

Name of World Heritage property	State Party	ID number
<i>Historic Town of Zabid</i>	<i>Republic of Yemen</i>	<i>C 611</i>

STATE PARTY'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF
THE HISTORIC TOWN OF ZABID, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE
WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN DANGER

Ministry of Culture - GOPHCY– February 2019

**DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS
42ND SESSION (Manama, 2018), CONCERNING THE HISTORIC TOWN OF
ZABID**

Decision : 42 COM 7A.37

The World Heritage Committee,

1. **Having examined** Document WHC/18/42.COM/7A.Add,
2. **Recalling** Decision **41 COM 7A.51**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017);
3. **Expresses its continuing concern** at the recent damage caused to the cultural heritage of the Historic Town of Zabid as a result of ongoing armed conflict, and that the property continues to be threatened by the current security situation, ongoing social change and continuing lack of organisational support and resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;
4. **Commends** the local actors and the communities of Zabid for efforts to protect and conserve the property despite the very difficult conditions;
5. **Reiterates** the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on short-term repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the development of a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as soon as the security situation in Yemen has improved;
6. **Urges** all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and to fulfil their obligations under international law by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, in particular the safeguarding of properties on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and **encourages** all concerned stakeholders to unite for the preservation of cultural heritage in Yemen;
7. **Reiterates its previous calls** for the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, adopted at the UNESCO expert meeting in July 2015, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures, and **calls on** the World Heritage Centre and



- the Advisory Bodies to continue providing technical assistance and support;
8. **Reiterates its request** to the State Party to submit details of the buffer zone and other technical requirements for a minor boundary modification proposal as soon as the conditions allow it, for adoption by the World Heritage Committee;
 9. **Requests** the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2019**, 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 43rd session in 2019;
 10. **Decides** to retain the Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

As a world heritage site at danger, the historic city of Zabid continues to face many challenges and threats, especially during the armed conflict approaches the city, where the city is located within the zone of conflict, with battles stretching along the west coast of Yemen and the city mediating between the coast to the west and the coastal plains to the east. Each part is controlled by one of the parties to the conflict and despite the efforts of the State party represented by the Ministry of Culture - GOPHCY and in cooperation with the local council, local actors and Zabid communities to try to neutralize the city of any armed conflict.

The forces loyal to the coalition controlled of the Al-Faza area west of Zabid and an extremist group was involved in the bombing of the Al-Faz Mosque and Mausoleum, which is one of the most prominent historical landmarks in the area.

The State party is concerned that such extremists may reach Zabid and tamper with the monuments and Mausoleums scattered inside and on the outskirts of the historic city.

It also expresses its concern that the coalition's air and naval bombardment of areas surrounding the historic city continues, affecting the structure of the city's components.

Due to the absence of international organizations and the deteriorating economic situation of the country and the unstable security situation due to the war, the General organization for the Preservation of Historic Cities could not take any precautionary measures other than the project of paving, improvement and drainage of rainwater financed by the Social Fund for Development, and Soq rehabilitation funded by German Government.

2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision, paragraph by paragraph

3) Expresses its continuing concern at the recent damage caused to the cultural heritage of the Historic Town of Zabid as a result of ongoing armed conflict, and that the property continues to be threatened by the current security situation, ongoing social change and continuing lack of organisational support and resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;

Old Zabid faces many challenges and threats, especially the armed conflict as the war approached the city in the past period and the clashes became 7 kilometers from the historic town. These conditions and circumstances surrounding the city caused deterioration in the security situation, social and economic led to the absence of national resources, and termination of international supports. Causing an economic problem and a continuing obstacle to GOPHCY, which still lacks basic tools to maintain and the lack of organizational support continues, which is a real obstacle to the GOPHCY, which prevents it from fulfilling its obligations unless it is supported by urgent financial support.

4) Commends the local actors and the communities of Zabid for efforts to protect and conserve the property despite the very difficult conditions;

The State party actors, despite the obstacles and financial difficulties, taken some conservation measures in accordance with the available resources and the very limited funding received by UNESCO through the Social Fund and confirms its continued work to preserve the city despite the difficulties and dangers faced the staff during their field works.

5) Reiterates the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on short-term repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the development of a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as soon as the security situation in Yemen has improved;

The State party persists in continuing to consult with the World Heritage Center and advisory bodies on restoration and rehabilitation process to ensure respect for international preservation standards.

The State party welcomes any Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on measures and plan of action could be implemented.

The State party also thanks UNESCO for its training programme has implemented for the team of (GOPHCY, GOAM SFD) in Amman, Jordan, Qualifications in the field of three-dimensional photography (Photo geometry) during the past year and hope to continue such training courses for the cadres of the GOPHCY to obtain local expertise in various technical fields that contribute to preserving the historical monuments in Yemen. And reiterates its request to provide urgent and rapid financial support to save the buildings of the city and we would like to point out that the work of restoration or study is not enough to save the city, the magnitude of the suffering is very large and that the State party strive after the end of the war and eliminate the effects left by the war inside the city to remove City from the danger list.

And emphasizes to the need upskilling the local staff working in the by the Center of Studies (CATS) through the local trainers, which were prepared by UNESCO and ask for more support for reactivating CATS and local experts

are capable of implementing any measures could be taken for preserving of the property during the war and post-war periods.

6) Urges all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and to fulfil their obligations under international law by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, in particular the safeguarding of properties on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and encourages all concerned stakeholders to unite for the preservation of cultural heritage in Yemen;

The State party call upon the international community and the relevant bodies, especially UNESCO, to pressure the parties involved in the conflict to neutralize the Yemeni culture heritage sites including zabid and not to employ it politically.

The State party continues to express concern at the continued air and naval bombing by coalition forces and fears that the conflict could reach Zabid, The party concerned is counting on the international community and heritage-interested organizations to address and persuade international and local parties involved in the conflict to neutralize the heritage and to take no action that might affect the historic city.

The State party is also concerned about the arrival of some extremist groups involved in the conflict to the city and the destruction of their religious features that are not in line with the ideological situation of these groups.

7) Reiterates its previous call to the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, adopted at the UNESCO expert meeting in July 2015, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures; and also calls on the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue providing technical assistance and support where needed;

The state party, appreciates WH committee appeal's on the international community to provide urgent financial support for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural heritage, adopted at the UNESCO Expert meeting in July 2015, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures, and also calls on the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue providing the State Party with technical assistance and support where needed, and hope that all international concerned bodies to facilitate urgent reception of that supports;

The state party, is in urgent need of international community support, ,we are depending too much in the role of the World Heritage Center, and Advisory Bodies and donors , to assist and support the state party in any way possible

for priority conservation, management measures and capacity building programmes, as well funding emergency interventions, that should be taken during this period of time, because the most of the world culture heritage sites and tentative listed of Yemen are facing severe deterioration, due to the war and airstrikes. The local staff and experts could implement any necessary actions, if there is a serious generous support from the international communities and organizations.

8) Reiterates its request to the State Party to submit details of the buffer zone and other technical requirements for a minor boundary modification proposal as soon as the conditions allow it, for adoption by the World Heritage Committee;

The state party need technical and financial supports to provide these requirements.

3. Activates implemented during the year 2018

The past period has not witnessed many conservations works in the city because of the war and the unstable situation except for some minor works in several areas as follows:

1. Field of studies and field surveys.

- 1.1 Preliminary surveys of some of the damage in the city were undertaken by an individual initiative of the staff of the GOPHCY 's branch in Zabid, which does not rise to the level of a database from which to proceed from the restoration process. In the hope of implementing an accurate and comprehensive inventory within the ongoing project of UNESCO funded by the European Union.
- 1.2 An integrated study on the roofing of the old market. The third phase was carried out by the Zabid branch funded by German Government.
- 1.3 preliminary studies of some of the affected buildings during the war.:

2. Training and Qualification of Staff.

The training of eight people working in Zabid city from GOPHCY branch, GOAM branch and the local authorities in the field of inventory and damage assessment in the training course of the team participating in the damage assessment of the cities registered in the World Heritage List (Zabid - Shibam - Aden) implemented in GOPHCY - (CATS) Sana'a and funded by UNESCO through the Social Fund for Development.

3. The field of restoration and conservation interventions

Paving and improve the drainage of rain water project in bab Alqrb funded by the Social Fund for Development.

4. Violations and Unauthorized Construction.

Despite the unstable conditions in the city, however, GOPHCY branch in Zabid has taken good measures to reduce the spread of unauthorized construction as follows:

- 4.1 control over the spread of violations within the city and reduce them by more than 80% compared to the previous year.
- 4.2 identification and document the violations and submit them to the related

timely basis before they are completed.

4.3 Follow up on the implementation of the judicial decisions issued by the Zabid Court, which ruled to remove some serious violations.

4.5 Implementation of the removal of a number of irregularities and random buildings

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

- Collation forces airstrikes
- Armed conflict escalation
- Lack of resources
- Socioeconomic situation deterioration
- Natural factors and decay

3.1. If no appropriate action wouldn't be taken immediately ,the deterioration could have escalated in Zabid.

3.2. Urgent actions from the international community and organization concerned , are essential;

5. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area (core zone and buffer zone and/or corridors) that might be envisaged.

Non

6. Public access to the state of conservation report

State Party, doesn't mind to upload the report for public access.

Signature of The Authority

Abdullah Ahmed Alkebsi

Minister of Culture

Sana'a February 2019

