

Name of World Heritage property	State Party	ID number
<i>Historic Town of Zabid</i>	<i>Republic of Yemen</i>	<i>ID N° 611</i>

REPORT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS ADOPTED AT THE 37th SESSIONS (PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA 2013) OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE, CONCERNING THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC TOWN OF ZABID, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE - GOPHCY – JANUARY 2014

The World Heritage Committee during its 37th session on July 2013 stated the following decision:

Decision: 37 COM 7A.28

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined* Document WHC-13/37.COM/7A,
2. *Recalling Decision* **36 COM 7A.24**, adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),
3. *Acknowledges* the efforts made by the State Party in the implementation of the corrective measures and *urges* it to secure adequate resources and support to ensure their sustained and comprehensive implementation;
4. *Welcomes* the development of the Conservation Plan and also urges the State Party to allocate the necessary resources for its implementation;
5. *Requests* the State Party to finalize the approval process for regulatory measures for the property, in particular the adoption of the Law of Protection of historic sites, monuments, cities and their urban and cultural heritage, as well as new construction codes, and to ensure their appropriate enforcement;
6. *Also requests* the State Party to submit a boundary clarification indicating precisely the boundaries of the property at the time of inscription no later than 1 December 2013 and a boundary modification request for a buffer zone, according to Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines, no later than **1 February 2014**;
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 Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

1. Introduction

Yemen is currently passing a very sensitive transformation period , unsustainable political , security and socioeconomic situation .

These issues, during the last three years until now , dramatically have expressing their shadows at all living aspects in our country.

Since 2011 mainly most of the development activities have been broken-down.

National dialog among the different parties in the country is in progress since February 2013. It aimed:

- To convergence views between the various dissimilar stripes and belongs of Yemeni partners ,to have a unified encouraging convince vision of new form of the state and the new political system, which is expected to bring the Yemen out of bottleneck, for the prospects of a promising future , better security and development.

In the other hand, the security crisis experienced by Yemen heavily effecting financial flows of the state capital , which is almost non-existent in the current time.

Donors as well have not fulfil their pledges so far to Yemen.

Nevertheless , according to the available capabilities of Yemeni government represented by the Ministry of Culture , the General organization for the preservation of historic cities as key players , have implementing important number of measures to improve the preservation approach of the cultural heritage in Yemen , especially protection of historical cities, which are registered in the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

series of reliable measures being in action like:

1. The very important step have been taken by Yemeni Authorities, that to issue the historic cities ,monuments , sites and its historical urban heritage preservation law No 16 for the 2013 year.(it done in August 2013.)
2. Ministry of culture in Yemen and ARC-WH in Bahrain in August 2013 have signed an agreement, assisting Yemen to improve historical town of Zabid state of conservation .
3. An important mission was held by the expert from the ARC-WH in Bahrain to Zabid assisting the current situation, during the mission a pilot project to be implemented by the ARC-WH have been discussed with the concerned authorities and representatives of local community in Zabid.
4. In January this year the pilot project was approved by the ARC-WH in Bahrain, supposed to start technical study and implementation in very near future.

5. Infrastructure projects (stone road paving ,lighting and new electricity networks) are in progress by SFD , electricity authority and GOPHCY.

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

2.1. Acknowledges the efforts made by the State Party in the implementation of the corrective measures and urges it to secure adequate resources and support to ensure their sustained and comprehensive implementation;

Yemen at present time is facing a financial crisis that even negatively affect the normal living standard of the Yemeni society, the crisis is forming a halt in implementation of many development projects and programs.

Programs of cultural heritage protection have also been affected due to the lack of resources .

Yemen is in urgent need of supports from the international community donors.

We hope the international community in led by the World Heritage Centre lend a helping hands in these difficult circumstances experienced by Yemen, we believe that the Yemeni culture and nature heritage deserves that the international campaign for its safeguards to be re-launched.

2.2. Requests the State Party to finalize the approval process for regulatory measures for the property, in particular the adoption of the Law of Protection of historic sites, monuments, cities and their urban and cultural heritage, as well as new construction codes, and to ensure their appropriate enforcement;

1. The law of Protection of historic sites, monuments, cities and their urban and cultural heritage has been officially adopted in august 2013, Regulations of the law (Bylaw) are prepared and will be reviewed and approved in the coming months
2. standards ,measurements and guidelines for the maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation of the historic cities , sites and buildings is been drafted , recently will be revised , approved and enforced.

2.3. Also requests the State Party to submit a boundary clarification indicating precisely the boundaries of the property at the time of inscription no later than 1 December 2013 and a boundary modification request for a buffer zone, according to Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines, no later than 1 February 2014;

- GOPHCY have submitted the requested information last year , throw the UNESCO national committee .

3. Some progress towards the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Despite the overall difficult situation in the country, the commitment on the highest level for the preservation of historical town of Zabid can be observed: through some actions like:

- The **Higher Ministerial Coordination Committee for Zabid (HMCCZ)** has had several meeting during the last two years to follow-up the obligation of the stakeholders concerned .
- During the last meeting in Hodeida, all the concerned parties such as the Ministries of Culture, Tourism, Public Works and endowment (Awqaf), the Planning Authority (GOLSUP), the Governorate and the GOPHCY were re-motivated to take their responsibility towards safeguarding of Zabid.
- Some steps have been taken after the meeting like :(technical team from GOLSUP has conducted a field visit to investigate the building violations.
- The high team mission by GOPHCY's chairman , representatives of president's office, minister's of local administration and the general secretary of UNESCO national committee, been conducted in December 2013 to Hodeida governorate and to historical town of Zabid, meeting the Governor and several personalities in Zabid to discuss the main issues and respond action that could be taken cooperatively.
- Hodeida governor and local authorities in Zabid have prepared an action plan's proposal to implement some conservation actions, the file should be presented to the prim ministries cabinet soon for review , fund raising and approval.
- **Zabid development forum** key members have participated in the planning workshop organized by GIZ new project , contributing their ideas for the effective community involvement in future Preservation process.
- In December 2013 GOPHCY have signed a contract with a local contractor to implement the second phase of a project called treatment of incompatible elements of extended buildings, situated in the path of the Paving project , the field work expected to start in March this year.

3. The major issue we are facing, that the part of Zabid inhabitants are not so cooperative with the preservation process, noticing that from increasing number of building violations in some parts of the town. We believe that a sustainable awareness program should be launched towards better understanding ,accepting and participating of the inhabitants in preservation process.

We have applied for technical assistance from the WHC in this subject, we hope that our application would be approved.

4. In conclusion

The numerous of constraints and challenges are still in place, efforts of all national and international stakeholders should continue and be encouraged by the WH Committee. The difficult situation in the country that, well-known by the international community need an urgent call for an international community to support financially and technically to insure sustainable Yemeni world heritage preservation.