



Ministry Of Culture

Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums

STATE PARTY REPORT

On The State of Conservation
of The

Syrian Cultural Heritage Sites
(Syrian Arab Republic)

For Submission By
1 February 2015

Arch. Lina Kutiefan
Director of Sites Management Dir.



Ministry of Culture
Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums
Tel/ Fax: + 963 11 2315313
www.dgam.gov.sy
Thawra st.-Damascus- SYRIA

Prof. Dr. Maamoun Abdulkarim
General - Director



Ministry of Culture
Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums
Tel: + 963 11 2234331 - 2254811
Fax: + 963 11 2247983
www.dgam.gov.sy
Qasr al Heir st.-Damascus- SYRIA



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INTRODUCTION

This Progress Report on the State of Conservation of the Syrian World Heritage properties is:

- Responds to the letter of the World Heritage CLT/WHC/HER/313/14/80 (Decision 38 COM 7).
- Provides an update to the December 2014 State of Conservation report.
- Prepared in to be present on the previous World Heritage Committee meeting 39e session 2015.

Information Sources

This report represents a collation of available information as of 31 December 2014, and is based on available information from the DGAM braches around Syria, taking inconsideration that with ground access in some cities in Syria extremely limited for antiquities experts, extent of the damage cannot be assessment right now such as(Aleppo old city, Bosra ancient city, Some archaeological sites in Zawia Mountain, Baricha and Wastani) .

According to this situation photos are not available in DGAM archive for Aleppo old city, they have been taken from photo gallery on internet.

Name of World Heritage property: **ANCIENT CITY OF DAMASCUS**

Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 26/10/1979

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS

Founded in the 3rd millennium B.C., Damascus was an important cultural and commercial center, by virtue of its geographical position at the crossroads of the orient and the occident, between Africa and Asia. The old city of Damascus is considered to be among the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world. Excavations at Tell Ramad on the outskirts of the city have demonstrated that Damascus was inhabited as early as 8,000 to 10,000 BC. However, it is not documented as an important city until the arrival of the Aramaeans. In the Medieval period, it was the center of a flourishing craft industry, with different areas of the city specializing in particular trades or crafts.

The city exhibits outstanding evidence of the civilizations which created it - Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. In particular, the Umayyad caliphate created Damascus as its capital, setting the scene for the city's ongoing development as a living Muslim, Arab city, upon which each succeeding dynasty has left and continues to leave its mark.

In spite of Islam's prevailing influence, traces of earlier cultures particularly the Roman and Byzantine continue to be seen in the city. Thus the city today is based on a Roman plan and maintains the aspect and the orientation of the Greek city, in that all its streets are oriented north-south or east-west and is a key example of urban planning. The earliest visible physical evidence dates to the Roman period - the extensive remains of the Temple of Jupiter, the remains of various gates and an impressive section of the Roman city walls. The city was the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate. However, apart from the incomparable Great Mosque, built on the site of a Roman temple and over-laying a Christian basilica, there is little visible dating from this important era of the city's history. The present city walls, the Citadel, some mosques and tombs survive from the Middle Ages, but the greatest part of the built heritage of the city dates from after the Ottoman conquest of the early 16th century.

THREATS

The old city has been targeted by mortars several times; minor damages for its monuments had accrued inside the old city, buffer zone and the historical districts outside the walled city:

- In BAB TOUMA neighborhood mortars hit several places in the main street and the private properties, resulted minor damage to the roofs of the properties in (estates n 815 - estates n 540 - estates n 49).
- In BAB al BAREED neighborhood mortars hit al-ADAILIYA madrasa near the OMAYYAD mosque causing minor damages to the brick roof, the same happened to the JUKMAQJIEH madrasa (The Arab Calligraphy museum)

resulted minor material damages to the historical building, windows were blown out and cracks to walls.

- Another mortar landed near SALADIN Tomb caused material damage in one shop façade .
- Several mortars bombing had struck several shops in Jewish parts in the NE of the walled city, (estate n 360), estate n 234 in KHARAB district. part of the house collapsed in BEIT al QWATLY (estate n 412) in MEZANET al-SHAHEM outside the walled city.
- In JURA neighborhood two mortars hit the area, the first one struck al MANAR school blown out the windows, the second mortar hit the upper part of one of the private property resulted a hall and cracks to the facade .
- Several damages appear in al QANAWAT historical districts (outside the walled city), causing damage to 6 buildings, one of them struck al SAADA school resulted moderate damage to windows and the wooden roof.

MEASURES TAKEN

On 20 December 2013, Technical assistants was provided to DGAM (depending of DGAM request) by UNESCO Whc, ICOMOS, ICCROM and INTERPOL, for the protection of the old city of Damascus in order to contribute to the planning and implementation, with the Municipality Directorate for the Old City of Damascus (Maktab Anbar), of immediate preventive measures as well as of an emergency response plan in view of the possible escalation of the crises in the area of the Old City of Damascus. According to what mentioned in the plan several steps were taken such as:

- DGAM secure and digitalize archival materials (such as historic maps, surveys, architectural drawings, photographs etc...), several copies were make and distributed in different safe locations.
- Request to shop keepers within the Souk to clean their shops and remove as much as possible any flammable material and obsolete electrical equipment to reduce risk of fire and allow swift evacuation.
- Promoting Coordination among:
 - Concerned national authorities competent for cultural heritage protection and those competent for disaster response operations (Internal Security Forces, Damascus governorate, Fire brigade, Damascus Health Directorate, Emergency ambulance) and several measures were taken in the old city such as:
 1. Install the fire hydrants and fire extinguishers in key locations.
 2. Remove deposits of flammable or explosive materials far away from vulnerable heritage structures.
 3. Secured the safely of the water reservoirs in the Old City.
 4. Remove the stored explosive material around the historic areas.
 - Coordinating with Waqf ministry, Damascus University, Directorate of old city to share the documentation and data).
 - Engineering union to preserve the national heritage through lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences, and follow-up rehabilitation and restoration projects, and the formation of joint committees for this purpose.

- Ministry of Tourism to monitor the compliance of tourist facilities in the old city readiness of fire extinguishers, secure public safety, and avoid storing facility of gas, fuel and implementation of self-protection measures.
- Evacuation for collections in the heritage buildings.



*Minor damage to the roof of Beit Al Qwatly in Mezanet Al-Shahem
(Estate n468) © DGAM 2014*



*Minor damage to Jukmaqjeh madrasa (The Arab Calligraphy museum)
(Estate N468) © DGAM 2014*



Minor damage to Saada school in al Qanawat historical districts © DGAM 2014



Minor damage to estate n 174 in al Jura districts © DGAM 2014



Syrian Arab Republic
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**Initial Damage Assessment
 Old City of Damascus &
 nearby Historical Districts**

2012 - 2014

Damaged Buildings

- 51 Damaged Historical Property

Kind of Damages:

- Partly destroyed
- Burned building

- Area 128 h

Prepared by :

Arch. Mouna Alkhouli
 Arch. Shaza Alzahr

Supervisor:

Arch. Lina Kutiefan

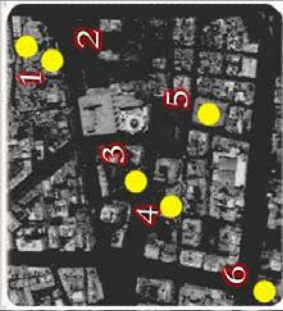


Directorate of Sites Management
 Source of the information:
 Directorate of Damascus Antiquities



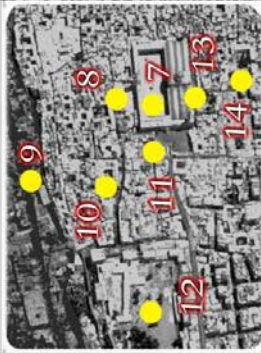
A

- 1- Property n 931
- 2- Basrawii mosque
- 3- Ministry of Interior
- 4- Gazl House
- 5- al Aabeed building
- 6- Hijaz Railway Station



B

- 7- Umayyad Mosque + Tomb Saladin
- 8- al Jukmaqjeh Madrassa
- 9- 2 Shops in al Malik al Adel Street
- 10- al Adailiya Madrassa
- 11- Square al Mskeih
- 12- Damascus Citadel



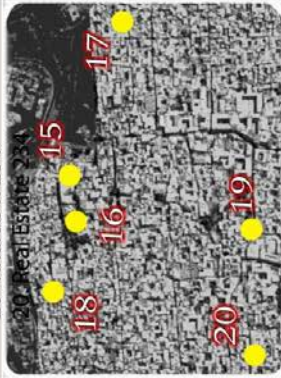
E

- 25- Building in Shaghour Gwani
- 26- Bzouria Markets (16 store)
- 27- Qwatly n 412
- 28- Property n 464



C

- 15- Bab Touma square
- 16- al-Manar School
- 17- Property n 49
- 18- Property n 174
- 19- Property n 540
- 20- Kharab n 234



F

- 29- Property n 360
- 30- al Zaitoon Church
- 31- Property n 815
- 32- Properties n 146-147



Name of World Heritage property: **ANCIENT CITY OF BOSRA**
Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 1980

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS:

The name of Bosra occurs in the precious Tell el-Amarna tablets in Egypt, which date from the 14th century B.C. and represent royal correspondence between the Pharaohs and the Phoenician and Amorite kings. It became the northern capital of the Nabataean kingdom. In the year of 106 A.D, a new era began for Bosra when it was incorporated into the Roman Empire.

Alexander Severus gave it the title Colonia Bosra and Philip the Arab minted currency especially for it. During Byzantine times, Bosra was a major frontier market where Arab caravans came to stock up and its bishops took part in the Council of Antioch. Bosra was the first Byzantine city, which the Arabs entered in 634 in the phase of Islamic expansion.

Today, Bosra is a major archaeological site, containing ruins from Roman, Byzantine, and Muslim times. Further, Nabataean and Roman monuments, Christian churches, mosques and Madrasas are present within the city.

Its main feature is the second century Roman Theatre, constructed probably under Trajan, which has been integrally preserved. It was fortified between 481 and 1251 AD. Al-Omari Mosque is one of the oldest surviving mosques in Islamic history, and the Madrasah Mabrak al-Naqua is one of the oldest and most celebrated of Islam. The Cathedral of Bosra is also a building of considerable importance in the annals of early Christian architecture.

Bosra survived about 2500 years inhabited and almost intact. The Nabataeans, Romans, Byzantines and Umayyad, all left traces in the city, which is an open museum associated with significant episodes in the history of ideas and beliefs.

THREATS

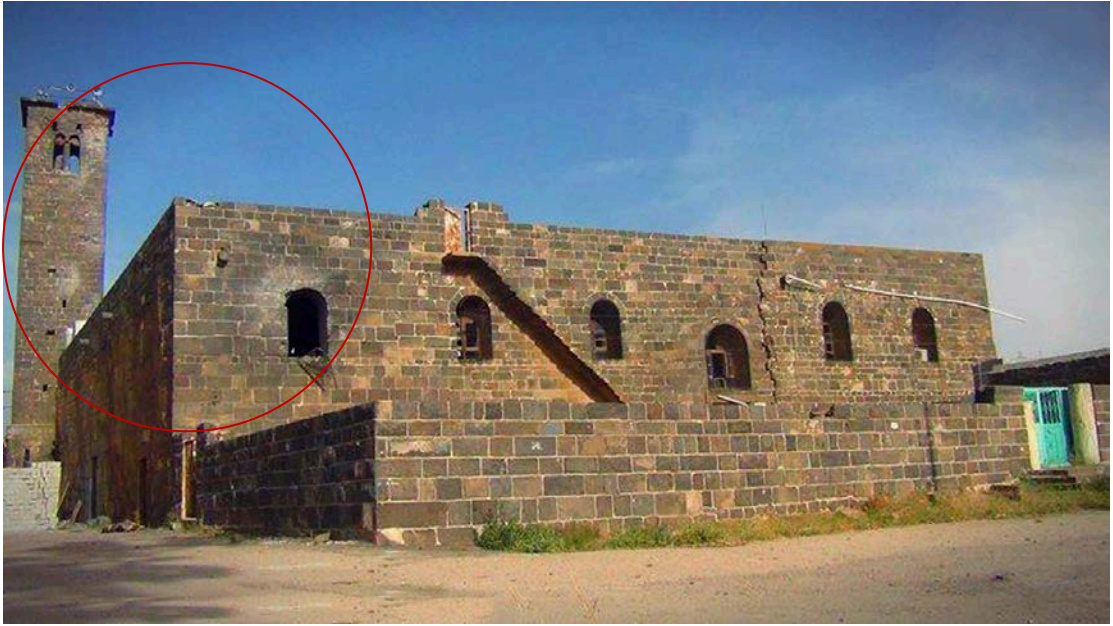
The antiquities of BOSRA was able to access some parts of the Ancient City on September 2014 and assessed the damage in several historical buildings affected by clashes, the report explain damage of varying severity from vandalism, illegal looting, and clashing, to a number of monuments within the old city such as:

- Few stones in MABRAK mosque, were collapsed in the eastern part.
- The minarets of al-OMARI mosque damaged and minor damaged appeared in the artificial zinc roof, walls and floors, few arch's stones in the east area destroyed.
- Temporary block walls built in front of the Western Facade in BAB al HAWA and in the Western gate in the old city. In addition, Vandalism and graffiti to the ancient walls were seen.
- Some areas in the old city of BOSRA witnessed illegal excavations in search for treasures; other areas burned or destroyed because of clashes.
- In the KALYBE, "CRADLE OF THE KING'S DAUGHTER" most of its architectural elements and the carved friezes were collapsed.

- In the Monastery of Monk BAHIRA the upper parts of the hermitage damaged.
- Minor damage to the citadel's trench because of the clashes.
- Some parts of the SHMIS Monastery were bulldozed causing damage to the southern wall of ARCHBISHOP Palace and the NABATIEH pool.
- In ABOU al FEDA Mosque, the interior walls and the ceilings were damaged; few stones in the upper bonds (south of the minaret) collapsed with some parts of the south wall.
- The Ancient city's wall in the SE part bulldozed and illegal buildings constructed there by locals.
- In FATIMA Mosque, the southwestern part of the ceiling and the small columns (decorated the minarets) were damaged. Some of the stones over the arches in the north collapsed.
- In MANJAK Hamam the brick which was covering the water fountain (in the reception room) was removed.
- On 1/12/2014, a massive blast had taken place at al-OMARI Mosque area between KHIDR mosque and the underground suq, one house in the archaeological area seriously damaged.

MEASURES TAKEN

- Communicate with the Local Community through the National Reconciliation Commission and notables in order to raise awareness among them about the importance of cultural heritage and to avoid using the ancient city as a battlefield.
- Communicate with the competent authorities in order to neutralize the archaeological sites on the conflict because of the current crisis.
- Formation of a committee from Bosra antiquities staff to connect with the locals in the surrounding villages to facilitate the access of the DGAM staff to the ancient city in order to follow up their duties in monitoring the damage and raising awareness among local community.
- In addition, Bosra Antiquities continue working in initial assessment of the damage to the monuments whenever access to the site is possible.



Minor damage to al Omari mosque façade, Bosra © DGAM 2014



Few stones collapsed in the façade, Abou al Feda mosque, Bosra © DGAM 2014



Minor damage to Fatima mosque in Bosra © DGAM 2014



Severe damage to Kalybe, "Cradle Of The King's Daughter" in Bosra © DGAM 2014



Minor damage to the pool in Manjek Hamam in Bosra © DGAM 2014



Stone collapsed at the covered passage in Bosra © DGAM 2014



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 Directorate General
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Primary Damages Assessments
Bosra Ancient city

2012-2014

- Damaged Historical Monuments
- Damaged Private Properties

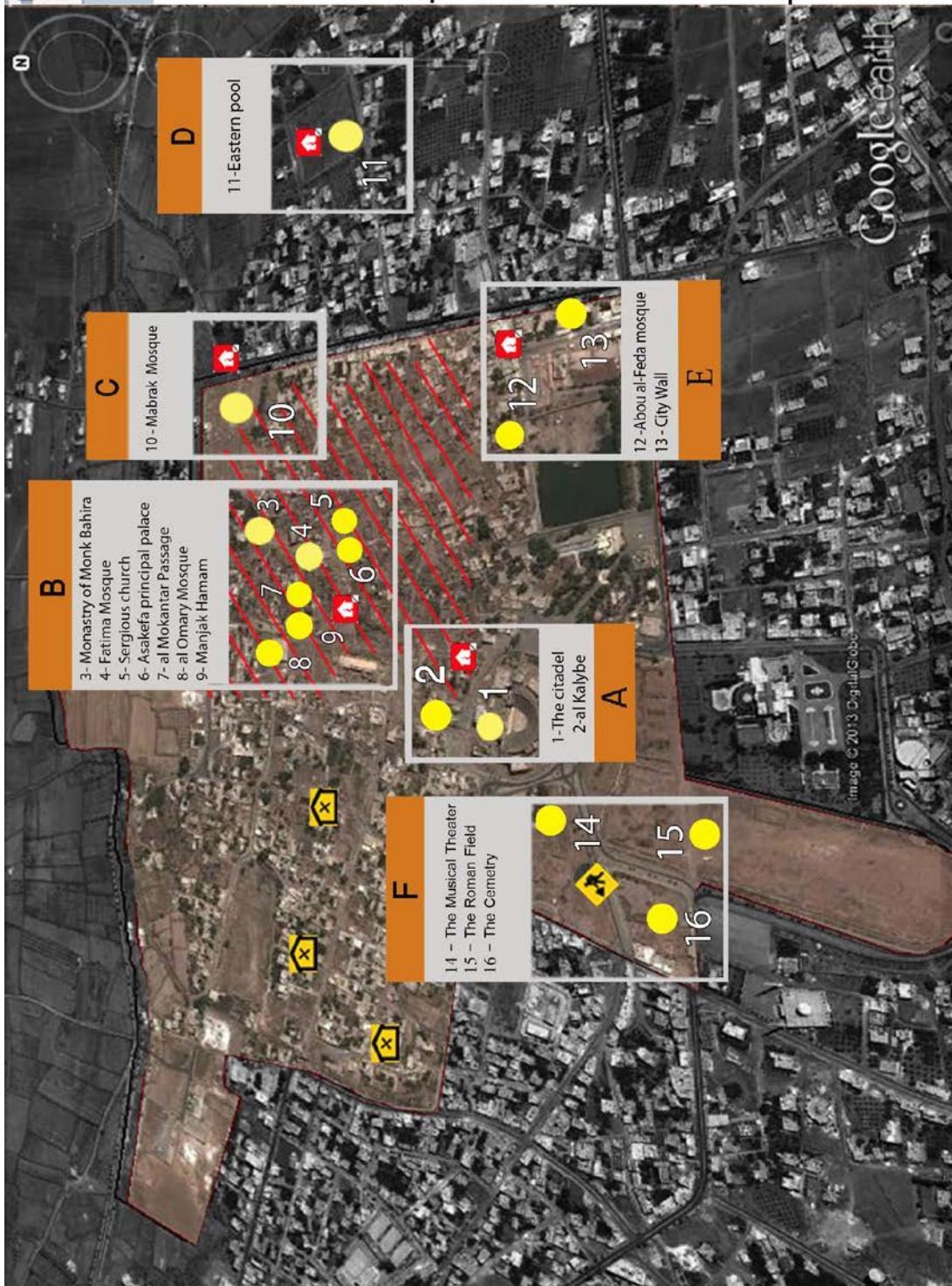
- Damaged buildings
- Caldestone Excavations
- Illegal Buildings

- 3800 family inhabitants
- 1665 Buildings
- Area 117 h
- Kinds of Damages:
- 16 Historical Monuments partly damaged and destroyed.
- Many Traditional houses burned and destroyed.
- Inhabitants displacements.

- UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1980
- World Heritage Site Endanger June 2013

Prepared by :
 Arch. Mouna Alkhouli
 Arch. Shaza Alzahr
 Supervisor:
 Arch. Lina Kutiefan

Directorate of Sites Managements
 Source of Information:
 Directorate of Bosra Antiquities



Name of World Heritage property: **SITE OF PALMYRA**

Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 1980

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS:

An oasis in the Syrian Desert, northeast of Damascus, Palmyra contains the monumental ruins of a great city that was one of the most important cultural centers of the ancient world. From the 1st to the 2nd century, the art and architecture of Palmyra, standing at the crossroads of several civilizations, married Graeco-Roman techniques with local traditions and Persian influences.

First mentioned in the archives of Mari in the 2nd millennium BC, Palmyra was an established caravan oasis when it came under Roman control in the mid-first century AD as part of the Roman province of Syria. It grew steadily in importance as a city on the trade route linking Persia, India and China with the Roman Empire, marking the crossroads of several civilizations in the ancient world. A grand, colonnaded street of 1100 metres' length forms the monumental axis of the city, which together with secondary colonnaded cross streets links the major public monuments including the Temple of Ba'al, Diocletian's Camp, the Agora, Theatre, other temples and urban quarters. Architectural ornament including unique examples of funerary sculpture unites the forms of Greco-Roman art with indigenous elements and Persian influences in a strongly original style. Outside the city's walls are remains of a Roman aqueduct and immense necropolises.

Discovery of the ruined city by travelers in the 17th and 18th centuries resulted in its subsequent influence on architectural styles.

THREATS:

The Archaeological area:

- Due to clashes, the column in the HAMAM area was hit by bullets also, the small NE arch in the TRIUMPH ARCH damaged.
- ZANOBIA HOTEL was looted; three of five ancient statues, which were represented in the lobby, were stolen. The other two pieces removed by Antiquities authorities.

The Southeast Necropolis

Antiquities of Palmyra were able to reach the Southeast NECROPOLIS in the Archaeological site on November 2014 in order to assess the damage in the area.

It worth to mention that at the beginning of the crises on 2011 the DGAM undertook protective measures against vandalism and theft in the tombs by reinforced the gates and covered the tombs with soil.

According to the Palmyra antiquities, resources several stone sculptures apparently stolen from the tombs and illegal excavations conducted with the help of heavy

equipment. The looters remove the soil, broke in to tombs by took off and expanded the air vents over the gates and stole funeral bust and statues represented in the cemeteries as follow:

- 22 funeral bust and child head stone represented in the Scene funerary feast in the underground ARTABAN Tomb (Tomb n 5) which was discovered on 1985 and restored by the national excavation mission between 1964-1999.
- TAIBUL Tomb (H), which is restored by Syrian-Japanese excavation mission, suffered from vandalism, 14 sculpted portrait (funerary sculpture) were stolen, one of the Scene funerary feast stolen and the other one broken.
- 25 funerary sculpture were looted in BOLHA tomb (Tomb n 7) and from tomb n 9.

MEASURES TAKEN

- Since the beginning of the crises, antiquities of Palmyra reinforced and consolidate the underground cemeteries gates and covered it soil. However, unfortunately due to the presence of the armed group in the oasis area, antiquities of Palmyra was unable to reach the archeological site for more than 7 months (from February until September 2013), and that helped to increase the vandalism acts and looting in the Necropolis area.
- All the entrances to the Palmyra museum, the storage area and the basement were reinforced and closed completely.
- Museum artifacts were evacuated.
- Relocate moved objects in storages.
- In-situ protection of the Lion statue, that cannot be moved, located in the main entrance of the museum.
- Communicate with the local community to raise awareness about the importance of their heritage. According to this, Antiquities of Palmyra was able to restitution many collection of archaeological sculptures by the assistance of the locals and the concerned authorities.
- Initial damage assessment was taken to the damaged area.



Stolen funeral bust from the Scene Funerary in the Artaban Tomb (Tomb n 5) in Palmyra © DGAM 2014



Stolen funeral bust and statues in Bolha tomb (Tomb n 7) in Palmyra © DGAM 2014



Stolen funeral bust and statues in Taibul tomb (Tomb H) in Palmyra © DGAM 2014



Tomb 9 in Palmyra © DGAM 2014



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Initial Damages Assessments
Palmyra Archaeological Site

2012-2014

Damaged Historical Monuments

Damage to Monnuent

Calandestine Excavations

- Area 113.3 h

- Kinds of Damages:
- Partly damage to the historical monuments.
 - Calandestine excavations.
 - Many private properties burned and destroyed inside the Oasis

- UNESCO

World Heritage Site

since 1980

- World Heritage Site

Endanger June 2013

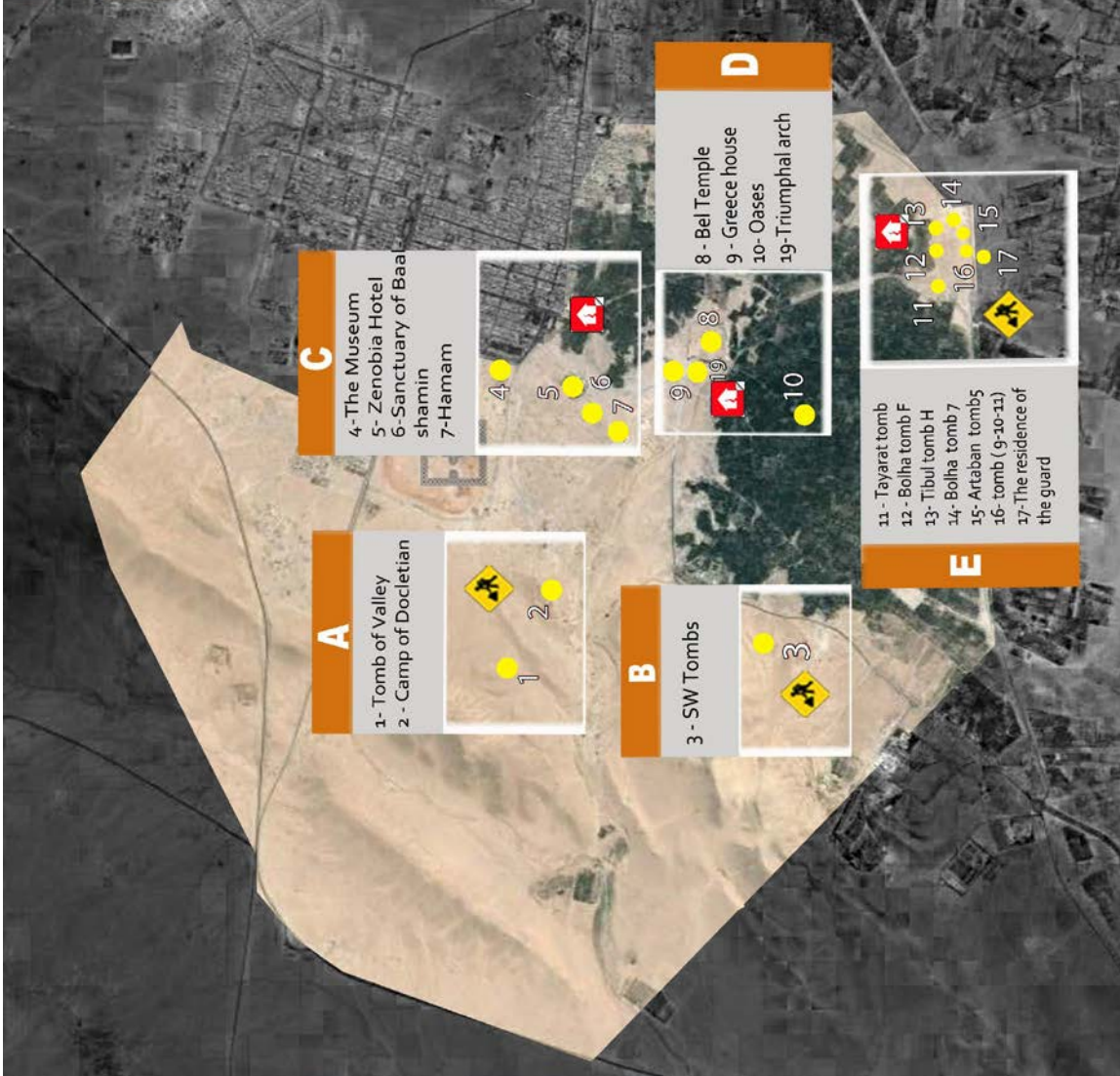
Prepared by :

Arch. Mouna Alkhoulil
 Arch. Shaza Alzaher

Supervisor:

Lina Kutiefan

Directorate of Sites Managment
 Source of the information:
 Directorate of Palmyra Antiquities



Name of World Heritage property:: **ANCIENT CITY OF ALEPPO**
Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 1986

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS

Located at the crossroads of several trade routes since the 2nd millennium B.C., Aleppo was ruled successively by the Hittites, Assyrians, Akkadians, Greeks, Romans, Umayyads, Ayyubids, Mameluks and Ottomans who left their stamp on the city. The Citadel, the 12th-century Great Mosque and various 16th and 17th-centuries madrasas, residences, khans and public baths, all form part of the city's cohesive, unique urban fabric.

The monumental Citadel of Aleppo, rising above the suqs, mosques and madrasas of the old walled city, is testament to Arab military might from the 12th to the 14th centuries. With evidence of past occupation by civilizations dating back to the 10th century B.C., the citadel contains the remains of mosques, palace and bath buildings. The walled city that grew up around the citadel bears evidence of the early Graeco-Roman street layout and contains remnants of 6th century Christian buildings, medieval walls and gates, mosques and madrasas relating to the Ayyubid and Mameluke development of the city, and later mosques and palaces of the Ottoman period. Outside the walls, the Bab al-Faraj quarter to the North-West, the Jdeide area to the north and other areas to the south and west, contemporary with these periods of occupation of the walled city contain important religious buildings and residences. Fundamental changes to parts of the city took place in the 30 years before inscription, including the destruction of buildings, and the development of tall new buildings and widened roads. Nonetheless the surviving ensemble of major buildings as well as the coherence of the urban character of the suqs and residential streets and lanes all contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value.

THREATS:

Since the beginning of the crises, the extensive clashes of Aleppo's old city has left part of the old city in ruins and caused massive destruction. Until present, it is impossible to get antiquities officials to the area due to ongoing fighting, and the report rely solely on local community and social media which presented damage to public and private infrastructures as follows:

Private houses in the most populated northern areas of old Aleppo were registering mostly "heavy" level of damage. Logically, most of the remaining population has relocated to these areas.

In regards to public infrastructures, all public infrastructures have been damaged to different extents, such as: BAB al HADEED, BAB al NASER, and in al JAIDEDEH district such as the 16th century buildings there: DAR ZAMRIA, FISH suq,

BASHIR PASHA mosque, SISI house, WOOL suq, GHAZALA house. In addition to -al HAMIDIEH district - BUSTAN al QASR district-- QUSTUL HARAMI district -- al FARAFRA district- AKYOL area - the area around the Citadel- BAB al NEIRAB - al AWAMID area near the Umayyad mosque. According to our resources more than 121 historical building were damaged such as: UMAYYED Mosque - The Citadel - MRISH House - BIMARISTAN al ARGWANI- AJQPASH House - BOUCH house - al KHBASH Khan - SILK Khan - SOAP Khan - al WAZIR Khan - al JUMROUK Khan - al KERKNAWI Khan- COTTON khan - KHEIRBEK Khan - Suq al GHAZAL Khan, and a long list of mosques, churches and religious schools, have all been damaged to different extents such as: (al ADILYEH mosque - OTTOMANIA mosque - al KAMAILYA mosque, - al MANMNDAR mosque - BANQOSA mosque - MENG GREAT mosque - HAROON DADA mosque - al SHUAIBA mosque - QUSTUL HARAMI mosque - al SAHABH mosque -al MAYDANI mosque - al ATROCH mosque -al HADDADIN mosque -al FARDUS madrassa - al HALAWIA madrassa - al- SHARFIH madrassa- al TRTANIH madrassa - al SHIBANI madrassa - al AHMADIYA madrassa - MARONITE Church - AL SHIBANI church- Church of Roman Catholics - ST. DIMITROS church - MARONITE Church).

The extreme groups have detonated bombs in tunnels under old Aleppo and threaten to blow up the citadel. This caused damage to several buildings ex, CARLTON hotel, JUSTICE building, and the police headquarters (al-QALAM building), GRAND SERAY, al KHUSRUWIYE mosque, al-SULTANIA mosque, KHAN al SHOUNA and YALBOUGA hamam etc...

Both buildings of the National Museum and the Department of Antiquities of Aleppo were partially damaged several times due to a blast and mortars taking place nearby. Damage was limited to breaking glass, gypsum ceilings, stone façades, floor tiles, the upper story and the interior North façade.

Violence and destruction have escalated, which has severely affected the building of the Museum of Folk Arts (AJQPASH house) and GHAZALEH house.

Museum of Folk Arts (AJQPASH house)

DGAM team managed to access the Museum of Folk Arts and inspect its current situation on March 2014. After inspection, it was evident that the constructional status of the museum was generally in good condition notwithstanding the cracks in the decorated wooden ceilings of the halls of the museum, distortion in the stonewalls of the courtyard and destruction of some internal walls and bathroom floors down to mortar shells.

Wooden doors and windows overlooking to the courtyard disappeared. In addition, the water fountain in the center of the courtyard, the woodwork on

the walls of the museums halls, ornamented cornices, the wall separating the guest room from the bride's room with Arabic ornamentations and the built-in cabinets in each room have all disappeared.

Nevertheless, the team did not manage to inspect the condition of the upper floor of the building down to the difficult and dangerous situation in the area surrounding the museum.

GHAZALEH house:

DGAM was able to reach the house on September 2014 which affected by severe damage due to the clashes. Looting and vandalism taken place there in several areas such as: the wooden walls decoration in the ground level rooms and in the Iwan, also the colored decorative glass in the dome and in the rooms were stolen.

At the end of September 2014, a Syrian television team had the possibility to report from the citadel of Aleppo after three years of the site's inaccessibility . This T.V pictures showed the destruction of the entire former protective roof of TEMPLE OF STORM GOD inside the citadel.

MEASURES TAKEN

- Since the beginning of the crises, antiquities of Aleppo has archived all its engineering drawings and documented them in a digital form.
- At the Folk museum, precautionary measures were taken at an earlier stage, which included taking away the doors of the decorated wooden cabinets and transferring them together with the collection of the museum to a safe location.
- Damages to the old city's buildings were recorded and transferred in to Google earth.
- Damage monitoring to the old city by photos, maps, reports and sometimes when available field visit.



Bab al Nasr in old city of Aleppo – 2014



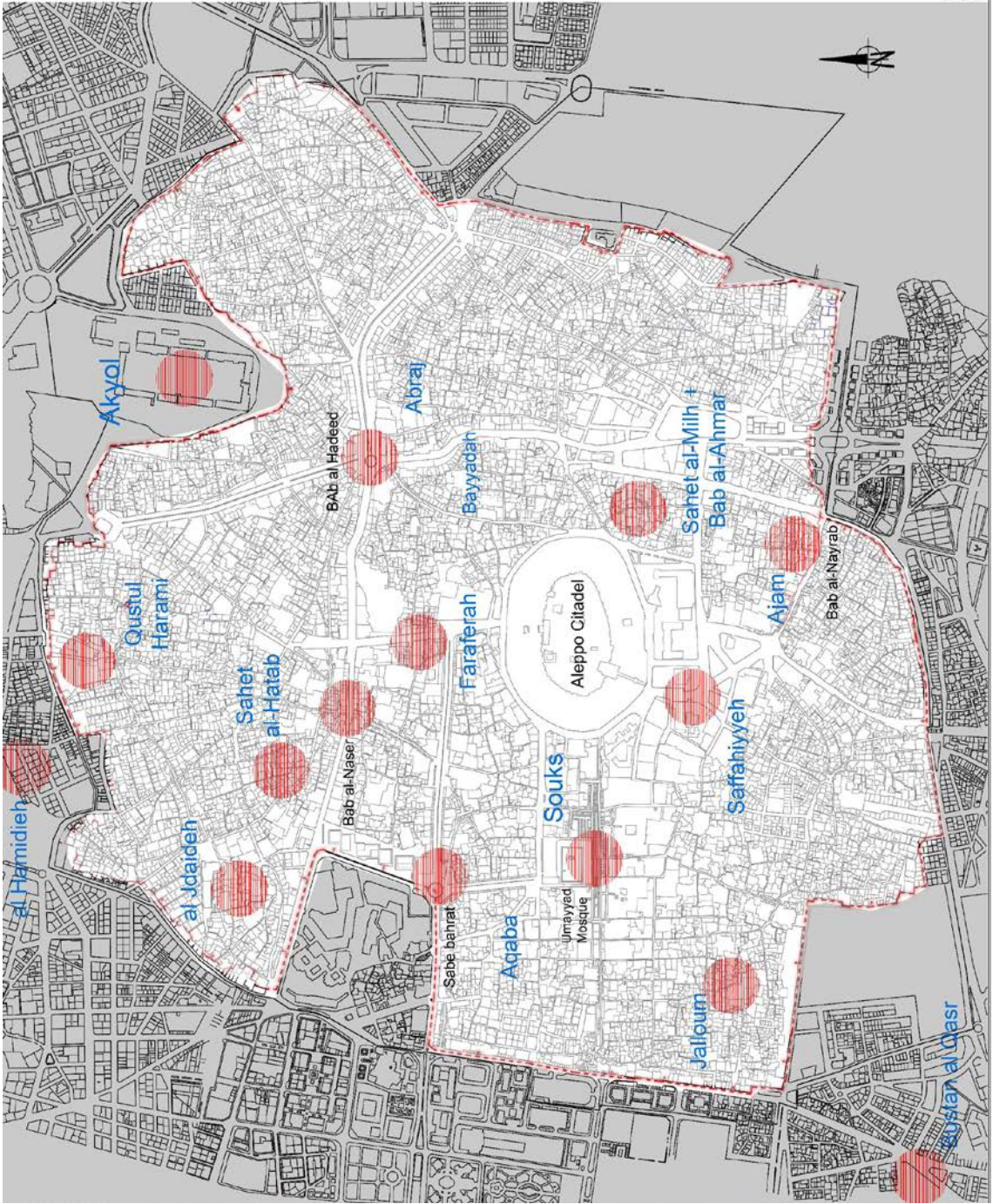
Carleton Hotel in old city of Aleppo -2014



The area surrounding Aleppo citadel – 2014



Museum of Folk Arts (Ajqash house) Aleppo – © DGAM 2014



Syrian Arab Republic
 Directorate General
 of Antiquities & Museums



**Initial Damage Assessment
 Old City of Aleppo**

2012-2014



Damaged Areas

- 100 000 inhabitants

Kind of Damages:

- partly / totally destroyed
- Fire
- Inhabitants displacements

- Area 355 h

- 12 h of covered Souqs

- UNESCO

World Heritage Site

since 1986

- World Heritage Site

Endanger June 2013



Prepared by :

Arch. Mouna Alkhouli

Arch. Shaza Alzahr

Supervisor:

Arch. Lina Kutiefan

Directorate of Sites Management

source of Information

Directorate of Aleppo Antiquities / Media



Syrian Arab Republic

Directorate General
of Antiquities & Museums



**Initial Damage Assessment
Old City of Aleppo**

2012-2014

Damaged Historical Buildings

- 100 000 inhabitants
- 20000 buildings
- more than 130 buildings destroyed

Kind of Damages:

- partly / totally destroyed
- Fire
- Inhabitants displacements
- Area 355 h
- 12 h of covered Souqs

- UNESCO World Heritage Site - 1986
- World Heritage Site Endanger August 2014



Prepared by:
Arch. Mouna al khoulil
Arch. Shaza al zaher

Supervisor:
Arch. Lina Kutufan

Directorate of Sites Managements
Information Source:
Directorate of Aleppo Antiquities / Med



Name of World Heritage property: **CRAC DES CHEVALIERS & QAL'AT SALAH EL-DIN**

Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 2006

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS:

The two castles represent the most significant examples illustrating the exchange of influences and documenting the evolution of fortified architecture in the Near East during the Byzantine, Crusader and Islamic periods. The Crac des Chevaliers was built by the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem from 1142 to 1271. With further construction by the Mamluks in the late 13th century, it ranks among the best-preserved examples of the Crusader castles. The Qal'at Salah El-Din, even though partly in ruins, retains features from its Byzantine beginnings in the 10th century, the Frankish transformations in the late 12th century and fortifications added by the Ayyubid dynasty (late 12th to mid-13th century). Both castles are located on high ridges that were key defensive positions.

Dominating their surrounding landscapes, the two castles of Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din are outstanding examples of fortified architecture relating to the Crusader period. Their quality of construction and the survival of historical stratigraphy demonstrate the interchange of defensive technology through features of each phase of military occupation.

THREATS

Field inspections were conducted on the 1st of May 2014 by DGAM Experts team in order to examine the current condition of Crac des chevaliers that are harmed by the presence of the armed groups. The purpose of this technical field inspection is to describe, and to record the degree and type of observed damage, to define action plan with timeline for rehabilitation project. As the result of the inspection, the experts have been defined three damage categories:

- Minor damage: Loss of stonework surfaces (max about 2 cm), crashed of stones (max about 10 cm) and damaged to the roof waterproof layer is evident .
- Moderate damage: Broken large parts in the same stone, Collapsed stonework, this type of damage does not affect the structural balance of the damaged place.
- Severe damage: Broken large parts in the same stone, Collapsed stonework that affect the balance construction of the place affected, in addition to complete collapse of parts of the walls, ceilings and stairs in some spaces.

Currently, some parts, of the castle are severely damaged and partially collapsed such as:

- ZAHIR BYBARS Tower almost half of its stonework is lost.
- The lower levels of the stable space with its E wall.
- Part of the wall in the SOLDIER's hall .
- Part of the vault roofing of the gallery leading to the kitchen.

- Two of the decorations surface of the HALL OF THE KNIGHTS.
- The inner stairs that leading to the roof in the Store room.
- The stairs in the HALL OF THE KNIGHTS.
- Arent stones in the E wall of the moat, collapse of a small part of rock holding the bridge).

We didn't informed about any damages in Qal'at Salah el Din.

MEASURES TAKEN

- The first stage of works involved cleaning debris resulting from use of the gung men such as (Rubble - fuel tanks - water tanks - furnishings - water pipes - electrical wiring).
- Documentation of damaged areas by plans and photos.
- Stabilization of the archaeological resource.
- Carried out emergency restoration and repair operations to prevent further immediate loss or damage of the castle.
- Cracks and lesions monitoring.

More measures should be undertaken during the next year such as: complete the construction of the control parts and preparation for the executive acts of consolidation, restoration and reconstruction, in order to implement the required restoration works.



The interior courtyard in Krac des chevaliers (Before) - © DGAM 2014



The interior courtyard in Krac des chevaliers (After) - © DGAM 2014



*Hall of the Knights in
chevaliers(After) - ©*



*Krac des
DGAM 2014*

Hall of the Knights in Krac des chevaliers(Before) - © DGAM 2014

The Passage leading to the kitchen in Krac des chevaliers(Before) - © DGAM 2014

The Passage leading to des chevaliers(After) - ©

*the kitchen in Krac
DGAM 2014*



Zahir Bybars Tower in Krac des chevaliers(Before) - © DGAM 2014



Zahir Bybars Tower in

*Krac des
chevaliers(After)
- ©
DGA
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2014*



Leader Tower in Krac des chevaliers(Before) - © DGAM 2014



Leader Tower in Krac des chevaliers(After) - © DGAM 2014

Name of World Heritage property: **ANCIENT VILLAGES IN NORTHERN SYRIA**

Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 2011

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANTS:

Located in a vast Limestone Massif, in the northwest of Syria, some forty ancient villages provide a coherent and exceptionally broad insight into rural and village lifestyles in late Antiquity and the Byzantine Period. Abandoned in the 8th-10th centuries, they still retain a large part of their original monuments and buildings, in a remarkable state of preservation: dwellings, pagan temples, churches and Christian sanctuaries, funerary monuments, bathhouses, public buildings, buildings with economic or artisanal purposes, etc. It is also an exceptional illustration of the development of Christianity in the East, in village communities. Grouped in eight archaeological parks, the ensemble forms a series of unique and exceptional relict cultural landscapes.

THREATS

In the rural of Aleppo, the gunmen have taken strategic places, including ancient hilltop as St. SAMMAN Sanctuary.

Violations have caused the distortion of the archaeological scene, which characterizes this site. According to DGAM resources, vandals have made various damages in ST. SAMAAN CASTLE PARK that can summarized below:

- Violations affecting the historical buildings at the ST. SAMAAN PARK have escalated as heavy machinery is used and buildings are being destroyed, such as monasteries and others, to construct new buildings.
- ST. SAMAAN CASTLE: Minor damage to the Northern facade due to clashes.
- ST. SAMAAN MONASTERY: The damages affected the following areas:
 - THE NORTHERN MONASTERY: digging and illegal building.
 - THE WESTERN MONASTERY: illegal building at the Northern wall.
 - THE NE MONASTERY: illegal building in the Southern shrine, broken ancient stones for building material.
 - THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH: (the old entrance to the church connecting the castle with its monastery), digging and illegal shops constructions by broken ancient stones for building material, damage inflicted on the ancient walls by the bulldozer to make a space to build the shops.
 - THE PUBLIC BATHS which, located at the Western slope outside the castle witnessed damage at the mosaic floor, broken big ancient stones of the old bath's remains.
- Olive trees in SAMMAN CASTLE inside the castle wall, and SW of the Triumphal Arch, were subject of serious explosions done by extremist groups controlled the castle. In addition illegal excavations witnessed in the same area. According to Aleppo antiquities, the extremist groups prevented anyone from approaching the Castle and they prevented the Landowners

from olive harvest in the nearby area, in order to keep them unknown of what is happening inside the castle.

- SETT RUM: Destroying the church Stones, illegal building in the Western area.
- RAFADEH: Building 10 residential construction in the South side of the protected area, quarrying was established in the Eastern area (currently out of work) and illegal excavations.

According to information received from the Office of Archaeological Parks in Idlib, violations affected the five archaeological parks. Those violations resulted from either illegal digs or construction, which caused minor damage, taking inconsideration that some sites in the parks are not able to access because of presence the armed group:

In BARISHA PARK:

- Destroying archaeological stones on the western side of the archaeological site of BAQERHA, as well as illegal digs in the site and in al-DEROUNA (next to the archaeological church) and DER QITA.

In al ZAWIA Park (BARA):

- Breaking ancient stones in the fence of the archaeological monastery at al-BARA site in order to be used in construction work by using heavy machines is now takes place on a massive scale in al-BARA. This activity appear in the ancient building located behind the Pyramid Tomb because of its location nearby to the road. Metal and other types of detectors are used in archaeological site and the unearthed ancient coins were taken by locals. the digs there revealed a tomb which was vandals completely.
- BTERSSA, MAJLAYA, BAUDA and BSHELLA suffer also from Bulldozing the landscape in order to build new buildings and illicit excavations. It was noticed that, expert persons, provided with equipment, did these acts of vandalism and they usually choose specific places such as tombs and cemeteries. In SERGILLA, and JARADEH refugees have re-inhabited buildings, rock shelters, and digging latrines amongst the Ancient Villages.
- Many families have been displaced at SHINSRAH, most of them were came from the neighborhoods countryside. The new residents live in the ruins of the historic Roman palaces roofed with nylon or thin metal boards, and some of them built new rooms closed to the ancient walls.

In WASTANI Park:

- KAHR AQAB and FASSOUQ are suffered greatly from destruction and devastation in the archaeological sites, where some people broke the ancient

large-sized stones for reusing as building material. This phenomenon increased because of the expensive prices in construction materials, particularly cement and blocks.

- Clandestine excavations have found in KAHER AQAB.

MEASURES TAKEN

- Damage monitoring to the parks by photos, maps, reports and sometimes when available and field visit (when possible).
- DGAM cooperated with members of the local community in this region, which has led to the protection of lots of archaeological sites and less of illegal excavation.
- As we mention before that some sites were inhabited by some local residents in the region during this crisis such as: al-BARA, SERJILA, SHINSFRAH. Thus, the DGAM communicated with those people in order to safeguard these relics against any damage that might be inflicted on them by means of breaking stones, setting fires and violating them (by some thieves). This was helping in reducing the extent of the damage affecting the sites as compared to the damage befalling other archaeological regions and sites.
- Cooperation with governorate of Idlib in order to reduce risk and damage in the parks.



Illegal excavations at al – Bara, Zawia Mountain, Idlib Countryside - © DGAM 2014



*Breaking ancient stones by using heavy machines
al – Bara, Zawia Mountain, Idlib Countryside - © DGAM 2014*



Families displaced at Shinsrah, Zawia Mountain, Idlib Countryside - © DGAM 2014



Illegal Buildings at Btressa, Zawia Mountain, Idlib Countryside - © DGAM 2014



Illegal excavations at Kafer Aqab, Wastani Mountain, Idlib Countryside - © DGAM 2014



*Breaking ancient stones by using heavy machines at
Samaan monastery, Aleppo Countryside*