



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

The Assistant Director-General for Culture a.i.

To all Permanent Delegates and
Observers to UNESCO

Ref.: CLT/HER/EPR/16/4926

Subject: Consultation on an Action Plan to implement the Strategy on reinforcing UNESCO's action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict

Dear Sir/Madam,

At its 38th session (Paris, 2015), the General Conference adopted 38 C/Resolution 48, which provides a strategy for reinforcing UNESCO's action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict¹ (paragraph 1).

The Resolution invited the Secretariat to elaborate, **in coordination with Member States** and relevant actors, an action plan that further refines and implements the strategy, in accordance with UNESCO's mandate (paragraph 2). It also invited Member States to support the elaboration of the action plan for the implementation of the strategy by defining mechanisms for rapid response and the mobilization of national experts, as well as by contributing to the Heritage Emergency Fund (paragraph 3); and, invited the Director-General to explore, **in collaboration with Member States**, practical ways for implementing such mechanism for the rapid intervention and mobilization of national experts (paragraph 4).

Moreover, at its 199th session, the Executive Board, by 199 EX/Decision 5 (I, D), requested the Secretariat to "*further strengthen cooperation between UNESCO, relevant United Nations partners, and other concerned institutional stakeholders, for the implementation of this strategy, together with the Action Plan, and to submit a report thereon, at its 200th session*" (paragraph 10).

In line with the above resolution and decisions, and with a view to ensuring the proper consultation of Member States, please find herewith attached: (1) a draft of the Action Plan requested under 38 C/Resolution 48; as well as, (2) a proposal concerning practical ways for implementing a mechanism for the rapid intervention and mobilization of national experts, resulting from preliminary consultations. The activities proposed in the Action Plan reflect the scope of the adopted strategy and, in particular, of its two objectives (paragraph 16) and various priority areas of action defined therein (paragraphs 17-36).

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¹ See Document 38 C/49, accessible from:
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002351/235186e.pdf>

To facilitate the consultation process, an online questionnaire is provided (accessible [here](#)²), through which Member States are invited to provide comments. Allow me to draw your attention to the fact that each Member State is invited to submit a single reply on behalf of its government and National Commission. All responses should be submitted by **18 July 2016, midnight Paris time**, so as to enable the Secretariat to integrate the provided comments in the document to be submitted to the Executive Board at its 200th session. In addition, Member States are invited to inform the Secretariat (by email to: epr@unesco.org) in case they do not wish their comments to be made public.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. Bandarin', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Francesco Bandarin

Enc.

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO

² Questionnaire accessible via:
<https://secure.unesco.org/survey/index.php?sid=12422&lang=en>

Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Reinforcement of UNESCO's Actions for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the event of armed conflict

NOTE: The activities included in this Action Plan refer to the two main objectives and to all the priority areas of action of the Strategy for the Reinforcement of UNESCO's Actions for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the event of armed conflict, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 38th session (38 C/Res. 48). Activities are grouped according to their short, medium and long term priority, with long term extending to the end of the foreseen time span of the Strategy (i.e. until 2022). The estimated costs are approximate and will need to be confirmed or adjusted subject to actual needs and the specific conditions of implementation. It is also indicated in green, orange or red whether funding for each activity is fully, partially or not secured, respectively.

#	§ in 38C/49	Activity	Estimated Costs	Funding secured	Preparedness	Response	Recovery
Objective 1:							
Strengthen the ability of Member States to prevent, mitigate and recover the loss of cultural heritage and diversity as a result of conflict							
Short-term							
1	§20, §25	<p>Development of training tools and piloting of trainings for national law enforcement, armed forces and legal sectors on cultural property protection and illicit trafficking of cultural objects</p> <p>This activity will build on pilot materials developed in cooperation with the UNESCO Chair on Heritage and Peace at Newcastle University (UK), as well as on the Military Manual on the Protection of Cultural Property elaborated by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo, Italy). It will also take into account the ongoing cooperation with UNIDROIT, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organisation (WCO) and specialized police forces such as the Carabinieri (Italy) or the Guardia Civil (Spain). It will see the development of toolkits, playing cards and other items for increasing the knowledge and capacities of military personnel, custom officers and police forces. In addition, through the development of materials and conducting tailor-made trainings, the project will enhance the knowledge of how to prevent illicit trafficking and of the relevant international instruments and build capacities of legal professionals – in particular judges, prosecutors and lawyers - as well as heritage managers, law enforcement agencies, civil servants, actors of the art market, police, customs and the financial sphere. E-learning and other innovative methods will be used in order to facilitate the sustainability of this action. These activities will be piloted in at least 5 countries in Africa and the Middle East.</p>	250.000				

2	§20	<p>First Aid training for the culture sector</p> <p>Building on ICCROM’s successful international course on “First Aid to cultural heritage in times of crisis” and successful experiences through UNESCO’s Libya programme, this activity will include conducting practical trainings at local level on evacuation, protection, safeguarding and recovery of cultural heritage during emergencies in partnership with ICCROM. These trainings will be conducted in at least 8 countries in Africa and the Middle East. In addition, a first aid tool box (apps, infographics, short videos, etc.) will be developed for rapid damage assessment, which will be pilot tested in these 8 countries, and later on made widely available for heritage professionals and authorities globally. UNESCO’s Movable Heritage Outreach Programme handbooks for museums will also be widely disseminated.</p>	200.000				
3	§20	<p>Development of Inventorying, Monitoring and Assessment tools using ICT and social media for recording, reporting and documenting events impacting heritage in all its forms</p> <p>This will include a coordination meeting with relevant actors on technologies already mapped by UNESCO, as well as the identification of needs and possibilities. Building on this, policy guidance and concrete tools will be developed in view of better preparedness, as well as to contribute to post-conflict rehabilitation and transition. These will include – amongst others - innovative models for heritage databases using crowd-sourcing, social media, mobile applications and satellite imagery, as well as strengthening database systems of police and related actors to prevent looting and study trafficking routes. These tools will be piloted in at least 3 countries, and will later on be made widely available.</p>	100.000				
4	§20	<p>Risk assessment and emergency plans in areas at risk</p> <p>A comprehensive tool for the analysis and risk assessment of the culture sector in relation to emergency preparedness and response, including the identification of gaps and opportunities, will be developed and piloted in 3 priority countries (possibly Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sudan, as a start). Tailored strategies and action plans will be developed accordingly, to mitigate risks for culture and seize opportunities to harness its potential to contribute to resilience and stability.</p>	200.000				
5	§§21, 23, 25, 34, 39	<p>Campaign for the global ratification of UNESCO Conventions</p> <p>This will include organizing and participating in international fora and expert meetings, as well as the development of policies and models. Such advocacy will draw attention to State obligations and international responsibility to ratify and implement, in times of peace, relevant international culture standards as embodied in UNESCO Conventions and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention, and promote the International Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant instruments. Particular attention will be given to areas with low ratification rates. The initiative will continue advocating for the full respect, by all parties concerned, of international humanitarian law standards pertaining to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, and will therefore build on the partnerships with the ICRC and the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights.</p>	75.000				

6	§§22, 36	<p>Reinforcement of the #Unite4Heritage campaign using international, regional, and national media as well as social networks</p> <p>Building on the achievements of the global #Unite4Heritage campaign, which focused so far mainly on social media and was targeted at young people from the Middle East, communication and outreach material will be developed through a number of innovative partnerships and creative initiatives. These will have a more global scope and involve the tourism, media, art, and other industries, as well as museums, to expand the reach of the campaign while promoting its core values of cultural pluralism and appreciation for heritage in its diversity.</p>	200.000				
7	§24	<p>Development of legal and policy frameworks for the establishment of safe havens for cultural property</p> <p>A comprehensive legal review concerning the setting up and operationalizing of safe havens will be undertaken, as well as case studies examined from which principles and best practices will be drawn. Building on the work already carried out by the International Law Association and other initiatives, these findings will then be compiled into specific guidelines. In parallel, it is proposed to explore the setting up an international roster of institutions, ready to temporarily host movable heritage evacuated during conflict.</p>	75.000				
8	§24	<p>First aid and mitigation measures</p> <p>This activity includes the emergency stabilization of damaged monuments, the creation of emergency inventories and salvaging of cultural artefacts as well as their conservation, and enhanced security at museums and sites.</p>	300.000				
9	§24	<p>Establishment and maintenance of a Rapid Response Mechanism (Roster “Unite4Heritage”)</p> <p>Based on the provisions of 38 C/resolution 48 (§§ 3 and 4), and building on the MoU signed with Italy, this activity will include preparatory consultations with potential operational partners and staff- or fund-contributing Member States, the establishment and maintenance of a roster of cultural heritage experts, the organization of induction and training courses for pre-selected members of the roster, as well as the deployment of rapid assessment and advisory missions to affected countries, as needed.</p>	300.000				
10	§25	<p>Awareness-raising activities on looting and illicit trafficking</p> <p>In order to raise further awareness (in particular through social networks) among stakeholders related to looting and illicit trafficking, specific activities aimed at sensitizing in particular tourists, youth, the art market, museums and private collectors will be developed in partnership with tourism guides, museums, airlines.</p>	75.000				
11	§26	<p>Formulation and coordination of international efforts for country-based Emergency Response</p> <p>Pursuant to its coordination mandate, UNESCO will continue ensuring technical coordination among all stakeholders to formulate Emergency Action Plans for the Safeguarding of Culture in affected countries, as well as for the implementation of new and existing Action Plans, with a view to review progress, identify emerging challenges and determine the appropriate response.</p>	300.000				

12	§§27, 28	<p>Development of recovery plans</p> <p>Subject to the improvement of security in the concerned areas, this activity involves working with relevant authorities and stakeholders in at least 3 countries in the Middle East to plan for heritage rehabilitation or restitution in selected locations and to have these efforts integrated as a part of peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies. Activities will include all relevant preparatory work, such as collecting documentation, convening stakeholders, and planning. This activity will build the basis for the mid- to long-term implementation of programmes for cultural heritage rehabilitation and preservation, again subject to enabling security conditions.</p>	300.000				
13	§30	<p>Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PCNAs and PDNAs)</p> <p>In the framework of UN-wide PCNA (to be possibly renamed “Recovery and Peace Building Assessment”) and PDNA exercises, this activity aims at strengthening their culture component and training UNESCO staff, NGOs in the culture sector and relevant government officials in their methodology and implementation, through 5 dedicated regional workshops, as well as supporting UNESCO's participation for culture in an estimated 3-4 PDNAs and 2 PCNAs (RPBAs) exercises per year.</p>	350.000				
Mid-term							
14	§20	<p>Preparatory documentation, risk assessment and emergency plans for heritage in peripheral zones</p> <p>As a preventive measure, inventory and documentation work will be undertaken in countries affected by conflict or potentially at risk, including the development of community-based inventories (notably for intangible cultural heritage). This will include the development of no-strike maps. In at least 3 countries, these activities will develop comprehensive inventories and the related documentation of tangible and intangible heritage (these countries will also receive the First aid training under activity 2), which will include the use of digitization, 3D-scanning and related methodologies. They will also introduce tools such as the object ID for movable heritage as a preventive measure, which is promoted by UNESCO and ICOM, as well as the development of comprehensive risk preparedness plans for sites and cultural institutions.</p>	350.000				
15	§22	<p>Informal educational activities around culture, history and commemoration</p> <p>Building on the World Heritage in Young Hands Programme and jointly with UNESCO's education sector, relevant partners, and the NET-MED Youth and Youth 2.0 projects, it is planned to develop informal and interactive learning activities around cultural pluralism, history and commemoration as part of an effort to build more tolerant and inclusive societies. This foresees working together with local actors operating in refugee and IDP camps, including national Red Cross and Red Crescent movements, and specifically those managing child-friendly spaces and similar child- and youth-oriented efforts. This activity will be closely linked to activity 25, and will concentrate initially on the current Syrian refugee crisis, but will also develop activities for communities of at least 4 other countries.</p>	200.000				

16	§22	<p>Learning through heritage: enhancing youth engagement</p> <p>This activity will contribute to the larger "Learning through heritage: enhancing youth engagement" project, specifically regarding the promotion in educational activities of cultural diversity and the respect for cultural heritage in particular in emergency situations. The larger project foresees the development of a comprehensive programme for heritage education, with a long-term view to strengthening the protection of heritage in all its forms, facilitating access to and enjoyment of heritage among the younger generation as related to development of their self-identities, as well as to contributing to improved learning outcomes through two intertwined steps: 1) At the global level, UNESCO will develop a generic "teacher's resource pack on using all forms of heritage in education" including two modules: one on key contents and messages related to heritage (definitions, principles, national and international cooperation) and one on methodological guidelines on how to use it in teaching, in consultation with international and regional experts, and with inputs and feedback from the local level. 2) At the local level, pilot countries will use these two modules to train a team of facilitators, which will then work with teacher-training institutions on developing adapted educational resource materials (teacher training materials, lesson plans, sample curricula and content) to fit their respective contexts.</p>	1.000.000				
17	§24	<p>Establishment of a Global Observatory of Cultural Heritage to monitor and document attacks against cultural heritage sites</p> <p>This activity will build on the experience with the EU-funded Syria Observatory, and aim to collect systematic, reliable and verified data on damage, destruction, looting and misappropriation of cultural property, essential to define priority mitigating measures, prevent further loss and engage in longer-term planning for recovery. On the basis of the collected data, regular reports will analyze the situation on the ground. In partnership with UNOSAT and other relevant research projects, data and documentation of deliberate attacks on cultural heritage will also be collected, which are critical to address impunity and ensure that perpetrators of such acts are held accountable, while systems and tools will be developed to maximize the value of documentation efforts for transitional justice purposes. This activity will be piloted in 3 countries and then expanded to global scale.</p>	400.000				
18	§24	<p>Facilitate the creation of safe havens for cultural property</p> <p>Based on activity 7 concerning a comprehensive legal review regarding the setting up and operationalizing of safe havens, the development of specific guidelines, and the establishment of an international roster of institutions ready to temporarily host movable heritage evacuated during conflict, this activity will facilitate the actual evacuation of cultural assets from sites, museums and other cultural repositories to domestic safe havens or abroad, if requested by the countries concerned. To this end, UNESCO will assist by liaising between source and host countries, developing agreements, and where required, provide technical assistance for moving collections.</p>	500.000				

19	§28	Community-based recovery projects Whenever possible, and within the framework of broader UN-led peacebuilding efforts, it is proposed to implement a number of relatively small, but empowering, culture rehabilitation or recovery initiatives owned and implemented by local communities at their request. Such efforts will aim to reconcile communities, foster dialogue or contribute to enhancing conditions for return through cultural rehabilitation, tangible or intangible – linked to broader peacebuilding efforts.	300.000				
20		Culture creation for inclusion and peaceful societies This will involve working with artists and the performing art sector in post-conflict situations and with displaced communities in at least 5 countries to ensure greater inclusion and social stability, as an enabling factor for other activities related to transition and peacebuilding efforts.	250.000				
21	§§20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30	Continuation of short-term activities Relevant elements (e.g. trainings, awareness-raising, advocacy, etc.) of short-term activities 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 will be continued in the mid-term as well.	2.175.000				
Long term							
22	§19	Strengthen Conventions' operational guidelines and build synergies in their implementation This activity involves the analysis of the gaps and opportunities – specifically related to the protection of culture in armed conflict - associated with all the Conventions and with their possible synergies, which would lead to proposals for strengthening the effectiveness of the Conventions, to be then formalized through a set of standard operating procedures (SOP). This would include exploring options for strengthening reporting and monitoring the implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention and its two (1954 and 1999) Protocols within their statutory processes.	100.000				
23	§§20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30	Continuation of short and mid-term activities Relevant elements (e.g. trainings, awareness-raising, advocacy, etc.) of short-term activities 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, as well as mid-term activities 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 and 20 will be continued in the long term as well.	4.025.000				
Objective 2: Incorporate the protection of culture into humanitarian action, security strategies and peacebuilding processes by engaging with relevant stakeholders outside the culture domain.							
Short-term							

24	§25	<p>Strengthened cooperation in the fight against illicit trafficking</p> <p>This activity will aim at reinforcing on-going cooperation with INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, UNODC, national specialized police units, research initiatives, university networks and other partners, including from the culture sector such as UNIDROIT and ICOM, for the tracking, authentication, seizure, conservation and restitution of objects stolen and illegally exported, including the joint development of tools and international as well as domestic policies. This activity is closely linked to activity 1.</p>	100.000				
25	§29	<p>Cooperation and exchange of information with the International Criminal Court (ICC)</p> <p>Based on the data collected via the Global Observatory of Cultural Heritage (activity 17), UNESCO will support the ICC in the prosecution of perpetrators of attacks against cultural heritage, if and when a legal case is opened, by sharing relevant factual information, including gathered and analyzed in cooperation with partners from the IT sector.</p>	100.000				
26	§34	<p>Cooperation and exchange of information with the Human Rights Council and the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights</p> <p>In order to mainstream culture into Human Rights policies and monitor violations of cultural rights, in particular in the context of armed conflicts, this activity will include research, assessments, the development of guidelines, and the organization of special advocacy events in the framework of the Human Rights Council and in cooperation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights. It could also involve cooperation with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide for the development of tools that would take consideration of violations of cultural rights and attacks against culture for early warning of genocidal processes.</p>	150.000				

27	§35	<p>Integration of the protection of cultural heritage and diversity in military including UN peace-keeping operations</p> <p>This activity will include training and sensitization activities, building on the experience of UNESCO in working with MINUSMA in Mali but also with other UN peacekeeping missions in Lebanon, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as well as on the work carried out in the past by the International Blue Shield Committee, pilot training materials developed in cooperation with the UNESCO Chair on Heritage and Peace at Newcastle University (UK), as well as the Military Manual on the Protection of Cultural Property prepared by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo, Italy). These will be adapted to the specificities of armed forces (national or regional, e.g. NATO) and peacekeeping forces that could be deployed or mandated by the UN Security Council and have a mandate for the protection of cultural heritage. The training modules will be tested in pilot capacity-building initiatives in cooperation with UNDPKO and UNITAR. They are aimed at enhancing, among military personnel, awareness of the basic principles of International Humanitarian Law related to cultural property and more in general of the importance of culture and heritage and the need to safeguard them.</p> <p>Furthermore, also building and expanding on the MINUSMA precedent, this activity will include the exchange of information (e.g. provision of no-strike lists) and advising on cultural property protection, as well as, if and when explicitly foreseen within their mandate as determined by the UN Security Council, cooperation with UN peacekeeping missions on the ground for the protection of cultural and natural heritage, through the deployment of technical experts under UNESCO's coordination.</p>	300.000			
28	§35	<p>Promoting the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict - as part of International Humanitarian Law - among Armed Non-State Actors (ANSAs)</p> <p>In cooperation with the NGO Geneva Call, and in the context of an increase in intra-state conflicts with strengthened engagement of ANSAs, this activity will aim at raising these groups' awareness and promoting their respect of basic principles of International Humanitarian Law related to cultural property and more in general of the importance of culture and heritage and the need to safeguard them. This will involve the preparation of a scoping study and the development of capacity-building and awareness materials, which could be used by relevant NGOs and other humanitarian actors having interaction with ANSAs.</p>	100.000			
Mid-term						

29	§34	<p>Integration of culture into humanitarian relief efforts related to displacement</p> <p>This will include research, promotional materials, assessments, development of guidelines, training and the organization of special events with the relevant UN Agencies (Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), UNHCR, IOM) and selected humanitarian actors at global and grassroots levels. A particular focus – as a priority - will be on displacement and migration, addressing access to culture and cultural rights in situations of displacement, including through the development of dedicated tools (such as refugee registration tools, the IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix) and on enhancing possibilities for return. With a pilot effort focusing in particular on the Syrian refugees, assessments will be conducted for the safeguarding and importance of intangible cultural heritage for community resilience during humanitarian crises, leading to the development of concrete tools.</p>	200.000				
30	§34	<p>Integration of culture into peacebuilding efforts</p> <p>Against the background of the ongoing review of the UN Peace architecture, as decided by the UN General Assembly, this activity will aim at integrating a culture component into policies and tools used by UN actors involved in peacebuilding efforts. This will involve the development of research, promotional materials and guidance, for example for UNDPA Advisors and Peace Building Support Office staff; the inclusion of culture into vulnerability assessments tools (such as the Conflict and Development Analysis (CDA) recently elaborated by the UN Working Group on Transition); the organization of thematic meetings (e.g. at the Peace Building Council’s sessions); and ultimately the elaboration of proposals for projects to be supported under peacebuilding funding mechanisms. This will be done at a global level, and subject to the availability of funds, piloted in at least 5 countries in cooperation with the relevant humanitarian actors.</p>	200.000				
31	§35	<p>Protected cultural zones</p> <p>Building on the legal bases provided within the 1954 Convention and its Second Protocol, as well as on the right of initiative granted to UNESCO therein, the activity will explore, through consultations with UNDPKO and UNDPA, the legal framework for the possible establishment of protected cultural zones in conflict-affected countries, as well as the practical implementation modalities on the ground, including through UNESCO partners such as the ICRC.</p>	75.000				
32	§§25, 29, 34, 35	<p>Continuation of short-term activities</p> <p>Relevant elements (e.g. trainings, awareness-raising, advocacy, etc.) of short-term activities 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 will be continued in the mid-term as well.</p>	850.000				
Long term							
33	§§25, 29, 34, 35	<p>Continuation of short and mid-term activities</p> <p>Relevant elements (e.g. trainings, awareness-raising, advocacy, etc.) of short-term activities 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28, as well as mid-term activities 29 and 30 will be continued in the long term as well.</p>	1.250.000				
General							

29	§51	Management and promotion of the Heritage Emergency Fund				
		This will include the development of procedures and assessment and evaluation mechanisms, the coordination of the implementation of activities, the reporting as well as initiatives for outreach, fund-raising and communication. These activities may include the preparation of promotional and fund-raising materials, the organization of information meetings and the development and maintenance of a comprehensive webpage – within the website of UNESCO - on the programme with updated information on current activities.	250.000			
Human Resources (over 6 years)						
		1 (P3) Coordination of Heritage Emergency Fund and of Rapid Response Mechanism - CLT/HER/EPR	1.103.976			
		1 (P3) Development and implementation of innovative partnerships and tools - CLT/HER/EPR	1.103.976			
		1 (P1/P2) Research, Knowledge management and Communication - CLT/HER/EPR	725.976			
		1 (P2) 1970 - Project Officer - CLT/HER/MHM	936.000			
		1 (P2) 1954 - Project Officer - CLT/HER/CHP	936.000			
		1 (P2) 1972 - Project Officer - CLT/HER/WHC/ARB	936.000			
		3 (P3) Project Officers - Field Offices covering priority areas (e.g. Iraq, Syria, Libya)	3.576.024			

GRAND TOTAL 24.917.952

ANNEX II

Proposal for the establishment and maintenance of a mechanism for the rapid intervention and mobilization of national experts (Roster “Unite4Heritage”)

Introduction

Resolution 48 adopted by the General Conference at its 38th session (38 C/Resolution 48) calls, in its paragraph 3, on Member States to define mechanisms for the rapid mobilization of national experts, as a way to support the implementation of the Strategy on the reinforcement of UNESCO’s action to protect culture and promote cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict. In its paragraph 4, moreover, the resolution invited the Director-General to explore, in collaboration with Member States, practical ways for implementing such mechanism for the rapid intervention and mobilization of national experts.

The following describes how such mechanism could be set up within UNESCO, resulting from preliminary consultation.

Establishment and operation of the rapid response mechanism

In order to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the response, the proposed mechanism for the rapid intervention of national experts should be based on a roster that UNESCO would establish, containing pre-selected experts in fields related to the protection and safeguarding of culture, ready to be deployed.

Within UNESCO, the roster would be managed by the Unit for Emergency Preparedness and Response of the Culture Sector.

The roster would be open to all, including individuals, experts from NGOs or seconded by Governments, through a call for expression of interest by UNESCO. Their candidatures would be screened against a set of pre-determined profiles and qualifications, drawn from past experience, and selected with the help of an advisory panel established on purpose. Desired competencies will not be limited to knowledge and skills within a specific area of knowledge related to the protection of culture, but also include the ability to work under stress and within a multicultural environment. Special attention would be put to ensure a diversity in profiles, regional experience, language skills, and gender.

The selected experts will become members of the roster and will be asked to guarantee their readiness to be deployed within a short period of time and provide their services, possibly in areas affected by a critical situation. Once selected, the expert members of the roster will be required to undergo an induction course and specific training programme. These will be aimed at providing them with relevant information on the context in which they may be deployed, focusing on institutional and security arrangements, but also on culture-related processes to which they may be asked to contribute, such as the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for Culture. In addition, as customary for all UNESCO experts, the members of the Roster will be required to undertake – and maintain updated - the standard online security training courses provided by the UN, and will received specific country-briefings when deployed.

Experts of the Roster would be used to assist in the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage from threats that may arise in emergency situations associated to possible armed conflicts and/or natural disasters. To this end, they might be employed at anyone of the three stages of the emergency management process, that is before, during and after, to contribute to preparedness, immediate response and recovery initiatives.

The members of the Roster, when deployed on mission, will assist in the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage by exercising their relevant professional expertise of a legal or technical nature, i.e. not by enforcing laws and security (e.g. ensuring the physical protection of people, a heritage site or Museum), regardless of whether, in their own institutions, they have a civilian, police or military status.

Among the possible activities that the experts of the Roster might be asked to undertake, always in full consultation with and at the request of the concerned national authorities, are the following:

- Rapid assessment of damage and other needs related to cultural heritage and in line with relevant national legislation, and identification of urgent safeguarding measures;
- Technical support to the implementation of urgent safeguarding measures, including emergency documentation, stabilization of structures at risk, salvaging and storage of collections, transport of movable cultural properties at risk to safe havens, legal counseling;
- Capacity building, including through training of relevant staff from national authorities, NGOs and volunteers;
- Legal advisory services to national authorities on measures to strengthen the protection of cultural property;
- Culture-related activities in support of internally displaced and refugees, such as psycho-social and educational programmes, vocational training, etc.

The actual deployment of the members of the Roster will be subject to the granting of security clearance by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and require the formalization of certain legal and administrative arrangements, to comply with United Nations established standard procedures. There exist different options, depending on the timeframe and the funding source, but in all cases the deployed experts will have to sign some form of individual contractual arrangement with UNESCO and, when on mission, will have the status of “UNESCO experts”, not UNESCO staff. These options may include:

- UNESCO taking complete charge of the deployment;
- UNESCO relying on a governmental organization to deploy its national experts, through various arrangements (loans or stand-by agreement); or
- UNESCO relying on an external Stand-by Partner.

Experts from the roster could be also deployed in the framework of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, which would include in its mandate – as defined by the United Nations Security Council – the protection of cultural property and which would request UNESCO – in the relevant UNSC resolution – to assist in implementing this particular aspect of its mandate. In such circumstances, UNESCO might wish to define specific arrangements with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) whereby the experts of the roster, under UNESCO’s coordination, would cooperate with the United Nations peacekeeping mission in protecting cultural and/or natural heritage. The opportunity of a similar arrangement would be assessed by UNESCO on an ad hoc basis, and would require further formal agreements to be completed between UNESCO and UNDPKO in accordance to the rules and regulations of both parties and in consultation with the authorities of the concerned country. The terms of the arrangement would depend on various factors, including the required scope of work, the presence of a UNESCO Office in the country hosting the Headquarters of the

peacekeeping mission and the availability of funds to support the deployment of the experts. The contribution by the UNESCO experts might focus on training and awareness raising of the mission personnel (notably police and military) on cultural property protection; capacity building of national authorities and local communities; and technical assistance for assessment and urgent protection and safeguarding measures. The UN Peacekeeping Mission could, as was the case for MINUSMA in Mali, contribute by ensuring logistics and security support, as well as in monitoring the situation related to cultural heritage.

The establishment and operationalization of the roster would require significant resources for UNESCO, on a structural and permanent basis. Ideally, these should be foreseen within the regular programme and budget of the Organization, at least to maintain its basic capacity to manage the roster. Extrabudgetary contributions, however, will be also critical. Interested donors could contribute through the recently established Heritage Emergency Fund or through specific Funds-in-Trust agreements.