

# 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/1525/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2016

H. E. Mr Alexander Kuznetsov  
Permanent Delegation of the Russian  
Federation to UNESCO  
8, rue de Prony  
75017 Paris

World Heritage List 2017

## **The Assumption Cathedral of the town-island of Sviyazhsk (Russian Federation) – 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 Assumption Cathedral of the town-island of Sviyazhsk” was carried out by Ms. Mary Aspra-Vardavaki (Greece) from 22 to 26 August 2016. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organization and implementation of the mission.

On 19 October 2016, a letter requesting additional information was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding the technical documentation of projects being carried out or planned, the protective measures in place for the zones of the buffer zone, the modification to the spatial plans for Zelenodolsk and Verkhneuslonsky districts and the city of Innopolis and of the state of approval of the management plan. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 14 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 provided by the State Party, 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. The exchanges during this meeting were of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting. During its last part meeting, the Panel has identified areas where it considers that further information is needed. Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

### **Justification for inscription**

ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could confirm that the entire Assumption Monastery Complex is being nominated and not only the Cathedral. The ICOMOS Panel found that, although the Cathedral is the most prominent attribute of the monastic complex, also the extant part of the Assumption monastery precinct, indicated as 'territory' of the nominated property, is important as it is integral to the nominated Cathedral, and should be therefore included in the nominated property.

### **Ownership**

ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could provide further clarification on the ownership of the Monastery and of the Cathedral, as currently there is a discrepancy between what is stated in the nomination dossier and in the management plan.

### **Conservation**

Could the State Party provide assurance that outpost character of the Island of Sviyazhsk will be respected and no beautification of existing buildings will be pursued?

### **Protection**

ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could provide further information on when the established zoning for the buffer zone and their regulations will be integrated into the scheme of the territorial planning of the Republic of Tatarstan, as this will make compulsory their respect by all administrations, and therefore represent an important step to strengthen the protection of the nominated property, its buffer zone and setting.

### **Management**

ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could provide a better explanation of the working mechanisms of the Interdepartmental Commission that have been set up in 2016 and if the State Party could clarify whether this Commission is already functioning. If not, when will it be in function?

Could the State Party provide further information on when the management plan will be approved and enforced?

The State Party informed that the management plan is expected to be enforced when the property will be assessed by the World Heritage Committee and this does not appear in line with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines (paragraph 132), according to which a management plan or a documented management system need to be effectively implemented at the time of the nomination.

### **Tourism management**

ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could provide additional information on any study on carrying capacity for the nominated property and particularly for the Cathedral due to the fragility of the paintings and assurances that the same rigorous policy that applies for religious use will also be implemented for visitors.

Could the State Party provide an assessment of the viability and sustainability in the long run of the number of new museums envisaged by the management plan, and assurances that their final number will not exceed those already planned?

Could the State Party provide assurances that no reconstruction of disappeared traditional houses will be carried out on the Island for purpose to give accommodation to visitors. Other alternatives for tourism infrastructure, including parking lots, are available and should be explored, e.g. on the mainland and along the banks of the rivers. This would ensure to spread the visitors and reduce their pressures.

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 would be grateful if the State Party could keep its 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 State Budgetary Institution of Culture of the Republic of Tatarstan "State Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve "Ostrov-Grad Sviyazhsk"  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre