

## State of Conservation Reports by the States Parties

Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)  
(Identification number: c 1278 rev)

### 1. Executive Summary of the report

The World Heritage Committee at its 37<sup>th</sup> session adopted the decision (37 COM 8B.30) to inscribe the *Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong* on the World Heritage List while recommending the State Party to develop tourism management and interpretation plans for the inscribed property; at its 39<sup>th</sup> session it adopted a decision (39COM7B.62) encouraging the State Party to proceed with the development, adoption and implementation of the tourism management and interpretation plans in close cooperation with UNESCO Beijing Office, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Furthermore, at its 41<sup>th</sup> session, the World Heritage Committee adopted decision (41 COM 7B.89) encouraging the State Party to timely adopt and implement the Tourism Management Plan (including the Interpretation Plan) and requesting to report on the tangible results achieved on the further development of the monitoring system at the property.

In response to the decisions of the World Heritage Committee the National Authority for Protection of Cultural Heritage (NAPCH) which is the central guiding organ for protection of national heritage in the DPRK has undertaken due activities in a phased way resulting in the endorsement of the Tourism Management Plan (including the interpretation plan) by the Cabinet of the DPRK in November 2018, which is in effect since 2019 under the legal base of relevant laws.

Regarding the further development of the monitoring system at the property; it was more strengthened since 2015 by the introduction of complementary administrative mechanism at the relevant government authorities at national and local (North Hwanghae Province and Kaesong City) levels, and the number of full-time management bodies in-situ has been increased.

While activities for the protection of OUV and the management of the property are being carried out actively, there are also challenges to overcome. In terms of adequate monitoring, study and conservation the level of expertise of personnel and the provision of necessary equipment or means at the sites are issues to be addressed duly as wooden construction elements and roof tiles at buildings need constant preventive measures against aging and erosion, not to mention the mural paintings in the tombs. Furthermore, the protection of the old residential quarter, although it is not part of the property, needs measures in light of the implementation of the Tourism Management Plan.

There is no intention or plan to undertake any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new constructions within the property and buffer zones which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

## 2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

The World Heritage Committee at its 41<sup>st</sup> session (Krakov, 2017) adopted decision 41 COM 7B.89 based on the report on the state of conservation of the *Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong* submitted by the State Party, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as follows:

1. Having examined Document WHC/17/41.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 39 COM &B.62, adopted at its 38th session (Bonn, 2015),
3. Notes the efforts of the State Party to complete the Tourism Management Plan (including the Interpretation Plans) and encourages its timely adoption and implementation;
4. Requests the State Party to report on the tangible results achieved on the further development of the monitoring system at the property;
5. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2018, 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 43<sup>rd</sup> session in 2019.

In response to the decision of the World Heritage Committee, the NAPCH, in close cooperation with all relevant entities pushed forward implementation of the decision by the World Heritage Committee.

- Adoption and implementation of the Tourism Management Plan (including the Interpretation Plans)

The elaboration of the Tourism Management Plan (including the Interpretation Plans) was completed from 2013 to 2015 in response to the decision 37 COM 8B.30. Under the arrangement of NAPCH the plan was elaborated jointly by domestic experts, officials and stakeholders concerned including the National Tourism Administration, Pyongyang College of Tourism, Ministry of Urban Management, Ministry of Land and Environment Protection, Kaesong City People's Committee, and, in particular, the Korea National Heritage Preservation Agency which made key contributions to the elaboration of the Plan, as one of the main consultative agency in the field of protection of national heritage. At the same time, the sincere support and contribution by the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO Beijing Office and its advisory body (ICOMOS) in reflectance of the decisions of the World Heritage Committee need to be highlighted. The status of the elaboration of the Tourism Management Plan (including the Interpretation Plans) as well as of conservation of the property has been submitted in the due format as a conservation report to the World Heritage Committee at its 41<sup>st</sup> session.

And in November 2018, the Tourism Management Plan entered into effect through processes of endorsement by relevant institutions and, finally, by the Cabinet of the DPRK. A pilot project pushed forward phase-by-phase underlies this result. Thus, since 2019, the Plan is being carried out and its implementation is being ensured by the legal base of relevant laws.

The review of the result of the implementation of the Tourism Management Plan is carried out at sessions of the non-permanent national heritage protection committee (it is a collective consultative organization involving government authorities concerned at national and local levels, and its structure and function has been already explained in the nomination file of the property.) The NAPCH and local authorities are responsible for the preparation and organization of these meetings at national and local levels.

The Tourism Management Plan set out objectives that should be attained for the

sustainable tourism management of the property between 2019 and 2028, and strategies for its realization. It also mapped out work plan to be carried out in the first 5 years (2019-2023) of the plan. Currently, detailed work plans divided into months have been drawn up and are being carried out.

- Tangible results achieved in the further development of monitoring system at the property.

Strengthening and developing the monitoring system at the property is a prerequisite for prevention of negative impact on the property and its protection and management, as well as for promotion of collaboration of various stakeholders concerned.

The State Party, in view of the importance of strengthening and further developing the monitoring system at the properties in general with particular focus on the World Heritage property, directed due effort achieving number of tangible results.

It was in October 2015 that departments with the sole function of monitoring of all activities at the properties with particular focus on World Heritage properties were set up at the relevant government authorities concerned at the national and local levels. At the national level the department was set up in the NAPCH and at local levels it was in the government bodies of provinces, counties and cities not to mention the North Hwanghae Province and the Kaseong City where the World Heritage property is situated.

In accordance to the Law of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Protection of National Heritage and its bylaw and regulations some of the key roles of these departments are monitoring of any acts within the protected area of the property such as the act of tilling land or developing underground resources, act of building public facilities or dwelling houses or any structures, act of dumping waste water or sewage or any other waste, act of digging or felling trees, act of creating fire risks, act of laying out of cemeteries, act of grassing of domestic animals, act of violations of visitor regulations (code of ethics); initiation of promoting educational and propaganda activities; drawing out of necessary plans and measures, including general issues, on conservation and management of heritage.

At the Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong, the World Heritage property, particular focus is directed to monitoring of all forms of activities at the core and buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines for Protection and Management of the Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong adopted in 2013 resulting in the improvement of surrounding settings of the property. In 2016 Manwoldae, the site of royal palace of Koryo was enclosed for the purpose of better monitoring and preventing random access to the site keeping the principle of not impairing the OUV in any aspect and ensuring full sight and aesthetic aspect.

Furthermore, the number of full-time management bodies for the World Heritage property has been increased in-situ. Namely, in 2018 the Management Office for Manwoldae (the royal palace site of Koryo) was organized beside the Kaesong National Heritage Protection and Management Office, and the Management Office for Mausoleum of King Wang Kon, thus improving and strengthening basis of monitoring as well as sustainable management of tourism at the property.

The review of the status of monitoring and its result with particular focus on the World Heritage property in Kaesong is also carried out at sessions of the non-permanent national heritage protection committees concerned at national and local levels. The NAPCH and local authorities, in particular the Kaesong City National Heritage Protection Committee, are responsible for the preparation and organization of these meetings at the national and local levels.

In light of the decisions of the World Heritage Committee and the purpose of this State of

Conservation Report the State Party deems that the protection of the World Heritage property, including the sustainable management of tourism and monitoring of the sites, are set in place and being further developed administratively and legally, and that it will ensure close collaboration between different sectors concerned in the protection of the World Heritage property as well as the national heritage in general.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a State Party to the Convention considers that its current and future activities in response to the decisions of the World Heritage Committee meets the request and spirit of the Convention and the decisions.

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

#### **Protection and Management Activities**

After the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List in June 2013, the Kaesong National Heritage Protection and Management Office and the Management Office for Mausoleum of King Wang Kon, which are full-time management bodies responsible for World Heritage sites, achieved a number of good results in terms of improving the conservation and management of the World Heritage property under direction and support by the NAPCH and the Kaesong City People's Committee, the local government authority.

Furthermore, in Kaesong, conservation and management activities at historic sites in general, with particular focus on the World Heritage Property, have been and are being carried out as an all-inclusive mass campaign, giving also emphasis to improvement of surrounding settings. To be noted particularly is that through these processes the public concern awareness on the World Heritage properties and the importance of proper conservation and management of them is raised among the Kaesong citizens.

#### **Current conservation issues which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value**

However, for the adequate preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property that also can guarantee the aspect of sustainable development there are some challenges to be addressed to.

- Challenges do exist in the conservation of the property regarding wooden structures

The erosion of wooden construction elements such as phenomena of cracks, decay, and creation of hollow spaces by insects at the pillars and rafters.

The state of erosion due to aging at roof tiles being severe in need of replacement.

- Challenges do also exist in the conservation of mural paintings in the tombs

Detachment of renders, their lack of cohesion to the base as well as among themselves, brittleness, separation between paint layer(s) in the shape of bubbles, and inhabitation of microorganisms on the surfaces of paint layer.

To address these issues, in 2015, conservation experts from the Hamhung Branch of the State Academy of Sciences and the Korea National Heritage Preservation Agency undertook conservative interventions on the east, north and south murals of the affected tomb. It was the same case in 2017 for south part of the mural painting. This kind of phenomena will continue to appear.

- In view of the above mentioned current conservation issues and to address them properly it is seen necessary to strengthen the base of technical and material means as well as the expertise of personnel at the full-time management bodies in-situ (or Kaesong), ensuring, on an upgraded scale, their comprehensive control of various factors that could affect the conservation, and also enable them to take immediate measures in contact with national agencies concerned and those specializing in conservation of relics.

Considerations on these issues are that in accordance with the spirit of the Convention as well as the current world standard in the conservation field, international assistance and cooperation for strengthening the base of technical and material means as well as the expertise of personnel in-situ are in need.

**4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe Any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.**

There is no intention of any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the property, the buffer zone(s) or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

However, it should to be taken into consideration that in the old residential quarter which is situated in the buffer zone of property but not included in the property, dwellers (or citizens) inclined towards more convenient and modern environment of life might be liable to changing the traditional architecture or using construction materials not befitting the traditional character, which could affect the OUV of the property.

Since the old residential quarter is an area embodied with the long history and tradition of Kaesong, the adequate protection of the quarter is a task of importance to emphasize the unique history and settings in Kaesong City and also to contribute to sustainable development in the region.

Thus, it is important to take a good advantage of tourism for the preservation of traditional character of the old residential quarter along with the awareness-raising activities.

Therefore, the State Party, in abidance to the spirit of the Convention, shall implement the Tourism Management Plan accordingly and seek to promote international assistance and cooperation through UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee.

**5. Public Access to the State of Conservation Report**

The State Party agrees that the report can be uploaded for public access on the World Heritage Centre's State of Conservation Information System.

**6. Signature of the Authority**

RYONG Ju

Director General



National Authority for Protection of Cultural Heritage

Democratic People's Republic of Korea