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Paris, 31 January 2019

Dear Mrs. Anatole-Gabriel,

In accordance with the Decision "42 COM 7B.31" adopted at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee held in 2018, in Manama, we convey herewith the Progress Report of 2019 prepared by the relevant Turkish authorities on "Historic Areas of Istanbul" for due consideration of the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS.

Please accept, Mrs. Anatole-Gabriel, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Elif Okutucu  
Counsellor  
Permanent Delegation of Turkey  
to UNESCO

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Mrs. Isabelle Anatole Gabriel  
Chief of Europe and North America Unit  
the World Heritage Center, UNESCO

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current report has been prepared in accordance with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's **42 COM 7B** Decision taken in the 42nd Session held in Manama, Bahrain, with respect to the Historic Areas of Istanbul in the light of the information and documents received from the responsible and relevant institutions. The report has been prepared as per Article 9 which states '**Also notes the large number of proposed infrastructure and other projects, and recommends that the State Party develop a progress report on these, together with a road-map including short- and long-term strategies covering all types of projects (development/renovation/renewal) which may have an impact on the OUV of the property, and determine all required details and steps in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and ICCROM) before any irreversible decisions are taken; and submit this road map to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2019**'.

The first part of this two-part report focuses on the issues mentioned in the UNESCO World Heritage Committee decision. In addition to the projects and works mentioned in the decision, various plans, projects and works including transport carried out within the boundaries of the Historic Peninsula Management Area or its immediate surroundings have been included in the report. The second part consists of training, promotion and awareness raising activities of related institutions and stakeholders for the UNESCO World Heritage Site and cultural heritage.

A joint work has been initiated by the Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Management Directorate and the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Cultural Assets Conservation/Directorate of Cultural Heritage Conservation on **vernacular architecture examples**. The aim is to document the existing traditional timber and masonry structures and to prepare the basis for the urgent action plan to prevent the degradation and loss of structures. The structures to work on in the first phase in 2018 were determined by the joint work of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Cultural Assets Conservation KUDEB (*Conservation Implementation and Control Bureau*), the Site Management Directorate and the Municipality of Fatih. The structures in question have been grouped under two headings. The structures under the first group are the ones that have a timber frame construction system, are authentic, privately owned and could be saved by minor repair and maintenance; the structures under the second group are the ones that have timber frame construction systems, which are dilapidated, privately owned and can be saved by major interventions.

On May 28, 2018, the Site Management Directorate held a meeting with the Governorship of Istanbul to discuss the status of the registered timber structures in the World Heritage Site, how they could survive via minor repair and maintenance work, and relevant funds available. In this context, it has

been decided to provide cash assistance from the Contribution Share for the Conservation of Immovable Cultural Properties for the minor repair and maintenance work of 10 registered timber structures in Süleymaniye that are privately owned and that have worn out due to lack of maintenance work due to financial difficulties. The work is carried out in partnership with the Site Management Directorate, the Governorship of Istanbul Directorate of Investment Monitoring and Coordination and the Municipality of Fatih. The Governorship of Istanbul has approved the cash assistance for the relevant structures and transferred the conservation fund to the Municipality of Fatih. The Municipality of Fatih will initiate the minor repair and maintenance works on these 10 registered timber structures in Süleymaniye in January 2019. Similar work was initiated for 10 registered timber houses located in Zeyrek.

With respect to the work on the **OUV Statement and the Significance of Site**, the method to be implemented has been decided on and is currently being brought together. The work is planned to be finalized with a workshop with the participation of experts and relevant ministerial representatives and the report on the work done will be submitted to the World Heritage Center before the 43rd session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

The Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Management Directorate follows closely all the plans, projects and works that may affect the World Heritage Site through official correspondence between the Site Management Directorate and responsible and related institutions, through the Conservation Board meetings attended as an observer member and the news covered in the print/visual media. The Site Management Directorate has reminded Paragraph 172 of the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage to relevant institutions and organizations various times with respect to the requirement to carry out a **CHIA** (*Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment*) for the plans and projects that may affect the area. The list of the plans and projects demanded by the Site Management Directorate for which Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) is requested to be carried out is included in the report. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) was requested by the Site Management Directorate from authorized and relevant institutions for 34 separate projects that could affect the area and that are within and/or outside the boundaries of the Historic Peninsula Management Plan. The Site Management Directorate also monitors closely the process by conducting regular meetings with the institutions and organizations from which such a study has been requested. In these meetings, the Site Management Directorate shares relevant information with responsible and relevant institutions with respect to what kind of a study and assessment the World Heritage Committee and its relevant advisory bodies expect and also shares relevant information and documents about the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Guidelines prepared by ICOMOS, one of the advisory bodies of the World Heritage Committee as

well as relevant information and documents on other international CHIA studies conducted in the Heritage Areas.

However, despite all the efforts and sensitivity of the Site Management Directorate and responsible/relevant institutions, it is difficult to say that the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) process has reached the desired level. For this reason, the Site Management Directorate is going to organize a CHIA workshop, in which local and foreign experts and representatives of the World Heritage Center will participate to ensure that the CHIA process is better understood and implemented by all responsible and relevant institutions. The workshop is planned to be held in April 2019.

On the other hand, the importance of CHIA is emphasized by drawing attention to the need to conduct one in line with the ICOMOS guidelines for all the plans, projects and works that could have an impact on the outstanding universal value of the site and its components for the strategies defined in the Management Plan and the actions designed to realize them. In this context, under the subheading of “Conservation-Planning” and under the target of “*Carrying out planning and project implementation taking into account ‘outstanding universal value’ of the Historic Areas of Istanbul*” and the strategy of “*Adopting an integrated approach to plans, projects and implementations in the Management Plan Area*, the action is defined as “*developing impact assessment framework and practices for the world heritage cultural properties*”. Under the theme of “Accessibility”, the target of “*taking transport decisions and developing transport projects taking into account the OUV of the site and offering high quality accessibility for everyone*” and the strategy of “*taking into account management plan area and cultural heritage into account in transport decisions covering the whole city*” are defined and the action of “*preparing CHIA reports for transport projects that have an impact on site at the design phase*” is defined under the abovementioned.

**Large-scale restoration projects** are carried out by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate of Pious Foundations, the Governorship of Istanbul, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and the Municipality of Fatih in both the World Heritage Area and on the Historic Peninsula on monumental structures such as Hagia Sophia, the Landwalls, the Süleymaniye Mosque Soup Kitchen and Şehzade Mosque. The details of the restoration works and the current status of the work carried out are included in the report. The details of the survey, restitution and restoration works carried out by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Cultural Assets Conservation/Directorate of Projects for Cultural Properties on the Landwalls and the current status of the works carried out are presented in the annex to the report. (APPENDIX 1: WORKS OF THE ISTANBUL METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY DIRECTORATE OF PROJECTS FOR

## CULTURAL PROPERTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL ASSETS CONSERVATION ON LANDWALLS)

This part of the report also includes plans, projects and works in the World Heritage Area and within the boundaries of the Historic Peninsula Management Area and its vicinities. These are primarily transportation and infrastructure projects, including museums, parks, recreation and lighting projects. The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) report prepared by the relevant institution for the Yenikapı Tent Project located in this area has been completed and is attached. (APPENDIX 2: YENIKAPI TENT CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CHIA) REPORT). The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Study prepared by the authorized administration for the CER Workshops is also enclosed. (APPENDIX 3: CER WORKSHOPS CHIA REPORT)

The second part of the report provides information about **Promotion, Awareness Raising and Training** activities. Information is given about the trainings organized in 2018 by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Cultural Assets Conservation/Conservation, Implementation and Supervision Bureau (KUDEB) (APPENDIX 4: ACTIVITIES OF KUDEB OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL ASSETS CONSERVATION OF THE ISTANBUL METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY IN 2018), works by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Cultural Assets Conservation/Directorate of Cultural Heritage Conservation, works by the Municipality of Fatih Conservation, Implementation and Supervision Bureau (KUDEB) in 2018 and the projects and works financed by the Istanbul Development Agency (ISTKA).

One of the remarkable projects of this part of the report is the scientific research project entitled “*Plural Cultural Heritage of Istanbul: The Case of Istanbul Landwalls*”. The project has been carried out for two years in partnership with the Istanbul Bilgi University, the Bursa Uludağ University and the Newcastle University. This project has been a good example in recent years of projects that recapitulate cultural heritage values together with the society and multiply narratives and memories about heritage. Within the scope of the project, walking ethnographies, video shootings and a photography workshop were organized with the people living in the neighborhoods located along the Landwalls. Thus, the interpretation, narration and routing of the Landwalls’ cultural heritage value has been completed. The project illustrates the importance and meaning of the consideration of cultural heritage values from multiple perspectives in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites and in all conservation areas in general, based on the findings obtained through participatory methods.

All information, documents and documents included in the report are obtained from authorized and related institutions and organizations carrying out plans, projects and works in the field and express the efforts of the State Party to conserve and transfer the World Heritage Site to future generations.