

3 Reports on the past Year

3-1 Report by the President of ICOMOS

Ten months after the election of the new Board, I am proud to present you with the “first President’s report”. To the extent that we have learned to live with COVID-19, ICOMOS has had to organise many meetings - all virtual - and the new Board has had to adapt to increase efficiency, by adapting to the various time zones of the board members on the one hand and the administrative office in Paris on the other.

As I stated at the December 2021 GA, the proper functioning of our association is fundamental for me. I repeat - and I am speaking on behalf of the board - that we are working on building an ICOMOS focused on two extremely important watchwords, although they are mentioned neither in our statutes of association nor in our code of ethics: these are “collegiality” and “inclusiveness”:

- we have all worked together according to the principle of collegiality and we therefore assume joint responsibility for the decisions taken;
- we have all made efforts to ensure - regardless of our experience - that we place our potential at the service of our organisation and do everything possible to reduce inequalities.

Since the elections of December 2020, the Board and the Bureau met once in 2020 and eleven times in 2021:

- The Board met on 18 December 2020 and on 19 January, 8 and 9 March, 28 May, 29 June and 15 September 2021.
- The Bureau met on 18 December 2021 and 15 January, 5 March, 24 June and 9 September 2021

Due to the pandemic, all statutory meetings have been held via ZOOM. As usual, the administrative office and our Director General attended all meetings, all members of the Board were invited to attend the meetings of the Bureau, and the President Vice President of the Advisory Committee were invited to attend the meetings of the Board.

We have also held countless working meetings on an almost weekly basis and in small committees, to deal with questions and resolve day to day issues.

Besides the everyday issues that we need to deal with quickly and diligently, the board is organised into working teams to reflect a plethora of subjects that can be divided up into 19 topics. The current working teams (a few are continuing the work developed by our predecessors) are working on the following subjects:

- GA 2020 resolutions - Impact follow-up and monitoring (coordinated by Mario Santana)
- Monitoring of the National Committees and International Scientific Committees (coordinated by Riin Alatalu)
- Cultural diversity and multilingualism (coordinated by Adriana Careaga)
- Geographical representativeness (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Universities Forum (coordinated by Leonardo Castriota)
- Communication (coordinated by Nupur Prothi)
- Adherence of members (coordinated by Riin Alatalu)
- Gathering of Funding and Financing (coordinated by Pamela Jerome)
- Agreement protocols (MOUs) (coordinated by Pamela Jerome)
- Rules of Procedure and Handbook (coordinated by Peter Phillips)
- International Day for Monuments and Sites, 18 April (coordinated by Stacey Vallis)
- Google Arts and Culture (coordinated by Mario Santana)
- Heritage Risk Observatory and risk preparedness (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Crisis unit and conflict monitoring (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Africa Initiative (coordinated by Alpha Diop)
- World heritage monitoring (GA2017 resolution) (coordinated by Jean-Christophe Simon)
- World heritage work (President and WH units)

- Revision of the terms of reference (TORs) for statutory meetings (coordinated by Mario Santana and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Working group monitoring (coordinated by Niels Ahlberg)
- Revision of the Model Statutes of the National Committees (coordinated by the President and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Preparation of the G20 working meeting (coordinated by Adriana Careaga)

The members of the Board liaise with the following working groups:

- "Our Common Dignity Initiative" WG - Rights-based approach
- Indigenous Heritage WG
- Sustainable Development WG
- Emerging Professionals WG
- Syria and Iraq WG
- Climate Change WG
- Reconstruction and Recovery WG
- Covid19 WG

Often Board meetings exceed the time allocated due to the huge number of matters for discussion and decision, but the Board has taken the time to discuss some strategic matters, including: our worldwide visibility, confidence in ICOMOS as share capital, the importance of our structures in providing support to our members and National Committees, and the crucial importance of developing a funding policy. The Bureau has worked with the heads of the Advisory Committee to improve the format of the GA and the Advisory Committee meetings so as to make the most of our meetings and exchanges. In addition, to improve dialogue and the transparency of our structures, the Board has also appointed a liaison member for the Advisory Committee. I would like to thank Adriana Careaga for having agreed to take on this post.

On 3 March 2021, the Board appointed Gabriel Caballero of ICOMOS Philippines as the new Focal Point of ICOMOS for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, taking up the baton from Ege Yildirim of ICOMOS Turkey. Gabriel Caballero will continue to coordinate the activities of the ICOMOS working group on sustainable development and will be our main point of contact for discussions on world heritage and sustainable development.

On 6 September 2021, the Board appointed William Megarry of ICOMOS Ireland as the new ICOMOS Focal Point of the Working Group on climate change, taking up the baton from Andrew Potts of ICOMOS USA. ICOMOS also appointed William Megarry as co-chair of the joint UNESCO-PICC-ICOMOS Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) which runs the co-sponsored international meeting on culture, heritage and climate change, with a view to acting as a catalyst in creating a more significant role for culture and heritage in climate science and our responses to climate change.

I would like to thank the two new Focal Points for having accepted our invitation and also the two outgoing Focal Points Ege Yilderin and Andrew Potts, who have developed some remarkable work with unconditional dedication.

Over the past 9 months, the Board has developed an enormous amount of work and I have chosen a few points to present to you in more detail for the purposes of this report.

Geographical representativeness within our institution and statutory bodies is a point very close to our hearts. The ICOMOS Statutes allow the Board to invite experts to attend Board meetings as consultants with no voting rights when the agenda justifies such action (article 10 a.). The Board thus appointed Ms Dana Firas (ICOMOS Jordan) and Ms Jeanine Abdul Massih (ICOMOS Lebanon) as invited experts, experts of the Arab States group, to the Board for the next tri-annual General Meeting in 2023, so that we can achieve a more balanced representation of all the world's regions within the Board.

External relations is a relevant current topic for ICOMOS. As you well know, an ever-increasing number of stakeholders are present on the heritage scene, with whom ICOMOS is able to develop regular contact and collaborations that will help us to project the image of ICOMOS all around the world, and partnerships that will help us to develop lines of thinking on topical issues. Within this context, we have signed a number of collaboration partnerships:

- GHF - The Global Heritage Fund, 20 April 2021.

MOU between ICOMOS, ICOMOS SDGWG and GHF which establishes a collaboration framework for joint activities in the area of the development, assessment and promotion of cultural heritage practices that support sustainable development.

- UCLG – United Cities and Local Governments, Izmir 9 September 2021.
The MOU between ICOMOS and UCLG establishes a collaboration framework for joint activities in the area of the defence, development and promotion of the role of culture and heritage in sustainable development.
- ICOMOS Belarus National Committee, ICOMOS and Europa Nostra, 10 September 2021.

The goal of this MOU is to formalise the collaboration between ICOMOS Belarus on the one hand and ICOMOS (Europe Group) and EUROPA NOSTRA on the other, as regards the preservation of cultural heritage in Belarus, in particular within the context of the current deterioration in the political climate which includes governmental political pressure on civil society organisations in Belarus. ICOMOS Belarus is facing increased political pressure and could end up being dissolved as a result. ICOMOS (Europe Group) and Europa Nostra are thus giving their patronage and support for the main public activity project managed by the ICOMOS National Committee in Belarus - its rewards programme for civil society in the area of cultural heritage “Heritage in action – 2”, organised in 2021.

Other partnerships are currently being studied and we are maintaining collaboration relations with other organisations such as IUCN and ICCROM.

The board and the bureau also play an important representation role, not only by attending conferences and workshops organised by ICOMOS, our NCs and ISCs, but also those organised by other NGOs and institutions. In the past 9 months, ICOMOS alone has organised around 30 webinars on a wide variety of topics. I myself, in my role as president, have attended a fair number of these webinars and around 15 webinars, workshops and meetings outside of our organisation, two of which deserve a special mention.

ICOMOS, Europa Nostra and the Climate Heritage Network - with contributions from the other members of the European Heritage Alliance - have joined forces in preparing the European Cultural Heritage Green Paper entitled “Putting Europe’s shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal”. This paper focuses on the role of cultural heritage in the achievement of the European Green Deal’s ambitions. Thanks to the support of the European Investment Bank Institute and the Creative Europe EU programme, Andrew Potts, the paper’s main author and outgoing focal point of the ICOMOS Climate Change and Heritage Working Group, conducted this work in collaboration with the Europa Nostra Board of Directors and its administrative office. I would like to warmly thank him for such an important piece of work.

The Italian G20 Presidency invited ICOMOS to actively participate in the consultation process in preparation for the ministerial meeting of Culture and final statement, as well as the development of three thematic webinars on illegal trafficking, climate change and training and education, broadcast live before the ministerial meetings. Under the coordination of Adriana Careaga, a member of the board, an ICOMOS working group played its part in the smooth execution of this task.

We attended the G20 meeting of the ministers of Culture in Rome on 29 and 30 July 2021. The purpose of our involvement was to ensure that culture and heritage be given more consideration in the fight against climate change, as they are both areas under threat due to its impacts whilst also being a part of the solution. The final statement was adopted by the G20 ministers of culture at the end of the summit.

Crisis monitoring and response for heritage and for our National Committees is an important point for the Board. Over the past few months, we have been confronted with many disasters, including the Covid19 pandemic, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, fires and flooding as well as conflicts and political instability that are ravaging a number of regions of the globe. Our crisis and conflict monitoring unit, coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal, conducts contacts and surveys with our members and proceeds with the monitoring and follow-up of the various crisis situations worldwide. During recent months, we have monitored the situation in Azerbaijan, Burma, Ethiopia, Haiti, Israel, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukraine) and occupied Palestinian territory. For this work, we are in contact with our NCs and with organisations such as Blue Shield and its founding organisations, UNESCO and ICCROM. The scale of the crises and the sensitivity of certain situations has shown us that ICOMOS needs to organise itself in a concrete way, more structured

and more sustained, with mechanisms that allow for faster assessments and potential responses; in particular in cases of crisis where a rapid emergency response is of vital importance.

The Board therefore also asked ICORP to set up a new working group (Decision by the ICORP Board ref. 26 July 2021, created 27 August 2021) – “ICORP Working Group on Crisis Monitoring and Response for Heritage” (CMRH-WG Crisis Monitoring and Response for Heritage Working Group) which will contribute to the supply of information to the ICOMOS Board and focus on monitoring and potential intervention alternatives to provide help in crisis situations.

The Emerging Professionals Working Group is continuing to grow; they have helped to organise countless meetings and webinars. I heartily thank them for their excellent work. However, it should be noted that several ISCs and NCs are still not in compliance with Resolution 19GM 2017/33 and have not yet appointed any EPWG representatives. I invite all of you to do this! I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the colleagues who are continuing to work with dedication as mentors for emerging professionals.

The revision of internal documents and terms of reference is a major and necessary task. We are proceeding to revise the specifications for our statutory meetings; this work, which is coordinated by our Secretary General with the help of the Secretariat, is now under way and is taking on extreme importance given the need for ICOMOS to adapt to the work changes linked to the pandemic.

In partnership with the Secretariat, the Board has also carried out a revision of the Model Statutes of the National Committees, in order to harmonise them with the new ICOMOS Statutes. The final document was adopted by the Board in June and I would like to thank Gaia Jungeblodt for her work.

Those National Committees who wish to update their statutes are invited to use this document as a reference. What is more, the Model Statutes will henceforth serve as a basis for our new Committees.

Together we will improve the Board's working method and its efficiency, even during the pandemic. I have taken the initiative to organise regular meetings with the work teams and with our administrative office; our ZOOM account has become our daily meeting room!

I would like to thank the members of the Board for their commitment and for the dedication they have shown. I would also like to thank our Director General and the Secretariat for the extraordinary results achieved despite the pandemic, for all the meetings and for the support given to all the webinars organised by our various national and international Committees and Working Groups. I would like to thank our Secretary General and the ICOMOS international Secretariat for having relentlessly performed this Board task which is so essential and also for maintaining the institutional memory of ICOMOS, i.e. the ability to draft agendas and reports and to prepare working documents.

To finished I would like to share my immense gratitude to our world Heritage units, the Evaluation Unit and the Advisory and Monitoring Unit, as well as the hundreds of ICOMOS members that, every year, anonymously, develop an exceptional work to ensure our success in world heritage matters.

Thank you all for always contributing your very best!

During this first year of work, we have already processed a large number of subjects but a lot still remains to be discussed and resolved. In spite of this, the Board continues to be as committed as ever and remains at the service of you all!

Teresa Patrício
Paris, 20 October 2021