



**FORMAT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF
STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS
BY THE STATES PARTIES**

(in compliance with Paragraph 169 of the *Operational Guidelines*)

Name of World Heritage property (State(s) Party(ies)) (Identification number)

Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia), (C 708)

Date of Inscription: 1994

***Criteria:* (iii)(iv)**

Municipality of Mtskheta, Region of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Georgia

N41 50 38.004 E44 42 59.004

1. Executive Summary of the report

[Note: each of the sections described below should be summarized. The maximum length of the executive summary is 1 page.]

In October, 2017 the three years' comprehensive project in the framework of the tripartite cooperation Agreement between Georgia, World Heritage Centre and World Bank under the Third Regional Development Project (RDP III), aimed at provision of Cultural Heritage Advisory Service to the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation has been completed.

As a result of the project the State Party has completed the work on the Terms of Reference for Mtskheta Urban Land Use Master Plan; further administrative work to prepare the competition is in progress; in line, based on the consultation with UNESCO experts, the proposal for the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones has been finalized.

The UNESCO-WHC assistance has covered wide range of tasks related to the strengthening the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Georgia, in particular: upstream process for updating the national Tentative List, promoting sustainable cultural tourism. The project greatly contributed to highlighting World Heritage management issues, enhanced coordination among management stakeholders and facilitated strong collaborative platform for heritage protection and sustainable development.

As a result of the changes in self-government system in Autumn, 2017 Mtskheta self-governing town was merged with the Mtskheta Municipality. The change of administrative boundaries has ensured to embrace all the territory of the buffer zone of the Mtskheta World Heritage property within single administration. In line with UNESCO-WHC recommendations, the Unit for Spatial Arrangement and Infrastructure was created within Architecture Department of the Mtskheta municipality self-government; additionally Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Center has been established by the self-government to increase capacities of the local administration in cultural heritage and tourism management.

The State Party continues active collaboration with World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies. The projects/proposals in the immediate/wider setting of Mtkheta WHS are regularly submitted for review and recommendations to the World Heritage Centre.

The State Party has formally invited the World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission and as a result of the mutual agreement, the mission is scheduled on 19-24 February, 2018.

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

[Note: The State(s) Party(ies) is/are requested to address the most recent Decision of the World Heritage Committee for this property, paragraph by paragraph.]

Decision: 41 COM 7B.44

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/17/41.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7A.17**, **39 COM 7A.41** and **40 COM 7A.29**, adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015) and 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the progress made by the State Party with the implementation of the recommendations, notably improvements to the Urban Land-Use Master Plan (ULUMP);
4. Also welcomes the progress made by State Party in establishing a Temporary Working Group for Urban Planning and Steering Committee;

5. *Takes note of the tripartite agreement signed between the State Party and UNESCO, and the World Bank (Georgia/UNESCO Agreement,) to provide technical assistance in the elaboration of the Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta;*
6. *Encourages the State Party to develop a detailed operational workplan and procedures for the revision and finalization of the ULUMP and development of the Master Plan, as well as ensuring stakeholder involvement and proceed with the finalization and implementation of the ULUMP and Master Plan, as a matter of priority:*

Reaffirming Mtskheta WHS being the highest priority for the State Party, justifying the credit of confidence given by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session, and ensuring integrated work of different branches of executive government, the Prime Minister of Georgia has taken Mtskheta World Heritage and spatial planning issues under his personal control since June 2017. The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia was assigned to further coordinate and lead the urban land use master plan elaboration. Upon the request of the State Party, UNESCO-WHC provided on-site assistance to the Ministry in designing the updated Terms of Reference for the Mtskheta ULUMP according to international standards. The Technical Committee (with the involvement of: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, National Tourism Administration, the National Environmental Agency, the Agency for Protected Areas, Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, Mtskheta municipality) and the planning team (composed from the experts of: MoESD, MoC, NACHP, Mtskheta local Government and the Government of Georgia) was set up to work with the UNESCO-WHC expert.

As of October, 2017, the Terms of Reference for Mtskheta spatial planning documentation was completed, incorporating three different planning levels from the urban land use master plan, to historical-cultural base plan and most detailed building regulation plans for the town of Mtskheta and its environs as defined by the WH buffer zone;

An administrative process for validation of the ToR according to the Georgian legislation and preparation of documentation for competition is in progress.

7. *Encourages the State Party to implement the recommendations and advice of the technical assistance reports provided in the framework of the Georgia/UNESCO Agreement:*

In October, 2017 the three years' comprehensive technical assistance project in the framework of the tripartite cooperation agreement between Georgia, World Heritage Centre and World Bank under the Third Regional Development Project (RDP III), aimed at provision of *Cultural Heritage Advisory Service to the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation* has been completed. The Final Report was duly submitted in December, 2017 (see annex 1.1).

The State Party conveys its deep gratitude to the World Heritage Centre for excellent collaboration enhancing the institutional and technical capacity of the national and local authorities, improving cross-institutional collaboration and facilitating reinforcement of management mechanisms and capacities required to deal with the integration of heritage protection and development needs.

The following activities were identified to be implemented within the Agreement for the collaboration in the form of advice and assistance provided by the UNESCO-WHC to the State Party:

- Activity 1: Urban planning, conservation, management of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta
- Activity 2: Assistance for the Upstream Process and harmonization of the national Tentative List
- Activity 3: Capacity-Building
- Activity 4: Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism

Activity 1: The main focus of the collaboration was to support Georgian Authorities in elaboration of the urban land use master plan for the towns of Mtskheta including the World Heritage Property and its buffer zone, meeting quality standards for conservation, management and development.

In the context of the World Heritage Committee recommendations, the goals achieved under this component are:

- **Boundaries of the World Heritage property's buffer zone, revised and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2017:**

In response to the World Heritage Committee request to revise the buffer zone of the property in such manner as to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting, the State Party implemented specific territorial analysis and the Unified Visual Protection Area (Buffer Zone) of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta was adopted by the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia in June 2016 (N03/212,28.06.2016). The enlarged buffer zone was submitted to the WHC in the form of Minor Boundary Modification and approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017 (41 COM 8B.44), by which the area of the buffer zone was increased from 8.73 ha to 2382.5 ha.

- **Cultural heritage protection zones identified by NACHP in collaboration with WHC experts, in the process of approval by the Government:**

In 2016-2017 under the methodological assistance of the WHC experts the proposal for Cultural Heritage Protection Zones for the town of Mtskheta was developed by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation in accordance with the national law on Cultural Heritage (# 47-08-IS, 8 May 2007) with an aim to provide territorial protection for the historic urban fabric, the sensitive areas that require specific building regulations, the archaeological areas and the historical landscape. The draft proposal is to be reviewed by the relevant government authorities before approval by the Government.

- **Revision of the structure and boundaries of local administration:**

As a result of the changes in the number of self-governing towns the Mtskheta self-governing town was merged with the Mtskheta municipality, as it was the case prior to the reform in 2014. This has resolved the issue of management of the World Heritage property and the buffer zone and brought it under single administration.

In response to the UNESCO-WHC recommendations the Spatial Arrangement and Infrastructure Unit, with the divisions for Spatial Arrangements, Architectural permissions and Infrastructure has been established at the local administration. The Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Center has been also created as an independent public entity under the local administration.

- **Mtskheta Land Use Master Plan:**

Due to the fact that the Mtskheta ULUMP elaborated by a private company in 2014-2016 by the order of local government, was found incomplete by UNESCO-WHC (report of July 2016), the document was not approved by the Mtskheta Municipality. Considering the complexity of the subject, necessary coordination among stakeholders at the national level, as well as financial and human resources, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development was assigned to further coordinate the project by the Prime Minister's decision. The Temporary Regime (Moratorium) on Urban Development and Land Privatization in the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta (Decree of the Government of Georgia N411, 03.08.2015) has been prolonged until 31

December 2018 (Governmental decree N119, March 7, 2017) on the condition that the full set of town planning documentation shall be approved.

Furthermore, to facilitate the project and to achieve elaboration of proper management and protective instruments for Mtskheta, upon the request of the State Party, UNESCO-WHC provided the direct on-site assistance that was not initially foreseen in the advisory service by the Agreement. An international expert was based in Tbilisi, at the MoESD from July to October 2017 to assist in revising the ULUMP, designing the Terms of Reference for the future works, defining methodology and objectives of urban planning, elaboration of the brief and preparation of the related documentation. The work of the expert was facilitated by the Technical Committee, in which the all relevant institutional stakeholders were invited: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD), Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia (MoC), Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Regional Development, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia (NACHPG), National Tourism Administration, the National Environmental Agency, the Agency for Protected Areas, Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, Mtskheta local self-government and the planning team composed from the experts of MoESD, MoC, NACHP, Mtskheta local government and government of Georgia.

As a result, the ToR for development of the urban planning documents were elaborated, including:

- Set of complete and integrated base maps of different scales;
- Description of the methodology;
- Set of revised maps of the ULUMP on the newly created base map in A-CAD;
- A reference to existing legislation, including the phasing of the project and the expected outputs;
- Detailed descriptions of the outputs and graphic standards, the professional profiles and qualifications, the evaluation mechanism and suggestions concerning the involvement of relevant stakeholders and local community in planning process.
- Terms of Reference for additional Sector Studies;
- Maps with proposed cultural heritage protection zones drafted on the newly created base map.

The ToR is being validated according to Georgian legislation and the preparation of the competition is ongoing.

Activity 2: Within the framework of the Agreement signed between UNESCO and Georgia for Cultural Heritage Advisory Service, the assistance to the State Party in revision of national Tentative List was foreseen as part of the upstream process for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The activity contributed to analysis of the current Tentative List of Georgia and priority sites identified by the Georgian authorities, also to strengthening collaboration between the MoC and Ministry of Environment (MoE) in the field of World Heritage; particularly important was the consultations with the WHC on the ongoing nomination of Colchis Wetlands and Forests managed by the Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia (APA) and planned for submission by 2019.

The workshop on the revision of the Tentative List with participation of relevant stakeholders was hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection on 27-28 September 2017.

As a follow up activity, the World Heritage Centre manual Preparing World Heritage Nominations was translated into Georgian by the NACHPG. The editing work is in progress with a view to publishing the manual in 2018. The manual will be one of the main resource materials for training heritage professionals in WH nominations in the forthcoming years.

Activity 3: The capacity building component has been cross-cutting throughout the whole project. However, this Activity was mostly designed to support Activity 1 and thus has targeted improving skills and capacity for heritage-led urban planning by national and local authorities.

The Activity encompassed different actions:

- On-the-job capacity building for NACHPG and local authority team as well as coaching the team working on the ULUMP during 2015-2016 expert missions, joint field visits, meetings with the stakeholders and experts;
- The lectures/presentations on urban conservation, planning methodology, and the Historic Urban Landscape approach for the wider public and professionals (scholars and students);
- The study visit for members of the Technical Committee aimed at increasing the institutional and technical competences of the national and local authorities to study the good practices in the domains of conservation and management, protection of historical urban landscapes, urban development and heritage strategies and policies of spatial planning.

Activity 4: Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism envisaged assisting the Georgian authorities in the assessment of the National Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in the context of the goals of the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme.

- As a result of the activity, the guidance on a sustainable tourism approach for World Heritage properties in Georgia was provided by UNESCO-WHC expert and the dedicated workshop hosted by the MoC in September 2017. The National Tourism Administration of Georgia updated Action Plan based on the consultations during the workshop.

8. *Requests the State Party to ensure that, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, any projects which may be proposed in the future in the immediate and wider setting of the World Heritage property be submitted to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible, before any tender is launched or decision taken to implement projects;*

In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, during 2017, following proposals were submitted to the WHC for review: proposal for construction a new bridge on the river Mtkvari and the proposal for Samtavro Monastery garden. The State Party received the ICOMOS positive conclusions and relevant recommendations on the both of the project proposals.

9. *Recommends that the State Party reviews the projects, such as the Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP) sectional replacement, the rehabilitation of the fragment of the Western Wall of the Defense Wall at Svetitskhoveli Church and the Mtskheta Archaeological Museum collection conservation and new building finalization, according to the recommendations provided;*

The State Party expresses its great appreciation to the essential support and methodological recommendations provided by WHC and ICOMOS for *the Cultural Heritage Management Plan within Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP) Sectional Replacement, the Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defense Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church and the Mtskheta New Archaeological Museum*. The all recommendations were fully considered by the project authors. The revised project documentations were resubmitted to the World Heritage Center and the final positive conclusions were received on two of the aforementioned proposals: *The Cultural Heritage Management Plan within Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP) Sectional Replacement and the Mtskheta New Archaeological Museum*. The revision of the updated project proposal on the Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defense Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church by Advisory Body is still in progress. The

State Party considers to discuss the issue during the Reactive Monitoring Mission planned to be arranged in February 2018, to clarify and agree the all details of the project proposal.

10. Takes note with satisfaction that the State Party has submitted the proposal for a minor boundary modification of the unified buffer zone;
11. Also takes note that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission has been invited by the State Party and also requests that it be undertaken **before 31 December 2017**:

The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission was invited by the State Party for Spring, 2017, however postponed by the decision of WHC and its Advisory Bodies due to objective reasons to February, 19-24, 2018.

12. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2018**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session in 2018.

Decision: 41 COM 8B.44

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC/17/41.COM/8B.Add and WHC/17/41.COM/INF.8B1.Add,
2. Approves the proposed buffer zone for **Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, Georgia**;
3. Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:
 - a) *Elaborating the Mtskheta Urban Land Use Master Plan through specific provisions to address the management of different areas:*

With the methodological assistance of the UNESCO-WHC and its direct participation in the process, the Terms of Reference for Urban Land Use Master Plan, Historical cultural Base Plan and Building Regulations Plans was prepared, including the methodology, additional sector studies, institutional needs, phases and human resources, as well as the updated base map for Mtskheta. The administrative process of the preparation of the competition is ongoing.

- b) *Reviewing the range of protective instruments and mechanisms to ensure integrated and comprehensive protection;*

To improve the protective instruments within the buffer zone of Mtskheta WHS approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017, in the close cooperation with UNESCO-WHC the proposal on the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones has been elaborated by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation. The proposal was developed in accordance with the national law on Cultural Heritage (# 47-08-IS, 8 May 2007) with an aim to provide territorial protection for the historic urban fabric, the sensitive areas that require specific building regulations, the archaeological areas and the historical landscape. The proposal is to be reviewed by the relevant government authorities before approval by the Government (see fig.1).

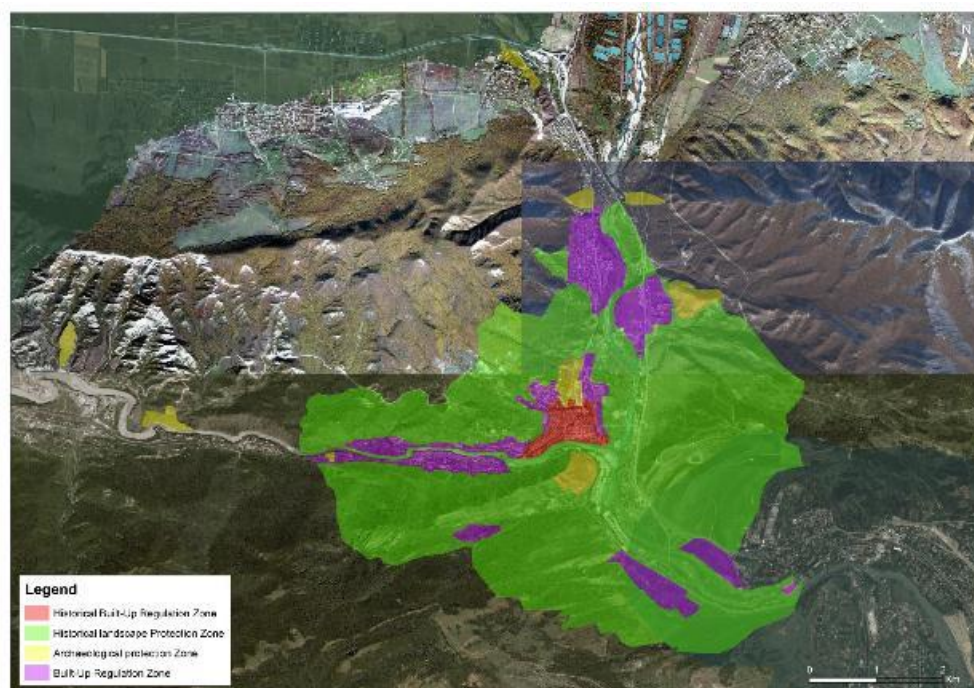


Fig. 1. Mtskheta World Heritage Property: Proposal on the Cultural Heritage Protective Zones

As a result of the changes in self-government system in autumn, 2017 Mtskheta self-governing town was merged with the Mtskheta Municipality. The change of administrative boundaries has ensured to embrace all the territory of the buffer zone of the Mtskheta World Heritage property within single administration. In line with UNESCO-WHC recommendations, the Unit for Spatial Arrangement and Infrastructure was created within Architecture Department of the Mtskheta municipality self-government; additionally Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Center has been established by the self-government to increase capacities of the local administration in cultural heritage and tourism management.

The draft Code on the Cultural and Environmental Heritage of Georgia launched in 2015 envisages the special provisions for the World Heritage Properties. It incorporates the special chapter dedicated to the protection and management of the World Heritage in Georgia and provides the respective regulations for elaboration and adoption of Site Management Plans, as well as for the World Heritage Council to be established at the Ministry level. At the request of the MoC, the Council of Europe provides legal assistance in revising the draft Code (*see annex 1.2*).

4. *Also recommends*, if a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission is organized, it also assesses the effectiveness of management of the modified buffer zone:

In response to the formal invitation by the State Party, the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission is scheduled on February, 19-24, 2018.

5. *Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2018, as part of the requested report on the state of conservation of the property (Decision 41 COM 7B.44), a progress report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session in 2018*

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value

[Note: this includes conservation issues which are not mentioned in the Decision of the World Heritage Committee or in any information request from the World Heritage Centre]

Since 2016 the stone conservation process of Jvari Monastery WHS has been resumed. In order to ensure the improvement of the severe condition of building materials at Jvari monastery in 2011- 2012 conservation of stone reliefs on the eastern facade of major church took place under the leadership of ICCROM expert Mr. Simon Warrack. Also, young Georgian specialist were trained during the activity. This was followed by the elaboration of the Stone conservation project of Minor Church of Holy Cross monastery (2015) in collaboration with stone conservation expert Mr. Stefano Volta. Georgian conservators team has begun the implementation of the project under the supervision of Mr. Volta (see Annex on the intervention report). At this phase the following conservation works were performed: Treatment of surfaces with biocide; consolidation of stones' structure with ethyl silicate; Consolidation of cracks and micro cracks; mechanical removal of unsuitable fillings and reconstruction of the missing parts of the wall with Lime mortar (*the detailed report has been attached to the document: annex 1.3*).

In 2017, the project on improvement of the protection infrastructure of the Armaztsikhe-Bagineti Archaeological Site has been implemented by NACHPG. The protective roofs over the fragile archaeological site repaired/changed; the fence has been arranged around the site; interpretation and visitor facilities have been repaired/installed.



In October, 2017, the “Georgian Cultural Heritage Data Management Geo-Informational System and GIS Portal” within the Agreement on Cooperation between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage has been officially launched and opened for the public access. The system allows the improved online communication between the central and regional offices of the NACHPG, as well as between the different state authorities and self-government bodies. The system also provides for improved access to the information on the cultural heritage assets of Georgia for general public via online GIS portal. (<http://memkvidreoba.gov.ge/>)

In 2017, the NACHPG in close collaboration with ICCROM completed the first stage of the multi-annual project on establishment of the training platform in the field of cultural heritage in Georgia (2015-2017). The assessment reports on the wall painting conservation, archaeology and urban rehabilitation have been developed by ICCROM experts.

The educational program “Archaeology for kids” at Samtavro valley has been ongoing for the last eight years, and remains one of the most attractive programs among school children. In 2017 the special focus of the program were ethnic minorities in Georgia to stimulate their participation in the cultural life.

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

In 2017 the State Party has resubmitted to the World Heritage Centre the following updated proposals revised according to the valuable recommendations provided by WHC and ICOMOS:

- Cultural Heritage Management Plan within Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP) Sectional Replacement
- Project design for the Mtskheta Archaeological Museum
- Project documentation for the Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defence Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church

The final positive conclusions have been already provided by the WHC/ICOMOS on Cultural Heritage Management Plan and the project design on Mtskheta Archaeological Museum. While, the revision of the updated project proposal on the Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defence Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church by Advisory Body is still in progress. The State Party considers to discuss the issue during the Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission planned to be arranged in February 2018, to clarify and agree the all details of the project proposal.

In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the State Party submitted to the WHC the following project documentation:

- Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari
- Samtavro Monastery Garden

The State Party has already received the ICOMOS positive conclusions and relevant recommendations on the both of the project proposals.

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

[Note: this report will be uploaded for public access on the World Heritage Centre's State of conservation Information System (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>). Should your State Party request that the full report should not be uploaded, only the 1-page executive summary provided in point (1.) above will be uploaded for public access].

The State Party gives its consent to upload the present SOC Report for public access.

6. Signature of the Authority

Nikoloz Antidze

Director General

National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. Antidze', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.