



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Venice Office
Regional Bureau for Science
and Culture in Europe



Ministry of Civil Affairs
Bosnia and Herzegovina

PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING

Holocaust education and intercultural understanding in South-East Europe: renewing the “Ex-Yugoslav” Pavilion in Auschwitz- Birkenau

Second meeting of the international steering group

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 5 December 2012

A meeting organized within the initiative



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 **CULTURE**
A BRIDGE TO **DEVELOPMENT**

Background

After World War Two, the Polish Government decided to preserve three sites within the Concentration Camp Auschwitz (Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II – Birkenau, Auschwitz III – Monovitse), as a memorial place. Auschwitz Birkenau was placed on the World Heritage List in 1979 by UNESCO.

The Auschwitz–Birkenau State Museum was officially established by a government decree issued on July 2, 1947 and became one of the central historical memorials in Europe. Since 1960, the Museum has housed national exhibits, opened on the initiative of former inmates from different countries.

At the time of former Yugoslavia, the Museum of Revolution of the People of Yugoslavia (now Museum of History of Yugoslavia) set up an exhibition in the space within the memorial, located in Pavilion 17. The Austrian national exhibit was situated in the same pavilion (ground floor). After the dismantling of Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav exhibit space was closed in 2009.

The Ministry of Culture, Media and Information Society of Serbia convened on 29 June 2011 a first meeting with all former Yugoslav Republics on the status of the former Yugoslavia exhibition space at the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau. Participants confirmed the willingness of all former Yugoslav Republics not to divide the exhibit space of the Pavilion 17 and to prepare a joint permanent exhibition, while establishing a regional Working Group. This was re-confirmed on the level of ambassadors of former Yugoslav Republics which met at the State Museum in Poland in October 2011.

Together with UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture, Information and Information Society of the Republic of Serbia convened on 4 June 2012 a first meeting, which served to establish an international steering committee and launch discussions on a work plan and common strategy. This first meeting served, in particular, to establish an international steering committee, comprising relevant Ministry representatives and Holocaust experts from each of the six participating countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), UNESCO, as well as representatives of the following internationally recognized institutions: Shoah Memorial (France), The Topography of Terror (Germany), Holocaust Memorial Museum (USA), with the participation as Observers of the National Fund for Victims of National Socialism (Austria) and the State Museum Auschwitz Birkenau (Poland).

During this meeting, it was agreed to create two sub-working groups: the first group comprising Ministry representatives (with one coordinator per country), will focus on all strategic, technical and financial matters, renovation works, funding, partnerships, and coordination with state authorities, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the National Fund for the Victims of Socialism. The second group, composed of Holocaust experts (with one coordinator per country), will focus on the concept, themes and design of the joint exhibit, and collection of all related support materials (oral testimonies, database, photographs, etc). Members of the thematic Working Group also agreed to focus their work for the preparation of the joint exhibit on the 4 following commonly agreed themes: i) Time and Space, ii) Victims, iii) Perpetrators and Collaborators, iv) Resistants.

Finally, it was agreed that the second meeting would take place, once the conclusions of the structural/static report, on the basis of which the National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism can present a cost estimate for the renovation of the building, are available.

Culture: a Bridge to Development

This meeting is placed under the auspices of UNESCO's global initiative "Culture: a bridge to development", and implemented within UNESCO's Intersectoral Platform for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence. This framework initiative has been included in the biennial Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 of UNESCO (36 C/5), as approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 36th session (October-November 2011).

The initiative aims at better promoting cultural heritage in all its forms as a powerful and unique tool for sustainable social, economic and human development, job-creation opportunities social cohesion, education and mutual understanding, thus bringing forth new opportunities for international cooperation. Building on the cohesive power of cultural heritage in all its forms and dimensions (tangible and intangible, movable and museums, documentary heritage), the initiative aims at contributing to the enhancement of creativity, dialogue and cultural exchanges, develop innovative and creative approaches to the safeguarding and promotion of heritage and culture-sensitive development projects through the support to the rehabilitation, capacity building, and transformation of key leading cultural institutions.

Promoting Holocaust Education

UN Member States are encouraged to develop educational programmes to transmit the memory of the Holocaust to future generations so as to prevent genocide from occurring again. UNESCO recognizes that teaching the lessons of the Holocaust is fundamental to establishing respect for human rights, basic freedoms and the values of tolerance and mutual respect.

This component of the project would serve to promote and implement Resolution 61 (“Holocaust remembrance”) adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 34th session (2007). In this context, the Organization promotes education on the Holocaust globally through various educational projects, especially as it can contribute to the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities and to the promotion of human rights.

UNESCO, within its overall mission to promote Holocaust education, as well as the role of museums as tools for intercultural understanding, research and dialogue, is therefore granting its patronage to this meeting.

This renovated pavilion could serve to influence and inspire similar initiatives in South Eastern Europe and beyond. The renovation of the pavilion and the production of a new permanent exhibit will help to produce innovative narratives, interpretations and museographical displays on the Holocaust, using the opportunities offered by a unique World heritage memorial and transforming it into a civic and educational forum for learning and exchange, with a possible educational resource centre in addition to the exhibition.

Objectives/ Issues to be discussed

This meeting is organized to continue discussions on the renovation and transformation of the (ex Yugoslav) pavilion nr. 17, situated within the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland, and to the setting up of a joint exhibit for Ex-Yugoslav countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) on the Holocaust.

The six coordinators of each working group will present the results of their work.

a) Renovation of the Pavilion

The decision of a joint exhibit implies the conduct of a preparatory study of the future renovated exhibit space in accordance with the strict regulation of the State Museum Auschwitz–Birkenau. All remodelling and reconstructions of the Museum complex lie within the authority of the Museum Preservation Department, responsible for the preservation of authenticity of the complex. The condition of the Pavilion 17 indicates necessary renovations, including works on the improvement of the construction itself as well as of installations. For the fact that the same pavilion (ground floor) is used by Austria, the reconstruction activity has to be coordinated with Austrian officials as well as with the State Museum Auschwitz–Birkenau.

During the June meeting, it was agreed in the conclusions that the second meeting would serve to present the conclusions by the Austrian national Fund of the structural/static analysis of the entire building (foundations, cellar walls, pillars in the cellar, cellar ceiling, ground floor walls, pillars in the ground floor, underpinning beams in the ground floor, ceiling above the ground floor, walls of the first floor, entire static system), on the basis of which the National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism can present a cost estimate for the renovation of the building.

In this regard, the static survey of block 17 and the related geological and building material investigations commissioned by the National Fund have been completed and conveyed to the Auschwitz Museum. On the basis of the information gained from these investigations, discussions are being held with the Museum to agree on the necessary renovation measures.

This second meeting in Sarajevo should therefore serve to give an update on the situation and agree on the implementation of the necessary measures for the renovation of the building and the relevant follow-up actions.

b) Concept design of the joint exhibit space

The meeting should serve to define common approaches for the concept, themes, supporting documentation and design of the joint exhibit: new configuration of the pavilion, set design and exhibit

plan program; use of exhibit spaces; presentation of supporting collections, texts, media and materials, educational resources and spaces. The new joint exhibition also needs to meet the standards of the State Museum Auschwitz–Birkenau applied for National Pavilions.

During the June meeting, experts have already agreed to focus their work on the 4 following commonly agreed themes: i) Time and Space, ii) Victims, iii) Perpetrators and Collaborators, iv) Resistant.

In this context, each coordinating partner museum should seek to present the preparatory work undertaken as a contribution to the new common exhibit space.

- ideas and suggestions on mission statement, outlining thematic and technical objectives and priorities; museological concept and storyline; set design and exhibit plan program; use of exhibit spaces; presentation of supporting collections, texts and materials, human and financial resources, partnerships.
- State mapping of the existing documentation (written, oral, photographic, and audiovisual) related to the Holocaust in the country.
- Collection of data on living Auschwitz inmates in each county and prepare grounds for filming testimonies/interviews with them; register and scan relevant 3 D objects, documents and other materials (both in public institutions and privately owned) with a view of the creation of a database for the future renovated exhibit space in the State Museum Auschwitz Birkenau.
- Complete the chronology and list of bibliographical references related to the joint exhibit.

Participants

Participating countries are: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

International institutions participating are: UNESCO, Mémorial de la Shoah (France), Topography of Terror (Germany).

Are also invited representatives from the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau (Poland), as well as from Austria (National Fund for Victims of National Socialism), who is playing a central role in the new design of the Austrian national exhibition on the ground floor of Pavilion 17, the renovation work planned on the building housing the exhibition.

Logistical information

Accommodation

The hotel chosen for participants is **Hotel Europa**. Transportation from the airport to the hotel and back will be arranged by the organisers.

Address: Vladislava Skarica 5, 71000 Sarajevo

Tel: +387 33 580-400

Website: <http://www.hoteleurope.ba/>

Board

Lunch and dinners will be offered to all participants. Dinners will be covered for 2 experts from the invited countries and international experts.

Venue of the meeting:

Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Trg Bosne i Hercegovina No 1.

Contacts for logistical matters:

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PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE MEETING

Tuesday 4 December 2012

Arrival of participants, transfer to Hotel Europa

20h00 Welcoming dinner – Location: Restaurant of Hotel Europa

Wednesday 5 December 2012

8h45 Departure from Hotel Europa

Venue of the meeting: Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Trg Bosne i Hercegovina No 1

9h00-9h30 Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Biljana Camur, Assistant Minister for Culture and Science, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Anthony Krause, Head Culture Unit, UNESCO Venice Office

9h30-13h00 Session 1: Towards the renovation of the pavilion, a general appraisal

- Presentation by Hannah M. Lessing, Secretary-General, National Fund for Victims of National Socialism, Austria : update on works and studies undertaken
- Presentation by Mr. Johannes Hofmeister, consultant engineer, National Fund for Victims of National Socialism, Austria: detailed update on renovation works
- Presentation by Piotr M. A. Cywiński, Director, State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau

11h00-11h15 *Coffee break*

- Remarks by country representatives: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Open discussion: work plan, deadlines and commitments

13h00-14h30 *Lunch (Venue: Restaurant of Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina)*

14h30-18h00 Session 2: Designing the joint exhibit space

14h30-15h00: Preparations for the future exhibition space: schedule and plan of work for Austrian Pavilion, presentation by Hannah Lessing, Secretary-General, National Fund for Victims of National Socialism, Austria

15h00-16h30 Presentation of preparatory work for former-Yugoslav pavilion, by participating countries

16h30-17h00 Remarks by :

- Olivier Lalieu, Mémorial de la Shoah (France)
- Thomas Lutz, Topographie des Terrors (Germany)

17h00-18h00 Discussion and adoption of plan of work for 2013 (research, documentation, designer, tenders, etc)

18h00-18h30 Conclusions, future steps

19h00 Dinner for participants – Venue: Restaurant of Sarajevo Brewery, Franjevačka 15

Thursday 6 December 2012

Departure of participants