
São Francisco Square in São Cristóvão (Brazil) No 1272

Official name as proposed by the State Party:

The São Francisco Square in São Cristóvão Town

Location:

São Cristóvão
State of Sergipe

Brief description:

São Francisco Square, in the town of São Cristóvão, is a quadrilateral open space surrounded by substantial early buildings such as São Francisco Church and convent, the Church and Santa Casa da Misericórdia, the Provincial Palace and the associated houses of different historical periods surrounding the Square. This monumental ensemble, together with the surrounding 18th and 19th century houses, creates an urban landscape which reflects the history of the town since its origin. The Franciscan complex is an example of the typical architecture of the religious order developed in north-eastern Brazil.

Category of property:

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *group of buildings*.

1. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 6 September 1996
(as Franciscan Convents of Northeast Brazil)

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination: None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre:

21 June 2006
1st February 2010

Background: This is a referred back nomination (32 COM, Quebec, 2008).

A first nomination dossier was examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec, 2008). At the time, ICOMOS recommended to defer the examination of the nomination.

The World Heritage Committee adopted the following decision (Decision: 32 COM 8B.42):

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-08/32.COM/8B and WHC-08/32.COM/INF.8B1,

2. Refers the nomination of São Francisco Square in São Cristóvão, Brazil, back to the State Party in order to allow it:

a) to reorient the comparative analysis in order to more convincingly demonstrate similarities and differences with other properties in Brazil and in the wider region;

b) reconsider the proposed boundaries of the nominated property in order to include other sectors of the São Cristóvão historic centre that might contribute to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property. In determining the boundaries of the nominated area and the buffer zone, it is recommended that the State Party take into account the geographical, historical, urban, architectural and cultural factors that have shaped the structure and the urban landscape of São Cristóvão over the centuries. This could enable a more accurate identification of cultural values and define boundaries of areas that can clearly express them.

3. Recommends, in order to enhance the conservation and management of the property, that:

a) a complete statement on the Integrity and Authenticity should be drafted for this property, based on the values of the property and the various requirements set out in the Operational Guidelines and the Nara Document on Authenticity;

b) more specific protection measures should be approved and implemented at the local level, including the approval of the Urban Planning Code;

c) the State Party should continue to implement and improve conservation programmes to ensure the long term conservation of the property;

d) the management structure and procedures should be improved by the development and implementation of a management plan for the nominated property;

e) the management system of the property should be extended to include a better articulation between the different levels of government, greater participation of community associations and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans, visitor management, and the increase, diversification and improved skills of the staff involved in the management of the property;

f) the State Party should define and implement a monitoring system for the long term state of conservation for the property, including key indicators and designation of a monitoring organization.

On February 2010 the State Party submitted a revised nomination that includes:

- A revised statement of integrity and authenticity although this has not separated the two concepts.
- Extracts from various federal laws and a draft code for urban planning.

The boundaries of the nominated area have not been reconsidered. The nominated area on the plan is the same as nominated in 2006, although the nominated area is said to be 3,0ha compared to 62,0ha in 2006. The buffer zone is the same size and the areas agree.

Consultations: ICOMOS consulted its International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages.

Literature consulted (selection):

Barros, Ana Paula, de Holanda, Frederico and Medeiros, Valério, *The Myth of the Intention: The Portuguese Urban Heritage Overseas* in Koch, Daniel, Marcus, Lars and Steen, Jesper (eds) *Proceedings of the 7th International Space Syntax Symposium*, 2009.

Bazin G., *L'Architecture religieuse Baroque au Brésil*, Paris, 1956.

De Solano F. (Coordinator), *Estudios sobre la ciudad iberoamericana*, Madrid, 1983.

Gutiérrez R., *Arquitectura y Urbanismo en Iberoamérica*, Madrid, 1983.

Kubler G. and Soria M., *Art and architecture in Spain, Portugal and their American dominions*, Baltimore, 1959.

Technical Evaluation Mission: 18-25 August 2007

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 18 January 2008 on the following issues:

- Further justification on the choice of São Francisco Square as emblematic of an historical centre, and further explanation of the reasons which distinguish this square from other ensembles in Brazilian and Latin American historic cities;
- Further demonstration of the specificities of the Franciscan Convent in comparison with other Franciscan complexes in North-Eastern Brazil and the wider Region;
- The time frame for the approval and implementation of the Urban Planning Code for São Cristóvão.

On 22 February 2008 ICOMOS received additional information provided by the State Party on the requested issues.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 17 March 2010

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The town of São Cristóvão is located 21 km from Aracajú, the capital city of the State of Sergipe. The town is located on the top of a hill next to the Paramopama River. The layout and form of the overall city is seen to reflect a variation to the general rules for the layout of colonial cities laid down by the Spanish King Filipe's Ordinances, in that it has responded to topography and local politico-military interests.

The upper town allows surveillance and protection and is where the headquarters of the civil and religious powers are established; while the lower town houses the harbour, the factories and the low income population.

What has been nominated is São Francisco Square, the main open space in the upper town. It extends to 51metres by 73 metres and is paved with stone slabs. The square is a quadrilateral open space surrounded by the monumental São Francisco Church and convent, the Santa Casa de Misericórdia Church and the Provincial Palace. The architectural ensemble is completed by five houses of the 18th and 19th centuries around the Square.

The nominated property thus consists of the following structures:

- São Francisco Church and convent - Church and Santa Casa da Misericórdia
- The Provincial Palace

These are considered separately:

São Francisco Church and convent

The Franciscan Convent ensemble defines the northern side of the Square, The wide square in front of the convent is considered to be a distinctive feature, not only in São Cristóvão but also taking into account other Franciscan convents and other squares. The monastery was authorised in 1657 and begun in 1693. The cloister has six arcades on each side. It originally housed the Treasury. After being abandoned for many years, it was almost totally reconstructed in 1902. The elements that make up the Franciscan Convent are organised on different levels. The church with the narthex is projected forward in relation to the convent, while the *Ordem Terceira* church constitutes the most recessed built element. This plan sequence contributes to the aesthetic appeal of São Francisco Square. A cross stands in the centre of the Square, its design characteristic of the Franciscan Order.

Church and Santa Casa da Misericórdia

The Church and Santa Casa da Misericórdia form the eastern perimeter and date to the founding of the town. However the current church with a simple facade and

Baroque ornamentation was constructed in the 18th century.

The Provincial Palace

The two-storey building of the former Provincial Palace (now the State Historic Museum) defines the southern boundary of the Square. The precise date of the original building of the palace is not known. It was however reconstructed in 1826, after the independence of Brazil. Until the capital was moved in 1855, it served as the residence for the President of the Province of Sergipe. The two-storey building of the Provincial Assembly completes one of the corners of the Square.

A group of five houses constitutes the fourth side of the square, to the west.

The nominated property and the buffer zone together correspond to the historic centre of São Cristóvão, which is protected by the National Institute for Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN).

History and Development

São Cristóvão was the old capital of Sergipe del Rey; it demonstrates the occupation processes of the region and the development of towns founded during the reign of King Philip II, during the 60-year period when Portugal was under Spanish domain.

The modes of territorial occupation and settlement used by Spain and Portugal in their American colonies between the 15th and the 17th centuries were distinctive. Portugal established a maritime trade network, and was able to occupy coastal territories in Africa and Asia prior to establishing trade and colonial settlements in Brazil. Portugal occupied the Brazilian coast, founding port cities as connection points with Portugal and its other colonies. The urban plans of these settlements respected the topography by adapting the layouts to local conditions.

The history of São Cristóvão is related to the colonisation of Sergipe, when due to the strong resistance of the indigenous people, it was vital to establish a constant communication between Salvador and Olinda, the two most important urban centres of the colony. It was also crucial to secure free access to the main rivers, often blocked by French smugglers.

In order to strengthen the colony in its conflicts with the Brazilian Amerindians and the French smugglers, Cristóvão de Barros founded the city of São Cristóvão, on the isthmus formed by the Poxim River, in the present-day Aracajú region. The land was granted to him by King Philip II with the expectation that it would be divided among the colonists, encouraging the settlement process. The town was moved in 1594-95 and again in 1607 to its present location.

São Cristóvão became the capital of Sergipe, the administrative and commercial centre between Salvador and Recife, and the departure point for the colonisation of the hinterland up to the mid-19th century.

In 1855, the state capital was transferred to the city of Aracajú. São Cristóvão, with its churches, convents and secular mansions, remains as a testimony to the past of Sergipe and Brazil.

In 1938, São Cristóvão was declared an Historic Monument by the State government. Between 1941 and 1962 many monuments were individually protected, and in 1967 the Architectural, Urban and Landscape Ensemble of São Cristóvão was registered at the federal level in the Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Protection Book.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Comparative Analysis

The analysis compares the Franciscan buildings to those of other inscribed properties: in Quito (Ecuador, historic centre inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1978), Lima (Peru, Franciscan complex inscribed on the World Heritage in 1988, and the historic centre inscribed in 1991), Santiago (Chile) and Havana (Cuba, historic centre inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982). These architectural ensembles were based on the Spanish urban design, and all have their main facades open to atriums or square (such as Quito) depending on their specific relationship with the urban form. These open spaces are in proportion to the size of the buildings. They therefore have similarities to São Cristóvão.

The Spanish towns reflected well defined chequered plans with defined uses, accesses and spaces as set out in the Philippine code. Portuguese planning by contrast was more responsive to topography but overall the Portuguese authorities had fewer resources. During the brief unification of the two crowns there was no complete fulfilment of the order in Brazil. São Cristóvão is an example of the partial process.

Franciscan urban ensembles in Brazil are similar to the Spanish as a consequence of the Order's organization and rules. Apart from some specific architectural features, the main difference lies in the urban context. Since the town of São Cristóvão was founded during the period when Spain and Portugal were ruled by the same Crown, Spanish codes for urban patterns were employed, especially the use of a regular grid. In contrast, Portuguese towns were usually founded on the basis of less rigorous plans, more in accordance with topography. In this sense, São Francisco Square in São Cristóvão is considered by the State Party a unique structure if compared with other Brazilian colonial

squares, since it is related to the Spanish urban solutions.

The comparative analysis also includes an analysis of religious ensembles constructed by the Franciscan Order and located in north-eastern Brazil: Joao Pessoa, Igarassu, Olinda, Recife, Irojuca, Marechal Deodoro, Penedo, Praca Sao Francisco, Cachoeira, Sao Francisco do Conde, Salvador and Cairu.

The comparative material is summarised in a table according to the following attributes: context within the urban space, construction and design elements, characteristics of the façades, interior ornamentation, single tower and position in the façade, and prominent kitchen chimney.

What emerges from the detailed analysis – presented in tabular form – is that although some of the squares and atria in front of the churches have been compromised, quite a number survive. São Cristóvão's square is not the most distinctive or the grandest but can be said to be in complete harmony with uniformity in design.

What are also highlighted are the characteristics that the group has in common and the differences between the group as a whole and monasteries in other places such as Spain, Portugal.

The overall group of monasteries in north-eastern Brazil, represent unprecedented solutions in terms of the way the convents and the urban spaces in front of them 'interfered' with the regular urban grain, and also in terms of the size of the buildings and their grand cloisters. The oldest complex at Olinda served as a model for those that followed. In only a few, such as Recife, Olinda and Joa Pessoa, were the churches richly ornamented, most were lacking in decorative elements. The facades of the churches have a gallery entrance which developed from those of Ipojuca (Pernambuco) and Cairu (Bahia) to the most significant, synthesis of this complex, that of Joao Pessoa (Paraiba). The groups of monasteries came to be seen collectively as the Franciscan School of the north-east.

ICOMOS considers that the analysis is not sufficient to demonstrate the uniqueness or exceptionality of the São Cristóvão Franciscan complex in relation to other similar structures located in north-eastern Brazil. The comparison table provided by the State Party shows that there are not substantial differences between the ensemble in São Cristóvão and other similar complexes, and indeed the overall group can be seen to have value.

With regard to São Francisco Square, its adjacent monumental buildings and accompanying domestic architecture, ICOMOS agrees that it is exceptional in plan if compared with other Brazilian colonial towns, where more irregular urban layouts prevail. However, this feature does not constitute a sufficient argument demonstrating the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property, since it is a common situation in Spanish

American colonial historic centres, several of which are already inscribed on the World Heritage List. And in terms of the individual buildings, these too cannot be said to be exceptional either in terms of their survival, design or function.

While recognising the importance of the property as a coherent and harmonious ensemble at the national level, ICOMOS does not consider that a case has been made either in terms of demonstrating a gap in the already inscribed list, or in terms of demonstrating that no other ensembles of squares and buildings exist that have comparable assets, that would allow consideration of this property on the World Heritage List.

ICOMOS does not consider that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for inscription on the World Heritage List.

Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- It is an example of a homogeneous urban ensemble made up of public and private buildings that preserve the forms and proportions of the colonial period;
- It represents a unique moment in the history of Brazil by preserving the layout created at the time Portugal and Spain were under the same crown;
- The layout of the square reflects Spanish laws and King Philip's ordinances in a Brazilian context;
- The architecture expresses the cultural and social structures, and the importance of the religious life during the different historical periods of the development of the town, including the Portuguese colonization of the region;
- The architectural design and styles characterize the culture and society of the region at the time of its colonization;
- The Square reflects the exceptional vitality of an open public space, complete in its urban configuration, illustrating its history over four centuries and adapted to its uses as a place for the cultural manifestations and celebrations of the daily routines and evolution of that society.

ICOMOS considers that all of the above points describe the square and set out what the nominated space is and how it reflects its history, social development and use. What however is not captured is why the property is considered to be outstanding in global terms rather than in Brazil or in a regional context, in terms of exceptionality, or the influence it might have had.

Integrity and Authenticity

Integrity

The nomination dossier includes a paragraph under the heading "Integrity and/or Authenticity". Although an amplified paragraph has been provided in the re-submitted nomination dossier, the text deals more with cultural significance rather than integrity and authenticity. It is said that the urban layout preserves the city's integrity and the permanence of its perimeter and its facades give it distinction.

ICOMOS notes that the statement on Integrity provided by the State Party is mainly related to the historical sequence of the urban space and the buildings that surround it, stressing the important role of the ensemble as a testimony to cultural development over three hundred years.

Interiority relates to how far all the attributes needed to convey outstanding universal value are within the nominated area as well as to whether any of these are under threat. These have not been considered in the text provided as requested in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

ICOMOS also considers that the São Francisco Square and related buildings constitute a fragment of an urban ensemble and landscape that has kept much of its original urban and architectural components. The attributes nominated are only a part of a larger urban whole that could be said to be of value.

Overall, ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the nominated property has not been demonstrated, according to the definitions and items included in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. ICOMOS considers that the attributes nominated only form part of a wider urban landscape that could be seen to be of value. Therefore in terms of wholeness, integrity has not been demonstrated. However, in terms of intactness, ICOMOS considers that the attributes nominated are not under threat.

Authenticity

As noted above, the nomination dossier includes a short text under the heading "Integrity and/or Authenticity". This text related to Authenticity states that the authenticity of the square stands out for design environment, technical, use, function, historical and cultural context.

ICOMOS considers that the Square and associated buildings within the nominated property are authentic, in terms of the way they portray their historical and social significance within the life of the town. ICOMOS notes that a number of the major buildings that form São Francisco Square have been rebuilt, restored and/or adapted to new uses as museums and offices over time.

Works to the Square itself have retained its characteristics while improving the infrastructure, amenity and security for pedestrians. The complex of residential buildings generally retains its typological characteristics, roof forms and facades.

However ICOMOS notes that what is not addressed is how the specific attributes of the nominated area as a group convey potential outstanding universal value. If the configuration of the square is said to reflect the way the Spanish ordinances were specifically met in Brazil, then what has not been demonstrated is how what survives reflects specifically the creation of the square rather than its evolution over time.

Overall, ICOMOS considers that the urban and architectural fabric of São Francisco Square and associated historical buildings are authentic, and that it continues to function as a focal point of social and civic life in the town. However ICOMOS considers that what has not been set out is how the ensemble as a whole conveys the suggested outstanding universal value.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have not been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii) and (iv).

Criterion (ii): to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the urban ensemble of São Francisco Square represents one of the finest examples of European architecture adapted to a colonial city in the tropics. The Square is an example of the urban structures derived from the Ordinances of King Philip II, at a time when Portugal and Spain were under the same crown. The Franciscan Convent is characterised by a spatial organization adapted to the climate and to the urban scheme.

The application of criterion (ii) is thus supported by the State Party by stressing the importance of the architectural features as an adaptation of European trends to a specific geographical region in Latin America.

ICOMOS considers that to justify this criterion it would be necessary to show not only how the town adapted the Philippine Ordinances to local conditions in an exceptional way but also how this adaptation in turn had influenced.

What the analysis provided in the nomination has shown is that the adaptation of the Philippine plan is exceptional in Brazil, but not in the wider geo-cultural region where

several other Franciscan convents, following a model established at Olinda also portray similar characteristics. Moreover what has not been demonstrated is how São Francisco Square did itself exert influence elsewhere – in terms of demonstrating an interchange of ideas.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

Criterion (iv): to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that São Francisco Square is a place of traditional and cultural manifestations throughout its history. The Square is a place where gatherings, celebrations, folklore, collective religious rituals and musical performances take place. It is a focal point and landmark for the town, and a space for the representation of religious and civil forces.

While recognising the role of São Francisco Square as a social landmark of the town and a place for important cultural and social manifestations, ICOMOS considers that the statement proposed by the State Party for the application of criterion (iv) rests on the use and social significance of the Square, but does not demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value of the ensemble from an architectural or urban point of view, in terms of its relationship to a significant period in human history, as set out in the *Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

To justify this criterion it would be necessary to show how the ensemble of buildings and square as a whole were of exceptional architectural merit and were also linked to an historical period that was of world-wide significance. ICOMOS considers that the ensemble of buildings is harmonious and has a coherence of materials and form. It cannot be said to be exceptional in terms of reflecting notable forms, materials decoration or in terms of being all of a single historical period related to the development of the square. The buildings have evolved over time and cannot now be said to reflect one period in history.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

ICOMOS does not consider that the criteria for inscription on the World Heritage List and the Outstanding Universal Value of the property have been justified at this stage.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Development pressures

While the pressures associated with urban growth have been controlled by the Urban Plan, ICOMOS considers that the proximity of São Cristóvão to the State capital, Aracajú, could expose the town to risk factors associated with the development of the capital city.

Aracajú has absorbed most of the economic activities of São Cristóvão, restricting the future economic growth of the town. This situation poses risks to the built heritage and to the social and economical sustainability of São Cristóvão, due to possible population changes.

São Cristóvão is recognised as an important resource for the State of Sergipe, and the State Party should ensure that the conservation of heritage occurs in an integrated way, within the broader framework of social and economic development.

Visitors / tourism pressures

According to the State Party, São Cristóvão has a relatively low level of tourism activity that causes no pressures on the nominated property.

ICOMOS notes that, due to the proximity of São Cristóvão to Aracajú, visits to the town are short and the small income generated does not benefit the local community. On the contrary, tourism represents an expense for the local government, which must offer a clean, secure and properly maintained site. Given that São Cristóvão is potentially attractive for tourism for its architectural and historical heritage and for its intangible heritage (e.g. religious festivities, arts festival). ICOMOS considers that the State Party should ensure that future tourism planning aims to provide direct benefits to the local population.

Environmental pressures

There are water pollution, garbage disposal and sanitation problems for the town.

ICOMOS considers that the lack of sanitary infrastructure and solid waste disposal is a risk factor for the quality of life of São Cristóvão's population. The State government has initiated specific studies aimed cleaning of the river for sanitation purposes. The revised nomination dossier states that implementation of measures to protect the river have been delayed.

ICOMOS notes that the town does not have fire fighting facilities, and that the nearest facility is located in the city of Aracajú. ICOMOS recommends that the State Party provide the necessary infrastructure for protection against fire.

Natural disasters

There are occasional floods in the town, but these do not reach the upper town, where the nominated property is located.

Impact of climate change

The nomination dossier does not include reference to the impact of climate change on the property. ICOMOS believes that the location of São Cristóvão in the tropics makes it vulnerable to the impact of storms and heavy rains, something that should be considered in risk preparedness plans for heritage conservation.

Risk preparedness

The nomination dossier does not include reference to risk preparedness plans.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are related to the relationship between São Cristóvão and Aracajú that could cause loss of population, and social and economic decline. Pollution of the river, the lack of sanitation infrastructure and fire fighting facilities also constitute risks to the integrity of the monumental ensemble. The lack of risk preparedness planning to address these threats to the long-term conservation of the property is a concern.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The nominated property includes the Square and the surrounding blocks. The proposed buffer zone coincides with the boundaries of the area protected by the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN).

ICOMOS notes that, beyond São Francisco Square and the surrounding urban blocks, the historic centre of São Cristóvão is also characteristic of a colonial Brazilian town reflected in urban, architectural and environmental values, and in the intangible heritage. Therefore, the nominated area constitutes only a small part of the historic centre and does not coincide with the whole area protected by the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN). Religious complexes such as Carmo, the Main Church, and the Irmandade do Amparo dos Homens Pardos Church are outside the boundary of the nominated property. Similarly, ICOMOS considers that there are many examples of domestic architecture in the historic centre of the town that have similar values to the domestic buildings within the nominated area.

Regarding the buffer zone, ICOMOS considers that it could be amended to take into account significant perspectives, the setting and the important relationship with the water system. There are other areas of cultural heritage importance for the city that could be incorporated into the buffer zone, such as the area developed in the 19th and 20th centuries for industrial factories and labour housing. The natural areas that surround the site could also be added to the buffer zone, especially those that constitute the historical access to

the city by river, recognising the importance of recovering this historical component of the urban landscape.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property include only part of the historic centre of the town. The boundaries of the proposed buffer zone should be revised in order to include significant perspectives, the natural setting, the relationship with the water system and areas of heritage value associated with the evolution of the town over the 19th and 20th centuries.

Ownership

The nominated property consists of buildings owned by the local, State and national governments, the Archdiocese and many private owners. In São Francisco Square, the Archdiocese owns the Franciscan ensemble and the local government owns one building, the State government owns two buildings and the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) owns five buildings. The remaining houses are in private ownership.

Protection

Legal Protection

The nominated property is protected at national, state and local levels. At the national level, the first protective measures were introduced between 1941 and 1944 with the protection of isolated monuments. The architectural and urban ensemble was protected by the Federal government by procedure 785-T-67 of 31 January 1967, in the framework of Decree – Law 25 of 30 November 1937. The authority responsible for implementing the legal protection is the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN). The 18th Regional Superintendence of IPHAN includes Sergipe State.

At the State level, the ensemble was registered as Historic Monument by Decree Law 94 in 1938, supported by Article 134 of the new State Constitution. In 1967, the Architectural, Urban and Landscape ensemble of São Cristóvão was registered on the Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Protection Book, on page 10, number 40.

At the local level, the 1979/80 Master Plan which directed the growth of the city, urban expansion and zoning and establishes measures for conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage, division and uses of land and construction prescriptions was revised in 2009.

The Urban Planning Code for São Cristóvão establishes guiding principles for urban policy defined in collaboration with the local community. The revised nomination provides details of this but not when it was approved.

The buffer zone corresponds to the historic centre of the town of São Cristóvão and is protected at state and national levels. The historic centre has been declared historic monument by Decree-Law 94 (1938) of the State of Sergipe and national monument by federal law 7489 (1986). These protection instruments ensure the effectiveness of the buffer zone to protect the values of the nominated properties.

Effectiveness of protection measures

ICOMOS considers that the national protection combined with local development plans and planning codes provide adequate mechanisms to avoid impacts on the values, integrity and authenticity of the nominated property, if the Urban Planning Code is in force.

While noting the protection provided at the national level, ICOMOS considers that the protective measures at national level, supplemented by those at local level are adequate for the protection of the property, if the Urban Planning Code is in force.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

The Inventory of Immovable Assets developed as a national programme of the National Institute for Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) has been completed. In São Cristóvão, 450 properties in the protected area have been documented. The Inventory of Integrated and Movable Assets has 1269 assets in the Art Museum, the Historical Museum of Sergipe, churches and private collections. Recently, IPHAN completed the first stage of the Inventory of Cultural References for registering the intangible heritage of the State. Copies of inventory cards are included in the revised nomination.

Present state of conservation

According to the State Party, the public and religious buildings are in good condition and the private houses are in satisfactory condition. The inventory concluded in 2006 indicates that 33% of the buildings are in good condition, 42% in satisfactory condition, 25% being restored and 0% in poor condition.

ICOMOS considers that the monuments and open spaces included in the nomination property exhibit a satisfactory state of conservation.

Active Conservation measures

Some monumental buildings are being restored in the framework of the *Monumenta* Programme, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, among them Santa Cruz Convent and Church, the Courthouse, São Francisco Square, Imaculada Conceição Home, the Historical Museum of the State of Sergipe and some

private properties. Between 2004 and 2006, restoration works included Rosario Church, the Franciscan Convent, São Francisco Square, Largo do Rosario and Largo do Amparo.

The nomination dossier describes projects to be implemented during 2007, among them the removal of lamp posts, electricity and telephone wires and improvements to the circulation and parking in the historic centre. Other projects include improving public spaces, such as Getúlio Vargas Square, works in the surrounding area such as Bica dos Pintos, and improvements to the water quality of the Paramopama River.

While noting the benefits of these projects, ICOMOS is also aware that there have been some difficulties for owners to secure subsidies through the *Monumenta* Programme, and it has often funded work on facades only. In this context, it is possible to conclude that these programmes need to be further augmented to ensure the long-term conservation of the nominated property.

Recent projects include: the improvement project of the Museum of Sacred Art (located in the São Francisco complex), the completion of the restoration of the former *Ouvidoria*, the lighting improvement project for São Francisco Square, the restoration of the square's pavements and the provision of urban furniture. ICOMOS congratulates the State Party for its constant efforts to improve the physical conditions and state of conservation of the nominated property and adjacent areas, and encourages it to continue with these kind of actions.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property exhibits an adequate state of conservation. ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party continue to implement and improve conservation programs to ensure the long term conservation of the property.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

At the national level, the National Institute on Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) is responsible for the protection and management of protected properties. IPHAN has regional units (Superintendencies); one of them, with headquarters in the city of Aracajú, includes the State of Sergipe.

IPHAN is responsible for the physical conservation of heritage, and the local government is responsible for land use and compliance with planning regulations. However, without an approved conservation plan for the nominated property, there is no framework to guide these decisions, which often depend on the technical judgement of the evaluator.

The newly established Undersecretary of State for Cultural and Historical Heritage, which came into being in 2009, will support cultural heritage interests in the State of Sergipe. The Department is also linked strategically to other national departments.

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

According to the information supplied by the State Party, there is no Management Plan for the nominated property, although one is in preparation. Indeed, the State Party reports in the additional information that the Participative Management Plan is currently under development by private consultants. The project was initiated in July 2007 and is expected to be finished on 30 June 2008 (a detailed timeframe of the successive steps of development was provided). ICOMOS appreciates that the Management Plan is under development and recommends that the State Party approve and implement it once it is finished.

Currently, the management of the nominated property is ensured by means of a number of different plans that are in place.

- *Master Plan, 2009*

The São Cristóvão Urban Master Plan establishes the urban policies, the urban perimeter, the conservation of historic and natural heritage, the definition of activities, subdivision of land, and standards of construction. Urban policies are defined on the basis of community consultation. Principles and rules regarding heritage conservation include the definition and additional limitations for properties and areas protected by Federal Law. There are several laws which contribute to the protection of the nominated property, among them municipal Law 08 of 6 June 1979, which regulates works done on buildings in São Francisco Square.

Other existing programmes are:

- *Training for tourism employment.* The “Friends of São Cristóvão” project, initiated in 2005, trains young people to act as tourist guides. Currently, 20 teenagers take history, tourism, English and environmental education classes, while receiving monthly allowance benefits.
- *Sustainable recovery of the historic heritage of São Cristóvão.* The *Monumenta* Programme of the Ministry of Culture, sponsored by the Inter American Development Bank and UNESCO, funds projects in São Cristóvão that will have direct or indirect effects on the local economy, education and culture, facilitating the involvement of the local population. The aim is to stimulate the economy by improving cultural tourism, expanding employment opportunities and supporting heritage education. Some

relevant projects funded by this programme are described above in the section on “Conservation”.

ICOMOS notes that these programs place a strong emphasis on physical conservation of cultural heritage. In order to ensure an adequate quality of life for the local population, a closer relationship between planning instruments concerning conservation and development is required.

With regard to visitor management and presentation of the property, the State Party reports on the “Friends of São Cristóvão” project discussed above, but no information on tourism facilities and presentation is included in the nomination dossier.

Involvement of local communities

According to the State Party, the historic centre of São Cristóvão is inhabited by approximately 1750 people (out of 71 572 in the municipal district) and 40 of them live within the nominated property. The nominated property is highly recognised and valued by the local community, which uses São Francisco Square as one of the liveliest spaces in town. The urban plan defines the guiding principles for urban policy, which is based on community consultation.

ICOMOS considers that the involvement of local communities is in a relatively early stage of development and can be improved over time. In order to guarantee the participation and involvement of all stakeholders, a stronger awareness by citizens of the responsibilities to care for cultural heritage is required; thus it is necessary to implement programmes of community awareness and participation and to provide adequate and effective financial resources.

Resources, including staff levels, expertise and training

The municipal Secretariat of Construction, Urbanism and Environment has a total of 155 employees and the municipal Secretariat of Culture and Tourism has 38 employees. The 18th Regional Superintendence of the National Institute for Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) has 16 employees (including 4 trainees). The nomination dossier does not include specific information on staff training and skills of these organisations.

ICOMOS notes that the main financial resources for the conservation of the nominated property are provided by state agencies, although the legislation encourages financial support by private enterprises.

ICOMOS considers that added resources for the updating of staff skills, increases in the number of staff members involved in conservation and management of the property, and the inclusion of different disciplines (engineering, archaeology, art conservation, etc.) are needed.

ICOMOS considers that the management structure and procedures could be improved by the development and implementation of a management plan for the nominated property, which was expected for completion by June 2008. ICOMOS considers also that the management system of the property should be extended to include a better articulation between the different levels of government, greater participation of community associations and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans, visitor management, and the increase, diversification and improved skills of the staff involved in the management of the property.

6. MONITORING

The State Party states that the public and religious buildings are in a reasonable state of conservation, but the key indicators are not included in the nomination dossier.

Concerning administrative arrangements, the 18th Superintendence of the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), the *Monumenta* Programme, and the State and local governments participate, jointly or separately, in restoration works in the protected area.

ICOMOS notes that it is mainly the Institute for National Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) which carries out monitoring and control actions. These actions are quite limited due to minimal staff members and financial resources.

ICOMOS considers that no systematic monitoring system is currently in place for the nominated property. ICOMOS recommends that a systematic monitoring programme be implemented, including the identification of key indicators.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The revised nomination dossier provides some amplification of the first dossier in terms of supplementary text on description, integrity and authenticity, and protection. The boundaries remain unchanged as do the justifications for the criteria. Small amendments have been made to the proposed justification for outstanding universal value.

What this re-presentation has confirmed is that the São Francisco Square together with the Franciscan convent is one of a group in north-east Brazil that can be seen to reflect an overall coherence that is differentiated from monasteries in Spain, Portugal and elsewhere in terms of their urban squares or atria some with monumental stone crosses, the interface with the surrounding urban plan, their galleried entrances, elaborate cloisters, lack of ornamentation and set back bell towers.

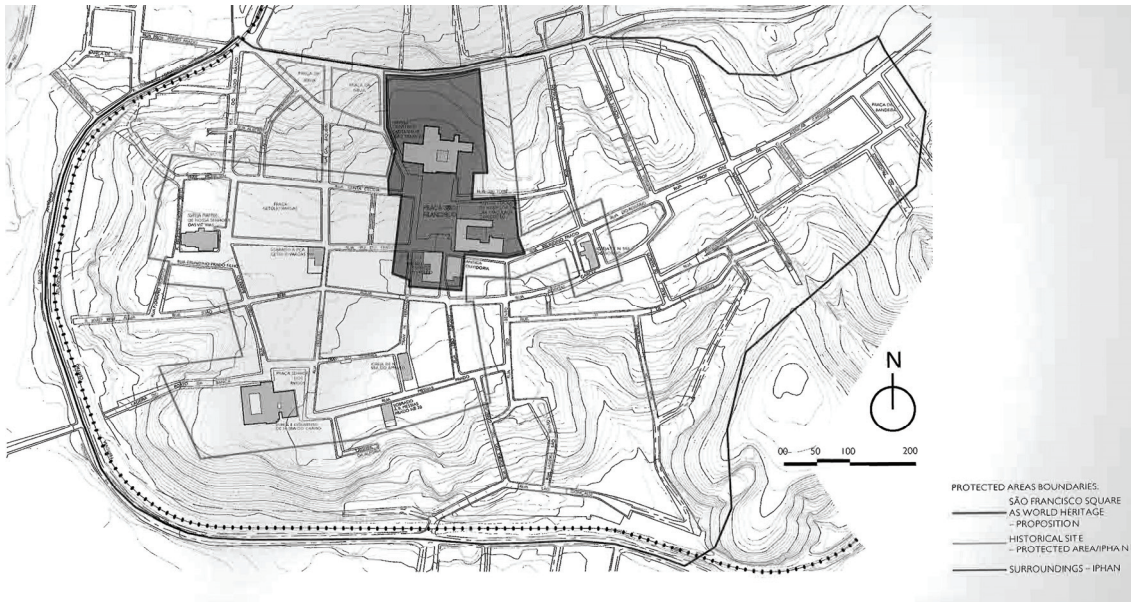
Many of these complexes have evolved and changed over the years and none survive as built. Several can be seen to have components that are similar to São Cristóvão. What has been demonstrated is that although the relationship between the monastery and square of São Cristóvão persists, the combination of plan and buildings, although visually attractive, harmonious and coherent, is not exceptional within the north-eastern group of monasteries or more widely.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of São Francisco Square in São Cristóvão, Brazil, to the World Heritage List, be ***deferred*** in order to allow the State Party to:

- Reconsider the proposed boundaries of the nominated property in order to include other sectors of the São Cristóvão historic centre that might contribute to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property. In determining the boundaries of the nominated area and the buffer zone, it is recommended that the State Party take into account the geographical, historical, urban, architectural and cultural factors that have shaped the structure and the urban landscape of São Cristóvão over the centuries. This could enable a more accurate identification of cultural values and defined boundaries of areas that can clearly express them;
- Define a complete statement on the Integrity and Authenticity of this property, based on the requirements set out in the *Operational Guidelines* and the Nara Document on Authenticity;
- Ensure that the urban Planning Code has been approved;
- The management structure and procedures should be improved by the development and implementation of a management plan for the nominated property;
- The management system of the property should be extended to include a better articulation between the different levels of government, greater participation of community associations and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans, visitor management, and the increase, diversification and improved skills of the staff involved in the management of the property;
- Define and implement a monitoring system for the long term state of conservation for the property, including key indicators and designation of a monitoring organization.

ICOMOS considers that any revised nomination with revised boundaries would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



São Francisco Square: aerial view



Aerial view of the convent



São Francisco Monastery



Historical museum