



MEDIA RELEASE

MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN ON UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee has inscribed Melaka and George Town, Penang, into the UNESCO World Heritage List on 7 July 2008. The two Malaysian capitals now join the ranks of Gunung Mulu National Park and Kinabalu Park, both inscribed into the list in 2000.

Malaysia's inscription into the UNESCO World Heritage List joins other iconic landscapes and monuments such as China's Great Wall, India's Taj Mahal, the US' Grand Canyon and Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

The press statement on the UNESCO website describes Melaka and George Town as "historic cities of the Straits of Malacca, Malaysia, (which) have developed over 500 years of trading and cultural exchanges between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. The influences of Asia and Europe have endowed the towns with a specific multicultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible. With its government buildings, churches, squares and fortifications, Melaka demonstrates the early stages of this history originating in the 15th-century Malay sultanate and the Portuguese and Dutch periods beginning in the early 16th century. Featuring residential and commercial buildings, George Town represents the British era from the end of the 18th century. The two towns

constitute a unique architectural and cultural townscape without parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia.”

The list, decided by the World Heritage Committee, is based on nominations of properties by countries which have adhered to the World Heritage Convention. By identifying and nominating properties to be considered for the list, these countries give details of how a property is protected and provide a management plan for its upkeep. The countries are also expected to protect the World Heritage values of the properties inscribed and are encouraged to report periodically on their condition.

Malaysia has also submitted two other nominations for future consideration: the Taman Negara National Park in Pahang and the Lanjak-Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary and Batang Ai National Park in Sarawak.

UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

The UNESCO World Heritage List has 878 properties all over the world comprising 679 cultural, 174 natural and 25 mixed properties in 145 countries.

For more information, please log on to <http://whc.unesco.org/en>.

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