

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref.GB/AA/1622/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2019

H. E. Mr Ahmet Altay Cengizer
Permanent Delegation of Turkey to UNESCO
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World Heritage List 2020

Arslantepe Mound (Turkey) - Interim report and additional information request

Dear Ambassador,

As prescribed by the revised *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies have been requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2020. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation process.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to "Arslantepe Mound" was carried out by Mrs. Mariana Correia (Portugal) in September 2019. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organization and implementation of the mission.

On 3 October 2019, a letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding the understanding of site stratigraphy, present and future archaeological research and integrated conservation and development pressures. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 4 November 2019 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

In mid-November 2019, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2020. The additional information provided by the State Party, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2020.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation to the meeting held on Friday 22 November 2019 with representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. The exchange during this meeting was of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS evaluation meeting in which the Panel identified areas where it considers further information is needed.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

Comparative analysis

ICOMOS recognizes the significance of the nominated property in providing an important well-preserved and complete picture of elite governance and residence structures in the Late Chalcolithic period, predominantly illustrated by the palace complex destroyed by fire in 3100 BCE. However, it appears difficult to appreciate these values when compared to other sites in the Upper Euphrates Valley as well as other sites in Anatolia and Mesopotamia. It seems that similar features are present in Tell Brak, Hassek Hoyuk, Hacinebi, Tepe Gawra and one most importantly Yumuktepe, which is not mentioned in the comparative analysis. Could the State Party provide information that would assist in better understanding what – apart from its very good state of conservation – makes Arslantepe exceptional when compared to the others?

Archaeological excavation strategy

In view of the future protection and preservation of these remains, ICOMOS would appreciate to receive further information on the future excavation strategy. In this respect, ICOMOS would encourage that a

Therefore, ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could submit a single survey plan of all structures currently preserved in situ and a detailed excavation programme for the following decades, which allows ICOMOS to understand better what future excavations are foreseen, and in which areas of the property as well as the layer to which these aim to excavate physical remains.

Regarding the conservation of the nominated property, ICOMOS notes the fragility of the remains, which are protected by the shelter system. However, it also presents certain shortcomings, including its resting on historic remains and occasional water run offs in excavation areas. ICOMOS would therefore like to receive further information on the future conservation measures planned, including risk preparedness and disaster management specifically for seismic risks, measures directly applied to the excavated historic substance and considerations for a potential renewal of the shelter system.

In terms of the enlarged 3rd degree conservation zone, ICOMOS would appreciate to receive formal notification that this enlargement is intended to also result in the enlargement of the proposed buffer zone for the nominated property.

Management

Visitor facilities

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation process.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation process.

Signature:

Copy to Ministry of Culture and Tourism - General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums
UNESCO World Heritage Centre