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ANTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES CONSEID INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTS ET DES SITES MEXIMAPO INDECIDO BOILPOCAMIDAMENTIMOS IL TOCTO IPINE MATERIA CI

Our Ref.GB/AA/1622/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2019

H. E. Mr Ahmet Altay Cengizer Permanent Delegation of Turkey to UNESCO Maison de l'UNESCO Bureau B11.31 à B11.41 1, rue Miollis 75732 PARIS Cedex 15

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

cautious excavation approach be developed, which gives priority to conservation and retains untouched significant non-excavated areas of the site allowing to benefit from potential future technological advances which may provide options for non-invasive forms of investigation.

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.

Conservation

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.

Boundaries

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.

In relation to the protection of the buffer zone and construction activities, ICOMOS would appreciate if the State Party could provide information on the measures in place to control building heights and volume, as well as to mitigate the risk of illegal construction.

Management

Based on the information provided in the nomination dossier, ICOMOS understands that conservation and research activities are managed by La Sapienza University excavation team. Could the State Party please provide information to better understand how the site is managed in the absence of the archaeological team? In general, clarifications on the different roles and responsibilities in the management of the site would be helpful.

Visitor facilities

ICOMOS would further appreciate if the most recent plans for the location of future visitor facilities and, where available, draft designs of these facilities could be shared for ICOMOS' consideration.

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

We would be grateful if you could provide ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre with the above information by 28 February 2020 at the latest, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the Operational Guidelines for supplementary information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So we would be grateful if the State Party could keep its response concise and respond only to the above requests.

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

Yours faithfully,

Gwenaëlle Bourdin

Director

ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

Copy to

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