

Name of World Heritage property	State Party	ID number
<i>Old City of Sana'a</i>	<i>Republic of Yemen</i>	<i>C 385</i>

STATE PARTY'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE OLD CITY OF SANA'A, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN DANGER

Ministry of Culture - GOPHCY– March 2017

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 40TH SESSION (Istanbul, 2016), CONCERNING THE OLD CITY OF SANA'A

The World Heritage Committee,

1. **Having examined** Document WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add,
2. **Recalling Decision** 39 COM 7B.59, adopted at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015),
3. **Expresses its great concern** at the recent damage caused to the cultural heritage of Yemen as a result of escalating armed conflict, and that the Old City of Sana'a has incurred irreversible destruction and severe damage due to the armed conflict, and continues to be vulnerable owing to the deteriorating security situation, the ongoing social change and continuing lack of organizational support and resources for both heritage management initiatives and physical conservation projects;
4. **Commends** the State Party for its commitment and involvement in damage assessment, documentation and first-aid interventions, and for its continuous communication with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and **encourages** all concerned stakeholders to unite for the preservation of cultural heritage in Sana'a;
5. **Notes** that the State Party has started the preparation of the reconstruction project for the seven destroyed buildings in al-Qasimi neighborhood on an exceptional basis linked to the need of providing shelter for the inhabitants of Sana'a;
6. **Urges** the State Party to pursue its dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in all restoration and/or reconstruction processes to ensure the safety of the inhabitants and the respect of international conservation standards;
7. **Calls** on the international community to provide financial support for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural heritage, adopted at the UNESCO Expert meeting in July 2015, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures, and also calls on the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue providing the State Party with technical assistance and support where needed;
8. **Also urges** all parties associated with the situation in Yemen to refrain from any action that would cause further damage to cultural heritage of Sana'a and the country and to fulfill their obligations under international law by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, in particular the safeguarding of

World Heritage properties and the sites included in the Tentative List;

9. Reiterates its request that the State Party:
 - a) Maintain a moratorium on new development or new construction, pending completion of the proposed Conservation Plan and, where appropriate, project-specific heritage impact assessments,
 - b) Prior to proceeding with the proposed rehabilitation of the water and sewerage project, prepare a HIA, which includes assessment of impacts on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), in line with the relevant ICOMOS guidelines and submit a copy of the HIA to the World Heritage Centre prior to making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
10. Also requests the State Party, as soon as it is feasible and in close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to develop a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);
11. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate the state of conservation of the property and identify measures needed to reverse the decay and ensure the conservation and protection of the property, as soon as the security situation allows;
12. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2017, 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 41st session in 2017;
13. Decides to retain Old City of Sana'a (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

1. Executive summary of the report

The old city of Sana'a as a world culture heritage site in danger, up to now still suffering of several challenges and threats, mainly by armed conflict and war, that leads to deteriorating of security situation and socioeconomic declination.

Subsequent, to Alqassimi and Alfolihi neighborhoods the continues Arab coalition airstrikes to the old city of Sana'a, lasted of bombing Al Madrassa and Al-Bakiria neighborhood in September 2016, causing more destruction to the historical building stocks of the old city of Sana'a.

As well physical damages to many of the historic buildings within the old city of Sana'a as a result of vibrations by the extreme explosions of airstrike bombs to the nearby mountains.

Moreover, absence of national resources, and termination of international supports have created major economic obstacles for conservation process.

Currently, GOPHCY has lack of basic mains and continuing lack of organizational support ,it gets real impediments to fulfill its obligations, unless to be reinforced by urgent international supports hopefully.

Despite of scarce resources and lack funds, GOPHCY has conducted some of emergency activities in coordination and support from UNESCO Doha, a stricture technical studies of two more damaged buildings in Alqassimi has accomplished and submitted to UNESCO for revision, four GOPHCY and GOAM staff have participated in regional training course in risk management during armed conflict funded by ICCROM Athar.

GOPHCY and SFD with financial support of WHC supervised and follow-up by UNESCO Doha office have signed a contract to conduct a rapid assessment in the old city for affected buildings in armed conflict.

Moreover ,the old city of Sana'a high committee has been reactivated recently ,which headed by HE the Presidential Office Director, assisted by HE Minister of Culture and Sana'a Mayor, membered of other related stakeholders, the main objectives are ; awareness rising, fund seeking, urgent conservation actions implementation supervision and monitoring , insure better conservation of the old city of Sana'a as WCH site endanger.

Certain decisions have been taken;(postponed any building activities for certain period, to overcome the main issues experienced by the old city of Sana'a).

In this period GOPHCY has have a trained core expert team , contains of architects , engineers, archeologists , skilled technicians, this team could carry out the necessary studies and documentation as well any emergency and first aid activities of the damaged heritage sites in Yemen, if it gets financial supports and assistance .

The state party like to acknowledge ICCROM Sharjah and UNESCO Doha for their modest assistance and supports. State party urge more supports from them and from other international concerned organizations, as the Yemeni world heritage sites are in danger. The state party relying to the WHC support, asking to take its responsibility towards vital protection of Yemeni world heritage sites, as they are encountered of serious destruction and irreversible deterioration.

Our thanks and appreciation to the Director General of UNESCO for their support and solidarity ,as well to all international experts and WH and the committee and advisory bodies.

2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision, paragraph by paragraph

2.1. The old city of Sana'a up to now still incurring several challenges and threats, started by armed conflict and war, that leads to deteriorating of security situation and socioeconomic declination.

Next to Alqassimi and Alfolihi neighborhoods the continues coalition airstrikes to the old city of Sana'a, lasted by bombing Al Madrassa and Al-

Bakiria neighborhood in September 2016, cause more destruction to the historical building stocks of the old city.

Then absence of national resources, and termination of international funding have created major economic obstacles for the country.

Currently, GOPHCY has lack of basic mains and continuing lack of organizational support ,it gets real impediments to fulfill its obligations, unless to be reinforced by urgent international supports hopefully.

- 2.2. The state party according to its obligations, despite the obstacles stated, has applied several measures like; damage assessment, documentation and first-aid interventions to the part of the city.

UNESCO –WHC through SFD is going to finance a small project to conduct a damage assessment for all damaged areas of the old city, the contract has been signed by UNESCO Doha office and SFD recently. The project supposed to begin next month by GOPHCY team.

Furthermore, state party has reactivated the high committee for old city of Sana'a protection, headed by HE the Presidential Office Director, assisted by HE Minister of Culture and Sana'a Mayor, membership of GOPHCY chairman and other related stakeholders, the main objectives of the committee are ; awareness rising, fund seeking, encourage community participation and monitoring tool, for recovered safeguarding of the old city of Sana'a, it held several meetings with deferent stakeholders including private sector representatives.

- 2.3. The state party (GOPHCY),has completed documentation and technical study, as well first aid intervention to AlQassimi area, with close coordination and consultation of UNESCO Doha office and ICOMOS. Moreover, thanks to WHC and UNESCO Doha office for funding and following up of structural study provision for the two more damaged buildings in Al-Qassimi according to ICOMOS recommendation.

But, up to now there is no any reconstruction work or restoration could be implemented for the damaged buildings so far in Al-Qassimi, due to unavailability of financial resources.

The state party is alarming that the dizzier situation of the two mentioned building (B01and B02), that could full down any moment from now, mainly after deterioration of their physical status due to last year heavy rainy season, unless un urgent intervention accrued,.

- 2.4. State Party adheres and assures to continue its dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in any restoration and/or reconstruction processes to ensure the respect of international conservation standards and safety, once the financial obstacles would solved. Therefore we urgently call for support.

- 2.5. The state party, appreciates WH committee appeal's on the international community to provide urgent financial support for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural heritage, adopted at the UNESCO Expert meeting in July 2015, including funding for capacity building and first-aid

restoration and protection measures, and also calls on the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue providing the State Party with technical assistance and support where needed, **and hope** that all international concerned bodies to facilitate urgent reception of that supports;

- 2.6. The state party, assured that the major destructive damaged to Yemeni culture heritage sites including old city of Sana'a have been occurred by coalition airstrikes. Therefore state party is requesting to censure coalition forces for that, and to refrain from any farther action that would cause any damage to cultural heritage of Sana'a and the country as well as to fulfill their obligations under international law.
- 2.7. There is no any development projects in the place, due to lack of resources and continues critical armed conflict situation. Concerning the proposed water and sewerage rehabilitation project for the old city of Sana'a it was postponed.
- 2.8. The state party, is in urgent need of international community support, ,we are depending too much in the role of the World Heritage Center, and Advisory Bodies and donors , to assist and support the state party in any way possible for priority conservation, management measures and capacity building programmes, as well funding emergency interventions, that should be taken during this period of time , because the most of the world culture heritage sites and tentative listed of Yemen are facing severe deterioration, due to the continuous armed conflict and airstrikes nowadays. The local staff and experts could implement any necessary actions, if there is a serious generous support from the international communities and organizations.
- 2.9. The state party is relying in WHC and international organization to give hands to overcome this unfair war , and to avoid any farther damages of the culture heritage. Meanwhile, the old city of Sana'a as well the other culture heritage sites in Yemen are in real threats.
- 2.10. We consider, it is urgently important , to get any possible consultation and support from the World Heritage Center and Advisory Bodies, to develop a set of emergency and corrective measures with a timeframe for implementation, to reach the desired state of conservation ,that remove the property from the List of World Heritage sites in Danger.
- 2.11. Since this moment the state party offers a certain open invitation to Joint World Heritage Center/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to visit Yemen to evaluate state of conservation of the property and identify measures needed to reverse the decay and ensure the conservation and protection of the property, as soon as they will.

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value

- Collation forces airstrikes
- Armed conflict escalation
- Lack of resources
- Socioeconomic situation deterioration
- Natural factors and decay

3.1. If no appropriate action wouldn't be taken immediately ,the deterioration could have escalated in the old city of Sana'a.

3.2. Urgent actions from the international community and organization concerned , are essential;

4. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area (core zone and buffer zone and/or corridors) that might be envisaged.

Non

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

State Party ,doesn't mind to upload the report for public access.

Signature Of The Authority