



State of Libya

# Libyan Cultural Heritage Sites

State of Conservation Report

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF SABRATHA  
WORLD HERITAGE SITE

C 184

February 2020



World Heritage 44 COM





# 1. Executive Summary

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The State of Party, (Libya) would like to express its gratitude to the World Heritage Committee (WHC) and its advisory bodies for the efforts and endeavours they have undertaken to monitor the status of the archaeological site of Sabratha (the property) in order to remove it from the list of endangered sites.

This report has been prepared, in accordance with Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines, and compiled in response to WHC decision 43 COM 7A.25 at the forty-third session held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan (30 June - 10 July- 2019). In this session, the WHC commended the efforts made by the of the Antiquities Authorities and local authorities to develop a strategy for the protection and preservation of the Libyan properties listed in the World Heritage List, including this site (Sabratha). The Department of Antiquities (DOA) continues to work alongside the civil society of the area to maintain the outstanding universal value of the property.

Libya would like to assure the WHC that there have been no security violations in the area of Subratha in 2019 and that the site is not in any danger and therefore should be taken off the endangered list. The DOA also reiterates their invitation to a joint WHC / ICOMOS mission to assess the status of the property on site and to provide advice to the DOA.

The DOA will continue to make the WHC aware of the evolving status of the property, of any new measures taken to ensure its protection and preservation and provide detailed information on the work accomplished.

A workshop was held on 12 / 02 / 2019 by the end of works of the committee formed by Government of National Accord decision no. (390 / 2017) to prepare the reports to reply to the decision of the World Heritage Committee to include the five Libyan sites in the list of danger.

May be the one of the most important results from this workshop is the formation of a new special committee (Government of National Accord decision No. (155 / 2019)), to management the Conservation Strategy, (state of conservation Report, 2018) to ensure protection and preservation of the property.

The committee was authorized to implement the strategy presented for the preservation and maintenance of the five Libyan world heritage sites and communicating with the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO in particular.

The follow up World Heritage Sites department was established in DOA to follow up on everything related to these sites, manage them, prepare periodic reports and proposed plans, and supervise the implementation of projects.

The main threat to the Site of Sabratha remains the degradation of the monuments by the environment, due to the nature of the building material in the site. Preservation of the monuments on the site requires substantial financial as well as technical support.

The DOA is in the process of securing funding and technical support from the international community and other specialized institutions. Efforts to control vegetation growth by the DOA office of Sabratha, in order to limit the damage to the floor mosaics and monuments in the site, continue year round.

To control the overgrowth and the impact of vegetation, team of specialists visited the property to determine the extent of damage and control mechanisms. A group of plants, including weeds, trees and shrubs, have been identified, and it is noted that one type of shrub is spread inside buildings and roads, while the other types are found in open area outside buildings and roads, and through tests on the following has been reached to plant classification, The plan is being prepared for direct control operations.

To reduce the effects of weather factors and sand drift, the discussion was opened using Nano Technology with a company specialized in insulation operations to study the possibility of using its product to protect

Due to the armed conflict that took place inside the Site (mainly around the Theatre area), several locations were damaged (minor damage from small arms). The most prominent is the visual scarring of some parts of the Theatre, (Damage assessment report prepared Roman Theater in Sabratha: a proposal for a simple restoration November 2019)

DOA has contracted to implement the first phase of the site's 660-meter protection fence and that implementation work will be carried out on it when the Antiquities Authority receives funding for the project from the Government of National Accord of Libya.

The second training program for training the employees of the Tourism Police and Antiquities Protection Authority was completed on 5-7 January 2020 at Sabratha site.

The state party, Libya would like to assure the WHC that there have been no security violations in the area of archaeological site of Sabratha and that the site is not in any danger and therefore should be taken off the endangered list.

The DOA would like to reiterate their invitation to a joint WHC / ICOMOS mission to assess the status of the property on site and to provide advice to the DOA.

And in this context we request the aid of the WHC in providing assistance in calling the international community to provide more financial and technical support, including from the Heritage Emergency Fund of UNESCO.



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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF SABRATHA WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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## Property Data

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**Name of World Heritage property:**

Archaeological Site of Sabratha

**State Party:**

Libya

**Identification Number:**

C 184

**Year of inscription on the List of World Heritage:**

1982

**Type of Property:**

Cultural

**Geographic Information (lat/long):**

32° 48' 18.63" N, 12° 29' 05.90" E

**Area:**

90.534 ha.

**Government Institutions Responsible for the Property:**

Department of Antiquities, (DoA)

**Criteria:**

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**Previous Committee Decisions:**

Decisions 41 COM 7A.39 and 41 COM 8C.2 adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017)

& Decision: 42 COM 7A.24 adopted at its 42st session (Manama, 2018)

& Decision: 43 COM 7A.25 adopted at its 43st session (Baku, 2019)

**Previous, WHC Monitoring Missions:**

None





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This report has been prepared, in accordance with Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines, although we did not receive a response to the previous report 2020, which was in response to WHC 43 COM Resolution 7A.25 at the forty-third session held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan (30 June - 10 July 2019) ... but we are continuing to monitor the state of conservation and preservation. We look forward to implementing all the requirements of the Libyan state in this regard to remove the Sabratha site from the danger list.

In this session, the WHC commended the efforts made by the of the Antiquities Authorities and local authorities to develop a strategy for the protection and preservation of the Libyan properties listed in the World Heritage List, including this site (Sabratha).

The Department of Antiquities (DOA) continues to work alongside the civil society of the area to maintain the outstanding universal value of the property.

Libya would like to assure the WHC that there have been no security violations in the area of Sabratha in 2020 and that the site is not in any danger and therefore should be taken off the endangered list. The DOA also reiterates their invitation to a joint WHC / ICOMOS mission to assess the status of the property on site and to provide advice to the DOA.

The DOA will continue to make the WHC aware of the evolving status of the property, of any new measures taken to ensure its protection and preservation and provide detailed information on the work accomplished.

Committee formed by decision no. (155) / 2019 issued by the Government of National Accord, Libya for the Management and Implementation of the Strategy for Preservation and Conservation of the Five Libyan World Heritage Sites and World Heritage Sites Administration Unit in DOA are working together to follow up everything related to these sites, manage them, prepare periodic reports and proposed plans, and supervise the implementation of projects.

The main threat to the Site of Sabratha remains the degradation of the monuments by the environment, due to the nature of the building material in the site. Preservation of the monuments on the site requires substantial financial as well as technical support.

The DOA is in the process of securing funding and technical support from the international community and other specialized institutions.

Efforts to control vegetation growth by the DOA office of Sabratha, in order to limit the damage to the floor mosaics and monuments in the site, continue year round.

COVID -19 pandemic, lack of resources and conditions in the country and frequent electrical cuts had a negative effect on the work in Sabratha.

Paris meeting which hold on March (05 – 06) 2020 was successful, the meeting included the discussion of the minor modifications of the properties boundary and proposing the buffer zones of the Five Libyan World Heritage Sites, in this meeting Libyan team benefited from direct discussion and close consultation with WHC, ICOMOS about the issues that concern all the Libyan World Heritage sites.

During this year 2020, the first phase of the project funded by the UNDP in cooperation with the Municipal Council of Sabratha was launched, where the phase includes maintenance and restoration work for some facilities, site management headquarters, restoration the lab building and warehouse which damaged during the war 2017, as well as improving and developing the entrance area of the property site. This phase is almost completed.

The second phase of the project will be start during this year, 2021 and shall include: Rehabilitate the area around the theatre; mainly focusing on removal of the rusted metal fence (with its cement bases), replacing light fixtures, preparing the pathways in the site (specific location), replacing the old wooden stage of the theatre, these anticipated works have been presented to ICOMOS and have been approved for the go ahead, since they do not include any works in the archaeological monuments.

As a part of capacity building, upgrade of the efficiency and capabilities of the tourist police and antiquities protection personnel, the second phase of the training program was carried out in the period from January, 05 to January, 07 2020 at the archaeological Site of Sabratha.

In terms of involving stakeholders in the protection of archaeological sites, and the Department of Antiquities (DOA) efforts to protect the site and its buffer zone, was done on the 9th of December 2020, signed a joint agreement for the Management of the Buffer zone of Sabratha World Heritage Site, between the Department of Antiquities (DOA), the Tourism Police and Protection of Antiquities, the Sabratha Municipal Council and the Urban planning Authority. This agreement in brief states that the management of the buffer zone will be

done by a joint committee and aims to protect the buffer zone in addition to promote protection of the environment and regulate urban planning and the development of the area.

The DOA would like to reiterate their invitation to a joint WHC / ICOMOS mission to assess the status of the property on site and to provide advice to the DOA. And in this context we request the aid of the WHC in providing assistance in calling the international community to provide more financial and technical support, including from the Heritage Emergency Fund of UNESCO.