



World Heritage

37 COM

WHC-13/37.COM/7A

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE
WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

Thirty-seventh session

Phnom Penh, Cambodia 16-27 June 2013

Item 7A of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of the properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

SUMMARY

In accordance with Section IV B, paragraphs 190-191 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee shall review annually the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This review shall include such monitoring procedures and expert missions as might be determined necessary by the Committee.

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of reactive monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/37COM/>

All previous state of conservation reports are available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>

Decision required: The Committee is requested to review the following state of conservation reports. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

**I. STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS
NATURAL PROPERTIES**

ARAB STATES

26. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)

See Document [WHC-13/37.COM/7AAdd](#) (subject to the Reinforced Monitoring mechanism)

27. Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) (C 1433)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List

2012

Criteria

(iv) (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger

2012 to present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- a) Degradation of the architectural complex of the Church of the Nativity;
- b) Development pressure;
- c) Tourism pressure.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established
Previous Committee Decisions

See page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1433/documents>

International Assistance

N/A
UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds
Total amount granted: USD 723,000 from Italy (Emergency Action Plan 1997-1998; Conservation and Management Plan 2006-2010).

Previous monitoring missions

N/A
Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

N/A
Illustrative material

See page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1433>

Current conservation issues

The State Party submitted the state of conservation report for the property on 21 February 2013. It consists of a short note about maintenance and tourism services, about the restoration of the roof of the Church of the Nativity and about the preparation of a conservation and management plan for the historic town of Bethlehem, declared as the "buffer zone of the property". The project is said to be funded by the European Commission and implemented by the Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP), the Bethlehem Municipality and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The reason why a new plan is being prepared, while the existing "Bethlehem Area Conservation and Management Plan" prepared with the support of UNESCO and with funding from the Italian Government is available and is to be published in the near future, is not spelled out in the report. There is no mention either of a specific conservation and management system for the property itself.

As regards the restoration of the Church of the Nativity, the tender for the roof has been advertised in the newspapers and is due on 13 March 2013 with works projected to start in June 2013. The State Party announces that it will ask ICCROM for technical assistance and advice on the restoration works and will provide progress reports to the World Heritage Centre. A series of pictures, showing some water damage, is attached to the report.

The State Party announces that a "Charter on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in Palestine" has been proclaimed on 6 February 2013, setting guiding principles for conservation.

The State Party has annexed to the report a document entitled "Master Plan for Developing Tourism in Bethlehem", undated. This document is in the form of a project document, drafted further to the Bethlehem Tourism Action Plan Initiative launched on 5 March 2011.

The State Party has reviewed the statement of Outstanding Universal Value revised by ICOMOS on the basis of the provisional statement adopted by the World Heritage Committee in Decision [36 COM 8B.5](#). This statement will be examined by the World Heritage Committee under Item 8 of the Agenda (Document *WHC-13/37.COM/8E*).

Conclusion

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies take note of the announcement of the preparation of a new Conservation and Management Plan for the Historic Town of Bethlehem and would recommend the World Heritage Committee to urge the State Party to develop a specific plan for the property itself, based on its Outstanding Universal Value, and to submit it for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its adoption.

They also take note of the decision of the State Party to separate into three phases the restoration programme for the Church of the Nativity and to tender only the restoration works for the roof at the time being. In this respect, they wish to highlight, as outlined in the ICOMOS evaluation, the necessity to design an overarching conservation strategy for the repair and restoration of the monument before initiating the effective work, and to submit this to the Advisory Bodies for review.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, taking into account the shortcomings revealed by the ICOMOS evaluation of the property before its inscription on the World Heritage List, recommend to the World Heritage Committee to request the State Party to identify urgently the corrective measures and Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger that would serve as a basis for planning of all future action at the property.

Draft Decision: 37 COM 7A.27

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document *WHC-13/37.COM/7A*,

2. Recalling Decision [36 COM 8B.5](#), adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),

3. Requests the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to develop proposals for corrective measures and for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in

Danger, together with a timeframe for their implementation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session in 2014;

4. Recalls the need for an overarching conservation strategy for the Church of the Nativity to be developed as early as possible to guide the restoration project;

5. Also requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre, for examination by the Advisory Bodies according to Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the conservation strategy and details of the restoration project for the Church of the Nativity, in particular for the roof for which tendering has commenced;

6. Urges the State Party to develop a specific conservation and management plan for the property as a whole that includes approaches to tourism and development regulations;

7. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2014**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session in 2014;

8. **Decides to retain the Birthplace of Jesus, Church of the Nativity and the pilgrimage route, Bethlehem (Palestine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

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