



**CULTURAL HERITAGE:
A BRIDGE TOWARDS A SHARED FUTURE**

**Sixth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage
in South-Eastern Europe**

**CETINJE, MONTENEGRO
23 April 2010**

ACTION PLAN

For the Implementation of Cetinje Declaration

On July 19, 2004 the Ministers of Culture of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Italy, Moldova, Montenegro Romania, and Serbia, gathered on occasion of the First Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe (hereinafter, SEE) adopted an Action Plan for the enhancement of cultural heritage as a shared resource for dialogue, peace, tolerance, and sustainable development. Further to that event, the Mostar Action Plan (hereinafter referred to as: MAP) constituted the basic reference for the definition of numerous activities of cultural cooperation in SEE, within the regional initiative “Cultural Heritage - a Bridge towards a Shared Future”.

Four years after the Mostar event, on occasion of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in SEE (Bucharest, 20 September 2008), the Ministers of Culture of the afore-mentioned countries agreed on the necessity to assess the results so far achieved in the implementation of the MAP and, in relation to these, to possibly revise that document by means of a new Action Plan to be presented during the Sixth Ministerial Conference, to be held in Montenegro.

Following up to that decision, the present “Cetinje Action Plan” is intended to revise the objectives and action lines stipulated by the MAP, with a view at updating the priorities

fixed by that document and at defining measures for overcoming the challenges arisen during its implementation.

I. Implementation of the Mostar Action Plan: assessment and lessons learned

During the implementation of the activities indicated by the MAP, the following *results* have been achieved:

- Regional cooperation on cultural heritage in SEE has been considerably improved through conceiving new initiatives of cooperation between the South-East European countries, with the active support of international organizations (especially UNESCO);
- The “Trust Fund for Cultural Heritage in SEE” (hereinafter, Trust Fund) has been established as a special instrument of financial support to the implementation of the MAP, initially financed by the contribution of the Italian Government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Cooperazione Italiana);
- An efficient mechanism of coordination and implementation of the activities financed through the Trust Fund has been established, especially through the Section for Culture of the UNESCO Office in Venice;
- Concrete results have been achieved in the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE, by means of the activities realized within the Trust Fund at both national and regional level;
- The safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage has gained priority within the political agendas of the South-East European member states participating in the initiative.

At the same time, some *challenges* have been identified that hindered the complete attainment of the proposed objectives in the implementation of the MAP, such as:

- Lack of coordination between the MAP and other relevant international cooperation initiatives;
- Limited mobilization of resources. In particular, the Trust Fund did not function as a multi-donor instrument as it was originally conceived, and depended on the generosity of one single donor;
- Scarce cooperation and synergies established with the civil society and the private sector;
- Necessity to extend the MAP’s field of action towards a broader approach to cultural cooperation, with special reference to the inclusion of intangible cultural heritage, underwater cultural heritage, contemporary creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions.

Furthermore, since the approval of the MAP the regional scenario concerning the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage underwent substantial *improvements*, including:

- The overall progress in the stabilization of the region and in its integration within the common European structures;

- The increased contribution of culture to the regional development processes, with special regard to the production, consumption and exchange of cultural goods and services, as well as the development of the cultural tourism;
- The progresses achieved in the development of institutional capacities and in the introduction of relevant international standards, with special regard to the UNESCO Conventions in the field of culture;
- The enhanced visibility of the cultural assets from SEE, confirmed by the number of newly inscribed cultural elements from this region in the UNESCO lists (including both the World Heritage List, and the Representative List for Intangible Cultural Heritage)
- The re-establishment of fruitful conditions for the enhancement of dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation between the peoples and countries from the region.

Based on the lessons learned during the implementation of the MAP, the present Cetinje Action Plan intends to update and supplement the objectives and action lines laid down in Mostar, thus posing itself as a milestone in advancing the cultural cooperation in SEE as an instrument of dialogue and sustainable development.

The Cetinje Action Plan stipulates the following:

II. OBJECTIVES

The *general objective* of this Action Plan shall remain the enhancement of culture and cultural heritage as a priority for international cooperation in South-Eastern Europe, by means of which dialogue, mutual understanding and sustainable development are to be supported.

The *specific objectives* are:

- A. Increasing cooperation in the field of culture with and between all the relevant regional cooperation frameworks in SEE;
- B. Improving the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE, by means of developing capacities of relevant institutions and professionals;
- C. Strengthening cooperation in the field of intangible cultural heritage and underwater cultural heritage;
- D. Reinforcing communication, public awareness, and cooperation with the civil society in the field of culture;
- E. Promoting synergies with tourism, cultural industries and the private sector

III. MEASURES

For the purpose of achieving the above-mentioned objectives, while considering the different implementation conditions, and compatibly with the internal policies and priorities of each member state, the countries participating in this Action Plan commit themselves to undertake the following measures:

Objective A: Increasing cooperation in the field of culture with and between all the relevant regional cooperation frameworks in SEE

Measures:

1. Culture shall be intended as the continuous forming, consolidation and interaction of material, intellectual and emotional features, thus promoting values of inclusiveness, openness, and acceptance of the other on a ground of mutual respect. Such concept of culture shall lead to extend regional cooperation from the field of cultural heritage to a broader action involving the safeguarding and promotion of cultural diversity in all its forms of expression, as an indispensable resource for supporting reciprocal knowledge, dialogue, and mutual understanding between the countries and peoples of South-Eastern Europe.
2. The safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity shall be stimulated and mainstreamed within all international mechanisms of cooperation focusing on SEE, whereupon priority shall be given to the development of regional and cross-border projects of cultural cooperation.
3. The enhancement of cultural cooperation in SEE shall include common efforts aimed at the full inclusion of culture within the internationally recognised development goals, as well as of related cooperation programmes, hereby including the new processes of joint programming within the UN framework.
4. The richness of cultural heritage and cultural diversity in SEE shall be interpreted as shared resource for fostering a positive and peaceful image of the region. To this end, efforts shall be stepped up for the presentation of multinational candidature files for inscription in the UNESCO's World Heritage List and Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, including the prioritisation of multinational cultural elements in the allocation of international support.

Objective B: Improving the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE, by means of developing capacities of relevant institutions and professionals;

Measures:

5. Reaffirming the enhancement of international cooperation as the guiding principle of the present Action Plan, future activities for improving the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE shall be guided by a cross-cutting approach based on the sharing of knowledge and good practices.
6. As a crucial tool for enhancing regional cooperation between relevant institutions and professionals, as well as for supporting capacity development, networks of experts shall be established in the various domains of safeguarding, management and promotion of cultural heritage. Such networks shall operate by means of regular meetings, joint training programmes whereas possible, and the creation of virtual platforms for facilitating continuous contacts and exchange of information.
7. As a complementary tool to the establishment of networks of experts, the creation of regional data-bases is proposed in the various fields of cultural heritage administration. Such instruments shall be intended to favour the collection and sharing of relevant information, in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and to support normative harmonisation with European and international standards.
8. Efforts shall be continued and possibly stepped up for the realisation of joint training programmes, targeting in the first place the experts and officials from the line ministries of SEE countries, and possibly including professionals from specialised centres and universities. Within this framework, the implementation of the UNESCO Conventions in the field of culture – intended as a coherent set of complementary legal instruments – is proposed as a priority topic for the definition of future training programmes.
9. In this sense, the centres of excellence on the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage already existing in SEE, as well as those to be possibly established, especially if recognised as UNESCO Centres, shall be considered as priority platforms for the definition and realisation of joint training programmes and other regional capacity-building initiatives.

Target C: Strengthening cooperation in the field of intangible cultural heritage and underwater cultural heritage;

Measures:

10. A comprehensive approach to cultural heritage shall be promoted within regional cooperation initiatives, in order to adequately cover all aspects of the South-East European cultural legacy in its diverse forms of expression, both tangible and intangible.
11. In this sense, the annual seminars of expert from SEE on Intangible Cultural Heritage, participated by all the countries in the region and in neighbouring areas, and supported by UNESCO, shall be considered as a consolidated good practice and its continuation and further reinforcement is encouraged.
12. Based on the experience developed in the field of intangible cultural heritage, the establishment of a regional network of experts on underwater cultural heritage is proposed. The safeguarding of underwater cultural heritage shall also be given adequate relevance within national and regional cultural policies, hereby including the cultural heritage associated to both marine and inland waters.

Target D: Reinforcing communication, public awareness, and cooperation with the civil society in the field of culture

Measures:

13. Culture heritage is first and foremost a resource of public interest and as such it shall remain available to all citizens, regardless of social, educational and geographic distinctions. To this end, common efforts for facilitating the public access to cultural heritage, its understanding and proper usage are to be reinforced.
14. Facilitating the access to cultural heritage shall be accompanied by increased efforts aimed at popularising cultural heritage and disseminating knowledge to the public, especially by means of media and dedicated communication campaigns.
15. In this sense the role of modern information and communication technologies shall be further developed, so as to fully tap their potential in terms of accessing and promoting cultural heritage. This shall include the development of specialized research programmes for the application of digital technologies to the management of cultural heritage.
16. Activities in cooperation with the civil society shall include events and initiatives aimed at popularising culture, such as the organization of cultural heritage days and the establishment of cultural awards, school competitions and art camps. In the spirit of this Action Plan, the development of similar activities over a cross-border and international dimension is encouraged.

17. Cultural exchanges shall be promoted between the South-East European countries, including a more active participation of the schools and university systems and through all levels of education.
18. The introduction of optional subjects in elementary and high schools curricula shall be supported, which will raise the awareness on the significance of culture and cultural heritage.
19. The role of artists and intellectuals as promoters of positive cultural values shall also be brought to the fore within regional cooperation forums, with the double objective of enriching the cooperation platforms and increasing their public outreach.

Objective E: Promoting synergies with tourism, cultural industries and the private sector

Measures:

20. Considering the growing relevance of culture in development terms, the scope of future efforts within cultural cooperation in SEE shall be extended from the field of cultural heritage to culture in a more comprehensive understanding, thereby including those aspects with a higher impact on development such as creativity and the cultural industries.
21. In this sense, an integrated approach to the management of cultural resources shall be encouraged, in order to fully tap the potential of synergic interplay between cultural heritage, contemporary creativity, and the development processes. Possible actions in this field may include the establishment of an annual South-East European award for the best practice in cultural management.
22. The safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in all its different forms of expression, including cultural landscapes shall be considered as a key-measure for the development of sustainable and responsible forms of tourism.
23. Accordingly, regional and cross-border cooperation shall be encouraged for the purpose of defining transnational “cultural routes” and related tourism offers, possibly including the development of infrastructures, the publication of common editorial and communication projects for the promotion of the shared cultural heritage, the creation of transnational museum networks, as well as all other initiatives of cross-border cooperation.
24. Similarly, common efforts shall increasingly focus on developing collaboration with the private sector, thus acknowledging its vital role in stimulating cultural production and in translating cultural components into proper development factors. Cooperation in this sense shall include the sharing of good practices on the establishment of public/private partnerships on cultural issues, ranging from

the management of cultural heritage to the promotion of contemporary cultural expressions.

25. The increased involvement of the private sector into regional cultural cooperation shall be extended to the support of traditional arts and crafts, including the realization of specific training and capacity building activities, as well as the definition of possible common promotional initiatives.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Coordination Mechanisms

- 4.1.1. In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a close coordination shall be sought so as to ensure the coherence of all follow-up actions to the principles embodied by the present document, as well as by the Declarations approved by the previous Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in SEE. Such coordination shall be pursued by means of ensuring a permanent secretariat, also responsible for the international coordination of related operational activities.
- 4.1.2. In this regard, the contribution of UNESCO to the present cooperation framework since the first Ministerial Conference in 2004 should be highlighted, especially through the action of the Culture Unit of UNESCO Venice Office. Also in consideration of the mission and mandate of the UNESCO Venice Office as Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, the continuation of its action as permanent secretariat for the development of regional cooperation within the framework of the Ministerial Conferences of Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe is strongly encouraged.
- 4.1.3. At the same time, the further strengthening of the International Working Group (IWG) created further to the Second Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in SEE (Venice, 2005) is encouraged, composed of representatives of all participating countries and invested with consultative and advisory functions towards the permanent secretariat.
- 4.1.4. In order to ensure the regular and continuous operations of the IWG, it is recommended to convene annual mid-term IWG sessions to be held within six months after the most recent Ministerial Conference, with the purpose of offering an effective forum for the coordination of activities and the preparation of following Ministerial meetings.

4.2. Operational instruments

- 4.2.1.** The “Trust Fund for Cultural Heritage in SEE” (hereinafter, Trust Fund) established in 2005 as the follow-up to the First Ministerial Conference (Mostar, 2004), shall continue to be considered as the main financial instrument for the implementation of this Action Plan, within the conceptual and strategic framework defined by the Declarations approved at the annual Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in SEE.
- 4.2.2.** The Trust Fund shall continue to serve as an international, supplementary instrument whose aim is to strengthen the commitment of the countries participating in this Action Plan to provide within their state budget (considering the different circumstances and in accordance with national priorities) adequate means for the safeguarding and promotion of culture.
- 4.2.3.** The Trust Fund shall be considered henceforth as a shared, open, multi-donor financial tool. Consequently, the participation in the Trust Fund shall be encouraged by the largest number of contributors, hereby including the countries from the SEE region. Within this framework, the countries participating in this Action Plan express their gratefulness and appreciation for the generous support provided by the Italian Government to the Trust Fund since 2005, especially through the voluntary contributions made available by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Cooperazione Italiana.
- 4.2.4.** In this sense, we commend for the efforts by all the countries participating in this conference in order to co-finance past activities related to their respective territories realised under the Trust Fund. This model of co-financing should be replicated with respect to all future activities related to the Trust Fund, as a sign of our shared commitment and with the aim to create synergies responding to the spirit of enhanced regional cooperation.
- 4.2.5.** All partners in the Trust Fund shall ensure their efforts in order for this instrument and its operational activities to be coordinated with other financial opportunities and programmes for the enhancement of cultural heritage in SEE. Such coordination, intended as complementary to the coordination to be sought at institutional and political level, shall be aimed at ensuring overall coherence and synergy of international action in this field, avoiding duplication of efforts and optimising the use of available resources.
- 4.2.6.** Given the good results achieved so far in the implementation of the Trust Fund, and coherently with the provisions of this Action Plan concerning the coordination of regional cooperation initiatives, it is proposed that the Trust Fund will continue to be managed by UNESCO through the Culture Unit of the UNESCO Venice Office.

4.3. Monitoring and evaluation

- 4.3.1.** An international performance evaluation and benchmarking - both qualitative and quantitative - should be developed to follow up the implementation of the present Action Plan. This evaluation mechanism shall be considered as one of the activities to be defined and implemented within the Trust Fund
- 4.3.2.** The responsibility of monitoring and evaluation under the Action Plan is entrusted to the above-mentioned International Working Group as common expert committee participated by all partner countries in the present document, with the support of UNESCO through the UNESCO Venice Office
- 4.3.3.** Yearly reports on monitoring and evaluation of the present Action Plan shall be submitted by the International Working Group to the Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in SEE, the latter having authority of approval over the reports.
- 4.3.4.** Based on the above-mentioned monitoring and evaluation report, the annual Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in SEE shall approve yearly recommendations for the implementation of activities under the present Action Plan.