

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>

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 OLD CITY OF SANA'A, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

MINISTRY OF CULTURE-GOPHCY– JANUARY 2014

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

**Decision: 37 COM 7B.58**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC-13/37.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **36 COM 7B.60**, adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),
3. Regrets that the State Party did not submit the report in time as requested;
4. Expresses its concern at the apparent continuing vulnerability of the property as a result of the current difficult situation;
5. Urgently calls upon the international community to support the State Party, in co-operation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in any way possible for priority conservation, management measures and capacity building programmes;
6. Requests 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;
7. Also requests the State Party to provide information to the World Heritage Centre on progress with the Heritage Protection Bill being considered by Parliament;
8. 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.

## **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 are dramatically have been 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 up to now. 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 are 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 process of historical cities, which were 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. Issued of Prime Ministers Decree No (116) 2013 for endorsement of the “ urgent executive plan for historical city of Sana’a protection as the world heritage site” which has been prepared by the joined team from the ministry of culture and the capital Sana’a secretariat, that been submitted to the Prime Ministers cabinet for revision and endorsement.
3. The above decree consisted some steps towards old Sana’a state of conservation progress which should be taken by the concerned stakeholders like, GOPHCY, ministry of endowments, ministry of planning and international cooperation (MOPAIC), as well as ministry of culture and the capital Sana’a secretariat.

## **2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee’s Decision**

### ***2.1. Regrets that the State Party did not submit the report in time as requested;***

We could not send the last year Sana’a state of conservation requested report in time, due to unsustainable political and security situation in Yemen during the last two years, that effect the situation in GOPHCY as well.

**2.2. Expresses its concern at the apparent continuing vulnerability of the property as a result of the current difficult situation;**

Despite the current difficult situation in the country , some of important activates have been taken as the following;

According to the above decree some decisions and actions have been taken as the following :

- Stopping any new construction within the old city of Sana'a for one year , during that the authorities shall take the necessary corrective measures for the ultimately overlapping and complicated issues.
- Stopping issuing any new contracts for the endowment's properties with in the old city of Sana'a for one year as well.
- Held several meetings with the officials of the MOPAIC (ministry of planning and international cooperation) looking for the available funds to implement some necessary conservation and protection projects in the historical city of Sana'a.
- The GIZ capacity building for the historical sites project has been established, aims to support the GOHPCY in staff building capacity, planning workshop been carried out with other stakeholders participation in December 2013.
- 70 % of a rapid assessment of the historical building stocks has been carried out by the GOPHCY staff, to have a clear picture , for future imperative intervention.
- WHC technical assistant support request for the old city of Sana'a conservation plan has been officially applied in October 2013.( need yours' support for prompted acceptance.)
- For urgent building protection within the old city of Sana'a , some individuals housing maintenance subsidies cases have been executed.
- The first draft of building's activities In the historical cites ( restoration and maintenance and new constructions...etc) guideline is elaborating.
- Production of bylaw manual of preservation law is elaborating with support of GIZ capacity building project.
- UNESCO Doha office been contacted to support in culture heritage strategy drafted by GOPHCY to be revised , enriched and developed .

**However** we are very much locking of funds:

- To implement the necessary conservation masurs.
- To restructure the GOPHCY as the Yemeni organization responsible for W culture H properties safeguarding, to be more effective and efficient organization to be able to fulfill its obligations, roles and responsibilities according to its vision and objectives.

- To organize and implement the necessary awareness sustainable campaign with the concerned partners.

*2.3. Status Urgently calls upon the international community to support the State Party, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in any way possible for priority conservation, management measures and capacity building programmes;*

We are in very urgent need of the WHC technical and logistical supports for official and efficient organization of this matter and regard, for that we request the committee during its coming session to announce for the international support campaign.

*2.3. Requests 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;*

- Actually, we are in very need of this mission to be performed , we believe that mission will enhance our willingness to improve the state of conservation of the city, In this regards as soon as the security situation improved , we are going official to invite the above mentioned joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission .

*2.4. Also requests the State Party to provide information to the World Heritage Centre on progress with the Heritage Protection Bill being considered by Parliament;*

- As we mentioned above the Protection Bill has been issued by the parliament and declared by the president in August last year, under the name of ( historic cities ,monuments , sites and its historical urban heritage preservation law) No 16 for the 2013 year.
- Team of experts are in progress to product the bylaw manual.

### **3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party**

- Conservation and development plan essentially should be in place , that will help GOPHCY to be able to control and manage the development activities within the city according to WH norms and profiles, technical assistance request has been sent to WHC last years.

### **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.**

- Study team of water and surge network rehabilitation project hired by the capital Sana'a secretariat is in progress , no close and clear cooperation with GOPHCY, it is a big project.  
we are concerned of possible effects to the traditional buildings and city urban tissues incase of inefficient implementation of the project. (need an urgent WHC technical assessment support for the project (study phase) before implementation of civil works.

## **5. In Conclusion**

The difficult situation in the country deserve to seriously thinking of international community support , we propose that the WH committee during its 38<sup>th</sup> scission in Qatar to call for international campaign for Safeguarding the Yemeni culture and nature world heritage.