



United Nations  
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la science et la culture

## AMENDMENT

Item of the Agenda	42 COM 8B.21
Amended Draft Decision	42 COM
Amendment submitted by the Delegation of....	Spain, China, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan
Date	28/06/2018

### TEXT

#### **Draft Decision: 42 COM 8B.21**

The World Heritage Committee

1. Having examined Documents WHC/18/42.COM/8B and WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B1,
  2. Decides to inscribe the **Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region, Islamic Republic of Iran**, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii), (iii) and (v)
  3. Adopts the following Statement of the Outstanding Universal Value:
- ~~2. Regretting that the State Party did not follow the suggestions made in the Interim report,~~
- ~~3. Defers the examination of the nomination of the **Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region, Islamic Republic of Iran**, to the World Heritage List in order to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, if requested, to:~~
- ~~a) Refocus the justification of Outstanding Universal Value on the exceptional testimony the proposed property provides in relation to the commencement and early expansion of the Sassanid empire under Ardashir I and Shapur I (224–273 AD),~~

#### Brief Synthesis

This serial nomination proposes 8 selected archaeological site components in three geographical area contexts at Firuzabad, Bishapur and Sarvestan, all located in the southern Fars Province of Iran. These fortification structures, palaces, reliefs and city plans date back to the earliest and latest moments of the Sassanian Empire, which stretched across the region from 224 to 651 CE. The sites include the founder of the dynasty, Ardashir Papakan's military headquarters and first capital, a city and architectural structures of his successor, the ruler Shapur I, as well as a monument testifying to the transition from the Sassanid to the Islamic era constructed around the end of the dynasty in the 7th and 8th centuries.

***Criterion (ii):*** The Sassanid archaeological landscape was influenced by the Achaemenid and Parthian cultural and ritual traditions, and their architectural and artistic approaches. It was also influenced by the cultural interchanges with the Roman art and architecture, contemporaneous with it. Subsequently, it had a significant impact on urban planning, architecture and artistic approaches in the Islamic era. The Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions affected the Sassanid archaeological landscape in the following ways: the continuance of the tradition of carving rock reliefs of the king and Ahura Mazda, developing cut-stone buildings, palaces with three porticos, and three-part façades with decoration. Likewise, some influences of Roman art and urban planning are visible in Bishapur. Yet another characteristic quality of the landscape is the continuance of some of the innovative architectural methods during the middle and late Sassanid periods, as well as into the Islamic era. General standards of using stone and gypsum construction materials, setting up eyvâns with barrel vaults, domed rooms, utilizing and enhancing squinches, and interior decoration of buildings were employed for the buildings, such as Sarvestan monument until the first centuries of the Islamic rule.

***Criterion (iii):*** The Sassanid archaeological landscape bears exceptional testimony to creating and innovating architectural styles and techniques. These include investiture reliefs, religious and royal buildings, as well as the symbolic city of Ardashir Khurreh. Therefore, the Sassanid archaeological landscape provides evidence of cultural traditions in architectural and urban planning, the legitimization and hierarchy of power, and ritual ceremonies. Among these, the most important is the construction of religious chahar-tags, literally "four arches", which has a direct correlation with the expansion and stabilization of Zoroastrianism under the Sassanid rule. The religious value of this type of plan which reached its technical and architectural evolution in Bishapur continued during the Islamic era thanks to its usage in religious and holy buildings such as some mosques and tombs. Sassanids monuments and remains are indeed exceptional testimony to Sassanid culture and civilization that has disappeared. SALF illustrates the Zoroastrian monumental architecture from its very beginning at Firuzabad (Takht-e Neshin), its consolidation at Bishapur (Fire-temple formerly interpreted as Shapur's Palace) and its development during the Early Islamic period at Sarvestan, which was built in a period before new Islamic regulations provoked the main decay of Zoroastrianism.

***Criterion (v):*** The Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a perfect example of an efficient system of land use and utilization of natural topography as well as creation of a cultural landscape in the Sassanid civilization. Using indigenous construction materials and based on optimal exploitation of earth topography such as mountains, plains and rivers, a diverse set of urban structures, castles, buildings, bas-reliefs and other relevant monuments took shape within the landscape. Overall the *Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region* is an outstanding example of the traditional land-use of Fars region where water management plays a fundamental role,

and in which the Sassanian foundation of inhabited settlements and monumental architectures integrates itself in the landscape with a strong imprint.

***Integrity:***

The monuments of the Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region, Islamic Republic of Iran, retain a high degree of integrity in visual and spatial terms. The distance of Sassanid archaeological sites, monuments and buildings from urban spaces as well as existence of natural expanses such as straits, rivers and plains around them has resulted in their visual integrity remaining intact. Based on archaeological researches and conservation activities done over a long span of time within the above mentioned region regarding its historical, natural and biological environment, all ancient towns, mounds, remnants of monuments, reliefs, palaces, castles and other major Sassanid relics in Fars have largely been preserved.

***Authenticity:***

The long previous experience of ICHHTO in scientific conservation and restoration of monuments, reliefs and historical cities of the Sassanid landscape of Fars has resulted in the prevention of any intervention in the plan or any change in historical construction materials and/or any relocation and transformation in the setting and natural environment surrounding the monuments in accordance with pertinent legal regulations. Participation of traditional master workers familiar with the workmanship of Sassanid buildings has led to the preservation of authenticity thanks to the usage of traditional methods and production of indigenous construction materials.

***Management and protection requirements:***

At present the existence of Sassanid archaeological remnants, urban planning and historical architectural elements in their natural background has been the focal point of inter-disciplinary researches and sciences. A brief review of the history of archaeological research, conservation and restoration in Iran shows that the Sassanid sites of Fars area were among the first investigated sites that went under conservation and restoration in Iran with collaboration of the international expeditions.

Due to the significance of preserving authenticity and integrity, all the necessary elements indicating the outstanding universal values have been included in the nominated property. Beside the conservation laws and regulations of ICHHTO, the nominated property is under legal and popular tools for their protection including deployment of the Unit for Conservation of Cultural Heritage whose members are regarded as bailiffs as well as local associations of the cultural heritage which are consisted of representatives of the local community and the public.

4. **Recommends** the State Party to facilitate the organization of another mission by the Advisory Body to Iran in order to further discuss various aspects of the nominated site. adjust some relevant concerns related to the property.