



**SEKRETARZ STANU  
W MINISTERSTWIE KULTURY  
I DZIEDZICTWA NARODOWEGO  
GENERALNY KONSERWATOR ZABYTKÓW**

***Piotr Żuchowski***

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Warsaw, 7 May 2014

***Mr. Kishore Rao***  
*Director*  
*UNESCO World Heritage Centre*

**Subject: Summaries of reports on the state of conservation of the Centennial Hall in Wrocław, Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945), Historic Centre of Warsaw, World Heritage Sites.**

Dear Sir,

As requested by the letter of the Chairperson of the 38th session World Heritage Committee (ref. CL/WHC-13/23) to enhance transparency of the monitoring process of World Heritage sites, I would like to submit the summaries of reports on the state of conservation of the Centennial Hall in Wrocław (Ref. C 1165), Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) (Ref. C31), World Heritage Sites.

On behalf of State Party I also agree on the publication on the web-site the report on state of conservation of the Historic Centre of Warsaw (Ref. C 30), World Heritage Sites.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Appendices:

1. Report on the state of conservation of the Centennial Hall in Wrocław (Poland) (Ref. C 1165) – summary
2. Report on the state of conservation of the Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945), (Poland) (Ref. C31) - summary
3. Report on the state of conservation of the Historic Centre of Warsaw (Poland) (Ref. C 30)

Cc:

1. Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to UNESCO
2. Polish National Commission for UNESCO
3. Monuments Preservation Department of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

**Summary of the state of conservation report on the UNESCO World Heritage Site  
Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945)  
(Poland) (C-31)**

The Report presents the current state of conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) and its surroundings. It covers the period from the end of January 2011, when the State Party submitted the Report on the State of Conservation of the property (following decision no. 33 COM 7B.115), to January 2014.

The report dealt with a number of issues related to the protection and maintenance of Auschwitz Birkenau, World Heritage site. It presented the status of work concerning the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of Auschwitz Birkenau and its surroundings, as well as the main planned conservation work and investments within the boundaries of the World Heritage site or in its surroundings.

**Issues raised in the report**

**1. Construction of the S-1 Expressway and the southern link road to Oświęcim planned in the vicinity of the World Heritage site.**

To consult the matter international experts were invited to visit the property. The results of the international consultations which took place in Kraków and Oświęcim on 20-23 October 2013, were summarised in the report of the expert group (Dec 2013).

The report drawn up by experts following international consultations in October 2013 sets forth the measures and recommendations to be considered by the Polish authorities with regard to the management of the World Heritage site, and also refers to infrastructural projects in its vicinity, in particular those relating to the link road to Oświęcim which is to connect the town with the S-1 Expressway.

The experts accepted and approved without comments the proposed route of the S-1 Expressway in variant A, running on the western side of the Vistula. They did, however, have objections to the proposed southern link road to Oświęcim. They concluded that the route of the road might be acceptable, subject to further studies and analyses aimed to ensure protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site.

The experts' report was sent to the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways for review of the experts' comments and recommendations. At the time completion of this Report, no response has been received by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage from the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways to the experts' comments and recommendations.

**2. Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SoOUV)**

The World Heritage Centre presented comments on the draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SoOUV) of the property. It stated that the proposed statement did not contain all the required parts of the document, and that there were certain inaccuracies, namely parts of the "Brief synthesis" and "Justification of criteria" were not consistent with the Statement of Significance of the property, which was approved by Decision 31 COM 8B.8. It was pointed out that the adopted text of the Statement of Significance should not be changed or modified.

Currently work is in progress to prepare the final version of the draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property, which will be sent to the World Heritage Centre.

**3. Conservation policy**

Since the date of the last report of 25 January 2011, work has continued, aimed at the protection, conservation and presentation of the World Heritage site and its surroundings.

a/ The National Heritage Board of Poland has been working on the development of "Conservation strategy for Auschwitz Birkenau, the German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) World Heritage site" containing the rules for the protection and preservation of the World

Heritage site and its surroundings based on the valorisation of objects and landscape of historical significance.

**b/** State Party continued to work on strengthening the legal protection of the World Heritage site and its surroundings

**4.** New conservation work took place at the World Heritage site: conservation of two blocks of Auschwitz I camp, preparing new suitcase store and changing of the storage system for historic objects.

**5.** Reported investment projects in the surroundings of the World Heritage site:

**a/** Construction of the main parking lot for visitors to KL Birkenau including associated infrastructure

**b/** Construction new Service Centre for Visitors of the Auschwitz Memorial site

**c/** New seat of the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust

**d/** Renovation and conversion of the “small potato warehouses”

**e/** Construction of dykes and pumping stations that prevent from further flooding the site

**6.** Financing activities related to the protection and conservation of the World Heritage site and its surroundings

Using its own resources and owing to professional conservation facilities, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum performs ongoing work and implements projects based on the funding acquired. Some of the conservation tasks in the World Heritage Site area are financed with EU funds.

In 2009, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation was established in response to the conservation needs of the World Heritage site. The aim of the Foundation is to amass a perpetual fund which will ensure the permanent financing of maintenance work.

In May 2012, the agreement was signed on the commencement of Stage IV of the Oświęcim Strategic Government Programme (OSGP) for 2012-2015, under which the Municipality of Oświęcim will receive PLN 11m, and the Town of Oświęcim more than PLN 7m for the implementation of the planned projects.

Annexes to the SOC report include, inter alia: the Report of the expert group from international consultations, Kraków/Oświęcim, 20-23 October 2013; map presenting four variants of the expressway S-1 with link roads to Oświęcim; photographs of conservation work; plans of new investments, and 2013 Report of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.