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World Heritage Convention

**45COM**

# AMENDMENT/PROPOSAL

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>7B. State of Conservation of World Heritage properties inscribed on the World Heritage List</b>
<b>Draft Decision</b>	<b>45 COM 7B.34 _____</b>
<b>Submitted by the Delegation of....</b>	<b>NIGERIA</b>
<b>Co-author(s) (if any)</b>	<b>ETHIOPIA</b>
<b>Date of submission</b>	<b>09/07/2023</b>

## TEXT

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7B.1**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Thanks the State Party to have invited and facilitated the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property that took place in February/March 2022, and requests the State Party to start implementing the mission's recommendations with no delay;*
4. *Welcomes the State Party's re-affirmation of its authority at the property and the continuing measures to address illegal development and encroachment of the property;*
5. *Further welcomes the State Party's ongoing commitment to revising the 2017 UNESCO Benin Framework Agreement, which includes the proposal of a large-scale project for the "Strengthening, safeguarding and promoting the tangible and intangible, cultural and historical heritage of Benin", which would provide capacity-building for professionals to protect and promote the property, as well as technical and scientific support for the development of the new museum and the promotion of sustainable tourism;*
6. *Notes that further urgently needed measures to improve governance and financial management, are envisaged, and encourages the State Party in particular to merge*

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To be submitted to the Rapporteur at: [wh-rapporteur@unesco.org](mailto:wh-rapporteur@unesco.org)

the management of the property and the museum to ensure that the conservation and presentation of the palaces, their history and symbolism, are reinforced by the museum project rather than being subordinated to it;

7. Also notes that an overall Risk and Disaster Management Plan for the property is foreseen for 2022 and that fire protection measures are being designed and will be implemented as part of the National Agency for ~~the Promotion of Touristic~~ Heritage and ~~Tourism Development~~ (ANPT), programme for this year;

~~7-8.~~ Appreciates the fact that the State Party has planned in the Restructured Draft Memorandum of Understanding, to update the Management Plan in view of taking into consideration the measures identified for security and safety of the property and requests that it should be integrated in the management plan of the site to the effect of ~~considering the property and~~ the new museum within it;

~~8-9.~~ Also welcomes the proposed modifications to the designs of the new museum as requested by the Committee to make it less dominant so that the Amazon court continues to be intelligible as a large ceremonial open space, and while acknowledging the unanimous understanding by all the local communities of Abomey that the Amazon court acts as a link between the different royal families supporting the unity and social cohesion of the communities, takes note of the confirmation by the 2022 Reactive Monitoring mission that despite a reduced depth of the occupation of the Amazon court, it would retain good legibility and circulation between the palaces and allow the continuation of the performance of traditional ceremonies by the local communities and the royal families;

9-10. Further notes that more information on the museum project is needed to avoid any negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and also requests that an integrated plan concerning the treatment of the surface of the Amazon court, the materials to be used, the functional links between the different spaces, the access of visitors, the scenario and the scenography of the exhibition, the cultural and scientific programming, as well as the detailed timetable of its implementation are developed and shared as soon as possible with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for consideration, including appropriate mitigation measures identified ~~with a revised plan for the museum together with a further revised Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) that is clearly based on detailed attributes of OUV,~~ before launching the construction works foreseen to be carried out in 2023 and 2024;

10-11. Further welcomes the link between the museum project as set out in the HIA, but notes that the proposed restoration project only covers four of the ten palaces that make up the property, and regrets that whereas considerable progress has been made over the past two years in developing the Museum Project, so far work has not started on the development of the urgently needed Recovery/Conservation Plan for the palaces that will address their highly vulnerable authenticity and integrity;

11-12. Reiterates its requests for the restoration project to cover all ten palaces in the property, not just the official palaces or those parts that might be accessible to the public;

12-13. Also reiterates its request for a specific Recovery/Conservation Plan to be developed for all ten palaces, and for a draft outline including a phased and feasible programme of restoration and conservation, based on adequate surveys and research so as to establish a baseline from which to measure progress, and for this draft to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before work commences;

13-14. Notes with concern that in advance of the Recovery/Conservation Plan being drafted it is stated that the ANPT will start a programme of rehabilitation work on four of the palaces in 2022, and requests therefore the State Party to accelerate the development of the outline of the Recovery/Conservation Plan including a phased approach for its approval by the World Heritage Committee;

14.15. *Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2024, a progress report, and by **1 December 2024**, 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 47th session.*