

COMMON HERITAGE,
COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY,
VITAL SOLIDARITY,
INSPIRING DISCOVERIES, AN
ENRICHMENT FOR ALL.

BY MOBILIZING ACTION
FOR HERITAGE WIDER
PERSPECTIVES ARE OPENED:
KNOWLEDGE IS INCREASED,
CAPACITIES ARE DEVELOPED,
ATTITUDES ARE CHANGED.

THROUGH INTERACTING
WITH OTHER CULTURES AND
OTHER HUMAN BEINGS
WE ARE ALL LINKS IN THE
GREAT HUMAN CHAIN.

WHY TAKE AN INTEREST IN WORLD HERITAGE?

Heritage is what we have received from our ancestors. Our duty is to preserve it for transmission to future generations.

Our identity is the result of our past and our environment. In the same way as we inherit the genes of our parents, we are also made up of "genes" of our cultural and natural environment.

If we do not know where we come from, it is difficult to know where we are going. The loss of this cultural or natural heritage would be like amnesia: the loss of the past and ignorance of this heritage means we lose our bearings.

Certain sites, witnesses to the past, have had an impact on history; others have been fashioned by it.

These sites are not eternal: some are in real danger, many are already lost. The threats are numerous: they are called ignorance, pollution, war, uncontrolled urbanism, poverty, irresponsibility and abusive tourism, to mention but a few.

Many sites have been saved from disappearing or irreversible damage through big international campaigns. Knowledge and recognition of the value of such sites are the best means to avoid these spectacular and very costly measures.

Intangible heritage is a particularly fragile type of heritage. Like cultural and natural heritage, it forges our identity. Indeed, what is more part of our daily life than music, culinary arts, knowledge, traditions, etc?

We should appreciate our roots, our culture, and keeping that as a foundation, we should build our future.

YOUNG CHINESE

The world is our inheritance. It is mine, yours, and ours too. So let us look after it well for the nations of tomorrow.

YOUNG ZAMBIAN

**THIS HERITAGE IS OUR
ROOTS AND OUR IDENTITY:
A PRECIOUS ASSET**



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We should start in our own back yard, taking responsibility for our own ignorance and transmitting tolerance and the richness of sharing and cultural exchange to our children.

YOUNG ARGENTINIAN

WHY STUDY AND PROTECT WORLD HERITAGE? TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS AND BUILD THE FUTURE

The guarantee of the transmission, safeguarding and protection of heritage are firstly the respect for oneself and others, the acceptance of diversity. Respect amongst individuals and people is based on the knowledge of others and their cultures. Peace is forged through contacts and convivial exchanges between human beings and between cultures.

The identity of individuals and entire peoples – cultural diversity – is the food for dialogue and mutual enrichment and an antidote to the risk of standardization, especially at a time when dominant patterns tend to homogenize the daily life of populations throughout the world. To acknowledge and cherish diversity is a good way to "build peace in the minds of men" (UNESCO Constitution).

The World Heritage sites can be a motor for dynamic development. Heritage management, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, is the generator of very beneficial economic, scientific and technological activities. Tourism which respects the sites, their regions and populations, is a source of revenue for hotels, craftsmanship, and commerce in general. It enables the improvement of infrastructures and the creation of many jobs – from scientific and technical research, to the restoration of buildings, to management positions and an entire range of professions (guides, animators, guards, etc). These activities contribute towards the economic growth of regions and states.

The future is nourished by the past, as a plant is nourished by the earth.

A weak union perceives culture as nothing but another occurrence in the world. A stronger union perceives colours, hears music, smells history and envisages a future.

YOUNG JORDANIAN

THE PRINCIPAL TEXTS CONCERNING HERITAGE PROTECTION (see: <http://whc.unesco.org>)

- The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954).
- The Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970).
- **The World Heritage Convention (1972)**
- The Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001).
- The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).
- The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).

COMMON RESPONSIBILITY

A COMMON HERITAGE FOR ALL PEOPLE, AND A RESPONSIBILITY
FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE

World Heritage is the collective property of humanity and not only that of the country where the sites are located. Even if the nation is its rightful owner, the responsibility for its protection is international.

This responsibility lies with all citizens of the world, all fully indebted to the present and to the future. We are all responsible: the people who live at the sites, tourists who visit them, specialists who study them, the media which speaks of them, the States who manage them and the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. The concept of universality is our common concern, as only collective action can protect our heritage.

Wide recognition of a site contributes to its survival: it will benefit from the care of those who are directly responsible for its management; it will be better protected if, unfortunately, a conflict should arise; it will have greater protection from acts of destruction committed in the name of fanatical ideology. Responsibility lies with each young person to be acquainted with and to make known the sites of his/her country, thus investing them with a sacred and inviolable character.

*We all speak the same language:
that of respect for others.*

YOUNG COLOMBIAN

THE MEANS AVAILABLE

The idea of collective responsibility for heritage has made headway over the years, resulting in the World Heritage Convention.

The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted in 1972, is an international legal instrument ratified by almost all countries of the world. It is a dynamic tool for the identification and protection of natural and cultural properties of "outstanding universal value".

The World Heritage List puts into practice the principles of the Convention and inventories the properties of outstanding universal value. Each year the List grows, and today numbers close to 1000 properties. Regular reports regarding the evolution of the state of the properties are made following their inscription and measures are taken to preserve them when necessary.

The List of World Heritage in Danger is indispensable as a second tool. The inscription on this List is a way of sounding an alarm when a property is threatened due to conflict, natural catastrophes or human negligence. It permits the rapid release of funds and the initiation of emergency measures.

The World Heritage Fund subsidizes, at the request of the State Party, assistance activities: preparation of nomination files, training, technical cooperation, emergency assistance, awareness-raising and education.

The World Heritage Centre coordinates, within UNESCO, activities relating to World Heritage: management of the Convention, organization of the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee, international assistance, the coordination of reports, education, information and communication.

The UNESCO Section for Youth develops, guides and coordinates the strategies and programmes of the Organization with and for young people, some of which aim at raising awareness among young people regarding heritage preservation; it builds partnerships with NGOs and youth networks, and widely diffuses information concerning young people.

