

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Thursday 19 May 2016 – Plenary session (Bellevue Palace, Bern)

Bénédicte Selfslagh (Cultural Heritage Expert, ICOMOS) opened the session with a presentation entitled 'Political discourse and Realpolitik in Europe: New approaches – old approaches'. She turned a critical eye on the supposedly new approaches which are 'participative governance' and 'integrated conservation', promoted in recent EU declarations. The '[European Charter of the Architectural Heritage](#)' (1975, Council of Europe), more than 40 years ago, was already referring to the value of cultural heritage for society. Bénédicte exposed the possible reasons why past objectives have not been realised yet. The increasing challenges faced by national heritage authorities, often left behind by their politicians, were put forward. But the institutional context has also deeply changed which brings its share of consequences for policy making. Despite the apparent slackness, Bénédicte concluded showing the window of opportunities which has opened in 2014 with the adoption of a series of EU texts promoting cultural heritage.

The three themes for the group discussions were then introduced. Uwe Koch (Head, Deutsche Nationalkomitee für Denkmalschutz) presented the current developments concerning the organisation of the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH). Instigated in 2014 by Germany, the EYCH was publicly announced in April 2016 by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics – for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. A concept paper entitled "Sharing Heritage" has already been published. A European platform [www.sharingheritage.eu](http://www.sharingheritage.eu) has also been launched. Uwe Koch presented five themes to structure the Year. A meeting is organised in Berlin on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July to coordinate further steps.

Then, Gianluca Silvestrini (Head of Division, Council of Europe) presented the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century which was called upon by the [Namur Declaration](#) last year. This Strategy aims at sending a clear political message about the importance of cultural heritage in addressing new societal challenges. The text of the Strategy has now been finalised and a launching event will take place in Cyprus in spring 2017 as part of its Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. It will then be up to the countries to implement the Strategy on the

ground. The Council of Europe is eager to accompany the Member States in their tasks, by providing legal and technical assistance, identifying and exchanging good practices, and monitoring the Strategy's implementation.

Finally, Paul Fox (UK Blue Shield) gave a speech on heritage destruction in conflict and crisis. He presented the 1999 Protocol which identifies the Blue Shield organisation as an advisory body to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Blue Shield national committees and international teams have been involved in numerous training programmes for the military in countries as diverse as Austria, the USA, Lebanon, New Zealand, and Cambodia. Last year NATO asked Blue Shield to help draft a publication entitled '[Cultural Property Protection Makes Sense](#)'. Paul also recalled the 2003 [UNESCO Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage](#). Although the Declaration is not legally binding, its importance is undeniable in its moral force, based on its unanimous adoption by UNESCO Member States. Blue Shield has developed a 'four-tier approach' that incorporates Cultural Property Protection (CPP) into military doctrine and planning. Tier 1 requires CPP instruction within basic training for all military personnel. Tier 2 is introduced when deployment becomes a possibility, and the military needs to review specific information about the cultural property it will encounter. Tier 3 relates to activity during conflict, and tier 4 to post-conflict CPP in the period that the military calls "stabilisation." Blue Shield has just issued a [Statement](#) on rebuilding in Syria and on the wider problems of reconstruction.

In the afternoon, Mechtild Rössler (Director, Heritage Division UNESCO) presented the recent activities of UNESCO. The campaign [#Unite4Heritage](#) is powered by UNESCO in response to the unprecedented recent attacks on heritage. A high-level meeting and technical conference was organised on that matter in Brussels on 9-10 June 2016, in partnership with the European Union and with the support from the Government of Flanders. The results of the discussions will help to finalise the Action Plan for the *UNESCO Strategy for the protection of cultural heritage and promotion of cultural pluralism* (Nov. 2015). The evolving nature of contemporary conflicts, from inter to intrastate, poses a significant challenge to the current world order built on international treaties and decision-making. These conflicts challenge the way in which organisations like UNESCO, whose programmes are built around international conventions signed by States, can respond. In response to the armed conflict in Northern Mali since 2012, UNESCO produced a "Heritage Passport" ("[Passeport pour le patrimoine](#)") which provides detailed information on the location and the importance of cultural sites. It was developed to raise awareness among the armed forces, NGOs, and local communities about the importance of safeguarding these heritage sites. Mechtild recalled that Syria is still a combat zone and that Member States cannot send any heritage expert yet. The project "Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage", co-funded by the EU and the government of Flanders, aims at planning for post-conflict reconstruction activities. Mechtild concluded with a call to the Heads to share their experiences in dealing with

heritage under threat and post-trauma recovery, and to coordinate their actions with existing legal instruments.

Stefano de Caro (Director, ICCROM) reviewed the history of the intergovernmental body which is ICCROM and reported on its activities in Europe. The role and weight of European countries in ICCROM is significant. Stefano mentioned the international course on 'First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis' (FAC) which is provided by ICCROM. The FAC course is aimed at enhancing national, regional and local capacities for protecting cultural heritage during complex and protracted crises. Stefano finally informed the Heads about the European-Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science ([E-RIHS](#)) project which is a pan-European project aiming to support research on heritage interpretation, preservation, documentation and management. ICCROM has been invited to contribute to E-RIHS by promoting global outreach of the E-RIHS network.

Gianluca Silvestrini closed the afternoon session by briefly presenting the heritage activities of the Council of Europe, among which the [Faro Action Plan 2016-2017](#). The "Faro Action Plan" aims to illustrate the richness and novelty of the principles of the Faro Convention. The [HEREIN system](#) and the [European Heritage Days](#) were also presented. Gianluca announced that a new 'Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property' will be drafted this year to replace the previous convention from 1985.

### Friday 20 May 2016 – Plenary session (Bellevue Palace, Bern)

Terje Nypan (Norway, delegate) and Wolfgang Goehner (Germany, delegate) gave a year report of the work of the European Heritage Legal Forum (EHLF). The case involving the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) was discussed. You can read the [News article](#) about it and find the [PowerPoint presentation](#) on the EHHF website. Since the case was brought to the EHLF by the Netherlands, some national competent heritage authorities such as Croatia have succeeded in getting in contact with their water boards and started negotiations for a "cultural exception". Some other countries such as Spain or Poland have already addressed the legal protection of water-related heritage during the transposition of the WFD into national law. Further exchanges are planned with the EU Commission in order to effectively raise public awareness on the threats at stake and implement good practices.

Then, Terje Nypan reported on the activities of the Economic Taskforce, sub-group of the EHHF. You can read the [report](#) and find the PowerPoint presentation on the EHHF website. The results of the HEREIN Crowdfunding launched in January 2016 on the economic contribution of cultural heritage have been finalised and sent to the EHHF members by email. The next step, agreed by the Heads during the plenary session, will be to apply to the [ESPON call](#) for a Targeted Analysis in cooperation between voluntary stakeholders.

### **The EHHF Secretariat**

For the next 3-year-period (2017-2019), the voluntary contributions to support the permanent secretariat are reduced following a general scheme: members contributing less than 2,500 Euros/year are continuing doing so, members contributing more than 2,500 Euros/year, may reduce their amounts to 2,500 Euros/year. The overall budget will allow the continuation of the permanent secretariat with an accordingly reduced workload and services. Thierry Wauters (Belgium/Brussels) kindly offered to host the secretariat for this period.

As for the last period, EHHF members will receive a declaration form for their future contributions, which they are kindly requested to sign and send back to the secretariat.

**Save the date: 12<sup>th</sup> EHHF annual meeting, 7-9 June 2017 in Reykjavík, Iceland**

The new members of the Troika for 2016-2017 are Switzerland, Iceland, and Luxembourg. Patrick Sanavia, head for Luxembourg, kindly offered to host the EHHF annual meeting in 2018. It was recalled that Alexandra Warr, delegate for England, also participates to the Troika meetings as honorary adviser.

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