

4-1 Report from the President of ICOMOS

Dear ICOMOS members

This past year also represents the last year of my 2020-2023 mandate. I would like to begin my report by thanking and paying tribute to the members of the Board, thanking them sincerely for the three years we have worked together under very special conditions. We began our term of office in the midst of the COVID crisis, yet they worked hard under difficult and uncertain conditions to ensure that ICOMOS emerged unscathed from this situation and maintained its effectiveness and dynamism.

I congratulate and thank our Director General for her competence and tenacious work. Her work is always characterized by efficiency and an unimpeachable desire for continuity. I would also like to congratulate and thank our entire International Secretariat, in particular their Director for her unconditional dedication, and the two Directors of our World Heritage Units - the Evaluation Unit and the Advisory Unit. Their commitment enables us to develop, each year, a quality work recognized and appreciated throughout the world in general and in heritage conservation circles in particular.

Since our last General Assembly and Advisory Committee meetings in Thailand in October 2022, the Board has convened eight times: on October 25 and 29, 2022 (Bangkok, in hybrid format), on November 14, 2022 (via ZOOM), on January 6, 2023 (via ZOOM), on January 20, 2023 (via ZOOM), on March 6 and 7, 2023 (Paris, in hybrid format), and on June 9, 2023 (via ZOOM).

During the same period, the Bureau convened four times: on October 25, 2022 (Bangkok, in hybrid format), on January 5, 2023 (via ZOOM), on March 6, 2023 (Paris, in hybrid format), and on June 8, 2023 (via ZOOM).

As usual, the Director General, the Director and the Network and Committee Coordinator of the International Secretariat attended all Board and Bureau meetings. Board members were invited to attend the majority of Bureau meetings as observers. The President and Vice-President of the Advisory Committee, as well as our Honorary Presidents, were also invited to attend the Board meetings.

To facilitate communication, cut costs and reduce our ecological footprint, we conducted the majority of our working meetings online, via ZOOM, with the exception of statutory meetings, which were organized in a hybrid format.

We have also held countless working meetings, mostly online and in small groups, to deal with day-to-day issues and problems.

In addition to the day-to-day issues we need to deal with quickly and diligently, the Board is organized into Task Teams to cover a plethora of topics. The current Board Task Teams, which have been working since 2020, and some since 2018, are listed below:

- GA 2020 Resolutions - Impact Monitoring and Control (coordinated by Mario Santana)
- Monitoring of National and International Scientific Committees (coordinated by Riin Alatalu and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Cultural Diversity and Multilingualism (coordinated by Adriana Careaga)
- University Forum (coordinated by Leonardo Castriota)
- Communication (coordinated by Nupur Prothi)
- Membership (coordinated by Riin Alatalu)
- Fundraising and Finances (coordinated by Pamela Jerome)
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (coordinated by Pamela Jerome)
- Rules of Procedure and Handbook (coordinated by Peter Phillips)
- International Day for Monuments and Sites, April 18 (coordinated by Stacey Vallis)
- Google Arts and Culture (coordinated by Mario Santana)
- Heritage Risk Observatory and Risk Preparedness (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Crisis and Conflict Monitoring Unit (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Africa Initiative (coordinated by Alpha Diop)
- World Heritage Monitoring (GA2017 Resolution) (coordinated by Jean-Christophe Simon)
- Work on World Heritage (coordinated by the President and General Manager Marie-Laure Lavenir with the Evaluation Unit and the Advisory Unit)
- Revision of Terms of Reference (ToRs) for Statutory Meetings (coordinated by Mario Santana and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Monitoring of Working Groups (coordinated by Niels Ahlberg)
- Preparation of Model Statutes for National Committees (coordinated by the President and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Statutes for new National Committees (coordinated by the President and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Preparation for G20 Culture Ministers' meetings (coordinated by Adriana Careaga)

- Heritage Alerts and Advocacy (coordinated by Riin Alatalu and Gaia Jungeblodt)
- Geographical Representation (coordinated by Zeynep Gül Ünal)
- Organization of G20 Theme Meetings (coordinated by Adriana Careaga)

The Board also has liaison members with the following organizations:

- Advisory Committee

and with the following Working Groups:

- Our Common Dignity Initiative - Rights-Based Approaches
- Indigenous Heritage
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Emerging Professionals
- Syria and Iraq
- Climate Action
- Reconstruction and Recovery
- COVID19

Over the past 10 months, the Board has carried out an enormous amount of work. Every Board meeting has exceeded the allotted time due to the overwhelming number of issues to be debated and decided, but the Board has made collegial decisions, even on difficult matters. We held two extraordinary Board meetings, one in November and the other in January (see point 5 of this report), and had to deal with several items in out-of-session decisions, given the urgency of the decisions. Naturally, we have tried to keep this type of action to a minimum.

Furthermore, the Board's working methods and efficiency were not affected, even during the pandemic, and I will summarize the most representative matters in this report.

1. Representing ICOMOS around the world - External relations

External relations are a relevant topic for ICOMOS. An ever-increasing number of players are present on the heritage scene, with whom ICOMOS is developing regular contacts and collaborations that help us project the image of ICOMOS worldwide, as well as partnerships that enable us to develop lines of thought on topical issues.

In this context, we have signed a collaborative partnership with:

- HIST, International Center on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage under the auspices of UNESCO, headquartered at the Aerospace Information Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), November 2022.
The aim of the partnership is to bring the benefits of space technologies to the preservation and sustainable development of cultural heritage, and to strengthen the partnership between our two organizations in order to contribute to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Other partnerships are currently being explored, and we are collaborating with other organizations such as UNESCO, IUCN, ICCROM, ICOM and Blue Shield.

- In March 2022, the Board appointed Michał Wosiński, member of ICOMOS Poland and member of ICLAFI, as focal point and official representative to the ICOMOS Committee of the Blue Shield, for the period 2023-2026, taking over from Bijan Rouhani, member of ICOMOS UK. I would like to thank Michał for accepting our invitation as well as Bijan, who has developed a remarkable work so consistently over many years and with unconditional dedication.

The Board also has representations with the following Organizations:

- European Commission – Expert Group on Cultural Heritage (GRP-EAC.ExpGrp Cult Heritage) (represented by Cyrill von Planta)
- European Commission - GRP-EAC.ExpGrp Cult Heritage Subgroup on Safeguarding Ukraine's Cultural Heritage (GRP- CHEG - Subgroup Safeguarding Ukraine CH) (represented by Riin Alatalu)
- Davos *Baukultur* Alliance (President, focal point Riin Alatalu)
- WHIPIC - International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO (represented by Mario Santana, until 2024).

The Board and Bureau also play an important representational role, not only participating in conferences and workshops organized by ICOMOS, our National Committees and our Scientific Committees, but also those organized by other NGOs and institutions. In 2023, the Board participated in a large number of webinars, workshops and conferences. ICOMOS alone organized a large number on a wide variety of subjects.

As President, I attended a good number of them (around 25 participations), many outside our organization, one of which deserves a special mention.

- Davos Baukultur Alliance 2023 / Davos Baukultur Alliance - Conference of Ministers of Culture, January 14-16, 2023.
ICOMOS' participation focused on the essential need to find ways of ensuring that culture and heritage occupy a central place on international agendas in order to create a living environment that fosters human well-being, peace and democracy.
During the Conference, ICOMOS supported the eight criteria for high quality Baukultur as defined in the Davos Baukultur quality system, underlining the complementarity and importance of creating synergies with the "Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with a Potential Impact on Cultural Heritage" developed by ICOMOS. Although they have been established to improve the cultural heritage outcomes of EU-funded projects, and to mitigate possible risks, due to their universal nature, they are to be applied to all types of projects/interventions that may have an impact on cultural heritage.
On the occasion of this conference of ministers of culture, on the eve of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, the Davos Baukultur Alliance was established, and ICOMOS became a member by co-signing the "Davos Baukultur Alliance - Founding Act". The Alliance brings together Baukultur players from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.
- Participation in the G20 Culture Ministers' meeting in India on August 26-27, 2023
The Indian Presidency of the G20 invited ICOMOS to participate actively in the consultation processes preparing the ministerial meeting and the final declaration, as well as in the development of four webinars prior to the ministerial meetings. Under the coordination of Adriana Careaga, member of the Board, an ICOMOS Working Group contributed to the smooth running of this task. I would like to thank the whole group for their work. My thanks also go to ICOMOS India, and especially to its outgoing President Navin Piplani, for his support and for representing ICOMOS at all the meetings.

2. Ensuring collaboration and communication between ICOMOS entities and members

The Board has taken the time to meet with numerous National Committees and Scientific Committees to discuss strategic issues and our visibility in the world, and to discuss the importance of our structures to support our members and National Committees. For this work, we participate in regional meetings such as the Europe, Africa and Asia-Pacific regional meetings and the Latin America and Caribbean regional group.

I would like to thank the incredible work of our Secretariat and I am particularly pleased to announce the accreditation of 2 new National Committees in March 2023 - ICOMOS Sudan and ICOMOS Cambodia.

Meetings with our Scientific Committees have become a highlight of my term as President, and the Board and I have participated in several activities organized by Scientific Committees.

In 2022 we organized an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in Ukraine, asking everyone to reflect and share experiences to help our colleagues in Ukraine. In 2023, due to the situation in Turkey and Syria, following the earthquakes in February 2023, the Board convened yet another extraordinary meeting on April 2, 2023 (via ZOOM) with the presidents of all the International Scientific Committees and the focal points of the Working Groups (see point 4 of this report).

Today, new themes are emerging where ICOMOS must be reactive. I am particularly pleased to announce the accreditation of a new scientific committee and January 2023 - the International Scientific Committee on Aerospace Heritage.

The Emerging Professionals continue to develop; they have contributed to the organization of countless meetings and webinars, and are developing work of impeccable quality, which is setting the standard! I would like to thank them warmly for their excellent work and their ever-enthusiastic participation in all our activities. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the colleagues who continue to work so devotedly as mentors.

3. Implementing ICOMOS' responsibilities to the World Heritage Convention

This obviously takes up a great deal of our time as an Advisory Body. It's an essential mission, both delicate and rewarding, which I feel compelled to make more collective, professional and independent!

To improve the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, but also to take the measure of the challenges to be met today and tomorrow, since January 2022, ICOMOS has been engaged in close exchanges with the delegations of the States Parties to UNESCO. In 2023 we continued this effort to engage in dialogue on World Heritage issues, to explain the importance of ICOMOS' work in the World Heritage nomination process as well as in the state of conservation process.

This year, with the aim of continuing this initiative and giving continuity to our exchanges, ICOMOS organized, for the second time, a meeting to present to delegations from UNESCO's States Parties the procedure for evaluating candidatures, emphasizing the changes introduced in recent years, such as the new preliminary evaluation procedure, to allow more dialogue during the evaluation cycle. Some 80 delegates, representing around 50

delegations, attended the meeting, which took place at the UNESCO headquarters, and we were pleased to have the participation of the Director and Head of the Nominations Unit of the World Heritage Centre, as well as the participation of the Director of the World Heritage Program at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

4. Crisis monitoring and response

Crisis monitoring and response for heritage and for our National Committees is an important issue for the Board. Our Crisis and Conflict Monitoring Unit, coordinated by the Vice-President of ICOMOS and ICORP, Zeynep Gül Ünal, carries out contacts and surveys with our members and monitors and follows up on various crisis situations around the world. I receive weekly reports from this Unit. This year, we monitored the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukraine), Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan and Ukraine. For this work, we are in contact with our National Committees and with organizations such as Blue Shield, UNESCO and ICCROM. The scale of the crises and the sensitivity of certain situations have shown us that ICOMOS needs to organize itself in a concrete, more structured and more sustained way, with mechanisms that enable more rapid assessments and potential responses; particularly in cases of crisis where a rapid emergency response is of vital importance. In addition, it is important for ICOMOS to introduce guidelines for dealing with recovery, mitigation and resilience, as well as environmental issues and sustainable development.

Ukraine

The Russian-Ukrainian war is causing considerable damage to all forms of cultural heritage (movable and immovable, tangible and intangible, cultural and natural), which is at the heart of Ukrainian identity. Since February 24, 2022, the ICOMOS Crisis and Conflict Monitoring Unit has been conducting contacts and surveys with our members, and monitoring and following up various crisis situations. During these difficult months, ICOMOS focused its resources and efforts on supporting our colleagues in Ukraine, as well as organizing the transport of protective equipment and equipment for documentation.

We also participated in all coordination meetings on Ukraine organized by UNESCO, liaised with partner organizations in our field, and above all mobilized our National and Scientific Committees, many of whom contributed to initiatives in support of Ukraine's cultural heritage through efforts at their national level.

At the end of 2022, ICOMOS responded to an EU call for projects for Ukraine. Unfortunately, the proposal submitted by ICOMOS, although well ranked, was not selected. We are currently in the final stages of launching a 6-month project with UNESCO entitled "Support for Ukraine in Culture and Education through UNESCO: Emergency Response for World Heritage and Cultural Property: Damage Assessment and Protection", generously funded by the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust. The objectives are as follows:

- To preserve and protect Ukraine's World Heritage Sites and Tentative List sites, as well as damaged key cultural heritage sites;
- To ensure adequate protection of specific damaged cultural assets through the implementation of emergency measures and the provision of equipment to prevent their deterioration, destruction or looting;
- To reinforce monitoring and damage assessment (remotely and in situ) of cultural assets, including all World Heritage Sites and Tentative List sites, and to prepare emergency response plans.

The Project will be carried out in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, UNITAR (Monitoring and Assessment Activities through Remote and Satellite Image Analysis) and ICCROM. The first UNESCO/ICOMOS/ICCROM training course on emergency intervention for World Heritage and cultural property in Ukraine is scheduled for July 26-30, 2023 in Kyiv.

Sudan

The Crisis and Conflict Monitoring Unit is also monitoring the conflict in Sudan. Close contact is maintained with the President of the National Committee to:

- identify the main needs in terms of emergency response;
- agree on topics, timetable and possible venues for training;
- provide technical advice on damage and risk assessment, emergency response prioritization, and recovery and rehabilitation planning.

Turkey and Syria

Following the earthquakes that struck Turkey and Syria in February 2023, the Board convened an extraordinary meeting on April 2, 2023 (via ZOOM) with the presidents of all the International Scientific Committees and the focal points of the Working Groups. 41 members took part in this meeting.

This disaster has claimed many lives and damaged cultural heritage in Turkey and Syria, and has shown us that dynamic planning with a multidisciplinary approach at all stages of cultural heritage disaster risk management - preparedness, emergency response and recovery - is crucial for cultural heritage and its users.

For this reason, we wanted to discuss with our Scientific Committees and Working Groups the possibility of a joint ICOMOS mobilization on behalf of the heritage of Turkey and Syria. From this meeting was born the idea of organizing a series of ICOMOS "Expected Unexpected" roundtables for the sharing of best practices, experiences, and knowledge in order to be better prepared to protect cultural heritage from future natural events and unexpected human disasters; with emphasis on the critical emergency response phase for cultural heritage and local communities. The first roundtable, Expected Unexpected: Earthquakes, took place on May 8 and 9, 2023, with the participation of our Turkish and Syrian colleagues, as well as numerous Scientific Committees.

5. ICOMOS Communication and Institutional Memory

ICOMOS must be recognized as the reference in the world of heritage, and to achieve this, ICOMOS must project a clear editorial line and identity. Since October 2022, several actions have been taken to improve our image. It's a long haul which has just begun, and I'd like to thank our Communications Coordinator Yuna Mathan for her dedicated work. The main directions of this work are (internal document, *Communication Policy and Roadmap for 2023*, Y. Mathan):

- Work on the ICOMOS image to develop a strong graphic identity
- Define different communication strategies
- Graphic design makeover
 - o 2022 Annual report
 - o Social media: new banners with catchphrases designed to enhance our visual identity and explain in one sentence the purpose of our NGO; new biographies aimed at a wider audience and new layouts professionalizing our ICOMOS brand.
 - o Monthly e-news and special edition: electronic newsletter distributed at regular intervals based on articles featured on the website's home page.
 - o Press and public relations: ICOMOS coordinated several interviews and had press releases published in magazines and newsletters. ICOMOS news (such as Heritage Alerts, declarations or other types of content) has also been regularly featured in various weekly newsletters of other organizations, such as the European Heritage Tribune.
- Launch of a new website: we are starting to prepare the renewal of the site, which is scheduled for 2024. Comparative research is being carried out on heritage websites, NGOs, hosting sites and web development agencies, graphic designers and user interface designers.
- Development of ICOMOS corporate identity and style guide.

The institutional memory of ICOMOS is also at the heart of our concerns. It is made up of all the documents, whatever their date, place of production, form or medium, that ICOMOS selects to preserve them indefinitely in order to keep track of and bear witness to its activity for historical purposes.

ICOMOS is repositioning its Documentation Center in a world where online digital resources have taken over. We are seeking to improve our ability to make our documents more accessible, more user-friendly and to promote them more widely. For this work I am deeply grateful to the meticulous efforts of Bertrand Bellet, Head of Documentation and Archives.

In response to the current challenges of a documentation center, at its meeting on June 29, 2021, the Board approved that priority be given to the digital aspect (digitization of ICOMOS collections, internal archive, ICOMOS Open Archive) and that only ICOMOS publications be collected and added to the catalog. In August 2022, in order to evaluate existing digital resources and obtain information on improvements and communication, the Documentation Center conducted an online user survey. The survey revealed a lack of awareness of ICOMOS online documentary resources, with only the Open Archive identified by a majority of respondents. User satisfaction was found to be average for the Open Archive, disappointing for the Photobank and encouraging for the resource lists on the website. At its meeting on January 6, 2023, the Board approved the new general policy for the ICOMOS Documentation Centre (internal document, *Documentation policy and roadmap for 2023*, B. Bellet, Head of Documentation and Archives):

- The activity of the Documentation Centre focuses mainly on the collection, conservation and dissemination of ICOMOS productions of all kinds: scientific and technical, institutional, educational and promotional. Establishing an institutional memory of ICOMOS and ICOMOS organizations.
- The Documentation Centre's target audience is ICOMOS members and organizations, but it will remain open to the entire heritage community and the general public. It promotes free access.
- The Documentation Centre will primarily meet the needs of its public through online resources. These will be managed in an integrated library system with a multilingual documentation platform.
- The Documentation Centre operates in French and English (ICOMOS working languages) and also promotes content in other languages in collaboration with the relevant National Committees.
- The Documentation Centre respects copyright and intellectual property. It operates within the framework of French law. It advises ICOMOS members and bodies and raises their awareness of these issues.
- The Documentation Centre maintains or establishes partnerships with similar institutions in the field of heritage conservation and restoration, seeks synergies and avoids duplication of efforts.
- The photo bank will be discontinued and archived. No new developments are planned.

- The Documentation Center will remain open to the general public (by appointment only).

At present, work is focused on three main areas:

- Modernizing the documentary infrastructure by implementing an up-to-date Integrated Library System (ILS) with a unified online ICOMOS documentary platform.
- Feed the ILS with current content selected for its relevance and quality.
- Define and promote documentation and archiving policies and best practices.

I would like to underline the importance of the work of our National Committees and Scientific Committees, and draw everyone's attention to the importance of depositing your productions in the Open Archive, so as to preserve institutional memory.

6. The institutional identity of ICOMOS

This year, the Board was confronted with a varied set of problems concerning various National Committees, notably in relation to economic, statutory and institutional identity issues. The Board, together with the Secretariat, worked each time directly with the National Committees. Where necessary, specific working groups were organized to resolve problems more effectively.

For the first time in the history of ICOMOS, a National Committee decided, without any consultation, to change the name under which it operates. In this absolutely inconceivable situation, the Board considers it highly regrettable that a National Committee should have implemented such a profound change, with such far-reaching implications, without consulting either the ICOMOS Board or the Advisory Committee in advance (or even, according to our information, its entire membership). Two extraordinary Board meetings were organized, with this issue and the consequent threat to the identity of ICOMOS as the only item on the agenda. A working group was set up, made up of members of the ICOMOS Board and Advisory Committee, and Toshiyuki Kono, Honorary President of ICOMOS and ICLAFI member, was invited to coordinate the work. The Board has informed all members of this situation by means of its *ICOMOS Info for Members No. 58 – 4 February 2023*.

As members of ICOMOS, we are all committed to ICOMOS, and we all share the ethical responsibility to uphold the image and principles of ICOMOS - a world organization that promotes the preservation and conservation of heritage in the broadest sense of the term. Although the National Committees each operate within their respective countries in accordance with local laws, their members are also first and foremost members of the international body ICOMOS. And it is precisely from the international expertise, size and diversity of this unique network of cultural heritage professionals that our National Committees and members draw their credibility and strength.

The Board, guarantor of the identity and cohesion of ICOMOS, confirmed the long-standing policy and practice, evidenced by the names of the Committees -including corporate names-, which all include ICOMOS at its meeting on March 7, 2023: "The name of each National Committee, including any corporate name, should contain only the full acronym ICOMOS and the name (or an appropriate abbreviation of the name) of the country of the National Committee. The same applies to the National Committee's website address, email address and social media presence. A similar policy will apply to transnational committees". The Board decided to "draft an amendment to the Rules of Procedure incorporating the above policy".

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Board for their commitment and dedication. I would also like to thank our Director General and the Secretariat for the extraordinary results achieved, for all the meetings and for the support given to all the webinars organized by our various National Committees and International Working Groups. I would like to thank our Secretary General and the ICOMOS International Secretariat for tirelessly carrying out this essential task of the Board and also for maintaining the institutional memory of ICOMOS, i.e. the ability to draft agendas and reports, and to prepare working documents.

I also share my immense gratitude to our World Heritage Units, the Evaluation Unit and the Advisory and Monitoring Unit, as well as to the members of the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel, our advisors and the hundreds of ICOMOS members who, each year, anonymously, do exceptional work to ensure that we succeed in World Heritage matters.

I'd like to end with a wish: to be able to continue safely with all our current activities, to enjoy the pleasure of seeing each other again at our conferences and meetings, and to continue the work begun with the members of the Board, our Secretariat and our World Heritage Units to ensure the smooth running of ICOMOS. We need to work together, in multidisciplinary environments, but also, and in view of the complexity of the modern world, in a transdisciplinary environment, aiming to understand the complexity of the present world, in order to help build the future.

ICOMOS excels in this unity of intellectual frameworks, as the harmonious way to build new and lasting knowledge and skills.

Thank you all for always giving your best!

Teresa Patrício,
President of ICOMOS
Paris, July 11, 2023