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**JOINT DECLARATION ON COOPERATION CONCERNING THE CONSERVATION OF  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL WORLD HERITAGE  
BETWEEN  
THE BELGIAN STATE, represented by the FEDERAL SCIENCE POLICY OFFICE  
AND  
UNESCO, represented by the WORLD HERITAGE CENTER**

The Belgian State and UNESCO intend to continue their cooperation concerning the conservation of cultural and natural World Heritage, which was initiated in 2002 between the Federal Science Policy Office (SPO) and the World Heritage Center (WHC). Therefore the Belgian State and UNESCO, represented by SPO and WHC, hereafter referred to as "the Parties", have agreed upon the following.

The objective of the Joint Declaration is to mobilize the scientific know-how and technical support from the Belgian scientific community for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, in particular the safeguarding and sustainable development of cultural and natural heritage as well as the promotion of the Global Strategy for a more representative World Heritage List, by improving the management of cultural and natural sites inscribed on it.

The two Parties will define, in consultation, ways and means of cooperation with a view to assist State Parties to the Convention in:

- Identifying under-represented categories of cultural and natural properties and, accordingly, assisting State Parties in the preparation of data and information to support the elaboration of nomination dossiers for the inscription of sites.
- Assessing the state of conservation of sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, supporting site management as well as capacity building of staff responsible for the management of those sites.
- Developing tools to improve the information base and the mapping and monitoring of sites in support of conservation management and capacity building of staff.
- Promoting World Heritage among citizens and among youngsters in particular, supporting the use of modern technologies to create awareness for conservation and sustainable development of natural and cultural heritage among the young generation.
- Enhancing the societal value of World Heritage sites by relating R&D to cultural identity and the promotion of regional sustainable development.

Under the first agreement (2002-2006), SPO and WHC implemented a pilot project focusing on the use of space technologies to develop an operational cartographic management and monitoring system for the 5 natural World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Under the current agreement (2007-2011) it is planned to further consolidate the achievements of the pilot project initiated in the first phase and to launch new activities focusing on cultural heritage in Latin-America. Pilot projects will be developed and agreed upon jointly by WHC and SPO and will specifically seek to mobilize Belgian scientific know-how in using space technologies to assist State Parties in acquiring the necessary capacity to improve the management of World Heritage Sites as well as Belgian expertise regarding advanced technologies for restoration/rehabilitation techniques for cultural and natural sites.

WHC will collaborate closely with the Division of Environmental and Earth Sciences of the Science Sector (EES/SC) which has a long experience in managing projects focusing on the use of space technologies for the management of natural and cultural heritage.

SPO, in consultation with WHC and EES/SC, will identify the Belgian technical and scientific expertise required for the above mentioned pilot projects. SPO will contribute the necessary financial resources (yearly average of Euro 225,000), with which it will directly contract Belgian universities and research institutes identified for the execution of the projects.

- \* In addition, SPO will provide a yearly contribution of Euro 55,000 to UNESCO to be managed within the World Heritage Special Account. This contribution will allow for the implementation, technical supervision and coordination of the on-going and planned pilot projects by WHC and EES/SC (Euro 45,000) as well as to support workshops related to specific scientific subjects which will be identified and agreed by the Parties (Euro 10,000).

The Parties will also cooperate to formulate joint requests, for submission to bilateral and multi-bilateral Cooperation Agencies in order to obtain funding in favour of sites inscribed on the List.

The Parties engage to develop a yearly work plan and to meet regularly to prepare and to monitor the activities to be undertaken in the framework of this Declaration.

The present Declaration will enter into force upon signature by the Parties and last for a second period of five years.

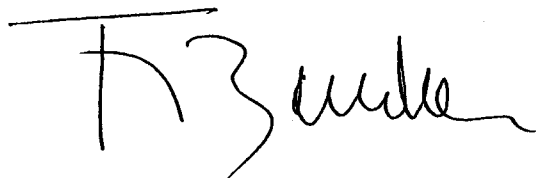
Signed in Brussels on 21 November 2006, in two originals, in English

For the Belgian State



The Minister for Science Policy  
Marc Verwilghen

For UNESCO



The Director of the World Heritage Centre  
Francesco Bandarin