

UNESCO to send technical mission to assess the situation concerning the work on the access to the al-Haram al-Sharif, Jerusalem

The Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, has decided to send a technical mission to the Old City of Jerusalem, inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List and on the World Heritage in Danger List, to carry out a technical assessment of the works on the access to the al-Haram al-Sharif.

Following extensive consultations with all the parties concerned, the Director-General requested the mission to leave as soon as possible, probably early next week. It will be led by the Director of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, Francesco Bandarin, and include the Director-General of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), Mounir Bouchenaki; the President of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Michael Petzel; and Véronique Dauge of the World Heritage Centre.

"I believe that such a mission constitutes the most appropriate response to the present situation," Mr Matsuura said, "and could also be a means of helping to alleviate tensions and restore a climate of confidence favourable to the dialogue that we all wish for."

Upon its return, the mission will report to the Director-General.

Author(s): Press Release N°2007-16

Source: UNESCO PRESS

23-02-2007

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