



46th Session of the World Heritage Committee

## **WHW Statement on Item 8 of the Agenda**

Thank you for the floor, Mr. Chair.

This year the World Heritage Committee has inscribed 24 new properties on the World Heritage List while having examined 124 properties under Item 7, roughly 10% of all inscribed sites. Out of these 124, 57 were sites in Danger while 67 were under Item 7B. Not even considering that many of the latter re-appear on the agenda every other year, the Committee can examine only about 6% of all non-endangered sites every year, which means that it would take it more than 18 years to examine all sites on the list. With a list that is growing at the present rate it will take longer and longer, and the statutory task to monitor the sites under UNESCO tutelage will become ever more difficult to fulfill.

At the same time, out of the 1.199 properties on the list, there are 439 about which no information has been published on their webpages for 10 years or more. I repeat: 439 sites, more than one third of all. It may be that the Secretariat has received information from third parties about which we don't know but in principle we have to conclude that Committee has been in the dark about the state of conservation of one third of sites for 10 years or more, in some cases since their inscription. Will the 24 sites inscribed this year join that long list? And how much sense does it make to inscribe a site if it has little chance to be monitored?

Distinguished Delegates, it is more than urgent that the Committee drastically reduce the number of sites it inscribes and instead shifts its focus on safeguarding those properties which are already on the list.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.