THE DEVELOPMENT WORLDWIDE

The care and protection of landmarks at international level are one of the functions of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), founded in 1945.

The decisive step towards cultural and national heritage protection was taken during the 17th UNESCO general conference held in Paris in 1972, at which the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” was approved.

The Convention divides monuments into:
- “Cultural Heritage”, i.e. single monuments, such as works of architecture, sculptures or paintings, ensembles and sites;
- “Natural Heritage”, i.e. works of nature, such as waterfalls, geological and physiographical phenomena and so on;
- “Mixed Ensembles”, i.e. examples in which man-made structures are combined with nature.

As of the beginning of 2005, the World Heritage List includes 961 cultural, 144 natural and 23 mixed sites – i.e. a total number of 788 sites – in 134 countries around the world.

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