

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref. GB/AS/1544/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2016

H. E. Mr Ahmad Jalali
Permanent Delegation of the Islamic Republic of
Iran to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 Paris Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2017
Historic City of Yazd (Iran) – Interim Report

Dear Sir,

As prescribed by the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies have been requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2017. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation process.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to the "Historic City of Yazd" was carried out by Dr Mariana Correia (Portugal) from 23 to 29 August 2016. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organisation and implementation of the mission.

On 6 October 2016, a letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information on the following issues: boundaries, conservation, authenticity, comparative analysis, Dolat-abad Garden, factors affecting the property, protection and management. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 7 November 2016 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

At the end of November 2016, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2017. The additional information, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2017.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation to the meeting held on 26 November 2016 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. During the final part of the Panel meeting that followed, the ICOMOS Panel has identified areas where it considers that further information is needed.

While the ICOMOS Panel considered that the "Historic City of Yazd" might have the potential to meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value, this has not yet been demonstrated.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

Documentation

Could the State Party provide ICOMOS with analytical studies on the urban level of the "Historic City of Yazd", elaborating how a district works with the intangible aspects such as the social, cultural and religious dimensions, and how does it work with the tangible aspects such as the *qanats*, water cisterns, and district center?

Boundaries

The boundaries of both the central component and the Zoroastrian component are defined according to intangible aspects related to historical traditional districts as explained by the State Party delegation during the meeting with

ICOMOS representatives on 26 November 2016. Could the State Party support this with detailed explanation illustrated by the use of maps? The previous requirement concerning urban level analytical studies may help in clarifying and justifying this question.

Conservation

The practice of plastering non-earthen new buildings with earthen plaster is a concern that was raised by ICOMOS Mission expert. It was not possible to identify these buildings on the maps by the expert during her visit to the nominated property. The explanation given by the State Party delegation during their meeting with ICOMOS representatives on 26 November 2016 was that the plastering of fired bricks buildings using earthen plaster is an old traditional practice in Yazd that continues into the present day. In this regard, ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

Could the State Party provide ICOMOS with academic published materials supporting, explaining and analyzing the practice of plastering non-earthen buildings with earthen plaster?

Could the State Party provide documentation of the urban tissue of the nominated property identifying (1) the building materials, (2) age and (3) state of conservation, for all buildings within the property?

Could the State Party provide the approach and method used in Yazd for differentiating on the ground between authentic fabric of historic buildings and newer constructions, interventions or additions within the nominated property?

Could the State Party provide any available guidelines for owners and users of earthen historic buildings explaining the principles and approaches for management, maintenance and conservation of their buildings so that not to jeopardize their authenticity?

Could the State Party consider providing a capacity building programs for ICHHTO Base staff as well as traditional builders and craftsmen pertaining to international best practice approaches, methods and techniques of conservation of earthen built heritage as outlined in relevant charters and documents issued by ICOMOS?

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation process.

We would be grateful if you could provide ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre with the above information by **28 February 2017 at the latest**, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the Operational Guidelines for supplementary information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So we request to keep your response concise and respond only to the above requests.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation process.

Yours faithfully



Gwenaëlle Bourdin
Director
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

Copy to The Office of Deputy for Cultural Heritage of Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO)
UNESCO World Heritage Centre