Dear Ms. Karima Bennoune,

Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

On behalf of the ICOMOS *Our Common Dignity working group* we’re sharing some experiences as an answer to your invitation September 26th:

In 2007 ICOMOS Norway started exploring “*World Heritage and Human Rights; Conflict or Cooperation?”* through a National ICOMOS seminar in cooperation with the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the Norwegian Center of Human Rights. - This was the starting point of the *Our Common Dignity Initiative (OCD),* addressing Rights-Based World Heritage Management

From a national focus the initiative was expanded into international collaboration between ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN in 2011, when the three Advisory Bodies (ABs) met for a workshop in Oslo Norway. The 3 AB cooperation was made possible through the commitment and network of honorary member of ICOMOS Norway, Amund Sinding-Larsen, and the financial support from Norway’s Ministry of Environment.

After six years with intensive debates, training efforts and analysis, undertaken by the 3 A**Bs**  to raise awareness about the significance of Rights-Based Approaches in the World Heritage context, the work was summed up in 2017 through the report *The Advisory Body “Or Common Dignity Initiative on Rights-Based approaches in World Heritage; Taking stock and looking forward “* and the report *“Case studies: our Common Dignity Initiative 2011-2016: Rights-Based Approaches in World Heritage”*

[*http://openarchive.icomos.org/1817/1/Report\_web.pdf*](http://openarchive.icomos.org/1817/1/Report_web.pdf)

[*http://openarchive.icomos.org/1818/1/casestudies\_web.pdf*](http://openarchive.icomos.org/1818/1/casestudies_web.pdf)

The Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment has followed up some of the *OCD* recommendations through support to the World Heritage Leadership programme, which is a partnership and capacity building programme by ICCROM and IUCN in cooperation with ICOMOS. A main aim is to improve the culture-nature cooperation.

One of the findings of the *OCD* was how we often deal with right issues but call it something else. We’ve seen through case studies how World Heritage work have significant rights implications, which are often not adequately solved by a “single issue” approach. **We’ve identified a need for a tool box for both duty bearers and rights holders**.

One important activity of the *Our Common Dignity Initiative* has been training courses in *Heritage Management and Human Rights* in 2016 for 2017, by the Norwegian Centre of Human Rights, ICOMOS Norway and ICOMOS South Africa . The training has given a general introduction to the human rights system, to relevant conventions and texts and given examples of planning tools for Human Rights based approaches.

The 19th ICOMOS General Assembly in New Delhi, India December 2017 adopted the enclosed resolution for Rights-Based Approaches in World Heritage, which will be followed up during the ICOMOS General Assembly in Argentina December 2018.

Sincerely Yours,

Bente Mathisen

ICOMOS Norway

bente@icomos.no +4799538550 Skype: bentemat\_1

<http://www.icomos.no/whrba/>