est une énergie pacifique. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Poland for the submission of this nomination and I would like to thank ICOMOS for the assessment they provided. We take note that the outcome of this assessment is a recommendation not to inscribe this property on the World Heritage List. We also take note that according to the information we received from the State Party, the assessment of this site was not undertaken during the pandemic which, of course, could have affected the smooth content of this assessment as many other events and processes have been affected internationally during the past months.

My Delegation wishes to reach an agreeable solution regarding this nomination during this session. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Indeed, this topic and this dossier seem to be controversial one way or another. But we would like to see that the State Party is given the chance to look at the folder again, have a meaningful dialogue with the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies to revise the focus of the nomination dossier and find the solution to this controversy and eventually inscribe the site. Therefore, we support the deferral of this submission and we would like to request to hear from the State Party of Poland to explain more about the technical dimensions of the dossier. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we believe this is an important site, not only for its value as a historical industrial complex reflecting critical stages of world history from the 19th century to the post-war era, but for its connection with Solidarity and the movement that it initiated.

There are different perceptions, of course, on the dimension of the role played by Solidarity in the events that shaped the 20th century, but one could hardly dispute its impact on the social movement that constituted one of the backdrops to the end of the Cold War, or even less questionable, the actual fact that it took place at the time. It does come quite as a surprise for us that in its report ICOMOS should overstep the boundaries of the technical evaluation of this site to enter the arena of subjective political consideration including questioning the end of the Cold War.

It is true that there are novel elements in this nomination. In this Committee, we are seeing innovative approaches to the presentation of nominations as happened with the Porticoes of Bologna and we are also facing unprecedented situations as happened with the Danube Limes. Well, everybody knows these are unprecedented times and we might have to think differently to consider new approaches, to think new way of doing things. To rethink the ways we have been doing and working here.

We have heard during this debate and we have now seen differences in this Committee as regards this nomination. In this sense, the proposal presented by Hungary may be a good basis for working towards a better understanding of this issue, to give time to the State Party, the opportunity to revise certain aspects of the nomination and it also gives us time to reflect about the challenges before us.

We thank the Hungarian Delegation for this situation and we welcome the State Party's goodwill to continue working in this nomination in open dialogue and collaboration with the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and, of course, the members of this Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Listening to the last speaker, His Excellency the Ambassador of Brazil, I would like to concur to what he just said and therefore would like also to support the decision, I mean the amended decision presented by Hungary. And therefore, we are in that consensus. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala. Please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We wish to thank ICOMOS for its evaluation. We also would like to commend the State Party for preparing the nomination and for the commitment that they demonstrated in protecting the heritage sites already inscribed on the List. A detailed evaluation has been carried out. We recognise the effort undertaken by the State Party. However, the evaluation shows that none of the cultural criteria have been demonstrated in this process. The authenticity and integrity have not been fulfilled. The nomination has not shown how Gdańsk Shipyard can be an outstanding example of a shipyard with a supposed global impact. Neither is demonstrated the direct and tangible association between the poverty and the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Considering the arguments put forward by other members of the Committee and evaluating the role of this site in the history of the 20th century, we are wondering whether in such a proposal perhaps it would be more viable to inscribe it on the World Heritage Memory List of UNESCO. Given the proof that we have in front of us and the exhaustive analysis we support the original Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for allowing us to take the floor for a second time. It is clear that the Solidarity movement contributed in a profound way to the social and political processes and events that led to the fall of the Iron Curtain and break up the former Eastern bloc of communist countries. But the significance of Gdańsk when compared to other sites or places associated with these events has not been demonstrated. With regard to the narrative of this property, we agree with the conclusions of ICOMOS that it is too early to assess the significance of the Solidarity movement in the course of the 20th century history.

We would ask our colleagues again to pause, to recognise that any recommendations other than do not inscribe would be without a technical evaluation. Any deferral implies the presence of OUV or potential for OUV. However, do not inscribe clearly indicates that it has not been demonstrated. In fact, do not inscribe means that it does not meet any of the requirements not in relation to integrity, authenticity, nor does it have clear boundaries, it does not have adequate protection management mechanisms. These are the foundations of the Convention. So, we would just ask the Committee, again, to recall that the deferral and the do not inscribe decisions are incongruously at odds with each other. For these reasons we would support the existing recommendation of do not inscribe. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you very much, Chairperson, for giving me the floor a second time. I would just like to add another question to the list of questions addressed to the State Party concerned, because, in the interventions, several references have been made to the assessment of ICOMOS and I understand that the assessment and the procedure and the conduct of this evaluation of ICOMOS were far from ideal during the Covid-19 period. I would just like to ask the State Party of Poland: what is the issue and what is the cause for this content within the process of the evaluation? Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. Chair, we are in the unfortunate situation where we have a physical site, a shipyard with two centuries of history which is presented today for enlisting based on its role in a recent historical event on which there are divergent interpretations, at least in terms of the countries of the region. It is quite unfortunate that it was presented that way. Had it been just a physical property that was presented as a shipyard with its own history in terms of the industrial development of Europe, that could have been something that would not have caused problems. The problem stems from the fact that the role of this shipyard in a recent historical event, on which there is divisive and divergent interpretation, is a problem. That is a significant hurdle, I do not think we can overcome easily, at least in the present form. Therefore, we are in the view of Russia and China in supporting the recommendations put forward by the experts. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Russia, please. Your microphone is muted excellency.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Sorry. Mr. Chair, I asked for the floor just in order to react to the proposal for deferral. I understand the distinguished members of the Committee, who are trying to reach a compromise. But unfortunately, this situation does not allow any kind of compromise, because, I fully agree with the distinguished representative of Australia, the deferral means recognition of some potential or legitimacy of a nomination. But, in this case, we are facing a very challenging aggressive attempt to impose a certain political vision of recent history in Europe. And therefore, we share the view of those members of the Committee who believe that this nomination at this point and in this form has no potential for Outstanding Universal Value. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I now give the floor to China. Please, just wait for a moment, we had a problem with the sound of the interpreters. You need to start from the beginning.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] The Chinese Delegation notes that during this discussion many members have felt that we need to uphold and respect the opinion of the Advisory Bodies and the spirit of our Convention and the reputation of our Committee and avoid risk of politicisation.

Mr. Chairman, China supports Russia, Spain, Australia, Norway, Guatemala and Ethiopia. We feel that our Committee should not inscribe projects that do not show OUV and China is opposed to inscription of this property. China supports the Secretariat's opinion that it should not be inscribed. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. Hearing all the opinions in this case we support the Draft Decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I ask the State Party to answer questions posed by the Committee members. Try to be very brief. Now, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Poland:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Poland nominated the Gdańsk Shipyard as an industrial complex with a long tradition of shipbuilding. It has the authentic spatial layout, buildings, stocks and cranes which bear unique testimony of two centuries of ship-building technology, as already confirmed by the experts from Europa Nostra.

Poland has a long-standing tradition of World Heritage protection. We proposed the Gdańsk nomination carefully studying all UNESCO and ICOMOS guidance on criterion (vi). In this sense we were surprised when reading some of the opinions expressed in the ICOMOS evaluation report. During the entire evaluation process, we experienced shortcomings in the cooperation with the Advisory Body which does not contain historians. The State Party feels deprived of the opportunity to defend the nomination and presented 39 pages of factual errors. However, being respectful to the spirit and principles of the Convention, Poland expressed our readiness to further cooperate with the Advisory Body and the World Heritage Centre to provide more clarification why this site needs to be protected on the international level.

During the evaluation process, Poland delivered many solid arguments together with a list of scientific papers for instance from historians demonstrating that Solidarity was a phenomenon on the international level. In this sense Mr. Chair, this site is not classified as a recent conflict situation nor associated with negative or divisive memory.

Poland has a history with very dramatic events but there was one period that is distinguished by the peaceful action of the 1,700-shipyard workers who represented no fewer than 10 million members of Polish civil society at the height of the Solidarity movement. Their courage and patience triggered the process of the reunification of Europe as John Paul II once said: '*There is no freedom without Solidarity*'.

In the spirit of Solidarity and seeking for consensus, we are asking the distinguished members of the World Heritage Committee to recognise the importance of the site to be ultimately safeguarded on the World Heritage List for the future generations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your response. ICOMOS, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for giving me the opportunity to reassure the Committee that ICOMOS attaches the utmost importance to respecting the integrity of the evaluation process as set out in the *Operational Guidelines* and to upholding the principles of the World Heritage Convention.

In respect of the Gdańsk Shipyard nomination, I would like to bring to your attention the following information. Throughout the whole evaluation process, including all the presentations made during this session, ICOMOS has rigorously followed all rules and procedures provided by the *Operational Guidelines* and defined in Paragraph 148 and abiding by clause b. We have been objective, rigorous and scientific in considering all information provided to the Advisory Body regarding this nomination. Furthermore, we have followed Paragraph 31e in terms of dialogue with the State Party which have been undertaken during the ICOMOS panel through an interim report and in a subsequent meeting.

The structure of our evaluation process has followed exactly the requirements of the nomination process as set out in the *Operational Guidelines* Annex 6a. An evaluation mission has been carried out by an ICOMOS expert of the region and this despite very difficult sanitarian conditions. We have consulted through desk reviews a substantial number of highly recognised international experts who were all history specialists, historians of this historical period and, or these types of heritage places.

This nomination has been evaluated by the ICOMOS panel. Firstly, in an extraordinary session held in January 2021 as the mission was delayed because of the pandemic situation. This session included a direct conversation

with the State Party and its national experts. Secondly, in the second session of the ICOMOS panel in the month of March. And I would like to state that the ICOMOS panel was this year, as in previous years, composed of international experts, 26 this year, with regional balance matching the balance for the nomination and from an appropriate variety of scientific backgrounds. To guarantee, the independence of the experts and to ensure full transparency of the process, the names of panel members are made available on the ICOMOS website after our evaluations are submitted to UNESCO.

In conclusion, ICOMOS would like to say that it considers the statement made by the distinguished Hungarian and Polish ambassadors to be without any foundation. And Mr. Chairman, if I may, I pass the floor to our expert to answer the questions. Actually, no need for further answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comments. Hungary please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chair. Just briefly to let you know that the distinguished representative from Poland seems to have been disconnected from the meeting during the intervention of ICOMOS.

Chairperson:

Please, check with the technician. Are there any other comments? Hungary?

The Delegation of Hungary:

No, thank you. Not at this stage, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Firstly, we wish to echo the sentiments expressed by Australia and many other colleagues previously. At the same time, we do have research and recognition of something that could potentially justify a deferral which, for us, based on the current evaluation, is a very complex matter to understand. If we could ask ICOMOS to repeat its main conclusions before we proceed that could be very useful. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

ICOMOS, can you repeat the conclusions?

ICOMOS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, and thank you Norway for this question. ICOMOS evaluated the property as it has been proposed by the State Party and both criteria (iv) and (vi) have been related to the role played by Solidarity. The proposed justification for inscription of the nominated property revolves around the association. It states that the Gdańsk Shipyard, as a representation or illustration of communist planning, is associated with Solidarity, the independent trade union movement with the peaceful struggle for freedom and determination of the Polish people, and also goes further and credits Solidarity with a major role in the fall of the Iron Curtain and the Cold War and unification of Europe.

The dossier is focused essentially on the associations. Criterion (iv) has been examined and the comparative analysis has not demonstrated how this shipyard could illustrate communist planning and would differ from other shipyards. Then the focus of the evaluation of ICOMOS looked at criterion (vi) which was from the text of the nomination considered anyway the most important. And criterion (vi) speaks about, I am spelling out: *'to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance'*.

Therefore, there are two aspects that ICOMOS had to address in assessing the irrelevance of these criteria and the capacity of this property to meet this criterion. It had to evaluate whether and to what extent, the site directly was associated with the events mentioned in the nomination dossier and whether these events may be considered of outstanding universal significance and, if so, whether the site might be considered as OUV. And it is in this framework that ICOMOS has conducted its assessment about those historical events.

ICOMOS has examined whether these events, that the State Party considered the nominated property associated with, can be deemed of outstanding universal significance. In this regard, ICOMOS has noted that events referred to in the nomination dossier and the assessment of the impacts might be considered divisive at the global level. This puts under the question and discussion the notion of universality of the possible significance. And furthermore,

on the ground of the proposed comparative analysis presented by the State Party which revealed that several freedom movements existed in the 20th century.

ICOMOS has found that, while Solidarity has played a significant role in leading Poland peacefully to democracy, it is difficult to position precisely the action of Solidarity with the wider 20th century context and establishing their significance in comparison with other freedom movements or also other countries in Eastern Europe. In ICOMOS' view, this difficulty drives from the fact that the nomination aims to memorialise the events for which the understanding and the interpretation are still developing and evolving as well as memories, with some of the protagonists being still alive. If interpretations of these events continue to evolve, as it seems, then it becomes difficult to make meaningful comparison.

It is in this concept that ICOMOS has taken note that there are other historical interpretations than those presented by the State Party on the factors that led to the fall of the Iron Curtain, the collapsed of the Soviet Union and related dramatic events that followed, which point towards a much more complex interrelation of underlying direct and indirect factors in the transition to post communism. ICOMOS eventually considered that it is too early to evaluate and to make a judgement of recent events such as those meant to be memorialised in this nomination and the scope of the impact, given the dramatic changes involved and, therefore, difficult also to define what would be that stage of human history and whether it can be considered as ended.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson and I hope I made clear the conclusions of ICOMOS evaluation about this nomination under both criterion (iv) and criterion (vi).

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. We thank ICOMOS for their very clear intervention.

Chairperson:

Okay. Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairman. I do not intend to prolong the discussion. I just want to make it clear that we do not share the assessment of ICOMOS. Apparently, the State Party does not share this assessment and I had the impression that a number of members of the distinguished Committee do not share the assessment of ICOMOS. And my impression is that the reason for this disagreement is that the dialogue, the process of discussions between ICOMOS and the State Party were compromised during the pandemic. I have the information that during this dialogue, as a matter of fact, no questions were addressed concerning the boundary or the authenticity or the criterion of the nomination.

I have reviewed the file and I have the impression that the State Party of Poland did not have the opportunity for a meaningful, open and constructive dialogue with ICOMOS on these very questions. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more questions in the comment. Dear colleagues, we are in a difficult situation. As you have realised this nomination is related to highly sensitive subjects and the Committee members have very divergent views. Can we take it that a growing consensus is on the original Draft Decision? And also, Hungary, you can offer some input and contribution to the Draft Decision. Can we proceed this way? Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. I am not completely clear about the procedural routes here, but we have handed out an amendment to the Draft Decision and to our recollection there were a number of Committee members that supported this amendment. I propose to discuss the amendment first.

Chairperson:

Are there any other comments? I see none. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.43. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment proposed by Hungary and co-authored by Bosnia-Herzegovina, Oman and Uganda as seen on the screen. There are no modifications proposed under paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you. The way we understood is that there is actually no consensus. I do not know, if interpretation was up and running? Is there interpretation?

Chairperson:

Yes. We have a point of order. Brazil, you have a point for order?

The Delegation of Brazil:

No. Mr. President there was no interpretation but now I think it is back.

Chairperson:

Okay. China, you can continue.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. According to our way of understanding this, the Committee members do not have a consensus on the way in which to deal with this. Some members emphasized that we should be changing the decisions whereas others support the opinions and conclusions made by ICOMOS which put us in a difficult situation because the basis of our discussion influences the result and causes to lose quite a lot of time. We would suggest postponing the examination of this point until Friday when we will examine the point on sites associated with negative memories.

Chairperson:

Russia please, you have the floor. Your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Chair. We do not agree with the discussion on the amendments. In fact, we do not have consensus in the Committee and we cannot discuss this amendment because we are against. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I want to ask Russia: do you want to discuss the original Draft Decision or would you like to go to support the proposal by China to discuss it on Friday after we heard the report by the working group on Item 8?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor. I would like to support the original Draft Decision, but I am ready to support the proposal made by China for the postponement of the discussion. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I think that would be the wisest move for us in order to be efficient in our work to postpone the examination of this item until the prior examination of Item 8. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Committee members, under such circumstances, can you accept that we postpone the discussion to Friday after we have heard the report by the working group? Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. We would have the preference to discuss it now, but, understanding the very divergent positions, our proposal would be to have a vote by secret ballot on the amendments.

Chairperson:

There is a proposal for a secret vote. Are there any other countries who would like to comment? Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair, I support the proposal by my distinguished colleague from Hungary for a secret vote. Thank you.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Once a secret ballot has been requested by at least two State members of the Committee, and in order not to distract the plenary meeting and the continuation of the examination of the agenda items, it is proposed that the ballot be held on the morning of the day following the request for a decision to hold the secret ballot, so that the result can be announced immediately at the resumed plenary meeting. The secret ballot is the next morning, and maybe my colleague from Paris can confirm this for the arrangement. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would also like to give the floor to the distinguished delegate of Hungary to clarify on what we are voting.

The Delegation of Hungary:

My proposal was to vote on the amendments handed in by Hungary and some other delegates of the World Heritage Committee.

Chairperson:

Now, I would like to give the floor to the Secretariat to explain to us the procedures for the conduct of the vote by secret ballot during this online session. Dr Rössler, you have the floor, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As I just explained, two Committee members have requested a secret ballot, and in order not to disrupt the plenary meeting, this secret ballot will be held on the morning of the following day, so tomorrow morning. You remember we had this already once in this Committee session. You know about the logistical arrangements, we have to ensure that the representatives of all the Committee members are available to come to UNESCO Headquarters to vote and a schedule will be drawn up by the Secretariat following the English alphabetical order of the member States of the Committee. This will normally be done in Room V in front of Room I, as previously, and you will be given an envelope and a ballot paper on arrival in the voting room. The question is whether or not you agree with the amendments, if I understood correctly what you have just said, Mr. Chair. This is the question in front of you. I see that two other Committee members wish to take the floor, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a question. According to the Rules of Procedure, since we have a motion of order, does the motion of order take priority or does the vote take priority?

Chairperson:

Secretariat, you have the floor. Just wait for a moment.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

I think it is a little bit complex because some Committee members wish to postpone it to Friday but then you have got a request for the vote on the amendment, so you may wish to ask the legal adviser, maybe, on this point. Thank you.

Chairperson:

The legal adviser please, you have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Mr. Chair, give me just one second. Mr. Chair, I hope you can hear me.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Legal Adviser:

Mr. Chair, I would actually need a little bit of clarification as to what is the understanding of the Chair and of the Secretariat as to the moment in which we were in the proceedings when this motion was put to the Committee. I wanted in particular to know whether the decision to move to the consideration of the Draft Decision had already been made by the Committee or not. I am not entirely clear on that point. Once, I have that answer I am more than willing to, of course, give legal advice. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My understanding was that the Chairperson asked to move towards the Decision and asked the Rapporteur. This was already moved towards discussing, was not it? Yes, absolutely, the Chair confirms.

Legal Adviser:

Mr. Chair, the situation as I understand is as follows. Once the Committee had moved towards the consideration of the Draft Decision, a delegate had taken the floor in order to propose that the consideration of this matter be postponed to Friday. Although, the delegate did not use those precise terms, the question I would have, is that this may be considered as constituting a motion for the adjournment of debate under Rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure. Since that same delegate took the floor, a few minutes later qualifying his intervention as motion, I understand, but this is subject to his confirmation that a procedural motion was made in this regard.

In that case, Rule 31 provides that during the discussion of any matter, any State member of the Committee may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. On moving the adjournment, the State member whether he or she, by the way, moves the adjournment sine die or to a particular time which he or she shall specify. In addition to the proposal of the motion, one speaker may be in favour and one against the motion. My understanding is that this may be what happened in which this would need to be decided by the Committee prior to moving forward. Thank you very much, M. Chair.

Chairperson:

As I understand, China proposed a motion to adjourn the debate until Friday. It was seconded by Russia and Ethiopia. So, according to the explanation of the legal adviser, this motion should go first, it takes precedence over the proposal for a secret ballot. Bosnia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

C'était juste pour appuyer l'idée de l'hôte, et puis poser une question, qui est plus compliquée: s'agit-il de renoncer, ou plutôt, comment dirait-je, de tuer dans l'œuf l'énergie extraordinaire contenue dans cet amendement et cette proposition? Est-ce qu'on peut oublier tout simplement cette énergie? Est-ce qu'on peut oublier l'importance de cette proposition et de l'amendement proposé par la Hongrie? Ce sont mes deux questions. D'abord pour le vote, si c'est bien la question, la réponse est oui. Et concernant la question que je pose au Comité, comment faire quand on se trouve devant quelque chose qui n'est pas uniquement juridique? C'est un fait qui est d'une importance extraordinaire pour la Pologne, cela va de soi, mais c'est aussi un fait qui est important au niveau global, qu'on l'accepte ou pas. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Is it okay now? Have you finished?

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

Yes.

Chairperson:

Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to state that when we have supported the discussion and also agreed for the co-authoring of this Decision, the discussion was very technical. Listening to the discussion recently is taking us somewhere else, Oman would like to be neutral and therefore will go with the consensus. I would like to withdraw our co-authoring from the Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear Committee members, we adjourn the debate until Friday. Is there any objection? There is not, so it is decided. We adjourn the debate on this Item until Friday. We can move to the next item.

Dear colleagues, now, I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, the works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana — Human Centred Urban Design, Slovenia, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the evaluation of the works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana — Human Centred Urban Design, Slovenia. The works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana epitomises a human-centred urban design that changed the identity of provincial Ljubljana into a symbolic Capital of Slovenia after the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

It consists of a series of public spaces and institutions that the architect Jože Plečnik designed between the two world wars throughout the city, in careful consideration of its pre-existing urban natural and cultural context. The comparative analysis demonstrates the contextual urbanistic approach which Jože Plečnik took in transforming the public spaces of Ljubljana and its distinctive architectural language stand apart from dominant modernist principles of the time. The nominated property demonstrates criterion (iv) but criterion (i) has not been demonstrated.

This serial nomination of seven components includes buildings and public spaces in the historic city centre as well as churches and funerary complex in the suburb. The requirements for authenticity and integrity have been met. The State Party initiated an extension of the buffer zone in response to concerns raised by ICOMOS. The proposed buffer zone is adequate. As set out in the Draft Decision ICOMOS recommends that a minor boundary modification might be considered in the future with a view to strengthening the linkages between the component part in the City Centre.

During the evaluation process, the legal protection was further improved by the State Party and is adequate as is the management system. ICOMOS stresses, however, the importance of carrying out Heritage Impact Assessments for development projects as is also set out in the Draft Decision. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana — Human Centred Urban Design, Slovenia, be inscribed in the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iv) and it has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members, for this property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection and no specific comments are made, shall we move on to the Draft Decision? Okay, I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.45, but before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.45 adopted [gavel]. Let me congratulate Slovenia, on behalf of the entire Committee, for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Slovenia, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Slovenia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving Slovenia the floor. Let me start by thanking China for hosting this meeting under your leadership. We wish to thank the distinguished Committee members for this decision to inscribe the works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana on the World Heritage List.

Allow me to express our appreciation of ICOMOS throughout the course of the evaluation from thorough scientific analysis, site mission and consideration of the additional information we provided in the dialogue process. We firmly believe this has contributed to the quality of the nomination bringing clarity regarding identified issues and presenting compelling arguments related to the pillars of OUV. We therefore look forward to the future reform that will allow guidance and exchanges at a much earlier stage and greatly aids States Parties in that regard. Additional

effort aimed at further strengthening protection of monitoring of development projects are continuously being made. Thus, the Committee will be pleased to know that the recommendations included in your Decision are already being addressed.

Mr. Chairperson, the process that led to this recognition has modestly started a decade ago, we are indebted to so many individuals and institutions that contributed to what was first a reflection on heritage values long before it became a start for developing a nomination dossier. Such collective effort depended on wide-ranging professional knowledge, open collaboration with individual owners and managers, clear commitment from national and local authorities and above all a careful articulation of the message we wanted to convey.

We believe the so-called 'the works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana' illustrates exemplary approach to heritage mindful of the accomplishments of the past and evolved around citizens. Just as much as it includes the present-day notions of quality architecture and built environment, governance and sustainability, beauty and sense of place. We therefore, warmly invite you all to visit Ljubljana and walk around its public squares, bridges and parks. Visit the architecture of Jože Plečnik, appreciate Slovenia newly inscribed World Heritage site.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations, once again. Dear Committee members, now let us proceed. I invite ICOMOS to present the nomination, the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, but before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. We received a factual errors notifications concerning the evaluation of this nomination which also has some impact on the text on the proposed statement of OUV which has been already included in our version on the screen. And the factual errors notification is to be found on page 122 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales illustrates the transformation that industrial slated quarrying and mining brought about in the traditional rural environment of the mountains and valleys of the Snowdon massif. The

Territory extending from mountain-top to the sea coast during the Industrial Revolution. The comparative analysis demonstrates the significance of the industrialisation process of slate quarrying and mining and its impact on the slate landscape in terms of scale of influence and development and the diverse application of technology in a context of rapid socioeconomic and environmental transformation. The nominated property demonstrates criteria (ii) and (iv). Criterion (v) has not been justified.

The property is composed of six separate serial component parts spread over four slate veins. Each component part has a nucleus in a relic of quarry or mines with associated processing areas connected to settlements either deserted or still inhabited. Transportation elements including part of the railway system as well as roads and in some case quays and harbours. The requirements for authenticity and integrity have been met. However, due to the configuration of the serial component parts and the lacks of formal buffer zones the integrity of the nominated property remains vulnerable requiring strict compliance to existing statutory protection mechanisms. Some recommendations have been included in the Draft Decision in order to address the vulnerability of the integrity of the key views and settings and the historical settlements located within the nominated property.

Legal designations of landscapes and historical assets in conjunction with the special planning system grant an adequate protection. The management systems are adequate although it relies on good coordination between different stakeholders and the completion of local management plans to ensure the effective protection and management at component part level. Some recommendations have been included in the Draft Decision to strengthen the management of the nominated serial property. Here is a summary of the ICOMOS evaluation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, be inscribed in the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv) and has included a number of further recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Dear Committee members as this property is recommended for inscription, if there are no objection and no specific comments, should me move on to the Draft Decision? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.47. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendment on this Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.47 adopted [gavel]. Let me congratulate United Kingdom on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. United Kingdom you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

Chair, ambassadors, friends, it is my privilege and honour to welcome your decision today to inscribe the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales as a World Heritage site. On behalf of the partnership many thanks for your decision. Gwynedd council have worked on this project for over ten years and I would like to acknowledge the active involvement of all our strategic partners, our communities and businesses who have given so much strength and support for developing the nomination and who have committed to work with us to promote the positive management of this new World Heritage site.

Without starting to name the many partners who made this possible, I would like to put on record our appreciations of the critical support of DCMS in London and Welsh government ministers in Cardiff and the related agencies in Cardiff and it is good that the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, has been here with us today as has David Davis on behalf of the DCMS.

Here, in Gwynedd, we have an outstanding example of a complete quarrying landscape that demonstrates all relevant elements of the industry visible and readable. Welsh Slate has global connections and it can be seen on both grand buildings and ordinary dwellings across the world. It was a significant export material in its heyday and it is still being exported and continues to be an important employer.

The inscription of the Slate landscape as a World Heritage site today is a source of great pride for our communities here in Northwest Wales. And it is the acknowledgment and celebration of our cultural contribution to the world, to the landscape of the mines and we are committed to managing the site collaboratively to that end. We recognise that this inscription is just the start of our journey with UNESCO. And we look forward to being part of a wider global community of World Heritage sites. We will be working to raise awareness on the importance of World Heritage not just locally but further afield, and to use this inscription to support our communities and businesses and welcome here people from all corners of the world.

Mr. Chairman this inscription acknowledges our global significance through the export of product and technology people values. And we thank ICOMOS, UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee for acknowledging our contribution to humankind. *Diolch yn fawr iawn*, thank you very much, indeed.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations, once more. Dear colleagues, I suggest we have a technical break for ten minutes.

Dear colleagues, now let us proceed. I now invite ICOMOS to present the nomination Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea (Russian Federation), but before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 119 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This is the presentation of the ICOMOS evaluation of the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea, Russian Federation. On this evaluation ICOMOS has received a notification of factual errors and has acknowledged some of these errors. The nominated series is located in the Republic of Karelia in the northwest of the Russian

Federation. It covers around 4,600 petroglyphs carved in the rocks during the Neolithic period. The petroglyphs represent one of the largest independent centres of Neolithic rock art in Europe covering a period between 4,500 and 3,000 BCE.

They have been nominated for they represent a unique testimony of the distinctive Pit-Comb Ware and Rhomb-Pit Ware cultures, two now extinct Neolithic cultures of northern Europe. Their high-quality carving techniques and unique form of art attest to the changes in society in the Neolithic period and provides a window on the hunter fisher-gatherer lifestyle through representations of hunting daily scenes, animals and symbols in use at the time. The expanded comparative analysis and additional documentation provided demonstrate the potential for the serial property to be considered for World Heritage at least. However, one of the aspects that makes outstanding the nominated series among its comparators is the relationship between the rock art sites and the associated archaeological sites and settlements. Therefore, these are to be included in the nomination and they are crucial for the understanding of the outstanding significance of the rock art.

The serial nomination includes two component parts located 300 kilometres apart from each other along the shore of the Lake Onega and the White Sea. The rationale for the delineation and the inclusion of the rock art sites, archaeological sites and settlements is not clear: some are comprised within the nomination, some are in the buffer zones and other ones in neither of them.

The state of conservation of the nominated site is overall good but concerns exist for the petroglyphs at the White Sea which are regularly flooded and present lichen infestation. Treatments with alcohol have been used with the results that ICOMOS recommends a more cautious approach and further testing. Pressures exist at the nominated series due to the ambitious projects for tourism development. An assessment of the cumulative impacts of these projects would be needed along with the development of an Outstanding Universal Value tourist strategy.

In summary, the expanded comparative analysis has shown that the nominated series has the potential to justify consideration for the World Heritage List, but only, if the archaeological sites and settlements associated with the rock art are also included within the boundaries of the nominated property. Only criterion (iii) might be eligible for this serial property while criterion (i) and (iv) do not have the potential to be justified.

At this stage, the condition of integrity and authenticity are not met due to unclear delineation of the boundaries. Federal legal protection is not fully in place for some sites in the nominated series and in the buffer zone. Protection therefore will be adequate only when all nominated sites are designated under the highest level of federal designation. The management system also awaits being fully in place. An overarching management structure is announced but no timeframe for its implementation is set out. The management plan would need management objectives and time frames for their implementation along with the conservation plan and the monitoring programme for the petroglyphs.

To conclude, ICOMOS recommends that petroglyphs of lake Onega and the White Sea, Russian Federation be referred back to the State Party for the following main reasons:

- Adjust the boundaries of both components to include archaeological sites and settlements associated with the petroglyphs;
- Complete the process of legal designation under the State code of especially valuable properties of cultural heritage;
- Complete the process of designating the buffer zone as remarkable places of Federal significance;
- Complete the establishment of a centralised management system for the whole series;
- Finalise the approval of the management plan, establish a conservation plan and the monitoring programme of the petroglyphs.

ICOMOS has included a number of recommendations in the Draft Decision to aid the long-term conservation of the property. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The prehistoric era is the dawn of humanity, it has left for us the unique evidence of the creative genius of ancient artists who carved their chronicles in stone all over the world from the desert of the Arabian Peninsula to the northern shores of Russia. The petroglyphs of the Lake Onega and the White Sea represent over 4,500 Neolithic pre-carvings which represent an exceptional testimony of the lifestyle and beliefs of the culture of the population of Fennoscandia.

As we have learnt from ICOMOS presentation, there were a number of recommendations to be fulfilled by the State Party in order to inscribe the property on the World Heritage List. We would like to note that the Russian Federation

has treated the ICOMOS recommendations with unconditional attention and respect and has already fully implemented most of them.

Thus, immediately after the reception of the ICOMOS final report all archaeological sites mentioned in the technical evaluation were included in the boundaries of the nominated property. The updated maps of the components of the nominated property and their buffer zone were prepared. This demonstrates the full compliance of the nominated property with criterion (iii) and the requirements of integrity and authenticity. All other ICOMOS recommendations in respect to inscription were also either already implemented by the State Party or clearly scheduled for the nearest future, 2021 at the latest.

The Republic of Karelia, a Russian region where the nominated property is located, has long and successful experience of preserving the Kizhi Pogost World Heritage site which was inscribed on the World Heritage site in 1990. We believe that it will succeed as well in preserving the great Neolithic site on the Lake Onega and the White Sea according to the highest standards established for the World Heritage. That is why we support the inscription of the petroglyphs of the Lake Onega and the White Sea on the World Heritage List.

If Mr. Chair confirms, we would like to invite Russia to make a short comment on the current recent boundary management activities, and the improvement of the legal status of the property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. We would like to thank the Russian Federation for submitting this unique and exceptional site for inscription on our List. We want to echo what was said by Saudi Arabia in calling for the immediate inscription of this site on the World Heritage List. This is a uniquely exceptional site in terms of its quality and its volume. We are also quite satisfied with what the Russian Federation has done to address the concerns of ICOMOS. Namely, regarding the expanded boundary and buffer zone as well as the submission of the map and, of course, availing the necessary measures to protect and conserve this very important site.

For the above reasons, we call on the Committee to inscribe this site at our current session. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in our view, this case presents no difficulties. ICOMOS recognised that the Outstanding Universal Value of the site would be demonstrated under criterion (iii) when the archaeological heritage located in the buffer zone were included in the nominated areas. The same condition was set for acceptance of the comparative analysis attributes for integrity and authenticity. The condition was accepted by the State Party which agreed to the requested adjustment to the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone. All these requirements are therefore met.

Concerning, protection and management the Advisory Body considered that the requirements were '*partially met*' and demanded additional legal and administrative measures. We have received information from the State Party on the demands and have listened attentively to what the Delegation of Saudi Arabia has said on this subject. And we were satisfied with the action taken by the Russian Federation government and by the authorities of the Republic of Karelia to satisfy the request made by ICOMOS.

We see no reason, therefore, Mr. President to refer the nomination back to the State Party and support the Saudi Arabia's proposal that the committee inscribes the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea on the World Heritage List. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. As has been said by ICOMOS, we have here a quite unique example of Neolithic culture in this nomination presented by Russia. If you would allow me a personal point of view. We have heard of hunting scenes but I think they are the minority, in fact, it is mainly observations of live animals as well as moons and suns and sun views that can still be seen simply by looking up the night sky in the same area. All of this is perhaps a lesson in humility. We start from the point of view of analysis and we believe the world was born when we arrived but back then there were those of us who wanted to pass on the vision, the understanding of beauty to make sure that what they were seeing would be handed over to the following generations.

With regard to the questions put by ICOMOS, the Russian Federation has already fulfilled some of them and that is quite clear. Authenticity is absolutely clear and in fact there has been improvement already made. This is why we would support the amendment presented by the delegate of Saudi Arabia which is explicit and she has very clearly presented it herself. We believe that with the abilities that have been demonstrated by the Russian Federation and the commitment made and the calendar of activities and research and documentation and the improvement of the management plan, we are certain that at the next session we will not be any further. We believe that what is missing is perhaps not that much. This property is really highly valuable and we would like to congratulate the Russian Federation for presenting this nomination.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea represent one of the largest independent centres of a new physical rock art in Europe which provides an exceptional testimony of the lifestyle and beliefs of the Pit-Comb Ware culture population in the Neolithic. Providing a unique source of data and representing a coherent image of the new physical culture period in the region.

China has noted with satisfaction that ICOMOS endorsed the OUV of this property. We are also glad to learn from the State Party that an overarching body for the management of the Petroglyphs of the Lake Onega and the White Sea is to be established by the end of 2021. This shows the commitment of the State Party. Therefore, China supports the inscription of the nomination onto the World Heritage List. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, as you have realised, we have a very heavy agenda today, so there are still quite a number of Committee members on my list. I would kindly ask you to be very brief if it is only to fully support and second the proposal made by previous colleagues. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hungary would like to congratulate Russia for the preparation of this substantial documentation. We can say that the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea are unique testimonies of rock art providing information on a variety of the daily activities of an extinct society. The components of the property testify to the emergence and evaluation of Neolithic rock art from its early development to the most elaborated compositions showing detailed hybrid and fantastic figures as well as geometric conceptual images. As such the nominated property bears unique information about the material and spiritual culture of the hunter-gatherer societies of northern Europe as well as providing elements allowing a better appreciation of economy, lifestyle and world view in the Neolithic period.

According to the evaluation report, ICOMOS considers that criterion (iii) would be demonstrated when the archaeological heritage located in the buffer zone that directly supports the significance of the petroglyphs, and provided contextualisation as sites representative of the Pit-Comb culture population who generated them, will be included in the nominated areas. Russia has made remarkable efforts to comply with the recommendations made by ICOMOS. Thus, the basic recommendation of the ICOMOS experts to adjust the boundaries of the property has already been implemented by Russia which allows to note the full compliance of the nominated property with criterion (iii) and requirements on integrity and authenticity.

Therefore, the Outstanding Universal Value of the property can be viewed as justified. According to the answer given by the State Party, the remaining basic recommendations have already been implemented or will be implemented soon. To conclude, Hungary supports the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Egypt would like to thank Russia for nominating the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea on the World Heritage List, and also to thank ICOMOS for its assessment. We note with satisfaction that the recommended measures advocated by the ICOMOS technical evaluation regarding the protection and management of the site are currently implemented by Russia in full accordance with international standards. We align ourselves with the amendments to the Draft Decision presented by Saudi Arabia and we believe that it should be inscribed on the World Heritage List during this session based on criterion (iii). The Outstanding Universal Value of the site has been recognised by ICOMOS experts and we do not see the need with the amendments presented for a referral. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I take your advice and will be brief. Oman supports and endorses the amendment made by Saudi Arabia on the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.44. Oman supports the inscription on the World Heritage List of this site from the Russian Federation on the basis of criterion (iii) and also endorses point 6 that the State Party has to submit the report on the 1st of December 2022 for the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendation for examination. So, we call for the inscription at this session immediately. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving us the floor. Without repeating the technical argument presented by fellow Committee members, Mr. Chairman, South Africa believes that the State Party has provided sufficient justification of the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. We, therefore, Mr. Chairman, express our support for the inscription of the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea, Russian Federation, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii) as proposed in the amendment of the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.44 by the State Party of Saudi Arabia. Thank you, Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thailand would like to express our support for the inscription of the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea under criterion (iii). Apart from the integrity of the OUV, Thailand has learned that the State Party has implemented measures to ensure the maximum protection and management of the property in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Body. The Russian Federation has undertaken significant efforts to create a centralised management system ensuring a coordinated and integrated management of the two components of the serial nomination.

Therefore, considering the OUV of the property, the significant progress and continued effort made by the State Party to comply with the recommendations of the Advisory Body, Thailand is of the view that the site should be inscribed on the World Heritage List at this session and therefore give full support to the amendments proposed by Saudi Arabia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. As we are taking the floor again, we would like to thank the report by ICOMOS and congratulate the State Party for this excellent nomination file and for its commitment that it has shown into protecting and managing these two sites with their petroglyphs. Along with the previous speakers, we recognise the unique characteristics of the site. We do not want to repeat all the outstanding features that have already been mentioned. We understand that this nomination has a lot of potential for OUV and criterion (iii). To be consistent with the previous decisions on this session, we will not oppose any emerging consensus when it comes to inscription, and we encourage the State Party to implement all the recommendations that are listed in the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. après examen de la documentation abondante, ainsi que la tenue de consultations, il devient clair pour nous que l'inscription des pétroglyphes du lac Onega et de la mer Blanche est clairement justifiée au titre du critère (iii). Il est nécessaire de souligner que, après l'inclusion par l'État partie des sites archéologiques dans le territoire proposé pour inscription, il n'y a plus aucun doute sur l'authenticité et l'intégrité du bien. Le système de gestion ainsi que les mesures de protection juridique mis en place par l'État partie sont également suffisants pour une conservation et une interprétation efficaces de ce bien en série extrêmement sérieux et précieux. La volonté et l'engagement de l'État partie de Russie à améliorer encore le système de gestion et de

protection du bien proposé pour inscription, conformément à la vision fondée sur les recommandations de l'ICOMOS, méritent d'être salués par le Comité. Il n'est pas nécessaire de retarder l'inscription du bien sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Nous sommes pour son inscription pendant cette session. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine appuie l'inscription de ce site sur la Liste de l'UNESCO et ainsi que l'amendement de l'Arabie saoudite. Il est important de souligner que la Russie s'est déclarée prête à faire tout ce qui est nécessaire, en suivant les prescriptions des experts de l'ICOMOS et des autres experts. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Uganda, please. I think that your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Yes. It is okay.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. I will be very brief. Uganda understands from the State Party that it has taken all the necessary steps to address the recommendations of ICOMOS. We, therefore, would like to support the amendments to the Draft Decision to have Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea of the Russian Federation inscribed on the World Heritage List. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The suggested nomination is of great interest representing cultural heritage in northern Europe in the Neolithic time. Several Norwegian archaeologists have worked with the rock art in the area of Lake Onega and the White Sea and we fully acknowledge the importance of this site.

Without going further into the proposed nomination, taking into consideration all what was said about the property from previous speakers, we would like to say that Norway supports primarily the Draft Decision to give the State Party the possibility to fulfil a complete nomination, in particular to adjust the suggested nomination considering the use of criteria and modify boundaries as recommended by ICOMOS.

Norway would like to take this opportunity to give Russia our full support with regard to the use of alcohol solution to remove lichen on the rock art. Norway has been doing research and analysis on the method for many years which has, in any context, proved to be the best way to remove lichens without harming the rock art itself.

Now, we will not oppose the majority of the Committee moving from referral towards inscription. But we will ask for an addition in the last paragraph of the amended Decision and to save time, Mr. Chair, our addendum has already been sent to the Rapporteur. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Now, Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. I will be very, very brief. Since the State Party, Russia, has responded to the recommendations, Nigeria supports the amendments. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Kyrgyzstan, please.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our Delegation supports the inscription of the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea and the amendments proposed and to take due note of the recommendations proposed in the Draft Decision. We also support the amendment proposed by Saudi Arabia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I now give the floor to the State Party, Russia, to answer the questions raised by the Committee members.

The Delegation of Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I would like to stress our deepest gratitude to the ICOMOS experts for a thorough study and analysis of the nomination documents and additional materials, as well as a comprehensive assessment of the current state of the property during the evaluation mission.

I will comment briefly on the measures taken by the Russian authorities in order to implement the ICOMOS recommendations. We have followed ICOMOS as for criteria for inscription and leave only criterion (iii) which was considered to be justified in case of adjustment of the boundaries of the property. The boundaries were enlarged in order to include the archaeological heritage which initially was located in the buffer zone. It means that over 90 hectares were added to the nominated territory. The new maps clearly indicate both petroglyphs and archaeological sites.

In June 2021, the official decision of the Republic of Karelia to establish the two remarkable places of federal significance, the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the Petroglyphs of the White Sea, was made. The boundaries of these remarkable places coincide with the boundaries of the buffer zones of the nominated property. Currently, all petroglyphs rock art sites within the components of the property have an official State designation of cultural heritage site of federal significance which guarantees their full legal protection. The inclusion of the components in the State code of especially valuable properties of cultural heritage of the people of the Russian Federation by an order of the government of the Russian Federation is scheduled to be completed by the 1st of February 2022.

The new joint management organisation for two components of the nomination is to be the Petroglyphs of Karelia Museum which is now undergoing the final steps of official registration procedures. By the 1st of September 2021, the Republic of Karelia is also scheduled to complete the procedure for the establishment of the coordinating council on the basis of the Museum. Currently the works on the approval of the composition of the council are conducted. Therefore, the centralised management system of the property will be completely established by the 1st of December 2021. The management plan has been updated with the information about the implementation of the recommendations by ICOMOS stating the time frame and authorities responsible. It also includes the new developed special monitoring form based on the impact factors identified in the periodic report questionnaire and the potential OUV attributes. The State Party is ready to proceed with the implementation of additional recommendations of ICOMOS experts and ensure effective State protection, management and conservation of the nominated property.

To finalise, I would like to thank all the members of the Committee who spoke on this occasion for their encouraging interventions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. I see no more question in the comments. Now, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.44. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment submitted by Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia as shown on the screen. We have no changes proposed for paragraph 1 of the Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will approve the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 is approved.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea, Russian Federation, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii)'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 3. 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then we have Brief Synthesis, Criterion (iii), Integrity, Authenticity and Protection and Management Requirements, end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:'— 4a is proposed for deletion, new 4a — 'Completing the process of legal designation of the component parts in the State Code of Especially Valuable Properties of Cultural Heritage of the Peoples of the Russian Federation by 1 February 2022 — Original 4c is proposed for deletion — b) Completing the process of establishing a centralised management system to ensure coordinated and integrated management of the two component parts,

c) Finalizing the approval of the Management Plan with a set timeframe for policies and measures to be implemented,

d) Establishing a conservation plan and a monitoring programme for the petroglyphs, dedicated to the systematic monitoring of the conservation of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the revisions? yes, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 5. 'Also recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

a) Setting up an adequate documentation system and developing an operational and up to-date database for the property to ensure monitoring of its conservation',

Sub paragraph b is proposed for deletion. New b): 'Developing a specific Tourism Strategy for the property in the course of the Strategy of Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Karelia and the Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Karelia,

c) Developing a Risk Preparedness Plan for the property in order to address the environmental pressures, and developing measures responding to potential natural disasters. This is particularly urgent at the Pavilion of Besovy Sledki and at Zalavrugra to ensure their long-term conservation,

d) Submitting all projects planned at the property and its buffer zones to an overall Heritage Impact Assessment, to ascertain whether they and the expected increase of tourism could have adverse impacts on the component parts and on their setting, particularly where it is intact, as at Lake Onega,

e) Developing an ongoing programme of research within a research framework and linked with conservation strategies'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the revision? Okay, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6: 'Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre,' — in here is the beginning of the insertion proposed by the distinguished Delegation of Norway — 'by 1 February 2022, the revised maps of the modified boundaries of the component parts of the series and of their respective buffer zones, as well as the decision establishing the two Remarkable Places of Federal Significance covering the buffer zones, and also requests the State Party to submit, by' — end of the insertion — '1 December 2022, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with the modifications? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We may wish to hear from the State Party, the Russian Federation, on the deadline, if it is feasible to give them the floor. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We thank Norway for this modification and we agree with it.

Chairperson:

Okay. Can we approve? It is approved. Dear Committee members, now, we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 Com 8B.44 adopted as amended ^[grave]. Let me congratulate the Russian Federation on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. The Russian Federation, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the Committee members and the Advisory Bodies for their trust and support for our nomination and with your permission I would like to give the floor to Mr. Artur Parfenchikov, head of the Republic of Karelia and Mr Sergey Obryvalin first Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation. Thank you.

Mr. Artur Parfenchikov, Head of the Republic of Karelia:

Dear Chairman, dear members of the World Heritage Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, Karelia is famous for its cultural and natural attractions of carefully preserved ancient and cultural traditions. One of such monuments is the unique prehistoric rock art site. We are grateful to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for its Decision to inscribe the Petroglyphs of Karelia on the World Heritage List. The 45th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee will be held in Kazan City, Russia. It offers a great opportunity to invite you to visit the Republic of Karelia and get acquainted with the prehistoric rock art and original cultural heritage of our region. We are looking forward to welcoming you in Karelia. Thank you.

Mr Sergey Obryvalin First Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation:

First of all, let me thank China for hosting the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, we thank the Committee members, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for their consultation and support.

The inscription of the Petroglyphs of Lake Onega and the White Sea on the World Heritage List is a great honour for the Russian Federation. This property is a unique source of information about the people of this area in the Neolithic era. Our petroglyphs are one of the most important components of the long-standing tradition of the rock art in northern Europe and represent a powerful layer of the universal human culture. The unique examples of the primitive art reflect the views and the way gatherer and sea hunters of the north lived. It is also a part of the history of the Karelia and its culture, a relic for the present and future generation for all mankind.

We will do our best to ensure that all decisions of the World Heritage Committee are implemented. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations, once again. Now, let us proceed. Before, we proceed to the next property, I would like to make an announcement. It is my understanding that an informal meeting has already been held between some members on the drafting on Decision 8 as it was suggested. I also understood that it is proposed to form a drafting group composed of the following members of the Committee: South Africa, Brazil, Australia, Hungary, Norway and Uganda. I would suggest that the group continues meeting on this matter in order to agree on the consensual text under the co-hosting of Norway and Brazil. Other members of the Committee who may wish to join the group should contact the co-hosts. Thank you.

Let us proceed. I now invite IUCN to present the Ivindo National Park, Gabon, but before I give the floor to ICOMOS, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. We have received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this nomination and this is to be found on page 59 of Document INF.8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN you have the floor.

IUCN :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. L'évaluation de l'IUCN se trouve sur les pages indiquées sur la diapositive. L'IUCN recommande au Comité de renvoyer la proposition d'inscription du parc national de l'Ivindo. Le parc national

de l'Ivindo est proposé sous les critères (vii), (ix) et (x) et couvre une superficie de plus de 300 000 ha, entourée d'une zone tampon de 5 km de large. Le parc national de l'Ivindo comprend de vastes et diverses forêts climaciques à *Caesalpinioideae* intactes, entrecoupées d'écosystèmes de rivières sauvages qui se définissent par leur nature intacte exceptionnelle. Le bien proposé fournit suffisamment d'espace pour que le processus de l'évolution puisse se poursuivre. La flore du bien proposé est extrêmement diverse et ses habitats sont d'importance critique pour la conservation des mammifères, des oiseaux et des amphibiens, y inclus l'éléphant de forêt, le gorille de l'Ouest, en danger critique d'extinction, le chimpanzé et le perroquet gris également en danger, ainsi qu'une faune ichtyologique d'une importance mondiale en raison de son endémisme exceptionnel. De plus, l'UICN note l'intégrité exceptionnelle du bien proposé. L'UICN considère donc que le bien proposé remplit les critères (ix) et (x) et qu'il satisfait la condition d'intégrité. Cependant, tout en reconnaissant la valeur esthétique de la forêt tropicale vierge et de ses rivières sauvages d'eau noire marquées par des chutes impressionnantes, l'UICN n'est pas convaincue que le bien se distingue au plan mondial sous le critère (vii). En outre, des attributs notés comme importants au titre de ce critère pourraient également être représentés au titre du critère (ix). Par ailleurs, le panel de l'UICN a soulevé plusieurs préoccupations en ce qui concerne la protection et la gestion du bien proposé. De l'avis de l'UICN, la protection de la zone tampon devrait être renforcée pour atténuer les effets sur le bien proposé. En particulier, l'exploitation forestière dans la zone tampon pourrait causer des effets bordures sur le parc ainsi que des impacts négatifs indirects tels que le braconnage et des espèces envahissantes. Par ailleurs, de nouveaux plans de gestion devraient être terminés, tenant compte de la protection de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle potentielle du bien proposé. Le projet de décision se trouve dans le document 8B, comme indiqué sur la diapositive, et contient la recommandation de l'UICN de renvoyer le parc national de l'Ivindo, tout en prenant note du potentiel important du bien proposé à satisfaire les critères (ix) et (x). Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments concerning this nomination.

The Delegation of Oman:

Sorry the translation mixed the French and the English sound and I could not understand.

Chairperson:

Can you repeat, Oman?

The Delegation of Oman:

Both channels, French and English, were mixed and I could not understand the presentation, we are sorry. We tried to raise our hands but the presentation went on. It is okay anyway, we can proceed.

Chairperson:

Is it okay now?

The Delegation of Oman:

Now, yes, but during the translation both voices were mixed and we could not understand.

Chairperson:

I see, we should pay attention to that. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Uganda would like to commend Gabon for its efforts in preserving the Ivindo National Park in its pristine state as an exceptional biodiversity hotspot and for bringing it before this Committee for consideration for inscription on the World Heritage List. My Delegation, however, is not comfortable with the recommendation to have this site nomination referred.

While IUCN recognises the existence of a comprehensive management plan, my Delegation wonders why IUCN fell short of recommending inscription of the site. The reasons, of lack of monitoring plan, inadequate staff, inadequate activity implementation, inadequate budget and gaps in biodiversity inventories, that IUCN based itself to refer this site, are common management issues at most World Heritage properties, including those that this Committee has inscribed during the course of this session. In fact, Chair, IUCN flagged these issues in some nominations but downplayed the importance and recommended inscription of such sites. Moreover, the issues are routine in nature and usually addressed during management planning implementation.

The good news, Chair, is that the State Party of Gabon is soon commencing the next planning period and these recommendations should form the basis for advice to the State Party after inscription, as one way of building ground for compliance assessment toward heritage management. In addition, the Ugandan Delegation views the evaluation of the State Party on site protection as an error. IUCN itself acknowledged the pristine nature of the property which

it says is well protected under the law with a five-kilometre buffer zone. IUCN further recognises the excellent integrity of the property with no human activities except for customary fishing. The State Party has also demonstrated its commitment through consolidation of projects that have been established within the site.

My Delegation, therefore, in this case, finds inconsistent the IUCN analysis of the different sites as if they are supposed to be subjected to different criteria. In view of all the above, Chair, Uganda has opposed the Draft Decision and together with other States Parties has submitted amendments to the effect. I would like to request you, Chair, to give the State Party of Gabon an appropriate time and opportunity to further clarify the issues of management planning and site protection. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party after the Committee members. Now, Ethiopia, please.

Délégation de l'Éthiopie :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous remercions le Gabon pour avoir soumis à nomination sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial ce site exceptionnel qu'est le parc national de l'Indo. Nous sommes également consternés, comme l'a dit mon frère et collègue de l'Ouganda, de la recommandation faite par l'IUCN, qui nous semble inconsistante par rapport à ce qu'elle a décidé auparavant, et qui semble mettre l'accent sur l'accessoire plutôt que sur l'essentiel. L'essentiel, c'est que le Gabon a soumis une nomination qui répond parfaitement au titre des critères (ix) et (x). Les critères scientifiques sont justifiés et portent respectivement sur les aspects liés aux écosystèmes et aux habitats importants pour la conservation de la biodiversité. Si la biodiversité et le combat pour celle-ci a un sens, c'est en protégeant ce genre de parc et en lui donnant la reconnaissance qu'il mérite qu'on réussira sinon, ça restera lettre morte, ça ne sera que des paroles vides. Le parc national a été classé parc national en 2002 par un décret qui limite clairement sa frontière, y compris celle de la zone tampon. Cela lui a conféré une protection juridique à long terme remarquable. Ce parc est la principale aire comprenant 13 forêts qui sont uniques au monde. De ce fait, ce parc constitue le refuge principal, naturel et viable, pour des espèces rares, menacées ou endémiques des plateaux intérieurs forestiers de l'Afrique centrale. Concernant la gestion du bien, le plan actuel de gestion 2016-2020 a été prolongé jusqu'en 2022. La révision, la mise à jour de ce plan portera sur les inventaires de la biodiversité et des plans de suivi pour la biodiversité. Elle tiendra également compte de la préservation de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien proposé. Le plan de gestion révisé sera soumis en 2023 au Centre du patrimoine mondial. En matière de financement, ce parc reçoit un appui financier et technique de l'État partie ainsi que de partenaires tels que l'Agence française de développement, le United States Fish and Wildlife Service ainsi que d'autres institutions, ce qui nous permet d'affirmer avec certitude que des financements sécurisés, suffisants et durables pour la gestion du parc sont en place. En ce qui concerne l'intégrité, comme cela a été mentionné par mon collègue, des limites claires ont été établies depuis longtemps et le parc est totalement inhabité à l'intérieur et absolument intact à 90 %, répondant ainsi aux demandes et aux exigences d'intégrité. De ce qui précède, l'Éthiopie reconnaît la valeur universelle exceptionnelle de ce parc. Comme notifié dans le rapport d'évaluation, ce bien répond aux deux critères naturels, aux conditions d'intégrité ainsi qu'aux conditions de protection et de gestion. C'est pour cela que nous demandons l'inscription de ce site exceptionnel, nécessaire à la préservation de la biodiversité de ce monde, à notre session actuelle. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My Delegation thanks the State Party for this nomination and thanks IUCN and the World Heritage Centre for the assessment reports. We have carefully studied the IUCN report and the additional information provided by the State Party and have taken the floor as a co-author of the amendments to the Draft Decision.

The IUCN report recognises that, even though the National Park is biogeographically unique and of high conservation value, it houses a rich biodiversity including species on the IUCN Red List of threatened species and species exclusively native to this region. On the whole, the UCN report is positive on the OUV of the nominated property under criteria (ix) and (x) and also positive on the adequacy of the boundaries of the property. The management plan of the nominated property has been established and implemented by the State Party. Though Covid-19 has delayed its updating, we take good note that the plan has been extended and its updating is also foreseen in the near future.

Mr. Chair, once again, my Delegation would like to stress that Africa is very much underrepresented on the World Heritage List. It is therefore more urgent than ever that the irreplaceable heritage of the continent be protected and preserved for the future generations. My Delegation believes that the inscription of this property would be a valuable addition to the World Heritage List, not only for Africa but also for Humanity. With this, I thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Now, we do not need to repeat arguments that have been stated quite clearly by colleagues from Ethiopia and Uganda and other important elements highlighted by the distinguished representative of China, but let me repeat something that we have said time and again when we have a nomination from Africa. This is Africa, this is Gabon. We are talking about ancient forest biodiversity and ancient nature. We are talking about a report which overall, if we had to balance the positive and negative, the IUCN report, is in fact on the positive side.

There are too many should, could and Gabon is answering we can and we do. We see the measures taken, the legislation to avoid construction in the vicinity of the site, to avoid negative impacts of activities to make sure that the communities living there is only using fishing for survival, all of these activities and protected laws. If you look at the effort and the budget that is allocated, I think that we need to be very understanding.

I would like to encourage Gabon and countries that continue to preserved spaces such as these that are so much needed for humanity and the world that frequently forgets that we need these spaces for our own survival. When we give the floor to the State Party, I would also like them to give us further details as to the funding mechanism that is sustainable and being set up for the sustainability of the property.

We believe there are enough reasons to inscribe immediately this site from Gabon on the List. We sometime lose track of the fact that for some people inscription is just a celebration, but for others it is not a celebration, it is also justification of preservation and conservation before their own communities, as to why we and they need to protect it because it no longer belongs just to them but to humanity. It is completely justified. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor the State Party after the Committee members to respond to the questions. Now, Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Australia congratulates Gabon on the nomination of this exceptional property and considers that its inscription will help improve the balance of the World Heritage List. We particularly welcome the significant freshwater biodiversity protection that inscription would provide noting the dire conservation status of many of the world's other freshwater ecosystems. We find much value in the expert advice of IUCN regarding the future management of the property and encourage the State Party to consider this advice in their implementation of this Committee's decision. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to commend Gabon for submitting the nomination of the site Ivindo National Park and also to thank IUCN for assessing this nomination. As co-author of the amendment presented to the Draft Decision, Egypt believes that it is of utmost importance for the Committee to inscribe in the current session the site on this World Heritage List based on criteria (ix) and (x). The National Park of Ivindo is a unique site in central Africa which constitutes a natural refuge for rare and threatened species and plays from this perspective an important role in preserving the biodiversity.

The site benefits from the 2002 legal protection, in addition the Gabonese authority adopted a management plan for the site which reinforces the measures aiming at preserving its OUV. Such measures include banning any type of human activities within the boundaries of the park except activities related to sustainable development.

We look forward to the adoption of the amendment we co-authored within the African group and express our wish to have the second African site registered on the World Heritage List during this session. I thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear colleagues, I found that there is a very strong consensus and I have a long list on my table. I would like to kindly ask you to be very brief, if it is only to fully support or second the proposal made by the previous colleagues. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Now, Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief. We very much hope the Committee will include the inscription for various reasons, but I will not repeat what my previous colleagues have said. The Advisory Body has recognised the OUV of the site on the basis of criteria (ix) and (x) and has considered that other technical requirements such as integrity and boundaries are met. Some improvements are recommended as regards protection and management though nothing that should constitute an obstacle for inscription.

There is, however, one aspect which we would like to seek further clarification from the State Party if you allow us, Mr. Chair. The IUCN report points to specific threats to the conservation of the site, particularly when it comes to logging and poaching. Could the State Party explain when logging companies operating in the buffer zone will be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council? Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will give the floor to the State Party later. Now Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Russia firmly believes that Africa's cultural and natural heritage should have more prominent place in the universal heritage. The Ivindo National Park in Gabon is an example of a highly valuable property which is characterised by beautiful natural landscapes, wetlands, waterfalls and rapids surrounded by intact forests. The property is supposed to be inscribed on the World Heritage List according to criteria (ix) and (x).

The National Park has been managed since 2002 by the Gabonese National Council of National Park and later by the National Agency of National Parks. Over the year, these management authorities have gained experience that has upheld the conservation standard of the international park which is one of the best managed National Park in Central Africa. I would like to ask a question: how does the State Party intend to develop the new management plan within the National Park? When could it be available?

To finish, Mr. Chairman, we commend the State Party for its efforts for the conservation of this unique and intact forest ecosystem and we support the amendments presented by a group of Committee members for the inscription of this property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I will ask the State Party to answer the questions posed by the State members later. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. Norway congratulates Gabon on the nomination of the Ivindo National Park and considers that its inscription will make a valuable contribution to the World Heritage List. We also thank the State Party of Uganda and other Committee members for the comprehensive amendment for inscription. We also find the guidance embodied in the Draft Decision prepared by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre valuable and we have some suggestions to be added when the amendment is presented.

At the same time, we would like to express that we highly value our partnership with Gabon through the Central African Forest Initiative and we applaud Gabon's effort to maintain its high forest cover and low deforestation rates. Gabon's success in this is the basis for the recent announcement of the results-based payments referred to in the amended Draft Decision. Gabon makes important contributions to the global arena on the discussion on how to maintain tropical forests and we welcome their engagement on this also on the World Heritage Convention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to congratulate Gabon for the nomination of the Ivindo National Park which is the main protected area representative of the forest of interior lowlands of Gabon. The site includes a forest with a great diversity of formations including very old Caesalpinioideae forest unique in Central Africa and the entire dominion are Congolese domain. This forest constitutes one of the four zones very different from each other of the biogeographical province of lower Guinea very different of the forest of the Congolese region. Mr. Chair, the elements presented in this brief presentation of the property militate in favour of its nomination on the World Heritage List. This will be in line with Gabon's [...]

Chairperson:

There is a connection issue. Is it okay now? There is no sound. Maybe I come back to you. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to be brief, we would like to commend Gabon for this nomination and we fully support the inscription of this property for the aforementioned justifications expressed by our dear colleagues of the Committee. Thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving us the floor. First of all, Hungary would like to congratulate IUCN for the preparation of the evaluation regarding the Ivindo National Park which is the main protected area representative of the forest of the interior plateaux of Gabon. This forest includes a great diversity of ecosystems including very old Caesalpinioideae forest unique in central Africa. As the advisory body emphasized in its evaluation, the old-grown forest hosts a rich biodiversity, including important and stable population of threatened flagship mammals and avian fauna. This includes IUCN Red Listed species such as the critically endangered forest elephant, the western Lowland Gorilla, the endangered chimpanzee and many others.

Hungary welcomes the State Party considerable and sustained effort made to ensure effective coordination and harmonisation of policies and practices related to the management of the protected area and encouraged Gabon to update the management plan. The evaluation makes a number of recommendations, all of which we consider sensible and important for the inscription. In light of the above, Hungary agrees with the amendments submitted by Uganda in favour of the inscription of this important biodiversity hotspot in the World Heritage List. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, Thailand shares the sentiments and seconds the comments made by fellow Committee members. And we will not repeat information already shared earlier. Instead, we would like to stress the dimension of the legal protection of the property.

Ivindo National Park benefits from long-term legal protection conferred by a decree classifying it as a National Park in 2002 and setting out the park boundaries. Gabon National Parks Agency which is the authority managing the property has made considerable efforts to ensure effective coordination and harmonisation of policy and practices related to the management of the protected area in a sustainable manner.

With the exception of management and research and tourism, the only activity allowed in the property is fishing, but this is also limited to a section of the Ivindo River. These activities are provided for by the Gabonese Forestry Code. Intensified surveillance missions are also regularly carried out to ensure the protection of the property, but ultimately safeguarding the OUV of the property. Moreover, the State Party of Gabon has already put in place the management plan which has just been renewed last month for another two years. The plan will be updated again in 2022.

With this in mind, Thailand would like to support the draft amendment to inscribe the Ivindo National Park. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would also like to concur with the previous discussion and support Gabon and commend them for providing this file for the Committee. I would also like to add a bit on the management.

Oman clearly noted the great and sustainable effort made by the State Party for protecting and managing the property with long-term legal protection confirmed by decree n° 612, in 2002, which classified the National Park and its boundaries in addition to the order n° 118, in 2004, which regulates forest, mining, agriculture, aquaculture, hunting and tourism activities with a buffer zone. The property also has a 2016-2020 Management Plan which has been renewed for two years by a ministerial decision in 2021.

Considering the explanation of the potential OUV to inscribe the property according to criteria (ix) and (x) and the great effort made by the State Party for managing and protecting the property, Oman supports the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List and the amended Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.31. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Mali, please.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Le Mali félicite l'État partie du Gabon pour cette proposition d'inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Nous pensons qu'il s'agit d'une candidature de grande qualité, et des efforts concrets ont été déployés pour préserver ce site du parc national de l'Ivindo. Nous pouvons citer par exemple le renforcement du plan de gestion 2016-2020, qui a été prolongé par décision ministérielle jusqu'en 2022. Par ailleurs les inventaires de biodiversité et la mise à jour de ce plan de gestion prendront en compte la préservation de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle. Les conditions d'intégrité de la propriété proposée sont remplies. Les limites sont claires et le site est non perturbé et vierge. Enfin, un financement sécurisé et durable de 150 millions de dollars sur dix ans est établi pour la gestion du site. Par conséquent, nous appelons les membres du Comité à inscrire ce site naturel exceptionnel sur la Liste du patrimoine pendant cette session. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, for giving us the floor. Guatemala would like to express its thanks for nominating this important National Park with rivers and endemic species, fish species as well as species of forest elephant. It is intact and has been untouched by humans, it has emblematic species such as chimpanzees, mandrills and important populations of forest elephants.

We encourage the State Party to implement all the recommendations, especially with regard to the management of threatened species such as elephants. We also support the original text that allows the State to fulfil all of its commitment and requires to ensure its inscription, but we will not oppose the consensus on this one. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity once again. The pristine natural attributes and the technical justification provided by the State Party on the Ivindo National Park in Gabon cannot be furthered ignore by this session. Hence, South Africa aligns itself with the emerging consensus presented by all distinguished Committee members.

Therefore, South Africa strongly recommends the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List as proposed by Uganda, Mali, South Africa, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia in the amendment to the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.31. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be explaining about the integrity of this, site, please bear with me. Ivindo National Park covers an area of 300,000 hectares, more actually, 481,000 with the buffer zones. It is totally uninhabited, very sparsely populated at the peripheral zone with one or two people per square kilometre. Therefore, the impact on the forest is really negligible. At present the nominated property is intact compared to other forests in Central Africa, almost all of which have been subjected to anthropogenic influence over the last millennium, especially over the last three centuries. There is current logging we understand but it is under sustainable management or certified by the Forest Stewardship Council at a rate of only two trees per hectare demonstrating responsibility and sustainability.

Moreover, by its size and the nature of the topography and the hydrographic system its phytogeographic and ecological gradients and its connectivity with other protected areas like Minkébé National Park to the north and the Mwagne National Park to the east, the ecosystem within the Ivindo National Park is able to withstand changing climate at least those predicted by current estimates. These elements demonstrate that this property meets the criteria of integrity required for inscription on the World Heritage List.

Moreover, Mr. Chair, and dear members, the inscription of this site will definitely enhance the diversity of the World Heritage List not only as a natural site but also as a site from the African Region. We support the amendment presented, your Excellency, and we would love to see this site inscribed today. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. La Bosnie-Herzégovine soutient l'inscription du parc national de l'Ivindo lors de cette session du Comité. Félicitations au Gabon pour cette proposition extraordinaire. Juste un mot de plus. On parle d'abord d'un lieu exceptionnel à bien des égards, le parc de l'Ivindo, et ensuite on commence à parler de problèmes secondaires qui rendent notre discussion plus difficile, mais l'important est que ce parc soit inscrit, et la Bosnie soutient cette proposition. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I give the floor to the State Party, Gabon, to answer the questions and make some responses. Try to be very brief.

Délégation du Gabon :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président, de donner la parole au Gabon. Nous voudrions d'abord remercier tous les membres du Comité et, avec votre permission, donner la parole au Ministre des eaux et forêts du Gabon, M. Lee White. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

M. Lee White, Ministre des eaux et forêts du Gabon :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Merci également à tous les États parties pour les questions et les commentaires. Je remercie l'État partie de l'Espagne pour le soutien ainsi que pour la question sur les financements. Effectivement, le parc national de l'Ivindo est soutenu financièrement et techniquement par des ressources provenant en premier lieu du budget du Gouvernement gabonais, mais il y a également des financements engagés par nos partenaires, comme le United States Fish and Wildlife Service, à travers un accord de collaboration sur cinq ans en cours de renouvellement, et l'ONG Wildlife Conservation Society, qui depuis vingt ans soutient ce parc. Nous pouvons également souligner notre partenariat de dix ans avec l'Initiative pour les forêts de l'Afrique centrale (CAFI), avec un financement qui vient surtout de la Norvège, qui fournira des ressources substantielles pour le bien jusqu'en 2030, ainsi que la nouvelle initiative LEAF de la Norvège, du Royaume-Uni et des États-Unis, à laquelle le Gabon se prépare à postuler. Une autre initiative encore, avec l'ONG The Nature Conservancy, pour la création d'un fonds fiduciaire destiné à soutenir la biodiversité au Gabon. Je remercie également l'État partie du Brésil pour la question sur les concessions forestières. Lesdites concessions forestières ont le statut de concessions forestières durables, ce qui signifie qu'elles sont gérées durablement. En outre, deux de ces concessions sont déjà certifiées par Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Le Gabon s'est engagé dans un processus de certification FSC pour toutes les concessions forestières, qui devrait aboutir à la fin 2022. Néanmoins, à cause des retards liés au COVID-19, il est probable que l'État partie va accorder deux ans de plus aux sociétés déjà engagées dans le processus de certification. Mais au plus tard en 2025, tous les permis forestiers autour de ce bien vont être certifiés ou annulés. Je remercie également l'État partie de la Fédération de Russie pour la question sur le plan d'aménagement. Effectivement, le plan de gestion actuel du parc national couvrait la période 2016-2020 mais, à cause de la pandémie de COVID-19 qui a retardé certaines actions de gestion, nous l'avons prolongé de deux ans et le nouveau plan de gestion sera disponible en 2023. Malgré la pandémie, cependant, les patrouilles de surveillance et les activités de gestion ont été effectuées régulièrement à l'intérieur du bien afin d'assurer sa conservation et sa protection. Finalement, j'ajouterais que, en plus du décret de 2002 qui porte création de ce parc, il y a une loi adoptée en 2007 qui a confirmé le classement du parc; de ce fait, seul le Parlement gabonais peut modifier les limites de ce parc, lui donnant ainsi une protection supplémentaire. Je remercie tout le monde pour les questions et pour les commentaires. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your response. I give the floor to IUCN.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to respond very briefly. First of all, we welcome the additional information provided by the State Party and by Minister White. We fully agree with the exceptional value of this site and its OUV and with the sentiment expressed by several States Parties about the need to welcome more World Heritage or African World Heritage site to the World Heritage List.

We would simply like to note, as well, that we do not believe that our advice on issues related to logging in the buffer zone has been inconsistent, but rather is evolving in response to new scientific information on the requirements for achieving true sustainability with industrial logging in tropical forests and with new information coming to light on the crucial importance of ecosystem integrity to addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.31. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur to present the amendments on the Draft Decision that she has received. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment from Uganda and co-authored by a number of Committee members as shown on the screen. We have no modification proposed for paragraph 1, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, we will adopt the text paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1 is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Inscribes Ivindo National Park, Gabon, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ix) and (x)'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New Paragraph 3. 'Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' then Brief Synthesis, Criterion (ix) Criterion (x), Integrity, Protection and Management Requirements, this is the end of paragraph 3, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Expresses its appreciation to the State Party for the significant efforts made so far for the conservation of Ivindo National Park and requests the State Party to review the General Management Plan of the property,'— here is a proposed insertion from Norway — 'and to submit it, by 1 February 2023, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN,' — end of the insertion — 'and to ensure that this plan: a) Takes into account the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including undertaking biodiversity inventories and a monitoring plan for the biodiversity of its freshwater and Caesalpinioideae forests,' —proposed addition from Norway — 'b) is developed through a fully participatory process including consultations with local communities both in the buffer zone and adjacent to Ivindo National Park; c) Is supported by secure, adequate and sustainable funding for the management of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept the modifications? Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, we would like to ask the Delegation of Gabon whether they are comfortable with this change proposed by our colleague from Norway, especially the submission by 1 February 2023 for review by IUCN of the general management plan. I have a question on 'b'. It seems for me to be out of scope especially the last part we talked about 'adjacent to the Ivindo National Park'. I do not see the relevance of that addition. In particular, I am not comfortable at all the way it is formulated. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Gabon, please.

Délégation du Gabon – M. Lee White :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, et merci à l'État partie de la Norvège pour ces propositions. Je n'ai pas de problème avec la date du 1^{er} février 2023. On va effectivement, au cours de l'année 2022, finaliser le plan de gestion modifié, on sera donc en mesure début 2023 de pouvoir le faire. Pour la proposition b), nous avons dans notre loi sur les parcs nationaux une disposition prévoyant la création d'un comité local de gestion du parc national dans lequel on définit les communautés qui sont impliquées dans cette gestion, donc je ne vois pas vraiment l'utilité de cet ajout, qui n'est pas non plus très spécifique sur les questions adjacentes du parc national. Compte tenu du fait que cette consultation est déjà prévue dans notre loi, je ne pense pas, respectueusement, qu'on ait besoin de cette proposition b). Et pour la proposition c), effectivement, nous avons, comme je l'ai déjà dit, une visibilité sur dix ans et un fonds fiduciaire en cours de création, donc je pense que le point c) ne présente pas de problème. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

That is okay, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, Uganda, please, it was cancelled. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Since we have an agreement, I do not need the floor. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, do you agree with all these modifications? It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New Paragraph 5: 'Recommends that the State Party ensure that any infrastructure or development projects, outside the property, do not adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and are subject to prior assessment in accordance with the IUCN World Heritage Advisory Note: Environmental Assessment'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6: 'Also recommends that all concessions in the buffer zone of Ivindo National Park should meet the provisions of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and be strictly controlled and managed without significant impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property' — there is a proposed addition by Norway in here — 'and further recommends the State Party to explore enlarging the buffer zone to include more fully the Caesalpinioideae forests in the landscape surrounding the property'.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please. Your microphone is muted.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair, I am sorry. We are not at all comfortable with the second part of the recommendation regarding the expansion of the buffer zone. We do not see why it is needed. We have recognised that the property has OUV status based on the criteria we have identified and we also clearly stated the buffer zones. The integrity is respected, why are we here putting further obligations on the State Party? We suggest deletion of the second part of this recommendation. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, I would like to say that this was a recommendation that we thought would benefit and bring additional conservation benefits to the property, but we can delete if the benefit is not seen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, good. Uganda, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you Chair. Uganda supports the position of Ethiopia.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear Committee members, do you accept this paragraph? Saudi Arabia.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to join my colleagues from Ethiopia and Uganda to delete the end of the paragraph and we would also like to see n° 7 deleted which is an extra burden on the State Party. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you agree? Are there any other objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7 proposed by Norway: 'Recommends furthermore that any future zonation of Ivindo National Park be based on the inventories of the biodiversity values and does not allow tourism infrastructure such as hotels to be located inside the park'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Chair, we do not at all agree with this one. This prejudices what the State Party would do. This is putting again additional obligations which have no merit or basis in here. I do not understand why we are talking about this thing. The State Party has already made a certain number of commitments. We do not think this is fair nor valid to be included here, so we suggest a deletion as was stated by my cousin from Saudi Arabia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Norway, do you agree with the deletion?

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This was again a recommendation that we think would actually benefit the property, but it seems not to be agreed by the other Committee members. So, we will agree with that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, good. Are there any other comments? Uganda, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Chair, we support Ethiopia I want to be recorded on that part and Saudi Arabia.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you accept the deletion? Mali.

Délégation du Mali :

Le Mali rejoint l'Éthiopie et les autres pays pour biffer cette partie-là. Merci.

Chairperson:

Okay. Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. My Delegation would also like to join previous speakers in asking to delete this paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, so this paragraph has been deleted. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

In this case it will be paragraph 7 but shown as 8 right now: 'Encourages the State Party to further its efforts in enhancing the management, technical and financial capacity for the effective conservation of the property'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8. 'Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2024,'— and we have a proposal from Norway as — '1 December 2023 a report on the implementation of the above-

mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session' — and respectively suggested by Norway — '47th session'.

Chairperson:

Are there any objections to Norway's proposal? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor. We would like to ask the State Party if the timelines are okay for them and if they are comfortable with the amendments made in the timelines of the submission of the report. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, the State Party, Gabon, you have the floor.

Délégation du Gabon – M. Lee White :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, et merci encore à tous les États parties pour leurs commentaires. Je n'ai pas d'objection à la modification de la Norvège. Je pense que ce serait peut-être mieux de garder 2024, mais s'il y a consensus sur 2023, nous n'avons pas de problème avec ça.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Ethiopia, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

It is fine for us, thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Can we approve? Okay. It is approved. Dear Committee members, now we have been through all the text, if there are no other comments, I now declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.31 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Let me congratulate Gabon on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. I would like to express my heartfelt joy to see another property from the African continent inscribed on the World Heritage List. And I commend the remarkable efforts of you all. Gabon, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

Délégation du Gabon – M. Lee White :

Merci, Monsieur le Président du Comité, merci les membres du Comité, merci Mesdames et Messieurs les experts. C'est avec une immense joie que j'accueille votre décision d'inscrire le parc national de l'Ivindo sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO. Ce chef-d'œuvre de la nature mérite amplement ce label du patrimoine mondial. C'est un moment historique pour la conservation de la biodiversité riche exceptionnelle qu'abrite ce site, à savoir de très vieilles forêts intactes et refuges pour de nombreuses espèces endémiques et espèces menacées. Le parc national de l'Ivindo est devenu aujourd'hui notre bien à tous. Il est évident que l'inscription de ce site sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial n'est pas une fin en soi ; comme l'ont dit tous les représentants des États parties qui ont eu l'honneur d'avoir un bien inscrit sur cette liste durant cette session, c'est maintenant que tout commence. En effet, le défi est de maintenir l'intégrité de ce bien ainsi inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Aussi, Mesdames et Messieurs, par ma voix le Gabon s'engage à respecter les recommandations annoncées dans la décision relative à l'inscription du parc national de l'Ivindo. Je ne saurais terminer sans réitérer ma profonde gratitude aux membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, au Secrétariat et à l'IUCN pour l'accompagnement dont nous avons bénéficié. Je voudrais aussi remercier le Fonds pour le patrimoine mondial africain pour son soutien constant. Au nom des plus hautes autorités du Gabon, je vous exprime ma reconnaissance pour la décision que vous venez de prendre. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations, once more. Dear colleagues, I suggest we have a technical break for five minutes.

Dear colleagues, let us continue. I now invite IUCN to present the significant boundary modification of the Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, France, Montenegro, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, and Switzerland. The Draft Decision concerning this nomination can be found in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. But before I give the floor to IUCN, Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. We received a factual errors notification concerning the evaluation of this property. And this is to be found on page 64 of Document INF8B.4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. IUCN, you have the floor.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the third extension of the existing World Heritage property of the Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe. IUCN is recommending the Committee to approve the modification of six existing component parts and the inclusion of 15 new component parts as an extension of the existing property. The evaluation can be found on the pages identified on the slide before you.

The Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests was first inscribed back in 2007, in Slovakia and Ukraine, extension followed in 2010 and 2016 significantly expanding the serial property which today spans twelve countries across Europe, counting 78 component parts in total. The extension that is tabled at this year Committee session has three different allotments.

Firstly, a significant boundary modification is proposed for four existing component parts in Slovakia to address long-standing concerns regarding boundaries which have been subjected to the Committee state of conservation decisions.

Secondly, the nomination proposes an enlargement of one existing component part in Italy and its buffer zone as well as an enlargement of a second buffer zone of a component part also in Italy.

Thirdly, the nomination contains an extension to the existing property and this is proposed in the addition of 29 new component parts across ten States Parties. Regarding the existing component parts, IUCN considers that the modifications considerably improve integrity.

We would like to highlight the work of the State Party of Slovakia in resolving various conservation issues in the Rožok, the Havešová the Stučica and the Vihorlat component parts which come to a convincing outcome in relation to the Committee's past discussion. In this respect, we would like to express our appreciation for the continuous constructive dialogue with the State Party also through missions in past years.

Regarding the newly proposed component parts, IUCN considers that nine of these improve the representation of Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests completing the series with near natural old growth beech forest. And a further six component parts are located nearby to existing components and they strengthen connectivity and completeness of the existing property. These 15-component parts exhibit convincing level of integrity and appropriate protection and management regimes.

The remaining component parts that have been nominated have either not yet fully demonstrated that they meet the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines* or they exhibit more significant issues related to integrity and, or, protection management requirements. And there are three component parts that do not meet criterion (ix) and therefore are not recommended for inclusion in the property.

IUCN is ready and already working to support States Parties on those component parts that would have the potential to improve the existing property but are not recommended for inclusion in the present time that might be included in future extension of this property.

Finally, Mr. Chair, IUCN notes that the conservation issues of the existing property, which the Committee has already examined under Item 7B, are important, and while the present nomination alone cannot solve all of these conservation issues for the existing property, we think it makes a very good step in addressing some of the long-standing conservation issues and also to improve management effectiveness.

We would like to thank all the nominating States Parties in that regard and also the State Party of Switzerland and the coordination of what is a very complex nomination and partnership for the very effective dialogue through the evaluation process and which has continued following the publication of the evaluation report.

Mr. Chair, the Draft Decision can be found in Document 8B on the pages shown on this slide. And this contains IUCN recommendation to approve the significance boundary modification of this property through the addition or modification of 22 component parts based on criterion (ix). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, IUCN, for your presentation. Dear Committee members, for this property recommended for inscription, if there is no objection and no specific comments on it should we move on to the Draft Decision? I see no objection. Thank you very much for your cooperation. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.32. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.32 adopted. Let me congratulate all the States Parties involved on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. Representative of all the States Parties you have the floor for a two-minute statement. Thank you.

Délégation de la Suisse :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de nous donner la parole. Permettez-moi tout d'abord de remercier la Chine d'avoir accueilli cette session du Comité. Nous vous félicitons, Monsieur le Président, de votre gestion efficace des délibérations. Nous tenions aussi à exprimer notre solidarité avec les victimes des inondations en Chine ainsi que dans nos pays voisins. Monsieur le Président, distingués membres du Comité, excellences, les États parties qui participent à cette extension saluent la présente décision du Comité. Aujourd'hui, un grand pas en avant a été fait pour la protection d'un bien iconique pour les écosystèmes forestiers. Il s'agit de se rappeler que l'intervention humaine a été responsable d'une réduction spectaculaire de ces forêts de hêtres, une tendance qu'il faut enrayer afin de garantir l'intégrité des écosystèmes qu'elles servent. Chaque accroissement du bien représente un acte important. Lier à la principale espèce d'arbre d'Europe, le bien s'étend désormais sur 18 pays qui tous sont conscients de sa valeur exceptionnelle. La préparation de ce dossier a été un véritable défi, et plus encore avec la COVID-19. La solidarité des États parties et la motivation des gestionnaires des forêts nous ont permis d'atteindre ce résultat en peu de temps. Volontaire pour organiser l'élaboration de cette proposition transnationale, la Suisse tient à remercier tous les pays impliqués pour leur engagement exceptionnel et de haute qualité. Elle remercie aussi l'Autriche et la Belgique pour leur soutien comme coordinatrices du bien existant. Tous les États parties concernés regrettent que certaines des composantes n'aient pas été reconnues pour inscription, notamment en raison des difficultés à organiser l'ensemble des missions sur site. Nous nous félicitons des discussions déjà entamées pour trouver prochainement des solutions et sommes reconnaissants à l'UICN pour le dialogue transparent et constructif. Notre reconnaissance va aussi au Centre du patrimoine mondial pour son soutien technique devant la complexité de cette nomination. Nous apercevons le bout du chemin d'une pleine protection des forêts de hêtres au titre de la Convention. L'impressionnante mobilisation de tous les partenaires et la présente décision du Comité nous rendent confiants de pouvoir l'atteindre dans un proche avenir. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your solidarity with the Chinese people in the flood-stricken area. Thank you for the statement. Congratulations, once again. Dear colleagues we have now finished the examination of all nominations. We will proceed with the examination of 16 minor modifications to the boundaries of properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List. You will find the related Draft Decision in documents WHC/21/44.COM/8B and WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. In order to save time, minor boundary modification requests proposed for approval will be adopted without discussion. I therefore invite Mr. Balsamo to read the list of minor boundary modification requests proposed for approval. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. This is the list of minor Boundary modification requests recommended for approval and proposed to be adopted without discussion: Canada, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump; China, Hubei Shennongjia; Czechia, Landscape for Breeding and Training of Ceremonial Carriage Horses at Kladruby nad Labem; Honduras, Maya site of Copá; Italy, Historic Centre of Florence; Italy, Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century; Italy, Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands of Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto and Ukraine, Kyiv: Saint-Sophía Cathedral and Related Monastic Buildings, Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Are there any questions? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.50, 52, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61 and 65. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur, if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decisions proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on these Decisions, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.50, 52, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61 and 65 adopted ^[gave].

I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Abbey Church of Saint-Savin sur Gartempe, France. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites de l'Abbatiale de Saint-Savin sur Gartempe, France. Diapositive suivante. Cette modification mineure concerne l'extension de la zone tampon existante de 147 ha à 4 214 ha. L'extension vise à préserver les vues lointaines et dégagées de la flèche gothique de l'église abbatiale depuis plusieurs points de vue de la vallée de la Gartempe et de préserver les relations spatiales entre l'abbaye et son paysage. Diapositive suivante. L'ICOMOS considère qu'une zone tampon élargie permettra de prendre en compte le territoire de manière globale, mais une carte des délimitations révisées de la zone tampon à une échelle plus appropriée est nécessaire. Aussi, les outils de protection existants devront être adaptés et de nouveaux outils de gestion être mis en place afin de gérer cette zone tampon élargie. Un calendrier pour la prise en compte de la nouvelle zone tampon dans les outils de planification et de protection doit être soumis, ainsi qu'une clarification sur la façon dont la gestion de la zone tampon va se coordonner avec la gestion du bien. D'où la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de renvoyer à l'État partie cette proposition de modification mineure. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.53. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur, if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.53 adopted. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Banks of the Seine Paris, France. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS:

This presentation is the ICOMOS evaluation of the minor boundary modification for Paris, Banks of the Seine, France. The proposal is to extend the property by slightly more than 50 per cent, which you can see here in red, and to create a buffer zone. The property was inscribed to reflect the growth of the City of Paris from the Middle Ages to the mid 20th century through a succession of architecture and urban master pieces along the River Seine or visible from it. These three parameters define the existing boundary.

The proposed extension includes some buildings and ensembles that might be seen as architectural masterpieces but also buildings of the late 20th century and early 21st century and some that do not have intervisibility with the river. Thus, while parts of the proposed extensions could be seen to strengthen or complement Outstanding Universal Value, the scope of the whole but also the focus of the property, the creation of a buffer zone, is welcomed in principle. But what is unclear is how its protection and management could support the OUV of the property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of Paris, Banks of the Seine, France, should not be approved. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.54. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decisions 44 COM 8B.54 adopted ^[gave]. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura, Holy See and Italy. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites du Centre historique de Rome et des biens du Saint-Siège (Italie, Saint-Siège). *Diapositive suivante*. La modification mineure des limites du bien propose la création d'une zone tampon et fournit un rapport technique qui donne des informations détaillées sur les études de base réalisées et la définition des limites de la zone tampon.

Diapositive suivante. L'ICOMOS prend bonne note des informations fournies concernant l'établissement de cette zone tampon, mais considère qu'un certain nombre de points devraient être clarifiés et envisagés, et notamment : considérer l'extension des limites proposées pour la zone tampon sur la base d'un réexamen des relations conceptuelles et physiques entre le bien et son environnement immédiat ; fournir de plus amples détails sur les mécanismes en place dans la zone tampon proposée pour évaluer l'impact de projets de développement sur le bien du patrimoine mondial ; et finalement préciser de quelle façon et quand les délimitations de la zone tampon proposées seront inscrites dans les règlements locaux et nationaux existants afin de conférer un statut légal à ces limites. D'où la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de renvoyer aux États parties l'examen de proposition de zone tampon du bien afin de fournir les informations demandées ci-dessus. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.55. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.55 adopted ^[gave]. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification Durham Castle and Cathedral, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites de la Cathédrale et château de Durham au Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord. *Diapositive suivante.* La modification mineure proposée des limites du bien concerne principalement l'inclusion des deux rives de la rivière Wear au niveau du bien. Elle répond à la nécessité de prendre en compte l'environnement naturel du bien et d'associer les délimitations proposées aux attributs de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du bien, démarche que l'ICOMOS approuve sur le principe. Elle contribuera à renforcer l'intégrité et la gestion du bien. *Diapositive suivante.* L'ICOMOS considère qu'il est nécessaire de considérer une extension des limites proposées sur les rives extérieures de la rivière pour englober non seulement les zones boisées, mais aussi les espaces entre les deux, et également de clarifier les mesures de protection qui vont s'appliquer à cette zone élargie. D'où la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de renvoyer à l'État partie cette proposition de modification mineure des délimitations. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.59. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.59 adopted ^[gave]. We will now continue with the minor boundary requests that are included in Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Prehistoric sites and the decorated caves of the Vézère, France. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation des modifications mineures des limites des Sites préhistoriques et grottes ornées de la vallée de la Vézère. *Diapositive suivante.* La modification mineure concerne la proposition d'une zone tampon unique pour le bien en série, comprenant l'ensemble de la vallée de la Vézère, de Montignac à Limeuil et correspondant à une unité géographique bien identifiée. La zone tampon permettra de garantir la conservation pérenne des biens archéologiques et patrimoniaux enfouis, par le contrôle du flux touristique, des modifications du bâti et la prévention des risques. *Diapositive suivante.* L'ICOMOS considère que les délimitations de la zone tampon proposées sont justifiées et que des mécanismes de protection adaptés sont proposés pour l'ensemble de la zone tampon. Toutefois, l'approbation de la zone tampon par les communautés locales concernées n'est pas mentionnée ni l'intégration des mécanismes de protection prévus par les lois nationales dans les plans d'urbanisme. Aussi, il sera nécessaire d'intégrer les mécanismes de protection

prévus dans la zone tampon dans le plan de gestion de l'ensemble. Pour ces raisons, l'ICOMOS recommande que l'examen de la modification mineure soit renvoyé à l'État partie. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.62. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.62 adopted ^[gave]. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France, France. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites des chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France. *Diapositive suivante*. La modification mineure propose la création de zones tampons pour les périmètres de 77 sur les 78 composantes du bien. L'ICOMOS note l'effort important que représente l'étude documentaire produite par l'État partie pour la définition des zones tampons raisonnées. *Diapositive suivante*. Premièrement, l'ICOMOS considère que la majorité des délimitations des zones tampons sont appropriées, mais certaines d'entre elles sont à revoir. Deuxièmement, concernant les mécanismes de protection, la situation n'est pas satisfaisante à ce stade. Il s'agit de s'assurer que l'intégralité de chaque zone tampon est protégée par les systèmes de protection en place et également de fournir le calendrier d'approbation municipal des zones tampons. C'est pour ces raisons que l'ICOMOS recommande de renvoyer à l'État partie la création des zones tampons de ce bien, afin qu'il puisse fournir des informations sur les points ci-dessus. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.63. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? France, please.

Délégation de la France :

Merci, Monsieur le Président, de me donner la parole. Depuis plusieurs années, la France a engagé un travail très important de mise à jour rétrospective des éléments des biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en s'appuyant notamment sur les recommandations faites lors des rapports périodiques. Ce travail de coopération entre les services de l'État et les collectivités territoriales concernées s'appuie sur le Code du patrimoine, qui intègre désormais les notions de zone tampon et de plan de gestion. Cette année, votre Comité a dû examiner quatre modifications mineures des limites proposées par la France: Paris, rives de la Seine; Abbaye de Saint-Savin sur Gartempe; Sites préhistoriques et grottes ornées de la vallée de la Vézère; et Chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France. Votre décision a été prise à la lumière des recommandations de l'ICOMOS, qui n'en a accepté aucune. Si nous ne contestons pas ces évaluations et les décisions prises, nous ne comprenons pas très bien les arguments scientifiques et philosophiques qui sous-tendent ces renvois. Au-delà de la grande déception qu'elles suscitent et de la démobilité des collectivités territoriales qu'elles sont susceptibles d'entraîner, elles font perdre encore quelques années pour la mise en place de limites et de protection adéquates pour la valeur universelle exceptionnelle des biens inscrits il y a plusieurs décennies. Sur ces sujets aussi, un dialogue avec l'ICOMOS doit être mis en place et nous souhaiterions l'engager dès septembre 2021, afin que nous puissions travailler ensemble et parvenir ainsi à adopter des mesures protégeant la VUE de ces biens. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Are there any other comments? I see none. I therefore, declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.63 adopted ^[gave]. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the Archeological areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata, Italy. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites des zones archéologiques de Pompéi, Herculaneum et Torre Annunziata en Italie. L'actuelle modification mineure des limites propose une nouvelle zone tampon basée sur une approche différente de celle exprimée dans la décision 38.COM 8B.51. Cette zone tampon révisée prend en compte des aspects pratiques liées à une gestion efficace d'une zone tampon. L'ICOMOS prend bonne note des informations fournies concernant l'établissement de ces zones tampons, mais considère qu'un certain nombre de points devraient être clarifiés et notamment : la façon dont les critères utilisés pour définir les zones tampons ont été utilisés pour sélectionner les zones à inclure ; la raison pour laquelle certains des fragments de la zone tampon d'origine ont été laissés hors des nouvelles zones tampons proposées ; la façon dont la protection juridique s'applique sur les aires comprises dans les zones tampons proposées qui se situent en dehors du mandat du plan territorial de gestion du paysage des municipalités vésuviennes, et qui ne sont pas reconnues comme patrimoine culturel ; et finalement, les modalités de gestion et les calendriers pour les zones tampons proposées. D'où la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de renvoyer à l'État partie l'examen de la proposition de ces zones tampons afin de fournir les informations demandées ci-dessus. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.64. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.63 adopted ^[gave]. I now invite ICOMOS to present the minor boundary modification of the City of Potosi, plurinational State of Bolivia. ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Il s'agit de la présentation de l'évaluation de la modification mineure des limites de la ville de Potosí en Bolivie. Cette proposition d'établissement de zones tampons répond à la décision 43 COM 8B.50 du Comité. L'ICOMOS considère qu'il manque des informations nécessaires pour comprendre la façon dont la zone tampon a été conçue, et notamment les trois points suivants devraient faire l'objet de clarifications : premièrement, la logique qui a présidé à la délimitation de la zone tampon ; deuxièmement, les mécanismes de protection appliqués au sein de la zone tampon afin de comprendre comment celle-ci offrira un surcroît de protection au bien; troisièmement, le champ d'application des différentes réglementations en vigueur dans la zone tampon, en particulier en ce qui concerne le chevauchement des différents mécanismes de protection. D'où la recommandation de l'ICOMOS de renvoyer à l'État partie l'examen de cette zone tampon afin de lui permettre de fournir les informations demandées. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS, for your presentation. Are there any comments concerning this nomination? I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.66. But before doing so, I would like to ask the Rapporteur, if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.66 adopted ^[gave]. We have now finished the examination of minor boundary modifications. We will now continue with agenda item 8B and proceed with the adoption of statements of OUV of properties inscribed at previous sessions of the Committee. I now invite Mr. Balsamo to present this point.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Chair. Here, we are dealing with eleven statements of Outstanding Universal Value that were provisionally adopted at previous session by the Committee. In Document 8B, in the provisional statements, there were twelve, but the committee decided to approve the significant boundary modification of the Ancient Primeval Beech Forest of the Carpathians and other Regions of Europe property, and therefore adopted the statement of OUV included in its Draft Decision 44 COM.8B.67 which was also included in the revised statement for the property,

as inscribed until now, regarding the statement of OUV of properties inscribed at previous session and not adopted by the Committee, by removing this property from the Draft Decision.

The eleven statements concern the following properties: Azerbaijan, Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace; Cambodia, Temple zone of Sambor Prei Kuk, Archaeological site of ancient Ishanapura; China, The Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of the Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China (Phase I); Czechia, Landscape for Breeding and Training of Ceremonial Carriage Horses at Kladruby nad Labem; India, Jaipur City, Rajasthan; Poland, Krzemionki Prehistoric Striped Flint Mining Region; Portugal, Royal Building of Mafra - Palace, Basilica, Convent, Cerco Garden and Hunting Park (Tapada); Portugal, Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga; Russian Federation, Central Sikhote-Alin; Saudi Arabia, Al-Ahsa Oasis, an Evolving Cultural Landscape and South Africa, Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains.

I wish to recall that the work to organise, revise and do the necessary back and forth to further refine and then bring to the adoption of provisional statements of OUV is lengthy and costly. And this additional work is brought in the system because of the changes that may occur between a recommendation and the related decision. Each time a site recommended for referral or deferral is inscribed, we add a new provisional statement in the system, and therefore, add the related cost to bear. These statements are being refined with the cooperation of the Advisory Bodies and the concerned States Parties. And they are now ready for adoption. Decision 44 COM 8B.67 can be found in Document 8B.Add and it is on page 17 of the English version and page 18 of the French version. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo for this presentation. I would like to know whether there are any comments. I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.67. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

We have not received any amendments on this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.67 adopted ^[gave]. Dear colleagues, we have almost finished with our Agenda Item 8B concerning nominations. I would like to remind you that we have to wait for the consensual text of the Draft Decision on Item 8B.24 and we have to discuss the Item 8B.43 on Friday to finish our Agenda Item 8B. Let us leave them open and move forward with the next agenda item.

Dear colleagues, with a heavy agenda we are approaching the end of today's meeting. I would like to suggest that we stop here. Once again, let me congratulate the World Heritage sites inscribed today. I would like to encourage the drafting groups and the informal working groups established for different topics to step up their consultations to forge consensus and bring the outcomes in the next two days.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and efficiency. We will proceed with Item 8D, 8E and 9A at the beginning of the plenary session. As announced during the Bureau meeting today, due to some arrangements, tomorrow, on 29th July, I cannot meet you, but I have to kindly ask his Excellency, Mr. Gross, distinguished Ambassador of Guatemala and Vice Chairperson, to replace me again in the capacity of Chairperson to preside over the Bureau and the plenary meeting tomorrow. You will meet tomorrow at 11:30 am Paris time and for Bureau Members you will meet at 11:00 am.

Before we conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are any general announcements to make. You have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do not have any announcements. You know that the Budget group has finished and we do not have any side events now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Dr Rössler. Finally, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to the interpreters for their diligence and their prolonged efforts. Thank you, have a good rest, see you the day after tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 4:23:41 pm.

TWELVTH DAY – Thursday 29 July 2021
TWELVTH MEETING
11.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Francisco Voss (Guatemala)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, it is my great pleasure again to welcome you all today for our daily meeting, but before we start, I would like to mention our condolence and sentiments to the People's Republic of China for the difficult situation they are facing. And also, commend the work of the President of this session for his extraordinary work and smart leading.

Now, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all for our daily meeting again. This morning the bureau held its 12th meeting. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recall that during our prolonged meeting yesterday, the Committee inscribed six new properties on the World Heritage List and also approved eight minor boundary modifications and eleven statements of OUV. Again, let me congratulate sincerely all States Parties concerned. Congratulations to you all.

The Committee also decided to adjourn the examination of Draft Decision 8B.43 until tomorrow once the general Item 8 has been reviewed. Due to time constraints, we could not review Items 8D, 8E and 9A as it was planned. Also, Item 8C was initially foreseen to be examined yesterday, but due to the fact that this Item can only be dealt with once all the nominations have been examined, we will only be able to review it later in today's session.

As for today's meeting after examining Items 8D, 8E and 9A which are all for adoption without discussion, the Committee will review the reports on the results on the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise for two regions: the Arab States under Item 10A and the African region under Item 10B. We will also examine Item 10C and Item 10D which are also both put in front of you for adoption without discussion. Then, the Committee will examine two decisions on points 7, 7.1 and 7.2 related to general conservation items.

Also, as you remember, general Items 8, 11 and 12 are still open until tomorrow. I trust that the consultations among Committee members, called for by the Chairperson, are progressing well and that we will have texts to look at tomorrow.

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, in spite of this heavy workload today, should we finish all the items ahead of time, I would suggest that we advance Item 13 on International Assistance today instead of keeping it for tomorrow. In addition, the Bureau recommended that the outcomes of the drafting group on Item 8B.24 be brought back to the Committee today and we will do so at the end of the plenary meeting.

Last but not least, the Bureau meeting of tomorrow will take place at 10:30 am Paris time sharp instead of 11:00 am due to time constraints and a busy agenda. We will start half an hour earlier tomorrow, 10:30 am Paris Time. Thank you very much.

We should now move to Agenda Item 8D devoted to the issue of the clarifications for property boundaries in area of States Parties. Please refer to document 8B. As you recall, by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3 the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. Therefore, I invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decision 44 COM 8B. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur, if she has received any amendment on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. I am sorry, I would like to go back to Oman. Oman you have your hand raised. Is there anything you would like to say?

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, afternoon, evening to all. I was meant to raise my point yesterday before the end, but we had a long session and I thought I could start today with this point. Yesterday, we have discussed minor boundary modifications and most, if not all, of the reports presented were referred back. Then we heard a comment from France yesterday that when they submitted, they were no connection or even contacts between the Advisory Bodies, the World Heritage Centre and member States Parties. For me it is a bit alarming to see some of the decisions not being discussed with member States. Therefore, I would like to have clarification from the World Heritage Centre and all the Advisory Bodies. What is the process in such reports and decisions? I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman, for your comment. We will go ahead with Item 8D and then we will go back to your request. Thank you very much. After hearing Ms. Rapporteur did not receive any amendments on the Draft Decision 44 COM 8D, are there any comments on that? I see none. Therefore, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8D adopted [gavel]. Thank you. Item 8D is now closed. Bosnia-Herzegovina you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je ne sais pas si c'est le bon moment pour poser cette question ; il s'agit d'une discussion que nous avons eue sur un projet concernant le Danube, qui a été proposé par plusieurs pays. Il y a eu des consultations, où je n'étais pas présent, et je ne sais pas ce qu'il s'est passé après. On a compris que c'était une proposition qui pouvaient être considérée comme acceptable, qui d'ailleurs avait été recommandée deux fois pour inscription, mais finalement il se trouve qu'on ne sait pas où elle en est. Est-ce que l'on pourrait en savoir davantage ? C'est la même question que la Hongrie, qui faisait partie de cette candidature transfrontalière. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir ce qu'il va se passer avec ce projet ? Où en est-on ? Quelle est la situation ? C'est dommage de perdre une telle proposition. On a déjà dit qu'il y avait eu des précédents, qu'un pays se retire, cela arrive ; mais que de ce fait la candidature parte aux oubliettes, là ça nous pose un problème. Donc je pose la question: que se passe-t-il avec ce projet ? Est-ce qu'on peut en savoir davantage ? Est-ce qu'on peut voir comment résoudre le problème ? Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bosnia, for your comment. It is noted. As we mentioned, the Item 8B.24 is included in the Agenda for today and we will discuss it at the end of the timetable that we have proposed. It is included in the Agenda. I would also like to ask the Director of the World Heritage Centre to take the floor. Please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I would like to confirm what you just said. This was discussed in the Bureau for the information of the Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the floor was given to the Chair of the drafting group to brief us and so this item will be taken up later on.

Furthermore, I would like to clarify the question from Oman. The minor boundary modifications go in accordance with Paragraphs 163 and 164 of the *Operational Guidelines*. States Parties requesting minor boundary modifications in accordance with the format which is in Annex 11 of the *Operational Guidelines* and it has to be received by the 1st of February and by the Secretariat. And then the Advisory Body is evaluating. I also noted the comments of France and I also agree that I think there needs to be a reinforced dialogue, if possible, so that States Parties do not lose too much time. I think we will take this up with the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies. Thank you very much and I think that ICOMOS may wish to comment as well, maybe, Mr. Balsamo. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Dr Rössler. Please, ICOMOS, you have the floor.

ICOMOS :

Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président. Comme l'a mentionné Mme la Directrice du Centre, effectivement, on a un calendrier bien défini mais serré également pour évaluer les modifications mineures de délimitations ; c'est-à-dire que l'ICOMOS dispose de trois mois pour procéder à ces évaluations et n'a pas l'opportunité dans ce calendrier restreint d'avoir un dialogue avec les États parties. Mais nous sommes à la disposition des États membres, et notamment de la France qui l'a demandé, pour avoir des réunions et clarifier tout ce qui serait nécessaire afin de continuer le travail sur ces modifications mineures. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICOMOS. Mr. Balsamo, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. Just to add some information about this process. First of all, maybe what was not clear yesterday because we had a total of 16 minor boundary modifications request this year in document 8B. Add and eight of them were proposed for approval and we did not present them, we went directly for the adoption of the draft decisions. We only presented the eight that were not for approval.

In terms of the process, what I would just like to add as an important information is that we need to really take into consideration the fact that the examination of minor boundary modifications happens in a very tight calendar. Because these are submitted by 1st of February and need to be reviewed within few weeks. This is the calendar and the space for dialogue which is quite limited, but I guess that ICOMOS already responded on that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo, for your intervention. I think we should continue. Ethiopia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much Chair. Listening to the debate on this issue and some of the clarifications that were given, we are not satisfied with this process. It is not proactive enough the way it is done. I understand the constraints in time, but that cannot be in any case a justification for not having a dialogue. And not having a dialogue is at the root of not understanding, it happens and it is creating the antagonistic relationships that often exist between the experts and the State Party.

I would really look into this issue in-depth to find a way with a view to having a constructed dialogue in place. If this constructive dialogue is not there, let us not kid ourselves, if you really want to engage and have a constructive dialogue, let us see how the mechanism works, how the deadlines affect or do not affect the existence of this dialogue and what we can do within the rules to make it happen. If it is not possible within the current set of rules, then modify the rules. But the current arrangement as is clearly highlighted during this debate is not satisfactory. We wish to see changes to this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ethiopia. Your comments have been noted and I think and I feel that it is an ongoing point which is being addressed already. Thank you very much for that and it has been noted already. Thank you. Therefore, going back to Decision 44 COM 8E the Rapporteur mentioned that she did not receive any amendments. Ms Rapporteur, did you receive any amendments for 44 COM 8E?

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Therefore, as I see no more comments, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM.8E adopted ^[gave!]. Thank you. Now I declare Item 8E closed ^[gave!].

Dear Committee members, Ladies and Gentlemen, the next Item on our agenda concerns the Upstream Process. Please refer to Document 9A. As you will remember by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this agenda will be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you to proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decision 44 COM 9A. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I do not want to open this for debate because it is not. I would like a clarification. The Upstream Process vs the Preliminary Assessment which is going to be discussed tomorrow. I see that the process is similar, so, to what extent, this is not going to be a burden for the process of the Upstream and the new Preliminary Assessment that we are going to talk about tomorrow and is also compulsory. To what extent both are different? I would like clarification from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Mr. Balsamo you have the floor, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you Oman for this very pertinent question. Actually, there are a lot of similarities between the Upstream Process and the Preliminary Assessment. Maybe the idea of Preliminary Assessment has been originated by the success of the Upstream Process. But there are actually factual differences, of course. We are talking about something that already exists in the *Operational Guidelines*, the Upstream Process, and something which is just proposed to integrate the *Operational Guidelines*. There are factual differences in the fact that the Upstream Process is not compulsory, it is a voluntary process, while the Preliminary Assessment is part of the normal nomination process, so it will become a mandatory step within that process.

There are other differences which I am not going to explain because it could be a lengthy discussion. Just to say that these two processes, of course, have in mind the same idea which is to intervene at an earlier stage trying to prevent later issues with nominations. In this, they are very similar. In the future, if the Preliminary Assessment will be one day adopted as we hope, maybe the Upstream Process could also change a little bit and focus more in the revision of the Tentative List which is really at the roots of what States Parties nominate. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Balsamo. Is there any other comment? I see none. Therefore, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 9A adopted as amended ^[gave!]. This Item 9A is now closed ^[gave!].

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, we will now deal with reports on the result of the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise. As you remember, due to exceptional circumstances, we will have to examine two reports this year. The final report of the Arab States Region which was due to be presented to you in 2020 and the final report in the Africa Region schedule for examination in this session, 2021.

We will therefore start with the report on the results of the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States. The relevant document is Document 10A. But before we start, dear colleagues, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Valentino Etowar of the World Heritage Centre to say a few introductory words on the Periodic Reporting exercise. Mr. Etowar, you have the floor, please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, following the second cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise, a two-year reflection period from 2015-2017 was engaged by the Secretariat in consultation with the Advisory Bodies natural and cultural heritage experts from the region. The UNESCO institute of Statistics, the World Heritage Centre with the collaboration of the Periodic Reporting expert group carried out an extensive and in-depth work to the development of the third cycle question which was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session.

The questionnaire included notably the integration of sustainable development approach and asked questions and provided information on how World Heritage properties contribute to environmental sustainability, inclusive social and economic development and synergies with other UNESCO Cultural Conventions. The third cycle of Periodic Reporting was officially launched by the World Heritage Committee by Decision 41 COM 10A confirming the start of the reporting periodic exercise in the Arab States in 2018 and in Africa in 2019.

By Decisions 41COM 10 A, 42 COM 10A and 43 COM 10 B, the Committee has requested the Centre to engage into a holistic approach across regions in terms of delivery of training, tools and guidance with this idea that this will help to get consistent overall approach across all regions and will further facilitate the State Party driven approach of exercise.

In the report, which could be presented in the Items 10 A and 10 B respectively for the Arab States and Africa region, these requests and recommendations have been fully integrated and the Secretariat has ensured a streamlined structure of reports across regions while fully considerate of each region specificity. The new monitoring indicator framework structure, our six core thematic areas, namely state of conservation, synergies, management, sustainable development, capacity development and governance has been considered in the data analysis and preparation of the regional report and the preparation or regional action plan. The use of these indicators provided and analysed data on evolution of different aspects of the implementation of the Convention across cycles.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we would like to point out that the preparation of the third cycle of reporting and regional action plan for the Arab States and Africa were made in very close consultation with the States Parties, national focal point and site managers. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Mr. Etowar. Thanks for this very useful comment and words. Allow me, dear colleagues, to now give the floor to Ms May Shaer, Chief of the Arab States Unit of the World Heritage Centre, who will present to us this report. Please, Madam, the floor is yours.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The complete report on the results of this third cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States can be found in Document WHC/21/44/COM/10A. A quick word on the background. Since the adoption of the Periodic Reporting by the World Heritage Committee, the first cycle was undertaken in the region in 1998-1999 and a report was presented to the Committee at its 24th session in 2000. The second cycle was undertaken in 2008-2009 and the report was presented to the Committee at its 34th session in 2010. The third cycle was undertaken in 2018-2019. The report was initially supposed to be presented at the 43rd session in 2020 and it has been postponed for this year. It is the report that is presented today.

As mentioned earlier, the third cycle was launched in 2018 following Decision 41 COM 10 A. At the time of initiating the exercise each of the property inscribed on the List were invited to participate. The exercise was coordinated by the World Heritage Centre in very close collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage which is a

Category 2 Centre in Bahrain. As a self-reporting process that is led as far as possible by the State Party, the relevant questionnaire was submitted by the focal points and site managers in their respective States Parties. Close collaboration was also undertaken with the Advisory Bodies to the Committee, the UNESCO field officers and heritage experts.

In terms of the key steps, I would just like to mention that several activities were undertaken to facilitate the process. Following the information process that was organised during the World Heritage Committee 42nd session in 2018, two meetings were organised for World Heritage national focal points: one in Manama, in 2018, and another in Paris, in 2019. These were followed by meetings for site managers in Cairo and Manama. Additionally, a side event was organised at the 43rd session of the Committee in Baku, in 2019.

By July 2019, the third cycle questionnaire was submitted by all States Parties. It comprised two sections. Section 1 focusing on the implementation of the Convention at the national level and Section 2 focusing on its implementation on each World Heritage property. All 19 States Parties have submitted section 1 of the questionnaire. For 82 out of the 83 invited properties, Section 2 was submitted. This comprised 74 cultural property five natural and three mixed properties.

The statistical results and information that was submitted by the States Parties were then analysed at the scale of the region as a whole. Based on the outcomes of the compiled data, a draft action plan and priorities were outlined. In July 2020, an online meeting was held for two days for all focal point and site managers during which the preliminary outcomes and draft action plan were presented and discussed and subsequently finalised. The draft action plan was then shared with all focal point by email in March 2021.

I will now present some of the main outcomes. Due to the time constraints, it will not be possible to present everything but some of the few highlights. As reported by the respondents the number of properties with seriously impacted OUV has risen from one in the second cycle 2010 to seven in 2019. Overall, the number of properties with impacted OUV has almost doubled from 11 to 20 properties. This increase may be attributed to the complex situation that have faced several cultural properties during the past years. Nevertheless, as reported by States Parties, the situation is either being addressed or can be addressed.

In terms of factors affecting properties, it seems that those falling under local conditions affecting physical fabric such as humidity, water, flooding and so on are relating as having the current potential negative impacts on properties. Other factors with high impact are related to climate change and severe weather events, social and cultural use of heritage which also includes tourism management and institutional factors and other human activities. The latter comprise actions such as destruction of heritage and so on. It is noteworthy that concerns related to local climatic conditions, climate change and severe weather events have been reflected as well in some of the identified properties for capacity building. In addition, the exercise has highlighted very clearly the impact of conflicts on the capacity of some States Parties to effectively protect and conserve heritage.

As regards protection, boundaries and buffer zones have been identified as the main management means in terms of delineation and communication with local communities and land owners. Boundary delineation and buffer zones are indeed priority given the need for several boundary clarifications in the region. Since the second cycle, there has been an increase with the number of properties with management plans or management systems which is a very good thing. Nevertheless, for several properties management plans are only partially implemented. In addition, the number of properties with formal monitoring programme has not increased. The objectives of the World Heritage Committee according to the results, the extent to which the management system contributes to achieving the objectives of the policy for their integration of sustainable development perspectives is very limited.

Moving on to synergies. Achieving synergies with other conventions, programmes and recommendations was among the top ten priorities identified by the States Parties. Priority seen under synergies related to the use of the 1972 UNESCO Convention as well as the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. There are positive levels of synergy between the World Heritage Convention and other instruments and programmes in terms of ratifications and communication. As regards natural properties the highest-level of cooperation are in relation to Ramsar Convention and the Man and Biosphere Programme. However, in relation to the second protocol of the 1954 Convention this does not seem to be the case of cultural properties, although substantial interest has been expressed in that regard.

The results also showed that the 2011 recommendation is the most followed document at 74 per cent, and this is at the level of States Parties, at the national level, in comparison with a policy document on the impact of climate change and a strategy for reducing risks from disaster. However, at the property level, only 30 per cent of these properties are making use of the 2011 recommendation. Nevertheless, the use of this recommendation, the climate change policy and the disaster risk strategy were identified among the top priority management needs.

In terms of capacity development, it is noteworthy that capacity building was selected by 15 of 19 States Parties as a priority. Thirteen States Parties also selected the use of the World Heritage capacity building strategy as a priority main theme. More specifically, the highest-rated capacity building needs are related to conservation and management, sustainable development, risk preparedness and disaster risk reduction, statutory processes and development of inclusive, equitable and effective management systems. For cultural sites, management approaches and methodologies including the Historic Urban Landscape was also rated highly, while for natural heritage, the protection and integration of biological and cultural diversity was rated high.

As regards sustainable development. The latter is also earmarked as a major priority for the region. Theme such as sustainable tourism has been highlighted for priority with the need for strategic planning in addition to training. In terms of contribution of inscription in achieving the objectives of the World Heritage sustainable development policy and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the highest scores were for protecting environment and cultural diversity and ecosystem services and benefits as well as for promoting economic investment and quality tourism. On the other hand, in terms of the contribution to the protection of heritage during conflict and to conflict recovery, they scored slightly higher than the contribution to ensuring conflict prevention and promoting conflict resolution. In any case, those two areas were rated the lowest.

As for the effective integration of conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as an element in national sustainable development policies and strategies, the policy areas with the highest level of integration are related to respecting and consulting and involving indigenous people and local communities, as well as promoting economic investment and quality tourism. Again, the contribution to promoting economic investment and quality tourism was rated highly in both questions. Again, the lowest ratings were related to conflict prevention, resolution and recovery as well as strengthening resilience to natural hazards.

With regard to communities, considerable efforts are being made as reported by States Parties to give heritage a function in the lives of communities whether according to a step strategy or on an ad hoc basis but less so in relation to participatory approaches. Other outcomes are related obviously to financial status and human resources which were a priority for most States Parties.

Concerning policy and resources, having a national capacity building strategy was selected as the highest priority theme, institutional capacities to conduct research specifically for World Heritage was also an identified priority. The promotion of international cooperation and the establishment of operational mechanisms for heritage was a main theme selected by 14 States Parties out of 19. As for education, awareness raising priority seems to focus to raise awareness among communities and stakeholders in addition to awareness heritage programme for children and youth. Heritage education programmes were also identified as a priority management need at the level of the property.

Finally, there was a focus also on the Tentative List and there was great interest that was expressed in using the Upstream Process. Although very few States Parties expressed that the Upstream Process has been used, nevertheless it was highly rated.

Based on the results and the outcomes of the Periodic Reporting exercise at the regional level, a Draft Action Plan was established which is more of an overall framework based on analysis and outcomes. Although at the time of filling the questionnaire Covid-19 had not yet emerged, during the online meeting of July 2020 participants highlighted the impact of the pandemic on tourism and consequently the livelihoods of communities. And therefore, the need for alternative sustainable solutions was raised and this was highlighted in the Action Plan concerned. The proposed Action Plan is envisaged for the coming six years and comprising a set of actions. Where applicable the monitoring indicators for each action has been selected among the monitoring indicators that have been adopted for the third cycle at the global level. The Action Plan overall framework is based on three strategic objectives and two transversal thematic priorities. The two thematic priorities are crosscutting among the three objectives. The first thematic priority is in regard to strengthening capacities of the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage. And the second one is in relation, in enhancing participation and engagement of all stakeholders particularly local communities fostering education and awareness raising.

Each strategic objective has a set of actions. The first one is to contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region. This includes actions such as support in capacity building, in training for the preparation of Tentative List and nominations. It includes the actions that are already in the process or have been carried out in terms of gap analysis, needs assessment and so on.

The second strategic objective is to enhance the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage, particularly for sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including through emergency preparedness, disaster risk response, and planning for recovery. This is a theme that was strongly recurring in the online meeting that took place in 2020 as well as another specific meeting that was for sites on the in Danger List.

The third objective is to improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage site. And this obviously includes addressing policies related to sustainable development, integrating them in management plans, seeking alternative solutions to livelihoods of communities that are affected, especially in the past two years by Covid-19 and so on.

In conclusion, the third cycle of Periodic Reporting has been generally well received by the participants in the region. Suggestions were provided on the need for further clarification and training. As a self-reporting mechanism, it has exceeded in providing an overview of the implementation of the Convention in the region with insights into the conservation and management of the properties. It has also provided a platform for exchange of information and experiences. Monitoring indicators have been included in the report for the first time. For some question, it has been feasible to measure changes in the second cycle. While for several other questions, it has not been possible, due to changes made to the questionnaire itself. Nevertheless, the monitoring indicator forms a baseline to measure progress in the future.

The next steps. Following the dissemination of the report and the Action Plan, online information meeting will be organised in order to discuss with focal points and site managers the way forward. States Parties are invited to appropriate the Action Plan and decide on the actions that would be relevant for implementation by the respective authorities. The World Heritage Centre will monitor and follow-up the implementation of the Action Plan with States Parties. Subject to finding availability, support may be provided in the implementation of priority action by the World Heritage Centre and partners and the Advisory Bodies, of course, and the Arab Region centre for World Heritage and other partners. To monitor progress achieved in implementing the Action Plan, a mid-cycle assessment is proposed in the form of a very short and straight forward survey.

To conclude the presentation, we would like to extend our deep gratitude to all States Parties in the region, the World Heritage focal points and site managers for their active participation in the implementation of the exercise. Their invaluable input provided insights into the implementation of the World Heritage Convention as well as information about the factors affecting the properties and the challenges they face.

Our gratitude goes to the State Party of Bahrain and Egypt for kindly hosting training workshops. Our sincere appreciation goes to the Arab Region Centre for World Heritage for its continued active support and commitment throughout the implementation of the third cycle in the Arab States. Our appreciation is also extending to the Advisory Bodies and experts as well as UNESCO field officers in the region and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

The Draft Decision of this Item can be found on page 107 of the English version and page 116 of the French version. Thank you very much. Mr. Chair, I understand that ICOMOS would like to take the floor on behalf of the Advisory Bodies if possible. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Shaer for this great report and your input in this process. Thank you very much. ICOMOS, you have the floor, please.

ICOMOS:

Thank you, Chair. As Mrs Shaer has just indicated this statement is made on behalf of all three Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN.

ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN congratulate the States Parties of the Arab States Region for the completion of the third cycle of Periodic Reporting in collaboration with the Secretariat. The Periodic Reporting process has been an important collective effort for the focal points of States Parties, site managers, the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage, heritage organisations and professionals from the region. The process has facilitated exchanges and collaboration, as well as capacity building opportunities for and amongst States Parties demonstrating the importance of the exercise beyond just reporting on improved cooperation.

The Advisory Bodies acknowledge that States Parties have taken steps to enhance the representation of the diverse natural and cultural heritage from the Arab States Region on the World Heritage List. These steps include elaboration of inventories at the national level and actions at the regional level from the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage. The Advisory Bodies note the direct and indirect impacts of conflicts have continued to affect the capacities of some States Parties to protect and conserve heritage in this region. For certain properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger where Reactive Monitoring missions have not been possible owing to conflict situations, the Advisory Bodies have contributed to innovative, collaborative pilot projects to support States Parties.

Aside from conflicts, over the last eight years many other factors have negatively affected World Heritage in the region, including management, housing, land conversion, legal frameworks, illegal activities, waste management climate change, overfishing, transport infrastructure and terrorism. These factors suggest the need for greater transnational collaboration, strengthening governance, improve use of the statement of OUV for management purposes and better use of viable instruments and policies. These include for example the forthcoming World Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance that will be issued later this year.

The Action Plan provides measurable objectives and accompanying actions. Particularly important in the Advisory Bodies view are the thematic priority. They include: strengthening capacity in the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage; enhancing participation and engagement of all stakeholders particularly local communities and fostering education and awareness building. ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN are committed to supporting the States Parties from the Arab States Region both regionally and individually and with organisations active in the region.

The joint regional study by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage and ICOMOS is specifically directed at improving representation on the World Heritage List. The ICOMOS collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage has also covered training activities on the World Heritage Convention and related policy documents. IUCN has also collaborated with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage on the preparation of the third edition of the Tobias series of publications on natural World Heritage and is engaging in strengthening the partnership with the regional centre through a new Memorandum of Understanding and a five-year Action Plan in conjunction with the IUCN offices in the region.

ICCROM, through its regional office in Sharjah, will also continue to work with States Parties within its activities and programmes in the region on key issues of conservation for World Heritage property. Through all of these various

activities of the Advisory Bodies in the region, the results of the third cycle of Periodic Reporting will support endeavours towards meeting identified priority needs and implementing the Action Plan. The Advisory Bodies thank all actors involved in Periodic Reporting for the results achieved and for the collaborative process that has been put in place to implement this important statutory process of the World Heritage Convention. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, ICOMOS. Now I would like to open the floor for comments before to the examination of the Draft Decision, I would like to know if you want to make any comments on this matter. Oman, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I would like to start by thanking the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for all their efforts they are making in the Arab world to protect and to build the capacities for the member States. The report is thorough, I have gone through the report and I would like to pick a point which is frequently mentioned during the presentation of the Arab Desk at the World Heritage Centre: capacity building. Whatever we do for capacity building, all the effort thanks to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and different regional and sub-regional offices, we still need more. We still ask for more capacity building because capacity building is, I think, the main point for the World Heritage site and for building capacity of member states.

Things are changing also in the process in knowledge, and therefore, I think the dissemination of knowledge to member States is very important. I would like to suggest for the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies that we start to develop training kits. Training kits for each theme that has just been mentioned and the need for all member States is really important. I think that now, we need to change also the strategy and how we do things and that is to start using the cascading model or training trainers.

I think training two or three individuals in subregions or regions in the Arab States and conferences or workshops are not enough. I think it is very important to start building training kits and we train trainers in each country and then we update the trainers and these trainers in each country they do their work in their country. This is very important I think to build the capacity. Because capacity building at regional or sub-regional levels, sending two or three people due to financial constraints is not enough. We are thankful to them but we ask for more, that is to start this cascading model for training the trainers of each country.

The second point that I would like to raise is protecting cultural heritage in countries in crisis. I think we need, in this region, the World Heritage Centre and its bodies to maximise their effort. I think in our countries in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Iraq, etc. we need more effort. The effort is made, I do not want to minimise the existing effort, but I think we need to maximise the effort of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman, for keeping up with the time as well. Bahrain, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since the adoption of the World Heritage Committee Decision 41/COM.10A and the subsequent start of the third cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States in 2018, the Arab Regional Centre based in Bahrain fully engaged with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, Arab states focal points and site managers in completing the third cycle of Periodic Reporting. In this regard, the Regional Centre for World Heritage was mobilised during the entire duration of the process between 2018 and 2020 providing technical and financial assistance to Arab States, facilitating in organising regional meetings and workshops in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and Arab Nations.

As the first Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO to collaborate in the implementation of the Periodic Reporting, the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage played a major role and did not refrain from spending any effort being an active partner of UNESCO in the region for the effective implementation of the Periodic Reporting. This fruitful collaboration would not have been possible without the support of the Arab State Unit and the Policy Statutory Meetings Unit of the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the participation of Arab States focal points and site managers. On behalf of Bahrain, we would like to present our thanks to them all. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bahrain, for your remarks. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre for preparing this report on the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States Region, as well as thanking the Centre for its outstanding performance in organising the different related activities including the activity that we were hosting in Cairo.

This Periodic Reporting exercise is an important tool for the 1972 Convention. It identified gaps in the implementation. We concur with previous speakers and also on what was mentioned in the report regarding the

priorities for the region, namely, capacity building, international cooperation and also general policy development. We welcome the adoption of the Draft Decision and we express our preparedness to continue the ongoing cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to realise the implementation of the third cycle Action Plan and its strategic objectives.

Finally, Mr. Chair, I would like to express our gratitude and thanks to the World Heritage Centre and also to Ms. May Shaer, the Director of the Arab Region. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Egypt, for your comment. ICCROM, you have the floor. Please, go ahead.

ICCROM:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and sorry. I will be very brief. I just want to respond to the distinguished delegate from Oman when he was talking about the idea of creating what he called training kits. I just wanted to go back and say that at the end of the first cycle of Periodic Reporting, in the early 2000s, ICCROM and IUCN developed a series of modules for training, specifically for the Arab States Region, and I think this idea is a very good one.

I would like to offer ICCROM potential services along with other capacity building institutions in the region on the possibility of maybe taking those original modules that we built up 15 years ago and maybe turning them into something a little bit more substantial as he outlined in his intervention. I just wanted to put that on the table as a possibility for the future and we would be happy to talk to Oman and other States Parties to work on the development. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, ICCROM. Now, I would like to ask Ms. Shaer to answer the comments of the previous interventions. Please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First and foremost, we definitely agree with the comments from the distinguished delegate from Oman and the other Committee members from Bahrain and Egypt. Definitely, capacity building is very important for us and the region in the coming period. We have also already started translating, we as the Centre, the Secretariat and also the Arab Centre for World Heritage, a number of documents and guidance notes into the Arabic language. The idea of having kits is a very good idea and also training of trainers. We have also started with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage compiling the list of experts in the region. The region has a large number of experts, however, somehow, it seems to be dispersed and so, so we are trying to consolidate this and also the idea of training trainers is good. Hopefully for the future.

We thank Bahrain again and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage and we hope that we will cooperate with you in the implementation of the next steps. Also, thanking Egypt for agreeing to the priorities that have been outlined and which really reflect the gaps that have been identified by all the States Parties. We are really looking forward to working with regions, implementing the Action Plan and a lot of action would need substantial resources. We will try to do whatever we can within our capacity and we look forward to your support and kind cooperation as well. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ms. Shaer, again. I see no more comments. I would like to invite you to examine and adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 10A including in Document 10A. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendment on this Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any more comments or questions? I see none. Therefore, I declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 10A adopted ^[gavel]. Dear colleagues and delegates, Item 10A of our Agenda is now closed ^[gavel].

Now, let us move on to Item 10B. Dear colleagues and delegates, we have concluded the examination of the final Periodic Report of the Arab States region. We will now listen to the presentation of the report on the third cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise in Africa which is contained in Document 10B. I would like to give the floor to Mr. Muhammad Muhammad Juma, Chief of the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Centre, who will introduce this Item. Mr. Muhammad, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. I will start to present the Africa Region report on the results of the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise. This document is in the Document WHC/21/44/COM/10B. Distinguished Committee members, I will not go into the details of background which my colleague Valentino has explained. In terms of procedures, both the Arab Region and Africa Region followed the same kinds of procedures, same recommendations of the *Operational Guidelines*. Here we just want to emphasise two points in the Africa Region, the Decision 41 COM 10A that was decided to initiate this process in 2019 and the Decision of our report for Africa is found in Decision 43 COM 10B. Thank you.

Now, when it comes to the Africa Region, as we are now in the third cycle, we had, of course, another two cycles. The first cycle for Africa started in 1999 until 2000 and this report was examined in 2001. In this slide, distinguished Committee members, we just wanted to emphasise that there is an important kind of progress, though, of course, when it comes to Africa the issue of representativeness is still critical, but you can see here, from the first cycle to the third cycle when it comes to properties, we have a 140 per cent increase. As for States Parties, when we started the first cycle in 1999 there were only 18 States Parties in Africa and now you can see we have 46 States Parties, an increase of 135 per cent and since 2020, all Africa member States are States Parties to this Convention. The last one was Mali. This was just a kind of a brief introduction to show you the trend from the first to the third cycle.

This process was long and for us it had some impact. I will talk about that later on Covid-19, because we started in the middle of it. On this slide, I just wanted to highlight what important actors really participated in this exercise. As you remember distinguished Committee members, in 2018, it was decided that this process would be driven by the States Parties. So, at the centre of the process were the national focal points who were the key points on this because they are the representative of the government in this Convention. Other important stakeholders included site managers, who are very, very key in this and the Advisory Bodies were accompanying us in the whole exercise.

As you are aware of, the Periodic Reporting exercise is also a moment of capacity building. The Advisory Bodies took this important moment to train our site managers and to train also focal points. This was a State Party driven exercise. The most important actor was the African World Heritage Fund who mobilised the States Parties and coordinated all processes for the Periodic Reporting exercise in Africa. The civil society and the local communities were part of the process and later I will indicate on how they participated in this process. Of course, the UNESCO field offices, as they are the ones who are very close with site managers and national focal points. And finally, us in the centre, of course, we helped them coordinate all activities for this exercise.

For Africa, the process itself started in February 2019 with the preparatory workshop in South Africa and it was there because, as you know, the African World Heritage Fund is headquartered in South Africa. It organised this workshop to mobilise all stakeholders and to come up with a procedure, a methodology on how to initiate this process in Africa. Following that, a workshop was organised in Côte d'Ivoire in September 2019.

During this workshop, 82 participants attended, of course, with the 41 national Focal Points, representatives of the Advisory Bodies also participated and, of course, the coordination team. Talking about the latter, one of the important procedures in Africa which we decided with the State Party and the support of the African World Heritage Fund was to have a coordination team of five members from all regions in Africa to support States Parties. This was a very, very important meeting where the national focal points were trained on how to manage the whole process. As you know, the questionnaire is filled by national focal points and the second part by site managers. But with the State Party within the country, the national focal points are the important one, they are those who are coordinating all site managers. This was a very important workshop.

The second one was the Anglophone site managers workshop undertaken in Kenya in February 2020. During the workshop, 75 anglophone site managers participated and all coordinating teams, the Advisory Bodies and the stakeholders also participated. According to our initial programme, after the February workshop we were supposed to have a March 2020 workshop but, as you recall, in December Covid-19 started to be important in the world and from March we were not able to travel. Everything was supposed to be online. From this moment the Africa Region and the Centre decided to come up with a new strategy. We did not stop we wanted to continue and to find a new strategy.

What was the new strategy? As you know, we come from what we call in presentia, classical ways of doing meeting and suddenly we were supposed to go to online ways of doing meetings. Today it is normal for everyone to use Zoom, Teams and WhatsApp but at that time it was still something new, especially for our part of the world, it was something completely new. So first, we did surveys to understand the position of site managers and national focal points and how they can go online, what they needed. We did a questionnaire that we sent to 100 experts and site managers and national focal points in Africa to understand the situation.

Following this survey, our idea and what we concluded was to target each site individually. We could not use the old procedure put everyone in one room and have one meeting. It was extremely difficult but we decided to go with this. It was like a targeted process. Each site manager has a unique process. Some of them have Internet connection, others do not, some of them were very close to a centre in a capital where we could bring them to our office, some others were very far from these areas. So, we decided to take a completely new approach by targeting from site manager to site manager, national focal point to national focal point and country by country.

To achieve this, we decided to have a weekly meeting to monitor the process. Every week, we monitored to understand who had issues or problems and we divided the process, in fact, in three stages. The country which was above 50, the country below 50 and we concentrated our energy to countries below 50. It was a tedious work but we were happy with it. We also focused our exercise to Francophone and Lusophone countries, as at that time, in March, we were not able to organise our meeting.

We are very happy today to say that we have achieved 100 per cent of our work. Section I was done by national focal points, they filled the questionnaire, all of them, and 100 per cent submitted. Knowing all the difficulties site managers they had with some of them in areas where there is no connectivity. We had to telephone them, I remember some of my colleagues in the afternoon took time to talk with site managers and to help them understand when they had difficulties. We are very happy that with this tedious work the result was with us and we have achieved 100 per cent in Africa.

Following that, of course, we have now the questionnaire filled. But the questionnaire itself does not tell us everything. We wanted to come to another point. And this is extremely important to us. How to analyse the data, and we came up with the idea of creating a kind of selective approach because those questionnaires they were filled with national focal points and with site managers. Those are the people who are working day to day with the site. But once we had those reports, we decided to take these reports to experts from Africa. And here we had experts, other stakeholders and the community involved. We gave them these results, this is what the experts and national focal points are saying when it comes to management, capacity building, when it comes to heritage, how do you see about this.

Experts analysed those materials and they gave us a report in 33 points. Following that, we took those reports and we sent the data back again to site managers and national focal points. We created a dialectic between experts who were kind of analysing and talking about the site and site managers who are working day to day on these sites. For us, this kind of crosscutting knowledge and experience were very important to see how these two groups see heritage in Africa and how they want to do it.

Following that, we organised four workshops in all subregions in Africa, with all site managers to show them the results, the analysis of experts and community regarding what they are doing and to let them know those two kinds of knowledge and go another step. Following that, the site managers went further. Looking at the results and the analysis, they wanted to produce actions which they see fit to respond to those kinds of analysis and the questionnaire. Following the four meetings with site managers, we had another meeting with national focal points to look at all those kinds of process and, of course, to kind of finalise the process. In February 2021, we had a final consultation with our national focal points to look at the results and look at the objectives and actions of the process.

If we look at the results, and here, what I wanted to do is to talk about one important element that my colleague Valentino talked about which was initiated in this study process. The third cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise was monitoring and mentoring which were very important because it allowed us to make comparison between cycles. So, when it comes to the OUV, you can see here, distinguished members, that we were able to analyse the situation from the second and third cycle and we can say that there is an improvement. If you look at the second cycle, if you ask site managers how they maintained the OUV in the second cycle, statistics show that it was around 67 per cent. And now, in the third cycle, we are at 76 per cent. If you look at serious impacts, we were at 4 per cent and now we are at 3 per cent. So, we can say that there is an improvement in maintaining OUV of these sites.

But these indicators also enabled us to look at regions. How regions are implementing tools. For example, when it comes to the 2011 Historical Urban Landscape tools, we could see the difference between regions, how they implemented. But also, when it comes to climate change, we could see for these sites that they were some kinds of difference between regions. This has also helped us to target capacity building. Because of those indicators we know that in some regions they do better when it comes to certain tools and in other regions not. We know where we will focus when it comes to our Action Plan and capacity building.

We also wanted to show one of the important indicators which gave us information on how regions look at the issue of climate change. We can see that in the southern region the impact of climate change is important, and we can see that from their answers, and that is also the case for other regions. This indicator also helps us to focus and target.

The issue of capacity building was extremely important on the outcome of this third cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise. Thanks to this indicator it also enabled us to see the difference between the second and third cycle. Distinguished members, you can see it in front of you. You have two cycles when it comes to capacity building in Africa, there was the same type of needs, on conservation, on risk preparedness, on promotion and dissemination, education, they were the same. But, in the third cycle, we were able somehow to go deeper in our understanding of conservation to see what are the most important issues, when it comes to risk preparedness what is the important issue. This information will also help us to look in detail when we come to our Action Plan.

On outcomes, we were able to see when talking of conservation implemented by countries. For example, 34 per cent of States Parties are not fully implementing their management plan, and we can also see that nine States Parties which is 19 per cent have inadequate budgets. You can see the disparity in terms of budget and management plans. Only 22 out of 96 properties have risk management plans.

When it comes to capacity building, we also wanted to go more into detail, to see exactly what are the issues. When you say education, communication, etc., from this slide you can see that they are also changing, 16 States Parties in Africa which is 34.8 per cent, have national capacity building but when you go deep, there are still countries in Africa which still do not have national capacity building strategy. Here, we have six countries who do not have any. 24 countries have one but it is not well implemented. This detail information is very important to us when it comes to focusing our Action Plan.

Heritage education is also very, very important. We have seen that. Of course, we raise awareness but when we come to gender, we found that there is relatively poor education and communication when it comes to women, youth and local businesses in Africa. Looking at the population in Africa you see that youth do not have much awareness on this. It is an extremely important information that is telling us what to do. We also see that only two States Parties have effectively implemented a national strategy to raise awareness. These are the results of the outcomes of the exercise.

Of course, stakeholders are extremely important to us when we implement this Convention in Africa. We have seen that only 29 per cent of Women are participating when it comes to management and conservation in Africa. This is extremely important information. When we look at the demography of Africa, out of 96 States Parties only 25 States Parties have a framework in inclusive economic development. This is extremely important because we know the debate between conservation and development. If you want to take on these kinds of challenges, we, of course, have to look at the information we have.

Following all of this information, we decided to draft our Action Plan. In Africa sustainable development was the umbrella of our Action Plan, we did not have specific actions for sustainable development but we say that all what we are going to do has to be based on sustainable development. But, as you know, distinguished Committee members, the issue of representativeness is extremely important for Africa. Our vision is to have all States Parties represented on this List but that they are also empowered and brand the sustainable World Heritage system. The representativeness and to empower African States to use the World Heritage system in their sustainable goals, this is the main vision.

Following this vision, we have crafted five objectives with 26 actions to implement them. By doing this we had a lot of information which are not only based on the questionnaire of site managers but, as you remember, synergy was extremely important when doing this third cycle Periodic Reporting exercise. Information regarding sustainable development, the Ngorongoro Declaration, the Heritage Urban Landscape Declaration talked earlier about, the UNESCO Global Audit Africa, the Africa Union 2030 Agenda and Inspiration 5 in Agenda 2030, all of this was for us information that we wanted to take on board when we are doing this exercise and in formulating action in Africa.

Now, I just want to go quickly to this strategic objective and actions. I will just focus on the flagship actions on these strategic objectives. For example, if we go to strategic objective 1 which has four actions. The most important action for us was, of course, nomination, to make sure that African States Parties are developing what we call credible nominations. The target is for those twelve countries who do not have any property yet. If you look at Actions 3 and 4, you can see that these are our targets. To do that, of course, we develop a Tentative List but also thematic studies that will help Africa States Parties to understand which areas they can develop. Now we are developing World Heritage in Africa and we think it will be important to develop thematic studies that can help us to have more nominations in Africa.

The second strategical objective includes 11 actions. This is the most important objective which has 11 actions and we know that the most important of causes is conservation. But we know that those sites which are already in the World Heritage in Danger List they are also important. So, what we will do here is to develop Desired state of conservation report for all sites which are on the in Danger List in Africa. We are targeting that by 2023 we will have all eleven sites which are on the in Danger List and do not have a strategy of Desired state of conservation report to develop one. Disaster and risk preparedness is also important for us.

Strategical objective 3: we talked about developing capacity building. This is an extremely, extremely important objective, as has already been alluded a little by my colleague from the Arab States. In the Africa region, capacity building has become extremely important. What we say for Africa is that we want a little bit to change the approach. Now, the flagship Action Plan has this objective. We wanted to encourage mentorship. To do that we have already developed what we call 'Roaster for experts in Africa'. We have at least 150 experts in Africa who have already put themselves in this roaster for expertise and we have also youth and women included. We are now developing pilots until December. Following this, next year we will go full frame for this mentorship programme to make sure that Africa will become sufficient in this area.

Also, there are important activities to establish an Africa site management network to enhance this exchange of knowledge and experience. When it comes to enhancing education, one of the flagship actions that we have taken is to create this network of universities, to make sure that now the emphasises on capacity building is not only to site managers and experts but also goes to university. Developing curriculum to education is extremely important and that will be a flagship action in this Objective 4.

Objective 5 is, of course, the community. We say that the role of women in terms of management and communication was very weak and we want to enhance this. We will map the engagement of communities and making sure that women, youth and indigenous people are fully participating in management and conservation of all sites in Africa.

Following this Action Plan, and the Committee endorsement of this Action Plan, one important thing we will do is to examine and visit our site managers and national focal points. We will organise regional meetings on the Action Plan, to disseminate it. We will also publish it so that our stakeholders know more about the Action Plan. We will also engage with States Parties, this is for us extremely important. To make sure that this Action Plan for the coming six years will also become part of national and local level planning. By just keeping it separately, we have seen that in the second cycle Periodic Reporting exercise it was not very well funded. This time we want to make sure we will mobilise States Parties to make sure that it becomes part of the national and local development plan. Of course, as said by our colleague from the Arab States, mobilising resources for us will be extremely important.

The next six years is a short period to mobilise financing. Of course, the Secretariat will do his part and we will be happy for our stakeholders and other member states to help us on this. We will follow on from some of the activities from the second cycle which are very important which have already been initiated some on mentoring at pilot stage and networking of site managers. We will also do assessment in terms of understanding how far we are. We will have an annual meeting with national focal points to assess our implementation.

Although there was success, we can say we are very happy to achieve 100 per cent of third cycle implementation exercise, but this work was done with many stakeholders, with many actors. I just want to acknowledge them and thank them for their support. National focal points that were instrumental, site managers, we know that they had a hard time to shift from in presentia to online meetings, but they worked with this, and we are very happy they achieved this and we want to thank them. The African World Heritage Fund, I can say they were instrumental in terms of the process.

The regional teams, as I said it was one of the approaches in Africa to construct these teams of five mentors and I wanted to mention their names here, Chairman, because they have done a very important work to make sure that we have achieved 100 per cent. The regional coordinator was Madame Ishanlosen Odiaua from Nigeria, the mentor from Mauritius Corinne Forest, Musawa Hamunsonde Musonda from Zambia, Charles Akibodé from Cabo Verde and Jeff Mapilanga from the Democratic Republic of Congo. These are the mentors who helped us.

We also want to thank the authority of Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya for hosting the two sub-region meetings we were able to do before Covid-19. We also wanted to thank some governments that have helped us to implement this third exercise which has also been diverse on the indications of what we should and can do in the second and third cycles. We have mentioned this in the Draft Decision. Thanks to the government of China, Belgium and Flanders, France, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sultan of Oman and the European Union for their contribution on the second cycle and some of the activities that we will definitely carry on in the third cycle when we come to mentoring.

Thank you very much, distinguished Committee members, for your attention. Thank you very much, Chair. As I understand, the Advisory Bodies would also like to say something on this exercise in Africa. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mr. Muhammad, for this wonderful report and very encouraging items that we heard. Thank you very much. Would any of the Advisory Bodies like to take the floor as Mr. Muhammad mentioned?

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Mr. Chair, we cannot hear you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Can you hear me now? Okay. Thank you, Mr. Muhammad, again for this great report and all the remarks and a very positive outcome from the report from Africa. Thank you very much. As Mr. Muhammad mentioned, would any of the Advisory Bodies like to take the floor at this moment?

ICCROM:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Advisory Bodies, ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN, we would like to extend our thanks to the World Heritage Centre and the African World Heritage Fund for the excellent work on the implementation of the third Periodic Reporting cycle for the Africa Region. The Advisory Bodies were pleased to take part in this very useful exercise, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic which still did not stop all States Parties to achieve remarkably successful research and we are pleased to be part of this 100 per cent completion of Periodic Reporting for this cycle for rendition at this session of the World Heritage Committee.

The Advisory Bodies have been working intensively with the focal points of the African States Parties as well as the site managers, and, in our opinion, this engagement has proved to be extremely valuable in terms of coming to a greater understanding of the issues related to conservation and management of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The Advisory Bodies remain committed to engage and support the African States Parties for the monitoring and management of inscribed sites until the next cycle. The Advisory Bodies are actively involved in a number of programmes that are established on the African continent. In particular, we highlight the ongoing agreement between IUCN and the African World Heritage Fund with a focus on upstream nomination support including support

for States Parties in the preparation of the Tentative List and new nominations as well as the application of IUCN tools and guidelines to support the conservation, management and sustainability of natural World Heritage properties in Africa.

Through the IUCN Green list of protective and conserved area, IUCN supports the improved governance of natural World Heritage site in West and Central Africa and the capacity of site managers to assess management effectiveness. IUCN continues to provide important technical supports to States Parties through its IUCN regional offices and IUCN experts' commissions in providing technical guidance on matters such as avian influenza outbreaks and potential mining project to supporting local women and youth associations to improve economic activities relating tourism and conservation.

ICCROM has recently launched a major new programme 'Youth Heritage Africa' with two partners the African World Heritage Fund and the Ecole du patrimoine africain. The programme aims to ensure a better engagement with young people towards the long-term sustainable conservation and the use of heritage of the region.

ICOMOS and ICCROM are also working with the African World Heritage Fund and other partners on the implementation of a programme focusing on the identification and conservation of the modern heritage of Africa. ICOMOS has actively partnered with the Getty Conservation Institute in the presentation of two workshops focusing on the 20th century historic thematic framework testing the methodology and exploring how the framework could assist in the identification of modern heritage on the continent.

ICOMOS has also introduced a programme known as Africa Initiative which aims to connect professionals working on African quantitative programmes and projects and to provide job platform for networking and information sharing. The programme has a particular emphasis on emerging professionals. All of these programmes will benefit from and take advantage of the information gained during the third cycle of Periodic Reporting demonstrating the value of this important exercise.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our support to the States Parties as we continue to prioritise the continent's work to actively position itself within the World Heritage Arena. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. I would like to know whether there are any comments on this Agenda Item. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

I thank you, Mr. Chair. The Delegation of Uganda would like to thank the World Heritage Centre for the data collected and the analysis to the facilitated evaluation of the progress of Africa's involvement in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Actually, based on the evidence presented in the report there is need to raise awareness and capacity building for States Parties to understand the need for credible and regular Periodic Reporting. We also realize, there is still great need for sites to be nominated on the World Heritage List and so many sites that qualify are to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

In this regard, we realize the need also for support in capacity building for the application of the World Heritage Convention and the generation of credible nominations for enhanced World Heritage representation on the World Heritage sites on the African continent. We further note that the protection of World Heritage on the African continent, like elsewhere on the globe, is greatly being affected by climate change. In this regard the evaluation of the World Heritage protection based on impacts of climate change needs to be revisited with the implementation of appropriate strategies for communities who are living next to World Heritage properties. We need therefore to raise a lot of awareness so that communities can appropriately understand and appreciate the need to live with these World Heritage properties and to conserve them.

It should further be noted that for some African States to comply with the provisions of the World Heritage Convention, technical support from the World Heritage Centre will be of paramount importance. All the above will translate into a need for more resources. Therefore, I hope that this aspect will be addressed adequately before this Committee puts a seal on the next budgets of the Secretariat. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Uganda. Now, Brazil, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President, thank you to all my colleagues and good morning to all my colleagues. Mr. President, I would like, first of all, to congratulate my African colleagues for this year as the African Union Year of the Arts Culture and Heritage and, of course, to welcome Somalia to the UNESCO World Heritage family.

Mr. President, we thank the Secretariat for this extensive Periodic Report on Africa as one of the UNESCO's two global priority strategy actions in favour of the African continent must be reflected in all areas of the organisation and even more so when we see that the whole African continent still accounts for only 12 per cent of the sites on the List but comprises 41 per cent of the property in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

This is a situation that we need to change. And we are glad to see from the report that different initiatives have been undertaken in this sense in close cooperation with the African World Heritage Fund and in line with the goals set for by the African Union Agenda 2030, the Africa We Want. These initiatives take many different forms and they are all very important, but the only way to produce transformative structural changes is by means of building capacities in the African continent that stays in the African continent, so that Africans themselves are able to redress the present situation by improving management and conservation of their sites, by becoming themselves actors in multiplying capacity building activities in Africa and by presenting successful nominations to the World Heritage List.

Brazil is also trying to be part of this process working with African countries through UNESCO by means of the Category 2 Centre Lucio Costa in Rio de Janeiro, but also directly in bilateral initiatives such as the recent collaboration with Cameroon in the preparation of the nomination of the port of Bimbia to the World Heritage List which will be followed by a workshop to develop local skills on the collection and registration of oral memories.

In this process, we must always have in mind, Mr. President and dear colleagues, the need to strike a balance between heritage conservation and development needs, as underlined by the 2016 Ngorongoro Declaration. As we have been saying in this Committee, development without conservation is compromised, but there can be no adequate protection without development. Finally, Mr. Chair, I would like to express Brazil's strong support for the goals of the original Action Plan 2021-2027. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Brazil, for your comments. Now, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. China commends the successful completion of the third Periodic Reporting exercise in the Africa Region against the challenges posed by the global Covid-19 pandemic. We also commend the joint efforts of the States Parties in Africa, of site managers, the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO regional offices and other Advisory Bodies, as well as the African World Heritage Fund.

China has reviewed the report prepared by the Centre and listened to other Committee members carefully. We share the concern that Africa is still underrepresented in the World Heritage List and over-represented in the in Danger List. The report has pointed out that the inscriptions have generally positive impacts on African properties in various areas with enhanced recognition, improved conservation and development of international collaboration, to name just a few. We expect to see more African properties inscribed on the List in the coming years and hope that the third Periodic Reporting exercise will bring good experiences in preparing nominations dossiers as well as conserving African properties.

China endorses the structure of the proposed regional Action Plan 2021 to 2027 for the Africa Region which has high relevance to the issues raised during the third Periodic Review. We further take notes with appreciation that the Action Plan is aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want. We are also happy to see the good practices shared by the African site managers. China hosted the site managers forum just before this Committee session and we look forward to more exchanges with African site managers in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, China. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We also thank the Centre for this report. Chair, I think we have to be quite honest in our assessment, in that the baseline from which we are starting is a baseline of failure. As was highlighted by my colleague from Brazil, when a continent as big as Africa where the history and the wealth of Africa is only represented by 12 per cent of the sites and on top of that we have 41 per cent on the in Danger List, that cannot be a sign that things are going in the better. So, it is a collective failure.

Now the question that is before us: are we serious collectively in addressing this collective failure? That is the most important. If we are serious about it, we can address it correctly. If not, then we can go on doing what we have been doing and we will still have the same gaps. Expecting different results while doing the same thing, I think, is the definition of holy for man. So, in order for us to have different results we have to do things differently. Now, I think the whole start of it should be, in our humble opinion, a baseline analysis of where we are in the African countries.

A baseline analysis study conducted by African countries together with the Centre, with the African World Heritage Fund and others who are willing to support us to see where we are in terms of our expertise. Whether it is in terms of inscription, whether it is in terms of management sites conservation and also where we are financially. That will give us a clearer picture of what we need to do and what kind of support we will need to mobilise, whether it is technical support or sustainable financial support.

While thanking the Centre for this report, Mr. Muhammad, we take away from the report that the improvements that have been evoked cannot make us satisfied, far from it, given the realities, the concrete realities. In order to change

it, we will need the will, the strong will of member States, of States Parties, the strong commitment of the Centre and the support of our friends in the global community. China has generously offered many supports. We welcome it and thank China and others in Europe, America, Asia to help us achieve our noble objective of making the World Heritage List, truly World Heritage. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Your comments are well noted. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for giving us the floor. Mr. Chairman, I think the third cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Africa Region was partly undertaken under complex, difficult and unpredictable circumstances, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the related restrictions. As such, South Africa would like to thank every individual who has contributed to the achievement attained to date in this supporting cycle.

But, Chairperson, I think we will align our concerns with what the distinguished Ambassador has raised in terms of the compounding issues experienced by the Africa Region, especially knowing that these issues have been compounded by the diversion of funding to deal with the emergencies around Covid-19. We have seen in most countries that treasury allocation, or the national fiscal, is no longer favouring the sites that we have listed in terms of the heritage Convention. And the biggest challenge in front of us is how can we reconcile in the continent.

We have made these facilities sustainable in such a way that they start to be financially sustainable and generate revenue for themselves. I think the big question will be: how do we move forward in terms of resource mobilisation for such properties to ensure that they continue to stay in the World Heritage List, that they do not digress and ultimately end up in the List in Danger or totally removed from the World Heritage List. I think these are the questions that we need to constantly ask and see how we balance the old debate on development vis-a-vis conservation. And I think, for me, from where I am sitting and the country is sitting, they too can coexist and co-depend on each other on these matters. I thank you, Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, South Africa. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair, and I will be very brief. This is just to support all what has been said by Ethiopia a few minutes ago. Chair, the situation right now in Africa is, despite all what we can say, very, let us put it this way, very sad in terms of capacity building related to the 1972 Convention. The African continent lacks expertise and not only in the nomination, as there have been and there is a lot of focus on it, but also on the conservation, on the management plan, on making the required studies, the Heritage Impact Assessment studies, etc. If we are really serious about the African continent then we should really focus on how to increase the expertise, how to make the African countries rely on themselves and also enhance the inter-cooperation between the different African states. But this, we will never be able to do it alone.

We need the Advisory Bodies also to do the part of their efforts. We checked the document, I think it was a few months ago, distributed during another meeting dealing with the 1972 Convention about the expertise or the geographical repartition of the expertise within the different Advisory Bodies. And I think that there should be made the link between the lack of expertise from the African countries and the status of the African countries right now. And it is about time, I think, that we take this matter seriously, not only by lip service and by making or arranging one or two seminars right and left, but maybe by starting to create a real database of it, starting to push the Advisory Bodies to rely more on Africans and to give us also the advancement that they are making in it. And advancements must be measured precisely and not only be verbal. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Egypt. Now, I would like to ask Mr. Muhammad to reply and answer some of the comments made earlier. Mr. Muhammad, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Chair. I mean there was no question per se, but there were comments from distinguished Committee members. Most of them were just to thank what we have done so far. But there were two comments from the Delegation of the distinguished members from Ethiopia and Egypt which I wanted to comment on a little bit.

Of course, we fully agree with the observations from the distinguished member from Ethiopia that if we want to change, if we want to do better, we have to change radically. And I just wanted to ensure, I mean distinguished Ambassador, that this has already been started. One observation, and this is just information that we can discuss further on one of the issues that we have kind of observed during the Periodic Reporting exercise. The good thing is that the Periodic Reporting exercises are also tools which give us the ability to analyse. We can do deep analysis

but this has also given us an axis for those six years of implementation. One of the things that we have seen when it comes to capacity is not that Africa does not have expert but most of these experts are located in the countries, in administration and the mobility is extremely high. So, you train experts for that in 20, 30 years. He becomes expert, he retires and you do not have him anymore. This is the observation we have seen.

What we have decided to do now is to create this mentorship programme. We enhance this knowledge, but we want now to bring more to institutions, to universities. This is where this campus can grow. If we continue to just give capacity to site managers and directors, they will land within 30, 20 years and then they retire. When we retire we start from zero. This is to show, Ambassador, just an observation, that we have seen and we have already changed.

Now, what we are doing is that we are focusing on mentorship to make sure that we train more experts, as the distinguished Ambassador for Egypt said. We train more experts but we want to train them in universities, we want to train them in institutions, we have learning institutions. We are doing maps now to understand which institution, university in Africa can have these hubs and, of course, as ICCROM said, we will develop this hub so that this knowledge will grow. Rather than the system we are with now where the knowledge grows and at a time it goes down because of mobility, because of the age and because of demographics.

Just to say that we agree with you, Excellency, that things have to change but we just wanted to assure you that things have already started to change and are changing now. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Mr. Muhammad. Ethiopia, you had your hand raised. Would you like to take the floor?

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Yes, may I? Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

We can hear you badly.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Okay, I am sorry. I think it is a network problem. I wanted to thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me right now? I wanted to add a little bit on what was already said by our Ambassador and the Brazilian excellency. I wanted to add a little bit on how we should go on changing the focus on looking at who is actually the real player in Africa.

If we consider for example climate change or balancing change between development and conservation, there is a minimum percentage of experts in the ground who are actually engaged in this process. As I was also part of the reporting cycle with Mr. Muhammad and others, I would like to focus on concentrating on who are the actual actors including the community, the local managers, higher learning institutions and also intellectuals at destinations or by areas. So, from practice, what we found very important is to bring a platform where sector offices, high learning institutions and communities can work in collaboration. But not starting at a time and stopping, but continuously working on it, doing a monitoring and evaluation process so that changes can happen in the ground, like what has happened everywhere.

It is just like we are talking about the history that has happened somewhere in developed countries. We need to do it in a contextually right way and engage all the required stakeholders, as I said, including private sector, institutions, communities, experts and higher learning institutions and develop a working platform, a working modality, so that we get to engage all the relevant stakeholders starting from knowing what is around them to understanding the concept of conservation and development and making or striking a balance between them. This is what I want to add. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ethiopia. Your comments are well noted. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will not take long. First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Muhammad Juma, the chief of Unit for Africa. I know he is very active to fundraise for the continent and how also approachable he is whenever we call him for any information. So, thank you Muhammad for that.

The second point is regarding that of human and financial resource mobilisation. This is very important, I think. To develop the human resources, we also need the financial resources. And therefore, this is a call for all of us to help this continent, to develop its capacity. And, here again, I am calling a general opinion about all the region, not only for the African States. I think I am calling the World Heritage Centre to change their approach in capacity building and again trying to emphasise on this model kits, whatever we call it, and to build the capacity of member States. Let us use the brother that does not give me a fish but trains me to fish, please. This is very important I think for the

member States to have their capacity to do their files, to manage, to absorb, to follow, etc. and therefore changing the approach in capacity building is very important. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Again, well noted. Thank you very much. Mr. Muhammad, would you like to take the floor?

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much. I just agree with what has been said, and definitely, we will follow those advice. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more comments or questions. Thank you then. Now let us turn to Draft Decision 44 COM 10B. But before doing so I would like to ask Ms. Rapporteur if she has received any proposal for amendments regarding this Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Uganda, it concerns paragraph 4 of the Draft Decision as shown on the screen which reads: '*Commend the authorities of South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya for hosting sub-regional workshops for the third cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise,*' the rest of the paragraphs of the Draft Decision remains as it was originally distributed, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. Basically, just commending South Africa and others. Thank you, Uganda for that comment. As I see no more amendments and proposals, we should go and declare Draft Decision 44 COM 10B adopted ^[gave]. Thank you very much again. Now, I declare Item 10B closed ^[gave].

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Sorry, Mr. Chair. I think the African World Heritage Fund wishes to speak.

Chairperson:

Yes, exactly. Thank you, Dr Rössler. Please, go ahead African World Heritage Fund, thank you.

Fonds pour le patrimoine mondial africain :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Le Fonds pour le patrimoine mondial africain salue le processus et les résultats obtenus pour ce troisième cycle de rapports périodiques pour la région Afrique. Le rapport illustre au moins trois aspects qui ont été évoqués par les distingués membres du Comité. D'abord, c'est la preuve d'une excellente coopération entre le Centre du patrimoine mondial, les organisations consultatives et le Fonds pour le patrimoine mondial africain grâce à la mise en œuvre d'une équipe de coordination qui a été écoutée et a permis de réaliser les objectifs décrits. Ce rapport illustre aussi notre capacité d'adaptation, puisque, comme cela a été dit pendant la présentation du rapport, l'exercice a commencé juste au début de la pandémie du COVID-19, ce qui nous a donc obligés à faire preuve de beaucoup de créativité pour arriver aux 100 % de remplissage des questionnaires. Ce rapport illustre aussi un certain nombre de défis extrêmement prioritaires et préoccupants pour notre région, à savoir, entre autres, le renforcement des capacités professionnelles et institutionnelles, mais aussi la question du financement durable. En tant qu'organisation chargée de coordonner la stratégie du patrimoine mondial sur le continent africain, je voudrais profiter de cette occasion, en tant que Directeur du Fonds, pour lancer un appel à tous les membres du Comité afin que des mécanismes de financement durable puissent être alloués au Fonds pour faire son travail. Enfin, je voudrais réaffirmer ici l'engagement du Fonds pour le patrimoine mondial africain à rester disponible, à travers le Centre du patrimoine mondial et les organisations consultatives, pour la mise en œuvre des résultats. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, dear colleagues and delegates, I would like to suggest that we take a 15-minute break for now. Before doing so, I would like to recall that tomorrow, as indicated earlier in the Bureau meeting, the meeting will take place at 10:30 am Paris time. Remember a half hour earlier due to the heavy agenda we have tomorrow. The plenary meeting will start tomorrow at 11:00 am Paris time sharp, instead of 10:30 am. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, let us start our meeting. I just want to recall tomorrow 10:30 am the Bureau meeting in the morning and 11:00 am the plenary session due to the heavy agenda. Thank you very much. Let us go dear colleagues, and now proceed to our Agenda Item 10C on the progress of follow-up activities and implementation of the Action Plans for the second cycle of Periodic Reporting for all regions. The relevant document for this item is Document 10C. As you remember by decision 15EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. Therefore, I invite you dear colleagues to proceed with the adoption

of the Draft Decision 44 COM 10C. But before doing so I would like to ask Ms. Rapporteur if she has received any proposals for amendment regarding this Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments from the room? I see none. I therefore declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 10C adopted [gavel]. Thank you very much. And now I declare Item 10C of our Agenda closed [gavel].

Let us continue to our Item 10D which is about the progress report on the preparation of the third cycle of Periodic Reporting which is contained in Document 10D. Also, as you recall by Decision 15EX.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decision 44 COM 10D. But before doing so I would like to ask again Ms. Rapporteur if she has received any proposal for amendments regarding this Draft Decision.

Rapporteur:

We have received no amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Are there any comments? I see none. I therefore declare the Draft Decision 44 COM 10D adopted [gavel].

Continuing our timetable, dear colleagues, you will recall that it was decided to examine the Draft Decisions 44 COM 7.1 and 44 COM 7.2 on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties at the end of our debate on Items 7A and 7B. This Agenda Item was introduced on Friday 17th of July by the Director of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Before we move to the examination of the two Draft Decisions, I would like to know whether there are any comments on this matter. I see none. Let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7.1. But before doing so I would like to ask Ms. Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have received an amendment from the distinguished Delegation of Kyrgyzstan to the Decision 44 COM 7.1 as shown on the screen. The proposed modification concerns paragraph 4 of the Decision which reads: "Welcomes the matrix structure developed by the World Heritage Centre in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, which provides a clear framework to report back to the Committee on the implementation of the priority recommendations, and requests them to prepare an Implementation Plan". We have relocated the phrase that was added by Kyrgyzstan. I hope it is acceptable. These are all the amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ms. Rapporteur. As it is just the adding of this phrase, I see Kyrgyzstan would like to take the floor, please, go ahead.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We added this small change to this item. And it is fine, if it is better if it is relocated. We thank the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for the preparation of the matrix structure, but it would give a clearer framework to report back if there will be an Implementation Plan. So, if it is clear for the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies how to report back on the basis of this matrix, then it can fit here. I mean the request for preparation of an Implementation Plan. But, to our view, the Implementation Plan will help to have a clearer framework to report back, as in the matrix structure we do not see actions actually on how this will be implemented. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you, Kyrgyzstan. Dr Rössler, the Director of the World Heritage Centre, would you like to comment on this, please?

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We do not see a problem with this because we have already developed a matrix and for this structured Implementation Plan we can provide information on the concrete action. So, that is not a problem for us. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I would suggest that your proposal Kyrgyzstan is clear enough to the World Heritage Centre to prepare an Implementation Plan and communicate it. Thank you very much. Therefore, if there are no more comments on this, I invite you to adopt the Draft Decision. I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7.2 adopted ^[gavel]. Thank you very much. Now we have Observer, Rivers without Borders, please, you have the floor.

Observer-Rivers without Borders:

Thank you for allowing us to speak after the state of conservation decision is adopted. We believe that no-go policies should focus among other things on rivers as they occupy just one per cent of the terrestrial earth but the remaining 99 per cent heavily depends on the ecosystems services. Due to increasing demands for scarce river resources, freshwater biodiversity is much more endangered than marine or terrestrial. Most large rivers are already dammed. Our Heritage Dam report demonstrates that only a handful of World Heritage properties offer reliable protection for rivers while hundreds of others are not safeguarding rivers running through them.

Despite decisions made by the Committee to prevent them damage, today, 29 per cent of natural sites are threatened by dams. 80 properties are threatened or already degraded by hydro-engineering with the vivid examples of Rufiji, Pashur and Mekong rivers presented during this session.

Our report contains recommendations on how to improve protection of freshwater ecosystems to ensure that the Convention does not fail on rivers. We beg you to consider this subject as extreme priority before it is too late. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Your comments have been noted. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 7.2 as we just adopted 44 COM 7.1. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments on this Draft Decision 44 COM 7.2? I see none, therefore, I declare Draft Decision 44 COM 7.2 adopted ^[gavel]. Thank you all very much. This, therefore, closes our main Agenda Item number 7 ^[gavel].

As we suggested from the beginning, we move to Item 13 that was intended to be discussed tomorrow. Now let us analyse and debate about Item 13 devoted to the International Assistance. To this end, I would like to invite you to pay attention to Document 44 COM 13. Ms. Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the world Heritage Centre, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. With regard to Document 13, Document WHC/21/44.COM/13, the first part of the document is related to international assistance requests within the purview of the World Heritage Committee or requests above US\$30,000.00 please note that all requests under this amount are within the purview of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee. The list of the requests approved in 2018-2019 and in 2020-21 until 31st of may 2021 can be found in the annex of the Document 44 COM 13.

As you see on this table, the screen shows a summary of the requests submitted to the Committee for its decision. The first request comes from Madagascar for activities to address the key threats for which the rainforests of the Atsinanana were inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2010 with the aim to lead to the removal from the in Danger List. Due to the extent of the revisions to be made to the request which would result in an entirely different project, and to the fact that the results of the requests previously approved by the Committee for this property have not been evaluated or taken into account in the preparation of this request, it is recommended not to approve it.

In the meantime, another international assistance request for the rainforest of the Atsinanana for an amount of US\$77,356.00 was submitted in 2020 for the 2021 funding cycle. After a recommendation for revision by the panel of the 29th of January 2021, the State Party decided to thoroughly rework its application in order to resubmit it by 31st of October 2021, as part of the 2022 funding cycle. It is therefore hoped that a sound proposal will be submitted to the Committee at its next session.

The second request comes from Lao PDR for the completion of the Heritage Impact Assessments and related risk analysis in response to concerns raised about a major dam proposal and other large infrastructure projects. The request further intends to provide wider capacity building to the state party on World Heritage Impact Assessments for both natural and cultural heritage. It is therefore recommended for approval. Please note that this request was submitted for US\$74,500.00 and that in the view of the timing required for launching the studies the Chairperson

approved already an amount of US\$30,000.00. Therefore, the amount recommended for approval by the Committee is only the remaining amount of US\$44,500.00

The third request comes from Sri Lanka for structural repairs to visitor infrastructure and stabilisation of rocks at Sigiriya Ancient City. There is no doubt that this proposed project is needed for visitor safety at the most popular World Heritage site in Sri Lanka and that the closing of the site due to the Covid-19 pandemic provides a good opportunity to implement this work. It is therefore recommended for approval.

The fourth, and the last request, comes from North Macedonia for capacity building activities in relation to the Ohrid Region. This project will increase the national capacities in heritage documentation, strengthen the recognition and protection of heritage places, and could result in a sound basis for monitoring the state of conservation of the World Heritage property and the valorisation of its cultural assets. It is therefore recommended for approval.

Part 2 of the Document provides a brief overview of the international assistance requests approved in 2018-19. The main figures are shown here on the screen. As you can see, there were 41 requests approved and US\$1,391,312.00 granted for 30 beneficiary countries and 30 World Heritage properties.

And finally, part 3 gives an update of the status of the 2020-2021 budget for international assistance as of 31st of May 2021. As you can see on the screen, all the funds have been used or have been earmarked for approval under all categories of assistance except emergency assistance. As you can see below, the legend shows the international assistant budgets for cultural heritage and natural heritage, for conservation and management assistance, as well as preparatory assistance, and the last bar is for emergency assistance. However, the recent approval of a request for Sudan leaves currently only a bit more than US\$50,000.00 available for other emergency assistance requests. As there is one for Fiji in the pipeline, and since we cannot anticipate the submission by the end of the year of other submissions, it is therefore proposed to authorize the Centre to increase the emergency assistance budget if the need arises and within the limit of an additional US\$124,000.00 maximum.

With that, Mr. Chairperson, I thank you and invite the consideration of the Draft Decision that is on page 26 of the English version and page 27 of the French version of the Document WHC/21/44.COM/13. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ms. Jyoti Hosagrahar, for this presentation. Now, I would like to know whether there are any comments on this Agenda Item. If none, then let us proceed. I now invite you to adopt the Draft Decision 44 COM 13. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on this Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on this Draft Decision proposed.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Therefore, I declare draft Decision 44 COM 13 adopted ^[gave]. Thank you very much Item 13 is now closed ^[gave].

Now, let us continue with the item 44 COM 8B.24 that was requested to be included in today's plenary. On this issue I would like to ask the Chair of the drafting group, Saudi Arabia, to send the Draft Decision to the Rapporteur, so we can have this document as a basis for the discussion. Please, Saudi Arabia can you do so? While waiting for Saudi Arabia to send the draft proposal I suggest that we take a ten-minute pause. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, let us go back to our plenary. We have received a draft amendment proposal and it has been translated. So, we just wait until it is on the screen. Please, before we go through the amendment, I would like to ask if there is any comment regarding this, but before the comments of the floor, I would like to ask the representative of Saudi Arabia to give us an introductory remark on this issue, so we can start our conversation from here. Thank you very much. Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope you can hear me.

Chairperson:

Yes, I can hear you well.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you. Just to clarify that this statement is being made on behalf of the two co-chairs, Saudi Arabia and Norway. Mr. Chair, on the 26th of July during the examination of the plenary session of item 8B.24 given a deadlock situation of the debate, the Chairperson of the Committee suggested establishing a drafting group composed by Saudi Arabia, Spain, Norway, China, the Secretariat, the Advisory Bodies and the four concerned States Parties (Austria,

Germany, Hungary and Slovakia) were invited to join the group as observers. Norway suggested adding Australia to the drafting group and the Chair of the Committee suggested that Saudi Arabia and Norway co-chair the drafting group and asked the co-chairs of the drafting group to establish the final composition of the group recalling the importance of having a balanced representation.

At the plenary there was no opposition to any of the above-mentioned points. In order to make the best possible use of the available time, the chairmanship of this drafting group decided to establish a clear *modus operandi*. It was therefore decided to have ten members from the States parties who attended the meeting, including the co-chairs from the Committee ensuring geographic balance. In addition, the four States Parties concerned, the Secretariat and ICOMOS were also invited.

The first meeting took place yesterday between 10:00 am and 11:00 am Paris time. After having listened to the Secretariat, ICOMOS and the four concerned States parties, these participants were requested to leave and the debate continued to be held between the ten members of the Committee forming the drafting group. As this meeting could not come to a conclusion, it was felt that there was a need for an extra meeting, and we announced that a new invitation would be sent either for the afternoon of the same day, or for the morning of the following day. Later in the same day, a new invitation was sent for a meeting to be held at 4:30 pm, however, as the plenary was still going on we decided to postpone the beginning of the meeting at 4:55 pm to allow for more participation.

The second meeting of the drafting group took place yesterday between 4:55 pm and 5:55 pm Paris time. Seven out of ten Committee members forming the drafting group were present. At the end, there was a clear divergence of views, there was an emerging need, however, for the drafting group to put forward an option for the Committee's consideration for a proposal of referral. In this regard we provided an amendment to the Rapporteur.

In conclusion, it is important to note, Mr. Chair, that due to the delicacy of the mandate given to this drafting group and the time constraints, we tried our best to reach an agreement, but unfortunately to no avail. And we trust that the Committee through its wise membership will reach a consensual decision today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Saudi Arabia, for the report of the drafting group. Now, I would like to open the floor for comments and inputs on this issue. Please, raise your hands if you want to take the floor. Now, we go to Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much. We thank the Saudi Delegation for their efforts but having said this Mr. Chair, we are a bit saddened, by the way the working group went about its work. In the first meeting we participated and along with ten countries, members of this Committee, we submitted amendments for inscription.

That draft was supposed to be the basis of discussion of a second meeting. Unfortunately, for the second meeting of yesterday we could not participate, and we did not participate because we did not receive anything to that effect. In fact, from our understanding, only Spain, Bahrain, China, Norway and Australia participated in yesterday's meeting. From yesterday's meeting and the 'consensus reached' at that meeting constitute a consensus of the working group, it cannot be because we were not there. For whatever reason, which we do not want to dwell into, but we were not there. Having said that, Mr. Chair, we remain adamant in putting forward our amendments, together with other nine countries, and in total submitting for the consideration of this community the adoption of a decision for inscription of this heritage site. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ethiopia. Now, Spain, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. Our intention is to clarify the situation from our perspective regarding what could be the position of each of us. As you know, Spain along with other countries put forward an amendment for inscription, because at the time, we understood as the proposal for inscription was not necessarily simply an international proposal but something that has been put forward for several years now. This was not just an international proposal but intercontinental proposal to bring together three continents.

We understand that this is an exceptional amendment and these are exceptional circumstances and there is no precedent. There is no precedent in this. We know that there has not been an agreement within the working group and in the first working group in the morning, there were ten countries and then in the afternoon there were fewer of them: Bahrain, Spain, Tanzania and China. We noted, as signalled by the distinguished delegate of Ethiopia, that some countries who took part in the morning meeting did not take part in the afternoon session.

We thought that, perhaps, some had lost interest in the matter or, perhaps, the fact that there was not necessarily a consensus. We decided that we needed to have some sort of outcome to put forward in front of the Committee as a transitional solution. This is what we thought we could do. Spain believed that if we can come up with a document that would satisfy all parties, we could be flexible. Once the meeting was finished, some colleagues told

us that they had not been summoned for this meeting. In the Bureau meeting this morning, I requested this issue to be open, because some colleagues said they had not been summoned. They are divergent views here. Some members were not invited.

In the face of this confusion, we believe that it was important to open the discussion again. In this debate, Spain has a clear position. We want to move forward with the consensus, as we put forward in the original amendment proposal. Now, we would like to hear from other Committee members so that we can understand their position on this proposal. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Spain. Now South Africa, you have the floor, please go ahead.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. We have listened carefully to the overview as given by Saudi Arabia on the process, but also to the response by States Parties who participated in the informal process. We are disappointed that this informal process has not yielded the desired outcome. We see that an injustice is about to be committed and that injustice is for almost 20 years of the State Parties spending resources and time working on this file and some of the State Parties face a situation where if a decision is not taken, they may by law be forced to disengage from this process. This is not the fault of the States Parties it is because of our own process.

An excellent file has been given to us to consider. During the debate, we were informed and ICOMOS did not deny the fact that for a very long time they have been seized with this file. The only step standing between the inscription of this file is a technicality that one State Party withdrew part of the elements or components of this dossier, but that does not distract from the fact that for almost 14 to 20 years ICOMOS was seized with the file. They have knowledge of the file and they can make an opinion if they want to make that opinion about what they observed. Given this situation, we are left with no option but to stand on the side of the State Party and support an amendment that seeks to inscribe this property. I submit, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, South Africa. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, let us not, as we say in Brazil, let us not cry the spilled milk. If we were invited, not invited, if we were or we are not present in one of the meetings of this working group. We have already some important elements that we need to share among all of the members of the Committee who were not present in the different discussions.

The first of them is, we have, Mr. President, during this process, reflected and we have consulted among us, Delegations, we have sought experts' advice on this matter. Unfortunately, we have not reached a consensual solution in this case, but there are a few points that have been clearer for us in these two days. And I want to bring those points to us, in order to enrich our discussions and mainly, and most importantly, to help us to take a decision during this debate. All of them are important, but the first one is that there is no obstacle to inscribing different parts of the Frontier of the Roman Empire at different times, and there is no general unifying principle for each specific part setting it apart from the others. There are all parts of the limits and we just inscribed yesterday one separate part of them in lower Germany that could be complemented today by one part of the Danube Limes and tomorrow by other parts reaching up Africa in the future.

Second, the Outstanding Universal Value does not pertain to each individual part itself but to its significance as a part of a much larger whole, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. And each part continues to be a part of the whole, even if reduced, so long as their attributes continue to exist and they do in the fortresses, watchtowers, bridges and so on. The OUV was recognised for each part of the Limes already inscribed on the World Heritage List and also for the components of this specific part twice.

Third, this is important. It is questionable that the inscription of these sites should constitute a very dangerous precedent for the future. As our colleague from Spain has said, this is an extremely, an entirely exceptional basis in which we are taking this decision, clearly expressing that it does not constitute a precedent for future decisions.

In that line, Mr. President, Brazil, after due consideration of the different aspects of the case presented here, and in the drafting group, we support the amendment presented by Spain with the addition of the new paragraph 6. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Brazil. The order of interventions is Thailand, Uganda, Bosnia, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Nigeria, Mali and then Egypt. After that I would like to give the floor, as it was requested by Spain, for the three countries involved to also make statements. Thank you very much. So, now, Thailand, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We thank the working group for its effort. Unfortunately, the working group could not reach a consensus. Thailand was part of the working group. Mr. Chairman, Thailand believes the nominating states have prepared an excellent nomination working with a number of stakeholders involving much effort and resources for many, many years. The property has been evaluated three times and twice recommended for inscription. Thailand believes that the OUV identified by the Advisory Body, ICOMOS, still stands.

We need to acknowledge the role of many stakeholders in the preparation of the nomination, as well as acknowledge the work done. Thailand is of the view that the nomination should not be subject to a referral. Therefore, we support the inscription of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire, the Danube Limes at this meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Thailand. Now, Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Chair. Uganda did not attend the meeting that is mentioned because we did not see the invitation if it came at all. My Delegation is of the view that the 77 component parts remaining, after the withdrawal of the Hungarian components from the nomination, still represent the essence of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire. We have observed that the attributes in the original nomination are still present. These are significant aspects of that part of the Frontier. Requests by ICOMOS to alter some of the sites have been accepted and executed by the States Parties.

My Delegation, therefore, believes that the remaining 77 component parts are of Outstanding Universal Value. The highest level of integrity of the Danube Limes will be reached only after the component parts of the entire Frontiers have been included. Since it is not possible to nominate the whole of the Danube Limes in one go, it is only fair to inscribe the west settlements of the Danube Limes. My Delegation, therefore, supports the amendment proposed by Spain to inscribe the site. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Uganda. Bosnia, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je vais être très bref. Nous soutenons l'inscription de ce bien. Nous avons déjà parlé, je ne vais pas le répéter, de la question des 18 ans. Il faut tenir compte de tout ce travail qui a été fait, de l'opinion des experts, et des efforts déployés par tous ces pays qui participent. Il doit y avoir une reconnaissance de ces efforts, de la part des autorités, de la part des spécialistes ; donc plus rien ne nous retient d'insister sur cette inscription. La Bosnie-Herzégovine est pour l'inscription de ce bien. Le problème de la décision de la Hongrie n'est peut-être pas définitif, la Hongrie peut changer d'opinion plus tard, mais annuler un travail ne me paraît pas raisonnable. Donc nous sommes fermement pour l'inscription. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bosnia. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. I hope my microphone is working at this moment. Can you confirm, please?

Chairperson:

Yes, we can hear you well.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have to admit I struggle with where to start now. We have in good faith participated in a drafting group in which three hours of deliberations took place. We were asked to chair together with Saudi Arabia, and we were asked to find a compromise. We left each other yesterday evening with the referral proposal at hand. We are well aware of the significant pressures for inscription of this property earlier and now, but I have to say that Norway has been elected among 194 States Parties of this Convention to uphold its credibility and legitimacy and also of this very Committee, and this meeting cannot with open eyes agree to this inscription proposal.

To make some clarifications on the meetings and the processes. We have requested that all the meeting invitations are sent to us, there are screen captures from the invitations from Outlook from the Secretariat of the World Heritage Centre and also what was sent from us in Norway. We have checked them extremely carefully after these serious allegations were raised. There are no discrepancies. Whatsoever, we have visual proof of this. No discrepancies are found. These are very serious allegations which are false.

I have to admit we have to disassociate ourselves fully from these procedural allegations and the distrust expressed to the chairs of the drafting group. Saudi Arabia did a wonderful job as chair of this group and we find it incredible that we are met with these allegations.

To return to the matter at hand for us, the critical matter is related to the infringement and violation of article 11.2 of the Convention and Paragraphs 132, 168 and Annex 6 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Red flags abound, the warnings from the Secretariat are massive, the consequences are known. Applying just a minimum of the precautionary principle in this case makes it impossible for us to accept this. This is about the credibility of this whole system to which we are the guardians and the rulers.

In my conclusion, I wish to ask ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre again to explain these very facts, and then whatever happens on the floor will happen. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Norway. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Mr. Chair, thank you so much. I will try to make the most out of the three minutes given to me. I totally feel for the frustration in the room, and we have known from the very beginning that this is a very difficult and daunting mandate. We tried our utmost to do it justice. We feel for the States Parties concerned that the file merits OUV and every single member of the drafting group agreed on that. No dispute about it. And everybody feels for the frustration of the States Parties involved.

If you allow me, Mr. Chair, I want just to straighten up some facts and I think my Norwegian colleague alluded to them earlier. The invitation was sent to all 21 member States to attend their preliminary meeting whoever is interested to come. Ten members showed up and we took attendance of that and the Secretariat will be given the chance to confirm what I am saying right now. The first meeting at 10:00 am was well attended. The consensus, or I would say the majority was going for inscription, therefore, as a co-chair, we decided to actually use the inscription decision as a basis for discussion, and we asked the Secretariat to drop the referral from the screen and start discussing the inscription. And at the end of the meeting, it was agreed that we will start the next meeting with the inscription as a basis for discussion.

And then, when we attended the afternoon meeting, there were three member States absent, Russia which withdrew, so they notified the chair that they will not be part of the drafting group anymore and we thank them for that. And Guatemala and Ethiopia did not show up. We also have screenshots of the invitations being sent to the Delegations' emails and the focal points specified by those member States. With them not being present, we adjourned the meeting for 30 minutes to give the chance for them to show up. And we started 30 minutes late and we ended 30 minutes late, just for the sake of giving them the chance to show up.

Now, just to clarify, Mr. Chair, as you well know because you are doing it right now, as a Chair, your role is to read the room and do what it constitutes. And the room in the afternoon was going towards what you are seeing on the screen. Impartiality is a key characteristic of a wise chairmanship. so, we tried our best to give what the room is asking for and we hope again that under your chairmanship, Mr. Chair, we can reach an agreement that satisfies all parties concerned. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Saudi Arabia, for those comments. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to pick up on that. We are a Committee member that has participated in all of the working group meetings and I just wanted to commend the co-chairs for their efficient conduct of those meetings, just for the record. My colleague from Saudi Arabia has explicitly explained the proceedings of those meetings, I would not repeat them. Our position was in line with the previous speakers of the Committee in terms of inscribing this property. I will call upon your wise guidance, Mr. Chair, to further narrow the gap in this Committee and put an end to the polarised positions we are finding ourselves in to put this item to an end. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Bahrain. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oman was the first to suggest for the referral of this file due to uncertainty and the withdrawal of Hungary. Listening to the previous discussion yesterday and today, I still think the file is very difficult to take a position on. And I think it is very important the discussion to refer the file back for one year again and to receive it for the next Committee in Russia. And therefore, I think it is wise this file is to be referred. I support the amended decision now presented by Saudi Arabia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Chair. Actually, the nominating States have prepared an excellent nomination and it has been evaluated three times, twice recommended for inscription. Hundreds of stakeholders from many countries, not only in Europe, were involved in the preparation and it is the result of many years of preparations, a lot of efforts, time and finances. They have done everything to preserve the property for further generations. That is all that a good nomination should have. That is the essence of the Convention. Hungary and other Danube Limes States can extend this property when they are ready. The first three steps of the series of eight countries are ready now. This is a nomination with a phased approach.

We see no obstacle not to inscribe. We need to inscribe now because second referral might postpone the process to infinity and there is a risk of losing the engagement of local communities and it is dangerous for the preservation of the sites. It could damage the credibility of the World Heritage Convention not only among the professionals involved but among the general public. Nigeria is in support of the amendment draft for inscription. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Nigeria. We continue with Committee members, then we will hear the three countries involved in the nomination. Please, Mali, you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Les États proposant ont préparé une excellente proposition d'inscription, qui a été évaluée trois fois, et deux fois recommandée pour inscription. Des centaines de parties prenantes de nombreux pays, pas seulement d'Europe, ont été impliquées dans sa préparation, et c'est le résultat de nombreuses années de préparation, de beaucoup d'efforts, de temps, avec un coût financier. Tout cela a été fait pour en préserver la propriété pour les générations futures. C'est tout ce qu'une bonne nomination devrait avoir et c'est l'essence même de la Convention. Nous pensons à ce stade que d'autres États du limes du Danube peuvent étendre cette propriété lorsqu'ils seront prêts. Les trois premières étapes de la série des huit pays sont maintenant prêtes. Il s'agit d'une proposition avec une approche progressive. Nous ne voyons aucun obstacle à ne pas l'inscrire. Par ailleurs, il faut l'inscrire maintenant, car une deuxième saisine risque de repousser le processus à l'infini, et il y a alors un risque de perdre l'engagement des communautés locales et un danger pour la préservation des sites. Cela pourrait nuire à la crédibilité de la Convention du patrimoine mondial. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Mali. Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair, and I will be very brief just stating three points. The first one is that, as co-author of the amendments that are presented and are under consideration for this Committee, we do believe that the site shall be inscribed in this Committee. There are many arguments supporting this. I am not going to repeat them they have been eloquently said by previous countries that took the floor before me, but let me just assure you once again that my Delegation stands with the rest of the Delegations who would like to see the inscription now, because they believe that this inscription shall be met now.

On the second point, Mr. Chair, I just wanted to refer to some interventions speaking about some allegations or some serious allegations, etc. I think we all owe to both the Saudi Delegation and the Norwegian Delegation a big gratitude and a big thank. This is not an easy task, they volunteered for it, they took the responsibilities and no one can ever either criticize or say anything bad either directly or indirectly, quite the contrary.

Mr. Chair, I do believe that it is about time that we all say it loudly: thank you to all of you, thanks to both Delegations for the wonderful work they did. And there might have been a problem here and there, maybe some emails have been sent but people did not have time to check them. Maybe there was a problem in sending, maybe because it is an online session, etc. A lot of maybes. But, for sure, one reality stands, is that both Delegations should be thanked and warmly. I am saying this despite the fact that I totally disagree with what my Norwegian colleague said about the inscription of the site but this is another issue.

The third point, Mr. Chair, is that we are totally in your hands. What we do believe what should be done is that we should consider the draft amendment that was under consideration when we were in the plenary last time. But, again, Mr. Chair, we are totally in your hand and waiting for your wise judgment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Egypt. Now, Kyrgyzstan, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our Delegation thinks that at this session we do not have enough time to go into every detail of this situation and if we step back and think from a technical point of view, look at the consequences of this situation, this can become a precedent for different situations like withdrawal of half of the elements after the inscription then what happens. Of course, in that case we do not accept. That situation is clear for us, but here we are discussing this nomination without taking into account all the technical points. The drafting group had much more time to discuss all these issues.

We think that it will be wise to take the amended decision which is proposed to us by the drafting group and they also considered that this nomination, even without that part of some components, still has strong potential for inscription. So, therefore, we think that we have to take the proposed amendment by the drafting group. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Kyrgyzstan. Ethiopia, please, again.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. Just two things. One, the fact that we did not come was not because we did not want to come, we may have received the invitation we have not overseen it, I do not know what happened. But anyway, we went in the morning meeting and in the morning meeting the consensus was for inscription. The afternoon meeting which we did not attend, not because the invitation was not sent to us, but because we maybe were too busy, I do not know. But anyway, the decision that was made was to use the referral as a basis. At any rate that is irrelevant because, in light of the importance of this issue, the 20 years that people have been working on this file, our personal feelings and our person should not matter, this is a much more important issue than any of us. I think we can agree on that.

Having said that, Chair, an overwhelming majority of member States are asking that this site is inscribed at our session. An overwhelming majority, here, are asking that the initial amendments calling for inscription be used as a basis for the discussion. And we reiterate this call again that we use the inscription draft that was submitted with the amendment for inscription that was submitted and that has still the overwhelming majority of the support of the member States of this Committee. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Saudi Arabia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I would like to thank the members of the working group for their constructive discussion and I have a number of issues to raise. The decision, the draft that you see in front of you is the result of the working group, it is not the amendment presented by Saudi Arabia, it is the result of the working group presented by the co-chairs who were very transparent, who were very unbiased and listened to everyone. And this is something to clarify in the beginning.

Secondly, although we see great merits for the site to be inscribed, and although we listened to the States Parties and we share their views about the importance of inscribing such a site, the support for the inscription should not be built on the ground of attacking the co-chairs of this group.

And Mr. Chair, dear Committee members, I understand your sympathy, I understand your desire to support such an important site but under no grounds I am going to accept the integrity of Saudi Arabia nor the transparency or the integrity of Saudi Arabia to be attacked in this esteemed Committee. Therefore, I would like to continue the discussion but with this disclaimer put on record. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Saudi Arabia, for your comments and your request has been recorded. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

I am sorry, Chair, I do not think we requested the floor.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you, sorry for that. Oman, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not know I got a bit confused now because of the decision submitted now by the group or the drafting group. Most of the people who spoke, they are speaking for inscription from this group and now that the decision here is for referral. How is this contradiction possible? Who has imposed this decision to us here now? So, we want to know. I mean we are confused because the group who drafted this, most of them they are for inscription and this decision is for referral, so something has to be clarified for us. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Oman. I would like to ask Saudi Arabia and Norway as the co-chairs of the drafting group: the amendment proposal that we have in front of us is that the result of your two group discussions?

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Mr. Chair, do you allow me?

Chairperson:

Yes, please, Saudi Arabia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you. I think I clarified it in my previous intervention and just to reiterate what I said and I think His Excellency the European ambassador said it. As co-chairs, we mirror the room and the meeting in the morning was asking for an inscription and so the basis for discussion was to inscribe the site until the last minute at 11:00 am and everybody was there and everybody can attest to that. And then, due to running out of time, we asked to resume our discussions, either later that day or the morning after, based on the inscription draft.

We started the afternoon session with the inscription. And we asked the room about that draft and we started discussing it word for word until the room asked for that basis to be changed into a referral. And then we asked if that will be a good option to present to the Committee and the room accepted. Then, we went paragraph by paragraph until there was no objection. And here we are today presenting the result of the discussions of three hours of deliberation. I hope that clarified the confusion of our colleague from Oman. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Saudi Arabia, for that. China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have listened very, very attentively to all the colleagues who spoke in front of us. First of all, my Delegation would like to show our very profound gratitude to the two co-chairs. They have done excellent work in this very hard difficult situation. I fully echo what the distinguished ambassador of Saudi Arabia just said and China participated in the working group.

As the host country of this session, of course, we fully anticipated the Committee will have a consensus decision on this issue. However, we are in a very difficult delicate situation. Of course, the Committee needs to have its credibility. Of course, we have to safeguard the credibility of the Convention. So, in this very difficult time, I just wanted to show you a very simple example. I discussed with a number of distinguished Ambassadors yesterday.

The original submission, of course, has OUV there is no doubt about. That it is like we have designed a four wheels, car, a good-quality car like a Mercedes-Benz. It is very good there is no doubt. Now, we only have three wheels, no test office or test centre will give us a qualification or a certificate to drive on the road with three wheels. What shall we do? Maybe, it is better for us to send the car back to redesign it. Of course, if we have a three-wheel car, we have to move the single wheel in the front or in the rear, put it in the middle, so the engine can be used, the wheels can be used, but we have to redesign it. I am an engineer. I just want to say that it is not a political discussion it is only a technical discussion.

In this case we support the text on the screen, this way we know that members have worked so hard, but technically we cannot do without a proper document, with a verified document. That is the technical issue. I plead to all the dear colleagues, please, support the referral decision and maybe next year we fully support inscription.

My intervention is just to show, to encourage all of us to have a consensus. If my example is not correct, please, ignore it. I thank you very much for your understanding. Let us reach a consensus on this. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, China. Your example is well noted. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. We were informed that in one meeting one day in the morning the view of the meeting was that the file should be inscribed. I can imagine a colleague of mine of Ethiopia would have gone home rest assured in good faith that understanding was going to be sustained. If it was in the evening, in the situation like you go to bed with an understanding that is positive. If you wake up in the morning you had a bad dream and you are told what you thought you had the night before was changed. I think this is an injustice I am talking about an injustice that a State Party or States Parties have suffered for 20 years.

20 years with resources dedicated and personal, financial expertise. A file that was submitted three times, twice recommended for inscription. The distinguished Ambassador from China correctly said that if it was a wheel, it was a car with four wheels and tires and you evaluated four tires when you remove one it does not mean that your knowledge of the three goes away. Your knowledge of the three that are remaining is still intact. The file is known to us all. The components are known to the system. There is no way our decision to inscribe the site will detract and affect negatively the credibility of the system, not at all.

For me it would be sad if these 20 years of effort are rewarded with another extension. What message are we sending to States Parties, who, like us, enjoy the full protection that we all enjoy. I am appealing to the Committee and I am seconding what my distinguished Ambassador from Ethiopia proposed that the amendment submitted by Spain for inscription be the one that processed this decision. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, South Africa. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am really very delighted to listen to this discussion. I thank my dear colleague from China for the example that has been presented that I think is very clever and very interesting, but I will present it in a different way if you allow me.

This is not a car with four wheels, this is a train and the locomotive is there and this is a four-carriage composition. We are going to take out one of the carriages but the train continues moving no problem about that. The locomotive is there, and by the way, the locomotive has been there for many, many years because this is a long Frontier of the Roman Empire. Therefore, we have this locomotive working for a long time. Here, we are going to take out one of the carriages of this particular composition, there is no problem, unless, of course, it is the restaurant and then we will have some difficulties.

But anyway, Mr. President, I think that I want to say basically, thank you very much to the Delegations of Norway and Saudi Arabia for this extraordinary work that gathered many Delegations to discuss the possibility of finding a consensus. The convergency was there yesterday morning, convergency was not there, it eluded us in the afternoon. Things happened. This is multilateralism it happened like that.

Therefore, what we have to have in mind is that this was a group of the Committee. Now this proposal is in front of the Committee, it is different from the group. The group decided that they reached this point, but now it is to the Committee to decide what to do from now on which is continuing discussion in order to find a solution for this question. And by the way, I want to make clear and restated that the decision and the opinions and the positions raised here by member States are absolutely legitimate. We are the member States who are the members of the Committee and the decision that we take, all the decisions that we take here, do not impair or impact on the credibility of this Committee. This Committee is credible and legitimate because we are here, we are the member States. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Brazil. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor and I think this is the last of the Committee members and then I would request the floor. Spain is requesting the floor as well. So, Ethiopia and then Spain and ICOMOS, the Secretariat after ICOMOS and then the three countries involved. Thank you very much for that. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. Very interesting conversation and very interesting metaphors being used, especially I like the one by my good friend the Ambassador of China the three-wheel car. For me this beautiful Mercedes has all the four wheels, it only lacks maybe a logo. Just because it does not have a logo does not mean it is not a Mercedes it is still a Mercedes. We should approve it.

But my overall question is regarding this notion that is being repeated about the credibility and that the evaluation report is somehow a sine qua none condition for inscription. Our understanding of the Convention and in particular Article 112 of the Convention is that there is nothing that states that the evaluation report is a sine qua none condition for inscription. The only thing is that this Committee has to decide is whether OUV is there or not. And obviously we can all agree OUV is there. I really plead with my colleagues to really look at the bigger picture. The 20-year efforts

and the need to preserve these wonderful sights and also having a view to the future and inscribing it on a multi or a transcontinental basis in Asia, in the Middle East, in Africa.

Please let us have that view and not be tied down with bureaucratic norms. The Convention is clear, it is our sovereign responsibility and, as South Africa eloquently said, our decision is credible because we represent these sovereign States. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Ethiopia. Spain, you have the floor, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Many Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I do not think I need to say this, but I will say it anyway. There is no doubt the co-chairs, as has been said by Norway, certainly were entirely transparent. And all we see is work from evening until the morning, the amendment had the same position from the outset. This has been deeply analysed. This was just an international candidacy that has begun and, in this Committee, we would not have presented the amendment. First of all, because there was just one candidacy. But what we have been seeing now is given the unknown dimension up to now with this tri-continent candidacy. We have seen this in this Committee for many years. In this case, it seems to us that, I am not sure I have a better example than China and Brazil have given, we could say that even if we had this car which lost a wheel, there are new ones that are being built and will have different elements and global visibility as this nomination will cover three continents. Something not to be sneezed at.

I think what we need to say is that if we are creating a precedent, we cannot apply to an international continent what we already know, rather we would have a candidacy from these candidates that is being built and we are building something now. I think what we are seeing here and even if this debate is uncomfortable for us. Some colleagues are saying that no one was in the meeting for whatever reason. I am not casting doubt on anyone. I am not saying that people were unable to come for what reasons it would be. But they were invited. And as people say, sometimes the invitation gets there, there might be different reasons also including bad weather in the different working conditions. But you cannot say, members of the Committee did not have the possibility to participate.

I am not speaking out in favour or against anyone. But we are saying there was a total transparency by the co-chairs, Norway and Saudi Arabia that presided over this Committee. We are maintaining the position that has always been ours without contradicting anyone, without forming judgments in anyway. And certainly, I would say that it was a great pleasure to work with the co-chairs, Norway and Saudi Arabia, and to work in total transparency.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Guatemala has the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do not want to stretch this discussion much longer. Many different arguments have been put on the table and they are all valid. There are different viewpoints and unfortunately, we are not arriving at a consensus. We have listened to great length to the arguments and they all have validity and are logical. We now need to figure out how to bring this debate to an end because we could spend days or weeks debating on this and I think it would be almost impossible to arrive at a consensus of all the Committee Members on this subject which is obviously quite unprecedented.

This is a nomination which is totally extraordinary. And to think of a site which covers three continents, these are very fundamental aspects we need to bear in mind. And for this reason, I think we do not need to be unduly hasty. I think, on the contrary, we need to stop, to meditate and to do things with the necessary caution. And to maintain this nomination and inscription at the highest level possible as this Committee is expected to do.

Considering we spent days and now we come to a point in time when the subject has come up once again and there is still no consensus, we would very humbly suggest that we have a vote on what decision this Committee should make. Because we are certainly not going to arrive to a consensus and there are different positions which have been staked out and are opposed to each other and we could spend hours and days debating and there would be no agreement. I think there is a good possibility to find a solution to make a definitive decision on this subject which is a concern to all of us and which obviously has generated widespread discussions among the members of the Committee.

We will not be able to conclude any time soon with the hope that we would go on debating and arriving at a consensus that would obviously be ideal. But, having seen the argument that we have in front of us, it is not going to happen. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for the attention and interest that members of the Committee have expressed here.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Guatemala. Ethiopia, you have the floor. Ethiopia, you have your hand raised, we do not hear you.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Yes, Chair, I have my hand raised since after the intervention of Guatemala on a call for a vote. If indeed there is going to be a vote, we ask for a vote to be held on inscription. The vote should be on inscription. That would be our submission. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, Ethiopia. Norway, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We take note of this motion and Norway would also support a vote by secret ballot on the inscription. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you very much, Norway. Thank you all for your understanding and for your very interesting comments and input into this very, very important debate, not just for the countries involved but for the whole process and the development of the Convention.

A vote has been called and seconded as in secret ballot and it has been requested to be on the inscription of the nomination. Therefore, I request Dr Rössler if you can intervene from the World Heritage Centre in order to let us know the administrative steps and request the clarification from the UNESCO legal adviser regarding this process. Thank you very much.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is in line with Rule 41. A decision on the votes whenever two or more State members shall request as happened just now. And then it also refers to Rule 39 regarding the votes that State members present and voting shall mean State members casting an affirmative or negative vote, therefore States Parties abstaining from voting shall be regarded as not voting. Furthermore, Mr. Chair, allow me also to underline that according to Rule 37 of the Rules of procedures, decisions of the Committee on matters regarding or covered by the provisions of the Convention shall be taken by a majority of two thirds of its members present and voting. And I think you are aware of this.

Now the voting arrangements have been approved by correspondence by the Committee on the 21st of May 2021, as per decision of the 15th extraordinary session for the conduct of the secret ballot. Now, my understanding is that this would happen tomorrow at 9:00 am, you see it here on the screen, by groups. The members of the Committee will have to ensure that one of their representatives in Paris is available to come to the UNESCO headquarters to vote. To my understanding, it is again in room five which is the room you know already in front of room one. And the Secretariat will provide a ballot box and a polling booth and each member of the Committee will be given an envelope and the ballot paper on arrival in the voting room. I think we also have the two tellers. I would like to recall that Mr. Moses Phahlane from South Africa and Mr. Szabolcs Nemes from Hungary had volunteered to do so. I hope they are still available.

The question of the voting will be sent by the Secretariat by email to the Committee members together with the schedule of the vote, of course. To my understanding, it is on the Draft Decision which was submitted concerning the inscription, but I need to confirm this with you, Mr. Chairperson, but I also look at the Ambassador of Ethiopia nodding because I think that was your request Mr. Ambassador. This is concerning the Draft decision on 44 com 8B.24 concerning the inscription of this site. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Dr Rössler. I would just like to clarify that, as we have been requested by two States, the vote will be for inscription basically accepting yes or no or rejecting Spain's amendment?

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Mr. Chair, if I can just clarify a vote would be along those lines: are you in favour of inscribing the site, etc. I think it would be like this and I see the Ambassador of Ethiopia nodding. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, Dr Rössler. Literally, the vote would be on the draft amendment 44COM 8B.24 submitted by Spain and cosponsored by others that would be to accept that or not, to agree with that or not. Thank you. The procedures and basically the guidelines for the voting are set for tomorrow. But, in order to be fair, I would like to hear and I would like to have the indulgence of the translators and of you, dear delegates and members of the Secretariat, we still have ten more minutes. So, I would like to hear and give the floor to ICOMOS or the Advisory Bodies and also the three States involved. Thank you

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Sorry, Mr. Chair, I think there is a Committee member who requested the floor before. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. As we have finished the procedure of voting, we are not hearing any more Committee members regarding this debate. Therefore, I adjourn the meeting for today. Thank you all very much for this very interesting debate. We have the evening to still consider our voting until tomorrow. Ms. Rössler, you have the floor, please.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. Just to recall that we start the session earlier tomorrow, half an hour earlier, Mr. Chair, as you announced. And I would also like to inform you that tomorrow after the session meeting on the 30th of July from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm there is an online event looking into the future highlights of the regional Action Plan for Africa. We wanted to announce this already today so that you can prepare for your day tomorrow. Thank you very much to all of you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much and thank you all again for your involvement and your interest in getting through the Agenda Items. Thank you all, have a good evening, have a good afternoon see you tomorrow morning.

The meeting rose at 03:37:18 pm.

THIRTEENTH DAY – Friday 30 July 2021
THIRTEENTH MEETING
11.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all today for our daily meeting. This morning the Bureau held its 13th and last meeting. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work and I recall that during its prolonged meeting yesterday the Committee progressed very well in his work under the able chairmanship of my dear colleague the Ambassador of Guatemala. Indeed, after examining Items 8D 8E and 9A, the Committee reviewed the reports on the results of the third Periodic Reporting cycle for the Arab States and the Africa regions. It also examined Items 10C and 10D before adopting two crucial Decisions 7.1 and 7.2 related to general conservation matters touching upon the heart of the Convention. Item 13 International Assistance was also examined yesterday.

In addition, the Committee resumed the discussion on the Draft Decision 8B.24 during which a vote by secret ballot was requested. This vote took place earlier on today at the UNESCO Headquarters.

As for the Agenda today, we will resume our plenary first with the announcement of the results of the vote. Then, we will move to general Items A to review the outcomes of the consultations which have taken place for the past few days. As agreed, we will then move to examination of the Draft Decision 8B.43, following this we will review Items 14 and the outcomes of the established consultative body on the Budget, as well as Items 11 and 12 for which consultations have also taken place. To finish our day of work, we will then examine Items 15, 16 and 17.

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, as you can notice, once again, we have a very heavy workload for today, I therefore call upon all of you to make concise and focused interventions and on your full support to forge consensus whenever required. Thank you very much.

Dear colleagues, as you all know a voting by secret ballot has taken place earlier on today regarding Draft Decision 8B.24 as amended by Spain. The results are as follows: number of Committee members present and voting 19, number of Committee members absent two, number of blanket ballot papers zero, number of invalid ballot papers one, number of valid ballot papers 18, votes in favour of the proposed proposal 15, votes not in favour of the proposal three, majority required two thirds, 12. Therefore, the Draft Decision 44.COM8B.24 as amended by Spain is adopted ^[gave]. As the vote is positive and the amended Draft Decision 44 COM 8B.24 adopted, I would like to ask if there are any comments. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving Norway the floor. We have heard the results of a vote marking the end of a long and painful process. Yesterday, we had a discussion including cars and trains and we heard that cars cannot drive with three wheels, all trains can run fine without one of its cars. Extending the analogy, the thing with trains is that there is always the next one coming. From our side we do not wish to board a train which may derail the Convention.

Norway expressed in very clear terms its great concerns for the consequences of this Decision. In our opinion the Committee Decision may leave us in a vacuum when it comes to the future integrity and credibility of the Convention and the Committee. We, therefore, wish to make the following statement to be duly noted in the protocol. It is of the utmost importance for Norway.

We recall Paragraph 23 of the *Operational Guidelines* and I quote: 'Committee decisions are based on objective and scientific considerations, and any appraisal made on its behalf must be thoroughly and responsibly carried out. The Committee recognizes that such decisions depend upon:

- a) carefully prepared documentation;
- b) thorough and consistent procedures,
- c) evaluation by qualified experts; and
- d) if necessary, the use of expert referees'.

We also make explicit and full reference to Article 11.2 of the Convention itself I will not recall it in full to save time.

The Committee has, through this process and its final decision, acknowledged that the ICOMOS evaluation was undertaken for the original series which is no longer valid. The Committee nevertheless considers that on the basis of the documentation in the nomination this year OUV can be justified. We emphasize that this decision is adopted on an extraordinary basis due to the withdrawal of one State Party from the transnational nomination after the evaluation including the recommendation for inscription was issued and this decision shall in no way constitute a precedent for the Committee's decision-making procedures. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Such statement will be duly recorded by the Committee for the interest of the Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much and good morning to all. We are extremely delighted that an overwhelming number of member States approved this Decision. This Decision is about justice, this Decision is about people who have been working for 20 years. 20 years to get this recognised. The Outstanding Universal Value of this property is unquestionable. There is nothing in the Convention that dictates us to follow the evaluation report. That is the fact.

With this in mind we are happy that science triumphed. We are happy that unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles have been, at least in this particular case, put aside. And we are happy that this hopefully will exemplify the spirit that should animate this Committee and the spirit of the Convention which we believe is first and foremost to save for future generations heritage sites that deserve to be saved full stop. The rest is accessory, secondary. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. My Delegation congratulates, Austria, Germany and the Slovak Republic for their efforts and perseverance in preserving this very interesting cultural property. For transboundary nomination, effective and sustained coordination among concerned member States is of paramount importance, not only in the nomination stage, but also in the most crucial management and conservation of the property after it is inscribed on the World Heritage List. Having said that, we are aware of the specificity of this transboundary serial nomination in this unprecedented situation.

We are of the view that the inscription of this site should not constitute a precedent for future Committee's decisions. My Delegation would also like our remarks to be recorded in the report of this meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Such a statement will be duly recorded by the Committee for the interest of the Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. Now, Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair, and I will be very brief. I would like first to congratulate the three countries for this nomination and also congratulate the Committee for reaching a decision. And I would also like to kindly ask you to add in the Summary Records our grateful thanks to the Saudi Delegation and to the Norwegian Delegation for the role they played during the last days. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. South Africa joins many Delegations and speakers who congratulated Austria and other States Parties involved in this project. And we also commend the Committee for exercising its discretion to bring finality to this matter and for restoring justice to what almost became an injustice to one of the States Parties.

We think that this decision that we have made can only serve to strengthen the integrity and credibility of the Committee and strengthen the implementation of the Convention. We are satisfied, South Africa, that we have judicially applied, as Committee members, our mind on this matter and we think that listing this property on the World Heritage List has made our List richer. We commend those who conducted the informal processes, Norway and Saudi Arabia, and we hope that our statement be recorded as such. Thanks.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I see no more comments. Therefore, the site is inscribed on the World Heritage List. Let me congratulate Austria, Germany and Slovakia on behalf of the entire Committee for the inscription of this property on the World Heritage List. The States Parties, you have the floor for a brief two-minute statement. Thank you.

The Delegation of Austria:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the opportunity to speak and given the time constraints allow me to talk in the name of all three States Parties. First of all, allow me to say a huge thank you to everybody who trusted this enormous

project reaching so far beyond its actual inscription and nomination. Furthermore, allow me to state that today with your decision you took a huge burden from the shoulders of our communities who applied the recommendations and requests put forward by ICOMOS with the evaluation report 2019, and complied with those recommendations without having an actual legal basis for it and without having the benefits of an inscribed World Heritage site.

Therefore, also in their name, a huge thank you to everybody and we are ready to run and to expand this property as outlined in the thematic study. And therefore, we kindly invite our partners downstream the Danube, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria to join us as soon as possible on our way forward.

Allow me to conclude with a picture in reaction to what the distinguished delegate of China yesterday said about this car having three wheels. Actually, our car is not a car, it is a huge truck and it is staying firmly on four wheels. Because the anchors and the most important components along this stretch are six legendary fortresses forming the most important components and key attributes of the property. Those are six legendary fortresses and four out of them are located in the current section. So, be convinced that you have really taken the right decision. There is not much more to say than, again, thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Congratulations once more. Dear colleagues let us proceed. As you know, Item 8 was presented on Saturday 24th of July. A drafting group was constituted regarding Draft Decision 44 COM 8. Before we move to the examination of the text proposed by the drafting group and the Decision, I would like to give the floor to the chairperson of the drafting group Ms. Beate Strøm. Now, Ms. Strøm, you have the floor.

Drafting Group:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good day, to you all. Mr. Chair I am really sorry to inform you that the drafting group has not been able to reach an agreement. We would like to ask you to give us a bit more time and allow us to come back to a later stage today. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your remarks. Dear Committee members, as presented by the chairperson of the drafting group, we need to give them a bit more time for a consensual text. Therefore, I would like to suggest that we leave the item for now and proceed with Items 14, 11 and 12, and come back to resume our discussion and Item 8. If there is no objection, we will proceed this way. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Just for clarity. Does this pertain to the item that deals with Sites of Memory?

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is the Item 8 which covers several points on the nomination processes including the Item on Sites of Memory. Thank you.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Sorry to follow up, Dr Rössler, the colleague from Norway was reporting on a specific item. Was it on the Sites of Memory? Because that is what they were dealing with not the entire decision. Is it on the Sites of Memory?

Chairperson:

Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

My understanding is that the decision has separate parts, but I think the crux of the matter and this is the reply to our delegate from South Africa is the point on the Sites of Memory if I understand correctly. But there is also a part on the Preliminary Assessment, etc. So, there are different parts in a draft decision and maybe we should ask the drafting group whether they cover all these parts. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. The drafting group, you have the floor.

The Drafting Group:

Thank you, Mr. President. Our drafting group has tried to find a solution on the Sites of Memory points only. So that is the only subject that we have been discussing. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Is it okay with you South Africa?

The Delegation of South Africa:

Chair, I am in your hands. But if the reason why this matter is deferred for later is because the chair feels that they still have room for a consensus, the impression we had was that we had reached the deadlock, and that we are not under the impression that there are still more meetings. So, we were a bit confused why the report presented gave an impression that there is still further discussion on this point. Our understanding was that the matter is now being brought back to the plenary for the plenary to deliberate on it. And that there is no other meeting schedule to discuss the matter.

Chairperson:

South Africa, I think just now the chairperson of the group suggested we come back only later this afternoon. I suggest we give them some more time this afternoon not tomorrow. Then after we maybe proceed with 14, 11 and 12 then if it is okay then we come back. Is it okay?

The Delegation of South Africa:

Chair, we really support your recommended consultation. We just wanted the text to be obtained. We are not aware of any further consultation. So, we can discuss it at your time, the one that you are suggesting but we are not aware of any further discussion on this method. We are in your hands, Chair. Thanks.

Chairperson:

I fully understand. I think now that the chairperson of the group hopes to give them some time, then I suggest we give them some time to have a try. So, we come back after we finish 14 or 11 and 12. Ethiopia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. What my colleague from South Africa was saying is that during the working group we have come to a deadlock. There is no agreement. So, whether we talk and talk, it does not make any difference. We will come to a deadlock. The issue is now referred back to the Committee. Whether we look at it now or in the afternoon that is fine, but what we want to make clear is that there will be no other meeting of the working group so that we do not get into another type of confusion we want to avoid. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. I would like to let the chairperson of the drafting group clarify the situation.

The Drafting Group:

Thank you, Mr. President. What we agreed on was that we did not agree, so our work forward is not to have new consultations. We agreed that we were going back to the plenary session with two different drafts and what is happening now, right now, is that the African group is revising their draft and the other group is revising their draft, and we will communicate that to the World Heritage Centre and the Rapporteur as soon as possible. The main point was that these drafts should be cleaned and improved from the discussions that we had earlier today. But there are no new consultations. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, good morning, good afternoon, good evening to all. Listening to the discussion, frankly we do hope that we get a consensual Draft Decision. It is not a one State, it is not a one country decision. We need a consensus, if there is no consensus, we should go back to the original Draft Decision and discuss. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. After the clarifications, Ethiopia, South Africa, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of South Africa:

We are happy with the clarification of the facts. We are happy with the factual situation as presented now. Thanks.

Chairperson:

Do you agree with my proposal now?

The Delegation of South Africa:

Yes, we have no problems.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Okay, we will come back to Item 8. Now, dear colleagues, as you know the working group on the Budget met several times throughout our session and therefore, I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of this working group Ms. Zoya Kritskaya to present the report and the Draft Decision proposed on this matter that was distributed to you. Please, Ms. Kritskaya, you have the floor.

Présidente du Groupe de travail du budget :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. J'ai le plaisir de vous rendre compte aujourd'hui des résultats des discussions du Groupe de travail du budget... Excusez-moi, j'ai des problèmes techniques. Je reviens vers vous dans un instant.

Chairperson:

Yes, the interpreters cannot hear your voice. It is okay now.

Présidente du Groupe de travail du budget :

Excusez-moi. J'ai donc le plaisir de vous rendre compte aujourd'hui des résultats des discussions du Groupe de travail du budget et de vous présenter le projet de la décision révisé 44 COM 14. Tout d'abord, permettez-moi d'exprimer ma sincère gratitude aux membres du Comité pour la confiance qu'ils m'ont témoigné en m'élisant à la présidence du Groupe de travail du budget. Le Groupe de travail du budget s'est réuni cinq fois entre le 21 et 27 juillet 2021, à raison d'une heure par réunion. Au total, nous avons eu une soixantaine de participants sur ces cinq jours, représentant 14 membres du Comité, une trentaine d'États parties observateurs et les trois organisations consultatives. Je tiens à souligner ici le niveau de participation élevé et l'engagement des membres du Comité. Les contributions et l'esprit de coopération de tous les participants nous ont permis de mener à bien nos travaux de manière efficace. Le travail du Groupe a commencé par une présentation très complète du document du budget par le secrétariat, ce qui a permis aux participants de mettre des commentaires généraux et de demander des clarifications ou des explications. Le Groupe a ensuite procédé à l'examen du projet de décision. Le texte original du projet de décision a été conservé pour la partie introductive, ainsi que la troisième partie qui concernait le suivi de la décision 43 COM 14. En ce qui concerne la deuxième partie du projet de décision, il y a eu un petit ajustement dans la formulation du paragraphe relatif à la réallocation budgétaire sur le budget 2020-2021. Cette réallocation a pour but d'aider au financement de l'évaluation de la stratégie du patrimoine mondial pour le renforcement des capacités. Il s'agissait simplement, pour une question de cohérence, d'aligner la formulation de ce paragraphe avec celui de la décision 44 COM 6 qui avait été adoptée quelques jours auparavant. Le travail du Groupe a porté essentiellement sur la deuxième partie du projet de décision. Dans cette partie, il a été convenu d'adopter le budget 2022-2023 tel que proposé dans le document du budget à l'annexe 6. En revanche, vous vous souviendrez sans doute que le reste de cette partie de décision du budget avait été laissée ouverte. La Norvège a donc présenté plusieurs nouveaux paragraphes liés à la question du financement de la réforme du processus de proposition d'inscription, et plus précisément au financement durable de l'analyse préliminaire, qui constitue la nouvelle première phase du processus réformé. Après quelques ajustements destinés en particulier à clarifier les modalités pour le financement de la phase de transition, qui commence en septembre 2023, ces paragraphes ont fait l'objet d'un consensus au sein du Groupe. En résumé, ils font état de la conscience aiguë qu'a le Groupe quant aux difficultés de financement et à la nécessité d'étudier tous les impacts budgétaires liés à l'introduction de l'analyse préliminaire, tout en gardant à l'esprit les décisions antérieures sur les États parties prioritaires. Il a également été unanimement décidé que le Groupe ad hoc serait chargé d'identifier un financement durable de l'analyse préliminaire pour 2024 et les années suivantes. L'Égypte et l'Arabie saoudite ont également présenté d'autres paragraphes relatifs au mandat du prochain groupe de travail ad hoc, en rapport cette fois avec la transparence, l'efficacité et les économies potentielles sur des ressources de la Convention, ainsi qu'à l'identification d'autres fournisseurs potentiels sur les services consultatifs. L'un de ces paragraphes envisageait également la possibilité d'un audit externe sur les mêmes questions. Après d'intenses discussions au sein d'un groupe de rédaction, un processus s'est dégagé autour d'un texte, reflété aux paragraphes 21 et 22 du projet de décision révisé. En conclusion, permettez-moi de remercier personnellement le Centre du patrimoine mondial pour son soutien constant, les services techniques du secrétariat et tous les délégués et les collègues distingués qui ont participé aux réunions du Groupe de travail du budget pour leur engagement constructif. J'espère que les distingués membres du Comité adopteront ce projet de décision, qui a fait l'objet d'intenses négociations au sein du Groupe de travail et dont le résultat reflète un vaste effort collectif. Il vise à nous mettre sur la voie d'une plus grande durabilité du Fonds du patrimoine mondial et donc, espérons-le, à terme, d'une meilleure protection du patrimoine

mondial culturel et naturel. J'ai été informé récemment que quelques États parties voudraient présenter des commentaires sur la décision. Donc, je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président, de m'avoir donné la parole et je vous demanderai de donner la parole à des États membres qui ont participé au Groupe de travail. Merci beaucoup.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much, now, Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Let me on the outset congratulate Ms. Zoya for the outstanding performance she did in chairing this meeting and the passion also that she showed. Also, let me express our gratitude for all the Delegations that were very active during the discussions, the Delegations of Norway, Australia, Hungary and Saudi Arabia, the Committee members and also Switzerland.

Chair, as it has been mentioned by the Chair of the working group there was just a very slight amendment in the wording on paragraph 21b so just replacing '*UNESCO programme budget*' by '*World Heritage regular budget*'. The Secretariat is already informed of this change it does not alter the meaning of the paragraph it just clarifies it and ensures that this was reflecting what we meant. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

No, sorry, it was my mistake.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now, I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. Just to comment on what the delegate of Egypt said. This is well noted because it should be the '*UNESCO regular budget*' and I think the same change would need to be done then under Item 11 with your agreement. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Allow me on behalf of the Committee to congratulate Ms. Zoya Kritskaya for your excellent achievement in chairing this working group. I understand that this is a consensual decision by the working group. I trust that members of the Committee are all in agreement with this text on the screen. Before we move to the examination of the Draft Decision, I would like to know whether there are any comments on this matter. I see none. Let us proceed.

I now invite you to examine and adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 14. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received the text from the working group as shown on the screen and we have been trying to make the changes proposed by the distinguished delegate of Egypt. The agreed text is shown on the screen one correction is in paragraph 21b. And if there was one more point if the distinguished delegate from Egypt could clarify it, I would appreciate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Egypt.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I am just looking at the paragraph with "UNESCO regular budgets" Instead of a 'UNESCO regular programme budget'. It will be 'World Heritage regular budget'. Basically, we remove 'UNESCO' and the word 'regular'. Exactly. That would be perfect. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur is it okay?

Rapporteur:

I am not sure, Mr. Chair, maybe the Secretariat will have clarification on this matter?

Chairperson:

The Secretariat, please, you have the floor.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. To our understanding it would be 'UNESCO regular budget'. Because this is the budget which comes from UNESCO to World Heritage.

Chairperson:

Egypt, is it okay?

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. If 'UNESCO regular budget' is okay for the Secretariat, then I think it is how it will be done at this moment and is okay for everyone.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur is it okay?

Rapporteur:

Yes. Now everything is clear. These are all the amendments, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? I see none, I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 14 adopted ^[gavel]. Thank you very much Item 14 is now closed ^[gavel].

Dear colleagues, you will remember that we have opened Item 11 on the 17th of July and that we listened to the report by the chairperson of the ad hoc working group. As you will also remember, we decided to leave this item open. As you also know, I had called upon Committee members to hold consultations on this item in order to take into account the outcomes of the Budget working group and the other matters discussed during the session. I understand that an agreement has been reached on the text that has been transmitted to the Rapporteur and which appears on the screen. Before we move to the examination of the Draft Decision, I would like to know whether there are any comments on this matter. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Actually, I wanted to make a comment when it comes to Item 14 after the decision, so if you allow me to make a comment on Item 14, please?

Chairperson:

Okay.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. First of all, I would like to sincerely thank Ms. Zoya Kritskaya for her excellent chairing of the Budget working group. Thank you. A huge thank you to all participants. I would like to make some general comments when it comes to Item 14.

First of all, States Parties have rights and obligations under the Convention paying the assessed compulsory and voluntary contribution is an obligation and absolutely necessary to implement the activities foreseen in the budget.

Second, States Parties putting forward nomination files to the World Heritage List are expected to make a voluntary contribution to the fund with reference to Paragraph 16 bis in the *Operational Guidelines*. We would like to thank Czechia, Germany, Italy, Slovenia and Spain who already contributed to the fund as described in paragraph 21 in the document.

Thirdly, the adoption of the Preliminary Assessment as part of the nomination reform is an important step to enhance the credibility of the World Heritage List through strengthened dialogue between States Parties and the Advisory Bodies. We look forward to the outcome of the next ad hoc working group when it comes to proposals for its financing.

Lastly, I would like to say that Norway will — as we actually did in 2020 as we did not have a Committee meeting last year and since this one is a virtual one — give the money that the whole team would have spent on travels, hotels, food, etc. during the Committee meeting in presentia to the World Heritage Fund. And this time, we would like to give it to the sub-account for the evaluation of nominations, even though we do not have a nomination, so that we can help kick off the Preliminary Assessment and I think the amount is approximately € 30,000. Thank you so much for allowing me to make this statement.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more questions in the comments. Bahrain, yes, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to thank our colleagues from Norway for this very positive gesture. It is much appreciated and much needed at this critical stage of the Convention. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more questions in the comments. I now invite you to examine and adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 11. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed. First, I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As was just discussed with Egypt before, we would need to do the same change I think, if my recollection is correct, it is under the part 7 subgroup 2.1b. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We received an amendment submitted by the distinguished Delegations of Norway, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, as shown on the screen. I propose to go through it, paragraph by paragraph, Mr. Chair, if you see appropriate as well.

Chairperson:

Okay. Before we go through the text, I will give the floor to Norway first.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. First of all, I would like to sincerely thank China for the excellent work done in leading the ad hoc working group and in particular the Chairperson, Mr. Tian Xuejun — I hope I pronounced it right with my Norwegian accent — he did an excellent work. Thank you so much. It is quite amazing that the ad hoc working group managed to finalise its work. It was very technical online with a lot of consultations and dialogue between the formal meetings. We would like to thank everybody involved in this extremely important work. I will very quickly present the text proposed under items 11 and 12 on behalf of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Norway.

First, under Item 11, we are basically recognising the good work of the ad hoc working group, we adopt the reformed nomination process and we structure the mandate and the composition of the next ad hoc working group. We proposed to divide the next ad hoc working group into two subgroups: one working on the proposals on how to finance the Preliminary Assessment and that second working on mapping and the discussion on the use of current and potential additional advisory service providers, as well as having a general discussion on the World Heritage Fund. Also, the actual working group will look into Article 11.3 of the Convention. When it comes to Item 12, we basically adopted the amended *Operational Guidelines* as recommended by the ad hoc working group. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment and also thank you for your kind words for me. Now, dear Committee members we will go through the Decision. Actually, Saudi Arabia, you do want and have the floor.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank Norway for its very kind gesture and their contribution, not only in terms of material but also in terms of finance. I was just wondering, are we going paragraph by paragraph? Because I have a minor edit at a later stage in this discussion. So, if we are going paragraph by paragraph, I will just wait until that paragraph comes along.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is the same, if we are going paragraph by paragraph, I have a comment regarding paragraph 4. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ms. Rapporteur, we will go through the text paragraph by paragraph. The first paragraph had no revision, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 2: 'Recalling Decisions 42COM 12A, 43.8 and 43COM 12 adopted at its 42nd session (Manama 2018) and 43rd (Baku 2019) session respectively'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 3: 'Expresses appreciation to the Ad-Hoc Working Group, the State party of the Republic of China for its commitment and ably leadership, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the geographically and gender balanced small experts drafting group for its work and recommendations'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 4: 'Endorses the recommendations of the ad hoc working group and requests that:

- a) the World Heritage Centre subject to available funding in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies develops guidance and related training courses for the States Parties at regional level to present the changes to the nomination process and ensure the constructive dialogue and support for States Parties in the implementation of the reform,
- b) the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies update the resource manual for preparing World Heritage nominations and encourages States Parties to contribute to this end.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Convinced that the most appropriate means for restoring and enhancing the credibility and balance of the World Heritage List is inter alia the development of high-quality nominations for sites which have a strong potential to succeed through enhanced dialogue between the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies from a very early stage'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 6: 'Decides to adopt the reformed nomination process with the Preliminary Assessment as a first phase of the nomination process and with the current mechanism as described in the current Paragraph 128 of the Operational Guidelines as a second phase'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. On the Preliminary Assessment, some Observers member States asked me to raise this point: whether this is going to be compulsory and is it possible that it is to be subcontracted outside the Advisory Bodies in order to lessen the load on these people, as well as maybe cost effectiveness? This is a question that was raised by two- or three-member States, asking me to raise this question. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Do you have any comment? I see no comment. Maybe this one can be discussed at the next meeting of the ad hoc group if it is okay. Okay, so it is agreed.

The Delegation of Oman:

Okay. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay Thank you. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7: 'Also decides to extend the mandate of the Ad-hoc Working Group, in two sub-groups, to be composed of members of the Committee and up to two non-members per Electoral Group, including the Committee members outgoing in 2021, to:

Sub-group 1: Analyse and propose sustainable and innovative solutions – including the cost-sharing mechanism described in Paragraph 168bis of the Operational Guidelines - for financing of the nomination process including the Preliminary Assessment, with the aim to improve transparency, cost efficiency and identify possible synergies, overlaps and potential cost saving measures to be taken into account in the reformed evaluation cycle;

Sub-group 2:

a) present concrete proposals on the following:

(i) Ensuring long term financial sustainability of all current and potential new Convention funds,

(ii) Transparency, efficiency and potential cost savings on the use of Convention financial resources (World Heritage Fund, UNESCO regular budget, and voluntary contributions),

(iii) Mapping of current and potential additional advisory service providers, with a view to improving geographical balance,

(iv) The possibility of exploring the criteria and governance under which the Committee may cooperate with international and non-governmental organizations in accordance with Articles 13.7 and 14.2 of the Convention as well as Paragraph 38 of the Operational Guidelines;

b) Continue dialogue regarding feasible procedures related to Article 11.3 of the Convention'.

Chairperson:

Do you accept? Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do accept. Just one additional word under subgroup 2a, we just say, 'Analyze and present concrete proposals'. And indeed, the points raised by our colleague from Oman shall be discussed thoroughly in subgroup two. So, we invite all member States who are interested in such a discussion to partake in that ad hoc working group mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8: 'Further decides that the Ad-hoc Working Group shall work in consultation with the World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies and as appropriate, relevant stakeholders, and requests the submission of the documents described in Decision 44 COM 14 Paragraph 22 as well as other relevant documents and background information to facilitate the work of the Ad-hoc Working Group, and submit its report and recommendations to the 45th session of the Committee'. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Is it approved? Okay, it is approved. Dear Committee members if there are no other comments or objection, actually, Norway please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I am not objecting at all. I just could not let go this occasion without thanking sincerely my dear colleague Ying [Jiao]. in the permanent Delegation of the People's Republic of China for his convening force and guidance in the abstract. So, Ying a big thank you to you too. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 11 adopted as amended ^[gave]. Thank you very much. Item 11 is now closed ^[gave].

Dear colleagues, you certainly remember that we opened Item 12 on the 17th of July. I had called upon Committee members to hold consultations on this Item in order to take into account the outcomes of the Budget working group and other matters discussed during the session. I understand that an agreement has been reached on a text that has been transmitted to the Rapporteur and which appears on the screens. Before we move to the examination of the Draft Decision, I would like to know whether there are any comments on this matter. I see none. Let us proceed.

I will invite you to examine and adopt Draft Decision 44 COM 12. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on the Draft Decision proposed.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an amendment proposed by the distinguished Delegations of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Norway as shown on the screen.

Chairperson:

Okay.

Rapporteur:

There are no modifications proposed for paragraph 1 of the Draft Decision. Paragraph 2 reads: 'Recalling Decision 43 COM 12 adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019), which recognized the importance of the overarching objective of the reform of the nomination process as a key measure for restoring the balance and the credibility of the World Heritage List and which decided to endorse the principle of a two-phase nominations process, with the aim to help improve the quality of nominations and strengthen dialogue between States Parties and the Advisory Bodies'.

Paragraph 3: 'Expresses its appreciation to the Ad-hoc Working Group, the State Party of the People's Republic of China for its commitment and able leadership, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the geographically and gender balanced small expert drafting group, for their work and recommendations'.

Paragraph 4: 'Notes that the proposed revisions to the Operational Guidelines have been prepared on the basis of the outcomes of the online survey of States Parties and other relevant stakeholders of the Convention on the Nomination Process and the recommendations of the reflection meeting of experts (Tunis, 2019) and have been reviewed, amended and endorsed by the 2021 Ad-hoc Working Group'.

New paragraph 5: 'Further notes that the transition period for introducing the Preliminary Assessment commences with the first deadline for submission of voluntary Preliminary Assessment requests by 15 September 2023'.

Paragraph 6: 'Also takes note that the transition period will end in 2027, and that the Preliminary Assessment will be mandatory, meaning that only nominations with a Preliminary Assessment will be examined by the World Heritage Committee from 2028 onwards'.

And new paragraph 7: 'Decides on the basis of the aforementioned Preliminary Assessment and related transition period to adopt the proposed revision of the Operational Guidelines and further decides that annex 5 will enter into force on 2 February 2022'.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members do you accept this text? Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I think that we also made an amendment in the last paragraph. If you can please scroll down the text because I think there was an incoherence. It should be that it is coming '*from 2028 onwards*' and I think you have to make the change also in the French version but I leave it to the Secretariat. I can see it is okay in the English version. Thank you so much.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Are there any other comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 12 adopted ^[gave]. Dear Committee members will go on with Item 15. I would like to know if you have any other comments or proposals on Item 15 devoted to other business. I give the floor to the United States for a brief intervention. Please, do respect the time limit. You have the floor.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Thank you, Chair. We are taking the floor for the first time and would like to convey our sympathies to the victims of flooding and our hope for a swift recovery. We would like to also thank China for hosting this meeting under such difficult circumstances. China has responded with generosity, flexibility and innovation and the repeated delays and uncertainty necessitated by the pandemic. I would also like to thank the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their expert guidance, responsiveness and the chorus of members.

I would like to thank you, Chair, for your expert leadership and tactful efficiency in guiding the work of the Committee during the past fortnight. Our appreciation for the Vice-Chair for his gracious [...] Sorry I am having problems with my video, so I will turn it off for the sake of technology. I would like to thank you, Chair, for your expert leadership and tactful efficiency in guiding the work of the Committee during this past fortnight. Our appreciation to the Vice-Chair for his gracious guidance and we have all been served well by the leadership of the 44th session.

Mr. Chair, the United States has submitted a statement for the record (see Annex 2) originally intended for Agenda Item 7B which has now been closed so we have raised this under other business. The statement addresses the issues discussed related to the Canaima National Park. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

We cannot hear your voice.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Chair, can you hear me now?

Chairperson:

Okay. Have you finished now?

The Delegation of the United States of America:

That is right, yes. Did you get my complete statement?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of the United States of America:

Okay. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Venezuela, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Mr. Chairman, we congratulate you. We had a productive day which benefited from you chairing. We would like to express the solidarity of the Venezuelan government with the Chinese government on the recent disaster. We also congratulate the government of China for the timely and humanistic response it has brought to such circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, we are taking the floor once again to respond to the cynical declaration of the government of the United States which is entirely out of place and should have been pronounced before the decision was made on this point. It shows deep ignorance of the functioning of this Committee. A pathetic proof of the existence of terrorist State organisations which disguised themselves as an NGO and which actually responds to the interest of those who are founding them.

This explains the absurd intervention by the representative of the government of the United States who intend to go on advancing their own interest at the expense of international law and multilateralism. It does not matter much to us that the government of the United States is unaware of democratic legitimacy of our government which is fully recognised by the Venezuelan people, the United Nations and practically all countries in the world. They represent their own puppet who they intend to impose on the Venezuelan people in using, in fact, perhaps, military invasion and terrorism. In this context, Venezuela reiterates the need to review the framework of relations with NGOs avoiding the possibility of having such para-State organisations that are clearly political.

For this important Convention, Mr. Chairman, on last July 24th, we celebrated the festival of liberty of the Bolivarian Republic and we said that the United States are destined by providence to be plagued on the Americas and on liberty [...]

Chairperson:

Please, respect the time limit.

The Delegation of Venezuela:

[Interpretation from Spanish] [...] universal and exceptional and goes on working with the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now I give the floor to World Heritage Watch for a one-minute intervention.

Observer-World Heritage Watch:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of 33 civil society actors, we conclude on the conduct of the 44th session.

- 1) Restricted to interventions after decisions were adopted, civil society was unable to contribute to the decision-making process as the *Operational Guidelines* require. Decision-making would benefit from civil society contributions to safeguard World Heritage in the spirit of the five 'Cs'.
- 2) Some members of the Committee have made unfounded political allegations against civil society representatives, discussions should be based on facts alone.
- 3) Some Committee members have disregarded science-based recommendations of the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat giving priority to unrelated considerations eroding the credibility of the Convention and at times failing to meet the task of protecting the World Heritage.
- 4) We fully support the demands of indigenous peoples as rights holders for their participatory, prior and fully informed consent to all decisions that could affect them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. I give the floor to the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage (IIPFWH). You have one minute for your intervention.

Observer-IIPFWH:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, UNESCO World Heritage Committee's Global Strategy identified that living cultures and especially traditional cultures and their diverse relationships with the environment were underrepresented. Indigenous peoples are the primary experts about our lands and more committed than anybody to taking care of them and safeguarding them for future generations. Yet, our cultural heritage and relationships with the land continue to be routinely ignored by the Committee and this List of so-called full natural sites. Our occupation on our traditional land should not be treated as a threat.

The Indigenous People's Forum has regional representation in all the UN regions and we are often approached by indigenous peoples to hear the serious concerns they have for properties within their traditional lands. We respectfully urge the Committee to change the wording of the natural criteria so that indigenous people living cultural heritage and relationship to the land can be fully and consistently recognised in all sites. We urge the Committee to change its practice and Rules of Procedure and ensure that we are consistently given the floor before [...]

Chairperson:

Sorry to interrupt you.

Observer-IIPFWH:

[...] the Committee takes decisions affecting us with the decisions on nomination or on the state of the conservation. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I see no more questions in the comments. Dear Committee members, dear colleagues, I now propose a technical break for ten minutes. Thank you.

Dear Committee members, dear colleagues, let us proceed. According to the situation now, I propose we go first with Item 17. Now, I would like to invite Dr Rössler to present the provisional agenda of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is contained in Document 17. It is the provisional agenda for the 45th session which will take place in Kazan in 2022, you remember the decision to have it in Kazan was already taken. Now, you

have first the opening session, Item 1 and then admission of Observers which are the traditional items, Item 3 Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable, 3A Adoption of the Agenda, 3B Adoption of the Timetable.

Then we come to the big item reports. There is Item 4 which would be the report of our dear Rapporteur of the extended 44th session and she would present it at the next session. Then Item 5, the reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies: so 5A the activities of the World Heritage Centre and implementation of the Committee's decisions, and 5B the reports of the Advisory Bodies.

Then, Item 6 the follow-up to the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy and the progress report on the World Heritage related Category 2 Centres which is also a traditional report and a follow-up to your decision here on Item 6. And then we come to the big item of state of conservation. This the general Item 7, as you have seen already at this session and Item 7A for in danger sites and 7B for sites on the World Heritage List.

Then we come to the establishment of the World Heritage List with the general Item 8 which is on the nomination process, 8A Tentative List, 8B Nominations, 8C update of the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, 8D clarifications of property boundaries and areas by States Parties and 8E which is the review and a pro-approval of retrospective statements of OUV by the Committee.

Then big item on the Global Strategy for representative and balanced and credible World Heritage List with the sub-Item 9A on Upstream Processes and then we have the big item on Periodic Reports which is the Item 10. You will have next year the presentation of the third cycle for Periodic Reporting from Asia and Pacific, a progress report from the other regions under 10 B, and 10C the follow-up to on the Implementation of the Action Plans on the reports you heard this year which was yesterday on the Arab States and Africa Region. You will then discuss the follow-up next year. Then you have the progress report on the search cycle of Periodic Reporting in the other regions which is mainly Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe.

Now working methods and tools. You have Item 11 follow-up on the recommendations of evaluations and audits on the working methods and the outcome of the ad hoc working group as we have just heard. You will have an ad hoc working group which runs from this World Heritage Committee to the next. This will be under this item 11. Then, Item 12 traditionally the revision of the *Operational Guidelines*, as we just also discussed, and we will report on that. Then you have Item 13 which is the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention which is a critical item because it will celebrate the 50th anniversary next year.

Then you have the big item with the financial and administrative issues with International Assistance and, of course, the Budget Item follows up to the decision you have just taken here at this Committee which is Decision 44 COM 14. And then, you have other businesses and the closing session with the election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur for the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee as well as a provisional Agenda for the 46th session of the Committee and adoption of decisions and then Item 20 the closing session.

Mr. Chair, this is the overview with the Draft Decision, and in case this Committee wishes to add anything, otherwise you have the Draft Decision 44 COM 17 on page 3 of the Document. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your presentation. I now invite the Committee members to express their comments concerning this Provisional Agenda. I see no comments. I therefore declare, actually, Oman, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have only a clarification. Since this is going to be the Provisional Agenda during the course of the year, is it possible for any amendment, to add an element to it, if there is anything to be added or do we have to follow these 20 items strictly? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much for the question from Oman. This is a Provisional Agenda until the Committee adopts it when it meets at the session in Kazan. There may be other additions that could also be a request from the General Assembly. There could be other points which may be raised. So, the Committee is free to make any additions also at the opening of the session when you formally adopt this Agenda in Kazan. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Is it okay Oman?

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other comments? I see none I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 17 adopted [gave]. Thank you, item 17 is now closed [gave].

Dear Committee members, as you will remember we decided to examine the draft Decision 44 COM 8B.43 on the nomination of Gdańsk Shipyard, Poland after the end of our debates on general Item 8. However, as you have realised that discussions on Item 8 are still going on and as it is almost the last working day, I think it would be reasonable to examine nomination 8B.43 now. Are there any objections? I see none? If so, let us proceed this way. Russia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. chairman, did I understand you right? That now we are discussing the nomination of Gdańsk?

Chairperson:

Right.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chairman, I have a proposal to make. According to the Rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee I moved the adjournment of the debate sine die. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. I would just like to remind ourselves that we did adjourn this debate in order to wait for the debate on the item that we still have not discussed and by this we have lost two days. Before we decided or the decision was made on the adjournment of the debate two days ago, Hungary made a request for a vote by secret ballot on the amendment that Hungary has handed in together with some other members. I just want to confirm that Hungary still maintains this request for a secret vote. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Chair, as it is the first time that I am taking the floor at this meeting I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership in presiding over a constructive and cohesive World Heritage Committee 44 and, Chair, it is in this spirit of collaboration and cooperation that I would like to make this intervention.

Australia has listened carefully to the views put forward on this application for inscription. As my colleague from Ethiopia said earlier today, we have watched as this Committee has come together to save heritage sites that deserve to be saved. Australia recognises the historical importance and significance of the peaceful actions that took place at Gdańsk Shipyards. And importantly, we also recognise the points put forward by experts about the importance of this site's contribution to the heritage of shipbuilding in Europe.

Australia is conscious that the conversation of Sites of Memory remains an issue requiring discussion and resolution. But and we take your point, Chair, about the importance of us moving forward in this meeting, we are equally conscious of the heavy decision of taking a definitive view of this property before these discussions have concluded.

We have listened, Chair, to the other distinguished members of this Committee including in the discussion on the 17th. And in a circumstance where the Advisory Bodies have not been able to visit due to Covid-19, where we have expert views that are presented indicating that the shipbuilding aspects of this site would likely be eligible in future for protection by this Committee. Australia believes it is important that the Advisory Bodies are given that chance to visit the site and to work in detail with the State Party.

We are conscious that this Committee has throughout its meeting sought to reach constructive and collaborative solutions and I would like to advise that Australia has listened to the views put forward in the discussion on this item from Saudi Arabia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Oman, Guatemala, Hungary and others that to rush to a definitive decision on this property would be premature. But, Chair, we also understand your view that not to take a decision given the short time left would be incorrect for our Committee.

We therefore would like to join with other States Parties in this Committee to give the State party a chance to work with the Advisory Bodies in a collaborative way to further develop aspects of the site including the shipbuilding elements. Australia would like to work with this group to find a solution that is consistent with the Committee and

support for the encouragement of all States Parties to conserve and protect the World Heritage. For this reason, Australia would like to join with others in supporting Hungary's amendment to defer. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Yes, thank you. I have a point of order. Hungary, first.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. I just wanted to clarify, and perhaps this is the point when the legal adviser could be asked, because Hungary made a motion for a secret ballot on Wednesday before the debate was adjourned. And today, Russia made another motion. I think it would be necessary to clarify the order of these motions and I think at this point an intervention and the advice of the legal adviser would be welcomed. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Now, I give the floor to the legal adviser to make the clarification.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Can you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes, but I cannot see you.

Legal Adviser:

Let me just put my camera on.

Chairperson:

The sound is not very good and no picture.

Legal Adviser:

Do you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes.

Legal Adviser:

I understand from the debates and from the discussions that have been held today that the Delegation of Russia made a procedural motion to adjourn the debate sine die under Rule 31. The Delegation of Hungary has requested a secret ballot. First, I think it would be important to clarify whether the request from Hungary for a ballot is in fact a request for the closure of the debate. If this is indeed a request for the closure of the debate then Rule 33 would apply.

Rule 33 foresees that certain motions will have precedence and it says that the following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or more motions before the meeting: First, suspension of the meeting, second, adjournment of the meeting, third, adjournment of the debate under the question under the discussion, and fourth, closure of the debate on the question under the discussion.

Given that we have a motion for the adjournment of the debate under Rule 31, and if we do have a request for the closure of the debate under Rule 32. In accordance with the order of procedural motions as foreseen in Rule 33, a decision should first be taken on the motion of the adjournment of the debate. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. It is very clear according to the legal adviser which one takes precedence. Hungary is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Hungary:

Chairperson, I am puzzled, because our motion was made on Wednesday, it was seconded by a distinguished member of the Committee, Uganda. And, as a matter of fact, the Chair was already about to announce the secret ballot. And now two days after, we heard another motion and we are hearing that it has a legal precedent. I think the legal adviser did not refer to this circumstance that the motion for the secret ballot was made two days ago and not today. I wonder if the legal adviser could clarify if this has any effect on her valuable advice. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Legal adviser, I give you the floor again.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. From what I understand, what happened two days ago, as the Delegation of Hungary has recalled, was that, indeed, two days ago, a request for the adjournment of the debate was made and there was also a request for the closure of the debate. The legal adviser had intervened and provided the advice at that time that there was a request for adjournment of the debate and that in the order of procedural motions in accordance with Rule 33, the question of adjournment of the debate would have to be decided upon first.

Again, from what I understand from the proceedings two days ago, the Committee accepted to adjourn the debate on this issue until today. There was a decision taken on the adjournment of the debate on this nomination until today. The fact that a request for a secret ballot was also made two days ago does not have any effect with respect to the new motions that have been put forward today. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you, legal adviser. Now, dear Committee members, may I ask the Committee members if the proposal for adjournment are seconded. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. China fully supports the motion made by our dear colleagues of Russia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much Mr. Chairperson. In fact, when we requested the floor, it is because we had the same doubt as Hungary. We believe that the proposal was still ongoing and we were going to support it to second that request. Now, on the basis of the information we have been provided, the situation has changed and it does not make any sense to me to support a proposal that is not going to be considered. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to agree with my colleague from Spain that we absolutely support Hungary's motion for the vote made already in this Committee and we have already considered the motion to adjourn and we have made that very clear. Along with Spain and others. Chair, we would ask that we see that opportunity for the Committee to take its decision and we call again and second the motion for a vote.

Chairperson:

I want to ask the legal adviser. Now, Russia's proposal for adjournment is the procedural motion and now it is seconded by China. Does it stand now? Legal adviser, you have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would read for clarity the Rule 31 on adjournment of the debate 'During the discussion of any matter any State member of the Committee may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. On moving the adjournment, the State member shall indicate when he moves the adjournment sine die or to a particular time which he shall specify. In addition to the proposal of the motion, one speaker may speak in favour of and one against the motion.' I repeat the last sentence: 'In addition to the proposal of the motion one speaker may speak in favour of and one against the motion'. It follows that 'When there is a request for adjournment of the debate it does not need to be seconded'. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Dear Committee members, according to the legal adviser explanation, so this is done. The proposal for adjournment of the debate sine die stands. Okay? Therefore, I declare this nomination adjourned sine die ^[gave]. Let us move on to the next Agenda item. Ms. Rapporteur you have to record this.

Rapporteur:

Yes, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Now, we move on to the next point. Dear Committee members, as you know Item 8 was presented on Saturday 24th of July and the drafting group was constituted regarding Draft Decision 44.8. Before we move to the examination of the text proposed by the drafting group on this Decision, I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the drafting group, Ms. Beate Strøm, you have the floor.

The Drafting group:

Thank you, Mr. President. The following is a brief report from the drafting group. The initial drafting group had the following members: South Africa, Uganda, Hungary and Australia. Brazil and Norway took on the role as co-hosts. The first meeting took place on the 28th of July and then we had only informal reflections. More Committee members wanted to join us in our important discussions, so yesterday, on the 29th of July, and today, we had three more meetings. More than 20 people from at least eight different States Parties attended the meeting and the discussions. We did not discuss substance, we rather tried to focus on how to continue our reflections in the future.

Mr. President, the discussions proved to be very complicated and that is why we are back in this plenary session with two conflicting views and maybe also two texts which are based on the following. We all agree that there is a need for broader discussions and that we need more voices to be heard. We also agreed that we need a group to be established in order to continue these discussions. However, we did not agree on the design of the process, as to whether this is a task that should be dealt with under the umbrella of the Committee or the journal [...]

Chairperson:

I am sorry, can you just wait for a moment? The legal adviser wanted to have the floor. Is it okay for you to just wait for a moment and I will give the floor back to you? I give the floor to the legal adviser. You have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I was just wondering, I see that there has been a point of order from Hungary, and I would like a bit more clarification on the process that has been followed regarding the adjournment of the debate and clarification also on the legal advice I provided. I am very sorry to come back on this issue, Chair, I do hope that you will forgive me on this issue. There was a request for the adjournment of the debate but I am not clear on the fact, on the question of as to whether a decision was actually taken on the adjournment of the debate. And this was just a clarification I wanted to have and maybe Hungary wanted to make a point of order in this regard. I am very sorry, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Now, the decision has already been made. We go on now with the Chairperson of the group I am sorry and please go on.

The Drafting group:

Mr. President, are you asking me to continue?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Drafting group:

Thank you. Would you like me to start from the beginning once again?

Chairperson:

Just start from where you stopped. Okay?

The Drafting group:

I will just repeat a couple of my last point because it is important so people can follow my thoughts. We are now back in the plenary session with two conflicting views which are based on the following: because we agreed on the need for broader discussions, we also agreed that more voices needed to be heard and that we wanted a group to be established in order to continue these discussions. We did not agree on however, the design of the process, as to whether this is a task that should be dealt under the umbrella of the Committee or the World Heritage Committee or the General Assembly. I think it is important to underline that our common goal was to come back to this plenary session with an agreed draft decision. We all wanted that, but we did not quite succeed and for that I am really sorry. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Many thanks for this presentation. Are there any comments on this matter? Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Écoutez, en tant que membre du Comité, je suis un peu confus. C'est une situation que je n'arrive pas à comprendre. J'aimerais bien que l'on débattenne de ce sujet en profondeur afin de ne pas trop nous éloigner brutalement de quelque chose d'important. Il y a une divergence d'opinion, nous ne sommes pas tous du même avis sur ce que la Hongrie a proposé, et que nous avons soutenu. Mais nous avons eu ce matin un vote, concernant un autre sujet délicat, et la situation a été résolue par ce vote. Vraiment je ne comprends pas ce qui se passe en ce moment. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to speak. I just appreciate that we are moving on but I just had a question based on the legal advice that was just provided. I was confused about the previous item where the legal adviser said there needed to be one person for and one against the adjournment. Chair, I clearly spoke against the adjournment and for the proposal of Hungary and indeed questioned that I would like to ask a point of order under Rule 28. It seems that I am not clear as others are. A decision was taken on the previous point. And, Chair, I think that in the interests of ensuring that this Committee does not move forward in a way that would be unnecessarily against its spirit of constructive and collaborative work, I would again, Chair, like to request and make it very clear that Australia does not support the adjournment. In fact, we had supported already Hungary's view. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. In order not to repeat everything that has been just said I would just like to second what Australia has said previously. Thank you.

Chairperson:

According to the Rules of Procedure it says 'may' but I have to move and decide. Now, I give the floor to the legal adviser to make some clarification. Legal adviser, you have the floor. Legal adviser your microphone maybe or other problems, we cannot hear you.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do you hear me?

Chairperson:

Yes.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you very much for giving me the floor again and I am very sorry if I was not clear in my previous intervention. There are two issues here. The question of how a motion is seconded. As previously explained the adjournment of the debate does not need to be seconded, and the closure of the debate does not need to be seconded either. There is an order of procedural motions, and, as I explained before, Rule 33 foresees that first if the floor requests suspension of the meeting, then adjournment of the meeting then adjournment of the debate then the closure of the debate. However, these are motions which might, must be decided by the Committee. It is not because a member State, a member of the Committee has made a proposal that the proposal is automatically accepted by the Committee. In fact, Rule 30 clearly States that 'During the discussion of any matter, any State member of the Committee may move the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated and shall be immediately put to the vote'. And this is the same for the closure of the debate.

In this context, and as I understand it, we have had a motion for the adjournment of the debate and another motion for the closure of the debate. In accordance with Rule 33, the Committee would first have to take a decision on the motion for the adjournment of the debate. I hope this clarifies this question. And my question was whether the Committee had in fact taken a decision on the motion for the adjournment of the debate. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Russia please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to make a small precision in order to avoid further misunderstandings. The motion of adjournment which was made two days ago is not the same as the one that has been made today, because, at that time, the decision to adjourn the debate was for two days. Now, there was a proposal to make an adjournment sine die, and this proposal was made before the proposal of a secret vote. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your intervention. The legal adviser, I made it very clear the Ambassador for Russia also made it clear and we have made a decision I think we will move on, okay?

Concerning Item 8, after the Chairperson of the group made a presentation, are there any more comments? Okay, thank you. Hungary you have a point of order. You have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

I am sorry, Chair, that I have to come back and I have to prolong this discussion. But I just want to make it clear that, in our interpretation, the Committee has not made a decision to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made, there has been an intervention in favour and some against and then no decision has been taken by the Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Is the floor on the Item 8, Chairperson, on the item on the Sites of Memory not on the issue that you have closed?

Chairperson:

Okay.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor on this important matter to us in Africa and I believe to all State Parties. We would like to thank the facilitators of the informal consultations for their efforts, as well as all the Delegations which participated in the informal consultation. We regret Chairperson that the informal consultations did not reach any consensus.

Our strong view is that the Draft Decision on the Sites of Memory should be simple, short and precise and should avoid paragraphs which may create an impression of a predetermined outcome. Thus, Chairperson, our amendment to the Draft Decision on this matter addresses the following:

- 1) It seeks to recall the matter of the Committee Decision of Manama, it seeks to recall the mandate given by the experts, by the Committee during its session in Manama in 2018 on the Site of Memories of Recent Conflict.
- 2) It acknowledges that indeed, the Secretariat convened an expert meeting to reflect on the subject and that some views on the matter were expressed. We also wish to indicate that the report of the meeting of the experts did not incorporate all the views expressed on this important matter.
- 3) It also takes note that the Africa Region also convened a meeting of experts and ministers to reflect on the same matter and agreed on a position which is different from the one that came from the meeting of experts convened by the Secretariat.
- 4) It acknowledges that there are still divergent views on the subject and more dialogue is needed by the States Parties to the Convention. And which is important,
- 5) it recommends the Committee to establish a working group for States Parties to discuss the matter and present a report during the next meeting of the Committee. The working group should have a clear mandate and a definite timeline. That timeline is the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee.

We respectfully do not agree with a proposal to escalate this matter to the General Assembly of States Parties. We believe that the Committee has the power to bring finality to this discussion. After all, this discussion started in this Committee. Taking it to the General Assembly will only serve to prolong finalisation of the discussions. It is our fervent request and wish that this discussion be concluded, as there are sites from our region that have been submitted for processing to the Secretariat but unfortunately that cannot be processed. We request the support of the Committee members on our proposal. I thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please. Actually, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I am intervening following what my brother from South Africa said to support the amendments proposed. Mr. Chair, we do not at all accept the idea that some decisions have to be predetermined in advance, we do not believe in the filtering process that aims to exclude and in particular those of us in Africa.

But, Chair, we want to make it clear secondly that the views of African experts, as also endorsed by African ministers, should be reflected at least in part in the recommendation of experts. That was not the case.

Thirdly, as was said by my brother from South Africa, we do not believe in taking this matter to the General Assembly that will only delay it. We believe in each case being evaluated on its merits, on a case-by-case basis. That should be the approach that should guide us and that is also in line with the Convention.

Therefore, we fully support the amendments put forward by South Africa and we urge Committee members to follow us on this important amendment. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment, Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Before anything else, we just wanted to thank the Chair of the working group. We think that it was done very, very well by Brazil and Norway on this most complex of topics. Unfortunately, we were not able to reach a consensus despite excellent efforts. It is a difficult topic, and it has been very difficult to work towards consensus. I think what is clear is that it is necessary for more State Parties to take part in this discussion, so that we can further our conversation on this topic which affects many sites and countries. We want to see the discussion broaden and we think an open-ended working group in which any interested States Parties could participate in, and not only Committee members could take part in, would be the best way forward.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je dois répéter que je reste toujours confus à propos de ce qui a été dit tout à l'heure concernant la proposition d'amendement de la Hongrie. Donc j'attends toujours une explication. Je voudrais savoir quelle est l'opinion du Comité concernant la décision ; parce que vous venez de dire qu'une décision a été prise alors que ça n'a pas eu lieu. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

The sound was not good. I could not hear clearly. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in this matter there are three things. The one and the most important thing is the issue of the need to have the matter discussed. Is there a need, is there some good will? That is the first issue. And then together with that comes the issue of the time factor, and then finally, the issue of the procedure. Now, in terms of procedure, any matter which goes to the General Assembly has to go back to the Committee. Committees normally support general assemblies in order to effect their work. That is why they say a Committee was created. The Rules of Procedure are very clear that matters are exhausted by this Committee and the Committee simply submit a report to the General Assembly. That means any matter which goes to the General Assembly is only for actions and recommendations, to make a decision, but not to start synthesizing, discussing, analysing and going into details. It is always committees and procedures.

Also, there is a procedure. Rule 21 gives mandate to this Committee that in a matter which needs further reflection the Committee creates working groups, which they call subsidiary bodies, and that is the method which is provided for within our Rules of Procedure. We cannot do anything outside the Rules of Procedure in this matter. The General Assembly issue comes much later. Because, first of all, this Committee started this matter as was discussed earlier in Manama. It came back, it is still within the Committee. And until the Committee has reflected and have come up with a draft decision that can go through the General Assembly, it is too premature to begin thinking of a General Assembly when the matter has not been discussed here.

Now, the procedure is very clear. Matters of a subsidiary body or a working group which has been properly articulated as open-ended working group is all inclusive. Because whatever is there will still come to the Committee finally. Now we are in the 44th session, we have the opportunity of the 45th session and our recommendation is

saying, our amendment says that this Committee will bring a report to the open-ended group, will bring a report to this Committee in the 45th session, and by that time they would have reflected widely on the matter, They would have also looked at the Rules of Procedure and *Operational Guidelines* and then when it becomes the 45th session, this 45th session will be able to make a report to the General Assembly which is in two years to come. In other words, if there is no good will to discuss this thing, it is like locking it up to wait for two weeks, I mean to wait for two years until the General Assembly is convened in 2023. That means the discussion will have lose its strength and the discussion will no longer be useful.

The other matter which you should consider in terms of procedure: the first drafted amendment which came to the floor and was discussed. The only amendment which was submitted to the Secretariat was from Brazil. No other amendment was brought forward. We are surprised to see later on a well-authored amendment which was in parallel to what this Committee received on the first day of the meeting. It was completely parallel and paragraph by paragraph it tried to downplay whatever was presented in this honourable Committee which you chaired.

So, Chairman where did that come from? Is it correct to bring a parallel amendment when an amendment has already been tabled and discussed and has been referred? Is it allowed within the procedures that a late amendment comes and it begins to overcome what was already discussed? There are many amendments from the other group, Norway and the other group, that have never been shared with this team at the time of presentation and not even within the 24 hours allowed.

So, my request therefore is that we should look at the procedure. We should look at the issues on the mandate. What is the mandate of the Committee versus the mandate of the General Assembly? The Committee cannot delegate afterwards, it is only the General Assembly which can delegate work to this Committee not the reverse. But what is being proposed is that this Committee should instead delegate work afterwards to the General Assembly, which is the supreme organ and the highest organ. Is that a Delegation? I think whatever people are trying to say here, even if this matter is decided, that we should wait for the General assembly. It will stay for two years without discussion, without a reflection. It will be closed and locked away. When it comes to 2023, the General Assembly is unlikely to send the file back to the same Committee [...]

Chairperson:

You have to respect the time limit.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Let me conclude by appealing to the members, here that, we must not act outside our Rules of Procedure. We need our legal advisers to advise us in terms of procedure in the way that this Committee works, if an open-ended Committee has been recommended which is under Rule 21 of the Procedure, and is the demand to take this matter to the General Assembly within the Procedure? Chair, that is what we are trying to appeal to you, that we consider the mandate and act on it in a very good conscience. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are discussing this issue now which is important and I have listened carefully to the view in all the debates that have been going on. First of all, I want to thank Norway that has worked with us in the presidency of this working group and I want to thank all the countries that participated, delegates that participated to the discussion which is of great importance. We have said since the very beginning, and this has been said in the group by many, many Delegations from different quarters, that the importance of this issue requires that we have a thorough reflection on it.

We decided and we have come up with a couple of elements, let us say, with which we converged. The first one is that we have to discuss this issue further and that member States have to have a voice in this discussion, and we have to intervene in this discussion in a more concrete and more structured way. This is the first thing we have converged to.

The second is that the best way to move ahead is to have a working group, and we have to accept the idea internally that a working group was the way to be followed.

The third element that came as a convergent element and I am not taking and telling here that we have a consensus, but these are convergences of the members that were in this group and that are proposing, with different elements, with different proposals that the Committee is to have the final decision. The third element is that in order to assure a greater ownership of this discussion on these decisions, this working group should be open in a way that allows members or non-members of the Committee to have a voice also in this group.

We have come to this discussion and we have come to this point that we will create or we should or could create a group here in this Committee, an open-ended group in this Committee, to discuss the mandate of this group as to continue this reflection. We understand, this is the Brazilian position, that the mandate of this group should be as

simple and as clear as possible, and those sites can be discussed under our Convention. And then, if this decision could be the decision of this Committee, to decide on the merit of each site case by case.

The only problem here, in our view, is how are we going to deal with the conclusion of this group. The conclusion of this group should be presented to the next meeting of this Committee. We think it is the way to proceed. Or should it present its conclusion to a larger body? In our perception these conclusions could be presented to the Committee providing, again, and I insist on that, that it is an open-ended group. Thereby, we assure inclusion, we assure ownership to all the members of the Convention. Thank you, Mr. chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to say that we are very confused with the discussion, not only us, but many States Parties who are members of this Committee, especially the previous decision, taking that this decision was taken and still there are member States expressing their views. Therefore, I think we should have listened to these people and in order to assist us in taking that decision.

As regards the current point here, I would like to support what has been just said by my colleagues, the member States of South Africa Ethiopia, and now the Brazilian ambassador has clarified this. I think we should go and create a group in order to discuss and reach at least a consensus in order to submit to the next Committee meeting. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, Norway please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just try to clarify with some more practical information maybe. Because the conclusion from the morning's meeting was, as we have said, that we did not agree. And then we agreed within the group that we would come back to this plenary meeting with two draft decisions, two clean draft decisions.

I heard the distinguished Ambassador from South Africa explaining their draft decision and I would just like to bring to your attention, Mr. President, that from the Norwegian, Australian Hungarian and Spanish Delegations you have received, all States Parties have received, the amendment about an hour ago from the Rapporteur. We actually have submitted a clean draft decision which is also subject for discussion. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. As we have stated in our intervention at the opening of Item 8, we do believe that the reflection on the inscription of sites associated with recent conflicts is an important topic and it should be given the importance it deserves. In line with the Convention articles on the function of this Committee, the matter should be dealt with within the Committee in a more concrete and structural way.

For this reason, we align ourselves with amendments presented by South Africa and Uganda. I also support the proposal to establish an open-ended working group according to Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I listened very closely to the discussions. Obviously, it is a very difficult but very important issue. I think we should try to find common grounds. First, I think we agreed that the issues need to be discussed further. We need to continue the discussion. Second, we do agree with the establishment of a working group which should be open-ended and inclusive. Third, we believe that the working group will try to arrive at a conclusion for presentation to the World Heritage Committee. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you, China, please.

The Delegation of China:

[Interpretation from Chinese] The Chinese Delegation, first of all, would like to Thank the chair of the working group, our Norwegian colleague, for his leadership and for the efforts made. China has listened very closely to the discussion on this Item 8. We have also studied the draft amendments regarding this item. We would like to thank the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies for their work. In April 2021, there was a meeting between experts which provided a new perspective for this discussion. We would like to thank South Africa for the support in organising this meeting. We would also like to thank the drafting Committee for their diligent work carried out. And we would also like to thank their interchanges and discussions.

I think there are important points regarding this Item 8. China believes that World Heritage should promote understanding and exchanges and should also promote unity and solidarity. Heritage with negative memories is closely linked to historical memories and they are very sensitive questions and they are complicated issues. They sometimes even feature contradictions. We need to have an in-depth analysis and extensive discussions so that we can provide support for the ensuing decisions.

That is the reason why China supports the ideas of South Africa and other countries about creating a working group in order to have an in-depth and constructive discussion on this matter, so as to have a consensus as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members before we look at the different texts, I propose a technical break for 15 minutes, so that Ms. Rapporteur and the Secretariat can table the texts on the screens. Thank you.

Dear Committee members, we will continue our discussion on Item 8. Are there any other comments? Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Monsieur le Président. Tout à l'heure, probablement à cause de raisons techniques, ma caméra a été coupée ; ce n'est pas grave, il n'y a pas grand-chose à voir. Pour le micro, j'espère que ça marche. Vous savez, quand on parle de mes compatriotes, et donc de moi-même, on dit qu'ils sont très obstinés. Moi, je suis obstiné dans le sens où je tiens à expliquer une situation, autant que possible, à savoir dans ce cas la discussion que nous avons eue tout à l'heure, et que nous avons déjà eue précédemment, concernant les sujets dits « délicats ». Il ne faut pas qu'il y ait de sujets délicats ici. Il n'y a pas de sujets délicats. On peut être d'accord ou ne pas être d'accord sur quelque chose, mais la délicatesse n'est pas de mise. Me viennent à l'esprit les jeux olympiques, qui sont en train de se dérouler en ce moment, durant lesquels on mesure le temps, celui qui est le plus rapide gagne. Ici, on échange des arguments, on confronte parfois des arguments. Donc deux choses : la première est qu'il n'y a pas de sujets délicats, et la deuxième est qu'il doit toujours y avoir une discussion du Comité avant toute décision prise par le Président, s'il vous plaît. Je pense que le Conseiller juridique, je ne peux pas prendre sa place, connaît mieux cette question. Il y a l'article 28.2, il y a toutes une série de dispositions afin que la discussion que nous en train d'avoir garde sa dignité et se déroule comme prévu. Si j'ai des choses à dire, je les dis. Si je lève la main plus vite que les autres, c'est autre chose. Donc je répète : nous ne sommes pas en train de courir un cent mètres, nous discutons. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you for your comment. Now, Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to verify, we are now currently discussing Item 8, right?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, I just wanted to be sure. We have just a few comments. Of course, we agree that it is really sad that we cannot seem to find for the moment an agreement on this important issue. The amendment that was put forward by Norway and other States Parties, more or less an hour ago, is the result of Brazil's encouragement to bring the two positions together to narrow the gap a little bit. And also, a result of a proposition made by our friends from Egypt this very morning. So, our amendment is an attempt to try to meet those demands.

That being said, we do agree, of course, with our African friends that good will is important. It is in fact crucial and that is why we have listened to them and we have done our best to find the best platform on which we can broaden the discussions. That is why we have proposed the General Assembly because this will enable us to include all States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in the discussions and it will not exclude anyone.

To go back to our draft amendment, Mr. Chair, I would like to ask the Secretariat if it would be possible to put our draft amendment on the screen so that it could be part of the discussion, please. Thank you

Chairperson:

Thank you for comment. Are there any other comments? South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. I really welcome the very positive interventions by many speakers and Delegations. I am not going to speak for Brazil and Egypt on what their position is, but I listened quite clearly to what they articulated and it was 100 per cent aligned to what the African position is. I am not sure what is the status or whether the draft amendment that Norway is proposing to put is also their amendment. But on a procedural point, Chairperson, for the record, we agree that the informal working group deadlocked which means we are where we were when the discussion started. So, there is no document that should be coming from that process.

What we officially have, and we like clarification, is a draft amendment by Uganda as well as Brazil. That is what I know and what I propose should be the basis of the discussion. If there are inputs or amendments that people seek to do, it should be on the basis of what was submitted at the time when this discussion started. Regarding the informal consultation, to us it is a deadlocked, nothing came from that and we are where we were when we started. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I am really astonished from what I heard from my colleague from Norway. By diplomatic courtesy, I would kindly ask her in the future whenever she is going to mention Egypt to just be sure that we are in line and at least know before mentioning it to the plenary. Mr. Chair, my country's Delegation has been mentioned. I just want to maybe clarify things.

First, our position has been expressed a few minutes ago, we are totally aligned to the African position. Second, yes, we participated in many meetings including the meeting today in which we suggested things exactly as others suggested. I would kindly ask again, if there was a decision taken by the Committee including or accepting any of the ideas that were presented by us. These ideas, Mr. Chair, I think by diplomatic courtesy, should be also seen as a package within a whole. I am really astonished from hearing that there was an intervention saying that we are aligned to any of the draft presented other than the African one. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank all the speakers before me. Again, we want to reiterate that we need to discuss. There is now a large majority of member States at this Committee who would like to discuss the Draft Decisions submitted by Spain and South Africa and others. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, please.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. Our intention is to reach a consensus that we would join. Of course, the issue is delicate and that is what we have been hearing from these views that seem to be going further and further away from each other after listening to the Ambassador from Brazil who is trying to make us reach a consensus. What we are seeing here is that we think that we should be able to reach more of a consensus. What we are saying now is that the issue of memories is so sensitive that not only does it generate issues at transboundary level but also within the Committee when it comes to trying to reach common ground. This should make us reflect on this issue.

The ambassador of Brazil said that he put forward a position for consensus. But what we are seeing here is that there are a lot of different impacts from this issue depending on the continent and the country. I believe that we can reach this consensus. We have the capacity to do so. We would ask the ambassador of Brazil to clarify his position and to be able to see the text on the screen. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. I hope you can hear me.

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We want to echo what was expressed by our colleague from South Africa regarding the base document that will guide our decision. I think we have had extensive discussion, now it is time to look at the Draft Decision. So far, the Draft Decision that we know as to be the basis of our decision, whether we reach a compromise or not, is the one containing the amendments of South Africa and Uganda, supported by Ethiopia, Egypt and others with the addition of the Brazilian Delegation's amendments. That is the basis of our work.

We want to have clarity in terms of the legal basis. We cannot look at two documents. We had a working group, unfortunately, the working group did not succeed. But the basis of our work is the document as amended by the Delegations I mentioned. We would need, maybe, the guidance of the legal counsel, so that we can move forward and look at the Draft Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that we are so much used to discuss technicalities that we lost a little bit the perception of the forest looking at the trees. Mr. Chairman, the decision taken by, or at least not the decision taken, but where we stand at the end of the working group was that different positions were expressed and each of the two groups will present to the Secretariat an amended version. We have on the screen the amended version presented by Norway, Australia, Spain and Hungary. As I understand, there is an amendment that has been presented by the African group, 10 or 15 minutes ago. I will ask you, Mr. President, please, if the Rapporteur can enlighten us, if the text that we have in front of our screen is by any chance the merger of the two proposals that have arrived to the Secretariat. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Norway first then the Rapporteur. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving the floor to Norway again. I would like to reiterate that the basis for entering this drafting group was actually the presence of two amendments from the very outset. There was an amendment proposed from Brazil and more and there was an amendment proposed by Norway and more. We have had two documents from the very outset, I wish to make that very clear that we are not only discussing on the basis of one document that was there from the very beginning. And also, I would like to reiterate what was presented by the Chair previously that when we left each other this morning, we were encouraged explicitly to try to work our respective amendments in and to bridge the gap. And I think the Chair was fairly clear and consistent in providing argumentation for that being the case for the amendment proposed by Norway and others a couple of hours ago. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

It may as well be that we will emerge and are hopeful that we will match with an agreement, a consensus. But given the experience we have had, it is important that we must first deal with the facts. What are the effects? The effects are the Secretariat presented the Draft Decision. The Africa group with Uganda submitted a draft amendment and then followed by Brazil. In fact, the Brazilians and the Ugandan amendments are almost alike. Subsequently, Norway and others submitted theirs. This one, which is supposed to come from an informal consultation, Chair, cannot represent the outcome of informal consultation because the report we received was that the consultation was locked.

Now, from the interventions that were made here, many of the speakers who spoke agreed that a working group be established that there is need for further dialogue. We need a text to take that discussion forward. The question is which text are we using. We propose that you put the original text which is the first one that we said we have submitted and Brazil as well. Because those were the first ones which were submitted. I think if we do that and if

other colleagues wish to put theirs, they can put theirs, but let us start from the beginning because already you have put here on the screen a text that came far later. It was not there when the debate started.

The informal consultation is locked and we do not want to talk about what transpired there. I think it is important to accept that it is deadlocked. If it is deadlocked let us leave it there and we thank those who facilitated. But let us now look at the objective situation which text should be used and can the Secretariat guide us in that regard. May the Secretariat guide us in that regard to the effect so that we might agree to move forward with a consensus but it must be based on the solid facts, objective facts on the ground. Thanks.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, I give the floor to Ms. Rapporteur to make some clarification concerning the question put forward by the Committee members.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to refer to the working document that we had presenting the original Draft Decision on Item 8 and we have six different parts in the Draft Decision. The part right now shown on the screen reflects the part 1, reflection on the reform of the nomination process, and this part was amended only by the countries shown on the screen: Norway, Australia Hungary and Spain. The discussion concerning the reflections on Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts and other Negative and Divisive Memories is part 2 and we received amendments from Australia, Spain, Hungary and Norway, as well as Uganda on behalf of the African group, but it was officially submitted by the Delegation of Uganda. And, as per the support raised, on the screen we will be adding the names on the Draft Decision as well. We try to integrate both of these so that it will be easy to work with and I will try to present it as clearly as possible to make our work easy.

I hope this clarifies the questions about which amendment is shown on the screen. What is shown on the screen is two amendments that we received today.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also, thank you, Rapporteur. It is a little bit what I imagined. I have both documents in front of me and curiously enough for all of us the seventh first paragraphs are not exactly aligned. We will have some difficulties or no difficulties, but we have to discuss about the definitions that are included in other paragraphs. The Rapporteur has made work of putting together the African proposal that has arrived 15 or 20 minutes ago, and the other proposal that has been presented by Norway, Australia, Spain and Hungary. Therefore, Mr. President, if members here are in agreement, we can go paragraph by paragraph and look at it and maybe we can get to an agreement by the end of the day. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. President. I am happy that we have started discussing the draft. I will only take the floor to apologize to our distinguished delegate from Egypt. What I meant to say was that our amendment is inspired by a suggestion made by our colleague during the morning meeting. It does not represent, nor is he responsible, for the amendment, so my apologies. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I know several Committee members are asking for the floor. I wanted to know whether you agree to the proposal by our colleague from Brazil? Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to thank my colleague from Norway for this clarification. It is very good to feel that I might be of an inspiration, but I would like again to thank her for all her work. Chair, I just wanted to state again the position that was expressed by Ethiopia, South Africa and Uganda about the text. I would also like, maybe, to remind everyone here that the first decision that was submitted, if we go on the website of the World Heritage Committee on Item 8, it was submitted on the 23rd of July and it was submitted by the African group. I do not see why we are discussing some other things. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This issue has taken really long and is taking different dimensions. I think if Mr. Chair can articulate and direct the Secretariat to follow the procedure because the working group could not come up with a consensus. I think the draft amendment submitted by Uganda stands and that should be the basis for us to discuss, to go through the documents. If there are other proposals or any insertions then the other Committee members can make an input. Let us have one document that we can now look at and it would be the basis for which we are going to make any amendments. The Ugandan submission we are supporting it, please, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Mr. Chair, when we do this, we have to do things at least in an honest fashion. As was highlighted by my colleague from Egypt, the first amendment submitted was that of Uganda. The first amendment as he put it. Thereafter, other submissions could have been made but we want to see that as a basis of our discussion. It is not correct what the Rapporteur just said that they received the African proposal at the last minute. That is not true. It is even on the website. Please, put the first amendment that was submitted. We will not accept to go along with any amendments that are put forth afterwards unless we see ours reflected properly as the first amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Mr. Chairman, I think you have got a legal adviser. Let the legal advisers come on board and pronounce themselves about the conduct of business of the Committee as per Rules of Procedure, and ask how amendments are handled in order of presentation. We will want that integration. If we are trying to act outside of our Rules of Procedure, if we are acting against our Rules or Procedure, let it be known that this Committee has decided today to overthrow its own Rules of Procedure. Can we follow the Rules of Procedure? There are Rules of Procedure according to the order of arrival and other received amendments on the floor. That is very clear.

Chair, I pray that you call on your legal people. Otherwise, the way things are going it is not the right way and it is against the Rules of Procedure. We cannot bring an amendment which came much later it was not even tabled on the floor. It was never there. Now where is it coming from? And you want it to be the basis of this discussion. Is that the rule of order in terms of procedure?

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I need to repeat that the initial two amendments which are the item of discussion now were both submitted in the context of the opening of Item 8, so they are both as valid. And it is the fashion that we always discuss all amendments not just the first coming in. I struggle with seeing the argument that we are indeed breaking the *Operational Guidelines* on this matter. We discussed all amendments and both amendments were initially submitted for the opening of Item 8.

I want that to be absolutely clear. There are no amendments which have been thrown up just before this and then there was an unsuccessful, unfortunately, deliberation over four meetings to try to bridge the gap between these two amendments. And the two amendments, that were proposed immediately before this discussion now, came as a result of the brilliant proposal from the Brazilian Co-chair to try to refine the current amendments by the two sides and bring them forward in a refined form, in an attempt to bridge the gap. That was followed in our proposal. But let it be absolutely clear that there were two amendments proposed for the opening of Item 8 from the very beginning. But, please, if we need to ask the legal adviser about this we should do so. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

I think colleagues have said, Chairperson, that the Secretariat should guide us in terms of the practice of how the Committee has conducted its business. I want to put it clear, Chairperson, that we are prepared to, we are flexible, and we want to see consensus on this matter, but it must be based on the basis of fairness. Norway co-chaired the informal consultations which collapsed. Norway submitted a counter amendment to ours. They have got vested interest in this matter. and now we are expected to use a draft document by Norway which has vested interest in

this matter. And we must now start defending our position against Norway. They are the player and the referee. The playing field is not levelled. It is unfair Chairperson. What is the practice? Can the Secretariat guide us, as has been proposed by Uganda? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think, in addition to what has been said about the common practice, we are taking a long time to discuss this and then you need to see to the majority, what the majority wants. I think the majority now is calling to discuss their first amended Draft Decision and we need to look at all this issue instead of discussing something that is not in agreement. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Now, I ask the Secretariat and the legal adviser to clarify. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much. To answer the question from South Africa. The Committee over time has tried to reach consensus through the tools of drafting groups or informal working groups, etc. Now, sometimes this works and sometimes this does not work. But in this case, I just want to clarify the status of the different amendments.

On the 24th of July, we received Australia, Hungary, Norway and Spain amendment on Item 8. On the 25th of July, we received Brazil, South Africa and Uganda amendment on Item 8. On the 30th of July at 2:48 we received Uganda. On the 30th of July at 12:47 we received Australia, Hungary, Norway, and Spain. And on the 30th of July another one from Uganda which was at 1:26.

There were two amendments on the 30th of July. That is the status which I have here in front of me. What the Chairperson is looking for is that we work together on a text to reach an agreement to the extent possible. That is the idea. I know that you have different views. I can fully understand that, but the idea is to come up with a text of a decision which can stand. We are running out of time now. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

The legal adviser, you have the floor.

Legal Adviser:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, for giving me the floor. I understand that there are several drafts on the table. Clarifications were requested as to what procedure should be followed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. There are two relevant articles rules in the Rules of Procedure which could apply in the present case.

The first one is Rule 26 entitled Voting on proposals and I will read it out loud to clarify what it says. Rule 26 says: 'If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. Unless the Committee decides otherwise, the Committee will vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted'.

There is also another rule which is a rule on amendments, it is Rule 25. Rule 25.1 foresees that 'When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to proposals are moved, the Committee shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be furthest removed in substance from the original proposal.'

Therefore, the question that you may wish to ask yourselves is, whether these draft decisions are considered to be proposals or are considered to be amendments to the original decision that was put forward by the Secretariat. Taking into consideration also the fact that obviously in the Draft Decision put forward by the Secretariat, in the original decision point 6, it is blank. It is the sites with three dots. So, in this case, it is for the Committee to decide whether these are actually proposals. And if these are proposals, the Committee could discuss the proposals in the order of their submission, in accordance with Rule 26. it could also decide otherwise if these are amendments, but then again, the question is amendments to what. Given that paragraph 6 of the original Draft Decision is blank, it would be the order you would first start with the amendment which is furthest removed. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you for the clarification. Uganda, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Mr. Chairman, based on the legal advice, these were not proposals but amendments. That means Rule 25 applies not 26 because these are not proposals but amendments. And the first amendment which was moved, and the legal adviser did advise they were moved, the first amendment which was used, namely tabled, before the Committee, was the amendment by Uganda, South Africa, and later Brazil improved it. Even during the plenary discussion, the members who took the floor kept referring to it. Like the open-ended arrangement which Brazil added. Many people, if you get your recording, talked about it before the thing was referred back.

Therefore, Rule 25 applies and these were amendments to the original Draft Decision and so it was moved by Uganda. And that is the one which the members have said that we should go with. What we are seeing before us in the screen was not moved. Chair, I rest my case and submit.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that the discussion has moved into very varied directions. We are not getting out of this point if no decision is being taken. I think this is an important issue. I have heard everybody saying that is an important issue. I have heard everybody or almost everybody saying that they are prepared to negotiate this issue in order to reach a decision and to reach a point.

For us, Mr. President, this is a very important issue and we believe that member States, and we are here as member States, have to have a voice in this issue, and not only the advisory board that has already voiced their decision or their position on this particular issue. Therefore, Mr. President, I ask my colleagues let us start negotiating the text. Put any text on the screen and let us go paragraph by paragraph and try to get paragraphs that we can agree on. Let us negotiate, let us come here and do what we are asked to do which is expressing our views on the issue and not if this is a proposal. This is a decision not a proposal. Let us go to the text. Choose one, the one that you want, Mr. President, the one that the group wants, and let us start negotiating paragraph by paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. We would just like to support the statements that our Brazilian colleague made. We think that there is a feeling in the room that wants to move through this issue that we have been working hard to get there and we think that there is a way forward. We look very much to supporting that consensus and we want to support Brazil's statement that we put the original text on the screen and then we all work together to work our way through it.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Dear Committee members, I have a proposal. In fact, we have two options here how to solve this problem. One is the proposal by Brazil to put the two draft amendments paragraph by paragraph. You see, just from what we hear from the discussions of Committee members, we can feel that now there are still diverging views at this stage concerning Item 8. We, at the same time, see the flexibility from both sides and also, we can see most of the members' views that there is also a growing consensus.

The second proposal is: can we take the amendment submitted by South Africa and Brazil as the basis for discussion, so we can move maybe more easily? Two proposals, I would like to listen to the Committee members. Let you decide, which one is better, more practical. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. We think the practical option is to support the amendment put forward by South Africa and to move on that basis.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

I would be kindly just asking for a clarification, Chair, and thank you for giving us the floor again. What was being done by the secretariat was actually an attempt to include — if we can move to the section that we are actually discussing on the Sites of Memory issues on the screen — and try to integrate both the proposals in the same screen. I think I saw that before. Because then, we could see both at the same time. That would be a suggestion. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

No, we are for just looking at the amendments put forward by South Africa. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think, again, I want to repeat what we said before. Now, we see only one country supporting the second option which is presented by Norway, it is Norway themselves, but the majority if not all support the decision that you submitted. It means the draft submitted by South Africa and others. Thank you. We need to start moving.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues in order to be practical, to be efficient, I mentioned the second proposal there are two proposals. Can we go that we take the amendment submitted by South Africa and Brazil as a basis then Norway, Australia, Spain and Hungary if you put your text into South Africa's proposal to have a merged text. Maybe this is a more efficient way. I do not know. Norway, Australia, Spain, Hungary do you accept my proposal? Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Thank you, Chair, and thank you for this very good and interesting debate. I would like to support your recent proposal to go to discuss the South African draft amendment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Confirming that we would like to support your proposal to go. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. So, Norway, Australia, Spain, Hungary can you accept my proposal to go this way? Uganda, please.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, just to remind that the amendment being referred to should include Uganda as well.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. You just requested us again to reconfirm. I just want to reconfirm that Australia does support your proposal, Chair, to use the Uganda, Brazil and South Africa text on the screen for us to talk with. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay, thank you. Rapporteur, please, if there is no objection, we will go this way. Take the amendment submitted by South Africa and Brazil as the basis for discussion. Ms. Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have, of course, the submitted amendment by Uganda, South Africa and Brazil and our team is right now working on bringing it up and we will be ready to show in a few minutes, I think.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, I suggest we have a five-minute technical break to give time for the Rapporteur to table the text.

Dear Committee members, let us proceed. The Rapporteur has prepared the text. Now, let us approve the text paragraph by paragraph. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The text is shown on the screen. I will go paragraph by paragraph. Paragraph 1: 'Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/8'.

Chairperson:

It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 2: 'Recalling Decisions 35 COM 9A, 40 COM 11, 42 COM 5A, 42 COM 8, 42 COM 8B.24, 43 COM 8 and 43 COM 12 adopted at its 35th (UNESCO Headquarters, 2011), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO Headquarters, 2016), 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively, as well as Resolutions 18 GA 8 and 22 GA 9 adopted by the General Assembly at its 18th (UNESCO, 2011) and 22nd (UNESCO, 2019) sessions respectively'.

Chairperson:

Okay. It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Reflections on Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts and other Negative and Divisive Memories: paragraph 3: 'Expresses its appreciation for the work of experts from all regions that participated in the Meeting in Paris, to the experts that have prepared the independent study, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre for their work on the reflection on sites associated with recent conflicts'. The rest of this paragraph is proposed for deletion.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay. It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 4: 'Takes note that some properties associated with memories of recent conflicts have been previously inscribed on the World Heritage List on an exceptional basis and also takes note of the outcomes of the detailed reflection process in which some experts considered that sites associated with recent conflicts do not relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines.'

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 5: 'Takes note of the meeting of the African experts and the inter-ministerial meeting hosted by South Africa 6-9 April 2021, which reviewed the reports and recommendations of the experts meeting of the sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories (Paris 4-6 December 2019), the ICOMOS updated paper on sites associated with memories of recent conflicts and the World Heritage Convention (ICOMOS 2020) and the study on sites associated with recent conflicts and other negative and divisive memories (Beazley and Cameron 2020) concluded that sites associated with memories of recent conflicts do relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay. It is approved. Go on.

Rapporteur:

We have to renumber the paragraphs in here.

Chairperson:

Wait for a moment. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I am sorry to take the floor, we just wanted to understand a point of clarification as to how the conversation ended before the technical break. The amendment that was put forward after the drafting group with

the joint sponsors of Norway, Hungary, Spain and Australia, we understood that would be put on the screen. Is that not how that finished? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Just now we decided that we take the amendment proposed by South Africa and Uganda as a basis of our discussion. Then your text, the text by Australia, Norway, Spain and Hungary, you can put some of the contents into this text. Is it clear? You can put forward proposals, revisions, modifications when we approve the text. Is it clear Australia?

The Delegation of Australia:

Yes. Thank you, Chair. That clarifies that. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 6: 'Further takes note of the experts' suggestion that sites associated with memories of recent conflict which may not demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value could be considered by other international fora'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is agreed. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 7: 'Acknowledging the persistent divergent views among experts, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre regarding how sites associated with memories of recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines'.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is approved. Sorry, Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

We would just like to ask a little bit of clarification on that because I think the divergence among the States Parties or the Committee members could possibly be reflected in that paragraph. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Any specific point you wanted to have the clarification on?

The Delegation of Norway:

Well, if we could add 'Acknowledging the persistent divergent views among States Parties' before 'experts, the Advisory Bodies, etc.'.

Chairperson:

South Africa, please, can you make some clarification?

The Delegation of South Africa:

We wanted an acknowledgement that there are diverging views among experts, because we wanted to confine this Draft Decision to the mandate that was given which mandate was for the experts to be convened and we said that '*divergent views*'. But if you wish to say among State Parties, look, the jury will be out. We will discuss this during the meeting. We have not tested it except what we have had people say. We are not hard and fuss on this one.

Chairperson:

Norway, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Norway:

Yes. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. It is approved.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 8: 'Considering that it pertains to the States Parties by means of the statutory bodies of the Convention, to express themselves on the definition of possible eligibility criteria for certain typologies of sites, such as sites associated with memories of recent conflicts'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Bahrain, please.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Chair. We just wanted a clarification perhaps, as to when this matter, this important matter, would be deliberated by member States. I think we all agree that further discussions need to be in place between member States and all stakeholders including the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

In the previous amendment proposed by the drafting group, there was a reference for this being discussed at the General Assembly. I am not sure if that reference would be reflected in this decision. I think it would be useful for all member States in the General Assembly to have the opportunity to voice their opinion on this matter. Perhaps a clarification from the members of the Committee drafting this decision to clarify whether that will be included or not within this Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

There is a paragraph still coming on that specific issue. I propose we discuss that when we reach that paragraph.

Chairperson:

Okay. Bahrain, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Yes, Chair, thanks for the clarification.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. If I may consider an amendment to paragraph 8 as we are discussing. And just include some words such as 'Sites that may be considered' so after 'Certain typologies of sites', 'such as sites that may be considered sites associated with memories of recent conflict'.

Chairperson:

Okay. Is there any objection to this revision? It is approved. Just wait for a moment. Ms. Rapporteur go ahead.

Rapporteur:

A new paragraph 9: 'Decides to establish an ad-hoc open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention in order to broaden the scope of the reflections on sites of memories of recent conflicts accommodating other views not currently reflected in the existing report.'

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, and apologies for taking the floor again. But I may need your advice Rapporteur on this. I would like to be able to insert a paragraph at paragraph 9 which would be a new paragraph to acknowledge that the question of whether and how sites associated with recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the Convention

have not yet been resolved and require further consideration. I may need some clarification as to whether this is already mentioned in an aforementioned paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please, you can make a clarification on this?

The Delegation of South Africa:

I think that will be the core, what the ad hoc working group is going to deal with. I am not sure if Australia feels strongly to put that. I think it has been dealt with in the past. I am not sure. I think it is just because we would want to prefer a simple minor Draft Decision than to have too many paragraphs that are there. We do not think that it will be possible. We want to request that we do away with that paragraph because we have already acknowledged before that there are divergent views in the previous paragraph. I think it is paragraph number, Rapporteur help us, assist us, there is a paragraph that acknowledges that there are still divergent views on this matter. It is the paragraph before, 9.

Chairperson:

Australia, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Australia:

I believe we are actually in agreement because my proposal was to acknowledge that the question remains to create the subject and then to request that there be an open-ended working group. Merely as a matter of framing, so that it was clear for the mandate, because otherwise it would end up in potentially quite a long paragraph. I am actually agreeing with the sentiment that the open-ended working group which will follow has that as the mandate. if I make myself clear there. Thank you.

Chairperson:

South Africa, you have the floor to give some clarification with the Australian colleagues.

The Delegation of South Africa:

There is paragraph 7 which talk to the same issue.

Chairperson:

Australia, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. If I may have a moment to read the paragraph, and please, for my colleagues to have a moment. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Ethiopia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. I think paragraph 7 captures quickly what Australia is trying to capture. It will be a repetition to have another paragraph here and its placing also may not be correct. Because, first, we acknowledge the origin and we establish the ad hoc open-ended working group as stated in paragraph 9. So, paragraph 10 does not add anything. It is the same thing as paragraph 7. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Australia, is it okay with you?

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I think it may be fine, but I will refer to my colleague from Norway as they are also co-signatory.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Chair. We have to admit we have a bit of confusion as how we are working on this draft and with the possibility to add from the other drafts. We think the comment by Australia warrants some further considerations, as it specifies further, I think, some of the crucial issues that we have been discussing on this very complex, very difficult and I have to say painful matter. I think if Australia could elaborate a little further on the thinking. I have to acknowledge the challenges that we are struggling with here. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have seen this proposal that has been just made by Australia. This is in fact, and maybe a colleague from South Africa can help us here, properly it will be I think that the mandate of the working group is to define if those sites may be considered or may be under the purview of the Convention. And it will be to the Committee after that to discuss case by case the pertinence of each of the sites presented.

I wonder if South Africa and other colleagues may want to retain this idea, if we can blend it maybe in paragraph 7. Somehow, I do not have the text here but we can think about that if we can move to the retention. On our part, we are totally flexible because we understand that this is what in fact we are going to discuss in the working group. But, anyway, if it is a need to see it reflected in the text, we are totally flexible if yes or not. Maybe, we can try to blend it in paragraph 7 if this is possible. Thank you, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, is it acceptable to you?

The Delegation of South Africa:

The thing is that you have already passed paragraph 7.1, and I have also noted the flexibility on the part of the Australian colleague which is welcomed, as well as Norway. This is what the working group will have to deal with and there is an understanding and I think n° 7 captures that. We propose that because, otherwise, we will have two paragraphs at different places which talk to the same issue. We propose that they are flexible. We plead with them that perhaps we do not take it because it is accommodated already in 7. We are not disputing that is what the Committee should deal with that is the core.

Chairperson:

Okay. Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We take the floor to support the proposal by Australia. We also have the flexibility. Seeing that we have already gone past point 7, perhaps, we could act so that to include this in paragraph 7. In the spirit of flexibility, we agree with Norway and Australia. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to keep paragraph 10, thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, dear colleagues, we are running out of time. Ethiopia.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

I want to understand what they see, the countries that proposed paragraph 10, Australia, Norway, Spain and Hungary. What they see that is different than in paragraph 7. Actually, paragraph 7 is stronger because it mentions the divergent views among States Parties among Advisory Bodies, experts, etc. The whole purpose of the two paragraphs is to say there are divergent views with sites of memories of recent conflict related to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. That is all, it is the same idea, unless there is something I am missing. It is the same idea basically. If we were having difficulties with the idea, I would understand. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Can we merge the two paragraphs together? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I have hopefully a set of words which I hope will capture both sentiments here if you give me the liberty of reading it out for consideration. Rather than having the addition as we have just talked about, if when talking about the open-ended working group we say, 'Request the Committee to establish a geographically and gender balanced open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention with the mandate of advising on whether and how sites associated with recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention and requests this group provide a progress report to the 45th session of the Committee'. I would be pleased to read that out again if that is helpful.

Chairperson:

South Africa, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Because this idea comes from Australia, I am going to propose to use the best part of their wording. What is being proposed now I think confuses even further. Let us keep it simple. Let us go back to what you are saying and I am saying this with great reluctance because I see other colleagues are perhaps reluctant.

Where we are talking about the establishment of an open-ended working group paragraph 9: 'Decides to establish an open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention, in order to broaden the scope of the reflections on sites of memories of recent conflicts accommodating other views not currently reflected in the existing report and to consider whether' — and then we can say — 'how sites associated with conflicts' and you take the whole paragraph of Norway and Australia.

It is the exact repetition of what we said in 8 which is stronger even than this one. I have used largely the wording of Australia merging it in the establishment of the working group to show flexibility. Hopefully we can move forward because on the question of when the Committee should report there is still a paragraph that is still coming if we follow the draft here. Let us follow the draft because there is a paragraph that talks to that.

Chairperson:

Australia, is it okay for you?

The Delegation of Australia:

With your indulgence, could I have the Rapporteur read out on the floor what is proposed? It is just a little difficult to read from our screen. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, please, read out.

Rapporteur:

Just to make it clear, we still did not adopt paragraph 9. Now we are going to find a place for paragraph 10. Could you just show this: 'Decides to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention, in order to broaden the scope of the reflections on sites of memories of recent conflicts, accommodating other views not currently reflected in the existing report and to consider whether or how the sites associated with recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention.'

Chairperson:

Is it okay with you Australia?

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. Just to avoid any confusion that I may have inadvertently caused. What I am actually proposing is the paragraph that is currently paragraph 11 can actually be replacing the current paragraph at current paragraph 9. So, this paragraph is about creating the open-ended working group.

Chairperson:

You want to use the paragraph 11 to replace paragraph 9, right?

The Delegation of Australia:

Yes, which is bringing together the ideas. Thank you.

Chairperson:

South Africa.

The Delegation of South Africa:

No, Chair. I see other Delegations from the continent wishes to take the floor. I defer to them.

Chairperson:

Okay. Russia please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, we suggest the proposal of South Africa and we suggest deleting the words 'gender balanced'. Gender equality is a very important principle but here this mention is irrelevant. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you. We cannot live with the amendments as proposed by Australia. The initial proposal was about acknowledging the divergent views. I am assuming that the initial proposal is gone because it has already been taken care of at paragraph 7. Now, they are coming up with another proposal which talks about the open-ended group and about gender balanced which we are not against and geographical balanced we are not against either. But, however, we are against the facts, and this is very important because it is in the flow of the decision. If you look at the previous paragraphs that other views, namely African views, were not taken on board, African expert views, as it was said by the ministers. That is what we want here to also be included and it is not covered by the notion of gender balanced and geographical balanced. There are conceptually very different things per se. We prefer the initial wording which is clear that all experts' views were not taken on board, they now have to be taken on board in reflection. That is all. Thank you,

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. I just support what Ethiopia has just said and I would kindly like ask you to indicate to us what are the paragraphs that have been already adopted and what we still did not adopt. I am sorry but we are a bit confused from the current situation. And also, in the case of paragraph 9 regarding the open-ended working group. The main idea, Chair, was to broaden it to the next one possible. Unless the Committee agrees to something else. But when we say geographically, I cannot see where how come it is geographically balanced and at the same time open-ended. I would prefer to make it open-ended, so that all the countries who are interested can join. And if we have one region where we have more countries joining than others then we do not put some limits on them. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will repeat that Brazil is totally flexible in this case. I thought South Africa came up with a very good proposal for paragraph 9 that we can support, and of course, I think that it is a perfect paragraph because it defined very clearly the mandate so we are not going to have problems in the future.

And I want to support strongly what my colleague from Egypt just said is that we are talking here about an open-ended working group which means everybody will be there. Therefore, naturally it could be geographically balanced and gender balanced. Because it is an open-ended group, there is no way to define an open-ended group, it is everybody. I think everybody will be there, therefore it will be diverse, all people will be present.

Again, we are very flexible, whatever the decision of the group is, we can work along, provided we have a working group to look at this issue and provided this working group is an open-ended working group. But I thought that the proposal by South Africa was a very elegant one so we can go along with it also. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, now we have passed paragraph 1 through to 8. We are discussing paragraph 9. Dear colleagues, I am sorry to interrupt the debate, but I have to remind you that we have to proceed with item 16 today due to the availability of the interpreters. I suggest that we resume our discussion on the amendment of the draft decision tomorrow if there are no objections because there will be no Russian interpreters. We proceed with item 16 first, then we come back either tomorrow or after a while. Is it okay?

The Delegation of Uganda:

Why don't we finish n° 9 which we have already discussed?

Chairperson:

Because, just now, I stressed that there will be no Russian language interpreters. We shall proceed this way because it will be very quick for Item 16. Then we come back to this one. Okay? Is there any objection? Okay. Let us just stop here then we proceed with Item 16.

Dear colleagues, now we have to examine Item 16 which concerns the election of the new Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee and also to proceed with the election of the Vice-Chairpersons and the Rapporteur of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2022. You will remember that at its 15th extraordinary session, in March 2021, the Committee accepted the generous invitation of the Russian federation and decided that the 45th session would take place in Kazan in 2022. Let me congratulate once more the Russian Federation. I understand that the Delegation of China wishes to propose a candidate as the Chairperson of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I give the floor to the Delegation of China.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. His excellency, Mr. Alexander Kuznetsov, was appointed the Permanent Delegate of the Russian Federation to UNESCO by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation on the 19th of September 2016. His excellency has a PhD degree in history, he speaks English, French and Spanish. He has a rank of ambassador post from appointment by Russia. His excellency began his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1974. He occupied various development positions in embassies of Russia in Argentina, Spain, the USA and France.

Professionally from 2012 to 2016, His Excellency served as the Director of the Department of History and Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the board of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the board of the Federal Archives Agency of Russia from 2000 to 2005. From 2012 to 2016 he served as a professor at the Moscow State Linguistic University and at the Russian State University for Humanities.

My Delegation fully believed that his excellency, Mr. Alexander Kuznetsov, with his rich experiences and competence, will successfully fulfil the responsibility of the Chair of the World Heritage Committee for the 45th session. This is our proposal. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. I understand that this proposal is accepted unanimously. The newly elected Chairperson of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee is His Excellency, Mr. Alexander Kuznetsov. Let me congratulate you, Excellency, Mr. Kuznetsov, for this election and let me express my best wishes for his task ahead. You have the floor, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, first I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the trust that you and our colleagues Committee members have placed in me by electing me as chairman of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I would also like to thank the government of China for the great effort that you have made to ensure the success of the 44th session in these complicated circumstances due to the pandemic. My deepest sympathy goes to the people of China affected by the flood in Henan Province.

The Russian Federation is committed to the core values and principles of the Convention. Our rich history and unique geographic position offer a large variety of cultural and natural heritage. States programmes are developed to study restore and preserve this heritage for future generations. In 2012, the World Heritage Committee held its session in Saint Petersburg. Ten years later, we are looking forward to meeting you in Kazan and we will be pleased to present the venue of the next Committee session.

Dear colleagues, let me assure you that the government of the Russian Federation and the authorities of the republic of Tatarstan will make all necessary efforts to organise the next session in the best possible way. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Thank you for your sympathy and solidarity towards the people in Henan stricken by the flood. Once again congratulations. Before giving the floor back to the State party of the Russian Federation for the presentation of the venue of our next session, we will proceed to elect the Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee and the Rapporteur.

Dear Committee members, this year, we are in an unprecedented situation as all Vice-Chairpersons will terminate their mandate to the Committee in November 2021. For some regions all current standing Committee members will also terminate their mandate in November. Therefore, we will proceed now with the election of some new Bureau members and we will also need to prolong the mandate of some others until the General Assembly.

An extraordinary session of the Committee will need to be convened next November immediately after the General Assembly to elect the remaining members. Are you in agreement with this proposal? I see no objection. Thank you. Group 1 Europe and North America, I would now like to know whether a Delegation would like to present a candidate in the presentation of the Europe and North America Region group 1. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Norway would like to propose that Spain continues as a Vice-Chairperson. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Yes, it is so decided [gave!]. Thank you, congratulations Spain.

Group 3 Latin America and the Caribbean. I would now like to know whether a Delegation would like to present a candidate in representation of the Latin America and the Caribbean region group 3. Guatemala, please.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Delegation of Guatemala would like to propose the Delegation of St Kitts and Nevis. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Okay it is so decided [gave!]. Thank you, congratulations St Kitts and Nevis.

Group 4 Asia Pacific, I would now like to know whether a Delegation would like to present a candidate in representation of the Asia Pacific Region group 4. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. After consultation my Delegation would like to propose Thailand to serve as the Vice-Chair from the region. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Okay, it is so decided [gave!]. Thank you. Congratulations Thailand.

Group 5a, the Africa Region. I understand that the Delegation of the Delegation of Uganda would like to present a candidate in representation of the Africa region. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

On behalf of the Africa State members of the World Heritage Committee and in the capacity of outgoing Vice-Chairperson representing electoral group 5a, I have the honour to report that the group unanimously agreed to nominate the Republic of South Africa as Vice-Chairperson representing electoral group 5a on the Bureau of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Yes, it is so decided [gave!]. Thank you, congratulations South Africa.

Group 5b, the Arab States Region. I understand that the Delegation of Bahrain would like to present a candidate representative of the Arab States Region. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to nominate Saudi Arabia as Vice-Chair for the next session. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Yes, it is so decided ^[gave]. Thank you. Congratulations Saudi Arabia.

We now have to elect the rapporteur of the 45th session of the Committee. As you know, my dear colleagues, the election of a number of new Committee members will take place during the 23rd General Assembly of States Parties in November 2021. I would therefore suggest that we wait until that time to elect the new Rapporteur. If there is no objection, we therefore prolong the mandate of our current Rapporteur, Ms. Hasaltun Wosinski, until the end of the 23rd General Assembly of States Parties in November 2021. Shall I take it that the Committee agrees with this proposal? Okay it is so decided ^[gave]. Congratulations.

As I indicated early on, I now have the pleasure to ask the Delegation of the Russian Federation to take the floor regarding the venue of our next session.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, dear colleagues, we propose to hold the next 45th session of the Committee in Kazan from June 19 to 30, 2022, with a pause on June 25th with no plenary. Now I am pleased to present you a short video about the venue please start the video ^[video]. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Let me congratulate you warmly again and we are all really looking forward to coming to your country next year.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Dear colleagues, I would like to pass the floor to Mr. Rustam Minnikhanov, President of the republic of Tatarstan and Mr. Mintimer Shaimiev, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and State councillor of the Republic of Tatarstan who will join us from Kazan. The floor is yours.

Mr. Rustam Minnikhanov, President of the republic of Tatarstan:

^[Interpretation from Russian] Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee. Let me, first of all, thank the members of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO for coming to this unanimous decision to hold the 45th session in Russia in Tatarstan in this 1,000-year-old city of Kazan.

Holding the 2022 session, that is to say the golden jubilee anniversary in Kazan, is a great honour and a great responsibility. The Chairmanship of the Committee is something that we take over from the ancient City of Fuzhou, and we know that it is an industrial city, scientific centre and world famous. Tatarstan has great potential for holding a global event of such nature. We are the heart and crossroads of religions and cultures. We have many centuries of religious and cultural concord. We are proud of our achievements in restoring Muslim and Orthodox monuments and holy sites. Can I also particularly thank the Director General of UNESCO, who visited the City of Kazan during her trip to Russia in 2019.

To make this meeting a success, we will establish all the right conditions, ensure the safety of all, and we can say that the welcoming land of Tatarstan with this unique nature, exceptional historical and architectural monuments and very rich cultural heritage and its unique traditions, will be very pleased to welcome all the participants and guests. I am convinced that the 45th session, this golden jubilee meeting of the World Heritage Convention will give us an opportunity to see further cooperation between governments for the success of the conservation of heritage. Welcome to Russia, welcome to Kazan.

Mr. Mintimer Shaimiev, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and State Councillor of the Republic of Tatarstan:

^[Interpretation from Russian] Ladies and Gentlemen, participants, the Republic of Tatarstan has a well-established history of cooperation with UNESCO. We are grateful to the World Heritage Centre and to ICOMOS and ICCROM for their consultative missions and more specifically for the help and support that they afforded us leading to the listing of Tartan sites on the World heritage List, namely the Kazan Kremlin, the ancient Bolgar and the town-island of Sviyazhsk.

Given the purpose of the 1972 Convention, namely preserving heritage for future generations, we intend to organise during the 45th session, a number of educational meetings for young people to get them used to what must be done to preserve World Heritage. As concerns the experts themselves, those who manage World Heritage sites, we will have a similar forum organised in the capital of Tatarstan.

As an Ambassador of goodwill for intercultural dialogue at UNESCO, I can propose that the 45th session of the Committee should be held under the following motto: 'Intercultural Dialogue is an imperative to protect World Heritage'. I am convinced that our forum will be a great event and that it will strengthen intergovernmental ties in respect to the conservation of historical and cultural properties. See you in Kazan.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much and let me congratulate you warmly again. We are all really looking forward to coming to your country next year. Dear colleagues I now declare item 16 closed ^[gavel].

Dear colleagues we want to come back to Item 8, but I checked there is no interpretation now. With the heavy agenda and the very hard work carried out today, I suggest we close today's meeting and we stop here. We can resume our discussion on the rest of the items of the agenda tomorrow. I also encourage you to take the overnight to have deep thoughts and consultations on Item 8 which is still open.

Thank you very much for your cooperation we meet tomorrow at 11:00 am Paris time. Before we conclude the meeting today, I give the floor to the Secretariat to see if there are general announcements to make. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As you know, now, directly after the session, we have 'Looking into the Future' highlights of the regional Action Plan for Africa which is an online event and I think we have the information. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Let us thank again all the interpreters for their prolonged and high-quality work. Dear colleagues, thank you and have a good rest. See you tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 04:22:03 pm.

FOURTEENTH DAY – Saturday 31 July 2021
FOURTEENTH MEETING
11.00 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.
Chairperson: H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun (China)

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, dear delegates, dear friends, welcome to our last plenary meeting. I hope you had a very good rest and also some more reflection and consultation on Item 8 that was not concluded yesterday. It is the only major Item left before we move on to finalise our work. As you have realised it has not been an easy task. In front of the last challenge and on the very beginning of the last day of our session, I would like to recall the responsibility, priority and the unity that I highlighted on the outset of the session.

Together, we have come through all the difficulties and accomplished many achievements. Now, for the last 100 metres of our collective journey I have confidence that we can make it. No matter whether it is with a four-wheel car or a train, what matters is the outcome. It is the decision, the consensus-based decision.

With no delay, let us resume our examination of the Draft Decision 44 COM 8. Let us focus on decision-making of the last few paragraphs, let us try our best to accommodate the concerns and the needs of each other to make a compromise and demonstrate flexibility. Once again, I stress the fact that we do not have much time for this session. Therefore, I call upon all of you to make concise, focused and decision relevant interventions. I call upon your full support to forge consensus. Thank you very much for your collaboration and efforts. Now, I give the floor to the Rapporteur, please.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yesterday, we adopted the first eight paragraphs of Decision 44 COM 8, Mr. Chair, so we continue from paragraph 9 today.

Chairperson:

Yes.

Rapporteur:

I will read paragraph 9 as it stands right now: 'Decides to establish an ad-hoc open-ended working group of States Parties to the Convention, in order to broaden the scope of the reflections on sites of memories of recent conflicts, accommodating other views not currently reflected in the existing report, and to consider whether or how the sites associated with recent conflicts relate to the purpose and scope of the World Heritage Convention'. Then we had a proposal from Australia to replace this paragraph, but then it was proposed for deletion by Ethiopia and Egypt. This is where we stand, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Dear Committee members, have you got any comment? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the Rapporteur for presenting this. Just to acknowledge that we support the removal of the text below as proposed by Ethiopia and Egypt because that is now captured in paragraph 9 above. Just recognising that it is already captured, but could we just suggest a minor word changes to the paragraph above? That is simply, we have there an 'ad-hoc open-ended working group' I think it just needs to be an 'open-ended Working Group of States Parties'. Perhaps there is just a confusion there of the two types of groups. And then on the second last line the correct language from the report was to consider 'whether and how' not 'whether or how the sites associated with the recent conflicts relate to the purpose of the Convention'. Just for accuracy. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Do you agree with this change, this revision? First, to delete the second paragraph then for the first paragraph a minor modification. Are there any objections? I see none. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 10: 'Requests this open-ended working group of States Parties to incorporate the outcomes of all the reflections in their final report, to be presented for consideration by the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee'.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 11: 'Finally calls [...]

Chairperson:

Just wait for a moment. Australia please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, and thank you for allowing me to take the floor for one last time. During discussions overnight and cognisant of the fact that there were differences of views about the role of the General Assembly in the Committee, we have attempted to craft a new paragraph 12 which we think might help bring parties together and, perhaps, maybe we could repeat this or speak to this.

The purpose of the paragraph is to recognise that we do not want to slow down this process. Recognise that many Committee members want to see this move quickly and to be a responsibility of the Committee, but that some Committee members including Australia wanted to see a role for the General Assembly. So, we have tried to craft a paragraph which we would like to put before the Committee, but we will certainly be happy to hear views on whether this actually hits the mark.

I will read the text from Australia, Norway Hungary, and Spain: 'Suggests the World Heritage Centre include an item on the agenda of the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to reflect on sites associated with recent conflicts and create uniform modalities or regional expert consultations in each electoral group; and further suggests the reports from these consultations together with the report of the 45th session of the Committee be considered at the General Assembly of States Parties'.

And in doing this, what we have hoped to ensure is that it does not slow down the progress of the Committee consideration of this work, nor remove the mandate of the Committee to the 45th session of the Committee to consider the outcomes of these regional consultations. But it also provides for an opportunity to increase the participation on the reflection across all of the States Parties. We would need to put within inverted commas the words 'sites associated with recent conflicts'. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Are there any comments? Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Chair, thank you, and good morning to all. Again, we fail to understand what is trying to get passed here. The World Heritage Centre suggesting to the Assembly. The Assembly has its own agenda it can decide whatever it wants. We are not at the Assembly; we are at the Committee. The Committee is deciding to establish an open-ended working group which includes everybody. That is what the word open means: open to everybody. Nobody is being excluded. We fail to understand the purpose of this amendment and, Chair, we do not support it. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you so much for the input. As my colleague and brother from Ethiopia has said, we do not think that this process as proposed by Australia, this paragraph, proposed paragraph 11, is going to assist us to take forward. We think the previous paragraph has dealt with this matter and let us not create parallel processes. It is going to muddy the waters. I think it is better to confine this within the World Heritage Committee. As the Ambassador said, we have an open-ended working group that would allow for participation of all States Parties in the process. And so, we would propose that paragraph, please, be deleted. Thanks.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair, and good morning to all. I would also like to request the deletion of this paragraph. Chair, this paragraph only slows down the process it does not provide any added value. The real added value has been already provided in previous paragraphs and we do not see any merit in having this neither having also something which is about the uniform modalities which would only lead to further delaying the process. This is where it was presented. The paragraph originally has the intention of not delaying it. So, please, Chair, I would like to see this paragraph totally removed. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are totally flexible in this regard. We think that we have a working group that will reflect on this issue. The working group has a very clear mandate, as has been suggested also by the inclusion of some amendments by South Africa that we recognise as very important in paragraph 9. We are not against. I think that this idea of discussing the issue in the General Assembly will not necessarily delay the process. On the contrary, I think it could enrich the process. I cannot see here any difficulties, but we are totally open. I think that we can have this paragraph or not.

I will concur with my dear colleague from Ethiopia and exclude the idea of the World Heritage Centre includes the item in the agenda. I think that we just have a quick fix here which is suggesting the inclusion on the agenda of the 23rd session. This item will allow us to discuss two important issues. One of them is to enrich the discussion without necessarily moving ahead, not necessarily delaying the process, but it will also allow us to discuss the issue of modalities, of bringing into the advisory board the reflection of the regional studies and specialists and experts.

I think this sentence creates the idea of creating a uniform modality. is something to be discussed. I understand that, but it brings to the discussion the idea that we have to take on board the reflection made by the local and the regional expert groups. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. I know there are several Committee members requesting for the floor. As to the proposal by our colleague from Brazil, what do you think of it? Our colleague from Brazil had some idea and proposal from both sides. Do you think it is acceptable? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Are you giving me the floor?

Chairperson:

Yes.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much, Chair. I failed to understand the purpose of this paragraph to be inserted here. Therefore, I would like to support the previous ideas from Egypt, Ethiopia, South Africa. I think we should delete this paragraph and we remain with the previous paragraph that we just read before. I think this issue has been discussed yesterday and we are over it and I do not know why we are opening this issue again to take this to the General Assembly. I think we should stick to what we agreed yesterday. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. Is it okay now, no echo?

Chairperson:

Yes, it is okay. You can go.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much. Norway strongly believes in multilateralism. We are trying to find a process in order to discuss and describe this very important issue in the most inclusive and transparent manner which is to include all States Parties in the working group and have a decision in the General Assembly where all 194 States Parties can decide

on this together. We do not have two sides. We are in this together. So, we would like to keep this paragraph. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are also flexible on this point. But one thing I wanted to stress is the regional aspect of the problem which is very important for us. Because we believe that it is difficult to imagine some principles equally applicable to all regions. In different regions the history is different and the conflicts also different. What is fair and possible for one region could be very difficult for another region. That is why I believe that this regional aspect should be reflected in our Decision. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. The more we listen to the arguments put forward, the more we are against this paragraph and the more we feel it is there to basically hamper the process. I share what my colleague from Russia said, but the way it is formulated here, it does not take into account the regional differences, it actually talks about uniform modalities. The regional aspect, individual specificities can be addressed through an open group, open-ended group where all 190 plus countries can participate. That is the purpose of an open group. We do not need to have a parallel process.

Secondly, Chair, in all cases the General Assembly is informed through the report of the Committee. There will be a report of the Committee to the General Assembly. The activities of that open-ended group will be submitted to the General Assembly anyway, unless we are here trying to hamper a process from moving forward. Putting in place such obstacles is really not correct for us. If there were solid arguments for inclusion, for making the process fair, for making sure, as my colleague from Russia said, regional specificities are taken on board, I would understand. But the objective here itself is not served. An open-ended group is inclusive, everybody will participate. There will be a report of the Committee to the General Assembly. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Now, South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Just to add on what my colleagues have said. The colleague from Ethiopia in particular said that paragraph 10 raised hopes for us that we were arriving at a consensus. We have agreed on a process in paragraph 10. Why repeat another processing level? I think we would want to discourage what we suspect and fear is filibustering which is not helpful.

I think the manner in which decision-making is processed in the form of an open-ended working group that would incorporate all 194 States Parties, but that would be in the context of the process of the World Heritage Committee which is where this discussion started. I think it is important that we should seek a process that must conclude this discussion. We cannot entertain a prolonged discussion, because, as I said, we have worked on some files that have been kept aside. And that is an injustice for us that has been done.

Paragraph 10 takes care of it. We agreed on paragraph 10. I have also noted our dear friends and colleagues, particularly from Russia and Brazil, said they are flexible. I think that gives us hope, in view of the fact that we feel strongly in Africa that a working open-ended group will give us an avenue to conclude this discussion expeditiously. It gives us hope that we can agree all of us to delete this.

I want to appeal to the sponsors of this. Please, listen to our arguments so that we can make progress. We all reserve our substantive discussion in the working group, because the working group that is where our discussions are going to be ventilated. This is not the right time about it. For now, let us spare our discussions in the working group. The working group will be inclusive to be open-ended and it will consider all the reflections, incorporate all the reflections, for presentation in our next session. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Australia, what do you think of the opinion of Committee members from South Africa and Ethiopia, can you accept them?

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I think there are a number of other States Parties too who have their hand up and we would appreciate hearing from them. But we will certainly not block a consensus on this Decision, but I would welcome the views of other Parties. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Bahrain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would not want to complicate matters any further. We just wanted to be clear that we do not see any harm of this item being discussed at the General Assembly. We believe that this is an appropriate process which is reflected in the text proposed by Australia, Norway, Hungary and Spain and as amended by Brazil. We just wanted to clarify that and we remain in your hands to reach a consensus on this, to move forward. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of Uganda's Delegation, I want to thank the position of the Australian delegate for accepting to go with the majority. This confirms the importance of the order of precedence that we are taking. That is what is important. To have a situation whereby when it comes to the formation of the composition of the open-ended working group, the Committee will take into consideration all the views and the needs of the people to be included and will be as inclusive as possible. But we should focus on this Committee delivering to the 45th session as agreed in the previous paragraph. And it is from the 45th session that consideration of the General Assembly and other issues will follow. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, we have some technical problems with our video but Hungary supports and reiterates the amendment presented jointly with Australia, Norway and Spain and also Norway's position to allow for the meaningful participation of all States Parties to the Convention in this debate and in the decision-making on an equal footing, as provided by the framework of the General Assembly of the States Parties. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. China, please.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dear colleagues, good morning to you all, we are actually at the 11th hour of this Committee. My dear colleagues we really have to show our flexibility and solidarity to show we successfully achieved all our items. For this, my Delegation is of the view that the open-ended inclusive working group will do the work. That is the responsibility of this Committee. Of course, as the Brazil's amendment said very clearly incorporating the outcomes of all the reflections in their final report. That is inclusive, that is a very good requirement. All considerations will be reflected. Have your say in this.

The General Assembly of States Parties has its own mechanism. The Committee is elected by the General Assembly. We cannot give the task to the General Assembly to do this or to do that. We believe that General Assembly has its own mechanism. If there is a need to discuss, they will discuss. From my Delegation's point of view, we do not really need to mention the General Assembly, here, in due course. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Thailand, please.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To be brief, we support and we are happy with paragraph 10. We give importance to the open-ended working group which comprises all States Parties. We do not think paragraph 11 is necessary. We think it is redundant and it is going to only prolong the process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Very briefly, I would like to add my voice to the numerous interventions that requested the deletion of this paragraph 11. This paragraph we do not see that it is necessary, quite the contrary. Mr. Chair, we think that this is overstepping the responsibilities of the Committee which is mentioned in the Convention. This is the responsibility of the Committee. The Committee shall take its responsibility through the open-ended working group and when the Committee, or the working group ends its work and when the Committee is going to present its report to the General assembly, there will be a point on it, naturally, inside the report. But to create the parallel discussions in order to slow down the process this is totally unacceptable for us. And again, Mr. Chair, we would need to delete this paragraph. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Spain, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you very much, Chair. Our intention is not to be an obstacle to the consensus. We understand the position of Africa. When we put forward this amendment, our intention was, as mentioned by representatives speaking previously, to give as much legitimacy as possible to the agreement reached. We understand that this is a sensitive position.

Perhaps, when it comes to the participation of the open-ended working group and the General Assembly, the participation is the same. The African colleagues are right in saying that the participation of the working group would be the same since it is open-ended. However, it would give greater legitimacy to the process if we included this paragraph 11. Our aim is to ensure that no one can claim there is not legitimacy in this process.

However, we are flexible and we will join the majority. Also, as mentioned by Bahrain, Brazil made a proposal that could allow us to reach common ground. We need to find a solution. We are not opposing sides in this debate. We need to take into account all views, and we need to reach a consensus.

Spain does not want to be one side against another side, we just want to provide more legitimacy to this process and to reach a consensus as much as possible. This was our intention. We want to confer greater legitimacy. This is why we put forward the amendment and that is what Norway said in their remarks about multilateralism. We believe that the amendment put forward by Brazil could be a position that would allow us to reach a consensus. In any case, Spain is flexible and in favour of a consensus.

Chairperson:

Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Chair, Uganda is among the countries that says that section 11 should be deleted. For record purposes, I am pleading that you capture Uganda among the countries that need the section 11 to be deleted. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Nigeria, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you. I join my colleague to say that paragraph 11 should be deleted. Nigeria should be included, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Dear colleagues I have a proposal. After listening to the discussion of the Committee members, I think all the Committee members show some flexibility and also the desire to reach consensus that is very good. I have a proposal: can we keep the proposal of the African group echoed by China, Brazil and Thailand but adding the expression of keeping the General Assembly informed? Is there any objection? South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

That is for clarity and I really appreciate your efforts to assist us to reach a consensus.

Chairperson:

Thank you.

The Delegation of South Africa:

The report of the Committee submitted to the General Assembly will be in one composite report.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Norway, please.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you for this proposal. However, of course, the General Assembly has to be informed of the decisions of the world Heritage Committee, but our point, here, was actually to have an inclusive and legitimate process as much as possible, as was stated out by Spain. We would actually like the 194 States Parties of this Convention to be part of their decision-making process as well. We would actually like this to remain up to the General Assembly to take the final decision on this. And, maybe, if there is a question of timing here, we could maybe make a proposal afterwards. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. How about Australia, actually, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you, Chair. We agree with your proposal as amended by South Africa. We want one process. As long as it is one process and that the Committee is leading it, we have no problem. Your compromise is very good as amended. But in no case we agree to a parallel process which is aimed at slowing down everything under the guise of inclusiveness. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Egypt, please.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Like Ethiopia we agree with your proposal to provide that Article 49 of the Rules of Procedure is clearly stated. Just replying to the intervention that was saying that we need an inclusive process. The open-ended working group is inclusive already and we have already all the members. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for your proposal. It seems to me that it is the way to proceed here. Can we can find here convergency. Would you be kind to repeat again for me your proposal, please, or ask the Rapporteur to do that for us? Thank you.

Chairperson:

Okay. Ms. Rapporteur, can you put it on the screen?

Rapporteur:

Mr. Chair's suggestion was to keep the General Assembly informed, but I am not very sure if it was as a new paragraph or to be added to any of the other paragraphs.

Chairperson:

We can delete paragraph 11 then put that as paragraph 10.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brazil supports your proposal strongly.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any other objections to this proposal? I see none. Now it is so decided. Let us proceed.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 12: 'Finally calls on States Parties to the Convention to contribute to the work of this open-ended working group including through voluntary contributions'

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, agreed and approved.

Rapporteur:

We continue with the other sections of this Decision, Mr. Chair. Other sections concern analysis of the Global Strategy and this paragraph is without any amendments. Then we have Criteria to assess the impact of paragraph 61 of the *Operational Guidelines*. This becomes [...]

Chairperson:

Ms. Rapporteur, we can go paragraph by paragraph. Okay?

Rapporteur:

Okay, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Paragraph 13 with no revision. Do you agree? Uganda, you have the floor. Actually, you do not want it. Okay, it is approved. Go ahead.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Chair, I do not know I was a contributing to a previous paragraph, I was talking about the issue of the General Assembly.

Chairperson:

Now, the General Assembly matter has been approved. We will go ahead, so paragraph 14.

Rapporteur:

Paragraph 14 concerns criteria to assess the impact of paragraph 61 of the *Operational Guidelines* and we have not received any modifications for this paragraph, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Yes, it is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

New paragraph 15 concerning buffer zones. We have not received any modifications to this paragraph.

Chairperson:

Do you agree? Okay, it is agreed. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

And protecting sites of potential Outstanding Universal Value in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, new paragraph 16, original paragraph 5, no modifications were proposed, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Do you approve? Russia, please.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

Mr. Chair, I would like to ask you that someone explains to us what are these marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. We hear this for the first time and this could be a very serious question. could someone explain what is this all about? Thank you.

Chairperson:

I give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This is in the document itself on Item 8. We wanted to brief the Committee that an expert group happened and this was a request actually of the external audit on the Global Strategy on which we reported to each of the General Assembly. One of the requests was to look at Outstanding Universal Value in marine areas. I give you an example, the Costa Rica Thermal Dome: there were several expert meetings and it is to inform you about the report from the expert group. The last expert meeting, and I say this from the top of my head, was, I think, in December 2019, in Monaco. And it is to inform you that the reports are available for you to look at, but there is no further decision to be taken in terms of this. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Is it okay with the colleague from Russia?

The Delegation of the Russian Federation:

So far so good, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Okay. Thank you. It is approved. Go ahead.

Rapporteur:

These are all the amendments under this Decision, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, we have been through all the texts, if there are no other comments, I therefore declare Draft Decision 44 COM 8 adopted as amended ^[gave!]. I now declare item 8 closed ^[gave!]. Now, I see an Observer requesting the floor. Committee member, Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to thank you for your leadership on helping the Committee to find a consensus solution on this complex issue and also to commend China on its chairing of this meeting in a constructive and inclusive way.

Chair, if I may, we did make an appeal based on 28.2 during the procedures yesterday and in the interests of ensuring that this meeting itself continues in that constructive manner, I would ask that we proceed with that, and ask that noting that the appeal should be put to a vote immediately. I am conscious that Bosnia-Herzegovina and Hungary also pointed to this provision. And it seems that this is an outstanding issue that has not been resolved where we do not have consensus and there are different views in the Committee. So, I would ask, Chair, that we do revisit the appeal that I made yesterday based on 28.2 with your indulgence.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Hungary, please.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Chairperson. I have waited until now to raise this point because I did not want to interrupt the smooth conduct of the debate that has been going on this very important Agenda Item. But before closing Item 8, I wanted to put it on record that we are still puzzled how the debate on the nomination of the Gdańsk Shipyard was adjourned yesterday. I want to put it also on record that Hungary did not agree with the adjournment of the debate of the nomination of the Gdańsk Shipyard sine die, that is without any definite date.

Our view is that if the debate was adjourned, this adjournment should have an exact date to provide for a clear and definite timetable for each party concerned. Our proposal would be in 2024 leaving sufficient time for the state party as well as ICOMOS to revise and reassess respectively the nomination. Thank you, Chairperson.

Chairperson:

Thank you. South Africa, please.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Chairperson, I am only taking the floor to thank you for your very firm and steady leadership in helping us navigate this important issue. It has often been referred to as a sensitive issue, we want to rephrase: a very important issue. I want to thank you for your very fair leadership in the manner in which you assisted all of us in arriving at a consensus decision on this matter. And to thank all States Parties for their solidarity, for their understanding of our

position and commitment to ensuring that the discussion on this issue is brought to an end in a satisfactory manner. This is all I wanted to say at this stage. Thanks.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment, Ethiopia, please.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As we now have closed this Agenda Item, let me also thank you for the very efficient way with which you have chaired our meeting, and on the difficult circumstances where divergent views were reflected, your wisdom in coming up with the necessary compromises and consensus, in consensus creation, is really remarkable. We want to make it a point and on record that, through you, we thank the People's Republic of China for the excellent manner in which in general the meeting was handled. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Mr. Chairman, the Uganda's Delegation thanks you for the effective, efficient, accommodative and fair leadership that you have demonstrated in steering the debate. At the beginning we were worried that perhaps we will have a bad presidency, said that this Committee would be the one which will be accused in the future of having overthrown the Rules of Procedure. But we are grateful that you have found effective and accommodating leadership that has led to a very good conclusion and a consensus building and therefore is a success to all of us. We remain very thankful and will continue remembering your leadership. We thank you and we thank all the participants for the effective and constructive discussions. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. We wish to join the thanks expressed by other members of the Committee. Spain has a lot of gratitude towards this Committee. We would like to thank you for the support provided by member States for the inscription of one of our sites. We also wish to thank you for the dialogue and multilateralism. We have undertaken opened dialogue and reached consensus. We would like to thank you, Chair, for your leadership and particularly for this last item. We would like to thank you for helping us to reach a satisfactory agreement for all parties. We would like to express our appreciation for inclusive multilateral dialogue. Thank you to all of you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. As I said I absolutely agree with all of those comments and appreciate the way with which China, as Chair, has helped us all to navigate and the way we have all come together. I agree very much with the points from my colleague from Uganda with regard to the procedural issues and it was in that spirit that I questioned, Chair, the procedure on the matter from yesterday. I thank you for your kindness in considering that.

Also, I would like to agree with my colleague from Hungary that this seems to be the only issue where there has not been some clarity and I would agree with his comment with regard to finding a date for this further discussion and I support the idea that that it could be 2024. Thank you again, Chair, for your leadership on this matter.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

Délégation de la Bosnie-Herzégovine :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. On a déjà mentionné le nom de Bosnie-Herzégovine, je sens donc que je dois dire quelque chose. L'idéal, c'est le consensus, quand tout le monde est d'accord. C'est l'idéal et c'est notre but d'atteindre le consensus sur les questions importantes. En même temps, il s'agit de ne pas créer des obstacles à n'importe quelle proposition. C'est pour ça que je disais que la valeur que nous devons défendre, celle que nous partageons tous, c'est l'ouverture de la discussion. Hier j'ai dit que, quand on dit «sine die», ça veut dire pour toujours, et c'est pour ça que j'avais ce mot à dire. J'aimerais bien qu'on trouve des solutions à tous les problèmes sur lesquels nous n'avons pas les mêmes positions. Je l'ai déjà dit et je le répète, nous pouvons ne pas être d'accord, mais ce que je n'aime pas, c'est quand on ne trouve pas de solution consensuelle. Je crois que, à l'avenir,

il serait raisonnable de discuter autrement que sine die. Comme la Bosnie quitte bientôt le Comité, vers la fin de l'année, je vous remercie à tous de cette possibilité que j'ai eu moi-même et la délégation de Bosnie-Herzégovine de participer à ce travail important, de faire partie de ce regroupement de pays qui n'a pas peur d'ouvrir le débat sur n'importe quelle question. Quand il y a un problème, on en discute et on essaie de comprendre les uns les autres. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président du Comité.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Egypt, please.

Délégation de l'Égypte :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. À l'instar des délégations qui m'ont précédé, je voudrais vous remercier et vous féliciter chaleureusement pour tous les efforts que vous avez déployés, non seulement aujourd'hui, mais depuis le début de notre réunion, et notamment pour votre proposition de consensus pour le point 8, qui nous a permis d'adopter une décision préservant l'inclusivité des débats qui vont se tenir sur ce point-là, en même temps que le respect des lois et des articles de la Convention. Je voudrais encore une fois vous remercier, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment. Brazil, please.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, we want to join our colleagues in congratulating you on the way you have conducted our discussion on this very difficult issue of the Sites of Memory. My question to you Mr. President is: I would like to know if we are having our closing remarks now or are we be able to express our views in a closing remark later during the closing process?

Chairperson:

Later not yet.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Okay, therefore I have already requested the floor for later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson:

Okay. Nigeria, please.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My video is not working, I do not know why.

Chairperson:

We can hear your voice.

The Delegation of Nigeria:

Okay. I do not know why the technical team cannot activate my video. It is not coming up. Anyway, Chair, I want to join other colleagues to congratulate you on this marvellous chairing of the sessions and also providing solutions and suggestions that have actually resolved issues. We want to thank you very much and also to thank China for hosting this session. Thank you very much, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear Committee members allow me to record that for the decisions that have already been adopted by the Committee, we will not reopen the debate on the content of the decisions, as per paragraph 34.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Heritage Committee which stipulates the text of each decision shall be adopted at the end of the discussion of the Agenda Item. Dear colleagues, now let us proceed. Sorry to the Observers, because of the time limit I cannot give the floor to you. Now, let us proceed.

Now that we have concluded the examination of the state of conservation reports and the nominations of properties on the World Heritage List, we have to examine Item 8C which concerns the update of the World Heritage List and of the List of World Heritage in Danger. But first of all, I would like to give the floor to Dr Rössler.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Document 8C was shared with you. Originally, we wanted to look at this yesterday but we could not. This document concerns Decisions you already have taken on state of conservation and

nominations, and to facilitate your task, we have included this into the Decisions record. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear Committee members as you will remember by Decision 15 EXT.COM 3, the Committee decided that this Agenda Item would be adopted without debate. I therefore invite you, dear colleagues, to proceed with the adoption of the Draft Decisions 8C.1, 8C.2, 8C.3 and 8C.4. But before doing so I would like to ask the Rapporteur if she has received any amendments on any of the Draft Decisions proposed. Ms. Rapporteur.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have not received any amendments on these Decisions, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you. Are there any comments? Australia, please.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair, and apologies, I am not trying to be difficult just trying to understand. I had understood that I had in yesterday's discussion, in fact before it closed, made an appeal based on 28.2 and that that procedure had not been fulfilled before the discussion was closed. It states that such an appeal should be put to the vote immediately. As I recall that discussion Bosnia-Herzegovina and Hungary also pointed to this provision. Chair, as I said, Australia throughout this meeting, and we would intend to continue, has been constructive, but it seems that this procedural point is unclear and I am not sure that it is being acted on. So, again, Chair, I would ask in the spirit of the way that you have chaired in following all procedures, I would be grateful, please, for an action on this item. Thank you.

Chairperson:

In fact, I have answered your question. I will not repeat my response which is that we do not reopen debate once the decision has been taken. Okay? Are there any other comments? I see none. I therefore declare Draft Decisions 44 COM 8C.1, 8C.2, 8C.3 and 8C.4 adopted ^[gavel]. Thank you. I therefore now declare item 8C closed ^[gavel].

Dear colleagues, dear Committee members, we now come to our final task the formal adoption of the report of Decisions. We will go through the report which has been prepared on time and circulated to you. Allow me to congratulate the Rapporteur and the Secretariat for that fantastic achievement. I would also like to thank you all because this is the achievement made by the collective efforts of the entire Committee during the past two weeks.

Before I give the floor to our Rapporteur, allow me to recall that the Decisions included in this report have already been adopted by the Committee and therefore the task we have before us is essentially an editorial one and we will not reopen the debate on the content of decisions. I would like to invite our Rapporteur, Ms. Miray Hasaltun Wosinski, to briefly explain the process of preparation of the report and give additional guidance for you to consider as you review it. Ms. Rapporteur, you have the floor.

Rapporteur:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be very brief, as I know, we are all tired after those very intensive past 14 days. It was a great honour to serve as the Rapporteur in this session and work with Your Excellency, Mr. Tian Xuejun. We all had very demanding tasks this year to go through the Decisions that have been awaiting discussions, considerations and adoptions since the last session of the Committee in 2019, which took place in Baku.

During the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, the Committee made 332 Decisions. We inscribed 34 new properties on the World Heritage List and reviewed the state of conservation of 256 properties. We also looked into several very important policy decisions on Capacity Building, Climate Change, Periodic Reporting, Priority Africa, Sustainable Development and others. We went through more than 40 documents at the preparation of this session, received over 115 amendment proposals during the meeting, and produced 473 pages of decisions report. We received corrections to these decision reports and it will be included in the final decision text. The Committee also had to make very difficult decisions. I hope that on the verge of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, our efforts for the implementation of this unique Convention will continue to be credible, inclusive and representative.

Before I conclude, Mr. Chair, I would like to thank you and thank the host of this session, the People's Republic of China, and the municipality of Fuzhou for their great organisation and warm collaboration. I sincerely regret not being able to visit Fuzhou at this time, but I certainly hope to have this opportunity in the near future. I express my gratitude to you, Excellency Mr. Tian Xuejun for your very efficient and prominent leadership. I must extend my sincere thanks to the excellent team of the World Heritage Centre whom I had the pleasure to work with closely in the past two weeks, as well as in the past four years, during the mandate of the kingdom of Bahrain in the Committee. The effort put in the smooth running of the sessions is impossible to describe or even believe without personally experiencing it.

I thank Dr Rössler as well, who despite the distance and time difference was always next to us virtually. I specifically thank Frédérique and Richard for their continuous support and friendship and Luba and Anatole for their relentless and diligent work, of course, also our typists Jean-Marc and Penelope, who skilfully worked under time pressure and did a terrific job in reflecting the voices of the Committee members.

Finally, I direct my deepest gratitude to her excellency Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed. Al-Khalifa and His Excellency Shaikh Khalifa Alkhalifa for their continuous belief and support. *Shukran jazilan* and thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. The invitation to you from Fuzhou to visit Fuzhou always stands, anytime. I would now ask whether, in order to be as efficient as possible, the Committee members could indicate to us where they have identified editorial errors which should be corrected so that we can deal with those. Please, also note that formatting issues will be fixed at a later stage by the Secretariat during the finalisation of the report. If there is no objection, I suggest that we adopt the full report as a whole. Do you have any remarks or comments? I see none. The report of Decisions is therefore adopted ^[gave]. I declare Item 18 closed ^[gave].

Now, I would like to give the floor to Observers. First, I give the floor to Belgium for a very brief intervention.

The Delegation of Belgium:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, our thoughts go out to the victims of the heavy floods. A tragic event that unfortunately unites both our countries right now. I would, furthermore, like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on the way you have been conducting the work of this Committee. And I would also like to congratulate the Rapporteur who has done an excellent job but does not always get the recognition.

Mr. Chair, dear colleagues, Belgium has first suggested the idea of a working group on sites of memories during the information meeting in January. And we want to express our gratitude for the fact that the Committee has chosen this as the way forward. Now, we have the utmost respect for the work of the experts, but when we are trying to define the very scope of the World Heritage Convention, its most important stakeholders, the States Parties, should have a say in this.

We are well aware that work on the substance is now yet to begin, and, as for Belgium, we believe that we should not just erase the difficult parts from our history. They have shaped our societies as much, and sometimes even more so, than our triumphs and our highlights. We should also remember that some of these sites related to conflicts have now actually become symbols of peace, reconciliation and humanity. It is sometimes behind the darkest pages in our history that the best of humankind can be found.

This is why Belgium believes that, if and when, a site related to a difficult memory has Outstanding Universal Value, it can have a place on the World Heritage List. Belgium looks forward to participating in the working group, and I would also like to announce that Belgium is ready to make a financial contribution to the work of this working group. I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your comment, also thank you for your kind words. Now, Argentina, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Argentina:

^[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Chair. First of all, our condolences to your country for this difficult natural disaster that your country has suffered. We wanted to congratulate you, your people, your government, for your effective organisation in running and organising this meeting and also the Secretariat for its effort. We are delighted to see that we have been able to discuss, as Committee member, all of the more delicate and difficult issues, as is reflected in the decisions you have taken.

Sites associated with recent conflicts and memories are, of course, very important and many of these cultural and natural sites have a value that everyone agrees on. But this latter category of sites associated with conflicts actually can serve as a symbol for commemoration and peace. It is important that we continue the discussion on Sites of Memory.

Remember that it is part of a whole ongoing process of building peace and reconciling. Also, acknowledging errors in the past that we do not want to repeat in the future. Sites of Memory are necessary if we are going to remember past and continue to be committed to peace for all of humanity. This is an urgent challenge for the Committee, for States Parties to the Convention and for UNESCO in its totality. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment, and thank you for your kind words and solidarity towards the Chinese people. Now, Syria, please, you have the floor.

Délégation de la République arabe syrienne :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je renouvelle nos condoléances pour la catastrophe naturelle qui touche le peuple chinois. Au nom de mon pays, la République arabe syrienne, je félicite de nouveau la République populaire de Chine pour avoir organisé cette réunion du Comité en mode semi-présentiel à Fuzhou. Je remercie les éminents membres du Comité, les États parties observateurs, le Centre du patrimoine mondial, les organes consultatifs et le Secrétariat du Secteur de la culture de l'UNESCO. Nous partageons la reconnaissance des inscriptions des nouveaux sites culturels, naturels et mixtes sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial de l'humanité, étant confiants en l'engagement des États parties dans la mise en œuvre des décisions adoptées. Le peuple syrien est la matrice humaine du patrimoine culturel des civilisations millénaires sur la terre de Syrie. La relève de notre patrimoine culturel, naturel et mixte en Syrie est partie intégrante de la relève nationale en cours, guidée par le travail et l'espoir. L'adoption des décisions de notre 44^e Comité relative aux six sites du patrimoine syrien inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril est une étape cruciale pour le retrait prochain de ces sites de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Les efforts nationaux du Gouvernement syrien, des autorités de tutelle, du Ministère de la culture, du Comité national syrien pour l'UNESCO, de la DGAM, des partenaires de la société civile et des partenaires internationaux sont récompensés par la reconnaissance de leur engagement inflexible. Le Prix ICCROM-Sharjah 2020 pour la réhabilitation du souk al-Qaqatiyya, dans l'ancienne ville d'Alep, l'un des sites du patrimoine mondial en péril en République arabe syrienne, est la preuve de la grande qualité de cette remise en état. La consécration de cette reconnaissance attend la visite de missions de suivi réactives sur aux sites du patrimoine mondial en Syrie dans les meilleurs délais. Nous aspirons avec enthousiasme à une participation en présentiel aux prochains travaux de notre 45^e session du Comité du patrimoine mondial à Kazan, en Fédération de Russie, qui se tiendra parallèlement à la célébration du 50^e anniversaire de la Convention de 1972. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment, and thank you for your kind words and the support towards the Chinese people. Now, Rwanda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Rwanda:

Thank you, Chair. I first wish to thank China for hosting this session. I also want to commend your outstanding leadership and wisdom thanks to which all members could put ideas together and reach a consensus which will be historical. Chair, I also want to thank all Delegations for their sense of common interest, their wisdom and their capacity to reconcile and make concessions whenever needed. Lastly, Chair, and distinguished colleagues, I wish to affirm Rwanda's commitment to participate actively and constructively in the work of the open-ended working group which has just been adopted. I thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your comment and for your kind words. Dear colleagues, due to time constraints, I have to move on and give Observers the floor later on. Now let us proceed.

Members of the World Heritage Committee, representatives of States Parties, Director of the World Heritage Centre, representatives of ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN, representatives of civil societies and local communities, dear colleagues and friends, we now come to the end of our work, but before we close, allow me to give you my wholehearted thanks for your support and trust in me during my office of chairing this Committee.

Your recognition and support have indeed honoured me. Your dedication and the cooperation have ensured the smooth running of the session and notably the efficient and effective decision-making process. Your insightful deliberations and reflections have profoundly enlightened me. Your sympathy and solidarity have made the Committee a forum of unity in diversity with steadfast commitment and strong ability of action. I am most grateful for the assistance and advice of my Bureau fellows and a special thank goes to the Vice-Chairperson, His Excellency, Ambassador of Guatemala.

Dear colleagues, words cannot describe how proud of you I feel and how proud of the outcomes and achievements of our collective efforts. Working with you in the past two weeks is a unique and valuable memory that I will always hold dear. As there will be a closing ceremony after this part, I would like to save some words and leave the floor to you and the UNESCO Secretariat.

Now, I would like to give the floor to the Director of the World Heritage Centre, Dr Mechthild Rössler. Dr Rössler, you have the floor.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Dear chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, dear delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen it is a great pleasure for me to just say a few words. First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for your wise and effective guidance throughout this session, and to your country for providing such excellent facilities and for your very warm hospitality, here, in Fuzhou. Thank you so much, dear Chair, for your great support over the past two years. It was two years we worked together with your leadership and also your efficient team.

I would like to thank all Committee members for their contributions to the debates and to the decisions taken which were not always smooth for many of us, but we made it to the end of the session. Our dear Rapporteur, Ms. Miray Hasaltun Wosinski, did not have an easy job with many amendments throughout the meeting, but I think she did it brilliantly. Thank you so much, it was really fantastic.

Thanks also to all the Observer States for their continued interest and commitment and to all other Observers whether NGOs IGOs, universities and others, especially civil society representatives and indigenous peoples. Your contribution is important to the continuous evolution and implementation of the World Heritage Convention. My deep thanks also go to our dear Advisory Bodies IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM. You are one of the pillars in the World Heritage system to provide scientific and technical advice.

Let me also thank my team the Policy and Statutory Meetings Unit headed by Ms. Aubert with her efficient colleagues. Many thanks for your intense work and for your professionalism. You managed very well. It was your first Committee session, here, in this new function, despite new challenges of such an online meeting with teams in Paris and here in Fuzhou. I am also grateful to all the chiefs of the regional units with their teams: Africa, Asia Pacific Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe and North America and our nature team NHU and our Nominations Unit and my assistant Laurence who always keeps me on track.

My sincere thanks go to our dear Deputy Director, as well as our colleagues from the culture sector, our Assistant Director General for Culture Mr. Ernesto Ottone and his team at EO and AO as well as the CCE Unit providing all the logistical support to this session.

I would also like to express my personal gratitude and thanks to the wonderful team accompanying me to Shanghai and to Fuzhou with Sherry and Mauro. Many thanks and special thanks go to our legal adviser, he and his team provided us with lots of advice on procedural matters throughout the two years we have been preparing for this unique session. I would also like to thank the Director of our Beijing office and his team for his kind support here in Fuzhou.

We are very grateful for our interpreters who really help us to dialogue and all other staff including those behind the scenes in UNESCO and here in Fuzhou. Many thanks to all teams in UNESCO who support World Heritage with our dear Director General in the front row. I really cherish the personal discussions I have had with Ms. Audrey Azoulay over the past years.

Thank you all for your close collaboration and invaluable contributions and support. The excellent and smooth chairing by you, Mr. Chair, at this extended 44th session of the Committee, the warm hospitality of the people in Fuzhou, a city linking nature and culture, will be long remembered.

This is my last Committee session. I will be retiring at the end of September from UNESCO after 30 years of service and I will go back to academia. It is quite emotional. It was a great pleasure and privilege for me to serve the Secretariat of the World Heritage Convention in different positions over three decades. There are many things I could say, today, but finally there is just one thought I wish to share with all of you now: the heart of World Heritage is conservation, if we are not able to preserve the most precious sites, the most outstanding places on earth, what would be left on our planet. Stay safe and see you soon. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, are there any Committee members who wish to take the floor? Oman, please.

The Delegation of Oman:

Thank you very much. Mr. Chair, Excellencies, colleagues from the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies, Ladies and Gentlemen, as we are closing the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee, my Delegation would like to congratulate China's leadership and its citizens for the success of this Committee meeting, and we extend our thankfulness and appreciation for all the arrangements and efforts made which contributed greatly to the success of the meeting.

At the personal level, we would like to extend our thanks and commend the efforts made by the Chair of the meeting and his assistance. Here, also, I would not forget my friend, His Excellency, the Ambassador of China for all his efforts in Paris to make this meeting successful. Mr. Chair, the Oman's Delegation has appreciated the excellent relationship with the Secretariat represented here by the culture sector and the World Heritage Centre, and we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Assistant Director General, the World Heritage Centre Director and her Deputy as well as all Chiefs of sections and staff for their efforts and preparation for this meeting and for being patient with us.

Oman would also like to thank all the Advisory Bodies and experts. We agreed and we disagreed sometimes during this meeting, but that does not mean that we do not value their expertise and efforts. They are of great values to us and they deserve more of our thankfulness and appreciation.

To my dear colleagues, their Excellencies Ambassadors and government delegates, it is an honour and pleasure for the Omani Delegation to have worked closely with all of you and your Delegation and to get connected frequently

for more discussions and negotiations which have helped to reach agreement to most, if not all the files. We do hope that we will continue the efforts for the benefit of our countries and organisation.

Mr. Chair, one of our Arab countries representatives of the Committee is leaving us in November, the Kingdom of Bahrain. For us it is our second country. The Oman's Delegation would also like to extend its thanks and appreciation to the Kingdom of Bahrain for representing us at the Bureau of the Committee and also being the Rapporteur for this session. As well as for their generous support for the UNESCO Category 2 Centre in Manama which is a great asset for the region. And, last but not least, we would like to thank the media, the translators and support staff for the success of this meeting.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we all know that my dear Madam Rössler, the director of the World Heritage Centre has announced that she is leaving us and might not be with us at the 45th session. As my country has enjoyed excellent relations with her, I would sincerely like to thank her and wish her a very successful life both at her professional and family level. I thank you all and goodbye.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Brazil, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Brazil:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we come to the end of this Committee session, we would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, as well as Ambassador Yang Jin and all our Chinese hosts, for the organisation of this very special session. We must also express our regret that we could not be together in Fuzhou as we would all have wished for, as we are certain that it would have been an extraordinary experience.

We commend the extraordinary work of the Secretariat not only in this session, but also in the two years that led up to it under the guidance of the Assistant Director General, Mr. Ottone, and Ms. Rössler. We would also like to thank our Director personally for her 30 years of commitment and dedication to the cause of World Heritage in UNESCO. A lifetime's work which has left its mark in the history of this organisation. Thank you very much, Ms. Rössler.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Saudi Arabia [...]

The Delegation of Brazil:

Sorry, Mr. president, I have not finished yet. This was a very eventful Committee, Mr. President, we inscribed 34 sites on the World Heritage List, expanded three more and also deleted one. We reviewed the state of conservation of more than 200 sites and removed one from the in Danger List. But, more important than that, we debated issues that are of utmost importance for all of us. We discussed a Policy on Climate Change, a text that bridges the frameworks for World Heritage preservation and climate action and that crafts a new role for UNESCO in one of the most momentous issues of the 21st century. We believe that there is much that this organisation can contribute to climate action provided that we always work in alignment with the main forum for debate of this topic as the UNFCCC.

We also tackled the issue of Sites of Memory, a question of great importance and sensitivity for many countries here. I recognise the need for broadening perspectives on this subject through further discussion involving all States Parties of the Convention.

But, one of the most important topics that we discussed was our role under the 1972 Convention. In this meeting, we faced new approaches and unprecedented situation to which there were no clear answers and it should lead us as to ponder if the way we have been doing things is still appropriate, or if we need to rethink our modes of operation. We have already started on the path of reform with the approval of the new Preliminary Assessment. We need to work further, and in open dialogue, in order to recover the adequate balance in the relationship between States Parties, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies to create more balanced processes for monitoring and evaluation which also take into consideration the advice of specialised regional bodies, and to actually find a greater regional balance within the Advisory Bodies themselves.

Finally, we need to rebalance priorities, in order to focus less on nominations and more on conservation and capacity building. It is only through capacity building that we can obtain satisfactory results in conservation which can enhance sustainable development and sustainable development can generate resources to be invested in capacity building and cooperation and conservation. This way, we can create synergies between capacity building, conservation and sustainable development, in order to escape the false dilemma posed between conservation and development.

As we approach the end of this meeting, we also approach the end of Brazil's mandate at the World Heritage Committee. It was an honour to be part of this Committee and we thank all the members of the 1972 Convention for their trust. We hope that we have been able to correspond to your expectation. But we do not say goodbye as we have a role as a State Party in this Convention that we always need to play actively, be it as a member of the

Committee or at General Assembly, as Observer or as a participant in working groups. And there is a lot of work to be done. You can count on us. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Saudi Arabia, please.

The Delegation of Saudi Arabia:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am very happy to take the floor after the wise words of His Excellency, the Ambassador of Brazil. I would first like to thank you, Chair, for your wise leadership leading this very challenging discussion online to try to reach the ultimate goal to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value that we all cherish. I would also like to thank our dear friend, the Ambassador of China, here at UNESCO for his valuable support and for making sure that all the discussions run smoothly and even behind closed doors. I would like to thank the Centre for their support and for their efficient management.

With regard to my dear friend Madam Rössler, we would like to congratulate you for all the great work you have done through these three decades. We would like to wish you the best of luck in your future endeavours and we think that now you have the chance to go around the world and visit all the sites you have kindly and diligently contributed to describing and preserving in your work here in the Centre.

I would like to thank the Secretariat for their support and definitely the Rapporteur and the interpreters for their valuable support as well. Special thanks go to you, my dear colleagues Committee members, for your support and not only in inscribing our dear site in Saudi Arabia but to having these valuable discussions that are very interesting, valuable and highly intellectual, sometimes a bit problematic and challenging, but definitely, we all share the same goal, and, for us, it has been a great learning experience to be part of this esteemed Committee.

I would like to give a special thank you to the kingdom of Bahrain who has been very supportive for inscription of our site and has been very supportive in the discussions during this meeting. And we would like to wish them the best of luck and definitely, as our dear ambassador of Brazil has kindly said, it is not the end of the road having them as a member of the General Assembly will definitely enhance the discussions and we are looking forward to being part of that.

I would also like to thank the States Parties, Observing States Parties, for their engagement, for their support and special thanks go to the Advisory Bodies for their technical evaluation that is based on science and looking forward for a more helpful and meaningful dialogue towards more convergence of ideas in the future.

I would like to thank the civil society and all members attending this meeting. Also, special thanks go to the silent heroes, the technical teams in China, who were supportive in handling all these very challenging technical issues that faced us in this meeting and we congratulate them for the efficient work that they have done.

Dear Mr. Chair and member countries and Observers, we are very happy that UNESCO is part of the G20 discussions when it comes to culture. Under Saudi Arabia's presidency, we had the initiative of creating the first ministerial meeting for the Ministers of Culture including UNESCO, and this is a very important platform for dialogue when it comes to the promotion of culture and definitely including heritage and preserve heritage. Therefore, I would like to congratulate Italy for their successful meeting of the Ministers of Culture and looking forward for a meaningful engagement of UNESCO in this regard, and, definitely, our discussions here in this Committee should embrace the discussion under the G20.

Overall, I would like to congratulate all States Parties who have inscribed their sites. I am looking forward to visiting them as well but, maybe, I will wait until I retire to join Ms. Rössler. Overall, this has been a challenging situation and talking to more seasoned Committee members, everyone was saying there is no way an online meeting of the World Heritage can take place and finish on time. And here we are at the last day, and with the wise leadership of our Chairman and the great support of the Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and the great engagement of member States, we are here today we have finished successfully and I would like to congratulate all of us.

Looking to the future, we are looking for more dialogue, we are looking for systematic answers, we are looking for addressing the deep roots of the problems by increasing the capacities and definitely a balanced capacity throughout the globe to make sure that we support the preservation of the World Heritage in a meaningful manner.

At the end, Mr. Chair, I would like to congratulate China for this successful meeting and for holding it. I would have loved to be in Fuzhou and enjoy the pleasure and culture of being in China, but I promise you that I will visit Fuzhou as at the nearest possibility and looking forward to meeting you in person.

Thank you very much, thank you all of you from the bottom of my heart and looking forward for the next meeting. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Egypt, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Egypt:

Thank you, Chair. Allow me, as we are approaching the closure of this session, to extend my Delegation warmest thanks and congratulations to the People's Republic of China for the extremely successful session of this Committee. We also wish to commend your able leadership all along the session. This was not an easy session. In fact, when the idea of organising it online was out, there was a lot of fear and I think this fear continued until very recently, but we managed to organise it and I think we should all be proud of this.

I would also like to thank all the Delegations, those whom we agreed with as well as those who did not agree with all the time. And let me assure you that we benefited from each interaction and we are really thankful for it. We also want to thank the World Heritage Centre as well as the Advisory Bodies.

Chair, this Convention is very dear to Egypt. It was inspired by what my country witnessed in the 1960s in Abu Simbel. We are and will be forever committed to it and to its success. The Convention is reaching a milestone next year. The celebration of the 50-year anniversary is an opportunity for all of us, and not only the members of this Committee, to reflect on our success but also on our challenges. To share the knowledge and expertise, to exchange experiences and success stories. This is why we are looking forward to the upcoming discussions on the future of the Convention whether within the ad hoc working group or within the next Committee session.

Finally, Chair, let me save the final remarks to a very dear person, and not only to my Delegation but also to me. Dr Rössler, it is really hard to imagine the World Heritage Centre without you. It is like a Mercedes without the four tires, as some have been saying here, but let us hope that maybe Mercedes will one day manufacture this car. Thank you a lot and we really wish you the best success in everything in your life. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the kind words. Uganda, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Uganda:

Thank you, Chair. Uganda would like to thank China for hosting and chairing the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. A job you have performed very well to the satisfaction of my Delegation. Before the beginning of the session, my Delegation had fears that there could be big challenges in coordinating our Delegation in Paris with our experts in the capital. Fortunately, there were no upsets and the session proceedings were very smooth.

I would like to thank you, Chair, in person for your patience and calmness. My Delegation commends your leadership which is exceptional. You are going on record for chairing the first ever virtual session of the world Heritage Committee. It would be a miss of me if I did not thank the Secretariat of our Committee which did an excellent job in coordinating the work of the Committee, including time keeping and sharing of quality documents.

Uganda is coming to the end of its four-year mandate on the World Heritage Committee. Our membership on the Committee has greatly enhanced the capacity and skills of my Delegation on matters of natural and cultural heritage. Uganda remains committed to the ideals of the Convention concerning the protection of world cultural and natural heritage. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the kind words. Now, Ethiopia, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Thank you very much, Chair. First of all, allow me to congratulate the people and governments of China for successfully hosting our extraordinary session. Extraordinary in many ways because it was both in presentia and virtually. The successful hosting by China shows the commitment of your great country to multilateralism as a whole and to UNESCO in particular.

Chair, we also appreciate and admire the way you hosted and chaired our meeting, particularly in bridging differences. You are very calm and very efficient. Maybe it is a testimony to Chinese Confucian philosophy, but you embodied it perfectly and we thank you for enabling us to reach this successful result. We also would like to thank, Chair, the Vice-Chair of Guatemala for providing you and us all an efficient support. We also extend our appreciation to our Rapporteur for a very efficient way of handling the various difficult issues with which we were confronted with.

Lastly, we would like to thank the Secretariat, all the staff of the Secretariat. We know the difficulties in holding meetings, the logistical nightmare that it represents. And I can imagine how it must have been particularly difficult given the nature of our meeting. We thank all those who are in the background, in the offline as we say, working hard to support us whether it is the translators or otherwise who have done an extraordinary job.

Here, allow me also to join others in thanking Dr Rössler. She has provided this organisation and humanity great service through her commitment to the World Heritage. She will be greatly missed. *Danke für Ihre Dienstleistungen und viel Glück für die Zukunft Dr Rössler. Danke Schön.*

Chairperson:

Thank you very much.

The Delegation of Ethiopia:

Let me just conclude and add one or two words by thanking and congratulating all countries that have successfully inscribed their nominations on the List. It was a successful meeting for many countries and we are very happy. As Dr Rössler said, conservation is at the heart of the mandates of our organisation. What will the world be, as she put it, without the marvels, whether nature made or man-made, with the genius of men and women throughout the world.

It is this preoccupation of conservation that is pushing us to see change in the way things are done in our organisation. The change that we seek is a change that will come through dialogue and consensus. We understand that. But the change that we seek is a change that wants inclusivity. Inclusivity in the sites that need to be listed, inclusivity as well in the representation of our region and Advisory Bodies. This is the change we seek and this is the change that must happen in the 21st century.

We thank the Director in her opening speech for the commitment to this change in light of the 50th anniversary of our Convention. And we look forward to partnering with all those who want to make this change effective. Lastly, Chair, I want to congratulate Russia for, of course, being chosen as our next host. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Norway, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Norway:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Norwegian Delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for your excellent management of the Committee meeting, held in the digital format for the first time, in a very smooth manner. We also thank the Rapporteur for her hard work in ensuring successful work on the Decisions. We would also like to thank the Advisory Bodies and the dedicated staff at the World Heritage Centre for the huge amount of work that they do, not only during the Committee meetings, but throughout the course of the year for the best of the Convention.

We would like to sincerely thank the permanent Delegation of the People's Republic of China to UNESCO and its ambassador for the great cooperation. Finally, we would like to commend the excellent leadership of Dr Rössler whose wisdom and integrity have enlightened us all. We wish you all the best for the future.

Since this is our last year as a member of the Committee, we would like to thank all our distinguished colleagues for four interesting and challenging years. During these four years, Norway has been an active member with a strong commitment to serve the aims of the Convention, represented by experts constantly seeking transparency and decisions based on scientific evidence.

The world is facing immense challenges, the alarming loss of nature and climate change considered the most prominent. The World Heritage Convention global commitment to the conservation of the most exceptional places on the planet while respecting their cultural and local connections make an invaluable contribution to address these threats. Given the clear legal provisions that this Convention provides, Committee members have the best prerequisites to make the right decisions to protect World Heritage properties' Outstanding Universal Value.

We wish the new members of the Committee, the Committee, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies much success in the years to come. Norway remains fully committed to the protection of World Heritage as a State Party to the Convention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the kind words. Bahrain, please you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bahrain:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try to be very brief, as we are all eager to reach the closing ceremony which I am sure will be as spectacular as the opening ceremony. Mr. Chair, as previous speakers have expressed, we would also like to express our greatest gratitude to you as Chair for your wise leadership through these difficult deliberations, either because of the online format or due to the subject matters at hand in the previous session. So, thank you again for that and it is much appreciated.

Our appreciation is also extended obviously to all the stakeholders involved including the Secretariat, the Advisory Bodies and the Rapporteur, and particularly, the Director of the World Heritage Centre. It is for us as well a very emotional day seeing you for the last time in your capacity as Director of the World Heritage Centre in this Committee session and we would like to reiterate our appreciation for all your efforts that has been exerted to us, the State party of Bahrain, as well to the Category 2 Centre here throughout the many years in your posts. And we look forward to further collaborating with you in your new academic role.

Mr. Chair, I think this Committee, this year, has discussed a number of very important policy documents which we believe will have implications on the future of the Convention. Since this is also our last year in the Committee, we have attempted over the past three years to safeguard the credibility of the Convention and withhold the *Operational Guidelines* with challenges, as all of you can imagine.

We will continue our role in engaging with other member States, specifically, as we reflect next year with regards to the future of this Convention as other members said. And I think what is obvious in our deliberations, during this session and previous sessions, is that further transparency, further dialogue need to take place among all stakeholders in the World Heritage system. We will continue to seek that reflected in the way we operate in the future. We wish all the best for the new Committee members that will be joining the Committee next year and we will continue our collaboration with them as an Observing State member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. Now, Thailand, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Thailand:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, my Delegation wishes to go on record in expressing our utmost appreciation to China and the people of China for going to great lengths and hosting this 44th session of the World Heritage Committee under exceptional circumstances. Our regret, of course, is that we could not be physically present in Fuzhou. We also would like to thank you very warmly, Mr. Chairman, for the very effective and efficient way you have chaired our meeting throughout the past two weeks.

As expressed by other Delegations, we very much appreciate your able chairmanship in guiding our meeting to a very fruitful and successful conclusion. On the part of Thailand, we are very happy that our Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex has been inscribed as a World Heritage site. We also look forward to taking up our role as Vice-Chair and working with the incoming Chair, Russia, at the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Finally, we would like to express our deep thanks to Madam Rössler for her 30 years of service to the World Heritage Centre and to the Committee. We wish her the best of luck. Thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. Australia, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Australia:

Thank you, Chair. As Australia's term on the Committee comes to a close, we want to take this opportunity to recognise the achievements of this Committee and the challenges and opportunities to come. This is particularly relevant as we collectively look towards the 50th anniversary. Taking action to address climate change and progressing reforms on the nomination and state of conservation processes were two key pillars of Australia's candidacy for this Committee term. Australia is very proud to be part of this Committee that has endorsed the updated climate change policy which will allow for a considered and proactive approach to supporting the conservation of sites around the world under pressure from this global challenge.

On this note, Chair, I wanted to join with others to provide my condolences to China and to other countries who have suffered disasters during the course of this meeting. We welcome the decision of the Committee to hold a dialogue on these matters and look forward to its flow through to future conservation processes. We are also very proud to be part of the Preliminary Assessment reforms which presents opportunities to progress the aims of the Global Strategy and to ensure the inclusive nature that we have just discussed and other speakers before me have mentioned.

I would like, on behalf of my country, to sincerely thank China for hosting, and, you, Chair, for skilfully navigating this challenging virtual environment. I would also like to pass my thanks to the permanent representative of China for his contribution in Paris to making the World Heritage Committee such a success. There is no doubt that the pandemic has made it globally difficult for many States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the Centre to not only assess but also progress the work to address impacts of OUV. China's commitment to making this meeting a success has been deeply appreciated by all Committee members and others involved in this meeting.

Against this backdrop, never has constructive and transparent dialogue been so critical, including with indigenous peoples and local communities to informing Committee decision-making. While this is the last Committee meeting of our current term, we will continue to be an active and constructive State party committed to promoting and maintaining the integrity of the World Heritage Convention in its important conservation role.

I thank you, Chair, and my dear Committee members for their tireless work and guidance and advice and their collaborative approach throughout this meeting and during Australia's term. I would also like to thank so many others, including the kingdom of Bahrain for its work with the Rapporteur and other. And, on this night, a very special sincere thanks to Dr Mechtild Rössler for her tireless work for over 30 years to assist States Parties and their peoples in their endeavours to conserve and protect the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Chair, we recognise the important role that we all play, all members of the Convention, Observers and civil society, and we thank you for your contributions to this effort. We are sorry that we have missed the opportunity to go to Fuzhou and I join with the sentiment of my colleague from Saudi Arabia. Throughout this meeting, we all look forward to visiting the many wonderful sites that have been inscribed. I thank you again all involved. These are important and very critical actions that we take and we are proud to have been a part of that. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much. Now, Guatemala, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Guatemala:

Thank you, Chair. First of all, I would like to congratulate and commend you for your work and your skilful leadership. Thank you very much for that. Thank you also to the city of Fuzhou for holding this extraordinary meeting in these difficult situations and we really miss being there, but hopefully soon we are going to arrive there and see all the wonderful things that we have seen.

I would also like to thank all your team or your Delegation that worked very hard not just there in Fuzhou but also here in UNESCO. We have made very good friends and that is very positive out of this. Also, I want to thank the Secretariat very much, everyone involved in the Secretariat from the Director to the practical helpers. Thank you very much, especially to Dr Rössler.

[Interpretation from Spanish] Congratulations and thank you very much for your work and I hope that you will be able to enjoy the fruit of everything that has been done.

[Back to English] I would also like to thank my colleague members of the Committee. It has been a wonderful experience for me personally and also for Guatemala in the last four years as part of the Committee. As we finish this session and this period, hopefully, so that we can come back again soon in the future. But the most wonderful thing is that we have been able to evaluate our culture, our heritage and also that we can actually work for our future because we are keeping up our history.

Thank you all for these wonderful experiences, for the learning process. I would also like to thank my team, the technical team in Guatemala and in Paris as well. Without them, we would not have been able to participate. I would like to thank the Guatemalan government for having promoted the Guatemalan candidacy at the World Heritage Committee. Thank you very much again for your wonderful skills for the smooth running of the session and we hope to see you in Russia. Congratulations again. Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for the kind words and thank you for your support. Now, Hungary, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Hungary:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Hungarian Delegation, I would like to take the honour of thanking the People's Republic of China for generously hosting the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for your invaluable consensus seeking, patience, hard and highly professional work. Hungary congratulates the Rapporteur for her tireless and precise service. We are grateful to the World Heritage Centre especially to the irreplaceable Madam Director Rössler and the Advisory Bodies for their committed support and to our fellow Committee members for their Committee discussions seeking the best solutions on some really difficult issues. Special thanks to all contributions which were presented in order to safeguard the spirit and the rules of the Convention.

Congratulations to all new properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and to the States Parties who made serious efforts to conserve the Outstanding Universal Value of their sites. Hungary would like to express its gratitude once again for the completed policy document on the impacts of climate change on World Heritage properties which is of fundamental importance for future conservation of World Heritage sites.

Last but not least, Hungary congratulates Russia for hosting our next session and Mr. Kuznetsov for his next year's chairmanship. Until we meet in Kazan next year, we wish all colleagues good health and professional successes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. South Africa, you have the floor.

The Delegation of South Africa:

Thank you, Chairperson. As this session comes to a close what remains of my Delegation is to warmly congratulate you, the people and the government of China for successfully hosting and presiding over this session. We also thank our dear colleague, the permanent delegate of China to UNESCO, for consulting with us here, in Paris, during the period leading up to this session.

Even though we could not travel to China for this meeting, through your affable manner and disposition, Chair, you brought to our offices and board rooms during the past two weeks a very positive spirit creating a conducive environment for our deliberations.

We are pleased that under your leadership the Committee also inscribed two sites from the African continent on the World Heritage List. Thereby giving concrete and practical expression of cooperation between Africa and China cooperation which is underpinned by greater solidarity.

We also join other Delegations in thanking the Secretariat under Dr Rössler for the professional and efficient manner in which they provided support to you, Chair, and to this Committee. We understand that Dr Rössler is retiring and we wish her well in her future endeavours.

And finally, I also congratulate Russia for its election as President and Chair of this Committee and we are looking forward to traveling to Russia for the next session of the Committee meeting. I thank you.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Mali, please you have the floor.

Délégation du Mali

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous voudrions par ce message renouveler aux autorités chinoises nos remerciements pour l'accueil et l'organisation de cette 44^e session du Comité. Monsieur le Président, à vous personnellement, nous vous adressons nos félicitations et notre gratitude pour la bonne conduite de nos travaux avec un sens élevé de patience et d'écoute inclusive. Toutes nos félicitations à l'ensemble des États parties pour les nouvelles inscriptions, les avancées sur les états de conservation et les progrès réalisés sur la question des sites de mémoire des conflits récents. Notre reconnaissance va en outre au Secrétariat, aux organes consultatifs, qui ont fait un travail formidable. À notre chère M^{me} Rössler, le Mali vous remercie chaleureusement pour tout ce que vous avez entrepris au sein du Centre du patrimoine mondial pour la protection et la promotion du patrimoine. Nous vous souhaitons plein succès pour vos projets futurs. Notre pays, le Mali, engagé aux côtés de tous pour la mise en œuvre effective et efficace de la Convention pour la protection du patrimoine mondial culturel et naturel. Vive la culture, vive le patrimoine, vive l'UNESCO. Je vous remercie.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Kyrgyzstan this time, please, you have the floor.

Délégation du Kirghizistan :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Nous arrivons à la fin d'une très belle session, grâce à votre leadership, Monsieur le Président, et à la présidence de la République populaire de Chine. Au nom de mon pays, nous vous remercions pour ce haut niveau de l'organisation et pour la conduite efficace à Fuzhou de la 44^e session élargie du Comité du patrimoine mondial. Depuis la ratification de la Convention concernant la protection du patrimoine mondial culturel et naturel de 1972, le Kirghizistan met tout en œuvre, les mesures et les efforts, pour remplir les obligations de cette Convention en garantissant la protection et le développement des valeurs et des objets culturels, leur popularisation plus large dans le contexte de ce développement rapide de la société. Nous voudrions souligner que, en 2017, le Kirghizistan a été élu pour la première fois en tant que membre du Comité. Ces quatre années étaient une expérience inestimable de travail et de coopération dans le cadre de la Convention. Le Kirghizistan va clôturer son mandat en tant que membre du Comité. À cet égard, nous tenons à exprimer notre gratitude aux membres du Secrétariat, qui travaillent tous les jours ; au Centre du patrimoine mondial, et sa brillante directrice, M^{me} Rössler ; nous saluons votre travail long et très efficace. Un mot à l'adresse à notre rapporteur ; nous la remercions pour la qualité de son travail. Nous remercions également les organes consultatifs pour leur coopération fructueuse. Nous voudrions encore saluer tous les membres du Comité qui, avec le Kirghizistan, ont porté l'esprit de cette Convention en cette 44^e session élargie. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, China, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of China:

Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to say that it is always a pleasure for my colleagues and me to work under your leadership, Mr. Chair, whether we are in Beijing or in Paris through an online connection. We thank you for your leadership. Today, I would like to thank all of my peer ambassadors, the permanent delegates. In the last half year, we have met a hundred times altogether including the ambassadors of Observer Delegations. It is always a pleasure and my Delegation has learned a lot from your perspective. This is my first session, so during our discussions, during our face to face meeting or during our discussion on the phone or through WhatsApp, we really have tried to understand your perspective. It has really enriched our understanding. I thank you very much for your friendship and your support.

Today, I would like to thank the UNESCO's Assistant Director General for Culture, Mr. Ottone. You were always available to discuss any issues associated with the preparation of this session whether it was at midnight or in the early hours of the morning. We enjoyed the discussion, collaboration with you and your team. I would also like to express my gratitude to the UNESCO's Assistant Director General for Administration and Management, Mr. Jeffreys to provide and organise the technical support team. As you can see the technical support has been wonderful. This time we have remained connected all the time with all the channels of interpretation. We thank our technical support team and the interpreters. We cannot do without them.

For Dr Rössler, my special thanks to you for your understanding. And I am really happy you enjoyed the two weeks of quarantine in Shanghai that showed your dedication to the work of the World Heritage. Your lifelong dedication towards heritage bears great fruits and we really benefited from your experience and inspiration.

Today, I would like to say thank you to our Ms. Rapporteur. Your command of the English language and also of the rules and the procedures of the Committee is admirable. You have done an excellent job. My Delegation will send you a package of gifts to express our special thanks to you, Rapporteur.

As I just mentioned, this has been the first session for me, I look forward to collaborating with all of you to understand the culture, to understand the heritage, to understand more the delicate balance between protection and development. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration at the 45th session in Kazan, Russia. With this, I thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. Now, Spain, please, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Spain:

[Interpretation from Spanish] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I already thanked you for the great quality you showed as Chair with your team at this Committee and also to thank the City of Fuzhou. I would also like to say how much common sense and delicacy the Chair has shown to move along. Spain would also like to give our thanks to the whole Committee without necessarily reading a long list of people. But we would like to say how much we thank Saudi Arabia for the work we have done together.

Also, to thank the Ambassador of China who was a focal, contact point between yourselves and us being in Paris. He was able often to resolve certain difficulties as we met this very large challenge of remaining connected in different time zones and different parts of the world knowing that we have had the Delegation here in Madrid and Valencia and our team is in Paris which is being led by our Deputy. We have been able to make all of this possible.

I would also like to thank Ms. Rössler for the work that she has done. And to arrive at something imaginative if you will: we have always been able to deal with her calm and smile. We would like to thank her for the way she has accomplished all this very difficult task making it easy although work in culture is never simple.

I would also like to thank all the staff of the World Heritage Centre, the Secretariat, the Rapporteur who has done an amazing job. It seems magic sometimes to make it so easy. I also would like to make a personal and special mention to the interpreters for the work they have done because we know how difficult it is. And it is practically impossible sometimes to try to interpret me, because I am not able to speak slower as I am speaking now, and not to lose myself sometimes in the meanders of my own thoughts. So, I would like to thank the interpreters very much.

I would also like to thank the city of Fuzhou, I will certainly come and visit you in the future and I would hope — as Ms. Rössler is retiring, at such a young age — I could beat her, but when she comes back, she will be able to tell us more about this beautiful city. I would also like to mention the other work that has been done, the diplomatic and emotional work it is very difficult to describe it. Thank you very much indeed.

Chairperson:

Thank you very much for your kind words. Now, Bosnia-Herzegovina, you have the floor.

The Delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

[Interpretation from Chinese] Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I would like to thank all the members of the Committee, and I would also like to express my sympathy for all the victims that suffered from the extreme weather conditions. I would also like to thank the municipality of Fuzhou for organising so efficiently this 44th session of the World Heritage Committee. And it is very regretful that we could not go to Fuzhou this time. Only part of the staff went there. My thanks go to the Chair as well as to Madam Rössler and her team for their efficient and diligent work. We actually thought out that the world is very small, even if we are separated by distance but our hearts are together.

We have, during this conference, discussed many important items and issues and we have made important decisions. We have also seen that there are a lot of media reporting about our conference. I would also like to say that this is the last year of our term in this Committee. I would like to thank all the members, colleagues and especially the People's Republic of China for their hosting of the current event. I would like to congratulate Russia who takes over the chairmanship for hosting the next session of the World Heritage Committee.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone, every friend. As I mentioned, it is very regretful that we could not go to Fuzhou this time. I hope in the future they will be more opportunities for us to go.

Chairperson:

Thank you to the delegate of Bosnia-Herzegovina for your kind words. Especially for your sympathy towards the people that suffered from the flood. Your Chinese is brilliant I am very pleased to hear it. And welcome to China. Now, I give the floor to IUCN.

IUCN:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I can speak on behalf of all three of the Advisory Bodies to firstly thank you, and also thank the Rapporteur, for your very calm and friendly and effective steering of our meeting. And we regret again that we could not meet together in Fuzhou to share in the hospitality, but also, because I think we have missed the human interactions that can only happen when the Committee meets in person.

We thank all of the Committee members, all of your experts, your site managers and those of all of the States Parties, the communities, the indigenous peoples that are committed to finding a future for the Convention as an exercise in inclusive conservation leadership. We fully subscribe to the needs to rebalance our approach to World Heritage to respond to those regions and those voices that remain inadequately represented in the work of the Convention whilst remaining true to the universal values and to the power of World Heritage.

I would also like to thank all of the staff in our own teams as Advisory Bodies, and especially all of the volunteers across the world, who give up their time and their expertise freely to support this Convention.

Mr. Chair, finally, I am especially sure that I can speak for all of the three Advisory Bodies in expressing our thanks to our dear friend and our dear colleague, Mechtild Rössler, for her immense professionalism through a lifetime devoted to World Heritage. Behind every Committee meeting there is a huge teamwork with the wonderful staff of the World Heritage Centre and that is happening through the work especially coordinated by the Director of the Centre.

For Mechtild, this has been a true vocation and having first met you, Mechtild, as an on-ground manager of a World Heritage site, I know that you bring the credibility and the vision of the Convention when you meet the communities that depend on World Heritage on the ground. Just as much as you do when you are sat on the podium. Thank you, Mechtild, you have been a rock for the credibility of the Convention. We will miss you enormously and we wish you all our good wishes for the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Thank you for your kind words. Dear colleagues, I really want to thank you once again for your support and solidarity demonstrated just now. I also wish to listen more to your reflections. However, we are short of time and we have to move forward now to the next part of our programme. I understand that the Secretariat would also like to take the floor for a few minutes from Paris. You have the floor please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. In addition to thanking you, Mr. Chairperson, for your leadership and smooth management of the Committee's deliberations and thanking the government of China, I wanted to take this opportunity, on behalf of myself and all our colleagues here at the World Heritage Centre and at UNESCO, to thank someone else today, someone who will be leaving us very shortly and someone who joined UNESCO headquarters in Paris in 1991 and started with the World Heritage Centre as the Centre was established in 1992. She has held many different positions including as programme specialist for natural heritage, Chief of Europe and North America, Chief of Policy and Statutory Meeting Section and Deputy Director before becoming Director later in 2015.

I am, of course, speaking, Mr. Chairperson, about Ms. Mechtild Rössler as she prepares to retire on the 30th of September. We would like to thank her for all her contributions and leadership of the World Heritage Centre which she has led since 2015 and for her dedication and long work at UNESCO.

As Ms. Rössler retires, we wish her all the very best for this next phase of her life and hope always to be able to turn to her. We have for the consideration of the Committee, Mr. Chairperson, one last very important document which I want to request you to allow me to present.

Chairperson:

Please.

The Secretariat:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. the presentation is going to proceed now. ^[a slideshow is presented] Thank you very much to Ms Rössler and to you Mr. Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson:

It is such a touching slideshow. Let me join the Secretariat in Paris, on behalf of the entire Committee and in my own name, to thank Dr Rössler for your outstanding leadership in the World Heritage Centre, and for your remarkable contribution to the course of World Heritage. Dr Rössler, you have our highest tribute and friendship forever. I trust that with your honourable retirement you will open a new chapter of your life and make constant and afresh contribution to the World Heritage. I wish you all the best.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues, last but not least, let me salute, on behalf of the entire Committee, our Ms. Rapporteur and her team who have done such a wonderful job for this session. Ms. Rapporteur, I would like to highly commend your professionalism and hard work and give you and your team big thanks and best wishes.

Dear colleagues I now declare the extended 44th session closed.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre:

Thank you very much.

Chairperson:

Dear colleagues it is my pleasure to inform you that a closing ceremony will take place in about ten minutes. I invite you therefore to stay connected and, in the meantime, we will broadcast a video entitled a Symphony of Mountains and Sea. Enjoy the beautiful video and see you very shortly. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 01:30:06 pm.

Fuzhou Declaration

We, the members of the World Heritage Committee, gathered online on the occasion of its Extended 44th Session held in Fuzhou, China, declare the following:

Recalling that the *Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage* has commanded global consensus and universal ratification over the past five decades, triggered unremitting efforts worldwide for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage, and promoted a harmonized relationship of humankind with nature, striving to preserve heritage including its cultural and biological diversity;

Fully appreciating the progress made in the protection of cultural and natural heritage, that has fostered international understanding and dialogue of civilizations through mutual respect of cultural identities and appreciation of the diverse cultural expressions contributing to global peace and sustainable development;

Reiterating the need for increased global cooperation on the different dimensions of sustainable development including environment, economy, and promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies in the perspective of shared future, integrated with the protection of cultural and natural heritage in order to attain the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*;

Being fully aware of the challenges and shared responsibilities for humankind as the custodian of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage sites, which are glorious and meritorious assets of nature and humanity, and provide vital ecosystem services and embodying various forms of human values and creativity;

Expressing growing concerns about the impact of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, which has demonstrated the importance of local communities and their shared future, integrally linked to the conservation of World Heritage sites, while highlighting a growing lack of human and financial resources needed to secure an effective protection of sites and support to local communities and their livelihoods;

Bearing in mind and witnessing that climate change has been leading to an increased frequency of extreme weather events, natural disasters and other negative impacts and which adds to other long-term challenges affecting cultural and natural heritage protection, such as demographic growth, rapid urbanization and inadequately planned urban development;

Recognizing the existing vulnerabilities of the heritage sector compounded by the prolonged pandemic and unprecedented current challenges of over-exploitation of natural and cultural resources, as well as the impacts of armed conflicts on the conservation of World Heritage sites;

Emphasizes the need to reaffirm and advocate UNESCO's core values, objectives and mission on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, with particular emphasis on the *World Heritage Convention* and its role for ecological conservation, and the construction of cohesive societies at the eve of its 50th anniversary, as well as the *2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* with a view to integrating heritage protection with sustainable development in historic cities and settlements;

Calls for the full engagement of governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, private sector and other key stakeholders to protect the World Heritage sites and protect them against threats to cultural and natural heritage sites in particular when exposed to armed conflicts, natural calamities or illicit trafficking of cultural and natural heritage assets;

Reaffirms the Declarations adopted at previous sessions of the World Heritage Committee such as those from Budapest (2002), Bonn (2015), Istanbul (2016) and Baku (2019), which reiterated the principles of the 1972 Convention and called for the protection of heritage from any impacts with a view to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage sites, including their integrity and authenticity;

Appreciates the importance of the *Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012-2022* with its six goals and 17 priorities and the achievements by the World Heritage Committee and the States Parties in the implementation of the Convention through openness and inclusiveness, constant dialogue and interaction, professional exchanges, knowledge/information sharing and partnership networking;

Commends the important role of UNESCO in its response to COVID-19 and the action taken by States Parties to mitigate the serious impact of pandemic on social, economic and cultural activities worldwide, especially in view of the new challenges to the conservation of cultural and natural heritage properties worldwide, such as the closure of World Heritage sites, the significant loss in number of tourists, delayed maintenance and restoration activities in some instances, and the safety and health of heritage site managers;

Welcomes the recent report published in May 2021 by UNESCO on "World Heritage in the face of COVID-19", with a view to laying the groundwork for a roadmap to recovery that will help enhance the future resilience of cultural and natural heritage, **and notes** the positive trends having emerged in the midst of the pandemic crisis, in particular the wide use of digital technology allowing people and sites to remain connected;

Also welcomes the objectives and principles laid out in the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, the *2015 Paris Agreement* and the *Convention on Biological Diversity*;

Highlights the recognition that the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems poses a major risk to human survival and development and the protection of the World Heritage sites and stresses the importance of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* to be held in Kunming (China);

Expresses gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for its contribution to host the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee;

Requests to further enhance the synergies between cultural and biodiversity-related Conventions bringing about a holistic approach to heritage conservation for both natural heritage and cultural heritage sites; and **calls upon** States Parties to reinforce international solidarity with a view of preserving cultural and natural heritage through fostering a new relationship of human beings with nature;

Calls for closer international cooperation to undertake appropriate research and planning to facilitate a balance between conservation and sustainable development, while addressing existing challenges and exploring new opportunities for World Heritage in the framework of universal multilateralism with common values shared by all humankind;

Urges wider participation of academics, civil society and communities to significantly strengthen links between heritage conservation and social and economic development activities, with an aim to protect World Heritage sites for the benefits of all in line with the 2015 World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy;

Calls for increasing support be provided to countries in need, in particular in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in order to establish a balanced, credible and geographical equally representative World Heritage List, which can also benefit awareness-raising, capacity-building and preservation activities of cultural and natural heritage;

Underlines the potential of digital technologies to improve effective heritage management and capacity-building programs and **appeals** to the international community to scale up support to developing countries, giving emphasis to Priority Africa and SIDS, in order to harness these new technologies and optimize innovative solutions;

Invites all States Parties to scale up World Heritage education and knowledge-sharing for the youth through formal and non-formal education in order to reinforce awareness of the need and value, knowledge and skills of World Heritage protection and foster a generation of "Patrimonitos";

Also invites States Parties to participate and engage in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention as an occasion for reflection and analysis on its history and looking towards its future, to promote the conservation of World Heritage, with the aim to maintain an open, inclusive, adaptive, sustainable, resilient, clean and beautiful world for future generations.

Déclaration de Fuzhou

Nous, membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, réunis en ligne à l'occasion de sa 44^e session élargie, organisée à Fuzhou, Chine, déclarons ce qui suit :

Rappelant que la *Convention concernant la protection du patrimoine mondial, culturel et naturel* a fait l'objet d'un consensus mondial et d'une ratification universelle au cours des cinq dernières décennies, qu'elle a suscité des efforts incessants dans le monde entier pour protéger le patrimoine culturel et naturel et qu'elle a favorisé une relation harmonisée entre l'humanité et la nature, en s'efforçant de préserver le patrimoine, y compris sa diversité culturelle et biologique,

Se félicitant pleinement des progrès réalisés dans la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel, qui ont favorisé la compréhension internationale et le dialogue des civilisations par le respect mutuel des identités culturelles et la reconnaissance des diverses expressions culturelles contribuant à la paix mondiale et au développement durable,

Réitérant la nécessité d'une coopération mondiale accrue quant aux différentes dimensions du développement durable, notamment l'environnement, l'économie, et la promotion de sociétés justes, pacifiques et inclusives dans la perspective d'un avenir commun, intégrée à la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel afin de réaliser le *Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030*,

Ayant pleinement conscience des défis et des responsabilités partagées par l'humanité en tant que gardienne de la valeur universelle exceptionnelle des sites du patrimoine mondial, qui sont des biens de la nature et de l'humanité porteurs de splendeur et dignes d'éloges, et qui fournissent des services écosystémiques vitaux en incarnant différentes formes de valeurs humaines et de créativité,

Exprimant des préoccupations croissantes quant à l'impact de la pandémie dévastatrice de COVID-19, qui a démontré l'importance des communautés locales et de leur avenir commun, intégralement lié à la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial, tout en soulignant un manque croissant de ressources humaines et financières nécessaires afin d'assurer une protection efficace des sites et de soutenir les communautés locales et leurs moyens de subsistance,

Gardant à l'esprit et témoignant que le changement climatique a entraîné une fréquence accrue de phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes, de catastrophes naturelles et d'autres effets négatifs, et qu'il s'ajoute à d'autres défis à long terme qui ont des conséquences sur la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel, tels que la croissance démographique, l'urbanisation rapide et le développement urbain insuffisamment planifié,

Constatant les vulnérabilités existantes du secteur du patrimoine, aggravées par la pandémie prolongée et les défis actuels sans précédent liés à la surexploitation des ressources naturelles et culturelles, ainsi que les impacts des conflits armés sur la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial,

Souligne la nécessité de réaffirmer et de défendre les valeurs fondamentales, les objectifs et la mission de l'UNESCO à l'occasion de son 75^e anniversaire, en mettant particulièrement l'accent sur la *Convention du patrimoine mondial* et son rôle pour la conservation écologique, et la construction de sociétés homogènes à la veille de son 50^e anniversaire, ainsi que sur la *Recommandation concernant le paysage urbain historique (2011)* en vue d'intégrer la protection du patrimoine au développement durable dans les villes et les lieux historiques ;

Appelle à l'engagement total des gouvernements, des organisations internationales, des organisations de la société civile, du secteur privé et des autres acteurs clés à protéger les sites du patrimoine mondial, et à les préserver des menaces qui pèsent sur les sites du patrimoine culturel et naturel, en particulier lorsqu'ils sont exposés à des conflits armés, à des calamités naturelles ou au trafic illicite de biens du patrimoine culturel et naturel;

Réaffirme les Déclarations adoptées lors des précédentes sessions du Comité du patrimoine mondial, telles que celles de Budapest (2002), de Bonn (2015), d'Istanbul (2016) et de Bakou (2019), qui ont réitéré les principes de la *Convention de 1972* et appelé à la protection du patrimoine contre tout impact en vue de protéger la valeur universelle exceptionnelle des sites du patrimoine mondial, y compris leur intégrité et leur authenticité ;

Reconnaît l'importance du *Plan d'action stratégique pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial 2012-2022* avec ses six objectifs et ses 17 priorités, ainsi que les réalisations du Comité du patrimoine mondial et des États parties dans la mise en œuvre de la *Convention* par l'ouverture et l'inclusion, le dialogue et l'interaction constants, les échanges professionnels, le partage des connaissances/informations et la mise en réseau des partenariats ;

Félicite l'UNESCO pour le rôle important qu'elle a joué dans sa réponse à la COVID-19 et pour les mesures prises par les États parties afin d'atténuer les graves répercussions de la pandémie sur les activités sociales, économiques et culturelles dans le monde entier, compte tenu notamment des nouveaux défis auxquels la conservation des biens du patrimoine culturel et naturel dans le monde entier est confrontée, tels que la fermeture de sites du patrimoine mondial, la baisse significative du nombre de touristes, le retard pris par les activités d'entretien et de restauration dans certains cas, ainsi que la sécurité et la santé des gestionnaires de sites du patrimoine ;

Accueille avec satisfaction le récent rapport publié en mai 2021 par l'UNESCO, « Patrimoine mondial face à la pandémie de COVID-19 », dont l'objectif est de préparer le terrain en vue de l'élaboration d'une feuille de route de relance qui contribuera à accroître, à l'avenir, la résilience du patrimoine culturel et naturel, et **note** les tendances positives qui sont apparues pendant la crise pandémique, en particulier la généralisation de l'utilisation de la technologie numérique permettant aux personnes et aux sites de rester connectés ;

Accueille également avec satisfaction les objectifs et les principes énoncés dans la *Convention-cadre des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques*, l'*Accord de Paris de 2015* et la *Convention sur la diversité biologique* ;

Souligne également la reconnaissance du fait que la perte de biodiversité et la dégradation des écosystèmes constituent un risque majeur pour la survie et le développement de l'humanité et la protection des sites du patrimoine mondial, et insiste sur l'importance de la 15^e Conférence des parties à la *Convention sur la diversité biologique* qui se tiendra à Kunming (Chine) ;

Exprime sa gratitude au Gouvernement de la République populaire de Chine pour sa contribution à l'accueil de la 44^e session élargie du Comité du patrimoine mondial ;

Demande de renforcer davantage les synergies entre les conventions culturelles et les conventions relatives à la biodiversité afin d'adopter une approche globale de la conservation du patrimoine, tant pour les sites du patrimoine naturel que pour ceux du patrimoine culturel, et **exhorte** les États parties à renforcer la solidarité internationale en vue de préserver le patrimoine culturel et naturel en favorisant une nouvelle relation entre les êtres humains et la nature ;

Appelle à une coopération internationale plus étroite pour entreprendre des activités de recherche et de planification appropriées afin de parvenir plus aisément à un équilibre entre la conservation et le développement durable, tout en relevant les défis existants et en explorant de nouvelles possibilités pour le patrimoine mondial dans le cadre du multilatéralisme universel avec des valeurs communes partagées par toute l'humanité ;

Prie instamment les universitaires, la société civile et les communautés de participer plus largement au renforcement significatif des liens entre la conservation du patrimoine et les activités de développement social et économique, dans le but de protéger les sites du patrimoine mondial pour le bénéfice de tous, conformément à la *Politique pour l'intégration d'une perspective de développement durable dans les processus la Convention du patrimoine mondial (2015)* ;

Appelle à un soutien accru aux pays ayant besoin d'aide, en particulier en Afrique et dans les petits États insulaires en développement (PEID), afin d'établir une liste du patrimoine mondial équilibrée, crédible et équitablement représentative sur le plan géographique, qui puisse également bénéficier aux activités de sensibilisation, de renforcement des capacités et de préservation du patrimoine culturel et naturel ;

Souligne en outre le potentiel des technologies numériques d'améliorer l'efficacité de la gestion du patrimoine et des programmes de renforcement des capacités et **lance un appel** à la communauté internationale afin qu'elle soutienne davantage les pays en développement, en mettant l'accent sur la Priorité Afrique et les PEID, afin d'exploiter ces nouvelles technologies et d'optimiser les solutions innovantes ;

Invite tous les États parties à intensifier l'éducation au patrimoine mondial et le partage des connaissances avec les jeunes par le biais de l'éducation formelle et non formelle afin de renforcer la sensibilisation à la nécessité et à la valeur de la protection du patrimoine mondial, ainsi qu'aux savoirs et aux compétences en la matière, et de favoriser une génération de « *patrimonitos* » ;

Invite également les États parties à participer et à s'impliquer dans la célébration du 50^e anniversaire de la *Convention du patrimoine mondial*, un événement à envisager comme une occasion de réfléchir et d'analyser l'histoire de la Convention et de se tourner vers son avenir, afin de promouvoir la conservation du patrimoine mondial, dans le but de maintenir un monde ouvert, inclusif, adaptatif, durable, résilient, propre et beau pour les générations futures.

Annex 2

Statement of the Delegation of the United States of America related to the Canaima National Park:

The members of the Venezuela delegation participating at the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, being held virtually in Fuzhou, China from July 16-31, represent the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the government of Venezuela. They are not speaking on behalf of the Venezuelan people. The United States continues to recognize the legal authority of the democratically elected 2015 National Assembly and the person chosen by this National Assembly to be its president as the interim President of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó. The Maduro regime's repression, corruption, and mismanagement have created one of the worst economic, political, and environmental crises outside of a war in modern history. The United States and others around the world share a moral obligation to support the Venezuelan people in their efforts to protect their natural heritage. On July 24, and in relation to the state of conservation of Canaima National Park (Agenda item 7B.199), a speaker representing the Maduro regime intervened in response to expressed NGO concerns about gold-mining activities in the Park. The United States unequivocally disputes the comments made on July 24 that the United States has manipulated or sought to politicize this issue. To the contrary, as an original signatory to the World Heritage Convention, the United States has consistently supported expert driven, transparent examination of World Heritage sites and nominations. A transparent and independent technical evaluation of the Canaima National Park would help to resolve outstanding concerns. The United States welcomes continued international cooperation to develop practical and effective solutions and looks forward to collaborating in the future with a delegation that represents a government legitimately elected by the people of Venezuela.