

Rescue & relocation of

22
MONUMENTS

Over a span of

20 YEARS With contribution from

50 COUNTRIES At a cost of

80 MILLION USD



# The Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia

Along the banks of the life-giving Nile, civilizations have flourished from pre-history through Pharaonic, Graeco-Roman, Christian and Muslim times to the present day, leaving behind them a priceless legacy in architecture, sculpture and inscription.<sup>1</sup>

In 1959, this cultural heritage was threatened with submersion by the waters of the artificial lake stretching 500 kilometres down the valley as far as the Dal Cataract in Sudan, which would eventually be created by the building of the Aswan High Dam. The Governments of Egypt and Sudan turned therefore to UNESCO and Its Member States for cooperation, since its constitution made provision for the protection of the cultural heritage of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

After UNESCO's Executive Board had studied a report by international experts on the feasibility of saving Nubia's inestimable treasures, the Director-General launched on 8 March 1960 a solemn appeal to governments, institutions, public and private foundations and all persons of goodwill,

requesting technical and financial contributions. The UNESCO International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia, a campaign without precedent, thus began in 1960.<sup>1</sup>

This appeal resulted in the excavation and recording of hundreds of sites, the recovery of thousands of objects, and the salvage and relocation of a number of important temples to higher ground, the most famous of them the temple complexes of Abu Simbel and Philae. The campaign ended on 10 March 1980 as a complete and spectacular success.<sup>2</sup>

Within the International Campaign, UNESCO played the role of a coordinator and intermediary between the donor States and the Egyptian and Sudanese Governments and facilitated their efforts to save the cultural heritage of Nubia. As a control panel for these activities, the Executive Committee of the International Campaign was created in 1960 and a Trust Fund was established. The amount raised by the Campaign was USD 40 million and the total cost was USD 80 million.







24.

Mali

25. Malta



## International Cooperation

For the first time, practical expression was given to the concept of a cultural heritage common to all the peoples of the world. The financial contributions of governments, needed to ensure the survival of the great monumental ensembles of Egypt, flowed into the UNESCO Trust Fund from the four corners of the earth. Seven countries in total provided technical assistance while 50 contributed to the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

List of countries that contributed to the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia:<sup>1</sup>

Afghanistan 26. Monaco Algeria 27. Morocco 28. Nepal Austria 29. Netherlands Belgium 30. Nigeria China Cuba 31. Norway Cyprus 32. Pakistan Democratic Kampuchea 33. Philippines France 34. Qatar Federal Republic of Germany 35. Romania Ghana 36. Saudi Arabia 11. 12. Greece 37. Sierre Leone 13. Holy See 38. Spain 14. India 39. Sri Lanka 40. Sudan 15. Indonesia 16. Irad 41. Syria 17. 42. Sweden Italy 43. Switzerland 18. Japan 19. Kuwait 44. Togo 20. Lebanon 45. Turkey 21. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya 46. Uganda Luxembourg 47. United Kingdom Malaysia 48. United States of America 23.

In addition, Egypt donated four temples as tokens of its gratitude to countries which especially contributed to the success of the campaign: Debod to Spain, Taffa to the Netherlands, Dendur to the United States of America and Ellesyia to Italy.  $^4$ 

50. Yugoslavia

49. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

" a triumph of international solidarity"





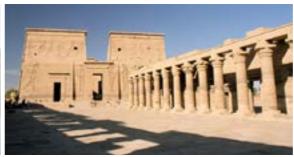


Photo by Przemyslaw "Blueshade" Idzkiewicz/ CC BY-SA 1.0



Photo by Arronestone 20034/ CC BY-SA 4.0



# Island of Philae







Photo by Przemyslaw "Blueshade" Idzkiewicz/ CC BY-SA 2.0



Photo by Ahmed Emad Hamdy/ CC BY-SA 4.0



# Abu Simbel



Photo by Osvaldo Gago/ CC BY-SA 2.0



Temple of Debod currently in Madrid





Photo by Dennis Jarvis/ Photo by OlafTausch/ CC BY 3.0 CC BY-SA 2.0



Photo by Paul Garland/ CC BY-SA 2.0



Temple of Taffa currently in Leiden



Photo by Roland Unger/ CC BY-SA 4.0



Photo by David Mateos García/ CC BY 2.5



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Kiosk of Qertassi



The Temple at Kalabsha



Temple of Beit el-Wali

continued...

groups:4

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Monuments Rescued

Abu Simbel; the two rock temples of Ramses II

The following monuments were threatened by the construction of the dam; they were reassembled in six

Island of Philae; temple complex

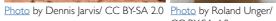
Temple of Debod (gifted to Spain) Temple of Taffa (gifted to the Netherlands)

Kiosk of Qertassi

The Temple at Kalabsha

Temple of Beit el-Wali







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# Temple of Dakka



Photo by Dennis Jarvis/ CC BY-SA 2.0



Photo by Olaf Tausch/ CC BY 3.0



Temple of Maharraqa

Photo by OlafTausch/ CC BY 3.0



Photo by Youssef Alam/ CC BY 3.0



Temple of Amada



Photo by David Schmid/ CC BY-SA 4.0



Temple of Derr

Photo by George Snyder/ CC BY 2.0

Temple of Gerf Husein







Photo by The Met/ CC0 1.0



Temple of Elleysia currently in Turin



Photo by Patricia Curcio/ CC BY-SA 3.0



Photo by Hans Birger Nilsen/ CC BY-SA 2.0 Photo by Hans Birger Nilsen/ CC BY-SA 2.0





Photo by The Met/ CC0 1.0

Temple of Dendur currently in New York





# In Sudanese Nubia:

8.

9. 10.

11.

12.

13. 14.

15.

16.

17. Temple of Aksha

Temple of Dakka Temple of Maharraqa

Temple of Amada

Temple of Derr

Temple of Wadi es-Sebua

Temple of Elleysia (gifted to Italy)

Horemheb Temple at Abu Oda

Temple of Gerf Husein Dendur (gifted to the USA)

- The temples in the fortified town of Buhen 18.
- The temples at Semna East and West fortresses

Monuments Rescued

Temple of Aksha

Temples at Buhen

### **April-October**

The Egyptian and the Sudanese Governments request independently from each other UNESCO assistance to save the sites and monuments of Nubia threatened by submergence as a result of the Aswan High Dam.

#### November-December

The 55th session of the Executive Board adopts the principle of an appeal for international cooperation to assist the Egyptian and Sudanese Governments and authorizes studies preparatory to the work of safeguarding Abu Simbel and archaeological investigations of the sites in Sudanese Nubia to be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

## January

Official inauguration of work on the Aswan High Dam.

### March

Director-General of UNESCO launches appeal to the international community for the preservation of the monuments of Nubia.

the remains of the temple of Aksha with a financial contribution from France.

Dismantling, transfer and reconstruction in Khartoum by the Sudanese Antiquities Service of:

Egyptian Government chooses the project to cut and transfer the two temples of Abu Simbel.

Meeting in Cairo of the Executive Committee of the Campaign and representatives of donor states.

Signing of agreement for carrying out the project of cutting and transferring the temple of Abu Simbel.

the temples of Buhen with a financial contribution from the United Kingdom and the United States of America

### 16-18 May

First meeting of the International Action Committee in Paris.

## 22 May

the temples of Semna East with a financial contribution from the Netherlands, and Semna West with a financial contribution from Belgium.

the Campaign.

### Summer months

Dismantling and transfer of the temples of Debod and Taffa and the kiosk of Qertassi by the Egyptian Antiquities Service.

## 11 November

First meeting in Cairo of the Session of General Conference of UNESCO authorizes Consultative Committee for the continuation and extension of the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia.

1959 1960

# **February**

Experts meeting on the safeguarding of the monuments of Sudanese Nubia.

#### November-December

Session of the General Conference. Creation of the Executive Committee of the International Campaign.

### 1962-65

Dismantling, cutting and transfer of the temple of Beit al-Wali and Wadi es-Sebua and of the Tomb of Pennut at Aniba with a financial contribution from the United States of America; dismantling and transfer of the temples of Dendur, Dakka and Maharraga under the supervision of the Egyptian Antiquities Service.

## 1961-63

Dismantling, transfer and reconstruction of the temple of Kalabsha by the Federal Republic of Germany.

## 1963 1962 1961

### Spring

Evacuation of population starts. Excavations finished up to Second Cataract.

#### April

Beginning of work to save the temples of Abu Simbel.

#### Summer months

of fragments of the temple of Gerf Husein and the chapels of Qasr Ibrim. Work carried out by Egyptian Antiquities Service, which also assisted Italy to cut the chapel of Ellesyia.

1963-67

### September-October

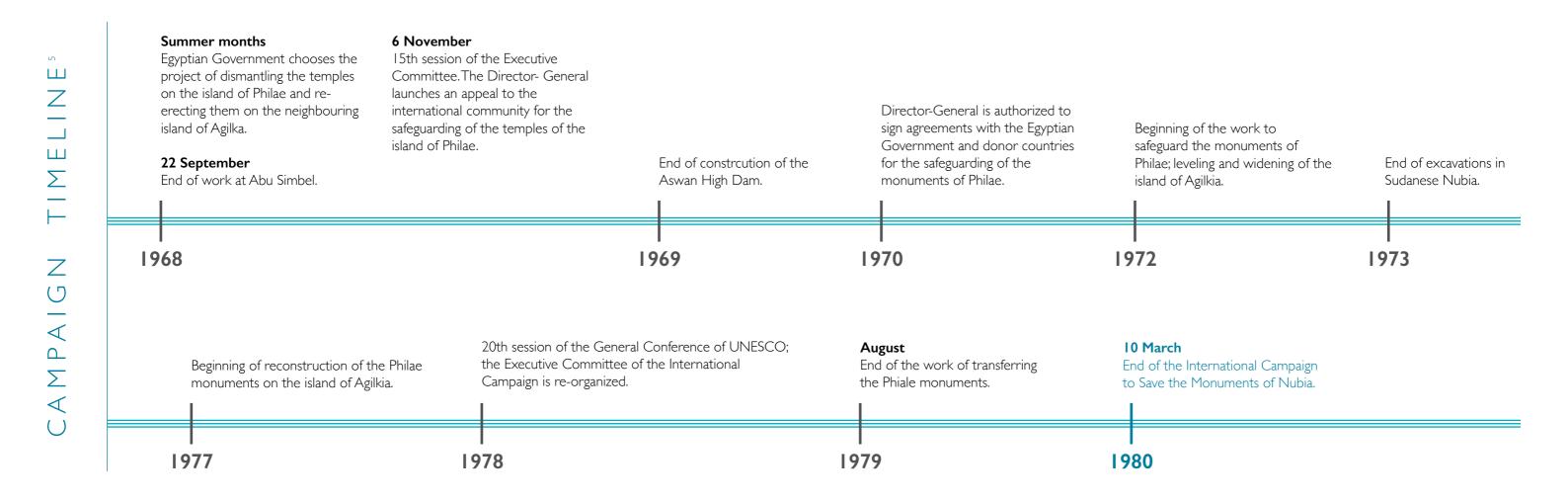
Waters of the lake created by the Aswan High Dam begin to rise.

## 1964-65

Cutting and dismantling of the temple of Derr. Cutting Dismantling of the pronaos of the temple of Amada and transfer on rails of the sanctuary by France.

End of the excavations in Egyptian Nubia.

1964



# UNESCO World Heritage Convention



The idea of creating an international movement for protecting heritage emerged after World War I. The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage developed from the merging of two separate movements: the first focusing on the preservation of cultural sites, and the other dealing with the conservation of nature.<sup>6</sup>

The International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia was the event that inspired the initiation of the World Heritage Convention. Its success also led to other safeguarding campaigns, such as saving Venice and its Lagoon (Italy) and the Archaeological Ruins at Moenjodaro (Pakistan), and restoring the Borobodur Temple Compounds (Indonesia).

- I Nubia: a triumph of international solidarity; Official inauguration of the temples of Philae and the twentieth anniversary of the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia, 10 March 1980/UNESCO
- 2 Monuments of Nubia-International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia/UNESCO WHC Website
- 3 أربعون سنة على اتفاقية حماية التراث العالمي الثقافي والطبيعي/UNESCO Website
- 4 The Rescue of Nubian Monuments and Sites/UNESCO WHC Website
- 5 <u>Timeline: Salvage of the Monuments of Nubia/UNESCO</u>
- 6 The World Heritage Convention/UNESCO WHC Website
- Victory in Nubia: the greatest archaeological rescue operation of all time/The UNESCO Courier; Feb-Mar 1980

# Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Completion of the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia

On 10 March 2020, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States in Cairo celebrated the completion of the renowned Nubian Campaign by organizing an event on the 40th anniversary of its completion.

In his welcoming statement, Dr Fariz, Director of the UNESCO Regional Office for Sciences in the Arab States, drew attention to the impact of the Campaign that was far beyond Egypt, inspiring the preparation and adoption of the World Heritage Convention. He reiterated that the Campaign continued to be a beacon of international solidarity in protecting heritage and an outstanding example of successful international cooperation among UNESCO, the Government of Egypt (one of the founding members of UNESCO), and humanity at large. H.E. Dr. Khaled El Anany, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, then delivered a welcome statement and keynote presentation. The Minister presented how the international community supported this extraordinary Campaign by providing financial and technical assistance, rescuing over 20 monuments and an architectural complex, including the Abu Simbel and Philae Temples, and setting the example of international solidarity based on the understanding of the universal nature of heritage and the importance of its conservation and transmission.

The event at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization provided the opportunity for a renewed commitment of the international community to the importance of heritage preservation for sustainable development.



















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