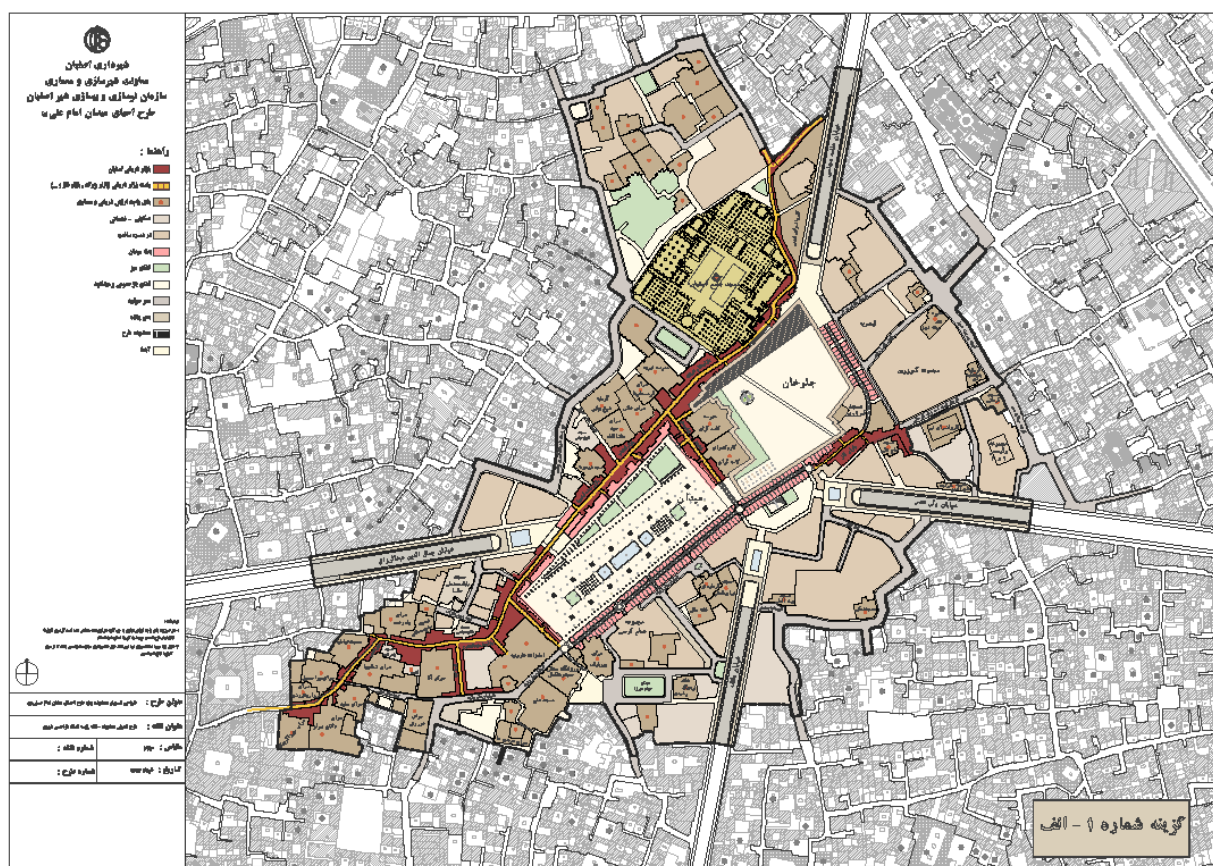


# Report on the ICOMOS Advisory Mission to Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan (C 1397)

**29<sup>th</sup> June to 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014**



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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The author of this report would like to thank Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian, Deputy for Cultural Heritage of ICHHTO, for the warm welcome provided in Iran and for the active cooperation during the mission.

The mission expert also expresses his special gratitude to Eng. Farhad Azizin, Director of ICHHTO Bases, for having supplied all the relevant information during the mission, as well as to Dr. Ali Reza Razeghi, ICCHTO Site Manager of Soltanyeh Dome, for his cooperative presence.

Finally the mission expert would like to express his great appreciation for the opportunity given to meet the officials of ICCTHO and the Isfahan Municipality, as well as the Iranian professional colleagues, who all guided the mission through the culture, history and beauty of Isfahan.

## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan (Islamic Republic of Iran) (C 1397) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2012, during the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee.

During its 38<sup>th</sup> session (Doha, 2014), after considering the Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B on the conservation issues concerning the property, the World heritage Committee adopted the following the decision.

### **Decision: 38 COM 7B.15**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B,*
2. *Recalling Decision 37 COM 7B.63, adopted at its 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013),*
3. *Notes the progress made in the revision of the Meydan-e Atiq project in response to the Committees request;*
4. *Requests the State Party to develop, adopt and implement an integrated conservation and management plan, as well as to elaborate mechanisms for monitoring urban development;*
5. *Reiterates its recommendation to the State Party that Heritage Impact Assessments are carried out for any future developments in the buffer zone, such as further rehabilitation of the surrounding historic bazaar, to ensure that any developments do not impact adversely on the property and its wider setting;*
6. *Welcomes the invitation by the State Party to host the ICOMOS advisory mission, to consider how the requests of the Committee at the time of inscription have been addressed;*
7. *Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2015, a report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property, including progress made in the implementation of the above recommendations, for examination by the Committee at its 40th session in 2016.*

### **Terms of Reference of the ICOMOS Advisory Mission to Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan**

In accordance with Decision **36 COM 8B.23** adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012), the advisory mission shall:

*1- Review the Meydan-e Atiq project, in particular its north-western corner in the immediate vicinity of the Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan, and assess whether:*

- a) The project is only to be carried out in the part of the buffer zone that is furthest removed from the property;*
- b) There are no structural connections between the new galleries and the historic walls of the mosque or that there are no structures connected to the mosque walls which could transmit loads or vibrations to these;*
- c) There is ample passage for pedestrians, in particular through the redesign of the entrance gate situation to the Meydan in the north-western corner and evaluate whether the current project ensures that the mosque and its adjacent historic structures are not endangered by crowds accessing the square during major events;*

- d) The overall design is appropriate to the local urban design tradition and setting of the mosque and sensitive to its Outstanding Universal Value;*
- e) There is a revised implementation schedule that allows for ample time to further review the project once the comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment has been carried out and to conduct further archaeological excavation if needed.*
- 2- Provide recommendations and guidance to the authorities regarding the undertaking of a comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure that the revised project proposal does not cause any negative impact on the historic structure of the mosque or its setting.*
- 3- Hold consultations with the Iranian national and local authorities and relevant stakeholders regarding the design and presentation of information in the property, in consideration to the principle of minimal intervention and in full respect for the aesthetic and religious significance of the Masjed-e Jāmē of Isfahan.*
- 4- Further advice the authorities on the protection of the buffer zone and wider setting and assess progress made in the integration of regulatory measures for the property in the Isfahan Master Plan and municipal by-laws. Evaluate whether monitoring mechanisms related to urban development and the provisions for mandatory undertaking of Heritage Impact Assessments for any future development in the buffer zone are currently in place to ensure that any developments do not impact adversely on the property and its wider setting.*
- 5- Review the status of development and adoption of an integrated conservation and management Plan, with special sections on visitor management and risk-preparedness strategies and evaluate whether priority has been given in the conservation plan to address the challenge posed by the necessary removal of the bracings in the shabestani domed areas.*
- 6- On the basis of the foregoing findings, prepare practical recommendations and identify measures to improve the conservation and management of the property, to be presented to the Government of Iran and to the World Heritage Committee.*

*Prepare a mission report in English or French, for review by the World Heritage Committee*

## 2. NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE MEYDAN-E ATIQ PROJECT

As indicated in the Terms of Reference and in accordance with Decision 36 COM 8B.23, the ICOMOS advisory mission shall:

1. Review the Meydan-e Atiq project, in particular its north-western corner in the immediate vicinity of the Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan, and assess whether:

a) The project is only to be carried out in the part of the buffer zone that is furthest removed from the property.

### NOTES

The Meydan-e-Atiq urban plan project, covering an urban area of 5.7 hectares, is located, in its totality, within the boundaries of the buffer zone of Masjed-e Jāmé 186,351 m<sup>2</sup>.

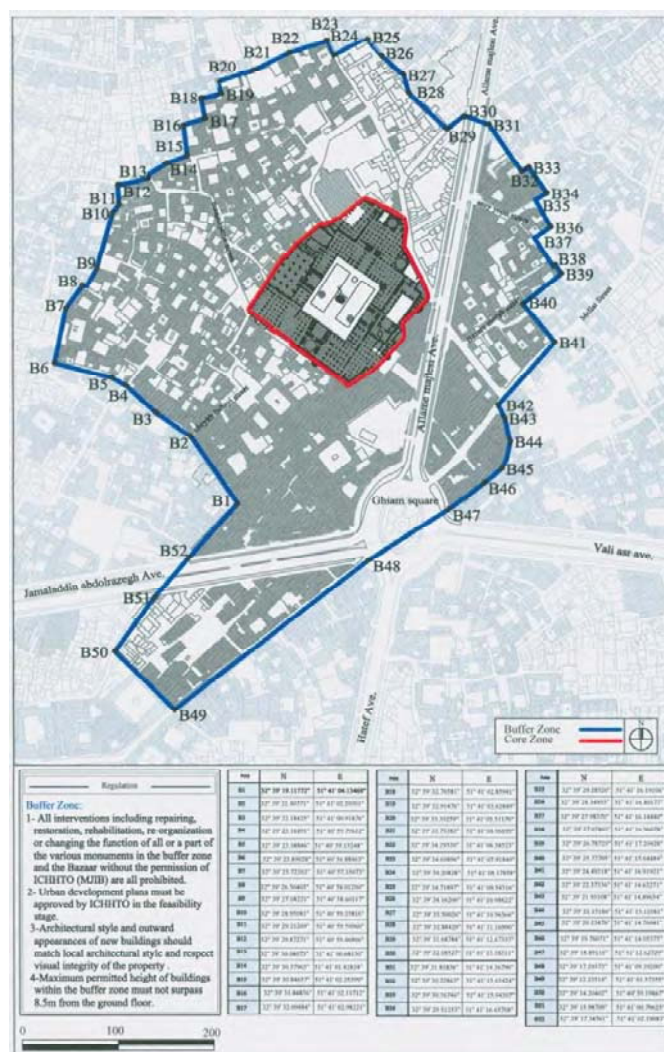


Fig 1. Plan of Masjed-e Jāmé inscribed property and its buffer zone  
(source: Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan nomination file)



Fig 2. Aerial view of Masjed-e Jāmé with boundaries of the buffer zone  
(source: *Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan nomination file*)

The project, which has received the approval of the State Party authorities at all levels, aims to upgrade the urban area located south east of Masjed-e Jāmé. The area is considered to have been an esplanade during the Seljukid period. Through the renovation of the public infrastructure and spaces as well as of public and private buildings, together with the reorganization of the residential areas and revitalization of the social and commercial activities, the project intends to recuperate the cultural, social and economic identity of the area.

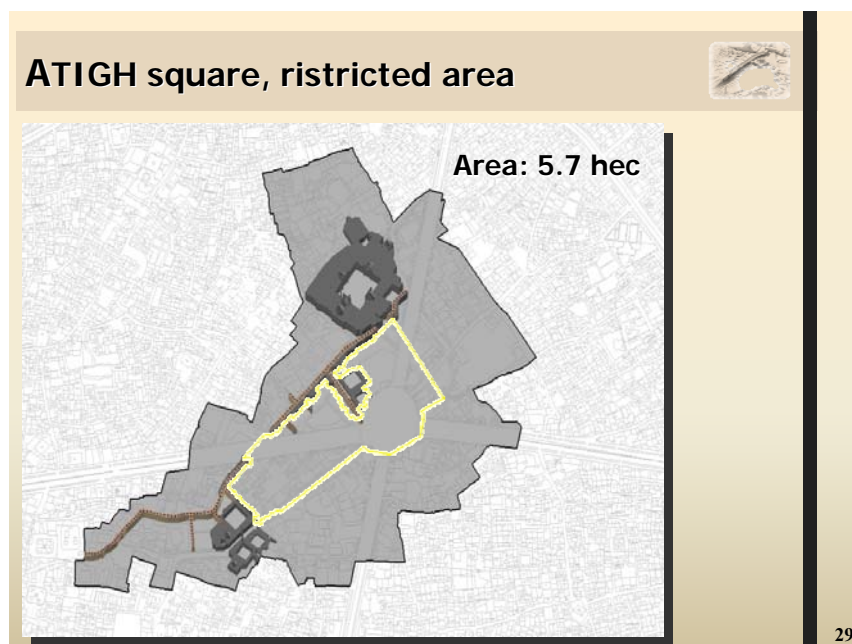


Fig 3. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: area  
(source *Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant*)

## Atiq Square Revitalization - Approved Plan



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Fig 4. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: area: approved plan  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

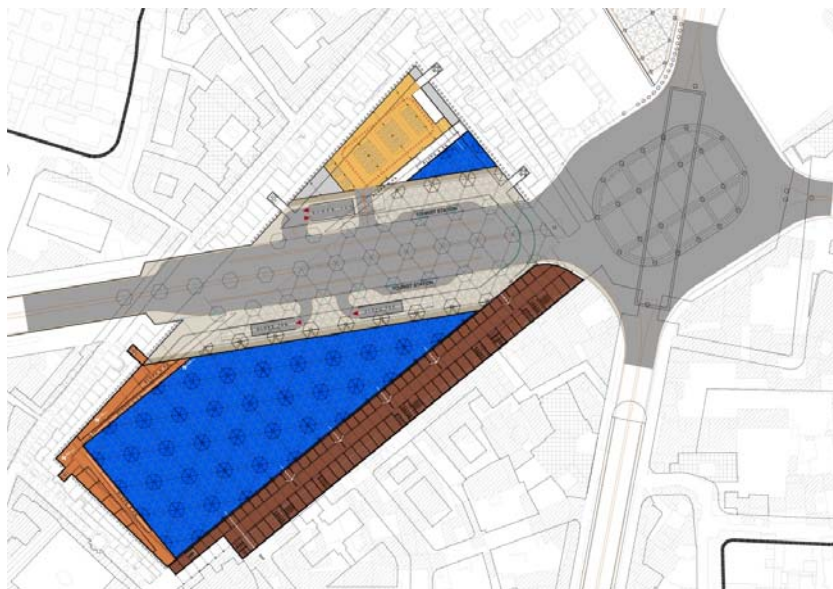


Fig 5. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: area of underground spaces  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

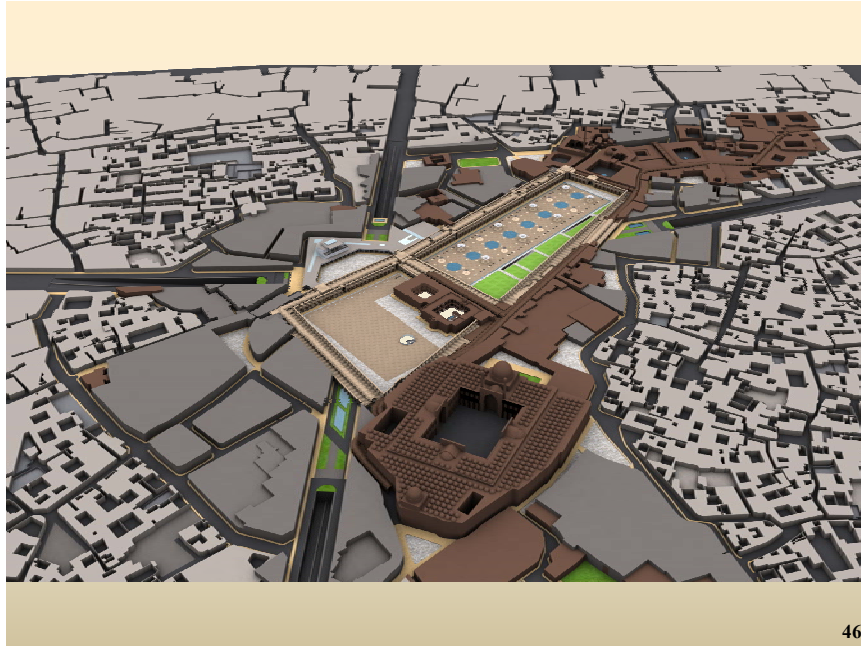


Fig 6. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: - CAD aerial view of the approved plan  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant )

The Meydan-e Atiq project consists of a macro-scale intervention with a linear plan, organized, in its totality, as follows:

- at underground level, a main road interchange, bus and car parking, facilities, a gathering hall.
- at ground level, a huge square presenting a north and a south section, surrounded by old bazaar galleries on the west side and new ones on other sides. Two ancient khans, which with their structures mark the edge between the south and north section of the square, will be kept and restored.

Parts of the new square cover the underpass for motorized circulation, built in most recent years.

The implementation of the project is scheduled in two phases.

At the date of the mission, the first phase of the project had already been realized.

It comprises:

#### South section

- at underground level: a hall for gathering events (18800 m<sup>2</sup>); and the underpass of Abdorazagh avenue
- at ground level, a square of 22530 m<sup>2</sup>, with a trapezoid plan, surrounded on the western part by the old bazaar galleries leading from the Meydan-e Imam to Masjed-e Jāmē, and on its other sides by new galleries (14883 m<sup>2</sup>). The new north-east gallery is located at around 100m distance from the Masjed-e-Jāmē south-east wall.

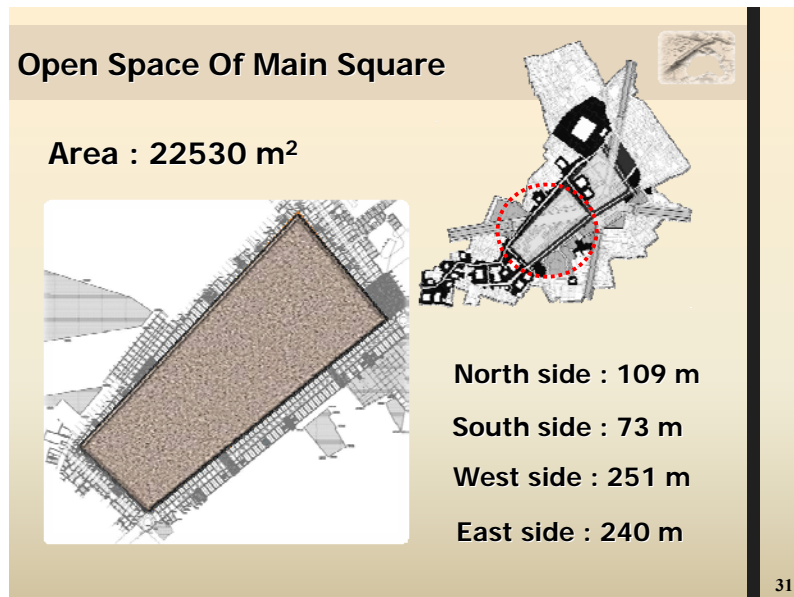


Fig 7. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: South section square  
 (source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

#### North section

- at underground level: a road interchange, connecting Azllameh Majilesi avenue, Hatef avenue, Valiasr avenue, and Jamaladdin Abdolrazegh avenue, which are main motor traffic thoroughfares opened in this historical area during the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The northern part of the Azllameh Majilesi tunnel is at a distance of 50 m from the South east foundation of the Masjed-e Jāmé.
- an underground parking for buses (2585 m<sup>2</sup>) and a VIP parking (965 m<sup>2</sup>);
- a pedestrian exit leading from bus/car parking facilities and gathering hall to the ground floor level:
- at ground level, a square covering the underpasses and the road interchange and connecting the Masjed-e Jāmé south east entrance with the eastern part of its buffer zone.

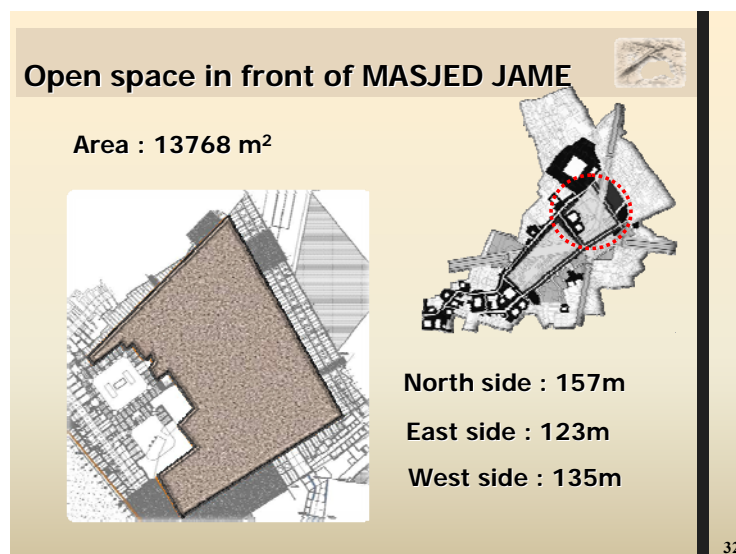


Fig 8. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: North section square  
 (source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant- first project)



Fig 9. Aerial view of Masjed-e Jāmé and of the square in front of its south-east gate  
(source: Google Earth)

The second phase of the project is still in the design process.

It foresees the creation of the north section of the new square, an almost rectangular open space in front of the Masjed-e Jāmé South-east entrance.

The new square will be delimited on its west side by the old bazaar galleries flanking the Mosque and on its south, east and north sides by new bazaar galleries. The two ancient existing khans, which with their structures mark the edge between the south and north section of the square will be kept and restored.

#### COMMENTS

The mission notes that the project is located in its totality within the buffer zone. The north section of the Meydan-e Atiq square is designed to be built in the close vicinity of Masjed-e Jāmé

*b) There are no structural connections between the new galleries and the historic walls of the mosque or that there are no structures connected to the mosque walls which could transmit loads or vibrations to these*

#### NOTES

Following the request of the Committee “to avoid any structural connection between the new galleries and the historic walls of the mosque or the structures connected to the mosque walls,” the State Party authorities have requested the designing company, Naqshe Jahan- Pars Consulting Engineering, to revise the plans of the north section of the square facing the South-east Masjed-e-Jāmé gate.

During the mission meeting held on July 1st, Eng. Ahmad Bahabadi, Naqshe Jahan- Pars Consulting Engineer presented the revised project:

- the north east wing of the bazaar, that in the first project was designed so as to adjoin the north edge of the Mosque entrance, is in the revised design shifted northbound by 60 m. in order to avoid any encroachment on the entrance, and it extends only up to Kamar Zarin Alley, at about 70 metres distance from the Mosque East wall, so avoiding any structural contact between the historical structures and the new ones.

While in the previous plan the northern section of the square measured 13768 m<sup>2</sup>, in the presented design, the open space in front of Masjed-e Jāmé measures about 22500 m<sup>2</sup>.

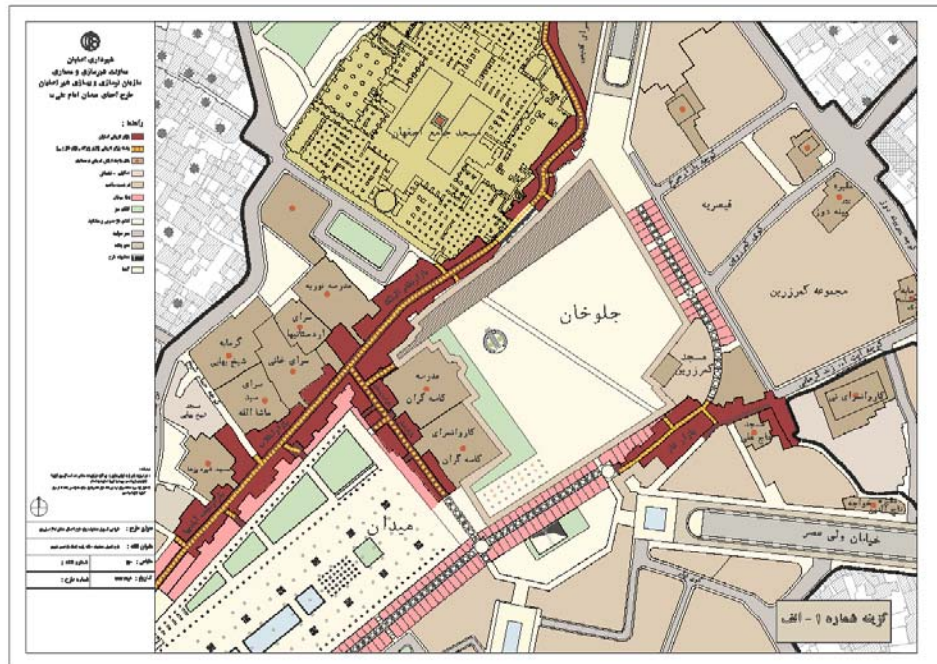


Fig 9. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: Revised plan of the north square section  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

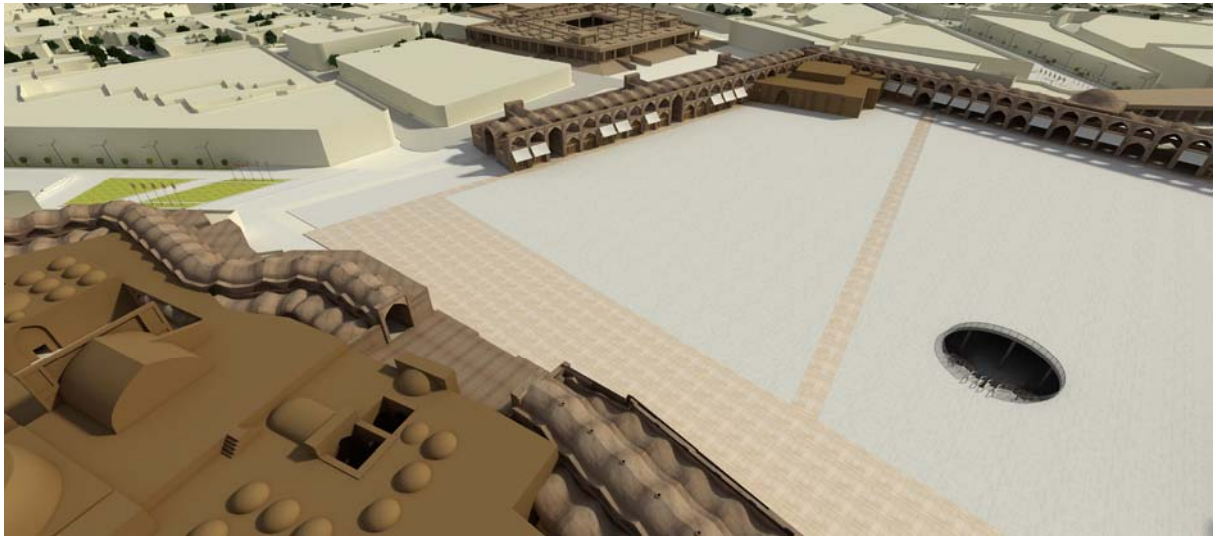


Fig 10. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project: revised plan - CAD aerial view of the north square section  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

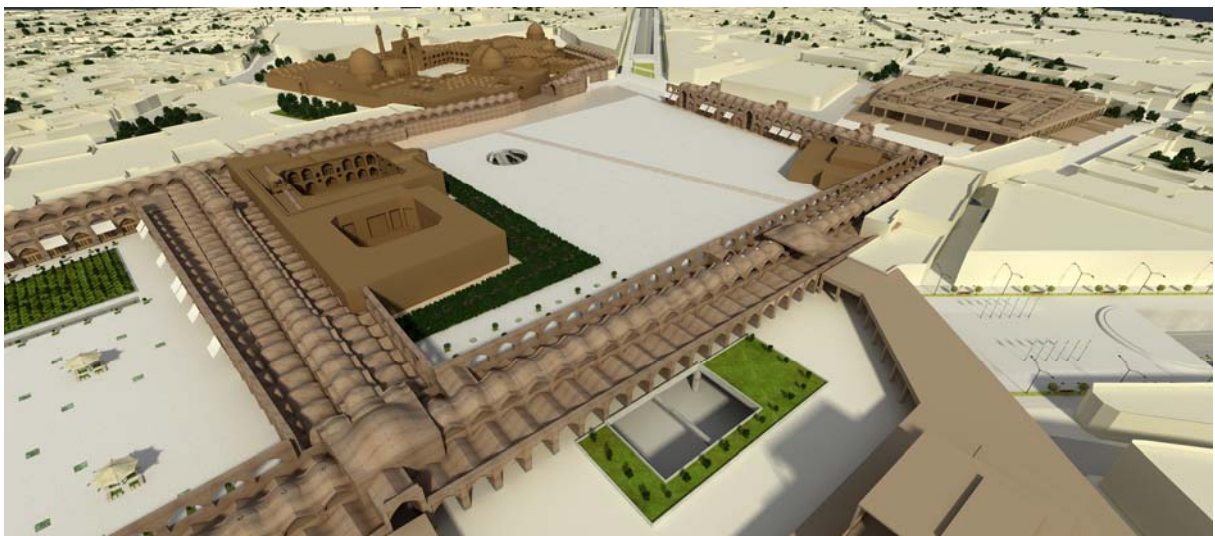


Fig 11. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project revised plan - CAD aerial view of the north square section  
(source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)



Fig 12. Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project revised plan - CAD aerial view of the north square section – detail of the new north gallery (source Naqsh-e Jahan – Pars Consultant)

## COMMENTS

The mission notes that:

- the revised plans of the project concerning the area in front of the south-east elevation of Masjed-e Jāmé, show that the new galleries will have no structural connection with the eastern wall of the Mosque nor with the structures of the existing covered bazaar flanking the Mosque;
- while the plans of the revised design of the project, transmitted to the ICOMOS expert during the mission, foresee the demolition of some structures of the existing bazaars located in front the Masjed-e Jāmé south-east entrance, the State of Conservation report transmitted in 2013 by the State party quotes (on page 14) “In addition to that, the recent revision recommends keeping and preserve the presently existing buildings on the north-western side of the square which is connected to the mosque. This side needs to meet minimal intervention but partial maintenance and restorations”

The mission has requested the ICCHTO authorities to provide updated information and/or plans on this issue. ICCHTO authorities have expressed their engagement to answer as soon as possible.

## RECOMMENDATION

Following the request for clarifying information on the final design concerning the “*presently existing buildings on the north-western side of the square which is connected to the mosque,*” the mission recommends the ICCHTO authorities to provide updated information and plans on this issue at the earliest convenience.

- c) *There is ample passage for pedestrians, in particular through the redesign of the entrance gate situation to the Meydan in the north-western corner and evaluate whether the current project ensures that the mosque and its adjacent historic structures are not endangered by crowds accessing the square during major events;*

## NOTES

The CAD renderings of the revised design show a huge empty space in front of the Masjed-e Jāmé south-east gate, but as they are at urban scale, they do not specify how the pedestrian flows will be organized in this area. According to the project designer, pedestrian passage will be through the redesigned entrance gate, foreseen in the middle of the north-western side of the square.

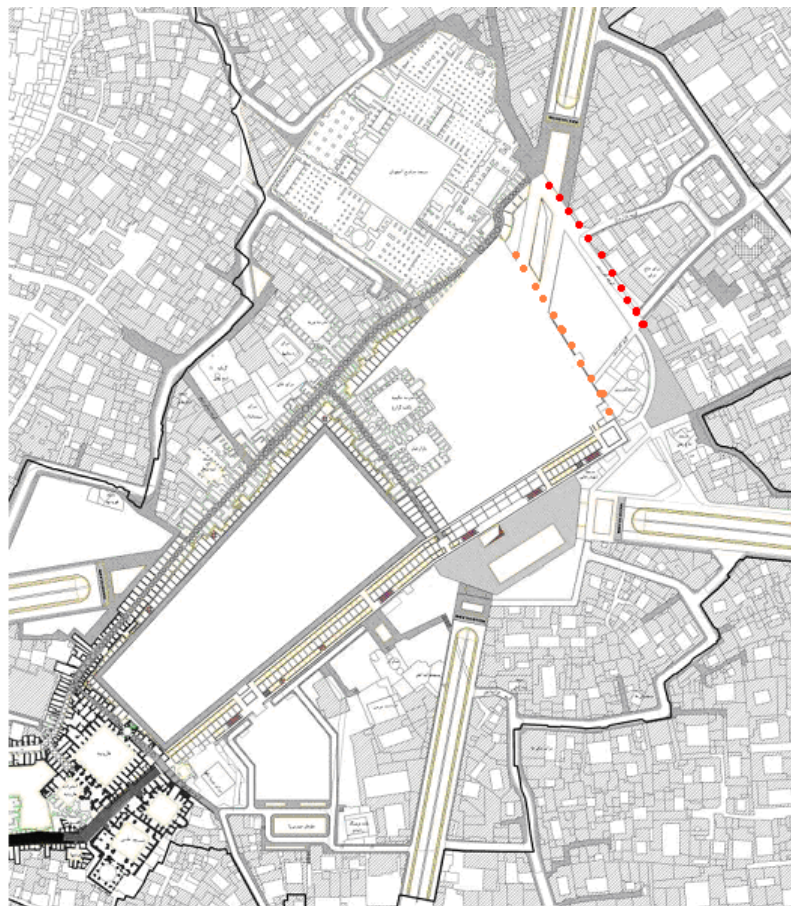


Fig 13. Plan of Meydan-e Atiq after modification  
Previous plan ----- revised plan - - - - -  
(source: 2013 SOC report)

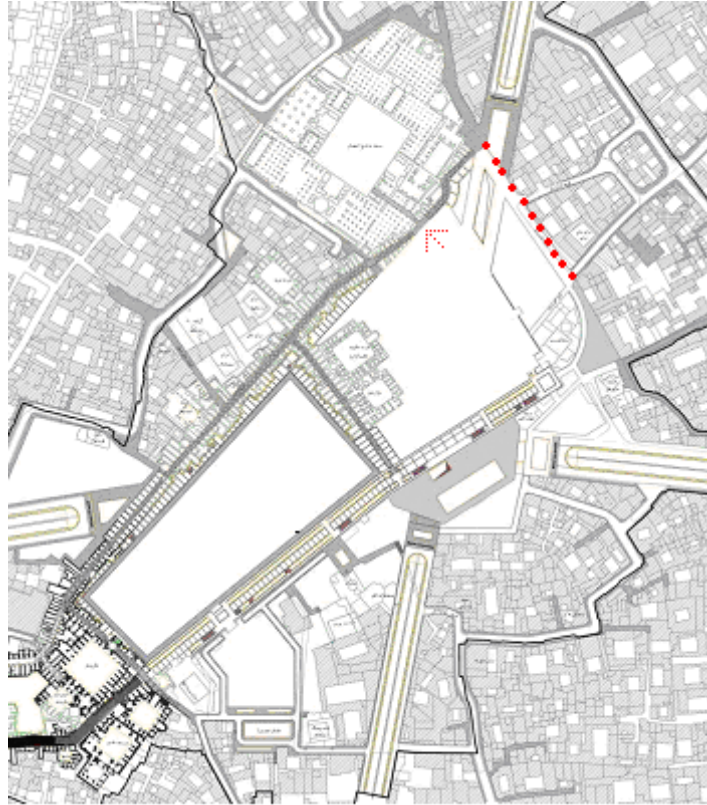


Fig 14. Plan of Meydan-e Atiq after modification: the entrance gate situation in Meydan located in the middle of the north-western section (*source: 2013 SOC report*)

## COMMENTS

Considering the new functional organization of the Meydan-e Atiq project, it is likely that the important visitor flows coming from the south section of the square with its new bazaar galleries, and from the underground parking facilities, will enter the north section of the square and have access to the south-east Mosque gate.

Large crowds always constitute a risk in a traditional historic centre, and this issue should be tackled, as requested by the Committee, through a proper management plan that foresees public accessibility regulations, especially considering the huge capacity of the Meydan-e Atiq, and its underground facilities, such as bus/car parking and gathering hall, to host large quantities of people.

The CAD plans and renderings of the revised design show a huge empty space in front of the Masjed-e Jāmé south-east gate, but as they are at urban scale, they do not specify how the pedestrian flows will be organized within this area.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State party to integrate into the revised design of the north square section, which according to the latest information received after the mission is still in progress, plans of an appropriate architectural scale, detailing the pedestrian circulation organization within the area.

d) *The overall design is appropriate to the local urban design tradition and setting of the mosque and sensitive to its Outstanding Universal Value;*

## NOTES

Some aerial pictures, included in the nomination file of the property, show that, up until recent times and before the beginning of the Meydan-e Atiq project, the area of the project was occupied by traditional urban fabric characterized by an irregular street network and small urban plots.

According to the information provided by the SOC report established in December 2013 by ICHHTO, the footprint of the Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project corresponds to the plan that the site presented in the Seljukid period, and quoting the report *“the revitalization and conservation plan of Meydan-e Atiq intends to reconstruct the Seljuq square to its authentic design and function. The aim of the plan is conservation and regaining the historical and cultural values of Meydan-e Atiq as well as improving the quality of life in the place.”*

The urban design of the Meydan-e-Atiq project presents a geometrical linear pattern overlaid on the pre-existing traditional irregular urban fabric.

While the underground foundations and bearing structures of the complex have been realized in concrete, the bearing structures of the new bazaar galleries, at ground level, consist of metallic frames dressed with baked brick finishing and creating arched porticos. These architectural features confer to the new bazaar galleries a traditional appearance, inspired to the Isfahan traditional architectural vocabulary.

The Archaeological report established during excavation works in the Meydan-e Atiq square does not mention if any evidence of remains of Seljoukid structures has been found.

The CAD renderings of the revised project, presented during the mission, foresee the creation of some new important buildings around the Meydan e Atiq, within the northern boundary of the buffer zone, which for the wider dimension of the footprint will cover several of the traditional urban plots.

## COMMENTS

Conservation philosophy and principles of international charters require that, in case of new buildings within historical areas, their features must be clearly recognizable as contemporary, in order to avoid pseudo-historical design (*“history must remain readable”*, art.21 of 2005 UNESCO Vienna Memorandum).

The new arched bazaar galleries of the south section of Meydan-e Atiq, already realized, create an urban setting inspired by the traditional architectural heritage of Isfahan, not in contrast with the historical cityscape of the area. According to the urban rules for new buildings in the historical areas of Isfahan, their height does not exceed 8.5 meters.

For the time being, the very close setting of the entrance of Masjed –e Jāmé, surrounded by traditional bazaar galleries has kept its traditional character and from this area no view is possible on the new bazaar buildings that surround the south section of Meydan-e Atiq.

Nevertheless, there is the risk that, following all the interventions already carried or in progress, the traditional context of Masjed-e Jāmé might be strongly modified, and that the property could “float” on a platform created by the open spaces of the square, under which are located the road interchange, the parking facilities, and the gathering premises. The intense motor vehicle traffic is likely to provoke atmosphere and noise pollution, as well as continuous ground vibrations just near the foundation of Masjed-e-Jāmé. Continuous monitoring of these nuisances that could affect the property should be carried out.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Having noted that the CAD renderings presented during the mission of the revised project of the north square section also foresee the creation of some new large buildings around the Meydan-e Atiq, just on the edge of the buffer zone, which for the wider dimension of their footprints will cover several traditional urban plots, the mission recommends the State Party:

- to request the design company to consider, as a priority during the finalization process of the design of the north section of the new square, the conservation of the relation between Masjed-e Jāmé with its traditional setting, as its modification could have an impact on the social and cultural signification of the property;
- to request the design company to provide detailed urban/architectural plans of the north section of the new square, defining how the integration between the new bazaar buildings and the surrounding traditional urban fabric will be realized.
- to request the design company that the design of the new buildings and open spaces to be created in the buffer zone, be finalized according to the specific detailed urban restoration/renovation plan for the area, which should determine buildings to conserve, to restore or to demolish, and to define the appropriate patterns of the urban plots on which the new buildings will exist, as well as the criteria for their harmonious integration with the adjacent traditional ones.

Finally, the mission recommends the State Party

- to monitor and assess the impact of the underpass motor traffic on the Masjed-e Jāmé structures;
- to expose, within the Meydan-e Atiq project area, information panels explaining the project design criteria and technologies to visitors, together with the date of construction.

*e) There is a revised implementation schedule that allows for ample time to further review the project once the comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment has been carried out and to conduct further archaeological excavation if needed.*

## NOTES

According to the information provided by the 2013 SOC report and confirmed during the mission by Dr. Talebian, Deputy for Cultural Heritage of ICHHTO, the mission takes note of the fact that the second phase of the project is still in the design phase and that the revised plan concerning the north-western corner of the square will be left pending until adoption by ICHHTO, and approval by the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS. In case either should express observations or suggestions concerning the revised project, ICHHTO will proceed to a further review of the project.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission therefore recommends the State Party to transmit to the World Heritage Centre, as soon as possible, the final revised design plans at architectural scale concerning the second phase of the Meydan-e Atiq project.

Moreover, the mission recommends that further archaeological excavations be carried out, prior to the implementation of future works, in order to document with archaeological evidence the historical occupation of the area.

2. *Provide recommendations and guidance to the authorities regarding the undertaking of a comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure that the revised project proposal does not cause any negative impact on the historic structure of the mosque or its setting;*

## NOTES

The SOC report transmitted in December 2013 by the State party informs that “*Partially, a heritage impact assessment has been carried out by the Bavand consultant group for each sub-district of the historical axis. These studies are being continued for some of the sections including Mayan-e Ate in order to foresee the future states of the historical properties*”

Bavand Consultants group has been performing historical and urban studies on the historical axis of Isfahan for about 30 years.

The information provided by the State Party during the advisory mission has confirmed that the Heritage Impact Assessment for each sub-district of the historical axis, including Meydan-e Atiq section, is in progress, but for the moment there is no established timing concerning its finalization.

The mission regrets that the Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project has been approved and implemented in the absence of a specific Heritage Impact Assessment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State Party to finalize the comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment of the Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project, as soon as possible and prior to the future implementation of the second phase of the project.

The mission brings to the attention of the Iranian authorities that the document “*ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*” provides the general methodology principles to organize the study and also informs that, if requested, ICOMOS could designate an expert to assist the designated consultant in accomplishing the task.

3. *Hold consultations with the Iranian national and local authorities and relevant stakeholders regarding the design and presentation of information in the property, in consideration to the principle of minimal intervention and in full respect for the aesthetic and religious significance of the Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan.*

## NOTES

During the visit to the Masjed-e Jāmé, the mission appreciated the quality of presentations and information available at the information desk of the south-east entrance, which fully respects the religious, aesthetic and cultural significance of the property.

During the visit to Masjed-e Jāmé guided by Professor Jabalemeli, the mission visited the building site for the consolidation of what remains of the original structures of the Muzzafaride medersa, which were subject to severe destruction during the last war. The reconstruction of the missing structures is carried out on the base of symmetrical analogy.

The State Party would like to use the reconstructed premises of the Muzzafaride Medersa, as a museum for the archaeological relics found in the mosque during the various excavation campaigns. These findings are at the moment deposited in the stores of the Masjed-e Jāmé restoration laboratory.

## COMMENTS

The mission appreciates the quality of presentations and information available at the information desk of the south-east entrance, which fully respects the religious, aesthetic and cultural significance of the property.

The mission encourages the State Party to implement the project of the Masjed-e Jāmé archaeological museum which could greatly contribute to the presentation of Masjed-e Jāmé history and to the understanding of its Outstanding Universal Value.

The mission brings to the attention that the museological and museographical project of this archaeological museum could constitute a pilot project to be developed in the framework of international cooperation with organizations specialized in the field.

*4. Further advice the authorities on the protection of the buffer zone and wider setting and assess progress made in the integration of regulatory measures for the property in the Isfahan Master Plan and municipal by-laws. Evaluate whether monitoring mechanisms related to urban development and the provisions for mandatory undertaking of Heritage Impact Assessments for any future development in the buffer zone are currently in place to ensure that any developments do not impact adversely on the property and its wider setting;*

## NOTES

During the meetings, Eng. Hossein Jafari, Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director of Isfahan Municipality Renovation & Restoration Organization (IMR&RO), informed the mission that the organization is in charge of the restoration of the traditional buildings in the historic areas.

The revitalization plan for the historic axis has been initiated by the Ministry of Housing and Urbanization in accordance with the adopted legislation for conservation of the historic fabric, namely for the Meydan-e Atiq and the southern section of Meydan-e Naghsh-e Jahan, with supervision by the responsible Cultural Heritage Organization.

One hundred restoration and conservation projects are in progress within the historical areas under supervision of the Cultural Heritage Organization in order to upgrade the living environment of inhabitants.

Finally, Eng. Hossein Jafari made a presentation of the regulations protecting the historical areas and special regulations protecting Masjed-e Jāmé and its buffer zone.

## **Master plan of Isfahan**

The master plan of Isfahan has been prepared by Naghsh-e Jahan Pars consulting engineers in 1993 and approved by the Higher Council for Architecture and Urban Planning [HCAUP], including an ICHHTO's representative as one of its members.

In addition, in 1993 the Isfahan ICHHTO has prepared the detailed master plan for the historic axis of Isfahan to assure due protection to the designated areas.

Masjed-e Jāme' of Isfahan is located within the core zone of the Isfahan historic-cultural axis.

The master plan of Isfahan was revised in 2007 by Bavand consultant engineers. In the revised plan, the historic area of Isfahan is divided into seven zones and the zone of Meydan-e Atiq and Masjed-e Jāme' of Isfahan is considered as zone A.

Special regulations have been integrated into the master plan to protect historical axis zones and their Monuments which foresee the approval of ICHHTO for land use and infrastructure plans as well as for any other intervention, stating the following principles:

- retain the existing skyline, any new construction having the obligation of being kept lower than the surrounding historic buildings and, in any case, of not exceeding 8.5 meters in height;
- respect the balance between mass and empty space of the urban fabric;
- specific regulations protecting an individual monument, override the regulations of the relevant core or buffer zone regulations.

Following the inscription of Masjed-e-Jāmé on the World Heritage List, specific regulations have been integrated into the Isfahan Master plan, in order to strengthen the ICHHTO control on the seven core zones of the historical axis and their buffer zones, and are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

### **Regulations of core zone**

1. Intervention and possession of any kind is prohibited;
2. All restoration and conservation activities must be first approved by ICHHTO (MJIB);
3. Any intervention altering the authenticity and integrity of the property is not allowed;

### **Regulations of buffer zone**

1. All interventions including repairing, restoration, rehabilitation, reorganization or changing the function of all or a part of the various monuments in the buffer zone and the bazaar without the permission of ICHHTO (MJIB) are prohibited;
2. Urban development plans must be approved by ICHHTO in the feasibility stage;
3. Architectural style and outward appearances of new buildings should match local architectural style and respect visual integrity of the property;
4. Maximum permitted height of buildings within the buffer zone must not surpass 8.5m from the ground floor.

## **COMMENTS**

Following the bombing during the last war, the urban fabric of the Masjed-e Jāmé buffer zone, especially in the areas north and west of the mosque, is in poor condition: there are empty areas and several empty urban parcels with remains of traditional buildings, as well as new constructions not which do not suiting the traditional character of the area. The public infrastructure of the area, in some cases, needs maintenance.

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<sup>1</sup> Following regulations extracted from paragraphs 5.b.7 and 5.b.8 of 2012 Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan nomination file (page 216)

On the other hand, the CAD renderings presented during the mission foresee the creation of some important new buildings around the Meydan-e Atiq, just on the edge between the buffer zone and the historical area. , Because of the wide dimension of their footprint, each of these building will cover several traditional urban plots. The mission brings to attention that the buildings with large plan dimensions are not in harmony with the traditional urban patterns and architectural typologies that should be preserved in historical areas.

The mission stresses the fact that the traditional character of the Masjed-e Jāmé buffer zone is an essential component to understanding the religious, historical, cultural and social importance of the mosque, and the measures to protect it need to be an integral part of the general urban planning. As a matter of fact, protection rules often lose their efficacy due to the difficult integration between planning instruments operating in the same area, but managed by different actors, with different time schedules, resources and legal effectiveness.

The mission considers that there is the risk that, following all the interventions already carried or in progress, the traditional context of Masjed-e Jāmé might be strongly modified, and that the property could “float” on the platform of the open spaces of the square under which are located the road interchange, the parking facilities, and the gathering premises. The intense motor vehicle traffic is likely to also provoke continuous ground vibrations just near the foundation of Masjed-e-Jāmé.

The mission notes that according to the latest information provided by the State party, new urban regulations are being prepared but considers that, for the time being, the buffer zone of the property is not sufficiently protected by detailed measures.

The mission recommends that the legal protection in place for the buffer zone be reinforced, as soon as possible, through the establishment of a specific zoning plan, integrated into the framework of the general master plan.

A comprehensive and effective zoning plan for protection of the property buffer zone needs:

- very detailed prescriptions for the protection and conservation of the traditional patterns of urban plots and traditional street network,
- very detailed prescriptions for the restoration of monuments and traditional buildings, fully respecting the traditional architectural typologies, morphologies and materials.
- identification of urban plots on which new buildings may be constructed, according to proper density and height parameters.

Therefore, the zoning plan needs to be accompanied by the Classification Map, in which all the existing urban assets, included the infrastructure and public equipment, are appraised and ranked according to their religious historical, architectural cultural, social and economic significance and potential, as well as according to their physical condition.

The Classification Map shall show the entire extent of the conservation area, indicating the status of individual buildings and shall specify categories of intervention according to a proper methodology (for instance: National listed monuments; buildings that, due to their high degree of architectural quality, or location in the urban planning landscape, make a key contribution to the appearance of the conservation area; structures of varying quality, which match the historical setting because of their scale and architectural features; buildings to be replaced and spaces to be filled).

With regard to the public space, the Classification Map shall be the basic tool for municipal regulations to define criteria for the conservation of traditional profiling of streets, squares, views, as well as paving materials, street furniture, types of plants or trees, with the intention of preserving the character of the protected area.

Considering the property inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, a classification map specific for new buildings within the buffer zone should also been compiled and adopted. to ensure that they will fit into their surrounding scale, parcelling and facade composition so as to be appropriate to the visual appearance of the existing context.

The Classification Map and the regulations relating to each category of buildings should form an integral part of the zoning plan and should be accompanied by operational guidelines defining conservation/renovation criteria.

Moreover, the zoning plan should also take into account the archaeological heritage findings and the expected presence of archaeological remains, on the base of the Archaeological Classification Map. This map should provide an inventory of excavated or expected archaeological remains as well as a first general indication for the integration of archaeological sites within zoning plans.,

Finally the zoning plan should also identify development factors that could have a negative effect on the property and the ways in which the preservation and protection of the property can be guaranteed by anticipating and incorporating these factors in planning and procedures, so as to ensure that future urban and societal developments within the area will not threaten its character.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State Party:

- to make finalize, as soon as possible, the ongoing urban studies in order to adopt very detailed urban regulations to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the Masjed-e Jāmé WH property and the traditional character of its buffer zone, through the establishment of a specific zoning plan, integrated into the framework of the general master plan.
- to monitor atmosphere and noise pollution as well as ground vibration originated by the intense motor vehicle traffic of the under pass, as these nuisances could affect the property.

5. *Review the status of development and adoption of an integrated conservation and management Plan, with special sections on visitor management and risk-preparedness strategies and evaluate whether priority has been given in the conservation plan to address the challenge posed by the necessary removal of the bracings in the shabestani domed areas.*

## NOTES

The Iranian authorities have informed the mission that:

- positive action is already ongoing in order to monitor the Masjed-e Jāmé property and to revitalize its buffer zone;
- the technical team of ICCHTO has already carried out comprehensive diagnostic studies on Masjed-e Jāmé and its setting and it continues monitoring the site, but the preparation of the preservation and management plan of the property is being considered as a new agenda for the next year.

The mission, recalling the World Heritage Committee Decision: 38 COM 7B.15 requesting “*the State Party to develop, adopt and implement an integrated conservation and management plan, as well as to elaborate mechanisms for monitoring urban development*” has brought to the attention of the State Party authorities that the management plan for the property, which includes sections on sensitive visitors management and risk-preparedness strategies, should be finalized and adopted with high priority.

## COMMENTS

The mission recalls some important issues concerning the establishment of the management plan for the protection of WH properties and their buffer zones.

### **Management plan**

The combined body of sections in *chapter I.C , II A II F and IV.B* of the “*Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*” defines the extent of engagement of the State Party when nominating a property to the World Heritage List: among them, the engagement of the States Party to establish a management plan for the inscribed properties to ensure that their Outstanding Universal Value, including the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription, are sustained or enhanced over time.

The Management Plan is the operative tool which defines how the responsible authorities at governmental and local level, will cooperate to preserve the OUV of the World Heritage property.

In the case of a World Heritage property, the management plan shall take into account national legislation and municipal regulations as well as principles and guidelines for the protection of the cultural heritage as defined by international charters, and it shall be coordinated with local and regional planning instruments and policies promoting sustainable and responsible development.

Ensuring effective protection and preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of a World Heritage property as well as of the proper character of its surrounding buffer zone, requires a wide-ranging management vision shared by the property owner, by the responsible national and local authorities and the property manager, which share the administrative responsibility, as well as by the stakeholders. For this purpose, the responsible authorities shall make legislation, regulations, policy and budgets that support the conservation of the property. Such commitment shall take the form of appropriate, legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures proposed and adopted to protect the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (Operational Guidelines, Paragraph 53).

Effective management involves a cycle of long-term and short-term actions to protect, conserve and present the nominated property (Operational Guidelines, Paragraph 112) and involves Reactive Monitoring and Periodic Reporting to the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO (Operational Guidelines, Paragraph 113).

The task of the management plan is to implement these operative measures – determined by legislation or mutual agreement among the relevant authorities – that will ensure the effective conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, controlling developments within the property and in its buffer zone as well.

The management plan should contain an accountable, transparent description of how the management system functions (Operational Guidelines, Paragraph 111) and satisfy the basic principles of effectiveness, coherence, functionality, realism, laid down by the World Heritage Committee.

In order to satisfy these basic principles, the management plan should include:

- a declaration signed by the property owner, the property manager, responsible authorities and, possibly, stakeholders (as partners in the site) detailing their direct involvement, their shared scope, and their agreement to combine efforts in protecting and conserving the property and its buffer zone;
- a cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, adjustment and re-evaluation of the management plan, set out by the property manager,
- allocation of resources, provision of sufficient manpower, estimation of relevant expertise and expected time for operations,
- financing by competent institutions with a balanced and transparent description of the implementation of the management system,
- methodology for assessing in practice, and adjusting where necessary, the operability of the management plan.

For the implementation of the management plan, the property manager, which is the authority responsible for the preservation of its Outstanding Universal Value and its conditions of authenticity and integrity, maintains contact and coordination with the jointly responsible authorities and with the sector municipal services and institutes of the city, as the support of these parties, who are involved and have an interest in the World Heritage site, is of key importance for its effectiveness.

Moreover, in a very pragmatic and positive approach concerning the public life, the property manager shall promote the consultation between the jointly responsible authorities and the stakeholders involved (such as users, advisers, historical associations, employers and residents), as combining the visions of shareholders and stakeholders creates a synergy of the instances in charge of the nominated property and it enhances the conservation and responsible use of the property and its buffer zone.

### **Conservation plan of the property**

During the mission a visit was made to the roofs of the Masjed-e Jāmé, accompanied by Prof. Jabalameli, to observe the metallic braces installed in the past, under the direction of Arch. André Godard, in order to retain the static disorder of the façade walls of the north and east aywans outlining towards the internal court.

According to the information received, these devices have almost lost effectiveness because of the dilatation and shifting which they underwent due to thermal excursion, but to remove them is a difficult task.

Moreover, the mission has been informed that no comprehensive geo-diagnostic enquiries have been carried out to check the condition of the mosque ground foundations and structures. Only a few pits have been excavated in the past years revealing that the foundations of the second mosque built during the Abbasid period, have been laid on the rubble and backfill resulted from the demolition of the first mosque.

The summary of the Geotechnical Engineering Report, established prior to the works for the realization of the Meydan-e Atiq underpass by the Isfahan province Bureau of Technical and Soil Mechanic Laboratory Co – Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, informs that, according to the boreholes drilled, the ground material to a depth of 3.5 meters to 9 meters is formed of disturbed soil containing clay and construction debris.

The summary of the Geotechnical Engineering Report does not mention either if the foundation soil of Masjed-e Jāmé may be affected by the projected work or if the impact of the excavations carried out in the close vicinity of the mosque foundations should be assessed. The mission brings to attention that monitoring the physical behaviour of heritage structures during major excavation works is a prior concern.

Therefore, the first step to undertake is the realisation of a comprehensive geo-diagnostic study on the foundation soil and on the condition of the Mosque foundations. A digital stability monitoring system, should record the static behaviour of the Mosque structures over of minimum one year period with the scope of elaborating a digital model of the behaviour of the observed structures in terms of its reactions to external strains. The availability of a reliable model is of great help not only in order to assess the static behaviour of the structures under normal conditions, but also under sudden disruptive events, such as earthquakes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission takes note that, according to the information provided by the State Party's 2013 SOC report and confirmed by ICCHTO authorities during the advisory mission, the technical team of ICCHTO has already carried out comprehensive diagnostic studies on Mashed-e Jāmé and its setting and it continues monitoring the site, but the preparation of the preservation and management plan of the property is being considered as a new agenda for the next year.

The mission recommends that the management plan, which is actually in progress under ICCHTO guidance, be finalized and adopted, as soon as possible with special consideration dedicated to the conservation/restoration action plan of the Masjed-e Jāmé structures as well as to the visitor pressure and risk preparedness strategies, in order to protect the property and its Outstanding Universal Value through the maintenance of its structures and the conservation and restoration of its buffer zone.

Concerning the specific issue of the conservation plan of the Masjed-e Jāmé structures, in order to complete the diagnostic studies already carried out, the mission recommends the State Party:

- to install a comprehensive monitoring system to check the static behaviour of its structures over a proper time span, and establish a digital model which will help to identify the nature and mechanics of the disorders.

Moreover, the mission considers that the studies to identify the proper techniques to remove the metal braces installed on the north and east aywan roofs and to consolidate their structures with fine-tuned contemporary technologies should receive the appropriate consideration of a highly qualified interdisciplinary technical team, formed by architectural historians, architect-restorers, and structural engineers, after implementation of comprehensive geo-structural diagnostic tests.

Finally, the mission kindly requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed in case the project for the creation of the Isfahan Underground Transport System should involve any of the Isfahan properties inscribed on the World Heritage List or their buffer zones.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. a) *The project is only to be carried out in the part of the buffer zone that is furthest removed from the property.*

The Meydan-e-Atiq urban plan project, consisting of the north and south sections of the new Square, and the new Bazaar galleries, covering an urban area of 5,7 hectares, is located, in its totality, within the boundaries of the buffer zone of the inscribed property.

The north section of the Meydan-e Atiq square is planned to be built in the close vicinity of Masjed-e Jāmé.

1. b) *There are no structural connections between the new galleries and the historic walls of the mosque or that there are no structures connected to the mosque walls which could transmit loads or vibrations to these*

The mission notes that:

- the revised plans of the project concerning the area in front of the south-east elevation of Masjed-e-Jāmé, show that the new galleries will have no structural connection with the eastern wall of the Mosque nor with the structures of the existing covered bazaar flanking the Mosque.
- while the plans of the revised design of the project, transmitted to the ICOMOS expert during the mission, foresee the demolition of some structures of the existing bazaars located in front the Masjed-e Jāmé south-east entrance, the State of Conservation report transmitted in 2013 by the State party quotes (on page 14) “*In addition to that, the recent revision recommends keeping and preserve the presently existing buildings on the north-western side of the square which is connected to the mosque. This side needs to meet minimal intervention but partial maintenance and restorations*”

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the request for clarifying information on the final design concerning the “*presently existing buildings on the north-western side of the square which is connected to the mosque*” the mission recommends the ICCHTO authorities to transmit to the World Heritage Centre updated information and plans on this issue at the earliest convenience.

1. c) *There is ample passage for pedestrians, in particular through the redesign of the entrance gate situation to the Meydan in the north-western corner and evaluate whether the current project ensures that the mosque and its adjacent historic structures are not endangered by crowds accessing the square during major events;*

Considering the new functional organization of the Meydan-e Atiq project it is likely that the important visitor flows coming from the south section of the square with its new bazaar galleries, and from the underground parking facilities, will enter the north section of the square and have access to the south-east Mosque gate.

Large crowds always constitute a risk in a traditional historic centre, and this issue should be tackled, as requested by the Committee, through a proper management plan that foresees public accessibility regulations, especially considering the huge capacity of the Meydan-e

Atiq, and its underground facilities, such as bus/car parking and gathering hall, to host large quantities of people.

The CAD plans and renderings of the revised design show a huge empty space in front of the Masjed-e Jāmé south-east gate, but as they are, at urban scale, they do not specify how the pedestrian flows will be organized within this area. According to the project designer, pedestrian passage will be through the redesigned entrance gate, foreseen in the middle of the north-western side of the square. No architectural plans of this gate have been provided.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State Party to integrate into the revised design of the north square section which, according to the latest information received after the mission, is still in progress, plans of an appropriate architectural scale, detailing the pedestrian circulation organization within the area.

*1.d) The overall design is appropriate to the local urban design tradition and setting of the mosque and sensitive to its Outstanding Universal Value;*

Conservation philosophy and principles of international charters require that, in case of new buildings within historical areas, their features must be clearly recognizable as contemporary in order to avoid pseudo-historical design (“history must remain readable”, art.21 of 2005 UNESCO Vienna Memorandum, The Venice Charter art. 12)

The new arched bazaar galleries of the south section of Meydan-e Atiq, already realized, create an urban setting inspired by the traditional architectural heritage of Isfahan.

For the time being, the very close setting of the entrance of Masjed-e Jāmé, surrounded by traditional bazaar galleries, has kept its traditional character and from this area no view is possible on the new bazaar buildings that surround the south section of Meydan-e Atiq. Their height not exceeding 8,5 meters, as required by the urban rules for new buildings in the historical areas of Isfahan, they do not create a visual rupture of scale with the historical cityscape of the area.

Nevertheless, there is the risk that, following all the interventions already carried out or in progress, the traditional context of Masjed-e Jāmé might be strongly modified, and that the property could “float” on the platform created by the open spaces of the square, under which are located the road interchange, the parking facilities, and the gathering premises. The intense motor vehicle traffic is likely to provoke atmosphere and noise pollution, as well as continuous ground vibrations just near the foundation of Masjed-e-Jāmé. Continuous monitoring of these nuisances that could affect the property should be carried out.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Having noting that the CAD renderings presented during the mission of the revised project for the north square section also foresee the creation of some new large buildings around the Meydan-e Atiq, just on the edge of the buffer zone, which for the wider dimension of their footprints will cover several traditional urban plots, the mission recommends the State Party:

- to request the design company to provide detailed urban/architectural plans of the north section new square, defining how the integration between the new bazaar buildings and the surrounding traditional urban fabric will be realized. to request the design company to

consider, as a priority during the finalization process of the design of the north section of the new square, the conservation of the relation between Masjed-e Jāmé with its traditional setting, as its modification could have an impact on the social and cultural signification of the property;

- to request the design company that the design of the new buildings and open spaces to be created in the buffer zone, be finalized according to the specific detailed urban restoration/renovation plan for the area, which should determine buildings to conserve, to restore or to demolish, and to define the appropriate patterns of the urban plots on which the new buildings will exist, as well as the criteria for their harmonious integration with the adjacent traditional ones.

Finally, the mission recommends the State Party:

- to expose, within the Meydan-e Atiq project area, information panels explaining the project design criteria and technologies to visitors, together with the date of construction.

*1. e) There is a revised implementation schedule that allows for ample time to further review the project once the comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment has been carried out and to conduct further archaeological excavation if needed*

According to the information provided by the 2013 SOC report and confirmed during the mission by Dr. Talebian, Deputy for Cultural Heritage of ICHHTO, the mission takes note of the fact that the second phase of the project is still in the design phase. It also notes that the revised plan concerning the north-western corner of the square will be left pending until adoption by ICHHTO, and approval by the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS. In case either should express observations or suggestions concerning the revised project, ICHHTO will proceed to a further review of the project.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The mission recommends the State Party to transmit to the World Heritage Centre, as soon as possible, the final revised design plans at architectural scale concerning the second phase of the Meydan-e Atiq project.

Moreover, the mission recommends that further archaeological excavations be carried out, prior to the implementation of future works, in order to document with archaeological evidence the historical occupation of the area.

*2. Provide recommendations and guidance to the authorities regarding the undertaking of a comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure that the revised project proposal does not cause any negative impact on the historic structure of the mosque or its setting;*

The mission notes that according to the latest information provided by the State party, the Heritage Impact Assessment for each sub-district of the historical axis including the Meydan-e Atiq section, is in progress, but for the moment there is no established timing concerning its finalization.

The mission regrets that the Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project has been approved and implemented in the absence of a specific heritage impact assessment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State Party to finalize the comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment of the Meydan-e Atiq revitalization project as soon as possible and prior to the future implementation of the second phase of the project.

The mission brings to the attention of the Iranian authorities that the document “*ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*” provides the general methodology principles to organize the study and also informs that, if requested, ICOMOS could indicate an expert to assist the designated consultant in accomplishing the task.

3. *Hold consultations with the Iranian national and local authorities and relevant stakeholders regarding the design and presentation of information in the property, in consideration to the principle of minimal intervention and in full respect for the aesthetic and religious significance of the Masjed-e Jāmé of Isfahan*

The mission appreciates the quality of presentations and information available at the information desk of the south-east entrance, which fully respects the religious, aesthetic and cultural significance of the property.

The mission encourages the State Party to implement the project of the Masjed-e Jāmé archaeological museum which could greatly contribute to the presentation of Masjed-e Jāmé history and to the understanding of its Outstanding Universal Value.

The mission brings to the attention that the museological and museographical project of this archaeological museum could constitute a pilot project to be developed in the framework of international cooperation with organizations specialized in the field.

4. *Further advice the authorities on the protection of the buffer zone and wider setting and assess progress made in the integration of regulatory measures for the property in the Isfahan Master Plan and municipal by-laws. Evaluate whether monitoring mechanisms related to urban development and the provisions for mandatory undertaking of Heritage Impact Assessments for any future development in the buffer zone are currently in place to ensure that any developments do not impact adversely on the property and its wider setting;*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends the State Party:

- to finalize, as soon as possible, the ongoing urban studies in order to adopt very detailed urban regulations to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of Masjed-e Jāmé WH property and the traditional character of its buffer zone, through the establishment of a specific zoning plan, integrated into the framework of the general master plan.
- to monitor atmosphere and noise pollution as well as ground vibration originated by the intense motor vehicle traffic of the under pass, as these nuisances could affect the property.

5. *Review the status of development and adoption of an integrated conservation and management Plan, with special sections on visitor management and risk-preparedness strategies and evaluate whether priority has been given in the conservation plan to address the challenge posed by the necessary removal of the bracings in the shabestani domed areas.*

The mission stresses the fact that historic towns and historic urban areas are essential part of the local and national identity, and their conservation activities have to be integral part of coherent policies at every level of urban, local and regional planning.

The mission notes that, according to the information provided by the State Party's 2013 SOC report and confirmed by ICCHTO authorities during the advisory mission, the technical team of ICCHTO has already carried out comprehensive diagnostic studies on Masjed-e Jāmē and its setting and it continues monitoring the site, but the preparation of the preservation and management plan of the property is being considered as a new agenda for the next year.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends that:

- the management plan, which is actually in progress under ICHHTO guidance, be finalized and adopted, as soon as possible, with special consideration dedicated to the conservation/restoration action plan of the Masjed-e Jāmē structures as well as to the visitor pressure and risk preparedness strategies, in order to protect the property and its Outstanding Universal Value through the maintenance of its structures and the conservation and restoration of its buffer zone.

Concerning the specific issue of the conservation plan of the Masjed-e Jāmē structures, in order to complete the diagnostic studies already carried out, the mission recommends the installation of a comprehensive monitoring system to check the static behaviour of its structures over a proper time span, and establish a digital model which will help to identify the nature and mechanics of the disorders.

Moreover, the mission considers that the studies to identify the proper techniques to remove the metal braces installed on the north and east aywan roofs and to consolidate their structures with fine-tuned contemporary technologies should receive the appropriate consideration of a highly qualified interdisciplinary technical team, formed by architectural historians, architect-restorers, and structural engineers, after implementation of comprehensive geo-structural diagnostic tests.

Finally, the mission kindly requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed in case the project for the creation of the Isfahan Underground Transport System should involve any of the Isfahan properties inscribed on the World Heritage List or their buffer zones.

## ANNEX

### 1.1 ICOMOS Mission Expert: Dr. Arch. Giancarlo Barbato

#### 1.2 Mission Program

The ICOMOS advisory mission was carried out from June 29<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014.

The program of the mission, agreed between ICOMOS and the Iranian authorities, has been slightly reorganized according to the needs of the Iranian authorities as follows:

**1- first day** : arrival to Tehran

**2 -second day**: departure to Isfahan

**3- third day**: visiting Masjed-e-Jāmé, Atiq Square Naqsh-e-Jahan Square

**4 -fourth day**: meeting with competent technical services: information on :

- Isfahan urban master plan -
- specific juridical regulations protecting the core and buffer zone of the World Heritage property
- present conditions of the property: monitoring system and statement of risks likely to affect it-
- presentation of the urban revitalization and conservation plan of Meydan-e Atiq by the design architects and assessment of its impact on the property outstanding values and its buffer zone concerning:
- the existing historical structures,
- the historic urban fabric morphology and its environment
- the cultural setting and visitors' pressure level.

**5 -fifth day**:

- Guided visit to the site with the technical teams
- Collection and screening of documentary information (in English) on the project.
- Meeting with the Governor-General, Mayor and other managers and technical council of cultural Heritage in Isfahan province.
- Final visit to the site.
- Departure to Tehran

**6 -sixth day**:

- departure to the origin country

#### 1.3 Mission Activities

##### **June 28**

Departure from the origin country - arrival at Tehran Khomeini International Airport – Welcoming by Mrs Maryam Mehran, in charge of International Affairs for the Deputy of Cultural Heritage (ICHHTO)

-Transfer to Laleh hotel

##### **June 29**

###### **-Morning**

Visit to the Carpet Museum of Iran accompanied by Mrs Maryam Mehran

Visit to the National Archaeological Museum of Iran accompanied by Mrs Maryam Mehran

###### **-Afternoon**

Departure by car to Isfahan accompanied by Eng. Farhad Azizi, Director of ICHHTO Bases and Dr. Ali Reza Razeghi Consulting engineer.

Arrival in Isfahan at 10 pm

### **June 30**

#### **-Morning**

Visit to Isfahan covered bazar leading to Masjed-e Jāmé accompanied by Eng. Farhad Azizi, Director of ICHHTO Bases and Dr. Ali Reza Razeghi Consulting engineer

- visit to the Masjed-e Jāmé Mosque halls and central court;

-visit to the archaeological store and restoration laboratory of Masjed-e Jāmé;

-presentation of the laboratory activities by Dr. Fariba Khatabakhsh, Site manager of Meidan Imam Esfahan

- visit to the photo exhibition on the Meidan- e Atiq renovation project

-presentation of the project by Eng. Hossein Jafari Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director of Isfahan Urban planning Office and Eng. Abdolreza Kargar, Tourism Expert of Esfahan Cultural Heritage.

### **June 30<sup>th</sup>**

#### **-Afternoon**

Meeting at the Masjed-e Jāmé with Professor Dr. Abdollah Jabalameli Consulting engineer

- visit to the Mosque roofs and to metallic ties retaining the Aywan façades East and north

#### **List of personalities present to the visits and meetings:**

Eng. Farhad Aziz,i the Director of ICHHTO Bases

Eng. Naser Taheri, Deputy of ICCHTO Esfahan 5 (Cultural Heritage)

Eng. Hossein Jafari, Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director

Dr. Fariba Khatabakhsh the Site manager of Meidan Imam Esfahan

Dr.Ali Reza Razeghi ,Consulting engineer

Dr. Fariba Saeidi, Director of the Naghshe Jahan Base and Head of Archaeology Team of Jāmé

Prof. Dr. Abdollah Jabalameli Consulting engineer

Dr. Ali Reza Gholinezhad, Consulting engineer

Eng. Abdolreza Kargar Tourism, Expert of Esfahan Cultural Heritage

Mr.Shabnam Jozdani Saeidi, Expert of Esfahan Cultural Heritage

Mr Mahobe Namdari, Expert of Esfahan Cultural Heritage

### **July 1<sup>st</sup>**

#### **-Morning**

- visit to the Imam mosque and its restoration building site

- meeting at the Isfahan Urban planning Office:

- Welcome to the mission and introduction of the meeting by Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian ICHHTO Deputy for Cultural Heritage;

- Presentation of the Eshahan Master plan and Meydan-e-Atiq project by Eng. Hossein Jafari, Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director of the Isfahan Municipality Renovation and Restoration Organization;

- Presentation by Eng. Ahmad Bahabadi, Naqshe Jahan- Pars Consulting Engineer, of the revised project concerning the north section of the Meydan e-Atiq square, modified according to the WHC requests;

- Presentation by Dr. Farhang Mozafar the Head of Esfahan Art University on the didactic activities of the faculty for conservation of Isfahan historical areas.

**List of personalities present to the visits and meetings:**

Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian, Deputy for Cultural heritage of ICHHTO  
Dr. Mohsen Moslehi, the Director of ICHHTO of Isfahan province  
Eng. Farhad Azizi, the Director of ICHHTO Bases  
Eng. Naser Taheri, Deputy of ICHHTO Isfahan 5 (Cultural Heritage)  
Eng. Hossein Jafari, Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director  
Dr. Fariba Khatabakhsh, the Site manager of Meidan Imam Isfahan  
Prof. Dr. Abdollah Jabalameli, Consulting engineer  
Prof. Dr. Farhang Mozafar, the Head of Isfahan Art University  
Prof. Dr. Ahmad Montazer, the Faculty of Isfahan Art University  
Dr. Ali Reza Razeghi, Consulting engineer  
Dr. Ali Reza Gholinezhad, Consulting engineer  
Eng. Ahmad Bahabadi, Naqshe Jahan- Pars Consulting Engineer  
Mr Alamdar Aliyan, Archaeologist

**July 2<sup>nd</sup>*****-Morning***

- visit to the Old Catholic church in Jolfa quarter:
- visit to the Vank Armenian cathedral in Jolfa
- visit to the Ali Qapu restoration works of the loggia on the Naghshe Jahan square
- meeting at the Naghsh-e-Jahan Base Office
- roundtable on the HIA studies and management plan with Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian ICHHTO Deputy for Cultural Heritage, as well with managers and specialist of the Technical Council of Cultural Heritage Organization in Isfahan province,
- Collection of documentary information (Persian language) on the project .

***-Afternoon***

-departure to Tehran accompanied by Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian, Deputy for Cultural heritage of ICHHTO and Eng. Farhad Azizi, Director of ICHHTO Bases

**List of personalities present to the visits and meetings:**

Dr. Mohammad Hassan Talebian, Deputy for Cultural Heritage of ICHHTO  
Dr. Mohsen Moslehi, the Director of ICHHTO of Isfahan province  
Eng. Farhad Azizi, the Director of ICHHTO Bases  
Eng. Naser Taheri, Deputy of ICHHTO Isfahan 5 (Cultural Heritage)  
Eng. Hossein Jafari Advisor of the Mayor and Managing Director  
Dr. Fariba Khatabakhsh the Site manager of Meidan Imam Isfahan  
Dr. Fariba Saeidi Expert and Executive Manager of MJB base  
Prof. Dr. Abdollah Jabalameli, Consulting engineer  
Dr. Ali Reza Gholinezhad Consulting engineer  
Mr Shabnam Jozdani Expert of Cultural Heritage  
Mr Mahbobe Namdari Expert of Cultural Heritage  
Mr Mansoor Zirak Expert of Cultural Heritage  
Mr Hossein Golchin Restoration Expert of Cultural Heritage  
Mr Benyamin Moslemi Installation Expert of Cultural Heritage  
Mr Mansoor Jafarpour Supervisor

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Transfer to the Imam Khomeiny International Airport, accompanied by Mrs Maryam Mehran, in charge of International Affairs for the Deputy of Cultural Heritage (ICHHTO) and departure to Rome.