

Dialogue among Civilizations

The Regional Summit Forum on
Communication of Heritage:
A New Vision of South East Europe

Opatija, Croatia,
31 May to 1 June 2006



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Stjepan Mesić
Georgij Parvanov
Alfred Moisiu
Branko Crvenkovski
Sulejman Tihić
Filip Vujanović

Koïchiro Matsuura
Terry Davis

with messages from

Boris Tadić
Traian Bănescu

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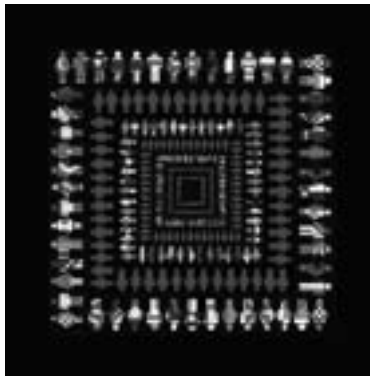
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Co-organized by
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and
The Presidency of the Republic of Croatia

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Hans d'Orville, Director
Bureau of Strategic Planning

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Foreword

This publication contains the proceedings of the Opatija Regional Summit on “Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe”, which was jointly organized by the Government of Croatia and UNESCO, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, on 1 and 2 June 2006. It is the fourth in a series of summits that UNESCO has had the privileged to organize in partnership with the countries of South East Europe.

These now-annual events began in April 2002 with the convening at UNESCO Headquarters of a “High-Level Conference on Strengthening Co-operation in South East Europe”. Since then, earnest commitment to increased collaboration among region’s leaders has grown steadily, from the first meeting in Ohrid in 2003, to those in Tirana in 2004 and in Varna 2005, and now in Opatija in 2006. A fifth meeting will take place in Bucharest and Sibiu in June 2007. These regular summit-level meetings have succeeded in fostering dialogue, including with European institutions and international organizations like UNESCO. They have created a new atmosphere of good-neighbourliness and mutual understanding, as well as a determination to pursue joint endeavours in the region in UNESCO’s different areas of competence.

This renewed commitment to cooperation and constructive partnership has grown continually over the years and is stretching across a broad range of fields that include the development of policies, strategies and programmes in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information, as well as in related infrastructure development.

In this spirit, the Opatija Declarations states “Communication is essential for building a Europe without dividing lines. It promotes the exchange of knowledge about heritage in our region and in particular our shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding for future generations, providing a sense of stability, continuity and cultural identity.”

The Opatija Summit was a natural progression from the preceding Varna Summit, which had promoted the idea of using culture as a common space for dialogue, exchange and understanding in South East Europe. At Opatija, regional leaders examined key features of “cultural corridors” - in particular, the fundamental role played by cultural heritage in the

development of South East Europe, along with its promotion, safeguarding and transmission through specific approaches. In this era of accelerated interaction facilitated by information and communication technologies, it has become important to promote systematically knowledge about heritage and to foster a sense of shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding - hence, the theme of the summit: “Communication of Heritage”.

Beyond the Opatija Declaration, the present publication also includes the statements given by the Heads of State and Government of South East Europe or their representatives, along with background documents that frame the context within which this meeting was organized. These proceedings, along with others already issued, form an integral part of UNESCO’s ever-growing body of reference documents in the “Dialogue Collection”.

I should like to thank the President of the Republic of Croatia for the very warm welcome accorded to all participants in Opatija, the “Pearl of the Adriatic”, and also to congratulate him and the organizers for the success of this event. The Opatija summit further deepened the commitment of the region’s leaders to international cooperation and consolidated the excellent work achieved in recent years. UNESCO is proud to have been associated with this process in the fields where it can contribute to the development and dialogue among the governments and peoples of South East Europe.

Effective and meaningful cooperation requires mutual understanding and genuine dialogue among all parties involved. UNESCO will not be found wanting in helping expand and deepen this process, in an effort to produce tangible results and provide guidance in the further development of policies that will benefit the countries of South East Europe.



Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General
of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "K. Matsuura". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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**Opatija Declaration
adopted at the Regional Summit Forum
on “Communication Of Heritage”**

Heads of State and high officials from South East European countries, the Director-General of UNESCO and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe gathered in Opatija, Croatia, from 31 May to 1 June 2006 at the Regional Forum of South East European States devoted to the theme “Communication of Heritage”.

Convened by Croatia and UNESCO, the Summit was chaired by the President of the host country, Mr. Stjepan Mesić, together with the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Terry Davis. The Prime Minister of Croatia, Mr. Ivo Sanader welcomed the participants. The following Presidents participated in Opatija: Mr. Georgi Parvanov, Mr. Alfred Moisiu, Mr. Branko Crvenkovski, Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Mr. Filip Vujanović. Turkey was represented by the Minister of State, Mr. Mehmet Aydın; Serbia by the Minister of Culture, Mr. Dragan Kojadinovic; Romania by the State Secretary in the Ministry of Culture, Mr. Virgil Stefan Nitulescu. Greece and Slovenia were represented by Ambassadors Mr. Panayotis Baizos and Mr. Milan Orožen Adamič

Besides the high officials, experts from South East Europe and international organizations, including the European Commission, as well as representations of the National Commissions for UNESCO of the region also attended the Opatija Summit.

At the conclusion of the summit, the participants adopted the following Opatija Declaration:

We welcome the intensification of the regional dialogue in South East Europe at the highest levels, which has developed since the first Regional Forum in Ohrid (2003), and express our satisfaction that constructive cooperation and solid partnership has developed and is growing across a broad range of fields: from political and security issues, economic policy and trade coordination and joint infrastructure development to policies, strategies and programmes in culture, education and the sciences. It has created a new atmosphere of good-neighbourliness, mutual understanding and joint endeavours in different fields in the region.

We appreciate the role played by international organizations in shaping the current levels of stability and security in the region. We seek to

strengthen cooperation with our international partners with a view to improving the economic and social situation. The South East European Cooperation Process has earned recognition as a voice of the region and should continue its important activities.

We share the vision of a united Europe as a goal and a destiny for all South East European States. We will spare no efforts in order to make this a reality.

Cultural diversity is a defining factor for Europe. Our readiness to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, as we have committed at the Regional Summit Forum in Tirana (2004), is a firm expression of our willingness to uphold the European standards in that respect.

The earnest commitment to cooperation through dialogue has grown steadily. Heritage has to interact with its time. Based on the principles and objectives of the preceding regional summit meetings in Ohrid (2003), Tirana (2004) and Varna (2005), we agree on the relevance of a set of international and European standard-setting instruments:

- the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Rome, 1950), known as the European Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe),
- the European Cultural Convention (Council of Europe, Paris, 1954),
- the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (UNESCO 1954) and its two protocols (1954 and 1999),
- the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Council of Europe, Granada, 1985),
- the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO 1970),
- the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO 1972),
- the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Council of Europe, Valletta, 1992),
- the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1992),
- the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (1995),
- the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe,

- Florence, 2000),
- the Declaration on Cultural Diversity (Council of Europe, 7 December 2000),
 - the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001),
 - the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2001),
 - the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2003),
 - the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Council of Europe, Faro, 2005),
 - the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005).

Imbued by the vision and values of an integrated Europe and the prospect of enhanced cultural cooperation, as charted in Varna (2005) with respect to cultural corridors and cultural routes, we focused in Opatija on the theme of “Communication of Heritage”. Communication is essential for building a Europe without dividing lines. It promotes the exchange of knowledge about heritage in our region and in particular our shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding for future generations, providing a sense of stability, continuity and cultural identity. Our future endeavours in this area shall facilitate integration and shall be guided by the following principles:

- A. Cooperation in South East Europe must build on its rich and diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage and its history of intense cultural exchange and dialogue. Beyond contacts at the political level, such cooperation should increasingly be citizen- driven.
- B. Well-designed national policies for and effective cooperation in the areas of culture, education, science and tourism are key foundations for further developing South East Europe as a dynamic European region.
- C. Cultural heritage lives in our region and within our people and makes people feel closer to each other. A strategy for “Communication of Heritage” needs to be anchored in national identities and recognize the role of cultural heritage in all its forms as a constituent element of cultural diversity and human creativity. The role of communities and groups who transmit, keep alive and recreate their heritage deserves

particular attention.

- D. Heritage conservation and safeguarding are an integral part of sustainable development. This includes the promotion of sustainable cultural and ecological tourism and the development of appropriate cultural industries. Restoration and preservation of heritage should make use of innovative techniques drawing on scientific research and expert institutions. Above all, knowledge and awareness about heritage must be brought to citizens through education, new communications and media tools as well as publications.
- E. Given the importance of cultural heritage for identity and reconciliation in the region, all efforts should be made to return cultural goods to the country of their origin. Likewise, the adherence to and implementation of measures to interdict illicit trafficking in cultural goods should be broadened and reinforced.
- F. Cooperation within the region aimed at promoting a shared vision of the South East European heritage should seek to broaden dialogue and mutual knowledge of other peoples and their cultures, traditions, languages. Furthermore, it should help bring about synergies among existing activities - whether under the auspices of UNESCO, the Council of Europe or the European Union or involving dedicated projects such as those established in the context of the South East Europe Cooperation Process.
- G. Cooperation shall be intensified and extended also to cultural policies within the framework of European integration, as the region's cultural heritage is part of European culture and adds value to the European integration process at large. Resources should be mobilized from governments, the private sector, foundations, NGOs and international organizations for cultural corridors, intercultural dialogue, including inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue, and for sustaining existing networks. The intention of the Council of Europe to launch pilot projects is most welcome in that regard.
- H. Efforts shall be aimed at increasing the region's share in international exchanges of cultural goods, services and activities.
- I. The capacity of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to foster cultural heritage, exchange, networking

and mutual knowledge should be used as a channel for communication, dialogue and mutual engagement across societies. Digitisation opens up new avenues for preservation of cultural heritage and the dissemination of knowledge. Digitised materials, virtual multimedia fora and innovative websites allow broad public access, appealing in particular to the youth. It ensures communication of heritage linking the past with the present and the future.

- J. Cooperation fostering cultural diversity shall also involve the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. To that end, all countries of the region are invited to ratify the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).
- K. Countries of South Eastern Europe are equally invited to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, which provides a basis for the sustainable use of the cultural and natural resources of the territory.

Taking into account these principles, we welcome the finalized Varna Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting cultural corridors in South East Europe and invite the Governments of the region, and in particular the Ministers of Culture or other competent authorities, to adopt the Strategy and to agree upon a related Action Plan. The preparation of the Action Plan should also benefit from input by experts from the countries of the region and by regional and international organizations.

We thank President Traian Băsescu for his invitation to hold the next Regional Forum in Romania and accordingly we agree to meet in Sibiu, the European Capital of Culture 2007, in the first half of 2007.

In 2008, we will convene the Regional Forum in Greece and in 2009 in Montenegro.

All participants expressed their profound appreciation to President Mesić and to the Government and people of the Republic of Croatia for their excellent arrangements made and for their generous hospitality.

**Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using
and promoting cultural corridors of South East Europe**

adopted at the Regional Forum

*“Cultural Heritage and Communication:
A New Vision of South East Europe”*

Opatija, Croatia

1 June 2006

The guiding principles and general commitments of the Varna Declaration, adopted at the Regional Forum “Cultural Corridors of South East Europe” (Varna, 20-21 May 2005) reflect the political will of the countries in the region to preserve and use in a sustainable way their cultural heritage, both as an expression of cultural diversity and identity, and a resource for human development and quality of life, but as well as for a sustainable dialogue in the region of South East Europe and the European Area.

The Heads of State and other leaders and representatives from South East Europe, gathered in the Regional Forum in Opatija, acknowledging the continuing support of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, welcome this Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting the *Cultural Corridors of South East Europe*.

The strategic goal is to identify, preserve, sustainably use and promote Cultural Corridors of South East Europe, as a regional network to stimulate cultural, economic and social development, to discover new opportunities for better understanding each other, due to the widened and shared knowledge of the cultural heritage.

The *Cultural Corridors of South East Europe* corresponds to trans-national axes of cultural connection and dynamic cultural exchange over time. They provide opportunities for cooperation in protection and raising awareness of the cultural heritage of South East Europe, and for promoting cultural connections and sustainable economic development, which respect cultural and patrimonial values. They foster understanding, intercultural communication, collaboration and growth, binding together national and local initiatives by public and private sector participants.

The Strategy for *Cultural Corridors* has been created by the on-going expansion of the European Union and the political will for regional cooperation, as well as the *UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, (1972); the *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*, (2001); the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, (2003); and the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, (2005); as well as the Council of Europe *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe*, (1985); the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, (1992); the *European Landscape Convention*, (2000); and the *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, (Faro, 2005).

The strategy was inspired also by the main principles, announced in the Varna Declaration, which are as follows:

1. The region is developing a new confidence and capability, creating common space for dialogue, exchange and agreement, in which culture plays an increasingly important role;
2. The rich cultural heritage of South East Europe is an essential element of global cultural diversity; it makes a vital contribution to European and regional identity, especially in the context of European integration;
3. The cultural heritage of our countries constitutes an invaluable resource for sustainable cultural, economic and social development, particularly through an innovative approach to cultural tourism in the spirit of the International Cultural Tourism Charter (ICOMOS 1999);
4. The protection, presentation and interpretation of intangible and tangible cultural heritage should foster mutual understanding and respect for the heritage of others;
5. The knowledge society, and information and communication technologies, have created opportunities for strengthening the role of cultural heritage in fostering dialogue both within the region and beyond it;
6. Revealing and making accessible the cultural heritage of South East Europe in its proper context will highlight the importance of the region and its contribution to the cultural heritage of the world;

7. The historical links and axes of inter-cultural dialogue and exchange of ideas, beliefs, knowledge and skills, as well as cultural goods and expressions, have given rise to a unique network of cultural corridors and cultural routes in South East Europe, which deserve to be identified, preserved, sustainably used and promoted;

These principles require a new vision for South East Europe, in which its cultural heritage is considered to be a universal language, which reflects the cultural diversity of the region and stimulates the intercultural dialogue.

The specific objectives are:

- A. To identify the network cultural corridors and the objects, values and manifestations that define them; and to accumulate knowledge about them in an integrated information network.*
- B. To preserve the cultural potential of the corridors and the sites, monuments and objects of the non-material heritage related to them.*
- C. To sustainably use the cultural corridors to facilitate exchange and cultural dialogue and to stimulate economic growth and inflow of investments, especially by cultural tourism that respect cultural and patrimonial values and cultural diversity.*
- D. To promote the cultural corridors and the sites defining them, and to form a new image of the region as a space of dialogue, exchange and accord, in which culture plays a role of increasing importance.*
- E. To develop existing regional networks, consisting of national and international experts, in order to fulfil these four strategic goals.*

The practical tasks and activities for the implementation of the above-mentioned goals should be defined in an Action Plan, prepared by the experts of these regional networks, taking into account the national priorities and on-going cooperation with international organizations. The Ministers of Culture of the region are invited to adopt this Action Plan.

Part I

Welcome Statements

Koïchiro Matsuura

Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to be here today with the leaders of South East Europe, in this beautiful city of Opatija. Widely known as the Pearl of the Adriatic Sea, Opatija is a delightful setting for this important Regional Summit.

At the outset, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to President Stjepan Mesić of Croatia and also to the Prime Minister for hosting this year's regional summit, and for the warm hospitality we have received. Let me commend the hosts and organizers of this summit for the excellent arrangements and for the constructive collaboration over the past weeks and months.

This is the fourth summit in a series where UNESCO has been privileged to cooperate closely with the leaders of all countries present and with the Council of Europe and representatives of other European organizations. The earnest commitment to increased cooperation through genuine dialogue has grown steadily over recent years, from our meeting in Ohrid in 2003, in Tirana in 2004, and in Varna last year - and now to Opatija. This process has succeeded in reinforcing positive linkages and exchanges, including with European institutions and UNESCO.

Last year, in Varna, clear recognition was given to the important role played by culture in the common space for dialogue, exchange and understanding in South East Europe. Among other things, the Varna Declaration drew special attention to the existence of a unique network of cultural corridors and cultural routes in South East Europe, which deserve to be identified, preserved and promoted within a long-term, sustainable strategy and frame of action.

Building on the Varna Declaration, the Opatija Summit takes the agenda one step further. It provides an exceptional opportunity to examine key features of these cultural corridors - in particular, the fundamental role played by cultural heritage in the development of South East Europe, along with its promotion, safeguarding and transmission through specific approaches. In this era of accelerated interaction facilitated by

information and communication technologies, it has become important to systematically promote knowledge about heritage and to foster a sense of shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding - hence, the theme of this summit: “Communication of Heritage”.

Our collective task at this Regional Summit in Opatija is to promote dialogue among all countries of the sub-region and to advance cooperation and mutual understanding through dialogue in concrete ways. The practice of organizing annual summits in South East Europe at Head of State level will continue in coming years in rotation among the countries of the sub-region. Be assured that UNESCO is by your side in this important endeavour.

Terry Davis

Secretary-General of the Council of Europe

We can now speak about an established tradition - each year in spring the leaders of this region meet to renew a common commitment to heritage as a common good, a resource for development and an asset to be enjoyed across national and cultural borders.

You would probably expect an Englishman to say that tradition is a key to stability, but without an outlook to the future, tradition is only an anchor to the past. The reason why the regional Summits on Heritage are so successful year after year is that they are based on a combination of continuity and innovation.

The continuity of these Summits lies in their message of togetherness and joint endeavour, in the symbolic search of a common identity for the region. The innovation comes from the different angles through which the theme of heritage is explored - and each time this exploration results in fresh ideas and activities on the ground.

Today we will focus on communication of heritage - a subject of great importance because the way in which cultural heritage is perceived shapes the attitudes of people to their past and to the past of other people. And we will also discuss how we can enhance heritage and exchanges in the region through cultural corridors - an initiative which gave a new impulse to the Regional Summits last year in Varna.

Later today I will outline in some detail the Council of Europe's approach to cultural corridors in South East Europe and our contribution to information and communication about cultural heritage at the pan-European level.

I am sure that we will all enjoy a stimulating and productive meeting.

Part I

Statements

Stjepan Mesic

President of the Republic of Croatia

South East Europe has always been a point of contact between different civilizations and cultures, a border area in which different interests crossed and overlapped, an area disputed by different powers. It is a small part of the world, with barely one hundredth of the world's population, poor and burdened by its past - and extremely rich in terms of its contribution to world heritage.

The fifty-nine cultural and natural sites in the region registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List are the best case in point.

But not everything that was created has been inherited as well. "Heritage without heirs", a syntagm devised by a Croatian scientist, has been for centuries the definition which described the attitude towards heritage. Namely, in order to be alive, heritage has to communicate with time. It must be used as a factor to stimulate growth, understanding and cooperation and not as a basis for erecting new walls.

International cultural cooperation develops in various ways. All countries in the world that try to preserve and develop their cultural identity while avoiding extremes - global cultural unification or cultural isolation - are interested in the expansion of international cultural cooperation.

But rather than unification or isolation, we want to achieve cultural integration of all cultures, and use such a policy to secure comprehensive minority protection and minority integration. In this particular region cultural integration is more important than in any other part of Europe.

Croatia is really aware of such priorities, as witnessed by the fact that it was the first European state to ratify the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Over the past 15 years, South East Europe has experienced major changes at the political, economic, social and cultural levels. Unfortunately, during this period of major upheaval - combined with difficulty towards transition and democratization and the redefinition of cultural identity - regional cooperation was not a priority.

The desire for greater integration into the global community, primarily into the European Union, has focused most efforts in the field of cultural

cooperation on major West European centres. The eyes of this part of the world, turned to Europe, too often overlooking its neighbours.

Although it has to be admitted that new forms of cultural cooperation in the region are still inadequate, unsystematic, largely funded by the international community and international organizations, there is increasingly notable progress in networking, knowledge transfer, artist mobility and the use of new information technologies.

An important step in that direction has been made by the Presidents of the states of South East Europe in their cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe focused on enhancing intercultural dialogue and cooperation in the region. Since the first meeting in UNESCO Headquarters in 2002 through the forums in Ohrid, Tirana and Varna, emphasis has been placed on peace and progress, openness, tolerance and interdependence, so sorely needed in the region. Our meeting in Opatija is a precious contribution to continued achievement of these goals.

Croatia's cultural cooperation is distinguished by openness that matches the definition of this country as a Central European, Mediterranean and South East European country, and a country that cares for democracy, peace and cooperation in the region. After entering the European Union, Croatia will continue, of course, to belong to this part of the world, Europe's southeast, both geographically and in terms of contiguous cultural elements. Croatia continues to promote new forms and approaches to cooperation and dialogue in the region, particularly in the "transformation of corridors of the past into privileged routes of cultural communication of the future", as UNESCO's Director-General, Koïchiro Matsuura symbolically put it at last year's forum.

Cultural cooperation in this region has already demonstrated that common cultural circles and parts of history can be translated into new common themes of cooperation and into a modern spirit of cultural partnership. One such common theme is the theme of this year's meeting: the Communication of Heritage.

A point that is especially important within the scope of this theme, in my view, is the linking of cultural cooperation with other spheres such as science, education, tourism and protection of the environment. This contributes to the achievement of the vision of sustainable development as a common, international goal of cooperation, and the vision of South East Europe as a modern, European region.

Georgi Parvanov*President of the Republic of Bulgaria*

I would like first to express my gratitude to my colleague and friend President Mesić for his commitment to be the host of today's forum as a follow-up to the forum on cultural corridors of South East Europe held at my initiative in Varna a year ago in almost the same format.

I cannot but voice my gratitude also to all participants in this forum for the assistance and support we received thanks to which, implementing the Varna Declaration, we have succeeded in developing and adopting today the strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting cultural corridors in South East Europe. I believe that, based on this Strategy, the Ministers of Culture of the countries in the region, with the support of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission will soon develop and adopt the relevant Action Plan for the practical attainment of the ambitious objectives we have set ourselves.

I also believe that this forum will identify a number of the tasks and specific actions to be covered by the Action Plan, especially with regard to the efficient use of cultural heritage as a specific sustainable development resource, the wide use of research and new technologies in identifying and preserving cultural heritage, the search for efficient ways to improve the knowledge of our citizens about the exceptional wealth and diversity of this heritage and, above all, the opportunities for joint actions of the countries in the region and international organizations in this sphere.

I think that a specific step in this direction is the permanent website "Virtual Cultural Corridors in South East Europe" launched today and demonstrated by Professor Todor Kreteev, which was developed with the support of the Governments of Luxembourg and Bulgaria and with the participation of experts from South East Europe and the assistance of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, for which I wish to express our gratitude. As well as a source of exceptionally rich and well-structured information about the cultural and historical heritage of this region, the website can serve as an excellent platform for building regional networks of both experts and non-governmental organizations working in this sphere. Thus the joint efforts could gradually turn the website into a broad regional forum for exchange of knowledge, opinions and ideas, for the establishment of a regional information system, and

also for development of joint projects included in the future Action Plan for the Cultural Corridors in South East Europe.

As a matter of fact, there is another project developed by a Bulgarian team with the support of the British Council in Bulgaria and again with the participation of experts from South East Europe and the assistance of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission, which fits perfectly into the topic of today's forum. This is the multimedia product entitled "Discover the Treasure" - an excellent teaching aid for children in South East Europe, offering a sophisticated and yet entertaining way to inform our children about the rich cultural and historical heritage of South East Europe, as well as to educate them to be proud of this heritage and feel responsible for its protection.

This multimedia product is an excellent example of the practical implementation of our commitments set out in the Varna Declaration "to contribute to the promotion of cultural heritage and cultural corridors within the region using modern dissemination technologies" and "to promote intercultural education as a means of fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and awareness of the rich cultural diversity of the region, creating new opportunities for communication, exchange and networking and interaction".

Last year, I launched the idea "To know and preserve Bulgarian cultural heritage" among young people in Bulgaria. I believe that this idea has been successfully interpreted in the multimedia product Discover the Treasure, where national coverage has been extended to reach the boundaries of the whole region and the motto has become "To know and preserve the cultural heritage of South East Europe". Let us, the participants in this forum, come together under this motto and work for its practical implementation.

Alfred Moisiu

President of the Republic of Albania

It is a pleasure to meet again and to continue the fruitful dialogue started in Ohrid, Tirana and Varna on the cultural heritage of our region. From our experience in Tirana, I can express the conviction that such discussions at the highest level of the states powerfully influence the strengthening of regional understanding, dialogue and cooperation. Now, when South East Europe has gone through great transformations and has distanced itself from the period when cultural values were censured or were dominated by nationalistic ideologies, it is exactly the moment to get our peoples and countries closer to one another through the regeneration and strengthening of cultural ties. Here I would like to add with pleasure that in the framework of various cooperation, within the last two months, the presidents of the region have had the opportunity to meet three times, once on April 28 in Durres in a informal meeting, a second time on May 20 in Varna in meeting of Heads of Central European countries and today, on June 1 in Opatija. This demonstrates how much this region has changed and that we have to do a great deal more to meet our objectives.

Because of the historical developments in this region, the cultural heritage of South East Europe is rich, diverse, entwined with and influenced by neighbouring countries. There are minorities of other ethnicities in each country of our region, which, through their traditions and cultural identity, help the enrichment of the country where they live. On my way here from Slovenia to Croatia, I noticed with pleasure the signs with the inscription Illyrian Bistrica. The Pellazgs and Illyrians are the forefathers of our people and this demonstrates the changes and major cultural heritage that enriches this region. This precious cultural asset makes South East Europe an attractive area for scholars and tourists from Europe and the rest of the world. Our aim to enhance our cultural potential and full integration of our heritage into European can be achieved through the widest possible recognition, preservation, enrichment and promotion of this asset. This would be a major contribution to the positive transformation of the image of our region to the rest of the world by increasing the tendency of strengthening regional cultural communication and dialogue. I think that among the innovations that our countries and peoples will bring into European Union integration are our ancient cultural assets and heritage.

Albania highly appreciates the significance of this process and it is an

active part of it. I can inform you that on a hillside in Saranda, which is one of our pearls in the Ionian Adriatic shore, the very old Church of Forty Saints has been discovered on the foundations of an ancient synagogue. This shows the multiple levels of peoples, ethnicities and religions that have lived and live in our country and other countries of the region. We are a country that has historical ties with the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires; we have three religions, and God has blessed us with both mountain ridges and sea at the same time, which have enabled us to possess a diverse cultural asset. The Albanian state has transformed this asset into a priority by assessing the tourist aspect of cultural heritage. Very soon, alongside various projects in this direction, with the assistance of UNESCO and the Italian government, we will open the first graduate school of restoration. It will be available to Albanian specialists and others from countries of the region.

In this framework, it is also necessary to strengthen the communication of heritage through a better and more intensive coordination and cooperation among the countries of the region and international partners in order to put in place an informative system for the promotion of heritage and a modern working system for its preservation and enrichment. Our societies, especially the young generations, need to acquire more knowledge about the cultures and traditions of each country by fulfilling this way an important function of heritage: that of connecting the generations, the past with the future, the culture and a country with other cultures and countries. All this would also be helpful in our efforts to be fully integrated in Euro-Atlantic structures.

Concretely, we can also do a great deal more to enhance the unique electronic network, to introduce modern technologies of presentation and information, to regenerate traditional local products, to strengthen cultural corridors and structures for greater popular awareness towards heritage, to publish joint scientific and informative publications on heritage and to also continue the work for the inclusion of more sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Albania has already a few such areas and sites, for example the 2000 years old city of Berat, which is a precious asset contributing meanwhile to our potential of cultural heritage.

Even when the language of politicians has created division among peoples, cultures have been those that have kept human communication and dialogue alive. Now we have the chance of politics being integrated in the

dedication towards cooperation. Let us use this opportunity to intensify the cultural, educational, and academic exchanges in all these aspects, by being convinced that today's meeting will give visible encouragement to the recognition and enrichment of the cultural heritage of South East Europe in all its forms.

Branko Crvenkovski

President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

It is my honour and pleasure to address this eminent gathering on behalf of the Republic of Macedonia and to extend my appreciation for the hospitality and the excellent organization of this Summit to the Republic of Croatia and its President.

Moreover, I would like also to commend UNESCO and its Director-General, Mr. Matsuura, for the strong support and understanding that he is giving to the countries of South East Europe in their efforts and strive to promote their mutual cooperation and to integrate in the European and Euro Atlantic structures.

The organization of this Regional Forum in Opatija clearly and unambiguously demonstrates the readiness and determination of the South East European countries to cooperate mutually within UNESCO, the European Union and the Council of Europe and in general as neighbours. These are countries that have many things in common and identical needs but also the possibility of jointly satisfying these needs.

The continuity in the organization of these regional meetings at the highest level, in the framework of the Dialogue among Civilizations, the Forums in Ohrid, Tirana, Varna and now in Opatija, as well as the conferences of the Ministers of Culture in Mostar and Venice, add a new vision for this region, introducing a new quality and dimension to our cooperation.

The regional meetings so far opened new possibilities for the organization of a series of important events in the Region enriching and intensifying therefore the communication among our countries in all areas, especially in the field of culture and cultural heritage, education and science.

Cultural heritage lives in our region and within our people, but also within each of us individually. This is exactly the reason why we must not allow political disputes, differences and prejudices to prevail over the search for the cultural thread that has been bringing us together and which today - regardless of all that has been happening to us and is still happening - makes our people feel closer to each other.

It is absurd that here on this soil, which has always been a crossroad of civilizations, we must constantly remind ourselves of the need to study

civilizing corridors and cultural ties. The frontiers of our countries are not the frontiers of our mutual influences.

Only when we will truly and sincerely agree with the assumption that cultural heritage is the common good of our people, will we be able to start enjoying the prosperity that all tolerant and open environments deserve.

Heritage pertains to all of us, and none of us can take ownership over it. Only exploration of mutual ties, open discussions and exchange of results of expert research can open to us and to future generations the true dimensions of cultural heritage that we have been entrusted with. True value of heritage can be acknowledged only when we will be able to make it a foundation for a better future for all of us. In that context even the most suspicious among us will accept that civilizing differences that have always existed are a virtue not a handicap.

I am strongly convinced that by strengthening our mutual cooperation, and with the support of UNESCO, the European Union and the Council of Europe, we will be able to implement the decisions taken at these important meetings and we will be able to leave to our future generations in the region a heritage of an established communication that will be based on mutual tolerance, a culture of peace, established dialogue and respect of cultural differences. This should be the vision of South East Europe.

The affirmation and respect of different cultural identities through jointly coordinated projects will imply the preparation of highly qualitative development policy of continued communication.

Communication within the countries of South East Europe in all fields of cultural, social economic and political life is not only possible, but also an indispensable prerequisite to the development, integration and inclusion of the region in modern cultural trends of the European Union.

I believe that underlining the new spirit of regional cooperation through an enhanced communication, creation of a long term strategic program - action plan in all fields of culture - all restraining definitions will be eliminated and the intercultural processes and sustainable development of the region will be promoted.

I am pleased to note that our country, as well as others in South East Europe, together with other member countries of UNESCO, have acted in a democratic manner through a mutual respect, to deepen the friendly and humane relations among people, thus contributing to the construction of a better world which is one of the basic commitments that the Organization has been following and still follows in this 60th anniversary since its creation.

The satisfaction is even greater because the Republic of Macedonia gave its contribution to the endeavours of UNESCO by organizing the Regional Forum “Dialogue among Civilizations” in Ohrid, in 2003.

Since 2003, in the framework of UNESCO, the Republic of Macedonia successfully organized several other important regional meetings, such as: the Regional Meeting for Cultural Heritage Digitization, the Anti-Piracy Regional meeting, World Dance Congress - CID UNESCO, Regional meeting on Prevention of Illicit Traffic of Cultural Properties and other illicit activities, etc.

Within the decade of the Dialogue among Civilizations, our country will have the pleasure of hosting the Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture. I believe that at this conference, through mutual exchanges and contributions, we will continue to define the priorities and mutual needs presented in Mostar and Venice.

I hope that Macedonia in 2007 will also host the Regional Youth Forum, Dialogue among Civilizations at which, with the assistance of UNESCO and the Ambassador of Good Will, Mr. Abramian, the dialogue and communication will continue among young people as well.

Finally, I would like to express my conviction that the constructive work and the final document adopted at this forum will contribute to our commitments to make South East Europe a more pleasant and more prospective place to live.

Sulejman Tihic

Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

I would like to join in congratulating and thanking our host and friend president of the Republic of Croatia, Mr Stjepan Mesić for a heartfelt welcome and the excellent organisation of this conference.

I consider today's meeting to be a continuation of the process of dialogue at the highest level between the countries of South East Europe with the view to enhance our relations in the area of culture and cultural heritage, which we started under the auspices of UNESCO in 2003 in Ohrid.

The specificity of its geographical position, at the crossroads between East and West, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, as well as its very rich and turbulent history has shaped South East Europe into a true mosaic of religions, cultures, traditions and languages.

Our common history and ethnic structure invite us to cooperate widely. Different nations, religions and cultures meet, intertwine and, more or less, co-exist in harmony in our region. One nation often lives on both or several sides of the border. In one country it represents the majority while it is a minority in other countries. In the same way our different monuments and cultural specificities are dispersed across the region. We have to build these relations, including those regarding preservation and restoration, in compliance with the European standards. The protection and restoration of the cultural and historical heritage of the minorities is primarily a responsibility of the representatives of the majority nation. They have to safeguard the cultural heritage of minority nations. In that way they set the model of how others should treat their cultural heritage.

By safeguarding cultural heritage as a witness of our long history, we safeguard awareness of our own existence and invest in the future. Each and every one of us needs to feel proud of the entire cultural heritage, regardless of the period, culture or nation from which it comes. It represents our treasure and our asset, not a liability. We should use these foundations to build bridges of cooperation for a better common future of South East Europe, as a region of tolerance, reconciliation and intercultural dialogue.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is like the region but on a smaller scale because different nations, religions and cultures have been meeting, mixing and co-

existing there, mostly in harmony, for centuries. In Sarajevo, which is still called the Jerusalem of Europe, in the town of Mostar, as in the majority of other towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina, mosques, catholic and orthodox churches, synagogues, but also other cultural and historical monuments and traces have been standing next to each other for centuries.

During the wars that have marked the 20th century, especially from 1991 to 1995, cultural and historical monuments and other sights were systematically destroyed. This is why the protection and restoration of cultural heritage is important, not only for the sake of the past, but also for the sake of the future. It contributes to safeguarding and strengthening the country's identity and ensuring fundamental human rights. Every protected and and/or restored sight leads us a step closer to rebuilding trust and tolerance, which are part of our long-standing tradition.

I am happy to say that the World Heritage Committee, at its last session in Durban, South Africa, decided to inscribe the Old Mostar Bridge and the Old historical centre of the town of Mostar on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The symbolic nature of this decision is that much greater because in the Declaration of our previous summit, held in Varna last year, the Old Bridge in Mostar was declared symbol of co-existence and reconciliation in the region.

This was an important impulse for our country to intensify activities of restoring and protecting our cultural and natural heritage.

Recently Bosnia and Herzegovina has officially nominated another cultural and historical monument for the World Heritage List - Mehmed-Paša Sokolović Bridge in Višegrad. Moreover, we are preparing the nomination of the Jajce Old Town complex and of the Vjetrenica Cave.

We are also interested in nominating the Sutjeska National Park for the World heritage List and this would be a cross-border joint project with the Durmitor National Park in neighbouring Montenegro. This is the best way to permanently protect the natural wealth of our respective countries - especially the canyons of the Drina and Tara Rivers.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank UNESCO and its Director-General Mr. Matsura personally for showing readiness to accept the

initiative of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina for UNESCO to take part in the reconstruction of the three symbolic religious sights in our country - the Ferhadija Mosque in the town of Banja Luka, the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in Mostar and the Catholic monastery Plehan in the town of Derventa.

I would also like to thank UNESCO for their support expressed up to now for the implementation of the project ARS Aevi - aiming to establish one of the most important European museums of modern art in Sarajevo. This will make Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and our region as well, one of the leading destinations for modern art.

A month ago intense archaeological excavations started in the surroundings of the town of Visoko, 30 kilometres from Sarajevo. According to the findings of a group of eminent archaeologists, the remains of several pyramids are present. Scientific studies conducted so far, including those carried out by Egyptian pyramid experts, have confirmed the aforementioned findings. If these hypotheses receive their final confirmation, this will be one of the most important and most spectacular archaeological discoveries in the world, which will largely change the history of Europe and transform our region into one of the most important destinations not only for scientists and researchers, but also for tourists. Bosnia and Herzegovina would highly appreciate it if UNESCO would decide to send several of its experts to the town of Visoko. I also invite other countries in the region to send their archaeologists to take part in field excavations.

After the closed period caused by the division of our continent and the recent conflicts marked by wars, suffering and the destruction of cultural monuments, our region is entering a new period - a period of openness, good neighbourly relations, cultural and all other types of cooperation. This period needs to be characterised by the reconstruction and promotion of the rich cultural heritage of South East Europe. For this reason we strongly support the intensification of cultural cooperation among our respective countries as well as the establishment of the cultural corridors and cultural routes network.

We support the initiative to intensify the activities of the promotion of cultural and historical heritage of our region and we believe that the new information technologies can be a very useful tool for this promotion. By

establishing cultural corridors, by joint promotion of our cultural treasures we can make the region of South East Europe a destination which will again attract visitors from all over the world with its cultural heritage and diversity and in this way we can open new development perspectives for our countries.

In this way we will send a clear political message that we are ready to constructively involve our respective countries in all international processes and that we decided to make South East Europe a model of establishing good relations and cooperation, on the basis of permanent dialogue and the wealth of our cultural diversity.

Filip Vujanović

President of the Republic of Montenegro

I am highly pleased that the Forth Forum of South East European countries is now taking place, as it affirms their cultural corridors through the topic of “Communication of Heritage”. I would like to thank the President of the Republic of Croatia, Mr Stjepan Mesić for the organization of the Forum as well as its co-organizers Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESO, and Mr. Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the of the Council of Europe.

Montenegro has a special reason for being particularity pleased today. It is for the first time that Montenegro can present its cultural richness as an independent state. You will agree that a wealth of each country, including the wealth of its cultural heritage can be best promoted only if promoted by an independent state. It is natural that none can be more acquainted with or devoted to the historical values of a country than the citizens of the country to which such values belong.

Therefore, first of all I would like to say that there is no smaller country having such great number of cultural and historical monuments than Montenegro. Some of you will likely say that I am using this opportunity to promote the cultural heritage of Montenegro as its President. If so, I will tell you that you are right and I will be grateful to you at the same time as I will inspire you to come and explore the cultural wealth of our country and compare it with the cultural wealth of other countries. I do not think there will be anyone who could deny what I have just said, but only will become aware of the cultural richness of Montenegro, thus becoming its promoter as well.

Montenegro is a state with numerous cultural and historical monuments. Being located at the boundary of the East and West, it was populated with many ethic communities - Romans, Illyrians, Avars, Goths, Ostrogoths and Slavs. Therefore, on its territory, the influences of many cultures were interfused, such as Roman, Illyrian, Greek, Byzantine, Montenegrin, Serbian, Muslim, Croatian, Albanian and Bosnian culture, while each of them preserved its own recognizability.

Traces of ancient cultures can be seen in archaeological sites, literature, religious and cultural monuments and in urban historical values.

There are approximately fifty archaeological sites in Montenegro, the oldest of which is Red Rock near Niksic, as one of the biggest Palaeolithic sites in Europe. In the 3rd century B.C., on the territory of the present town of Risan, a fortified Illyrian town was mentioned, which was capital of Queen Teuta, where exceptional archaeological sites showing representative Roman edifices were found in late second and early third century A.D. Remnants of the ancient town of Doclea, from the first century A.D., are located near Podgorica.

St. Tripun's Charter is the first known literary work, which was written in 890, then there is Bishop Dukljanin's Chronicle from the 12th century and Miroslav's Gospel also from the 12th century, which is the oldest preserved book in Cyrillic. In late 15th century, the first Cyrillic book in the South Slavic region was printed in Crnojevic Printing House in Cetinje.

Cultural monuments of all denominations have exceptional historic value. Notable Orthodox monuments include: the Đurđevi Stupovi Monastery near Berane from the 12th century. The Morača Monastery from 13th century, the Cetinje Monastery from the 15th century and the Ostrog Monastery from 18th century. Notable Catholic monuments are: St. Tripun's Cathedral from 12th century, and the well known church dedicated to Our Lady of the Rocks, built on an artificial island in the 17th century. When it comes to Christian relics, Montenegro may proudly say that three notable sacred objects are kept in Cetinje: the Hand of St. John the Baptist, a fragment of the True Cross and an original icon of Our Lady of Philermos, The Patron Saint of the Order of Malta. Of Islamic religious monuments I should like to note the Husein-Pasha's Mosque in Pljevlja that dates from 16th century and which is one of the most beautiful monuments of Oriental culture in the Balkans.

The architecture of the old towns of Ulcinj, Old Bar, Herceg Novi, Budva and Kotor, make them highly valuable in terms of well-preserved old urban architecture. The town of Kotor stands out for its monumental cultural value, which is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List of Cultural and Natural Properties

Cultural richness is a testimony of another exceptional wealth of Montenegro - wealth of multiethnic and multi-religious relations. All

ethnic communities now living in Montenegro have contributed to the exceptional cultural heritage of Montenegro by their own cultural richness. They have also made it more affluent by assuring interethnic and interdenominational accord. It is exactly this accord that helped Montenegro preserve itself and its cultural heritage, allowing it now to valorize these two exceptional values as an independent state.

Message of Traian Bănescu*President of the Republic of Romania*

As delivered by Virgil Nitulescu, State Secretary for Culture and Religious Affairs of the Republic of Romania

It is an honour and a great joy to be amongst you here at the Summit of Heads of State and Government of South East Europe, an event of great importance that will deal with the subject of cultural heritage of our countries.

Because cultural heritage is an essential element for regional and global consolidation and cooperation, with its many facets, must be conserved, preserved and maintained for future generations as a testimony of human experience and aspirations. All of this, so that it is apt to stimulate creativity in all its diversity and to inspire an authentic intercultural dialogue, just as is prescribed the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and especially the more recent initiatives of this international Organization, namely the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, adopted last year in Paris.

We all share the same cultural values, and the richness of the cultural diversity of our region brings a vital contribution to European and regional identity. Equally, it is an important engine for the development of cultural tourism.

There are, in this part of Europe, cities that are rich in history - jewels of medieval architecture - that we have succeed, against all odds, to preserve. They are places of memory and of convergence of our civilizations, whose unique character is given, I believe, by unity in diversity. It is for this reason that we must encourage cooperation in order to ensure the means of protection and promotion of this priceless inheritance. Because it is whilst making accessible the heritage of South East Europe, that we will succeed in giving again to this region the importance it deserves within the universal cultural heritage.

It is with great interest that we be following the debates and the interventions of all participants. I should also like to announce our wish to you that we meet next time in Romania for the 2007 Summit-level forum and to transmit to you the message of the President of Romania, Mr Traian Basescu:

The strategy to be adopted on the occasion of this Forum on identification, preservation, sustainable use and promotion of cultural corridors in the Southeast of Europe corresponds entirely to the cultural policy promoted by Romania, therefore I express my confidence that the objectives of this strategy will be not only agreed upon by the states present here, but also enforced as soon as possible.

Romania is willing to take part in this common effort of reflection on the future of the Cultural heritage in the region. This common effort will be evaluated on the occasion of the following Regional Forum of the Head of states from South East Europe that will take place at Sibiu, Romania, in the first half of May 2007.

In this context, I have the honour to invite you to take part in the next Regional Forum Romania is organizing in Sibiu, entitled “Cultural diversity -a bridge between Cultural Heritage and the Culture of Future”. This Forum is going to unfold with the occasion of the first “European Capital of Culture” from the South East Europe.

With the designation in 2007 of Sibiu as an European Capital of Culture, Romania inaugurates a new mechanism for the development of this program, in the very year of its accession to the European Union.

From this point of view, Sibiu intends to turn its multicultural, multiethnic and multiconfessional aspects into European values, to be promoted at regional, national and worldwide level.

Throughout the year 2007, the city of Sibiu will host cultural events, festivals, concerts, theatre performances under the aegis “Emotion in motion”. These events will take place on the city streets and squares, as well as in the marvellous layout of the fortified Saxon churches surrounding Sibiu.

The events developed in the framework of the Program “Sibiu -European Capital of Culture 2007”, embrace the objectives supported by UNESCO and intend to promote cultural cooperation, to strengthen inter-confessional harmony, to encourage and develop linguistic diversity.

UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, defines this value as common heritage of humanity. Following this premise, cultural diversity will be approached in the ambit of the Forum as a source for

cultural exchanges, innovation and creativity, a development parameter and a promoter for mutual understanding.

The culture of the future can only be built by strengthening the cultural heritage of each country and by promoting international cooperation. The balanced and sustainable development of the South Eastern European cultural heritage contributes to the regional economical and social cohesion.

The historical links, the axis for cultural dialogue and exchange of opinions, knowledge and abilities, all these are favourable for the establishment of a cultural network, based on the richness of cultural diversity in the region.

The key topics for Sibiu 2007 Forum will be the following:

- Multiculturalism -an engine for development and regional peace
- Cultural heritage and cultural diversity in South East Europe - global accessibility
- Strategies for a better knowledge and communication of the cultural heritage (awareness campaigns, educational programs, specific promotional strategies) -Cultural heritage -a source of creation for the culture of future
- Regional cultural networks -means of communication for the proper use of the European cultural heritage
- The preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage through integrated projects
- Cultural corridors, cultural routes and the promotion of the regional cultural heritage.

Due to the special significance of 2007 for Romania -the accession to European Union and the designation of Sibiu as an European Capital of Culture -I believe that the organization of the following Regional Forum in Sibiu will find its international natural place within all the European and international cultural events, taking place in our country.

Hoping that your working agenda will allow you to accept this invitation, we are waiting for you in Sibiu, in 2007.”

Boris Tadić

President of the Republic of Serbia

As delivered by Dragan Kojadinović, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Serbia

The fact that we are meeting for the second time at the highest level in order to discuss the Cultural Corridors Programme and the issues of cooperation and management of cultural heritage clearly demonstrates the importance our region attaches to this topic. After the painful experience of the recent past in our region, but hopefully also with some lessons learned, these issues surely exceed the level of traditional academic debates. The Cultural Corridors Programme touches upon some fundamental questions regarding the establishment of stronger ties in the region as well as the problems and aspects of the policy of sustainable development of the region and of attaining social cohesion. All of us perceive cultural tourism development, which represents the strongest link between cultural corridors and the economy of our societies, as, among other things, an opportunity for job creation and a more balanced and creative development of the entire region.

Many things of regional importance regarding cultural heritage management have occurred between last year's summit and this one.

What was especially important for the Republic of Serbia was the first step to normalisation of its relations with the temporary authorities in Kosovo and Metohija, made precisely around issues of cooperation in cultural heritage protection. We have cooperated successfully and made progress at the technical level.

Several new monuments and sites from our region are on the UNESCO World Heritage List. 160 monuments and sites are being treated in the framework of the programme for cultural and natural heritage of South East Europe led jointly by the Council of Europe and the European Commission and which undoubtedly represents the most successful active regional reform programme in this area. The cultural routes programme of the Council of Europe is gaining new elements and possibilities of future development on a daily basis. The European heritage day programme is also becoming increasingly visible in the whole of the Balkans.

Furthermore, two very important international agreements were adopted in the meantime and their implementation will, I am convinced, provide new forms of cooperation in our region. These are the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural

Expressions and the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. All countries of South East Europe unanimously supported the adoption of these documents. Their ratification, which is underway, should be our political goal, as well as their fastest possible implementation. The level and quality of the future cooperation in the region will definitely depend, among other things, on the capacity and the way of implementing these agreements.

In accordance with what has been done so far, the Cultural Corridors Programme, as well as the Action Plan for the implementation of the Varna Declaration is, in our view, a programme which should be a product of synergy of all efforts invested up to now, as well as the basis for the future cooperation on an equal footing, which will bring together all the initiatives of UNESCO, of the Council of Europe and of the local players in the region started up to now.

Apart from political will, which is necessary for the development of cultural corridors, providing working conditions for regional networks and institutional mechanisms is of particular importance.

The development of the Cultural Corridors Programme should provide conditions for sustainable development and for a very intertwined network of intersectoral cooperation. This task also undoubtedly represents a true challenge in terms of cybernetic organisation and requires a coordination of countries' policies, the participation of local authorities, intersectoral cooperation, the participation of civil society mechanisms and private initiative, expert networks and an increasing use of modern technologies as well as material resources necessary for its implementation. For this reason, I believe that the adoption of the Action plan was for us the beginning of a very serious and complicated management process.

The Republic of Serbia will, in the framework of its policy on cultural and natural heritage management, by treating heritage as a resource of social development, provide maximum support to the development of Cultural Corridors Programme, which will unify all the efforts invested so far in this area.

Koïchiro Matsuura

*Director-General of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization*

As I said in my welcoming remarks, I am delighted to be here for this fourth Regional Summit in Opatija aimed at promoting dialogue among all the countries of the sub-region. The theme of “Communication of Heritage” points us to the importance of sharing information, knowledge and understanding in order to build lasting peace and stability.

The potential of enhanced regional cooperation through a shared vision of its heritage - be it tangible or intangible - is enormous. At present, 59 cultural and natural properties from South East Europe are inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List and nearly 100 sites have been identified on national tentative lists that may be nominated in future. Increased cooperation and communication clearly can enhance conservation practices, establish links between heritage sites across the region, and raise public awareness of the diversity and shared history of this heritage.

The Republic of Croatia has spared no efforts in this regard. The country can take pride not only in its outstanding cultural and natural heritage but also in the important protective measures that have been enacted. Since its ratification of the 1972 Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage in July 1992, Croatia has actively participated in its implementation. Today, the country has six sites inscribed on the World Heritage List - five cultural and one natural - and 5 more on the Tentative List, which shows its great potential in this matter, something it shares with all the countries in South East Europe.

The constant efforts to enhance international collaboration in this domain are exemplified by the Old City of Dubrovnik, which has been the focus of a major restoration programme involving UNESCO and other European partners, as well as by the beautiful Plitvice Lakes.

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which was adopted by UNESCO’s General Conference in October 2003, has been ratified at an exceptionally rapid pace in all regions of the world, but nowhere as extensively as in Eastern Europe. The following States in South East Europe already are party to this Convention: Croatia, Romania, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Turkey and Albania. The Convention entered

into force in April of this year, and very soon the General Assembly of this Convention, and the Intergovernmental Committee it will elect, will start implementing it. I am sure that these organs will profit greatly from the experience and research available from this sub-region. Furthermore, I am certain that living cultural practices and expressions will form part and parcel of the heritage that will be communicated and shared through cultural corridors, high-level heritage-related research and new technologies. The recognition of the function and values of the intangible heritage in the spirit of the new Convention is not only linked to tangible heritage but also serves as a stable factor for the sense of identity and continuity of communities. This recognition will help to develop corridors and programmes that promote dialogue, exchange and understanding between communities and peoples all over the region.

Indeed, heritage can be an important driving force for regional and local development. Natural and cultural heritage sites and the various manifestations of cultural diversity and of living cultures are major tourism attractions, reflecting the inherent link between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Cultural tourism is among the foremost vehicles of mutual knowledge and cultural exchange. Cultural industries, which combine the creation, production and commercialization of contents, also communicate identities and heritage as well as generate income and improved livelihoods for local populations.

Furthermore, interaction between tourism and heritage often results in the interpretation and re-interpretation of heritage, which involves important educational dynamics. The significance of heritage education in regions that have recently suffered from conflicts and wars cannot be underestimated. Successful initiatives such as UNESCO's "World Heritage in Young Hands" merit attention in the South East European context, especially because of its focus on heritage as a common denominator and unifying factor for cooperation and reconciliation.

The promotion of innovative techniques in restoration and preservation is channeled through capacity-building, networking and the dissemination of best practices and expertise; in this regard, there is an important role to be played by organizations such as UNESCO, the European Union, the Council of Europe and ICCROM. Information and communication technologies obviously play a key role in promoting cultural heritage as they facilitate and enrich the exchange of knowledge on heritage, both

among experts and among the public at large. Through digitization, these technologies help to keep heritage accessible as a living part of contemporary culture and to maintain cyberspace culturally and linguistically diverse.

“Communication of Heritage” clearly points to several domains and different types of expertise in a creative and dynamic process. Obtaining concrete and tangible results will require a firm commitment to the principles of dialogue and commonly shared values - mutual respect, tolerance and willingness to listen to and learn from each other. It is worth recalling that our cultural diversity is, as the UNESCO Universal Declaration (2001) puts it, “...the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations”.

The High-Level Conference on Strengthening Cooperation in South East Europe, held at UNESCO Headquarters in 2002, along with subsequent important developments, events and Summit gatherings have clearly illustrated the growing understanding of the need for intensified “Communication of Heritage”. In this perspective, the many efforts presently being undertaken by many countries in the region and by the international community represent a new beginning. The challenge of the Opatija Summit is to bring all the strands, perspectives and approaches together with the aim of formulating a clear strategy and a sustainable action plan for the future. The tangible proof of our efforts will then lie in the practical translation of the Strategy into concrete action at the level of each country and through various cooperative efforts.

Let me assure you that UNESCO stands ready to continue its support to this process as a genuine partner and stakeholder with a view to consolidating peace, stability and prosperity in the region for the benefit of its peoples.

Terry Davis

Secretary-General of the Council of Europe

The Varna Declaration adopted last May gave rise to an inspiring idea: reviving the historic lifelines of South East Europe - the lines of interaction between cultures which have left their mark on territories, landscapes, settlements and traditions - and make them a source of new links between peoples.

Great ideas are born every day but few outlive the first critical examination and even fewer survive the test of time.

This Opatija Summit is proof that the idea of reviving these historic lifelines, launched a year ago, was not only fresh but also workable. I willingly embraced this idea, on behalf of the Council of Europe, because it corresponded fully to our thinking on cultural heritage, intercultural dialogue and sustainable community development.

The Council of Europe - together with UNESCO - was the midwife at the birth of this idea. But it also wished to be a caring godparent giving guidance and support to the child on its journey to maturity.

Following the Varna commitment, I encouraged the network of heritage experts on South East Europe to turn the concept of cultural corridors from a bright idea into a reality.

The task was complex and challenging - but no one said that it would be easy. Allow me to briefly outline the outcome of our work.

First, the guiding principles. They derive from the Council of Europe standards in the field of cultural heritage and in particular from the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the value of cultural heritage for society adopted last year in Faro. The cultural corridors must contribute to local development and sustainable communities and therefore be able to reconcile several requirements for development - economic growth, preservation of the environment, cultural heritage and diversity. This reconciliation must be the result of a democratic debate involving members of the community from different cultural traditions - and lead to a common project reinterpreting the historical legacy in the light of the community's contemporary objectives.

Second, the organisational framework. Our Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural heritage in South East Europe, in which most of your countries participate, has been extended, with the support of the European Commission, to provide the framework for development, indeed the cradle, for the cultural corridors project. This programme has generated over the past years, the institutional capacity, expertise and networks which will assist in building the cultural corridors.

Third - the method. We propose to develop, within the next 18 months, the conceptual design for a pilot corridor involving at least three countries. In this endeavour, we rely on our lasting partnership with the European Union, as well as on the intellectual input of other key partners such as UNESCO and the European Cultural Routes Institute.

But the most valuable ally is the determination and commitment of your governments, and their support to the local authorities, civil society organisations and businesses, whose energy and imagination will be the lifeblood of this project.

The corridor is a powerful and omnipresent metaphor: we speak about trade corridors, transport corridors, migration corridors. Today we will fit a few more pieces into the puzzle with a new type of corridor which, in the spirit of the guiding theme of this Summit can also be called corridors of cultural communication.

Communication is essential for building the dream of a Europe without dividing lines - a continent proud of its heritage and diversity, open to its neighbours and confident in its future.

Communication is pivotal to the Council of Europe action in the field of heritage: at the annual European Heritage Days, millions of Europeans discover treasures of the past usually hidden from the public eye. The European Cultural Routes mobilise public authorities and civil society alike around projects which educate people about common themes in our diverse heritage.

However, preserving heritage and communicating it to the general public requires knowledge and expertise - we are in this business too, through our training and capacity-building programmes for heritage professionals and the unique pan-European information system HEREIN which helps

to disseminate standards and good practice across Europe and beyond.

The cultural corridors are potentially one of the more complex and ambitious projects we have in this field and we look forward to the process and to the result.

Part II

Regional Forum on
The Cultural Corridors of South East Europe:
Common Past and Shared Heritage, a Key to Future Partnership
Varna, Bulgaria, 20 to 21 May 2005



Varna Declaration

Adopted at the

*Regional Forum on The Cultural Corridors of South East Europe:
Common Past and Shared Heritage, a Key to Future Partnership
Varna, Bulgaria, 20 to 21 May 2005*

8. We, Heads of State and other leaders and representatives of South East Europe, meeting in Varna (20-21 May, 2005) within the framework of the Regional Forum ‘Cultural Corridors of South East Europe’ organised under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr. Georgi Parvanov, the Director-General of UNESCO Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Mr. Terry Davis:
 - a) *Reaffirming* the ideals and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - b) *Recognising* the role of the cultural heritage of the countries of South East Europe as a key element for strengthening regional and global cooperation; their heritage in all its manifestations must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001);
 - c) *Recalling* the relevant conventions adopted under the auspices of UNESCO, in particular the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970); the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), and under the auspices of the Council of Europe, in particular the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992), and

the European Landscape Convention (2000);

d) *Acknowledging* the complementary roles and objectives of the international institutions and organisations participating in the Forum, and in particular:

- UNESCO's core mandate, which includes fostering international and regional cooperation and standard-setting in the field of culture, particularly through the preservation and enhancement of intangible and tangible cultural heritage as a source of dialogue and development;
- the Council of Europe's role in setting standards and supporting networks (cf. Resolution (98) 4 on Cultural Routes), particularly the ongoing joint action with the European Commission for the integrated rehabilitation of the architectural and archaeological heritage (the Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe);
- the European Union's role in formulating programmes and initiatives for balanced sustainable regional development, aiming at social cohesion with strong emphasis on the potential of cultural and cultural heritage resources for growth and employment opportunities;

- a) Welcoming *the reconstruction of the Mostar Bridge (2004)*, which is an eloquent symbol of reconciliation in the region;
- b) *Emphasising* that this Declaration is in continuity with the Message from Ohrid adopted by the Regional Forum on the Dialogue among Civilizations (2003) and the Tirana Summit Declaration on Inter-religious and Inter-ethnic Dialogue (2004);
- c) *Noting* the fortunate coincidence of our meeting in Varna with the *World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development* (21 May), proclaimed by the United Nations in 2002;

9. hereby declare that:

- a) The region is developing a new confidence and capability,

creating common space for dialogue, exchange and agreement, in which culture plays an increasingly important role;

- b) The rich cultural heritage of South East Europe is an essential element of global cultural diversity; it makes a vital contribution to European and regional identity, especially in the context of European integration;
- c) The cultural heritage of our countries constitutes an invaluable resource for sustainable cultural, economic and social development, particularly through an innovative approach to cultural tourism in the spirit of the International Cultural Tourism Charter (ICOMOS 1999);
- d) The protection, presentation and interpretation of intangible and tangible cultural heritage should foster mutual understanding and respect for the heritage of others;
- e) The knowledge society, and information and communication technologies, have created opportunities for strengthening the role of cultural heritage in fostering dialogue both within the region and beyond it;
- f) Revealing and making accessible the cultural heritage of South East Europe in its proper context will highlight the importance of the region and its contribution to the cultural heritage of the world;
- g) The historical links and axes of inter-cultural dialogue and exchange of ideas, beliefs, knowledge and skills, as well as cultural goods and expressions, have given rise to a unique network of cultural corridors and cultural routes in South East Europe, which deserve to be identified, preserved, sustainably used and promoted;

10. and commit to:

- a) facilitate the setting up of a Regional Network, with the participation of national and international experts, building on the experience gained in preparing the Forum in Varna, and having a mandate to develop a conceptual and operational Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting cultural corridors, and an Action Plan for its practical implementation through

- integrated regional policies and actions;
- b) facilitate the creation of a regional framework of institutional cooperation in the field of cultural corridors and cultural heritage;
 - c) contribute to the promotion of cultural heritage and cultural corridors within the region using modern dissemination technologies, in cooperation with the European Institute of Cultural Routes, Luxembourg, and other specialist institutions;
 - d) encourage cooperation concerning ways and means of promoting and protecting intangible cultural heritage;
 - e) promote urgent measures for the protection of cultural heritage at risk within the region, including continuing action to counter the illicit traffic in cultural property;
 - f) foster the improvement of management skills and structures to support the cultural heritage and creative activity and so enhance the status of artists in the region;
 - g) encourage concerted action for the balanced sustainable development of cultural heritage, including cultural tourism, through partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society;
 - h) promote intercultural education as a means of fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and awareness of the rich cultural diversity of the region, creating new opportunities for communication, exchange, networking and interaction;
 - i) use the potential of relevant programmes and frameworks of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Union, ICOMOS and other international organisations, financial institutions and countries outside the region to intensify cooperation in the field of culture in South East Europe;

11. In conclusion, we

- a) Welcome the proposal of President Stipe Mesić to host the next regional high-level forum in Croatia (2006), on the subject of science;
- b) Support the presentation to the participants in the Forum in Croatia for adopting a Strategy and Action Plan for the Cultural Corridors, drafted by the members of the

regional expert network, with the assistance of Bulgaria as organiser of this summit, the new host country of Croatia and the international organisations;

- c) Note the proposals for subsequent regional high-level forums (2007) made by Romania (Sibiu) on 'Multiculturalism as a bridge between cultural heritage and culture of the future', and by Greece on 'Intercultural Encounters on Maritime, River and Lake Routes of South East Europe' and their role for the Dialogue of Civilizations.

21 May 2005

Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO

*Address on the occasion of the
Regional Forum on The Cultural Corridors of South East Europe:
Common Past and Shared Heritage, a Key to Future Partnership
Varna, Bulgaria, 20 May 2005*

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today in Varna for this Summit, which represents a new opportunity to strengthen the cooperation we have sought to build up with the Heads of State of the region in order to create a genuine platform for dialogue among the cultures and civilizations of South East Europe.

The high-level encounter on the strengthening of cooperation in South East Europe that took place at UNESCO Headquarters in April 2002 was undoubtedly the starting point for renewed dialogue among the countries of the region. Since then, this dialogue has been pursued most fruitfully, first in Ohrid in 2003 and then in Tirana last year. I am very pleased with the progress that has been achieved over the last three years. I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all Heads of State of the region, and especially those present here today who, by their regular attendance at these Summits, have shown how much importance they assign to this process.

I believe that the dialogue has now been placed on a sound and lasting footing and that the time has now come to anchor it in more practical and targeted actions, and to think about launching a series of annual meetings on specific issues that can solidify the dialogue around unifying themes.

This is one of the reasons why I so readily concurred with the proposal of our host, President Georgi Parvanov, to give concrete extension to our previous encounters by including on the political agenda of the Heads of State a project based on cultural cooperation and devoted, by definition, to dialogue.

I am especially glad that at this decisive stage we are able to benefit from the support of regional cooperation organizations, particularly the Council

of Europe and the European Commission. The project that brings us together, if it is to succeed, indeed demands a steadfast commitment to cooperation and to the sharing of expertise and resources.

Today, the Heads of State of South East Europe are assembled not only to issue a strong reaffirmation of their determination to cooperate in peace and dialogue - as they did in Ohrid and Tirana - but also to sign up to a concrete programme that places culture at the heart of development and dialogue.

This is a moment of historic significance for UNESCO - which has always argued that culture had a pivotal role in international relations - since, today, it is Heads of State who are declaring before the world their support for this approach and thus giving it exemplary importance and impact. I am confident that the Varna process will be contagious in the most beneficial sense of the word. For we are living in times when each and every one of us is becoming aware of the increasing role of culture in the daily lives of peoples and individuals as a mirror of their identity. As a result, by not only reaching into every nook and cranny of daily life but also becoming an increasingly central feature of international relations, culture is generating a new geopolitical strategy or paradigm.

Your engagement is forcefully inscribing upon the political agenda a development that is here for all to see and that is gathering momentum in the age of globalization. You have understood the awesome power of culture, which can be divisive if used badly, or a tool for peace and progress when placed in the service of mutual understanding.

I am also very pleased to see that this Varna meeting coincides with the World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2002. It is particularly appropriate that this symbolic coincidence is occurring in a region with such extraordinary ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, something that has long been a source of vulnerability for it, but which today is among its strengths.

The promotion of the “fruitful diversity of cultures” is enshrined in UNESCO’s Constitution as one of its core mandates. This involves the recognition of the equal dignity of each culture and the mobilization of all cultures’ energies in the service of future-oriented projects.

As is the case in any region that has a rich history, memory is a bridge between past and future, based on the traces of a remarkably varied heritage, each part of which is an indispensable building block for a self-respecting society. Heritage is not the result of the slow sedimentation of successive cultures and civilizations in a given location. Nor is it the fruit of a selective reading of history whereby certain periods would fall into oblivion while others would be highlighted simply because they were considered more glorious or productive. Heritage is the daily encounter with the past and the discovery of a key that opens the doors to a full understanding of today's world, thereby shaping a clearer vision of the future. Heritage should not be taken as meaning a collection of cultural landscapes, sites, monuments or objects. It is not confined to these material components, however valuable they may be.

Heritage also stands for such practices, representations, expressions, and forms of knowledge and know-how - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated with them - as communities, groups or individuals recognize as belonging to their cultural heritage. This intangible heritage, handed down from generation to generation, is in a perpetual state of re-creation by those communities and groups in accordance with their *milieu*, their interaction with nature and their history, and it gives them a sense of identity and continuity, thus contributing to the promotion of respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

UNESCO has sought strongly to affirm the multi-faceted value of heritage, adopting the World Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972 and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003. It is gratifying for UNESCO to observe that the complementarity of these two Conventions is today widely recognised and that heritage protection, whether in the tangible or intangible domain, is in demand the world over.

Accordingly, there is a growing public outcry whenever one of the treasures of humanity's heritage disappears, be it as a result of natural disaster, war or some other cause. It is this watchful universal awareness that will in future guarantee the survival of our heritage on the international, regional, national or local levels. But it will only work if each of us recognizes that another person's heritage is also a part of our own and of that of humankind in its entirety.

Where regions are concerned, it should by rights be even easier to build up regional awareness through a closer and more detailed knowledge of neighbouring cultures. And yet the paradox is that this is not always the case, with the wounds of strife clouding our memory or effacing whole segments of it.

This is the type of situation where the “Routes” or “Cultural Itineraries” approach can point to a way forward, by revealing riches that others do not know exist - even though, locally, they have been revered since time immemorial. The concept of a “Route” is based on the observation that encounters among peoples and among cultures are beneficial. It highlights the cross-fertilization of knowledge and know-how, of ideas, beliefs and representations by integrating the fundamental data of the natural and cultural, tangible and intangible heritage. It identifies the dynamics that, in times of crisis and in times of well-being, have set these interactions in motion. In addition, on the basis of an analysis over time, it makes for a better assessment of the potential and the modalities for intercultural dialogue in today’s pluralistic societies, while at the same time avoiding a return to past disagreements that could once again be our downfall. The Routes not only offer a history and geography of intercultural dialogue down through the ages, but also contribute to forward-looking reflection. Indeed, the encounters and interactions that today’s world tends to overlook are actually a stark reminder to us that intercultural processes were happening long before we started discussing them.

In South East Europe, long referred to as the “Balkans” - a word that means “mountain” in Turkish - it is easy to appreciate that, except for a few major Routes such as the “Via Egnatia”, the routes make up a maze of corridors that are scattered and unconnected. This concept of “cultural corridors”, coined in 1974 by Rezvan Theodorescu, is the expression of a reality that is particular to this region where, as Herder put it in his famous aphorism: “history is but geography on the move”.

Each of these corridors has its own specificities, born out of the meeting of remote or neighbouring cultures in an environment generally disinclined to exchange and sharing. Each of them therefore represents an opportunity to open up new horizons for mutual understanding, thanks to a broader vision of cultural heritage.

Out of the secrets of past encounters that occurred spontaneously but

sporadically, we should now seek to discover an alchemy of encounter that could be of benefit to the entire region of South East Europe.

I have no doubt that the Summit of Varna is set to transform the corridors of yesteryear into the primary axes of tomorrow's intercultural communication. While I do not wish to dwell on the detailed modalities for such a strategy, some key ideas are contained in the document prepared by UNESCO and sent to you a few days ago by President Parvanov in an attachment to the Draft Statement in order to provide clearer insights into the issues to be covered at this Summit.

Allow me to assure the Heads of State that UNESCO stands ready to support them without fail in the pursuit of this fine project, whose appeal is more than a passing enticement, but a renewed invitation to enduring dialogue.

1. Introduction

The Varna Forum is part of a series of meetings organized over the recent years at UNESCO's initiative or with the Organization's participation, including the High-Level conference on Strengthening Co-operation in South-East Europe (Paris, April 2002), the Regional Forum on Dialogue between Cultures and Civilization (Ohrid, August, 2003), the Conference of Culture Ministers at the inauguration of the Mostar Bridge (July, 2004) and the Regional Summit on Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Dialogue in South-East Europe (Tirana, December, 2004).

By meeting in Varna, the Heads of State of the countries of South-East Europe once again demonstrate their resolve to consider this sub-region a space for encounters, exchanges and creating new ties of solidarity in which culture plays a pre-eminent role. In this way, they hope to send to Europe as well as the entire world an optimistic message based on the peaceful forces of culture through a unifying project of cooperation. More specifically, they hope to mobilize, for the benefit of the sub-region, the vital forces of heritage -- understood in the largest meaning of the term -- as a source of dialogue and development. Heritage is not limited to monuments and their environment; this notion encompasses ensembles, sites and cultural landscapes as well as live performances and expressions. In this way, heritage permeates cross-border cultural routes and itineraries.

Moreover, given that the day slated for the adoption of the Varna Declaration coincides with the World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May), it would be judicious to take advantage of this opportunity.

2. Objectives

In this context, the Varna Forum constitutes a decisive step. The Forum will have to underline the need to promote understanding among peoples and communities of the sub-region avoiding withdrawing behind one's cultural identity via stereotypes and prejudices. In this spirit, the role of culture as a common component of identity, integration and stability

in the sub-region must be enhanced. It will be important to define this positive role, and, from the outset, to denounce the instrumentalization of culture for partisan ends and the negative consequences that culture can engender in peacetime as well as in wartime.

More specifically, it will be necessary to emphasize the polysemantic nature of the term “cultural heritage” by underlining the particularly rich transformations and mingling in spaces of intense contact. Thus considered, heritage encompasses a wide range of concerns, namely the ways in which societies relate to and protect their environment, and express their solidarity or existence through literature, the arts and various other forms of creation. In this way, the sub-region’s profuse creativity manifested by its exceptional cultural diversity will also be highlighted. The commitments made by the Heads of State should be expressed in the Declaration and its action plan, which will be complemented by a timetable for the plan’s implementation.

3. Strategy

The work and projects on cultural corridors must benefit from UNESCO’s experience in the **Routes of Dialogue** programmes, for it was in the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-97) that these intercultural projects were launched. The “Route” concept is based on the beneficial effects resulting from encounters among different peoples and cultures. It highlights the exchange, in terms of knowledge and expertise, of ideas, beliefs, performances, by integrating fundamental aspects of the cultural and natural heritage as well as the tangible and intangible heritage. It also recognizes the dynamics, which, in periods of prosperity and periods of crisis, have determined such interaction. This in turn enables us, by means of diachronic analysis, to evaluate more accurately the chances and means of achieving genuine intercultural dialogue in today’s multi-cultural societies, without getting entangled in the debates of the past. These “Routes” offer not only a historic and geographic overview of intercultural dialogue over the centuries, but they also contribute to future debate: the encounters and interactions, which have been somewhat forgotten today, illustrate that intercultural processes predate the current debate on the subject.

From the outset, it will be necessary to clarify the concept of “cultural corridor”, which has various meanings according to the authors who

apply it to South-East Europe. In order to be operative, this concept must be understood unequivocally by all the participants of the Varna Forum. It must help to bring down the barriers of culture by placing it at the heart of current exchanges and the processes of development. It should be easy to eliminate restrictive and dangerous definitions: a corridor can be neither a dead end nor a narrow strip winding its way through hostile regions. Similarly, the intangible and multifarious nature of these corridors should be taken into account to ensure that the concept of cultural corridors does not go astray by drifting towards “complete cultural and tourist products”.

On one hand, the Forum must foster a common perception of this concept by highlighting its distinctiveness in relation to “Routes” and “cultural itineraries”, and on the other hand, it must enhance the interaction between heritage and dialogue by placing them in perspective with regard to history and collective memory in order to create new spaces for communication and exchange. Consequently, these corridors should be spaces devoted to renewed dialogue not only between national and local authorities, or between artists, craftspeople, international media professionals and tourists, but also, and especially, between local and national communities within the same country. It goes without saying that the voices of these communities, whatever their common ties (ethnic, religious, linguistic...), must be heard and their common stakes taken into account. If this is not the case, these corridors could lead to new conflicts rather than enhanced dialogue.

It would therefore be advisable to:

- **Propose a broader approach to corridors and Routes**, in line with the recommendations of the expert meetings in Madrid (24-25 November 1994), the regional meeting on cultural landscapes in Eastern Europe (September - October 1999), and with the work undertaken by ICOMOS (Spain) and UNESCO concerning the intangible heritage.
- **Promote an integrated vision of cultural heritage under all its aspects**, as a bearer of history and identity to be conserved, a resource and motor for sustainable development, and a tool for intercultural dialogue.
- **Emphasize the role of creativity**, to illustrate the rich cultural diversity of the sub-region today, and to highlight both similarities

and particularities.

- **Increase the spaces devoted to intercultural mediation**, encounters, festivals, museums, interpretation centres, galleries and foundations as spaces enabling the public to discover the entire range of the heritage and creativity of the sub-region. To achieve this goal, develop multi-media facilities and incorporate, in a more methodical matter, written and audiovisual media.
- **Promote innovative cultural tourism**, as a vehicle of exchange and a tool for heritage preservation and creative diversity, which can contribute to a better mutual understanding of the sub-region and to its sustainable development.

4. Orientations to Guide the implementation of the Declaration of the Heads of State

- **Suggestion for a concerted approach at the sub-regional level to proposals for inscription on the World Heritage List and on the future List of Intangible Heritage of Humanity** (cross-border sites, joint nominations of sites located in different countries within the same sub-region, enhancement of Routes and corridors etc). It will be necessary to consult reference documents and standard-setting instruments, such as the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970), the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), and reference documents of the Council of Europe, such as the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985) and the Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992).
- **Identification of spaces** (museums, theatres, cultural centres, parks, etc), of **themes** (co-publishing of anthologies of literary works by authors from the sub-region, co-production of music and film projects etc) and **events** (festivals, exhibitions, book fairs, art or crafts fairs etc.) and **live performances** and expressions related to cultural corridors that could contribute to creating a harmonious cultural scene.

In line with these objectives, one could:

- **Demonstrate, by means of an integrated approach, the heritage potential of the corridors and other spaces of contact**, previously redefined, taking care to avoid major discrepancies between examples of tangible and intangible heritage or discrimination between different categories of heritage (for example, there exists a project on “Monastery Route” but one could also propose a “Mosque Route”). Given the varying state of available documentation, it would certainly be worthwhile to explore the possibility of creating thematic databases beyond the national level to embrace the heritage of the entire region in all its diversity (sites, music, dance, arts, crafts, spiritual traditions, clothing and cooking traditions etc.) taking special care to include the heritage of minorities.
- **Make a diagnosis of the state of conservation of cultural heritage sites**, ensembles and monuments and define the priorities in terms of conservations of cultural landscapes by referring to the orientations of the World Heritage Centre; undertake inventories of the intangible cultural heritage found along the envisaged corridors and determine which elements require particular attention so that they can contribute to the enhancement these corridors.
- **List the most vulnerable forms of the intangible cultural heritage** in order to ensure its safeguarding and conservation for future generations. Encourage the states of South-East Europe to ratify the Convention of 2003 and to prepare candidatures for the lists of intangible heritage established by that instrument.
- **Establish, or link via a network, programmes devoted to heritage conservation and enhancement of heritage as well as awareness-raising** for all administrators, political and cultural actors by improving the relevant teaching materials. Adapt the training programmes for the actors and operators in the field of cultural tourism by defining cross-border thematic itineraries and by associating logos to these corridors with the assistance of the sub-regional coordination committees.
- **Identify or create poles of excellence with the assistance of UNESCO Chairs and establish network links** among research and teaching centres based on a series of themes to be selected (the role of contemporary creation as a tool for intercultural communication; the role of history in enhancing understanding of

contemporary interaction; the role of the written and oral literary tradition in the awareness of a common heritage; religious and linguistic diversity etc.). In this context, it is advisable to produce a series of printed or audio-visual documents in the various national languages. This series should be designed for the entire sub-region, thereby avoiding a nationalist position. Clearly, it could be used in a formal or informal educational context.

- **Propose events related to the cultural corridors project in the framework of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May)**, by defining unifying themes that will produce fruitful encounters between visitors and the local populations and reinforced cooperation between cities on the basis of common cultural policies. Encourage exchange programmes between young people from different countries, particularly through artist residencies, volunteer programmes for monument restoration or archaeological excavations in the framework of the “World Heritage in Young Hands” programme or “The Olive Tree Route” project.
- **Establish a timetable for launching some cultural corridors - in an integrated approach - devoted to the principal themes already mentioned:** archaeological zones, religious heritage, civil heritage, particularly vernacular and World Heritage Sites, with particular attention to their multifarious or intangible components and to their enhancement by a type of tourism that is respectful of the fragility of these ensembles. For symbolic reasons, it would be advisable to create a new itinerary based on the unifying theme of “bridges” - with the appropriate accompanying literature - given the richness of the region in this regard, from Antiquity through the Ottoman period down to the present day. Another suggestion: the creation of one or several regional corridors to highlight the components belonging to one or several aspects of the intangible cultural heritage that reflect the communities living along these corridors today.

NOTE:

1. Prepared by UNESCO as an intellectual contribution to the Regional Forum “Cultural Corridors in South East Europe, Common Past and Shared Heritage: a Key to Future Partnership” in May 2005. www.unesco.org/culture

Part III

Background Documents

Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe

**Background Paper prepared by
Hans d'Orville, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning,
UNESCO and
Ann-Belinda Preis, Senior Programme Planning Specialist, Bureau
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South East Europe is rich and diverse in cultural heritage and has always been an area characterized by intense cultural exchange and dialogue. The important role of tangible as well as intangible cultural heritage is increasingly recognised, not only for the identity, well being and development of groups and individuals, but also as a mainspring of cultural diversity. Moreover, the crucial role of culture, education and science for the development of South East Europe as a dynamic European region has been widely recognized.

The region has recently come out of a decade of war and destruction. Its diverse cultural heritage, both in its monumental and living aspects, should be regarded as a strong reference point for anchoring the identity of the region at large. Heritage sites, both those inscribed on the World Heritage List for their outstanding universal value, and those of national significance, have been the target of hostilities, often leading to their partial or total destruction. During this period, several World Heritage sites were included on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and then removed from it after successful restoration efforts. In recent years, new sites have been included on the List, illustrating progress made for their conservation and management, and witnessing to a general rise in the awareness of the importance of heritage.

Today, in an era of accelerated interaction facilitated by communication and information technologies (ICTs), it has become necessary, to promote the exchange of knowledge about heritage and in particular our shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding for future generations. This process is called the *Communication of Heritage*.

In an era of globalization, the promotion and preservation of cultural diversity together with the respect for human rights contribute to peace and human development through education, science, culture and

communication. After the adoption by UNESCO's General Conference of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (20 October 2005), the countries of South East Europe will be invited, in due course, to cooperate in order to ensure that relevant provisions of the Convention are applied and that an efficient system for exchange of information and monitoring is put in place.

As a follow up to the Varna Summit of Heads of State (20 - 21 May 2005), which discussed in-depth the concept and development of "cultural corridors", the central theme of this year's event will be the ***Communication of Heritage***. The Summit provides a unique opportunity to acknowledge the fundamental role that culture and science play in the development of South East Europe.

Objectives

As a follow up to the discussions on the notion of cultural corridors, the aim is to enable experts to look closely at central elements of cultural corridors in the region, i.e. the cultural and natural sites and associated elements of our living intangible cultural heritage. The key theme of the discussion will be to explore the potential of enhanced cooperation within the region in order to promote a shared vision of the South Eastern European heritage. Special emphasis will be placed on the consolidation of knowledge of existing activities and initiatives so as to achieve greater regional cooperation. The aim will also be to strengthen the synergy between and coordination of existing projects and initiatives - whether they are projects developed by UNESCO, the European Union, the Council of Europe or projects specifically initiated in or for the region.

The notion of "Communication of Heritage"

In contrast to all other forms of communication that generally involve the present only, Communication of Heritage has a strong diachronic dimension in connecting the past to the future through the present. Communication of Heritage can be a leverage to connect generations, thus providing a sense of continuity and - most integral to human society as well as to each individual - cultural identity.

Today, when people are surrounded by a global market, one increasingly feels the need not only to understand one's roots but to get to know the

lives and cultures of others. This not only reflects the wish to acquire knowledge, but also the desire to confirm and share the uniqueness of their personal identity and to learn about the values and heritage of distant and close neighbours.

The discussion of cultural heritage in the context of a new vision for South East Europe and the development of related new approaches, represents a challenge not only for the participants themselves but also for those who will follow it with interest, in that it captures and summarizes experiences acquired through heritage and transmitted from generation to generation, while teaching us how to interact in the present and prepare for the future. Thus, awareness should be raised about the existence of heritage in all its aspects, and about its functions and values, in order to learn about and appreciate each other's identities and cultural and social values for an enriched dialogue and increased interaction. Imagining a life without identity, without an understanding of the past, without the transfer of knowledge and tradition, is impossible and unacceptable; avoiding to take the past into account would be a present without a vision of the future.

Specific cultural areas and, indeed, cultural corridors, with abundant monuments, sites and other elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage characterize the South East European region and are shared by peoples and communities across borders stretching from the Mediterranean to the Lower Danube, from Central Europe to the Black Sea. Through centuries of interaction, dialogue and exchange which is testified in the cultural heritage itself as well as in the vitality of languages and, for instance, culinary traditions, a practical communication through heritage has emerged, emphasizing and giving new value to overlapping elements, especially those shared by immediate neighbours. The importance however, lies in their subtle contact and communication through which elements are taken over, fostered, developed and retained by neighbouring cultural spheres.

In many instances, politicians, experts, artists and conservators have emphasized the importance of raising the level of knowledge in the spontaneous communication of heritage between cultural spheres. However, tools for intercultural communication need to be developed and put at service of decision-makers, culture experts and civil society. It is clearly a prerequisite for the protection and survival of cultural heritage in every sense and a basis for communication of heritage towards the future.

Although this is not a specificity of South East Europe, the knowledge of cultural heritage is particularly relevant in this region. Enhanced knowledge will clearly help raise awareness of the fact that heritage was and is the material realization of cultural contacts and a channel for communication and dialogue in the life of the community and society at large providing impetus to sustainable social development.

The challenge

Experts participating in the Opatija Summit will be invited to analyze the Communication of Heritage from three different perspectives and approaches:

- Integration of heritage conservation and safeguarding as an integral part of sustainable development (cultural tourism, urban regeneration, regional development, etc.);
- Innovative techniques in restoration, preservation, safeguarding and revitalization based on scientific research;
- Bringing knowledge about heritage closer to the citizens (awareness-building, education, promoting cultural heritage through publications and the new media etc.)

The three sub-themes will be included in the materials for discussion during the meetings (background paper) and the experts will be invited to present examples of tangible or intangible cultural heritage from their respective countries - with special emphasis on one of the suggested sub-themes - for which new innovative approaches in heritage preservation are relevant.

Thematic Orientations

The lengthy quest for capturing the *values of cultural expressions and practices and of monuments and sites*, (which started after the Second World War and culminated in three complementary UNESCO Conventions: 1972, 2003, 2005), has paved the way for new approaches to understanding, respecting and sharing our cultural heritage. These approaches, which involve the recognition of the role of cultural heritage in all its forms for the promotion of cultural diversity and human creativity,

as well as a new understanding of the role of communities and groups as those who transmit, keep alive and recreate their heritage should be at the basis of the development of strategies for implementing the goals of the Communication of Heritage.

Currently 59 cultural and natural properties are inscribed on UNESCO's *World Heritage List* in South East Europe and nearly 100 sites are identified for future nomination on national tentative lists (see Table 1). In the heritage field, cooperation and communication can in particular enhance heritage conservation practices and assist in linking heritage sites across the region, while making people aware of the diversity as well as the shared history of this heritage. This is most important in a former conflict region which counted 5 sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger - the last one removed only in July 2005.

Heritage can be a engine for *regional and local development*, especially through cultural and ecological tourism, the production of local goods and crafts and by reviving local traditions, thus linking tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Heritage is therefore a driving force of sustainable development both for the urban environment and rural communities. Scientific research in this field can be further encouraged through the UNESCO University and Heritage Network to assist local communities to benefit from the enhanced valorization of heritage.

Innovative techniques in restoration and preservation (based on scientific research, hands-on experiences and craftsmanship) can be promoted through capacity building and networking disseminating best practices and expertise. Organizations such as UNESCO, the European Union, the Council of Europe and ICCROM should be key actors in such initiatives. Related guidelines and manuals should be updated and widely disseminated, including in national and local languages. Moreover, *enhanced regional cooperation* can be achieved through the coordination of existing projects and initiatives, for example through a special interactive web-page for SEE and the availability of all World Heritage Periodic Reports from the region (already on-line). The existing network of World Heritage focal points could be continued and enlarged.

Communication and information technologies can contribute in many ways to promoting cultural heritage. They provide potential to facilitate, enrich and diversify exchange of knowledge about heritage, both for

experts and the public at large. Through digitization these technologies can help to keep heritage accessible as a living part of today's culture contributing to a culturally and linguistically diverse cyberspace and can be used for the preservation of cultural heritage. The digitization of living and oral traditions is also a key challenge for the region. In addition, more and more of the world's cultural resources are being produced, distributed and accessed in digital form. Born-digital heritage available on-line, including electronic journals, World Wide Web pages or on-line databases, is now part of the world's cultural heritage. However, digital information is subject to technical obsolescence and physical decay and action needs to be taken to preserve digital heritage.

Awareness raising and heritage education are of particular importance in regions that have recently suffered from conflicts and wars. The experience of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre has showed that the success of awareness-raising activities aimed at obtaining a high level of commitment and interest from the wider public largely relies on building a strong network of partners at the local, regional and national levels. The "World Heritage in Young Hands" project envisages to organize a first South East European World Heritage Youth Forum at one of the sites inscribed in the World Heritage List. The Forum would seek to establish cooperation and synergy between educators, managers of cultural heritage and youth with a view to highlighting the role of heritage as a common denominator and unifying factor for cooperation and reconciliation.

State Party	World Heritage Properties	Tentative List
Albania	2	3 (last updated 1996)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	4 (last updated 2006)
Bulgaria	9	14 (last updated 2006)
Croatia	6	10 (last updated 2005)
Greece	16	9 (last updated 2003)
Republic of Moldova	1	1 (last updated 2005)
Romania	7	15 (last updated 2005)
Serbia and Montenegro	5	12 (last updated 2005)
FYROM	1	2 (last updated 2004)
Turkey	9	18 (last updated 2000)
Slovenia	1	4 (last updated 2000)

Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe

Background Paper

prepared for the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE)

by: The CULTURELINK Network Research Team

Introduction

UNESCO has a long-standing commitment in fostering regional cooperation in South East Europe (SEE). It continually engages in contributing to stability, peace and development of intercultural dialogue in this geopolitical zone.

The region of SEE has undergone tremendous change which has inevitably caused the reassessment of national identities and cultural re-identification.

SEE was burdened by the raging conflict stemming from the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the enduring consequences it left. In the last decade of the past century, South East Europe was the region where war was a reality and the conflict was wrongly ascribed to differences in cultural legacy and cultural values that were imprinted in the fabric of national identification. Although they are proclaimed to be the main traits of proposing better communication amongst nations, cultural differences were „trigger“ elements to the conflicts that occurred in this region.

Nevertheless, the conflict itself was largely defined by opposing political, social and economic interests and inclinations towards general systemic change. Cultural features, just as religious legacy, were purposefully mistreated and misused as a communicational tool of obliteration. Inevitably, heritage both tangible and intangible became a source of indescribable torment. Destruction of cultural heritage was just one of the consequences of conflict where tangible cultural assets were destroyed as national symbols, regardless of the outstanding value they had for global cultural heritage.

Since 1990, UNESCO has undertaken a primary role in leading international operations and actions for restoring and safeguarding heritage

damaged or threatened by conflicts. These activities are mostly realized through cooperation with other supranational bodies and agencies, like the Council of Europe and the European Commission, who have collaborated intensively with UNESCO on projects in Croatia, Bosnia, and the Kosovo region. The initiative for rehabilitation, protection and preservation of cultural heritage in Kosovo is an initiative that followed the High-level Conference on Strengthening Cooperation in South East Europe that was held in UNESCO headquarters in 2002 and which was further elaborated at the UNESCO Conference on Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Kosovo. The main aim of these initiatives is to accentuate the need for establishment of intercultural communication and concrete dialogue among civilizations in order to enable better understanding and appreciation of mutual cultural legacies and features.

Furthermore, the objectives of the initiative encompass the fostering of international awareness of cultural issues in the region and the generation of both political and financial resources that can enable the achievement of the general goal, which is to push the current and rather marginalized position of the region towards a more active and weighty one in the context of evolving European perspectives.

Consequently, many heritage sites have been restored and inscribed on the World Heritage List¹. The latest entries were the Monastery of Dečani in Kosovo in 2004 and the Old Bridge Area and the Old City of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005.

The latter is a result of the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed by UNESCO and the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Old City of Mostar and the Old Bridge Area are two of five heritage preservation projects that are to be realized in this country. The Old Bridge was recently rebuilt and many of the edifices in the Old Town have been restored or rebuilt with the contribution of an international scientific committee established by UNESCO. Just like the Monastery of Dečani, the reconstructed Old Bridge and the Old City of Mostar are a symbol of reconciliation, international cooperation and the coexistence of diverse cultural, ethnic and religious communities. In many ways, this bridge represents the aims of the efforts UNESCO is devoting to this region - by restoring heritage as a core symbol of a respective identity and promoting its value in a wider, international context, UNESCO is striving to establish new ways of interregional and international communication where heritage

is employed as a main agent and factor of dialogue. Heritage is perceived as grounds for understanding and communication rather than for national glorification. According to UNESCO's 1972 Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the World Heritage Sites belong to all peoples of the world, regardless of the territory where they are actually located. Along with the universal spirit that the Convention promoted, along with raising awareness of the collective good, the Convention proposed for national State Parties to integrate the inherited cultural legacy into national policies and development plans. This was further asserted by the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage, adopted in Paris in 2003. In the context of current globalisation trends and the erasing of nationally established borders, both tangible and intangible heritage are a matter not only of national but also of global interest. It is imperative for heritage to be preserved in the environment of its cultural inception while positioning it on a wider international and intercultural level. This enforces the sustainability of a distinctive cultural identity and encourages respect and dialogue among diverse cultures. It is precisely cultural diversity that supports a clear definition of particular cultural identities and thus makes possible communication among various cultures. The occurrence of the interlinking notions of heritage as being national yet global, distinctive yet diverse, proves UNESCO's promotion of the World Heritage to be inclusive rather than selective. The policy of inclusiveness promotes and proposes the language of cultural diversity to be the main pillar of communication in the region necessary to upgrade the levels of intercultural tolerance. Cultural diversity must be deeply integrated into the foundations of emerging SEE societies.

Along with the above-mentioned activities and operational aims in the SEE region, UNESCO has engaged in organizing annual regional forums of Heads of States and other leaders from the SEE countries, as a result of the recognition of the need for enhanced international cooperation in this region as being essential to the reconstruction of educational, scientific, cultural and communicational structures. The main objective of the forums is to assess and present new possibilities for better cultural communication and cooperation amongst SEE countries.

The first meeting took place in Ohrid, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2003. Entitled "***Regional Forum on Dialogue among Civilization***", it underpinned the importance of confidence and capacity-building in the region through interregional dialogue and cooperation,

together with complementary actions at the respective national levels.

Next came the Tirana Summit (Albania) “*The Development of Inter-religious and Inter-ethnic Dialogue*” in 2004, which further reinforced the concept of dialogue among civilizations.

“*Cultural Corridors of South East Europe: Common Past and Shared Heritage - a Key to Future Partnership*” was the title of the last meeting that was held in Varna, Bulgaria in 2005. The meeting highlighted the recognition of the role of cultural heritage and cultural corridors of the countries of South East Europe as a key element for strengthening regional and global cooperation.

This year’s meeting, devoted to “*Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe*”, will define and analyze the aspects and benefits of the communication of heritage through the fundamental role of science and culture, given that science and IT have always been key components of development for all cultures and have great potential to advance dialogue.

Certain initiatives undertaken by non-governmental bodies in establishing scientific and cultural cooperation between the countries of the region must also be mentioned, since their significance is considerable. The series of annual postgraduate courses, organized since 2000 by the Department of Culture and Communication of the Institute for International Relations in Zagreb, in cooperation with the Interuniversity Centre in Dubrovnik, has gathered scholars and students from the SEE region who have jointly researched, examined and debated various aspects of contemporary and on-going cultural changes in the region. The topics that were covered in the course curriculum include the issues of Multicultural contexts of Central European and Mediterranean Regions, Redefinition of Cultural Identities in South East Europe, Cultural Industries and Technological Convergence, Managing Cultural Transitions in South East Europe and assessing the Creative City by Crossing Visions and New Realities in the Region. These initiatives are of paramount importance for the viable construction of long-term communication and knowledge sharing.

New Technologies and Knowledge Societies

Today the new ways of communication and knowledge organisation in

the networked environment are the result of digitisation and technological convergence - merging of the computer industry, communications, broadcasting and publishing that enable fast and easy ways of information storage, reproduction and distribution of information. All existing media are being converted to 'new media' by being pulled into the digital domain through digitisation.

The fact that digital technologies make this conversion and change possible does not also make this process easy. Digitisation of existing cultural goods, e-born cultural goods and documents and their accessibility through the Internet present a new context that cultural institutions must take into account in the information society, and South East Europe is no exception. The presence of the Internet is rapidly increasing, despite the discouraging facts that Serbia and Montenegro have only 14% of their population digitally literate, Bosnia less than 5% and Albania not even 3%. UNESCO has supported the increase of digitisation by funding digitisation centres in countries of the region (Zagreb, Sofia, etc.). The primary feedback of the centres operation has shown that digitisation is a much-needed project in SEE with long-term prospects. Moreover, the digitisation has made an influx in the sphere of heritage preservation and providing wider accessibility. Namely, UNESCO has been actively involved in the project of cultural heritage digitisation in Macedonia. In the communicational arena and the influence that new technologies have made on regional networking in the culture and arts sector, NGOs have played a crucial role. In effect, this has been mostly funded and supported by international foundations, organizations and agencies. Today, the NGO sector that has been strengthened in the period from 2000 until 2005, is the bearer of cultural communication in the region. Concurrently, UNESCO and the Council of Europe have made a statement by placing one of the most significant networks for scientific and cultural cooperation, the Culturelink Network in Zagreb, in the capital of a SEE country.

This new context affects the way the cultural sector operates, and opens new possibilities for cooperation as well as for the distribution and consumption of cultural goods, giving the users unprecedented access to knowledge. As Kolar-Panov argues, there is a vital need for national visions and strategies for ICT implementation, and for use in both the scientific and cultural sectors.

In practice, creating digital resources proves to be a bottom-up process where anyone can relatively easily upload digital content online and this

is visible in a situation where NGOs have assumed a leading position in using digitalisation in order to promote and establish open access to content and free communication of knowledge in the cultural and arts sector in SEE². Though the region lags behind Western Europe, digital infrastructure development is on the rise.

However, the establishment of an open and flexible system of knowledge and heritage in SEE that must be based on using common organisational and technical standards creates problems related to converting the existing analogue heritage to the digital form in all areas. There are organisational challenges arising due to the logic that ICT imposes, as well as challenges related to new knowledge that cultural practitioners must master. When these skills are in place, there is still a question of setting priorities and adequate national strategies that will have to take into account the limited resources available. Apart from the insufficient financial resources, one of the major obstacles in content development is also language barriers.

The organisational pattern of networks challenges the established ways of working in public cultural institutions that are hierarchically structured. Also the convergence creates new problems for cultural policy that is still traditionally perceived in the South East Europe as a sector under the Ministry of Culture's influence and that in the new context of e-culture must embrace interactions with various other policies.

The digitalisation of heritage resources aims to preserve knowledge that has been recorded through particular heritage elements. It does not happen automatically because ICT infrastructure is available to us. This process has to be carefully planned. Existing heritage artefacts should be digitised and processed in such a way that allows information to be retrieved by different users' criteria. For the most part heritage institutions are small institutions, with limited resources, that have in their safekeeping a small share of our heritage. The real knowledge that heritage provides us with lies in the relations among objects and not only in the objects themselves. For this reason, institutional boundaries should be overcome when digitalisation strategies are being developed. If we agree that the role of the cultural heritage sector in knowledge society is not just to ensure users access to 'raw' information, but rather to offer the possibility for interaction with knowledge, then it is clear that this can be achieved only through cooperation.

The cooperation in the heritage field does not happen randomly. To be

able to effectively safeguard heritage, it is important to build partnerships through cooperation networks that contribute to different aspects of heritage protection, which also includes digitalisation. It requires setting policies in place, securing necessary resources, developing inventories, mapping resources, building new knowledge structures, connecting people, exchanging experiences, etc. For this reason joint cooperation projects are an important infrastructure that enables heritage to be protected, as well as communicated.

In South East Europe such cooperation is taking place, but still only to a limited extent. In most cases, institutions work on small-scale isolated projects. Some steps have been taken to remedy this through various joint projects initiated by UNESCO, the Council of Europe or the EU. On a political level, UNESCO is engaged in organizing annual regional forums of the Heads of States and other leaders from the SEE countries, resulting from the recognition that the need for enhanced international cooperation in this region is essential for the reconstruction of educational, scientific, cultural and communicational structures. The main objective of these forums is to assess and present new possibilities for better cultural communication and cooperation among SEE countries. There are also cooperation initiatives on more practical levels that aim to develop joint digital resources and facilitate knowledge sharing. Initiatives such as UNESCO's Regional Meeting on Digitization of Cultural Heritage that took place in Ohrid in 2005³, Council of Europe's Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plan / Survey on the Architectural and Archaeological Heritage (IRPP/SAAH) 2003 - 2006⁴, the HEREIN⁵ project, or the Kulturkarte Donau⁶ project all contribute significantly to the process of restoring broken regional links and they help build synergies in the development of digital heritage projects.

The process of establishing a framework, as well as infrastructural services for digitalisation and constructing virtual heritage resources in the region is important because it does not only try to digitalise existing resources in a systematic way, but it also contributes to building 'knowledge tools', such as thesauruses and digital maps, which serve as users' interfaces through which the digital heritage resources are accessed. This organisational layer, although sometimes invisible to the users, is important as it contributes to the success of the projects because they in fact shape the virtual heritage resources logic, which, if not suitable to users' needs, will fail in reaching the set aims.

The only way to keep culture and heritage alive is through communication. New technologies can assist in preserving our memory (knowledge), but we must strike a balance between its use as a recorded memory tool and its use as a communication tool. In addition to recording elements of our heritage through the use of ICT, we must strive to keep it alive through its communication and use. Digitalisation is very significant for culture in the information society, as it does not only provide a means of preservation of our collective memory through the recording of cultural heritage resources, but also as the means of preservation of today's culture and creativity.

ICT will be effective for preserving heritage only if it results in keeping alive particular elements of our heritage for its use by citizens. This highlights the importance of cooperation and joint projects but it also implies that real actions must link the virtual with the real world. Thus virtual heritage resources, cultural industries, cultural tourism, art, etc., are all important segments in which our heritage is reflected and through which people find connections to it.

Cultural Tourism as a Dynamic Aspect of Heritage

The natural and cultural heritage, diversities and living cultures are major tourist attractions (*International Cultural Tourism Charter* 1999) and cultural tourism is among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange and for carrying information about the 'Other' since it embodies the inevitable 'contact' between cultures. Interaction between tourism and cultural heritage often results in the interpretation of heritage, which involves an educational process.

Since post-modern tourism has shown trends of active holidays which enrich the *persona* of a visitor by educating him/her and giving them a sense of experience, a great potential has been seen in developing such approaches. Accordingly, with the growth of creative use of free time, the growth of the industry which supplies creative activities also occurred⁷. Such industries are those which supply «ordinary» citizens with means for developing their creative skills. The situation in South East Europe in the sector of cultural industries as defined by UNESCO shows that the only three countries from the region represented on Florida's⁸ emerging 'global creativity index' are the EU candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania, and Croatia.

Cooperation between various countries and their different cultures is best perceived through the concept of cultural routes/corridors. This concept is not new to the UNESCO activities; it launched programmes related to roads that connected peoples of the world. The concept of cultural routes also has strong roots in the Council of Europe and ICOMOS activities but also new initiatives following the same pattern were born (such as within the Central European Initiative or within the Varna Regional Forum on Cultural Corridors of South East Europe, for example). The Council of Europe initiatives tried to involve the SEE region in its itineraries but except for a few (The Olive Routes, The Silk and Textile Routes), no greater developments have been made. A new theme of 'Nikola Tesla Route' is currently being proposed that would involve some of the SEE countries where Tesla spent his life. Because of numerous actions in this field a need for concerted actions is expressed.

The cultural routes initiatives undertaken so far have particular importance as pioneering activities in the field of intercultural communication through tourism. There is no doubt that cultural routes have great power in connecting people. Still, the question arises why SEE countries have not been more involved in the initiatives? A research study⁹ done in Istria has confirmed that all cultural tourism planning is done in an eclectic way, without a systematic approach. Another research study¹⁰ done for the whole territory of Croatia confirmed the same results. The above-mentioned research also confirmed the following problematic issues: non-existent or poorly-organized system of cultural statistics; insufficient cooperation between the cultural and tourism sectors; lack of funding and consulting agencies. All of these are certainly slowing down the process of closer cooperation between possible partners in the SEE region, since the situation is not quite clear on national levels. Further obstacles in planning and implementing cultural tourism programmes are seen in fragmentary responsibilities for the cultural tourism sector.

Fora and seminars¹¹ that have been held in the last few years expressed the need for a more organized system in the field. The success of an organized system on national levels is a prerequisite for future quality cooperation. Therefore, a need for clear responsibilities on national levels is expressed so that future partners in regional initiatives can be detected. Undoubtedly, the SEE region has a lot to offer in this field, having in common a variety of themes that could be presented.

Many other documents and initiatives which focus partly on the subject

of cultural tourism exist, be it within the framework of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, EU, ICOMOS or others. In this way, for example, the Charter of the Council of Ministers of South East Europe from 2005, in Article 2, mentions that the objectives will be pursued, amongst others, through ‘creating regional management strategies for cultural needs to be defined and put into action, thus assuring the integration of cultural activities into contemporary economic and social goals, including cultural tourism’ (*Charter of the Council of Ministers of South East Europe*). Accordingly, by protecting and putting efforts into preserving the heritage sites in SEE, UNESCO has provided grounds for the development of cultural tourism in the region. World Heritage Sites in SEE are today’s most visited locations for new generations of cultural tourists.

Cultural Industries and Communication of Heritage

Cultural tourism, as well as creative tourism, are important factors in the communication of heritage across borders. In this way, the exchange of knowledge of respective identities takes a more direct and dynamic form. One of the ways in which identities and heritage can and are also communicated are cultural and creative industries. They have become of great concern due to the active transformation of cultural models perceivable in the cultural policies as a part of public policies.

Cultural industries are considered by UNESCO as mainly those industries that combine the creation, production and commercialization of contents. These contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of goods or services. Cultural industries may also be referred to as ‘creative industries’, ‘content industries’, ‘experience industries’ or ‘copyright industries’. Cultural (and creative) industries are based on the exchange and consumption of cultural products and services that have a tangible as well as an intangible element. Sometimes, it can be understood that ‘cultural industries make a subset of the creative industries’ (UNCTAD, 2004: 4). The notion of cultural industries generally includes printing, publishing and multimedia, audio-visual, phonographic and cinematographic productions, as well as crafts and design. In some contexts this concept also includes architecture, visual and performing arts, sports, manufacturing of musical instruments, advertising and cultural tourism. In this context one has to stress that new technologies influence directly as well as indirectly both aspects of cultural products. The cultural as well as creative products are not like other products as Venturelli (2000: 7) stresses; unlike other products, their value increases with time and their usage. It is

not a one-way process, and new technologies are not the only influencing factor, but they are important considering the role they have and how they are used, taking into account radical changes including mp3, p2p, various intranets, broadband, etc. The digitalization in this respect influences cultural heritage that in this way can be more easily used in the cultural industries, and consequently more easily communicated, promoted and exploited. The new technologies also enable the preservation by the way of digitalization of cultural industries heritage such as cinematographic and documentary heritage, literature, traditional arts and crafts etc., which can thus be distributed and communicated more easily. This is also perceived as a tool for the enhancement of regional cooperation.

The knowledge on and research of creative industries is rather scarce in the SEE region. There are several problems encountered while entering the analysis of the cultural industries sector (Primorac, 2004): there is a lack of data, the data that exist are not structured, and the existing structured data differ from country to country in their structure, which makes comparison difficult. When assessing the overall situation (on the sectors of book publishing, film industry, recording industry and publishing) one notes that there are mainly problems of distribution within and out of the country, piracy/copyright issues, problems of small-scale production, translation and the need for regulation of the market.

In connection to cultural industries, UNESCO tries to provide legal aid to Member states as part of the development of cultural industries. This should be achieved through strengthening the local capacities and access to global markets of the emerging countries through new partnerships, training, and control of piracy and intensification of the types of international solidarity. The question of copyright and neighbouring rights is directly connected to cultural industries in the context of the production and exchange of cultural products. This is in line with the *Florence agreement* on the free circulation of educational, scientific and cultural goods (1950), and its *Nairobi protocol* (1976). UNESCO works to protect cultural diversity and is committed to having an active role in raising awareness on the importance of copyright. Therefore, it promotes the international conventions on copyright and neighbouring rights, and in the same time it opens the floor for the internationally accepted regulations of the digital age. It has to be stressed that one of the major UNESCO actions in this field is the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that was adopted in 2005 by the General Conference of UNESCO. The principal objectives of the 2005 Convention are: to recognize the right of States to formulate

cultural policies; to adopt measures in favour of the diversity of cultural expressions; to recognize the distinctive nature of cultural goods and services insofar as they convey identity; and to recognize the link between culture and development and the importance of international cooperation. The promotion of these objectives is carried out through various international meetings and conferences (organized with partners such as UNCTAD and others), on the issues connected to cultural diversity and globalization, cultural industries, copyright infringement, and so on.

The latter topic is rather important in the region of SEE as the infringement of copyright is rather immense in SEE countries and piracy is on the highest levels in Europe. This is why in May 2004 UNESCO co-coordinated a project entitled 'Anti-Piracy Training for Trainers', an advanced seminar on the copyright enforcement officials from SEE. The project was carried out by the UNESCO's Copyright Programme and was funded by the Government of Norway, while positioned within the framework of the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. It was designed to alert national authorities and enforcement officials to the importance of enforcing copyright laws and economic and cultural consequences of piracy. The second phase of the project was national seminars for officials involved in anti-piracy struggle on a national level; these seminars began in December 2004 in Romania and were followed by seminars in FYROM (April, 2005), Bosnia and Herzegovina (May, 2005) and Bulgaria (May, 2005).

The majority of the profit of cultural as well as creative industries is based on the profit made from the copyright they create, or from the copyright that they own. The interests of multimedia companies have dominated the regulatory processes: "[a] sign of this imbalance is the fact that copyright is not only addressed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), but by the World Trade Organization (WTO), bringing intellectual property (as a tangible good) to the trade negotiating table. This move was initiated by the USA and Europe to give them more power and control over the flow of intellectual capital - turning intangible rights to be negotiated within the framework of world trade. In fact, intellectual property is considered to be the fastest-growing component of the national economy and represents a significant amount of GDP in the United States" (ERICarts, 2005: 8). This dynamism of cultural industries is mostly the result of the transnational corporations that also creates an imbalance of the cultural production and a certain homogenization of the cultural market. There are many structural changes ahead in the

cultural industries sector in the SEE countries. The whole field has to be restructured in order to establish strong domestic production that will have a healthy distribution system and accessibility and that will be in touch with global processes. UNESCO should continue to work raising awareness on these issues in the light of regional cooperation in the field of cultural industries in the context of communication of heritage.

The Regional Cultural Cooperation

The SEE cultural cooperation in the last fifteen years has been marked by transitional changes that have included liberalization of markets, increasing openness to globalization processes and impacts of new technologies. The dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation has essentially re-oriented cultural exchange and cooperation by directing all efforts to communication and cooperation with the EU countries and reducing radically both intra-regional and international contacts and communication.

Cultural cooperation in the region is still sporadic and rather unsystematic. However, new forms of cultural cooperation have been developing. They are visible in networking, transfer of knowledge, artists' mobility and creativity and the development of cultural market exchange based on cultural industries production.

Specific networks have been created: ECUMEST, Apollonia, the Southeast European Contemporary Art Network - SEECAN, Balkan Art Network, BalkanCult and others. They support functional interlinking within the region by promoting information exchange, residential programs for artists, seminars, educational and other activities.

Transfer of knowledge encompasses joint projects and exchange of experts, particularly in the area of cultural policies, cultural management and cultural heritage. It reflects the need to share expertise which is often lacking, and rationalize cultural processes through competent analyses.

Exchange of artists has been increasing, which testifies to the growing interest in joint manifestations (e.g. The Urban Zagreb Festival hosting artists from Bosnia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, etc.) and creation of artists' residence programmes (e.g., in Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Croatia etc.).

The present day cultural cooperation within the region has been marked by the strong influence of international donors, particularly international organizations, who have been supporting the efforts to enable functional interconnection among the ever more diversified societies within the region, and centripetal forces influencing the processes of redefinition of particular national identities. However, it is ever more visible that the identification processes are structurally comparable. They tend to affirm cultural particularities, diversities and specific cultural values, but the processes of such affirmation are similar. This provides for a possibility to base cultural cooperation on the new regional visions. One of such visions should be linked to the communication of heritage. The whole process of cooperation therefore moves from internationally supported programmes and projects to nationally supported ones. An institutionalization of support to joint programmes is lacking and they depend mostly on individual efforts of cultural activists, researchers or artists. The civil society organizations active in the cultural field substantially support ever more diversified forms of cultural cooperation within the region. Their efforts are not always matched by the governmental organizations or state ministries that mostly care about how to sustain and develop national cultural activities.

South East Europe: Creation of a Modern Dynamic Region

The contemporary European development dynamics largely resides in modern regions that encompass production, trade and many other functions related to the integration processes and mutual cooperation of the European peoples. The region of South East Europe is, in geographical, historical and cultural sense, both a part of Central Europe and the Mediterranean. It connects them and inherits from both of them, gradually evolving from a regional construct heavily imbued in historical Balkan heritage into a supranational region bringing new diversity qualities into the overall European integration processes.

The South East European region is being created through influences of the newly established states and still unstable national identities, strong presence of ethnic identities and pressures for wider European identification supported by wishes to integrate into the EU and the much needed functional economic and social integration. Thus the creation and further development of the Southeast European region demand the establishment of functional links among the neighbouring countries

and peoples and an awareness of belonging to the same geographic, historical and cultural entity. The general process of democratization and systemic transition in the area has to be blended with different aspects of integration processes, be they global or regional. Although South East Europe has not yet been fully constituted as a region in a modern sense, there are tendencies of flexible mutuality: promotion of mutual trade, common development projects, sharing of infrastructure, reestablishment of cultural links and exchange, sharing of ever more standardized media communication developed under the influence of global media networks, etc. Within such concepts the values of the Balkan cultural heritage, artistic specificity, regional diversity, blending of different cultures that has been going on for centuries, need to be re-evaluated through mutual and ever more intensive sharing of knowledge and through the creation of regional cultural identity.

Sharing of knowledge on cultural heritage and awareness of its value stands for rationalization of the own past and represents the communication of heritage. Communication of heritage is an inalienable part of redefinition of cultural identities and the presentation of key-values of peoples from the region. The communication of heritage encompasses historical, cultural, natural and overall intellectual heritage of South East Europe and thus defines the position of the region in the European context.

South East Europe is defined today in the context of the knowledge society and full awareness of individualized and particular cultural identities. Although the knowledge society may primarily be an economic concept, it has important social and cultural implications. It brings forward a new way of working with historical memories and cultural heritage in the form of information components.

The institutions dealing with the past and the collective memory have been changing in the contemporary world. In this context, the communication of heritage is linked to institutional change induced by processes of transition in all countries and cultures of the SEE. Institutional convergence is forming new creative clusters. Following the societies' needs, they are evolving from a prevalent scientific concern to a communicational one. Retaining science as their obligation, heritage occupations, be they museums, archives, libraries or different hybrid institutions, are turning themselves into a communicational business of particular sort and importance. From ambition to care about totality of

inheritance and provide knowledge about it, those institutions now want to share, to impart and provide the benefit and joy of **understanding**. They want to contribute to a better quality of life in all communities and provide a basis for their development. Communication helps to create means and objectives for the accumulated knowledge to be turned into the very substance of regional development. By communicating heritage, language of users is employed to present both difficulties and advantages of making science and culture effectively and efficiently present in the daily lives of most of the SEE peoples. That is what communication of heritage is about.

The attempts at self-definition of countries and societies in this part of Europe still remain disconnected and much diversified, but they also seem to be turning from the past to the future perspectives. Realization of these perspectives demands an overall transformation of the Southeast European societies, their economic modernization and overall progress, as well as the functional inclusion in international exchange and development.

The new societies are being built in the region. Their ability to develop self-consciousness based on education, knowledge, respect of inherited cultural values, present creativity and flexible communication will define the future of these societies. Their natural and human resources need to be interconnected within the region in order to produce synergetic effects in each and all of its parts.

NOTES:

1 There are 31 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the region of Southeastern Europe: 2 in Albania, 1 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9 in Bulgaria, 6 in Croatia, 1 in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 7 in Romania and 5 in Serbia and Montenegro.

2 See Open Content in the Southeastern and Eastern Europe <http://oc.openflows.org/> see

3 <http://www.ncd.matf.bg.ac.yu/news/sr/ohrid.pdf>

4 http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/Heritage/Technical_Cooperation_and_Consultancy/3_Projects_and_Programmes/IRPP_SAAH.asp#TopOfPage

5 www.european-heritage.net

6 <http://www01.noel.gv.at/donau/>

7 In Croatia, such changes have occurred around 1995. No research has been done in the field but the search through the Court Register results in a number of small firms that started their activities as hobby art centres around 1995 or later. A number of firms also changed their field of activity into hobby/art field (<https://sudreg.pravosudje.hr/SUDREG3/index.jsp>). A personal communication with the director of the leading firm in the field in Croatia (Hobby Art Center Chemaco) revealed that people in Croatia do have more free time as is also the world trend. Still, people in Croatia do not have more money but a number of them started to do hobbies as a means to gaining profit (K. Prešečan,

personal communication, 25 February, 2005).

8 Florida, Richard (2005). *The Flight of the Creative Class*, New York, HarperBusiness

9 The research *Identification of the situation in cultural tourism in Istria* has been done by Daniela Angelina Jelinčić in Istria, Croatia in 2002.

10 The research has been done by the Institute for Tourism, Zagreb within the framework of 'From Culture and Tourism to Cultural Tourism: Development Strategy' in 2003.

11 For example 'Reedukacija za kulturni turizam' (Re-education for Cultural Tourism), Belgrade, 8 - 10 May 2003; 'Od turizma i kulture do kulturnog turizma: strategija razvoja' (From Culture and Tourism to Cultural Tourism: Development Strategy), Zagreb, 18 February 2003.

Heritage as a Relation, Understanding and Communication

Background Paper

prepared for the Croatian Ministry of Culture

by Jozo Ivanović and Predrag Pale

Today, the concept of cultural heritage is more easily deductible from convergence with it and a dialogue with its content and values in the modern day world than from the definition of objects and content as the exponents of traditional aesthetic, historical or symbolic values recognized as cultural. The heritage of social groups, as a rule, includes all the achievements of human intellectual and spiritual activities generated through individual creative efforts or the interaction of individuals and groups. However, the fact that something has been created does not immediately imply that it represents heritage. Heritage is also the relation with those achievements which it recognizes and understands as such and uses them as expressions of affiliation, values and viewpoints - and finally, as expressions of the relationship toward oneself and others. Heritage is not simply given or inherited: each generation, even each individual, discovers it anew, shapes, and experiences and uses it, re-establishing it in the process. Due to this frequently concealed dynamic and relational nature of heritage it is not easy to unequivocally determine all that culture and cultural heritage encompass, namely, what does not enter into their range; in other words, any more thorough reduction may reach a measure that impoverishes and impairs the concept of cultural heritage.

If one seeks the key for understanding cultural heritage, as it is manifested in the life of a community, in the relation towards it, rather than in objects, the multi-layered nature of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue become apparent. While religions and ideologies have one truth and science strives towards another, culture thrives on diversity and can establish it as its principle.

Cultural diversity comes to light as a prominently dialogical concept not merely an ethnological, geographical or aesthetical one. It should be borne in mind that it appears in cultural policies almost simultaneously with the emergence of a disturbing instability in the dialogue of cultures that could lead a monological discourse of globalized culture or its specific regional variances. Globalized culture will not destroy or push aside material

monuments or works of art of a specific environment: on the contrary it has an interest in their preservation and may even increase the number of visitors to these monuments, expand the market and generate resources for their physical protection and presentation. The problem facing the preservation of cultural diversity lies in the fact that it can draw them into its dominantly interpretative context and system of values, change the relationship and marginalize the variety of perceptions. Without preserving its dialogical foundation, cultural diversity can easily be assimilated into the repository of cultural, artistic or tourist sights of globalized culture.

The preservation of cultural heritage cannot, therefore, be reduced to the protection and presentation of cultural objects and content. It should also include the preservation of the actual possibilities of polycentric contextualizations and dialogue between them. This on the other hand implies visibility and presence in the life of the community and its regular communicational processes, sensibility and knowledge required in order to produce and understand these contextualizations (the ideas of cultural circles or cultural corridors are some of these contextualizations) and the inclusion of values that are created in the overall dynamics of social relations. This task is probably the most demanding and uncertain problem of present day cultural policies that are aware of the challenges and goals and recognize the need for breaking out of traditional custodial concepts of the relation toward heritage. It is not easy to reduce varied 'post-custodial' approaches to one common foundation or message, but it is apparent that in the majority of cases they focus on polyvalence, free exchange dependent on power relations, knowledge and understanding, reception and usage contexts, and capability of transforming heritage into values, services and relations that function in society.

Heritage and Contemporaneity

It is no coincidence that the mentioned values are the very same ones society counts upon when speaking of the developmental potentials of cultural, cultural activities and heritage, of culture as mentality, knowledge, spiritual maturity and strength of society upon which its future building capacity depends, of culture as a factor of stability, social cohesion and understanding, of the significance of intercultural dialogue in the prevention of conflicts and building of understanding and confidence among nations.

a. Heritage as the intellectual and creative potential of society

Development trends in modern societies are manifesting a tendency (although exceptionally unevenly) of switching from concepts based on production and products to concepts founded on knowledge and experience. In a world characterized by growing competition and exposure, communities and nations are striving to increase the usability of their intellectual and creative potential. Its preservation, development and productive utilization are taken as a special challenge and inevitable component of any development strategy. They are becoming aware of its heterogeneity and recognizing how demanding and complex it is to develop capacities for its full mobilization in the achievement of various goals they set for themselves. They are trying to discern the key to the ability of initiating and channelling developmental processes in society. They are becoming aware to what extent this ability depends on their relation to knowledge and creativity, relation towards oneself and others and on the availability and free flow of intellectual and spiritual values and goods.

This ability cannot simply be localized within the spheres of politics, the economy or management and organization. It involves before all a cultural legacy that is built over a long period of time and changes relatively slowly. This is demonstrated, among other things, by the congruity in the rhythm of cultural changes with that of the transformation of the community on the whole. The experiences of transitional countries, among which are the countries of Southeast Europe, show that this rhythm can be much faster (for example, within the legal system and in respect to political and social goals, the economy) but that the more profound transformation of values, relations and capabilities governing society is in tune with the dynamics of cultural processes. Cultural activities and content, their circulation and exchange - equally in time, space and social structures of the present day world - their transformation into values, relations and capacity of facing oneself and others, the challenges of one's own and common future, accelerate and channel these processes at a fundamental level, comprehensively and in the long-term. This capacity of society, objectified in its heritage (spiritual and material) and institutions may perhaps be denominated as active (living) heritage.

b. Culture and global economic trends

Dominant economic trends include mass production and the omnipresence and standardization of goods and services. In such circumstances knowledge and the ability to create new products and services become key issues. The consumer's basic desire becomes to be and have something different to be distinguished from the masses. Once again the richness of an individual's and an organization's intellectual and spiritual "output" is the key factor for their survival and success in the globalized world.

Historically speaking, this individualism was mostly (sometimes exclusively) encouraged in the field of culture. Thus, communication (discovery, preservation, exploration and publicizing) of heritage and its full capacity to produce new outputs become imperative: nationally, organizationally and individually.

Culture becomes both the most sought after product and the major tool for the production of marketable goods and services. In addition, art and culture are being explored as educational means.

c. Culture as integral element of sustainable development

As the world leading economies shift from material production to services and the awareness of limited natural resources gains momentum, sustainable development is getting its chance. However, development that honours knowledge, skills and creativity also has its own environment and "natural" resources that need to be catered to.

Preservation of heritage is the first step in sustainable cultural development. Its exchange and respectful usage is the next. Every attempt to preserve heritage in any form but its raw original, every attempt to interpret heritage and disseminate only (one) interpretation without alternative interpretations and origins would have a severe impact on the cultural environment and represent its devastation in the gravest form.

The problem is even more complex since the daily production of what will tomorrow be considered heritage is vast and getting larger every day. Missing the opportunity to treat it as heritage today, applying filters and deciding what will be considered heritage and what will not means depriving our successors of their heritage.

d. Cultural exchange as social inclusion and cohesion

The crises and conflicts that are most difficult to resolve are those in which cultural barriers are more distinct and resilient and cultural dialogue superficial or formal. This is not only or primarily the case in crises of relations between peoples and states but in regard to social tensions and crises within specific states and communities. Societies that are more exposed within themselves to such tensions and divisions are in the majority of cases precisely multicultural and multi-ethnic communities (including those that are showing a tendency to become such due to increased population mobility), revealing a lack or crisis of dialogue between the diverse components within such societies. Where identity (one's own) and diversity find themselves on opposite sides - and efforts and a measure of maturity on the part of society are required to avoid it - more expressed gestures of reticence and prejudices are developed encouraging such manifestations in others as well.

The attainment and preservation of such maturity require active cultural policies that are, on one hand and where needed directed toward the enhanced protection of singularity and on the other, at establishing cultural dialogue and promoting mutual understanding and exchanges. Policies which set such goals can hardly function in isolation, for themselves: they must find sufficient points of contact and common values with other participants of social and cultural dialogue in society.

The mentioned gestures of reticence and confrontation between social groups have a dual feedback effect on culture: through the diminished circulation and availability of cultural content and ideas and through the reduction of heritage (ex. separation or confrontation of cultural traditions through which specific social groups and strata are connected: elitist and popular culture, urban and traditional, mainstream and marginal...). Cultural multifariousness of this type is not something that could or should be avoided; however, the question is what does it give and how is it used. To a certain degree social and cultural dynamics always evade definitions and predictions; they do not fit into management models. Tensions and crises in societal relations are unavoidable: the question however is, how can we deal with them at all and how are we actually going to deal with them; to what degree are circumstances and systems of value going to limit us in our actions.

The dialogue between and convergence of such cultural diversities has, at least in the last twenty years or so, contributed considerably to artistic creativity. In some fields it has been perhaps one of the greatest generators of new ideas and approaches. At the level of socio-cultural dialogue and provision of the desirable degree of social cohesion and inclusion such effectiveness is unfortunately still not apparent. At times global communications easily cause us to know better and more readily accept and even understand distant cultures than the multifariousness of the cultural space of the environment we live in. Distant is close, and what is close remains unknown or neglected, until its voice becomes louder or begins to cause visible crisis situations. The historicization of heritage has a similar effect: we have developed an attitude toward and respect for the heritage acquired long ago (our own and that of others), but our attitude to what is being created and lives in the present is not as developed and harmonious.

Cultural heritage and intercultural dialogue can contribute considerably to **social inclusion, promotion of understanding and prevention of conflicts in society**. This however requires a degree of de-historicization and localization both of the concept of heritage as well as of the context of intercultural dialogue: from monuments to people and their relations. The role of culture in the development of dialogue and cohesion in society cannot be reduced to respect for the heritage of others that is distant in terms of space and time, accessible through books, the media or cultural institutions and organizations: it must include the respect of the present expressions and needs of the holders of cultural values or interpretations. For that reason cultural dialogue is always demanding and, as a rule, uncertain, while overlooking the interdependence of the heritage, values and identities of various strata and groups in society gives rise to poverty, the de-contextualization of heritage and identities is conducive to the exacerbation of tensions and crises in society.

e. Communication and usage of heritage

The capacity to communicate and use heritage productively depends on the identification of the needs and understanding of the context in which they are formed and satisfied. In modern society these needs change and stratify more quickly, seek a faster answer and are forgotten sooner. New technologies and new possibilities of expression and communication create new spaces in which people dwell, talk to and meet others, in which they acquire experience, find meaning and form viewpoints. Present

possibilities and rhythm of communicating and exchanging content, condense, deepen and network fields and systems in which communication and exchanges take place. The basic trends which influence and which will probably increasingly influence the presence and use of heritage in communications between individuals and communities are given below. These of course are not and cannot be the only relevant trends, but they do sufficiently clearly illustrate the context on the whole.

1. Presence and accessibility in leading communication channels are preconditions for success in the majority of public activity fields. The profuseness of the content and growing pressure of suppliers who are striving to attract attention make it ever more difficult to really be present and accessible.

It is only apparently paradoxical that the presentation of cultural heritage today, when we have at our disposal much more powerful tools than ever before, is more demanding or at least equally uncertain as before. The key to presence and accessibility is not in the possibilities of technologies used for communication and presentation but in the probability of those for whom the content is intended to actually become aware of it and consume it. It is a given fact that the needs to which heritage can be directed can be met by content of other origins, other messages and values, that various messages can be derived from that heritage. It should be taken into account that the closeness of the consumer is usually the decisive factor, not the potential value of the content itself. In an over abundant supply, presence includes promotion.

2. Fields of activity, as well as fields of reception and usage of cultural activity products are expanding and increasingly dispersing.

The same content is usable for various needs and in various contexts. The presentation and communication of cultural heritage should not focus on the typified, ideal user of cultural content but rather recognize and exploit specific needs and interests originating outside of traditional segments of cultural consumption. This also implies the development of targeted content and (education, topics such as crisis and post-crisis states, etc.).

3. The key to successful supply is the creation of reference points and points of excellence.

Presence includes excellence. The points that impose themselves as

present or referral for a specific area or community, namely, group of users are visible and influential. Little else remains for others and their message remains silent.

Regional initiatives, such as those in Southeast Europe should identify where and for whom can they become points of accessibility and excellence and thus really become visible and effective. Inventive and high end projects that contain leadership elements and generate other projects and activities are particularly successful.

4. Boundary lines between sectors and fields of activities are diminishing and becoming conditional.

This process includes both traditional cultural activities in themselves, as well as heritage and cultural production on the whole in relation to the 'remaining part' of society. The divisions are more operative and analytical than substantial. It is difficult to make a clear distinction between cultural heritage and the heritage of society as a whole and the same goes for cultural activity.

The fading of sectoral boundary lines increases exposure and competition on the market of ideas and values and requires a specific transcending of sectoral mentality and relation toward culture.

5. The expansion and multiplication of fields and channels of individual and social communication change the context and multiply points of cultural communication.

Communication systems change the way people communicate, their expectations and communicational behaviour. A few centuries of relative stability in communication technologies that were based on the press and communicational patterns connected with it, resulted in the fact that we consider this type of communication almost natural and that communicational strategies are adapted to it.

Today, communication technologies and channels are unstoppably spreading in two directions: on one hand, toward the comprehensive utilization of possibilities and patterns brought and imposed by information technologies, and on the other hand, toward the field of personal and verbal communication. Communication is simultaneously globalized and individualized.

6. Today's life-style is constantly changing needs and expectations.

Individuals and societies need more, greater variety, greater speed and urgency. Needs change quickly, disappear or are substituted by other needs. Due to the speed of this process they are frequently reduced to basics and require only the basic: effect is often sufficient. Reduced needs are offered reduced; easily digestible content that can be quickly consumed is consumed.

On the other hand, it is not easy to identify needs that change quickly and offer relevant content at the right moment. Examples of belated recognition and late reaction are numerous in all fields of life.

7. Differences between global, personal, local, regional and national are fading. Global presence is often the precondition of presence and activity in a more confined area.

The facility of global communication digests and leads to overlapping and interdependence of more or less all localized fields of activity. An individual can be almost equally directly immersed in the global environment as in the local community or some other field of interest. The almost instant mobility between various fields and contexts of observation and activity leads to intensive exchanges and overlapping of content, experiences and values, but also to challenges, problems and dilemmas. Communication and contextualization determine what works and provokes a feeling of belonging, when it works and at which level.

8. Condensing the world into an integrated communication field creates a need for networking.

We are witnessing a growing trend towards networking in almost all social fields. The more an activity is exposed to globalization effects, the more extensive and important the networking for survival on the market. The global economy is becoming increasingly integrated through the formation and expansion of clusters, namely, interest networks. In other fields as well networks empower and open possibilities for taking action: developed networks can, in a manner of speaking, control and channel the activity on the whole. Networks create new structures and identities. Networked structures bring stability, set rules and power relations in the otherwise open arena of global communication. Networking opens up

great possibilities for cultural activities, particularly those based on values and the usage of heritage. However, it is necessary to develop capacities for networking and for developing cooperative content and services.

9. Communication of heritage in the contemporary context requires a shift of focus from content to the experience of convergence and dialogue with heritage.

Following trends in other fields, post-custodial concepts of cultural heritage are oriented to the act and context of the reception and usage of heritage and its values in the existing and predictable social context. What is accessible is preserved, and what is easily found, understood and used is accessible. Communication that aims at creating experience for the user becomes the fundamental protection strategy.

10. Communication of heritage requires heritage as a resource to be transformed into value and services.

The true meaning of heritage lies in the relation and perception, not in material things. Things and objects are exponents or symbols of the content and message we can interpret as heritage. The same heritage can be experienced and interpreted in various ways and therefore transformed into various messages and values. Precisely for that reason the task of presenting heritage is so demanding and sensitive and does not solely concern culture.

Specific challenges: Communication of Heritage in Southeast Europe

The population of the Region makes up 1% of the total world population. However, its contribution to world history, progress and heritage is undeniable and grossly disproportional to this number. The future role of the region should be founded on these facts, on its heritage and joint human potential.

Similarities among nations and communities of the region can be used as a synergizing agent while differences can play a crucial role in the construction of dialogue as the key generator of discoveries and creative endeavours. There are at least a half a dozen main streams of actions (described later in this document) that need to be undertaken in each and every country of the region. It is not (only) economic issues that

prevent members from fully implementing necessary activities but rather the simple fact of numbers: national and professional populations are too small. Therefore, there are only two ways to proceed: concentrate on one major (national) programme and participate in other regional joint programs.

Typically, a nation or community would volunteer to pioneer and carry out (only) one among the jointly agreed activities and offer assistance and support to all others in the region, so they can all benefit from the programme and thus enable their individual organizations and people to participate. For programmes that no one member can carry out alone, a consortia would be formed and members would again use the results at will.

Cultural heritage and intercultural dialogue in Southeast Europe

Southeast Europe has always been the meeting point of different civilizations, cultures, spheres of influence and global centres of power. It could be said that throughout the greater part of its known past it has also been a border area in which various interests, traditions and values, and even different, more broadly founded identities and cultural circles met and intertwined, such as the Mediterranean, European or Central European.

Challenges

Southeast Europe has a rich and diverse cultural heritage and is aware of the value it has and can have in the efforts to increase the prosperity of communities and citizens, develop the capacities of societies to build and channel their future and promote understanding and dialogue within and between communities. A rich heritage becomes richer if it is present and active in fundamental social processes and in people's awareness, their relation toward their past, present and future. In evaluating this role of cultural heritage there are a number of areas and challenges that dominate in the present context as the subject of cultural policies and regional cultural activities.

1. Preservation of cultural diversity

It could be said that the convergence of cultural diversity is perhaps the most powerful aspect of the common heritage in this region. Identities and

the relationship towards oneself and others are connected to it, making it necessary to take into account its potential in the development of these relations. The context of globalization that places everyone in the region in an identical position additionally emphasizes this potential.

In order to preserve diversity and capacities for productive cultural exchange it is not sufficient only to register and safeguard the legacies and contents which carry and symbolize cultural diversity and then monitor their fate. It is necessary to present it and continually create an awareness and experience of diversity which enrich and increase communication skills and draw heritage values into the social dialogue.

Partner projects aimed at creating that experience and awareness at the regional and sub-regional levels can give more. Such projects can topicalize both the affiliation and relation toward broader cultural circles, such as the Mediterranean and (Central) European which have overlapped in comparable ways in the past and continue to do so in the present of the peoples and communities in Southeast Europe.

2. Formation and promotion of the perception and awareness of the cultural heritage of the region.

The lack of care for the perception and presentation of the region as an area of culture with riches and traditions that by far exceed regional significance opens space for non-comprehension and prejudices and impoverishes the context of cultural activities and exchanges.

Creating an image of Southeast Europe as a region of dynamic cultural and intercultural processes in the past and present, with its own identity, implies a targeted topicalization of that perception and supply of content and experiences which enrich it both in regard to the communities and individuals in this region as well as more extensively. It depends on the quality and accessibility of knowledge on heritage and cultural processes, on the methods and goals of the communication of heritage to citizens and creation of quality networks, portals, reference points and initiatives which will connect and contextualize the cultural heritage of peoples and communities in the nearer and more distant neighbourhoods.

3. Content and supply development corresponding with present needs and challenges in the region.

Cultural supply should continuously seek new and adequate forms of expression and action in line with the current needs and goals of communities and individuals it is directed at. Needs are changing today much faster than before and are much harder to pinpoint. Communication systems and patterns are also changing and with them people are changing their habits and expectations in regard to communication. If cultural supply does not take into account both current needs and dominant or growing communication patterns and expectations in its environment, barriers between culture and needs will be created or reinforced, and thereby between culture and citizens.

Currently, certain aspects of post-crisis and transitional states, intensification of dialogue in the region, positioning of countries and peoples in the region in current and forthcoming economic, political and global relations and processes, including the growth of capacities for sustainable development have become apparent as particularly important needs in this region which require and open space for the evaluation and use of cultural heritage.

4. Increased circulation of content, supply, ideas and concepts.

The circulation of cultural content between countries in the region seems considerably slower than is the case with cultural exchanges with other cultural centres which is partly due to less developed communication channels - one could well say the currently active cultural corridors in the region. The nature and significance of intercultural dialogue and exchange in the region in the future will depend to a considerable degree on the interest and capacity for various forms and levels of regional and sub-regional networking and on linkages through wider networking.

5. Regional visibility and presence as enhanced capacities for global presence.

Southeast Europe is a region of cultural diversity, exchange and exposure. If we are capable of transforming cultural heritage in that context into value and content which correspond to the needs of people and communities, into experience and knowledge that contribute to the general capacity of

society to respond to the challenges they are faced with, if we are capable of developing intercultural dialogue and exchanges while preserving diversity and identity, it will certainly increase our capacity to face challenges that stem or will stem from global society.

6. Enhancing institutional and creative skills, development of knowledge and excellence.

The challenges set before modern society and the responses to those challenges are ever more complex, regardless of the activity in question. The capacity to respond and act successfully depends on the capacity to generate and quickly assimilate knowledge, develop and apply new approaches, techniques and tools and on the capacity to adapt quickly.

The development of these skills is exceptionally demanding, costly and strenuous. In addition, the skills and competencies one has acquired can quickly become obsolete. Therefore, organizations and institutions from a specific field of activity are stimulated and even compelled to cooperate, exchange knowledge and experience, and participate in cooperative projects aimed at enhancing institutional and professional capacities and competencies. Forms of such co-operation in the field of protection and communication of cultural heritage can range from the exchange of experience, transfer of knowledge and skills to the development of joint programmes and centres of excellence.

7. Comprehensive use of information and communication technologies

Today, information and communication technologies are sufficiently mature, dispersed and penetrating to support and transform almost any human activity. The networking level is such that a new 'virtual' environment has already been created in which people dwell and communicate, satisfy their needs, gain experience, meet others and their achievements. Global networking has enabled individuals and groups to directly contact other individuals, groups and cultures regardless of distances in terms of space and time. It compresses their communication horizon into a synchronicity of close and distant, local and global.

This environment offers unprecedented possibilities for the communication of heritage and brings it closer to a much wider circle of users, expanding

the context of its usage outside of traditionally defined cultural activities and creating new experiences of converging with heritage.

Presence and activity in a digital environment pose specific demands that are not negligible. They require a high level of processing and a comprehensive IT backed presentation of heritage which connects heritage with knowledge about it. One of the basic preconditions for wider accessibility and exchange of heritage knowledge and experience is content and system inter-operability.

Information and communication technologies are effective if their possibilities are used to their full potential and if a critical mass of participants, contents and services is reached. The presence of only some or a sporadic presence in the digital environment leaves untapped the most important possibilities offered by technology.

Communication of cultural heritage cannot be reduced to one or a few specifically targeted projects, or to only some of the mentioned aspects of the environment that determines it. Just like interpersonal communication, intercultural communication on the whole is achieved in as much as it is integrated in the dominant patterns of activity and relation towards others. Inter-cultural dialogue, productive communication and the usage of heritage as an intellectual, spiritual and creative potential of communities and its transformation in value and content that are effective in society require an awareness of this value as well as a clear insight into the needs and challenges of modern society which seeks and opens possibilities for the re-socialization of heritage. Such an insight can give rise to a more broadly founded resoluteness for promoting various forms of co-operation which will enhance presence and exchange and thereby the preservation of content and value.

Inter-cultural dialogue, productive communication and the usage of heritage as an intellectual, spiritual and creative potential of communities and its transformation in value and content that are effective in society require an awareness of this value as well as a clear insight into the needs and challenges of modern society which seeks and opens possibilities for the re-socialization of heritage. Such an insight can give rise to a more broadly founded resoluteness for promoting various forms of co-operation which will enhance presence and exchange and thereby the preservation of content and value.

Annex I Programme

Wednesday, 31 May 2006

- 1430-1530 Registration and accommodation of experts in "Admiral" Hotel
- 1530 Departure by bus for "Ambassador" Hotel
- 1540 Arrival in front of "Ambassador" Hotel
Walk to "Magnolia" Hall
- 1600-1730 1st Expert Meeting "Communication of Heritage"
- 1800-1930 2nd Expert Meeting "Communication of Heritage"

Thursday, 1 June 2006

- 10.30 Beginning of the First Plenary Session - Part One
Welcoming address and opening of the Summit by:
Mr Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia
Welcoming addresses by:
Dr Ivo Sanader, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia
Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
Mr Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- 10.50 Presentation of the Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainable using and promoting cultural corridors of South East Europe (Bulgaria)
- 11.00 Presentation of Communication of Heritage (Croatia)
- 11.30 First Plenary Session - Part Two
Address by:
Mr Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia
Addresses by other heads of delegation in order of precedence
- 13.05-13.20 Ceremony of presentation of decoration by the President of the Republic of Croatia to Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
- 13.25-14.40 Lunch given by Mr Amir Muzur, Mayor of Opatija, in honour of heads of delegation
- 15.00-15.45 Bilateral meetings
- 16.00 Beginning of the Second Plenary Session
- 16.35 Presentation and adoption of Joint Declaration
- 16.50 Closing remarks by:
Mr Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
Mr Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia
- 19.40-20.10 Guided tour of Euphrasian Basilica
- 20.25-22.10 State dinner in honour of heads of delegation and First Ladies hosted by the President of the Republic of Croatia and his wife

Friday, 2 June 2006

- from 11.00 Departure

Annex II

List of Participants

List of principal high-level participants:

Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia
Ivo Sanader, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia
Koïchiro Matsuura - UNESCO, General-Director
Terry Davis - Council of Europe, General Secretary
Georgij Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria
Alfred Moisiu, President of the Republic of Albania
Branko Crvenkovski - President of the Republic of Macedonia
Sulejman Tihić - President of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina
Filip Vujanović - President of the Republic of Montenegro
Dragan Kojadinović, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Serbia
Mehmet Aydın, Republic of Turkey, State Secretary
Virgil Nitulescu, Romania, State Secretary for Culture and Religious Affairs of the Republic of Romania
Panayotis Baizos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic in Croatia
Milan Orožen Adamič, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia in Croatia

Delagation of Croatian/host country Organizing Committee personnel included:

Hrvoje Cvitanović, Chief of the Cabinet Office, Office of the President
Maja Razović Kocijan, Advisor tot he President for Culture, Office of the President
Andrea Javor, Chief of the Presidential Protocol, Office of the President
Jasmina Lokas-Strpić, Head of the Department for European

Integration and Cooperation, Ministry of Culture

Rut Carek, Secretary General, Head of the Department for UNESCO, Croatian Commission for UNESCO

Nina Obuljen, Assistant to the Minister, Ministry of Culture

Petra Furdek, Office of the President, Protocol of the President

UNESCO Delegation:

Hans d’Orville, Director, Bureau of Strategic Planning

Katérina Stenou, Director, Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue

Marie Paule Roudil, Senior Programme Specialist (Culture) UNESCO-Venice

Ann-Belinda Preis, Senior Programme Planning Officer, Bureau of Strategic Planning

Cécile Duvelle Executive Officer, Office of the Director-General

FW (Russ) Russell, Information Manager, Bureau of Strategic Planning

Krista Pikkat Executive Officer, Office of the Director-General

Andreï Chevelev, Liaison Officer, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation

Jasmina Sopova, Press officer, Bureau of Public Information

Damir Dijakovic, Programme Specialist (Culture) UNESCO-Venice

Annex III

General Information about the Opatija Summit

OPATIJA SUMMIT 2006

Communication of Heritage:

A new Vision of Southeastern Europe

(June 1-2, 2006)

Welcome to Opatija!

In May 2005 the regional Summit “Cultural Corridors in Southeastern Europe” was held in Varna, the Republic of Bulgaria, in cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

This conference brought together not only national experts and the representatives of the international community (the Director General of UNESCO and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe), but also the heads of some ten states in Southeastern Europe. In line with the prior agreement, the Final document of the Summit stipulates that the following Summit will take place in the Republic of Croatia in 2006.

Theme

As a follow up of the Varna meeting, the central theme of this years’ Summit will be **Communication of Heritage**. The Summit provides a unique opportunity to acknowledge the fundamental role that culture and science have in the development of Southeastern Europe.

Following discussions on cultural corridors, the aim is to enable experts to look closely at central elements of cultural corridors - the cultural and natural sites themselves. The central theme of the discussion will be to explore potentials for enhanced cooperation within the region in order to promote a common European heritage. Special emphasis will be placed on the consolidation of knowledge of existing activities and initiatives so as to achieve greater regional cooperation and a synergy and coordination of existing projects and initiatives - whether they are projects developed

by UNESCO, the Council of Europe or European Union or projects specifically initiated in or for this region.

Experts who will be participating in the Summit in Opatija will be invited to analyze Communication of Heritage from different aspects:

- Integration of heritage conservation as an integral part of sustainable development (cultural tourism, urban regeneration, regional development etc.);
- Innovative techniques in restoration and preservation based on scientific research;
- Bringing knowledge about heritage closer to the citizens (awareness-building, education, promoting cultural heritage through publications and new media etc.)

These three sub themes will be included in the materials for discussion (background paper).

- more than 160 years of tradition in tourism - dubbed “the Queen of tourism”
- at the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries, owing to its favourable geographic position making it the closest gateway of Central Europe to a “warm sea” and due to its agreeable climate, Opatija developed into one of the most famous tourist resorts in Croatia and it is a town with the longest tradition in tourism on the east Adriatic coast
- still attracting tourists throughout the year due to its mild climate and relative vicinity (just around 500 km from Milan, Vienna and Munich)
- named after the Benedictine abbey of St. Jacob (“opatiija” is the Croatian word for abbey), which is mentioned for the first time in the mid-15th century
- today it accommodates beautifully the architecture and horticulture from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries
- cultivated parks, illuminated waterfront (12 km long), well-tended beaches and fountains are a setting for villas and hotels which can accommodate up to 6 000 guests
- the construction of this villa marks the beginning of tourism in Opatija
- Up until the construction of this summer residence - Villa Angelina

- in 1844, Opatija was a relatively big town with around 120 houses, grouped around land lots removed from the sea coast and mostly living on fishing and seafaring
- By building Villa Angiolina (built by Higinio von Scarpa, a nobleman from the town of Rijeka), Opatija opened its door to a series of distinguished guests, among others to Austrian empress Maria Anna, botanist Heinrich Noë, Croatian governer (“ban”) Josip Jelačić and others, who, enchanted by its vegetation and climate, spread the word about Opatija throughout Europe
- During their visit to Opatija, the Austrian heir to the throne Rudolf and his wife Stéphanie stayed in the villa, as well as their guest, the satirist from Styria, Mr. Rosegger
- The villa is being transformed into the Museum of the town of Opatija

The Park, where many different plants, from all around the world, especially from the Far East, South America and Australia, are successfully grown, although untypical for this area, was created from 1845 until 1860.

- It is considered to be a valuable horticultural monument (covering a surface of 3,64 ha; divided into 60 fields where some 150 plant varieties are planted)
- Among other interesting plant varieties, the Japanese camellia (*Camellia japonica*) grows in the park, and it became a symbol of Opatija

St. Jacob`s church

- Situated in St. Jacob`s park, which is a continuation of the Angiolina Park
- The oldest building in Opatija, mentioned for the first time in the historical books in 1449
- Most likely built several years earlier as a colony of Benedictines who fled the Furlanian monastery San Pietro di Rosazzo
- This abbey gave the later developed town its name
- Little from its original appearance has been preserved: in 1506, as the text over the portal reads, abbot Simon built or remodelled the church
- At the end of the 18th century it was completely renovated and in the 1930s it was significantly extended

- One of its curiosities is the replica of a relief made by the sculptor Ivan Meštrović
- In the earliest times, the monastery was a place where court trials and fairs were organised; the first cemetery was situated in its vicinity and in the 19th century it accommodated the first school in Opatija
- The church used to belong to different church orders, from the Benedictines and Augustinians to Paulists and Jesuits
- Apart from being a place for liturgies, today this is a venue of musical performances

Volosko

- An authentic fishing village with old and closely built fishing houses, first mentioned in 1543
- 1km from the centre of Opatija - a destination for a lot of Opatija's guests who, after a pleasant 10-minute walk, wish to change the fancy atmosphere in Opatija for an authentic coastal experience

Poreč

- town, port and a tourist resort on the west Istrian coast
- settlement from the Roman period - even today Roman construction elements are preserved in the grid of town streets: cardo - decumanus
- in the 2nd century it was a Roman castrum; later on it was granted the status of a municipium and in the 1st century it was known as Colonia Julia Parentium
- it became the seat of the bishop at the turn of the 3rd and the 4th centuries
- after the fall of the West Roman Empire it was ruled by the Eastern Goths, Byzantium and the Franks
- in the 12th century a self-government was set up in Poreč
- from 1267 to 1779 it was under Venetian rule which was after that replaced by the Austrian rule
- in 1861 it became the capital of Istria and the seat of the Istrian parliament; from 1918 to 1943 it was under Italian rule. During the World War II (1944) it was severely damaged in bombings.

Sights:

- in the 6th century, when Euphrasius was the bishop, Euphrasian

basilica complex was built (consisting of the church, atrium, baptistery and the former bishop's palace); this monument is placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997.

- Romanic houses and gothic and late gothic palaces are still preserved in the town
- Museum of the Poreč region (in the Sinčić palace) has a collection of stone monuments and a collection of archaeological findings, furniture, paintings and ethnographic objects
- The collection of the Poreč parish (set up in 1974) consists of around 40 exhibits the most important of which are the fragments of a mosaic (the oldest one dates back to the 3rd century), crosses (13th century) and several altar pieces (15th - 16th centuries) as well as the choir benches.
- On the nearby little island of St. Nicholas a former castle (from 1886) was transformed into a hotel. A round tower built in 1402 is one of the oldest preserved lighthouses on the Adriatic.

LOCALITIES AND MONUMENTS ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST

THE EUPHRASIAN BASILICA IN POREČ (EUFRASIANA)

- one of the best preserved monuments of early Byzantine art in the Mediterranean
- erected in the 6th century in Poreč, during the time of Bishop Euphrasius
- unique in that it is the only church of its type with the original structure preserved
- main structure of the complex : the three nave basilica, with the central nave wider and taller and separated from the side naves by two series of arcades
- All three naves end in semi-circular apses, while in the main apse, taller and wider than the other two, is the ciborium
- In the northeastern corner of the basilica, the trefoil Memorial Chapel is connected with an elliptical vestibule, while the external vestibule is connected with the spacious quadratic atrium
- On the western side of the atrium is the octagonal baptistery
- In the region between the northern side of the atrium and the seashore, a second large church was built at the same time, with its axis vertical to the axis of the main basilica, and new additions were made during the Middle Ages, when it was transformed into

the Bishop's Palace. Much later, the remaining structures of the complex came into being

- in the 18th century, the entire complex suffered significant damage, many sections were destroyed and the complete restoration was conducted following World War II
- richly ornamented in the Byzantine style of mosaic (which, with the mosaic of the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna represent the most significant examples of mosaic art in Europe); also ornamented with incrustations, stucco and plaster

Photo Gallery



Opatija, Croatia



from L to R: Panayotis Baizos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to Croatia; Mehmet Aydin, Minister of State of Turkey; Filip Vujanović, President of the Republic of Montenegro; Branko Crvenkovski, President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria; Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia; Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe; Alfred Moisiu, President of the Republic of Albania; Sulejman Tihić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Dragan Kojadinovic, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Serbia; Virgil Stefan Nitulescu, State Secretary, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Romania; Milan Orožen Adamič Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Croatia
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The Heads of State/Government at Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage





The Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage



Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, and his team. from L to R: FW (Russ) Russell, Krista Pikkat, Hans d'Orville, Ann-Belinda Preis, Cécile Duvelle and Katërina Stenou



The Heads of State/Government at Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage





The Heads of State/Government at Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage



The Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage. Maja Razović Kocijan, Advisor tot he President for Culture, Office of the President and Lubomir Loncar, Political Advisor to the President of Croatia are on the right



The Opatija Regional Forum on Communication of Heritage





Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia, with Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
© Presidency of the Republic of Croatia



from L to R: Milan Orožen Adamič Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Croatia; Virgil Stefan Nitulescu, State Secretary, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Romania; Dragan Kojadinovic, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Serbia; Sulejman Tihić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Alfred Moisiu, President of the Republic of Albania; Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia; Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe; Branko Crvenkovski, President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Filip Vujanović, President of the Republic of Montenegro; Mehmet Aydın, Minister of State of Turkey; Panayotis Baizos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to Croatia; [absent] Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria
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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

“Communication is essential for building a Europe without dividing lines. It promotes the exchange of knowledge about heritage in our region and in particular our shared responsibility towards its preservation and safeguarding for future generations, providing a sense of stability, continuity and cultural identity.”

The Opatija Declaration

Although it has to be admitted that new forms of cultural cooperation in the region are still inadequate, unsystematic, largely funded by the international community and international organizations, there is increasingly notable progress in networking, knowledge transfer, artist mobility and the use of new information technologies. An important step in that direction has been made by the Presidents of the states of South East Europe in their cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe focused on enhancing intercultural dialogue and cooperation in the region.

Stjepan Mesić

President of the Republic of Croatia

Building on the Varna Declaration, the Opatija Summit takes the agenda one step further. It provides an exceptional opportunity to examine key features of these cultural corridors – in particular, the fundamental role played by cultural heritage in the development of South East Europe, along with its promotion, safeguarding and transmission through specific approaches.

Koïchiro Matsuura

*Director-General of the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization*

The continuity of these Summits lies in their message of togetherness and joint endeavour, in the symbolic search of a common identity for the region. The innovation comes from the different angles through which the theme of heritage is explored - and each time this exploration results in fresh ideas and activities on the ground.

Terry Davis

Secretary-General of the Council of Europe

For further information about UNESCO's activities related to the Dialogue among Civilizations, please consult:
www.unesco.org/dialogue



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