



Our sympathies go to the survivors of the earthquake which hit the southeastern Iranian city of Bam on December 26, 2003, destroying much of the historic city and severely damaging the old quarter and the 2,000 year-old Citadel Arg-e-Bam. The human loss and the humanitarian problems facing the city are the first priority for all concerned in reconstruction.

UNESCO has reacted quickly to the emergency, first by earmarking in early January US\$200,000 in emergency aid, of which US\$50,000 came from the World Heritage Fund. Japan contributed US\$500,000 for technical missions and early reconstruction activities.

The UNESCO Teheran Cluster Office immediately undertook a mission between 12 and 14 January to Bam City and Kerman City with Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization experts to assess the situation.

At the request of Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura, a mission led by myself, along with international experts in structural and geological engineering, and earthen architecture, was undertaken to the area in late January in order to jointly elaborate an Action Plan with the Iranian authorities and the UNESCO Teheran Cluster Office.

We were able to conduct an assessment of the state of conservation of the Citadel of Bam as well as survey some of the monuments located outside the Citadel complex and inside the City of Bam itself. We observed the impact of the earthquake on the urban fabric and examined the connection between the conservation and rehabilitation activities necessary for the Citadel and the reconstruction plans for the city.

UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Culture, Mounir Bouchenaki, jointly with Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, went on mission to Bam in early February to discuss long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes with senior Iranian authorities.

A third, technical mission to Bam was conducted by Wolfgang Eder, Director of UNESCO's Division of Earth Sciences and Natural Sciences Sector, in order to examine UNESCO's contribution to future disaster mitigation and the goal of reconstructing Bam on earthquake-resilient ground.

A preliminary action plan has been developed as a result of these missions, based on an emergency phase, already being launched, a research and project design phase, to be started within the next six months, and the restoration phase proper, which will begin in 2005.

Francesco Bandarin, Director, World Heritage Centre

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© Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization

On 26 December 2003, a powerful earthquake struck southeastern Iran, killing almost 50,000 people and leaving 50,000 others homeless. Much of the historic city of Bam was destroyed. Here, the central gate to the 2,000 year-old Citadel Arg-e-Bam, before and after the quake.



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The Spanish Funds in Trust

The Spanish Funds in Trust, an agreement between Spain and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, is aimed at providing funding for projects in Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. A meeting was held in Madrid (29-30 January 2004) between Spanish authorities and representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to discuss activities relating to the Fund, whose implementation started on 28 April 2003.

Francesco Bandarin, Director of WHC, and Nuria Sanz, Programme Specialist in the Latin America and Caribbean Unit and co-ordinator of the Spanish Funds in Trust projects, represented the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. H. E. Mr Yago Pico de Coaña y de Valicourt, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Spain to UNESCO, Áurea Roldán Martín, Director-General of Co-operation and Cultural Communication, Fernando Gómez Riesco, Assistant Director-General of International Cultural Co-operation, Luís Lafuente Batanero, Assistant Director-General of Protection of Historic Heritage, Josefina López Conejos, Chief of the Multilateral International Co-operation Sector, Diego Fernández Alberdi, Chief of the Legal Affairs Sector and Juan Duarte, Chief of Programs and Cultural Agreements of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, also attended.

The Agreement between Spain and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre is not yet one year old, but a long list of initiatives is underway, with a set of new and continuing projects already established for 2004.

One of the projects that has been developed and will be receiving continued support from the Spanish Funds in Trust, is the transnational nomination of the Qhapaq Ñan (Camino Principal Andino) to the World Heritage List.

This unique trail system, developed under the Inca Empire in the Andes, also called the Qhapaq Ñan, covers a distance of about 6 000 km, from the city of Pasto (Colombia) to the city of Talca in central Chile. It is a unique testimony to the engineering and organizational capacities of the Inca Empire, and represents a unique opportunity to set up a transboundary nomination process among six countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru), leading to joint co-operation. It is also a powerful tool for promoting sustainable development for indigenous people and communities united by the Qhapaq Ñan. The UNESCO World Heritage Centre will organize two expert meetings to ensure the scientific, international and technical co-operation of the nomination process.

The Spanish Fund will also contribute to the production of a new World Heritage Centre website. This website should enable the public at large to have easy and more complete information on World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean. It should also permit access and exchange of information for experts through specialized channels on data bases covering such areas as: Periodic Reporting information, Camino Inca, Caribbean heritage, modern heritage, earth and wooden heritage, etc.

The Spanish Fund is also concerned with strengthening technical capacities for the preservation of the Pacific and Caribbean fortifications in the region. A meeting of experts is planned to discuss conservation methodologies applicable to fortifications in Latin America.

A work plan for Central America (El Salvador, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica) has been approved for this year. Meetings and activities related to the revision of the Tentative List of the region are to be held.

A nomination dossier is being prepared for Nicaragua Lake with assistance from the Spanish Funds in Trust



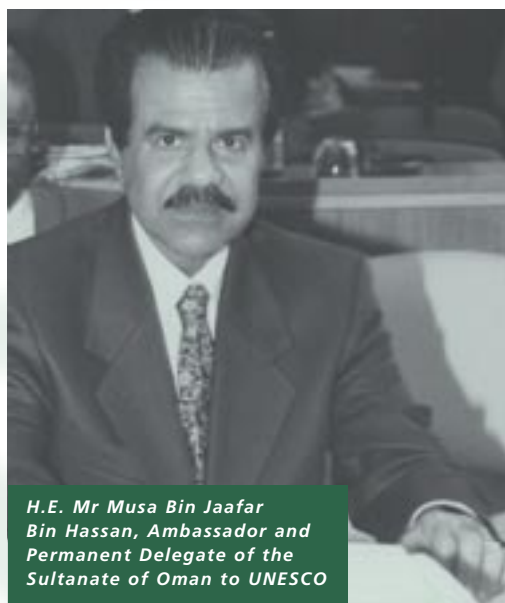
The Fund has provided for actions this year aimed at identifying Caribbean archaeological sites for possible nomination to the World Heritage List, whose goal is to revise the role of archaeology as cultural heritage in the region and define strategies for setting up a Tentative List of Caribbean sites to be included in the World Heritage List. Preparation is to begin of an Archaeological Action Plan for the Caribbean, to be implemented in 2004 and 2005.

Preparatory assistance has been provided to Nicaragua for the elaboration of the nomination dossier for the inscription of Granada and the Nicaragua Lake on the World Heritage List, while preparatory assistance is to go to Honduras for the elaboration of its Tentative List.

The Fund will also be providing international assistance to Palau for the preparation of its Tentative List. Palau has already taken the initiative to conduct a national inventory of its cultural and historical heritage.

Interview with the Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to UNESCO

In this edition of the *Newsletter* we speak to H.E. Mr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Sultanate of Oman. The *Newsletter* first asked him what Oman has accomplished during its time on the Committee, and what he would like to do before its mandate runs out.



H.E. Mr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Sultanate of Oman to UNESCO

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Oman is very proud of having two successive mandates as a member of the World Heritage Committee. The preservation of World Heritage is an important responsibility which has been ignored for years, particularly in developing countries. Oman, as a developing country itself, has a specific role to play. Oman has helped spread awareness of some of the most important sites in the world. At the same time we have been able to show and present our country's heritage and culture on a world stage, particularly by way of personal contacts with international experts.

One of the activities that Oman organized was an important workshop in the field of management of protected areas, aimed at increasing the capacity of staff and rangers at the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, one of Oman's four sites on the World Heritage List.

When Oman leaves the Committee in 2005, it will remain very committed to its ideas and mission because of its long experience on the Committee and its dedication to the preservation of natural and cultural heritage.

Oman has played an active role in the activities of the World Heritage Centre. What can Oman and the other Gulf States do to assist their fellow States Parties from the region?

It has been unanimously considered that Oman is a model of regional and international co-operation, and has always given official endorsement, administrative and financial support to the World Heritage Centre. It is in this respect that the office of His Majesty the Sultan Qaboos for Cultural Affairs decided to sponsor the translation into Arabic and the publication of the fundamental texts related to the World Heritage Convention and the *World Heritage Review* which are useful not only for the Gulf States but also for all the Arab states.

A prize entitled 'The Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation' is further proof of the importance His Majesty gives to the environment, whether on a national or international level.

Oman also plays an active role in the field of heritage through its National Commission for UNESCO, presided over by His Excellency Yahya Bin Saud Al Sulaimi, the Minister of Education, who deeply believes in the message and the ideas of the Organization.

The Gulf region has a rich heritage that has been exposed to the threats of development in the boom of the past 20 to 30 years. What would Oman like to say to countries in the region that are undergoing such drastic development?

The model that Oman wishes to advance is to remain attentive to efforts and action plans for the protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage by providing support to World

Heritage governing bodies and protecting the world's cultural diversity. At the same time Oman supports development processes, the preservation of cultural property, an increase in public awareness of the values of common human heritage, etc. Countries with some experience in the field should take responsibility for getting clear information and advice to States Parties and to devise appropriate processes for the archiving and management of information on the value, attributes and state of conservation of World Heritage properties.

The Regional Seminar on the Conservation of Earthen Structures, held in Muscat 15-17 December, brought to the fore the need to raise awareness among decision-makers and the population of the importance of this heritage, its role in the modern urban fabric and the measures necessary for its protection. In what way could this Regional Seminar be used as a model for further co-operation?

It was His Highness Sayyid Hitham Bin Tariq Al Said, the Minister of Heritage and Culture, who personally opened the Seminar that was organized by the Ministry of Heritage and Culture in close co-operation with the World Heritage Centre. This endorses the importance given by Oman to this kind of heritage and the necessity of transmitting it to future generations in Arab countries. World Heritage Centre Director Francesco Bandarin's official mission to Oman at the time of the Seminar confirms the close relations that Oman and UNESCO have established.

The Seminar attracted a large number of participants and showed the importance that this kind of heritage holds for many Arab countries. Further co-operation can be promoted if the concerned authorities establish structures to follow the outcomes of the Seminar in close co-operation with the participants. A working session should also be organized in the other countries involved. Finally, it would be constructive if workshops were organized to treat separately the problems of the conservation of earthen structures.

World Heritage Papers Series

The World Heritage Papers Series, targeted mainly at World Heritage experts, national and local authorities and site managers, was launched by the World Heritage Centre in 2002 in an effort to publish papers related to World Heritage issues, reports from seminars, workshops and meetings, as well as manuals aimed at facilitating the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Eight publications in the Series are available to date from the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

No.1: Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites: A Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers. (In English only). This publication looks at the implications of the tourism industry for site managers. It also considers the impacts and problems of tourism, and the benefits and challenges of public participation. It offers suggestions on strategies and solutions to tourism management problems.

No.2: Investing in World Heritage: Past Achievements, Future Ambitions. (In English only). This guide to International Assistance provided by the World Heritage Fund contains a series of papers on such subjects as 'the case for collective protection' and 'assistance in action.' The publication considers ways of responding to various needs and outlines the trends that have been developing in international assistance.

No.3: Periodic Report Africa. (In English and French). This publication records the periodic reporting exercise on the World Heritage Convention carried out in the Africa region in 2001/2002. It looks at the implementation of the Convention both at the States Parties' and at the site level.

No.4: Proceedings of the World Heritage Marine Biodiversity Workshop, Hanoi, Viet Nam, February 25–March 1, 2002. (In English only). This collection of papers discusses the areas of concern by region and reports on regional recommendations. It cites the challenges identified by the workshop, and reports on its recommendations. It also lists threats and feasibility analyses for the highest priority sites in each region.

No.5: Identification and Documentation of Modern Heritage. (In English with two papers in French). This set of papers considers aspects of modern heritage thematically and by region. Topics include position papers presented for the October 2001 Expert Meeting on Modern Heritage which define visions and trends. A selected bibliography relating to modern heritage is also provided.

No.6: World Heritage Cultural Landscapes 1992-2002. (In English only). This study presents a global review of cultural landscapes, and provides an analysis on their nature and distribution. Quantitative, geographical and strategic aspects are examined and possible future approaches are suggested. Twelve recommendations are made.

No.7: Cultural Landscapes: the Challenges of Conservation. (In English with conclusions and recommendations in French). This publication reflects the debates at the workshop held in Ferrara, Italy in November 2002 to mark the 30th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. It also provides an overview of World Heritage cultural landscapes and gives information on the training challenges of management. The publication looks at the cross-regional dialogue for landscape conservation and updates information on legal protection.

No.8: Mobilizing Young People for World Heritage. (In English and French). This issue records the workshop held in Treviso, Italy in November 2002, another event linked to the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. It considers innovative ways of mobilizing young people in the promotion and preservation of World Heritage, including the skills and techniques of the production of cartoons as a means of communicating with young people.

For online consultation: <http://whc.unesco.org/pubs.htm>



African Cities and World Heritage

A view of the city of Yaounde

During the third Panafrican Summit, AFRICITIES, held in Yaounde, Cameroon, the World Heritage Centre organized on 4 December a special discussion session, 'African Cities and World Heritage', aimed at sensitizing African municipal authorities to the importance of the protection of urban heritage and to encourage them to nominate sites and historic centres of exceptional universal value for inscription on the World Heritage List. The session brought together 70 participants, including ministers, mayors and World Heritage professionals. The UNESCO ADG/Africa, Nouredine Tidjani-Serpos, French Senator and Mayor of Chinon, Yves Dauge and the historian Elikia M'Bokolo were also present.

Why protect the heritage of African cities? What advantages will mayors get from heritage protection? What heritage should be protected? These are just some of the questions that this special session attempted to answer, in the context of the under-representation of African historical centres on the World Heritage List.

Participants emphasized the need of cultural heritage protection as a tool for reducing poverty. They also pointed to the various ways mayors can highlight urban heritage. Decentralized co-operation and the role of development agencies, as well as the stakes involved in the inscription of African historical centres on the World Heritage List, were also discussed.

The session recognized that an emphasis on urban heritage is of paramount importance to the development of African cities. The group concluded that a major campaign is necessary to mobilize the international community around this issue. They also acknowledged the central role municipal

authorities have to play in the implementation of strategies to protect urban heritage, highlight urban identity and improve the quality of life in Africa's cities. There was a unanimous call among participants for cultural and natural heritage to be a part of development policies.

In order to encourage the international community, including UNESCO and its international partners, to support the efforts of African municipal and national authorities, the session developed a number of conclusions.

They recommended that national authorities set up a legal structure at the local, regional and national level, so that fiscal measures can be adopted to mobilize human and financial resources for projects on the protection of heritage. They encouraged city authorities to include heritage protection in their development plans and to set up municipal regulations to carry out those plans. They also called on international organizations to support these efforts.

Participants decided to launch the 'Yaounde Initiative for the Protection and Enhancement of Urban Heritage and Cultural Diversity of African Cities', aimed at creating a programme for the cultural heritage of African cities, in close collaboration with municipal authorities. This programme is to give priority to the training of city employees and elected officials in the areas of protection and management of urban heritage; technical assistance to the municipal authorities in their heritage policies and programmes; pilot projects which associate socio-economic development and urban heritage and cultural diversity; and activities which would lead to the inscription of African cities on the World Heritage List.

A committee of representatives from the cities, training institutions, donors, agencies and UNESCO was established to follow up the work of the Yaounde Initiative.

World Heritage in Danger

Djingareyber Mosque, Timbuktu
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Timbuktu (Mali)

Home of the prestigious Koranic Sankore University and other *madrasas*, the legendary city of Timbuktu (Mali) was an intellectual and spiritual capital and a centre for the propagation of Islam throughout Africa in the 15th and 16th centuries. Its three great mosques, Djingareyber, Sankore and Sidi Yahia, recall Timbuktu's golden age.

Although continuously restored, Timbuktu was added to the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1990 because of the threat from natural phenomena such as drifting sand from the Sahara and water stagnation. Torrential rains in August last year caused further damage. The walls of the three mosques are in an advanced state of degradation due to persistent humidity within the structures and stagnant water accumulating inside and outside the buildings. In the winter months a dry, dusty wind called the *harmattan*, covers the city in a haze that obscures the sun. This has led to the desertification which imperils Timbuktu's vegetation, water supply and the historic sites.

Since the site's inscription on the Danger List, the WHC and the Government of Mali have been working with a wide range of partners to ensure its restoration and preservation. At the local level the site manager, the Cultural Mission of Timbuktu, religious leaders, builders' guilds and individual community members have been co-operating with international organizations such as AFRICA 2009 (for management and conservation of immovable cultural heritage), CRATERre-EAG (for technical expertise), and ICCROM (for conservation and training activities).

The Cultural Mission of Timbuktu has launched a public-awareness campaign in an effort to create a sustainable tourism programme that will protect the site, empower the local community and increase revenue from tourism.

Despite progress, Timbuktu is still in need of a comprehensive management plan which would recognize the differing opinions and interests of stakeholders by balancing the efforts to conserve the site and preserve its authenticity with the legitimate desire to modernize the city. Following a World Heritage Centre mission to the city in January it was noted that Timbuktu is also in need of a restoration project for its earthen architecture.

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Participants in the North American Periodic Reporting meeting in Quebec

As part of its tourism programme, the World Heritage Centre is hosting its first stand ever at ITB Berlin



12 to 16 March
International Tourism Exchange (ITB Berlin).
UNESCO World Heritage Centre stand Nr 10.1/116.
Berlin Exhibition Grounds, Berlin, Germany.
Information: <http://www.itb-berlin.com>;
itb@messe-berlin.de; m.richon@unesco.org

14 to 17 March
Sub-regional Workshop on the Conservation and Management of Modern Cities: the Case of La Plata. La Plata, Argentina.
Information: n.sanz@unesco.org

17 to 19 March
First international expert meeting on the World Heritage Centre project 'Archaeo-Astronomical Sites and Observatories'.
In collaboration with UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science in Europe. Palazzo Zorzi, Venice, Italy.
Information: a.sidorenko@unesco.org

21 to 27 March
International Conference on the Restoration and Revitalization of Olinda. Olinda, Brazil.
Information: n.sanz@unesco.org

24 to 26 March
Seminar 'Illicit Traffic of Cultural Property in Southeast Asia'. (Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok and International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden University, Netherlands). Bangkok, Thailand.
Information: iasa@let.leidenuniv.nl

25 to 27 March
Conference on 'Learning from World Heritage': Lessons from International Preservation and Stewardship of Cultural and Ecological Landscapes of Global Significance. Natchitoches, Louisiana, USA.
Information: http://www.icomos.org/usicomos/Symposium/SYMP04/2004_Symposium.htm

24 to 29 April
Sub-regional Workshop at Itchan Kala, (Central Asian Earth 2002-2012 Programme). Khiva, Uzbekistan.
Information: g.gonzalez-brigas@unesco.org

30 May
Deadline for the submission of papers and posters for the Forum UNESCO-University and Heritage 9th International Seminar, 'Heritage Management – Centre and Periphery'. University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. (11-15 October 2004).
Information: www.fadu.uba.ar; dri@fadu.uba.ar

for your information

UNESCO and the European Space Agency organized a training workshop in Beirut, Lebanon and a field trip to Baalbek (15-18 December). The workshop was for the benefit of the Arab countries, on the topic **Contribution of Space Technologies to the Management of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites**. The event, in partnership with the Lebanese Remote Sensing Center, and in co-ordination with the Lebanese National Research Council, brought together, for the first time, site managers and experts from the various national space agencies in the Arab region. Over 45 experts participated. As a result, various projects were identified in which the national space agencies will assist site managers in strengthening conservation for natural and cultural heritage sites.

In early December the Government of Brazil signed the **Brazil World Heritage Biodiversity Partnership** project document. The four-year project will receive funding from the United Nations Foundation, the Government of Brazil, WWF-US, Conservation International and The Nature Conservancy, with a total budget of over US\$4.5 million. The project will support conservation activities at the World Heritage sites of Central Amazon Conservation Complex, Pantanal Conservation Area, Iguazu National Park, Atlantic Forest South-East Reserves, and Discovery Coast Atlantic Forest Reserves.

On 3 January the roof of the 12th-13th century church of **Mewa Tsadkan Gabriel, Ethiopia** collapsed, killing over a dozen parishioners. Although the church was not on the World Heritage List, it has a strong historical link with the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1978.

The **2nd North American Periodic Reporting** meeting was held in Québec, Canada (20-23 January) to assess progress on the periodic report and to agree to a process for sharing it with the public before finalizing it. It was attended by 45 participants, World Heritage site managers, representatives of Parks Canada and the United States National Park Service.

A planning meeting among the **Advisory Bodies ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN** took place at IUCN Headquarters on 28 January. The results were presented to a meeting with the representatives of the World Heritage Centre (29-30 January) opened by Achim Steiner, Director General, IUCN, who underlined the key role the World Heritage Convention is playing in strengthening the effectiveness of conservation and governance around the world. Joint strategic actions for World Heritage conservation were discussed.

What Are They Doing ?

Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General, was on an official tour of the Pacific Region (28 January–4 February). During his visit to New Zealand he visited Tongariro National Park, the first cultural landscape to be inscribed in the World Heritage List. **Francesco Bandarin**, Director WHC with Professor **Giorgio Croci**, Professor **Kunio Watanabe** and Professor **Hubert Guillaud** of CRAterre were part of a high-level UNESCO mission to Bam, in Iran (see editorial). **Mounir Bouchenaki**, ADG/CLT also went to Bam on 9 February with the Administrator of UNDP, **Mark Malloch Brown**, as representative of the DG in a UN high-level mission. Mr Bandarin, along with **Nuria Sanz**, Programme Specialist, Latin America and Caribbean Unit, attended the yearly meeting on the Spanish Fund, held in Madrid, on 29 January (see page 2). The Director and **Giovanni Boccardi**, Chief Arab Region Unit, attended a regional seminar on the Conservation of Earthen Structures in Muscat, Oman (15-17 December). **Minja Yang**, Chargée de mission to the ADG/CLT, organized, with Lazare Eloundou, a special session on African Cities and Heritage at the Africity Congress in Yaounde, Cameroon in December (see page 3). **Natarajan Ishwaran**, Chief, Natural Heritage Section, and **Art Pedersen**, Consultant on Tourism and Visitor Management, participated in the yearly board meeting of the InterAcademy Council in Amsterdam (27-28 January) to promote the role of science at natural and mixed World Heritage sites. **Mechtild Rössler**, Chief Europe and North America Unit, was on mission to Bulgaria (3-6 February) with **Marija Zupancic-Vicar**, IUCN and former Minister for the Environment of Slovenia, to review the situation of Pirin National Park and Srebarna Nature Reserve. Ms. Rössler also attended the 2nd North American Periodic Reporting meeting in Quebec, Canada (20-23 January). From 8-10 December **Ron van Oers**, Chief, Latin American and Caribbean Unit, was on a reactive monitoring and technical assistance mission to Venezuela, where he participated in a roundtable on the Conservation and Management of the site of Coro and its Port, attended by the President of the Instituto de patrimonio cultural, **José Manuel Rodríguez**, and other officials. Mr van Oers was in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (18-20 November) for a meeting on the harmonization of tentative lists and possibilities for serial and transboundary nominations for Eastern Caribbean States

Parties. **Feng Jing**, Programme Specialist, Asia Unit, went on a reactive monitoring mission to the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri and New Delhi, India (11-16 January) to assess the state of conservation of these properties and identify urgent conservation and management needs. **Fumiko Ohinata**, Associate Expert, Europe and North America Unit, gave a keynote speech at a regional workshop on management planning for site managers in Central Europe, in Sopron, Hungary (27-31 November). Other speakers included **Tamás Fejérdy**, Chair of the Hungarian World Heritage Committee, **Hans Horcicka**, Head of Dept. IV/3, Protection of Monuments, Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, **Giora Solar**, ICOMOS, and **Christopher Young**, Head of World Heritage and International Policy, English Heritage. **Marielle Richon**, WHC Focal Point for Universities, was in Angers, France on 12 December for a meeting on World Heritage in the Val de Loire. **Anna Sidorenko-Dulom**, Programme Specialist, Arab States Unit, went to the M'Zab Valley in Algeria (2-11 December) for discussions with national authorities and met **Zohir Ballalou**, Director of the Office of Protection of the M'Zab Valley in order to assist the local authorities with the development of a management plan for the site. She was also in Ouadane and Chinguetti in Mauritania (6-13 October) to evaluate the progress of the pilot project 'Safeguarding of the Four Mauritanian Ancient Cities'. **Lazare Eloundou**, Program Specialist, Africa Unit, participated in the 11th meeting of the Africa 2009 Steering Committee in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. Along with four Italian experts Mr Eloundou attended a seminar on management site plans at Mali's World Heritage sites, and on the rehabilitation of earthen architecture at Timbuktu. He also evaluated the impact of the August 2003 floods on the site and discussed with Malian authorities assistance measures to be taken in the future. **Junko Okahashi** joined the Asian Unit in January as an Assistant Programme Specialist to assist in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in India, Nepal and Bhutan for cultural sites. She will also be the co-ordinator of WHC's activities with the Japan Bank for International Co-operation.



UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura at Tongariro National Park



The World Heritage Review No. 34, January 2004. The leader article in this issue focuses on Protecting the Amazon Basin through the World Heritage sites in the largest untouched area of the world: the Central Amazon Conservation Complex in Brazil, Manu National Park in Peru, and Noel Kempff Mercado National Park in Bolivia. Other articles feature two splendid Renaissance towns in Spain, Úbeda and Baeza; the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, impressive botanic gardens on the outskirts of London; My Son Sanctuary in Viet Nam, whose unusual tower-temples are being restored after a century of destruction; and the Ancient Ksour of Mauritania: the cities of Ouadane, Chinguetti, Tichitt and Oualata, important centres of Islamic culture.

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