



CULTURAL HERITAGE

A BRIDGE TOWARDS A SHARED FUTURE

Sixth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South East Europe

Cetinje – April 23, 2010

CETINJE DECLARATION

The sixth joint declaration of the Ministries of Culture of South-Eastern Europe and Italy on the promotion of cultural heritage for dialogue, integration and sustainable development

We, the Ministries participating in the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe on the topic “Cultural Heritage – a Bridge towards a Shared Future”, organized by the Government of Montenegro with the support of UNESCO:

Emphasising that this Declaration is a follow-up to the Message from Ohrid on the Dialogue Between Civilizations (2003), the Tirana Summit Declaration on Inter-religious and Inter-ethnic Dialogue (2004), the Varna Declaration on Cultural Corridors in South-East Europe (2005), the Opatija Declaration on Communication of Heritage (2006), the Bucharest and Sibiu Declaration on the Cultural Diversity as a Bridge Between Cultural Heritage and Culture of the Future (2007), the Athens Declaration of Intercultural Encounters on Maritime, River and Lake Routes of South-East Europe (2008) and the Cetinje Declaration “Management of Heritage Diversity and its Promotion for Tourism”;

Fully reaffirming the contents, aims and principles of the Mostar Declaration, Venice Declaration, Ohrid Declaration, Zadar Declaration, and Bucharest Declaration, respectively approved by the First (Mostar 2004), Second (Venice 2005), Third (Ohrid 2006), Fourth (Zadar 2007) and Fifth (Bucharest 2008) Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe;

Expressing appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Italy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Cooperazione Italiana) for its generous support to the activities for the safeguarding and promotion of South-East European cultural heritage realised since 2004 within the framework of these annual Ministerial Conferences;

Recalling:

- *The UNESCO Conventions and declarations in the field of culture, and especially: the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999); 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); the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005);*
- The mandate and action of UNESCO in strengthening international cooperation within its fields of competence, with special reference to its role in fostering intercultural dialogue, as well as in safeguarding and promoting cultural diversity as a driving force for human and economic development;

Inspired by the proclamation of 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures;

We adopt the following Declaration and the attached Action Plan:

DECLARATION

1. Culture, as the expression of knowledge, convictions and creativity of peoples and individuals in their continuous interaction, constitutes the platform for the development of peaceful and successful international relations. Therefore, the priority of culture as a topic of and platform for enhanced bilateral, multilateral and intra-regional cooperation in South-Eastern Europe (hereinafter, SEE) should be re-affirmed and further strengthened.
2. In this regard, the annual Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in SEE, since their beginning in 2004, greatly contributed to the creation of a spirit of cooperation for the safeguarding and promotion of the shared cultural heritage. We thus consider our participation in these Ministerial Conferences the expression of our firm commitment to the strengthening of dialogue and mutual understanding between our countries and peoples, as well as an opportunity to affirm our strong will to preserve the richness and diversity of our shared cultural legacy.
3. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure a closer coordination between all international initiatives and platforms of cultural cooperation in SEE, with a view at leveraging on the respective assets and experiences, creating synergies, and avoiding duplication of efforts. In this sense, while reaffirming the leading political and institutional role played by the annual Forums of South-East European Heads of State, a more effective harmonisation shall be sought between the initiatives participated by the countries in the region, also with the support of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission.
4. Similarly, the coordination between cultural cooperation initiatives in SEE and the cultural policies and programmes of the European Union shall be strengthened, possibly increasing the participation of UNESCO as leading international organisation for cultural cooperation in the implementation of relevant programmes financed by the European Union, as well as in other programmes supported by different governmental and non-governmental organisations active in the field of culture;
5. Taking into consideration the excellent results achieved so far in the cooperation in the field of culture between all the countries participating in this Conference and the UNESCO Venice Office – Regional Office for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE), we support the continuation and possibly the further strengthening of these common efforts, and express our strong encouragement to the establishment of adequate financial means for the implementation of related activities.
6. We commend the government of Montenegro, and especially the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Media, for having organised the present Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in SEE in close time proximity and in the same venue as the annual meeting of the Council of Ministers of Culture of SEE, which represents the first step for a closer coordination between these two platforms.
7. For the purpose of achieving a stronger relation between the preservation of cultural heritage and its promotion as a means of sustainable development, we support the realisation of relevant capacity-building activities, with special regard to the definition of efficient Management Plans for the protected areas. Accordingly, we support the creation of a regional network of experts on the management of cultural heritage, and encourage the establishment of a Regional Centre in Montenegro specialised in the management of cultural heritage.
8. Convinced that the continuity of these annual Ministerial Conferences is of great importance for further strengthening our mutual political and institutional commitment to the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE, we express our appreciation at the offer of the Government of Serbia to host the Seventh Ministerial Conference in 2011, and we accept the invitation to participate therein.
9. Finally, further efforts shall be taken in order to ensure the application of this reaffirmed spirit of regional cultural cooperation at the operational level. In accordance with this, we approve the attached Cetinje Action Plan and propose it as the reference for the definition of all future international cooperation activities aiming at the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage in SEE.

H.E. Mr. Branislav Mićunović
Minister of Culture



Branislav Mićunović

H.E. Mr. Ferdinand Xhaferaj
Minister of Tourism,
Culture, Youth and Sport



Ferdinand Xhaferaj

H.E. Mr. Sredoje Nović
Minister of Civil Affairs



Sredoje Nović

H.E. Mr. Vezhdi Letif Rashidov
Minister of Culture



Vezhdi Letif Rashidov

H.E. Mr. Božo Biškupić
Minister of Culture



Božo Biškupić

H.E. Mr. Sandro Bondi
Minister for Cultural Heritage
and Activities



Sandro Bondi

H.E. Mrs. Elizabeta Kanchevska Mileska
Minister of Culture



Elizabeta Kanchevska Mileska

H.E. Mr. Boris Focsa
Minister of Culture



Boris Focsa

H.E. Mr. Kelemen Hunor
Minister of Culture and National Patrimony



Kelemen Hunor

H.E. Mr. Nebojša Bradić
Minister of Culture



Nebojša Bradić