



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

CULTURE SECTOR / SECTEUR DE LA CULTURE
WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / CENTRE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

To: - **Permanent Delegations of all States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention***
- **National Commissions for UNESCO**

11 January 2008

Ref.: CL/WHC-08/02/AWH/AS

Subject: 2009 - International Year of Astronomy / Follow-up of the World Heritage Committee's decision related to the Thematic Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage" (29 COM 5.1)

Sir/Madam,

On 20 December 2007, the United Nations 62nd General Assembly proclaimed 2009 the International Year of Astronomy. UNESCO was designated as the lead agency and focal point for the Year.

As noted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 33rd session, the UNESCO Thematic Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage" contributes to the preparation of the International Year of Astronomy, and will provide an opportunity to raise public awareness, especially with young people, about the safeguarding of scientific heritage, and to enhance the links between science, education and culture.

The World Heritage Centre appeals to States Parties to the World Heritage Convention to contribute to the activities within the framework of the Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage" and to promote the recognition of astronomical knowledge including through the nomination of sites that celebrate achievements in science.

I would like to invite you to submit to the World Heritage Centre proposals of activities illustrating the importance of protection and promotion of the heritage connected with astronomical observations, which your authorities plan to organize in your countries within the framework of the International Year of Astronomy in 2009. The list of such proposals will be submitted for consideration to the World Heritage Committee during its 32nd session in July 2008.

I would like also to thank you all State Parties, which already designated the national focal points and transmitted to the World Heritage Centre their intention to participate in the implementation of the Initiative and the development of project proposal for the serial transnational nomination "The Worlds' Astronomy Monuments".

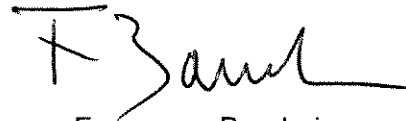
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I would like to reiterate my invitation to State Parties which wish to participate in this Initiative to include the properties relating to astronomy in their Tentative List.

To facilitate the transmission of your proposals, please note that correspondence may be addressed to Ms Anna Sidorenko-Dulom, coordinator of the Thematic Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage" by mail, by fax (+33.1.45.68.55.70); or by e-mail (a.sidorenko@unesco.org).

With many thanks in advance for your kind cooperation, please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Francesco Bandarin
Director
UNESCO World Heritage Centre

- Cc:- Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee (ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN)
- National Focal Points and expert's group of the Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage"
 - Assistant Director-General for Culture
 - Assistant Director-General for Science
 - Members of the UNESCO Intersectoral Working Group "IYA-2009"
 - IAU