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COMMITTEE- UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

AGENDA- THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WORLD HERITAGE SITES

PORTFOLIO- EGYPT

Climate Change has made its inroads into our everyday life and now, even world heritage sites of other cultural, historical, natural or scientific significance are not spared by this dreadful phenomenon. There are various reasons which can be attributed to rising threat of climate change on world heritage; for instance, increasing wildfires, melting glaciers, increasing temperatures and ocean warming among many other reasons in the case of natural heritage. If we talk of buildings which are our heritage like monuments, they are getting increasingly vulnerable owing to the temperatures differences in days and seasons, water movement, abrasive effects of acid rain and the harmful particles which are carried by water and air pollution.

Egypt is a country which is most prone to these effects, especially since we are the holders of the Wonder of the Ancient World- the Pyramids of Giza and many other such historical places. However, even these famous pyramids and other such heritage sites of Egypt are prone to climate change due to the reasons cited above. Even though we enjoy a low share in carbon dioxide emissions, the danger posed to us by climate change has made us take many steps to control it. Therefore, Egypt has launched ambitious polices and taken many such steps to check climate change which are as follows: -

- (a) Egypt has launched the National Climate Change Strategy 2050 which aims to bolster climate change mitigation and move towards a sustainable future ahead. This is a 5-point plan and its major aims are adapting to climate changes with the country's ability to address this issue; governance framework of the state and society; improving the financial infrastructure; and improving scientific research and technology management, and this have even been regarded as a timely step by The United Nations Resident Coordinator in Egypt, Ms. Elena Panova. This gives a financial package to the purpose of mitigation and adaptation to climate change around \$324 billion.
- (b) Egypt is pioneer in international climate change mitigation and will be proudly hosting the COP27 summit in 2022 to discuss climate change. We have also ratified the UNESCO Convention on World Heritage, 1972 since we have many UNESCO World Heritage Sites including the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur.
- (c) Launching the Greater Cairo Air Pollution Management and Climate Change Project to reduce air pollution and do its proper management. This plan can further be replicated in various historical cities and various monuments after its success.

(d) Egypt has also issued the first Sovereign Green Bond in the Middle East and the North African Region which aligned investment and the Egypt Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

These steps are strong moves to counter climate change and make a big difference.

Based on these points, we, Egypt suggest the following measures to be taken internationally: -

- (a) Amending the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 1972 to specially emphasize on terms like climate change mitigation vis-à-vis preservation of all types of heritage either natural or cultural heritage.
- (b) Creating a new framework for climate action in order to save monuments in the amended UNESCO World Heritage Convention as mentioned in point (a).
- (c) Discussing collaborations between the UNESCO and the World Bank to sponsor preservation actions around World Heritage Sites.
- (d) Relocating monuments in various coastal areas, where sea levels are rising or other such prone areas, to safer places across the nation with special and scientific methods of such relocation across countries.
- (e) Forming a special committee under the guidance of the UNESCO to report on the conservation status of monuments with regards to climate change and action.
- (f) Proposes a special meeting and discussion in COP 27 and future such COP events to monitor the status of world heritage vis-à-vis climate change and analyzing the report of the committee proposed in point (e).
- (g) Creating scientific missions and research laboratories in countries which have monuments prone to climate change for better conservation strategies along with creating and sending a team of experts in restoration and conservation of monuments to such countries alongside the scientific missions.
- (h) Dismantling and later relocating any pollution refineries within a specific radius of each world heritage site as discussed and suggested by experts.
- (i) Assisting economically weaker nations to battle the effect of climate change on monuments with the help of a United Nations-led trust with donations from all economic superpowers and other well-off nations.
- (j) Creating forest and biodiversity hotspots in areas which are a storehouse of threatened heritage.

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