



CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE 21st CENTURY

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CALL FOR ACTION: "THE SPIRIT OF NAPLES"



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PREAMBLE

We, the Participants gathered in Naples to attend the UNESCO Conference on Cultural Heritage in the 21st Century (27-29 November 2023), wish to express our gratitude to the Italian Government and the City of Naples for providing a unique environment to reflect on the future of the UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and their increased synergies, in light of their respective 50th and 20th anniversaries.

We recognise the inspiring role played by the City of Naples in our deliberations, demonstrating an extraordinary integration of natural, cultural, tangible and intangible heritage components. They are interconnected, combined and mutually reinforcing, giving life to a unique example of powerful coexistence of tangible and intangible Heritage deeply rooted in the daily life of the citizens of Naples. Hence, testifying to the fundamental linkages between local communities and their natural, cultural and living heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Recalling the importance of safeguarding and promoting cultural -both tangible and intangible- and natural heritage of communities across the world;

Highlighting the respective achievements attained through the implementation of both the 1972 and 2003 Conventions over the past decades; thus, contributing to a broadened concept of cultural heritage that includes practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills, transmitted from generation to generation, and testifying to the rich diversity of the cultural capital for the sustainable development of peoples and communities around the world;

Recognising the importance of implementing integrated and innovative approaches, seeking to generate greater synergies between the 1972 and 2003 Conventions towards an enhanced and more effective protection and safeguarding of heritage in all its forms;

Considering the intrinsic interdependence between Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tangible Cultural/Natural Heritage, ideally to be considered as “Human Heritage as a Whole”;

Underlining, as enshrined in the MONDIACULT 2022 Declaration, the contribution of the 1972 and 2003 Conventions to advance the recognition and promotion of culture as a global public good, acknowledging the role of culture – in all its diversity – as a driver of sustainable development for the benefit of communities, and an engine of the economic growth of nations.

ACTIONS

We appeal to all UNESCO Member States and stakeholders to drive forward a prospective vision, by enacting public policies and strategies anchored in the following principles:

- **Safeguard cultural – both tangible and intangible – and natural heritage through holistic approaches that encompass its rich diversity as a whole, promoting equal access and participation for all**, as well as building on a reinforced nexus between heritage and local communities, placed at the heart of cultural strategies as rightful stakeholders and rightsholders.
- **Raise awareness of the importance of leveraging the interconnectedness of nature and culture** to promote environmental sustainability and address the impact of climate change, fostering **innovative, community-based and culturally grounded responses to challenges facing heritage**

sites, such as disaster risks and biodiversity loss, with a view to safeguarding indigenous, local adaptation and mitigation practices and know-hows.

- **Ensure the wellbeing and sustainable livelihoods of local communities and indigenous peoples** living in and around heritage sites, by valuing and sustaining their living heritage, protecting their intellectual property and reducing the risks of misappropriation of their heritage.
- **Foster quality education to ensure that knowledge, skills, practices, representations and expressions are transmitted in a comprehensive, coherent and sustainable manner to future generations**, by promoting the systemic integration of cultural heritage in all its dimensions, across all formal, non-formal and informal educational settings.
- **Ensure social and economic inclusion through heritage conservation and safeguarding strategies and initiatives**, that integrate a gender perspective and promote inter-generational dialogue and transmission by engaging youth.
- **Reinforce and expand partnerships to strengthen capacities at the local, national and regional levels to leverage culture** as a vector for social inclusion, economic growth and employment, and as a powerful transformational force for sustainable development, resilience and peace building.
- **Advocate for a systemic integration of culture in humanitarian action**, security strategies and peacebuilding processes, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2347 (2017), in recognition of the importance of cultural heritage for peace and security.
- **Develop and implement sustainable tourism policies that prioritise the safeguarding of heritage as a whole**, while harnessing its potential in and around heritage sites, including by integrating intangible heritage into tourism planning and management and providing smart solutions to address the challenges of over-tourism.
- **Encourage a sustained and constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue at all stages of the nomination processes concerning the listing mechanisms** of the 1972 and 2003 Conventions, including among States Parties, Advisory and Evaluation Bodies and the UNESCO Secretariat; thus, ensuring that nomination files meet the necessary requirements before examination by the respective Committees, towards a more harmonious, comprehensive and effective listing of heritage properties and elements.
- **Foster an objective, rigorous and scientific approach to the evaluation of nomination files** by the Advisory Bodies and Evaluation Bodies of the 1972 and 2003 Conventions, respecting the technical recommendations of these organisms concerning the examination of sites and elements; thus, enhancing the credibility of the Conventions and reducing the need for urgent safeguarding and monitoring of their state of conservation.
- **Provide enhanced assistance to under-represented Member States with a view to ensuring a more representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List**, with a particular focus on Africa and SIDS, notably by fostering capacity-building and exploring innovative approaches to listing criteria.