



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

## AMENDMENT

<b>Item of the Agenda</b>	8B
<b>Amended Draft Decision</b>	42 COM 8B. 15
<b>Amendment submitted by the Delegation of....</b>	Bahrain Kuwait Tunisia Tanzania
<b>Date</b>	29th June 2018

### TEXT

#### **Draft Decision: 42 COM 8B.15**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Documents WHC/18/42.COM/8B and WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B1,
2. ~~Refers Inscribes the nomination of~~ the **Ancient City of Qalhat, Oman**, ~~back to the State Party in order to:~~ on the World Heritage List as a cultural property on the basis of criteria (II) and (III);

~~a) Modify the boundaries of the proposed property to include the shoreline along the sea, which bears significance as a location facilitating the trade interaction as a transitional space Nominations to the World Heritage List WHC/18/42.COM/8B p. 15 between the ancient city and the ocean and to exclude the section of the highway from the south-western borders of the proposed property,~~

~~b) Finalize and officially adopt the Management Plan, including tourism management, risk preparedness and disaster response strategies, and a joint excavation-conservation programme,~~

~~c) Strengthen the human resources capacities of the regional office responsible for the day-to-day management activities, in particular in terms of conservation and interpretation specialists as well as security guards, once the proposed property is reopened to the public;~~

3. Adopts the following Statement of the Outstanding Universal Value:

### **Statement of Outstanding Universal Value Ancient City of Qalhat, Oman**

#### Brief Synthesis

The Ancient City of Qalhat is located on the eastern coast of the Sultanate of Oman, approximately 20 kilometres north-west of the city of Sur. The property includes the entire Ancient City of Qalhat, demarcated by its inner and outer walls, which extends over 35 hectares, as well as areas outside the walls where the necropolises are situated.

The city was an important port on the sea of Oman along the East Arabian Coast, which allowed for trade in the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean and hence functioned as a trade center between India and through it East and South East Asia and the Arabian Peninsula. Qalhat flourished in the 11th to 15th century CE under the ruling of the Princes of Hormuz, who coordinated vital exports of horses, dates, incense and pearls. Following Portuguese attacks, the ancient city of Qalhat was abandoned in the 16th century and has remained as an archaeological site. The remains and monuments on site comprehensively represent a port city of the Kingdom of Hormuz and reflect its legacy, architecture and urban design.

Qalhat provides exceptional archaeological evidence for the trade exchanges between the East Arabian Coast, India, and reaching as far and China and South East Asia. As such, the property provides evidence of the Indian Ocean trade networks, which predated the arrival of European colonial powers.

#### **Justification for Criteria**

Criterion (ii): Qalhat exhibits exceptional evidence of the cultural and commercial interchange of values within the trading range of the Kingdom of Hormuz, which extended to India and as far as China and South East Asia. The archaeological site of Qalhat provides physical evidence of these interchanges, documenting the architectural features which indicate its own produce, dates, Arabian horses as well as spices and pearls but also integrating the multi-cultural features of a medieval cosmopolitan city, with houses influenced by the needs and values of their various owners and inhabitants of foreign cultural origin. The ancient city also includes a number of highly representative buildings which were referenced in narratives authored by historic travelers.

Criterion (iii): The ancient city of Qalhat presents a unique testimony to the Kingdom of Hormuz, as it prospered from the 11th to 16th century CE. Ancient Qalhat presents exceptional evidence of a major trade hub, which came under the rule of the Princes of Hormuz and profited from its geo-political position in the region. It was a seasonal residence and refuge to the Princes of Hormuz, which has given it the title of a secondary capital of the larger kingdom. The urban plan and the excavated buildings of Qalhat show features and characteristics specific to the Kingdom of Hormuz and the archaeological remains are its most complete representation and provide further potential for a more detailed understanding of its ways of life and trade.

## Integrity

All key components of the historic city of Qalhat lie within the property boundaries, which include the entirety of the intra-muros city and the structures immediately outside the city wall. The remains of the walls and street fabric provide a representative testimony to the Kingdom of Hormuz, with the archaeological finds adding to our understanding of how it functioned.

The ancient city of Qalhat is free of major threats, with the highway along the western side of the property being an unfortunate past intervention, it is important that future infrastructure and other developments in the vicinity of the property avoid any negative impacts to the larger landscape qualities of the site. In case of future increased visitor numbers as result of the new visitation concepts, Qalhat needs a controlled and managed tourist traffic to avoid any visitor pressure and behaviour.

## Statement of Authenticity

The ancient city of Qalhat is an abandoned archaeological site. Its architectural and urban fabric and form remain authentic, almost untouched, as does its setting. The abandonment of the Ancient city of Qalhat plays a positive role in the conservation of its authenticity. The site has not been occupied since the 16th century and, therefore, it preserves all characteristics of organization, function and particular architectural techniques corresponding to the Islamic Period in general and the period of the Hormuz Kingdom in particular. Conservation, visitor management and site presentation plans aim at preserving this state to the largest extend possible.

Likewise, archaeological excavations have been well planned, thorough and minimal, an approach that should be commended and continued. Conservation works undertaken post-excavation will likewise be guided by minimum intervention approaches. The location of the Ancient City of Qalhat between the mountains, deep valleys and the sea is essential to its largely retained authenticity in setting. Authenticity in meaning is related both to the authenticated history of the site and to stories and myths associated with it, which will be respected within the overall management approach.

## Protection and Management Requirements

The Ancient City of Qalhat is designated as a national cultural heritage site of Oman and therefore benefits from the highest legal level of protection of national heritage according to Royal Decree No. 6/80. The same Royal Decree also assures the protection of a buffer zone around the heritage sites concerned. The legal protection is effectively implemented by means of fencing and guards patrolling the archaeological site. Before the property was closed to the public for conservation, the section of the site around Bibi Maryam enjoyed community protection by the residents of the neighboring village which was disrupted when the site was closed and visitation was discontinued. This guardianship tradition will be re-activated as part of the future visitor concept.

The administrative organization responsible for the protection and management is the Ministry of Heritage and Culture. The Directorate General of Archaeology as a part of the Ministry's Administrative structure looks after the day to day management of the site. A management plan was finalized and officially adopted in June 2018, which will guide the establishment of a strengthened management unit and system on site. In light of the possible risks by earthquakes or other natural disasters this management system should integrate risk preparedness and disaster management strategies.

The property is currently closed to visitors for the purpose of continued excavation and conservation measures and no visitor infrastructure exists. While a reopening, and with it a need for visitor infrastructure is envisaged, concrete plans for visitor infrastructure and services are yet to be developed. In light of this, Heritage Impact Assessments

should be undertaken before any visitor infrastructure is approved within or around the property to prevent potential negative impacts to the Outstanding Universal Value.

~~3.~~ 4. *Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:*

~~a) Utilizing the current commissioning of conservation tasks to foreign firms or institutions as a means of local capacity building in order to train a site-specific team qualified to undertake ongoing conservation and maintenance tasks;~~

a) strengthens the human resources capacity of the office responsible for the day to day management of the site.

b) Undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments according to ICOMOS' Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties for any site infrastructure. ~~envisaged within or outside the proposed property boundaries before such is given official approval, and communicating these to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;~~

~~c) Applying a minimum intervention approach, in line with the largely untouched nature of this proposed property, to all future conservation projects in view of the negative impacts that extensive restoration could have on the Outstanding Universal Value of the proposed property;~~

~~d) Detailing further the indicators and mechanisms of the monitoring system and start its implementation at regular intervals.~~