

Presentation by Mr Vladimir TSVETNOV,  
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Russian Ministry of Culture  
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being a representative of the Russian Ministry of Culture, I am happy to welcome you at the presentation devoted to the 25th anniversary of the first Russian sites on the World Heritage List.

Beginning, I would like to briefly cover the history of the issue.

In 1988, Russia completed the procedures necessary to join the World Heritage Convention, and two years later, it was able to submit three nominations to the World Heritage Committee: The historic center of St. Petersburg, the Kizhi Pogost, and the Moscow Kremlin.

When received the unconditional support of the Committee, these sites were included in the World Heritage List in 1990 and put forward the highest standard for the rest of the Russian nominations – 13 cultural and 10 natural ones, listed in the following years, for example, the Kazan Kremlin and Ancient Bolgar included in the List in 2000 and 2014.

The historic centre of Saint Petersburg and related groups of the monuments is a nomination, unprecedented in complexity and the number of components. The site area is twice larger than Luxembourg is, it consists of 37 components and over 130 elements, includes the palaces and parks, memorial objects connected with the blockade of Leningrad, natural landscapes, forts, historical roads and a lot of monuments from different ages.

The Kizhi Pogost and the Moscow Kremlin are the ensembles, which are smaller, but not less important in terms of history and culture.

St. Petersburg is the imperial capital; it is Moscow with its heart, the Moscow Kremlin - the capital of Russian tsars and soviet leaders, the Kizhi Pogost is a kind of the peasant capital, the center of the local government for the peasant communities of the Onega region.

My colleagues will tell more details about these unique objects, reflecting the different stages of our country's life, in their speeches, and I would like to say a few words about the problems related to the World Heritage sites the Russian Ministry of Culture have got.

Firstly, it is a state protection. The majority of the Russian world cultural heritage has the highest protection status under the Russian legislation. Any work on their territory shall be carried out only with the permission and under the supervision of the Russian Ministry of Culture.

Secondly, it is the conservation. The Russian Ministry of Culture regularly allocates the significant funds to restore the World Heritage sites. In 2014-2015, over 10 million Euros were allocated to restore a number of the World Heritage sites.

The restoration work is carried out in accordance with the internationally accepted principles, including enshrined in the Charter of Venice.

Thirdly, it is a legislative provision. The presence of the legislation provisions, enshrining the Convention and the Operational Guidelines, is very important for the efficient operation. In 2014-2015, the Russian Ministry of Culture prepared a new version of the Russian law on the facilities of cultural heritage, where such things as "Management Plan", "Heritage Impact Assessment", Buffer Zone are enshrined.

Fourthly, it is coordination. The Russian Ministry of Culture is the National Focal Point for the World Cultural Heritage and provides the information and interaction of all stakeholders in solving the issues related to the implementation of the UNESCO recommendations and requirements.

The Russian Ministry of Culture also coordinates the preparation of new nominations and translates UNESCO documents into Russian. The Russian guidelines and the other materials are available on the web site of the Ministry of Culture.

25 years later, since the moment of including the first Russian sites in the World Heritage List, we can say that Russia continues to pay great attention to the work of the World Heritage Convention and seeks to raise awareness and provide the availability of their monuments for a wide range of the people interested in our history and culture.

So, at the St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum on 14-16 December 2015 the exhibition dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the first Russian facilities in the World Heritage List will be held. The guests of the exhibition will be able to see the unique layouts, multimedia installations, photographs of St. Petersburg, the Moscow Kremlin, and the Kizhi Pogost.

I would like to take this opportunity of inviting all the present people to visit this exhibition.

Thank you!