

**Mounir Bouchenaki was born on 16 November 1943 in Tlemcen in Algeria.**

Having obtained at Alger University and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Ancient History, he went on to become Curator of the archaeological site and museum of Tipaza from 1966 to 1971, when he had carried out a major operation to safeguard a new archaeological ancient necropolis. Meanwhile, within the Algerian-Italian cooperation framework he had attended, in 1968, an internship at the University of Rome "Istituto del Vicino Oriente" and he had participated in archaeological excavations in Sardinia (summers 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971).

**He was appointed Director of the Antiquities Service from 1972 to 1974; then Deputy Director of Archaeology, Museums and Historical Monuments from 1974 to 1976 and Cultural Heritage Director in the Algerian Ministry of Information and Culture from 1976 to 1981.**

In parallel to his responsibilities for Antiquities Service he was in charge, as assistant professor at Alger University, of Ancient History teaching from 1969 to 1981. He had also completed in 1973 his PhD in Archaeology and Ancient History of North Africa at the Aix-en-Provence university in France.

**He joined UNESCO in 1982, as a Project Manager in the International Affairs Division. From 1985 to 1990, he was appointed Section Chief for Operational Activities. Promoted as Director of the Cultural Heritage Division of UNESCO's Culture Sector, he was in charge, from 1990 to 2000, of planning and coordinating the protection of cultural heritage in different areas of the world.**

In 1992, in the aftermath of Taif Agreement that put an end to the Lebanese Civil War he was called to draw up the first report on the situation of cultural heritage in Lebanon and to supervise the rehabilitation operations of Beirut Museum. From 1993 to 1994 he was deployed in Vukovar, Croatia than in Sarajevo and Mostar, Bosnia Herzegovina, where he was assigned to conduct the coordination of the reconstruction work of Mostar bridge, terminated in 2004. Such an effort was unanimously appreciated by Bosnia-Herzegovina authorities, who granted him the Bosnian citizenship.

**He was in charge of the direction of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre from 1998 to 2000, Assistant Director-General for Culture from 2001 to 2006, Special Advisor to the Director-General from 2012 to 2019.**

Under his leadership, and at the request of Member States, Bouchenaki was in charge of coordinating the various stages of preparing normative instruments of all types, such as the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage adopted on 2 November 2001 by the General Conference, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted in 2003, and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted in 2005. Furthermore, he was in charge of monitoring sensitive issues, such as the destruction in Afghanistan of the great Bamiyan Buddha statues by the Taliban in 2001, the second war in Iraq (2002-2003) and the Kosovo conflict (2003-2004) and their impact on cultural heritage.

**He was Director-General of ICCROM in Rome from 2006 to 2011, since 2012 Special Advisor to the Director-General.**

**In 2012 in Manama in Bahrain he founded the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage with the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Sheikha Mai Al Khalifa, under the auspices of UNESCO, of which he was Director until 2019.**