



CULTURAL HERITAGE
A BRIDGE TOWARDS A SHARED FUTURE
Fourth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage
in South-Eastern Europe
(Zadar, Croatia, 10 September 2007)

Concept Paper

1. Introduction

The tree of Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) is developing ever deeper roots. The first three years of meetings and activities allowed to obtain important results, including common political commitments to the preservation and promotion of regional cultural heritage, the definition of a broad set of shared principles and guidelines, and – last but not least – the realisation of numerous concrete activities. After Mostar 2004, Ministers of culture from all participating countries engaged on a general effort to create and promote a new image for the region, based on the invaluable cultural treasures it harbours. They committed themselves to make culture a priority within the political and civic agendas of their countries, convinced of the crucial role of cultural heritage in the processes of mutual understanding and sustainable development. Within this framework, the annual Ministerial conferences continue to offer not only an important moment to evaluate accomplished efforts, well represented by the projects realised under the “Trust Fund for Cultural Heritage in SEE” financed by Italy and coordinated by the Culture Section of UNESCO Venice Office. Even more, the conferences represent a common forum for sharing information on the relevant measures being applied in all participating countries, for exchanging good practices, for enhancing cooperation, and for

identifying appropriate policies to preserve and promote cultural heritage. The Fourth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe will be held in Zadar on 10 September 2007, organised by the government of Croatia – Ministry of Culture, with the support of UNESCO. The Zadar meeting has the intention to continue supporting the definition of a common strategy for further enhancing culture in the region, in order for it to be fully appreciated as a fundamental part of the European cultural heritage. Furthermore, the conference will be an occasion to extend the range of regional cooperation, including new sectors of activity such as the protection of underwater cultural heritage. Finally, it will be the starting point for a stronger regional programme focussed on communication of cultural heritage, through the launch of pilot activities and the definition of future actions in this field. In so doing, the Zadar conference intends to move one more step in the direction of enhancing the shared cultural heritage as a tool for sustainable development, mutual understanding, and respect of cultural diversity in South-Eastern Europe.

2. Objectives

The Fourth Ministerial Conference will continue to pursue the common principles and goals agreed in Mostar, Venice, and Ohrid. Consequently, its main objectives are:

- A.** To ensure the continuity of regional cooperation process in the field of cultural heritage;
- B.** To assess the results achieved at previous meetings, with a view toward identifying and exchanging good practices developed during the implementation of successful activities;
- C.** To introduce new resources and to provide guidance for their future implementation, with special focus on the networking of knowledge-based resources;
- D.** To further enhance regional cooperation on cultural heritage and to discuss regional programmes for improving communication of cultural heritage.

3. Expected results and follow-up activities

In so doing, the Zadar conference is expected to further consolidate cooperation built on the basis of previous conferences. In particular, this fourth meeting is expected to achieve the following results:

- enhanced coordination of interventions into an appropriate regional strategy, including the review of priorities for future action;
- proposal of guidelines for the implementation of innovative policies and instruments intended to support the protection, promotion and communication of cultural heritage in SEE;
- promotion of enforcement of UNESCO's standard setting instruments in the field of culture;
- consolidation and synergy of all existing activities in the field of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in South-Eastern Europe.

Within this framework, the UNESCO Venice Office is invited to continue supporting and promoting cultural cooperation throughout the region, as well as strengthening its operational tools. This will include the extension of activities financed under the "Trust Fund for Cultural Heritage in SEE". The definition and implementation of new Trust Fund activities will be carried out on the basis of the indications to be provided by the Zadar meeting, in close consultation with relevant authorities of the participating countries, as well as in coordination with other initiatives stemming from the framework of previous ministerial conferences.

Furthermore, as a special initiative of the host country, Croatia will present its latest achievements and investments in the preservation, restoration and promotion of underwater archaeology. As a discipline that studies traces of human existence and heritage of all mankind, underwater archaeology is a fruitful area for the development of multicultural projects. Being one of the first countries to sign and ratify UNESCO's Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, the Republic of Croatia is committed to the promotion and protection of this particular heritage and is currently establishing, as a first step under its agenda, an International Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar. The Centre will offer educational opportunities in fields such as the restoration and conservation of underwater finds. Additional goals of the centre will be the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage as an integral part of sustainable development and cultural tourism, the implementation of new restoration techniques

based on scientific methods, and the strengthening of awareness of cultural heritage through education and communication and information technologies (ICT's). The Centre will also contribute to communication and cooperation on all levels throughout the region, as well as to the promotion and presentation of finds in situ or in museums.

4. Participants

Conference **participants** are Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia, together with Italy and UNESCO. Participants are expected to be represented by their Ministers responsible for culture and cultural heritage. Travel and accommodation expenses for participants will be covered by the organizers, according to modalities to be communicated separately. Each participating country is invited to send a 3-person delegation, composed by the line Minister, the country representative in the International Working Group, plus a third member. Representatives of all other partner countries of the Stability Pact are invited as observers.

5. Programme

Sunday, 9 September

Arrival of the participating delegations

- 19.00 – 20.00 Afternoon arrival of the participants at the Hotel Kolovare (Bože Peričića 14)
20.50 Departure by bus from the Hotel Kolovare to the Restaurant
21.00 Welcome reception at the Arsenal (Trg tri bunara 1)

Monday, 10 September

- 09.15 Departure by bus from the Hotel to the City Center
09.30 – 13.15 Zadar and its cultural heritage, guided tour for Ministers and Heads of delegations followed by lunch (at Kornat Restaurant – Liburnska obala 6)
11.30 Opening of the Exhibition “The Croatian Apoxyomenos” – City Lodge (Narodni trg)
09.00 – 13.00 Meeting of the International Working Group (IWG) at the Hotel followed by lunch
13.30 – 13.50 Inauguration of the International Centre for Underwater Archeology (Božidara Petranovića)
13.55 – 14.00 Walk to the Zadar County Hall (Božidara Petranovića 8)
- 14.00 – 18.30** **Plenary Session** - Zadar County Hall
14.00 – 14.10 Ministerial Photo opportunity
14.15 – 14.45 Welcoming addresses (Croatia, Italy, UNESCO)
14.45 – 15.30 Presentation of accomplished activities (UNESCO-BRESCE, Croatia)
15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break
16.00 – 18.00 Addresses by ministers of participating countries
18.00 – 18.15 Approval and signing of the Zadar declaration
18.15 Closing addresses
20.15 Departure by bus from the Hotel Kolovare
20.30 Dinner and Cultural Programme in Foša Restaurant (Kralja Zvonimira 2)

Tuesday, 11 September

- 09.30 – 12.00 Guided visit of Zadar area and Nin
12.00 Buffet lunch in Restaurant Branimir in Nin
Transport to the Airport and the Hotel Kolovare

6. Contacts

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