



مملكة البحرين
Kingdom of Bahrain
وزارة الثقافة
Ministry of Culture



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Dr. Mechtild Rössler
Director
World Heritage Centre
Culture Sector, Division for Heritage
UNESCO
PO Box: 75352, Paris
France

**Subject: State of Conservation of the World Heritage Property
Qal'at al Bahrain - Ancient Harbour and Capital of Dilmun
(Bahrain) No.1192 (ter)**

Dear Ms. Rössler,

Following the latest decision 43 COM 7B.42 by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd Session in Baku, I am pleased to provide the progress report prepared by Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities and Site Management Unit of World Heritage Site of Qal'at al- Bahrain.

I would like to assure you that the State Party of the Kingdom of Bahrain is fully committed to the protection of the World Heritage Site and to the mission of the World Heritage Centre.

Please accept the assurances of my highest esteem.

Yours Sincerely,

Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa
President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities



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State of Conservation of the World Heritage Property
Qal'at al- Bahrain - Ancient Harbour and Capital of Dilmun
(Bahrain) No.1192 (bis)

Following the latest decision 43 COM 7B.42 by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd Session in Baku, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities is pleased to update the Committee Members, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre on the latest development of the matters related to the protection and management of the World Heritage property of Qal'at al-Bahrain – Ancient Harbour and Capital of Dilmun.

1. Response of the State Party to the to the Decision of the World
Heritage Committee No. 43 COM 7B.42

i) Incorporation of the heritage related zoning codes in the Zoning Regulations of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Following the restructuring of the government of Bahrain in 2016 and replacement of the Ministry of Culture with the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities the cultural sector is no longer present in the Cabinet of Ministers, but relies on the partnerships with other governmental agencies and ministries to be represented and bring its matters forward.

The case of the introduction of the heritage specific zoning in the Prime Ministerial Edict No. 28 of 2009: Zoning Regulations for Construction is undertaken in close and mutually respectful partnership with the General Directorate for Urban Planning, under the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, which represents the joint initiative in the Cabinet.

While there is a clear agreement among the partners on the significance of the cultural heritage in the integrated and sustainable development of the Kingdom of Bahrain, there is an ongoing discussion on the number and types of heritage zones to include in the legislation, specifically concerning the agricultural and urban heritage areas. BACA is in close collaboration with the legal drafting team, and the leading authority of the Working Group: The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning.

BACA understands the desire of the World Heritage Committee to see the matter of heritage legislation concluded. Nevertheless, considering the specificity of Bahrain, BACA respectfully considers that expediting the legislative works might not have the desired effect. Therefore, BACA would favor a perhaps more prolonged but ultimately more sustainable option of continuing the discussion on the phrasing of the draft new zoning regulations before submitting it for the final approval.



Having considered the above, BACA kindly requests that the World Heritage Committee supports its discreet approach by extending the period before the next State of Conservation Report shall be submitted to four years, in place of the current two-year interval. Should in the meantime a significant progress be made in the matter, BACA shall notify the World Heritage Committee, the Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies.

ii) Final designs and details of construction methods for the tunnel to be submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities has not received further details on the project. Should there be any update in the situation, BACA shall immediately communicate with the World Heritage Centre.

2. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party

Below issue has been reported to the World Heritage Centre in September 2020.

In September 2020, the monitoring team of BACA has spotted an unusual activity along the eastern shore of the visual corridor, constituting the maritime buffer zone. It appeared to have been an unpermitted reclamation activity, resulting in the intrusion of a land-mass into the visual corridor. The area in question is approximately one kilometre distant to the shore of the Fort and 400 m to the east-most point of the sea access channel. As such, although the area is distant to the World Heritage Property boundaries, on the eastern end of the Buffer Zone, BACA immediately acted and halted the construction work.

It was confirmed that the works have been undertaken without a prior permit. BACA requested the immediate removal of the reclaimed land by the contractor, and also asked the Government of Bahrain to take a prompt action, allocate the necessary financial resources and ensure the removal of the reclamation as soon as possible. The unpermitted reclamation has already been partially removed. The resources have been allocated and BACA is in coordination with the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning and the local municipal authorities to manage and monitor the progress of the removal of the remaining area.

No other issues are identified.



3. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

No major works planned in the site that would affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

4. Public access to the state of conservation report

The State Party of Bahrain has no objections to upload the report for public access.

5. Signature of the Authority

On behalf of the State Party of Bahrain

Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa
President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities