

GA – General Assembly 2015

GA29/03

**Laudatio for Webber Ndoro
ICCROM Award 2015
XXIX General Assembly
Rome, Italy 18 - 20 November 2015**

Delivered by Ms Britta Rudolff, Vice Chairperson Administration, ICCROM Council
and Mr Joseph King, Unit Director, Sites

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2015 ICCROM Award to Dr. Webber Ndoro on the occasion of the 29th session of the ICCROM General Assembly. Dr. Ndoro's accomplishments in the field of heritage conservation have had an important and lasting impact on ICCROM as an organization, and on a generation of young heritage professionals in sub-Saharan Africa and around the world.

Webber Ndoro completed his BA in History at the University of Zimbabwe in 1982. His increasing interest in archaeology, led him first to Cambridge University where he received a Master of Philosophy in Archaeology in 1987, and then to York University for an M.A. in Architectural Conservation. He completed his formal education at Uppsala University where he received a PhD in Heritage Management in 2000.

His love of education came early, as he spent his first 2 years as a secondary school teacher before joining the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe in 1985. At the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe he worked first as a curator at the Queen Victoria Museum in Harare and then became conservator and site manager at the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site, a post that brought him directly into the World Heritage field, in which he is so influential today. From 1992 – 1994, he was the Co-coordinator of the Monuments Programme at the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe which put him in charge of all conservation projects at heritage sites in Zimbabwe.

Beginning in 1994, Ndoro moved to the University of Zimbabwe where he lectured at both the undergraduate and graduate levels on the topic of heritage management. He has also lectured on heritage management at the University of Bergen in Norway, among others.

Ndoro's first involvement with ICCROM came in late 1998 when he was put in charge of the implementation of one of the first 3 site projects for the AFRICA 2009 programme, the development of a management plan for the Khami World Heritage property in Zimbabwe. The successful implementation of these site projects was strategically important for AFRICA 2009 in order to quickly demonstrate the value of the programme. He soon became indispensable to the programme, acting as a resource person for many of the AFRICA 2009 courses and seminars starting in 1999, including the core three-month courses on conservation and management of immovable cultural heritage in sub-Saharan Africa. During this early phase of the programme, he became one of the core group to guide its development.

In 2002, Ndoro was given a leave of absence by the University of Zimbabwe to work as a full-time ICCROM staff member on AFRICA 2009. In that capacity, he provided a much needed African perspective at ICCROM to the planning and implementation of the programme, as well as more generally, making a significant contribution to ICCROM's ability to deliver its programme to all of its Member States.

Between 2002 and 2005, he continued implementation of regional courses and seminars, as well as site projects in Tanzania, Botswana, and elsewhere. His strong interests in the areas of documentation and inventory, rock art, and living heritage approaches helped to take the programme in new directions.

I had the pleasure of meeting Ndoro 1998 when he first starting working on AFRICA 2009 activities. It was clear from those first encounters that he was someone with a passion for the cultural heritage of Africa and a strong desire to share that passion with a worldwide audience. I considered myself very fortunate to have him come to ICCROM full time to work on the programme.

In 2005, he became the lead Project Manager at ICCROM for AFRICA 2009, thus being the principle coordinator of the programme and its more than 20 activities carried out each year. His work on AFRICA 2009 was instrumental in guiding the Consolidation Phase and Final Phases of the programme, working closely with African directors of cultural heritage to ensure that African professionals and institutions were internalizing the progress being made by the programme. It was Ndoro's guidance and leadership during these phases that guaranteed that the results of the programme would be long-lasting, beyond its 2009 end date.

While at ICCROM, Ndoro edited two of books on legal frameworks in Africa within the ICCROM Conservation Studies publication series, and authored a third entitled, *The Preservation of Great Zimbabwe: Your Monument Our Shrine*, based on his PhD thesis work.

Ndoro's contribution to ICCROM as a staff member rested not only in his work in sub-Saharan Africa, but also in providing his unique perspective as a resource person to other ICCROM courses and activities. His strong belief that understanding African Heritage conservation would be of benefit to the worldwide discussion of heritage practice has helped to sensitize a generation of ICCROM participants.

Ndoro left ICCROM in 2007 to become the first Director of the African World Heritage Fund. In his current position, he is able to ensure that the positive outcomes of AFRICA 2009 are promoted and utilized in the region. Working for ICCROM on World Heritage issues, I have had the privilege of continuing to work closely with Ndoro over these past eight years. He has maintained his links with ICCROM, at the institutional level through partnerships on some activities of the AWHF, and at the personal level by continuing to act as a resource person on ICCROM's Built Heritage course and other ICCROM activities, including the Forum on Conservation Science.

During his mandate at the Africa World Heritage Fund, Ndoro has seen the organization grow and become one of the leading conservation organizations in the region. He was responsible for all of the initial work to build up the AWHF and has also ensured that it can be maintained on a sustainable basis. It is through his leadership and guidance that the AWHF has managed to raise a significant endowment while at the same time planning and implementing well thought out programmes and activities for heritage conservation. The programmes implemented have included improving World Heritage nominations, strengthening disaster risk management, strengthening traditional management systems, and promoting entrepreneurship related to heritage in the region. The AWHF

has also often partnered with the Ecole du Patrimoine African in Porto Novo, Benin and the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa in Mombasa, Kenya.

The success of the AFRICA 2009 programme was a work of true teamwork. A committed group of professionals both from Africa and the partner international organizations worked together to achieve its goals. But, it was under Ndoro's leadership that the programme came into its own and began to really produce the positive results that we can see today. And we can see how those results continue to multiply because the work that Ndoro has done since leaving ICCROM at the Africa World Heritage Fund.

For his outstanding service to ICCROM and the international conservation community, it gives us a great deal of pleasure to present this year's ICCROM award to our friend and colleague, Dr. Webber Ndoro.