



CULTURAL HERITAGE
A BRIDGE TOWARDS A SHARED FUTURE

Seventh Ministerial Conference on
Cultural Heritage in South-East Europe

Belgrade, Serbia | June 10, 2011

Belgrade Declaration

The seventh joint declaration
of the Ministers of Culture of South-Eastern Europe
on the promotion of cultural heritage for dialogue



BELGRADE DECLARATION

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of the Ministers of Culture of South-Eastern Europe
on the promotion of cultural heritage for dialogue

We, the Ministers and Heads of delegations participating in the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe, organized by the Government of Serbia with the support of UNESCO,

Fully reaffirming the contents, aims and principles of the Mostar Declaration, Venice Declaration, Ohrid Declaration, Zadar Declaration, Bucharest Declaration, and Cetinje Declaration, respectively approved by the First (Mostar 2004), Second (Venice 2005), Third (Ohrid 2006), Fourth (Zadar 2007), Fifth (Bucharest 2008) and Sixth (Cetinje 2010) Ministerial Conferences on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe;

Reaffirming our commitment to implement the Cetinje Action Plan, approved by the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe (Cetinje, 2010) to promote shared guidelines and priorities for the enhancement of cultural diversity and of regional cooperation on cultural heritage, in the spirit of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) which acknowledges the important role of cultural diversity for social and economic development;



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Adopt the following Declaration:

1. We emphasize that **culture is a source of enrichment and a bridge to the sustainable development** of local communities and peoples, and commend UNESCO's work with the region over the past decade to promote at all levels the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector, in particular by protecting and safeguarding cultural heritage in all its forms, encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting the development of sustainable cultural institutions and cultural industries;
2. We welcome the initiative "**Culture: a Bridge to Development**" to be launched by UNESCO in 2012 to capitalize on the region's experience of promoting innovative and creative approaches to culture as a powerful tool for sustainable development, dialogue and reconciliation, and support the new "**Heritage and Dialogue**" Programme as a crucial component of this initiative and of our joint work to promote cultural heritage and expressions in the South-East European region; we commit ourselves in this regard to enlarge these annual Ministerial Conferences into a broader regional forum on Heritage, Dialogue and Cultural development, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders;
3. We underline the need to strengthen, through joint resources and fund mobilization, the role of the **Regional Centres of excellence** and expertise established with the support of UNESCO as platforms for capacity building, education and policy advice in the field of cultural heritage, as well as for the dissemination of good practices and know-how;
4. We support the development, in particular, of actions aiming to rehabilitate and promote cultural heritage sites in post conflicts areas, as a means to raise the awareness on the **cultural diversity** of the region, build confidence in reconciliation processes and support the development of local education, knowledge and skills;
5. We underline the importance of cultural heritage for the development of **cultural tourism** based on sustainable use of natural and cultural resources and welcome its beneficial role for the region
6. We welcome the increasing cooperation established among countries of the region to safeguard **tangible and intangible cultural heritage**, including the preparation of serial transnational nomination files to the Lists foreseen under the 1972 and 2003 UNESCO Conventions, and encourage the development, with the support of UNESCO, of joint regional research projects, conservation and educational projects;
7. We support the development of creative and innovative **educational programmes** under UNESCO umbrella or patronage **addressed to the youth** on the values of shared cultural heritage, to ensure the recognition and enhancement of cultural heritage and cultural diversity in society;
8. We commit ourselves to support and further develop **national legal frameworks and policies for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage** and cultural property in South-Eastern Europe, the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property and the return of cultural property, in accordance with national legislation and applicable international legal frameworks, including by promoting cooperation to prevent the misappropriation of cultural heritage, as well as to improve preventive, reactive and awareness-raising measures for the fight against the illicit traffic of cultural property, in close cooperation with all relevant institutions and stakeholders;
9. We undertake to transmit this Declaration, for endorsement, to the next **Forum of the Heads of State** of South-East Europe that will be held in Belgrade, Serbia, on 1-2 September 2011.
10. We thank the Republic of Serbia for its generous hospitality and we wholeheartedly thank the Republic of Bulgaria for its proposal to host in Bulgaria the next annual meeting of the Ministers of Culture of South-Eastern Europe in 2012".

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H.E. Mr. Predrag Markovic
Minister of Culture, Information
and Information Society



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H.E. Mrs. Suzana Turku
Deputy Minister of Tourism,
Culture, Youth and Sports



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



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



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H.E. Mr. Jasen Mesic
Minister of Culture



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H.E. Mr. Giancarlo Galan
Minister of Cultural Heritage
and Activities



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H.E. Ms. Elizabeta
Kanchevska Milevska
Minister of Culture



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H.E. Mr. Boris Focsa
Minister of Culture



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H.E. Mr. Branislav Micunovic
Minister of Culture



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H.E. Mr. Hunor Kelemen
Minister of Culture
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H.E. Ms. Majda Sirca
Minister of Culture



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