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World Heritage

44 COM

# AMENDMENT

Item of the Agenda	8B
Draft Decision	44.COM 8B.22
Amendment submitted by the Delegation of ....	Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Mali, Hungary, China
Date	23.07.2021

## TEXT

### **Draft Decision: 44 COM 8B.22**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC/21/44.COM/8B and WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B1,
2. Refers the nomination of **Inscribes Arslantepe Mound, Turkey**, ~~back to the State Party in order to allow it to:~~ **on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iii);**
3. **Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value;**

### **Brief synthesis**

Arslantepe Mound is an archaeological tell of about 4.5 ha in extension, and 30 m high, at the heart of the fertile Malatya plain, 15 kilometres from the right bank of the Euphrates. The archaeological evidence of the site testifies to its occupation from at least the 6th millennium BCE up until the late Roman period. The earliest layers of the Early Uruk period are characterized by adobe houses dating to the first half of the 4th millennium BCE. The most prominent and flourishing period of the site was in the Late Chalcolithic period, during which the so-called palace complex was constructed. Considerable

evidence also testifies to the Early Bronze Age period, most prominently identified by the Royal Tomb complex. The archaeological stratigraphy then extends to the Paleo-Assyrian and Hittite periods, including Neo-Hittite levels.

Arslantepe shows in detail the complex processes bringing to the birth of the State and a sophisticated bureaucracy before writing, offering basic information on the early formation of this new society, which was at the basis of our contemporary world. The site, being located in a real geographic and cultural border, thanks to the intensive and varying external relations that have significantly marked its history, is also a testimony of fundamental events and changes in various and different civilisations of the Near East.

Arslantepe 4th millennium levels, in particular, show fundamental changes in human relations in the period of State formation, which involved Eastern Anatolian and Mesopotamian societies in the course of the entire 4th millennium BC, and is thus an exceptional testimony to the first emergence of State society in the Near East, original though related with the great 4th millennium Uruk civilization. This interchange of cultural traditions and social values resulted in the emergence of new social and political systems based on hierarchies and social differences, economic privileges and new power relations which led to new developments in monumental architecture, administrative technology and iconography of power in artistic representation. The extensive and systematic excavations of the palace complex, full of material in situ, and the thorough researches conducted on them have allowed to reconstruct the characteristics of this civilization, the life of these first elites and their activities with incomparable details, enlightening the emergence of a centralised government controlling the economy of the population and exercising a central political authority. The finding of an exceptional group of metal weapons, among which the earliest swords so far known in the world, which were probably hanging on a wall in one of the buildings of the palace (and are now exhibited in the Malatya Museum), also points to the beginning of forms of organized combat as the prerogative of an elite, who probably flaunted it as an instrument of their new political power.

**Criterion (iii):** Arslantepe presents an exceptional testimony to the first emergence of state society in the Near East. It is related to the 4th millennium Uruk civilization, presents an original form. Its uniqueness when compared to other Uruk culture centres lies in the extensive material in situ, which has made possible the reconstruction of the characteristics of this civilization and the life of these first elites, their activities and relations with the rest of the population, with incomparable details, throwing light on the emergence of a centralized government in a non-urban centre, controlling the basic economy of the surrounding population. The property provides a complete and vivid picture of society and daily life of the early administrative elites in the Late Chalcolithic period.

### **Integrity**

The large extension of the areas uncovered, its preservation and exhibition ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the Arslantepe significance: the birth of the State and a new type of society marking a radical change in the history of humankind. The monumental palatial complex of the 4th millennium BC, in particular, has been widely exposed and preserved in perfect and integral state, with the original mud-brick walls, mud plaster and floors, internal features and paintings almost unchanged since they were brought to light in the course of more than forty years. The progressively expanding researches on the Hittite and Neo-Hittite period levels are in progress and can potentially bring to light new monuments of great historical and cultural value in the near future. All attributes that manifest proposed outstanding universal value lays within the world heritage boundary which encompasses the whole mound plot and surface, together with adjacent small portion of land towards north where movable cultural objects dated to settlement layers the mound embodies were recorded. Neither the property nor its buffer zone suffered from adverse effects of new developments or inappropriate interventions so far.

### **Authenticity**

All the buildings brought to light at Arslantepe and the Palace structures exhibited in the Open-Air Museum in particular are totally original and no reconstruction has been made. The mud-brick walls and the whole 4th millennium BC architecture, including the internal mud features, plaster, wall paintings and floors are in the same condition in which they were found. The only interventions practiced on these buildings are minor repairing interventions made, when necessary, by using the same original materials, i.e. mud and straw tempering. The roofing system itself has not damaged the structures in any point, since it is supported by metal poles which do not stand on the walls, but directly on the floor, without perforating it and therefore even without damaging the underlying archaeological levels. The entire palatial complex has not been modified in any way and is protected maintaining its total authenticity. The landscape silhouette around the site is fairly preserved, as well.

### **Protection and management requirements**

The property and its buffer zone is under protection by the Turkish Legislation for Preservation of Cultural and Natural Property, Law No.: 2863. Arslantepe Mound was registered as a 1st Degree Archaeological Conservation site by the decision of Adana Regional Conservation Council dated 20 January 1989 which provides it with the highest level of protection at a national level. The boundaries were later enlarged by a decision 2145 of Sivas Regional Conservation Council dated 23 December 2010. The immediate setting of the site, which overlaps with the buffer zone, was defined as a 3rd Degree Archaeological Conservation site. In order to protect the property's setting a conservation development plan was developed by Battalgazi Municipality which indicates the legal conditions and restrictions for urban development.

The property is managed by means of the cooperation of multiple institutions. At the local level, two institutions are responsible for the protection and management of the site: the

site management unit under the direction of the Site Manager, which facilitates the management processes, in particular all coordination processes at the national, metropolitan or municipal level and which also coordinates the implementation of the site management plan, and the Malatya Museum, which supervises the cultural heritage resources of the region, including Arslantepe Mound. The museum is responsible for security, visitor access, cleaning and maintenance of the site and houses the collections of archaeological findings discovered during excavations. A third partner at an international level is the Excavation Director and Scientific Coordinator based at La Sapienza University in Rome, Italy. The Italian team is responsible for planning the excavation seasons and active conservation measures but also acts as a management advisor all year round to the local team. Financial resources for the site include resources for the annual excavation seasons provided by the Italian archaeological mission through the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and an annual administration and maintenance budget provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The management plan (2019-2024) prepared by the collaboration between Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Battalgazi Municipality and Sapienza Archaeological Expedition was approved on the 8th of January, 2019. The site manager has been in duty since the preparation phase of the management plan. In addition, as a part of the management structure, an “Advisory Board” and “Supervision and Coordination Board” has been established by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The palatial complex is already protected by a modular roofing system and it will be extended towards the newly excavated part of the palatial complex as a part of landscaping project prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

4. Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:
  - a) Prepare a conservation strategy and plan for the site, which determines protocols, priorities and procedures for all forms of conservation and maintenance interventions needed,
  - b) ~~Prepare within the context of the conservation plan a cautious strategy for anticipated archaeological researches and excavations in the next decades, predominantly based on non-invasive research methodologies, and the designation of undisturbed areas, which are not planned to be excavated,~~
  - b) Augment the management plan to include local management roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, a comprehensive risk assessment and risk preparedness plan,
  - c) Strengthen the local management capacity ~~through the appointment of a~~ **under the coordination of the** local site manager,

- d) Provide clarifications on the new arrangements allowed in A3 zone with the enlargement of the buffer zone,
  - e) Reconsider the design of the proposed new roof shelter by providing more views of different sections, detailing the connection between the old and new roof and how the new roof will address places where the rain water mostly accesses the site, and submit it for further review,
  - f) Undertaking further surveys to determine the exact extension of archaeological findings towards the north and west of the ~~nominated~~ property and on that basis, if necessary, extend the boundaries of the ~~nominated~~ property in line with the indications of archaeological ground surveys in these directions,
  - g) Studying unsheltered areas previously excavated and the edges of the present protective shelter to ensure minimum exposure of earthen architectural remains to weathering phenomena,
  - ~~g) Undertaking a periodical detailed photographic documentation of all the site structures and objects, where needed, augmented by drawings indicating positions and exact features of elements of specific significance, as a baseline for monitoring and risk and disaster management processes,~~
  - h) Undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments for any new visitor infrastructure or museum buildings before any decision is taken, to assess their potential impacts on the ~~potential~~ Outstanding Universal Value of the ~~nominated~~ property,
5. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2022 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46<sup>th</sup> session in 2023.