



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

**MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

**STATE PARTY REPORT  
ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF**

**HISTORIC CENTRES OF BERAT AND GJIROKASTRA**

**WORLD HERITAGE**

**ALBANIA**

**Ref 569bis**

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## 1 Executive Summary of the report

The report for the state of conservation of “Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra” 569 bis., was prepared in response to decision 44 COM 7B.151 of the World Heritage Committee, and in compliance to the format for submission of SoC reports in the Operational Guidelines 2015, Annex 13.

Chapter 2 responds to the points of the WHC Decision, explaining in section 2.1 the process undertaken by the state party (Ministry of Culture) for the drafting and approval of the legal acts (by-laws) as required by the Law 27/2018 “*On Cultural Heritage and Museums*).

Section 2.2. focuses in the monitoring indicators for the protection of the OUV and links to Annex 1 of this SoC report.

Section 2.3 expresses the willingness of the state party to take into consideration the recommendations of the advisory bodies and refers to the chapter 4 and the annexes for an updated status of the implementation of the ongoing development projects in both historic centres.

Section 2.4 provides un update information on the state of implementation of the International Assistance for the drafting of the Integrated Management Plan (PMI) for the World Heritage Property "Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra". A final draft of the IMP is planned to be prepared within December 2022.

Chapter 3.1 describes maintenance works, projects and investments undertaken by the RDCH Berat and RDCH Gjirokastra for the protection, conservation, restoration of cultural heritage as well as promotion and improvement of touristic services. The chapter links to Annex 2 showing a report with photos before and after the works.

In chapter 4, Section 4.1 provides updated information on projects related to PIUTD as well as Government of Albania funds, in the historic centers of Berat and Gjirokastra. The section links to Annexes 3-9.

Chapter 5 allows the WHC to publish the report and is followed from the Chapter 6 with the signature of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Albania for this SoC report.

Chapter 6 is the official signature of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Albania.

Chapter 7 presents the list of Annexes that accompany the SoC report.

## 2 Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee 44 COM 7B.151.

### 2.1 *Notes the implementation of the Law on “Cultural Heritage and Museums” and subsequent development of by-laws to create various cultural heritage councils to strengthen and improve the conservation and management of the property, the restoration and maintenance work undertaken during 2019 and 2020 to the built fabric of the property, and the implementation of the monitoring indicators and establishment of a system for building approvals in the management of the property and its buffer zones;*

During 2020 – 2021 following the obligation from the Law no. 27/2018 “Cultural Heritage and Museums” and based on the Analytical Plan of the Ministry of Culture during 2020 and 2021 the following by-laws have been drafted and successfully approved:

- Decision no. 1125, dated 30.12.2020 "On the design, implementation of protective and protective interventions, their supervision and testing"
- Decision no. 1099, dated 24.12.2020 "On the approval of treatment methods, technical norms, criteria and models of interventions in the field of preservation of cultural assets"
- Decision no. 729, dated 16.09.2020 On the declaration of cultural property "Historic Center" of the village Kanina, its protection zone and the approval of the plan for their preservation, protection and administration;
- Decision no. 771, dated 30.9.2020 On the declaration of cultural assets of the "Historic Centre" of the city of Shkodra, the definition of its protection zone and the approval of the plan for their preservation, protection and administration;
- Decision no. 169, dated 20.02.2020 On the scope, structure, content, methodology of preparation and procedure of public discussion of cultural immovable property management plans”;
- Decision no. 583, dated 22.7.2020 On the approval of the integrated management plan of Butrint National Park;
- Decision No. 793, dated 13.10.2020 On determining the special conditions and licensing criteria, accompanying documents and procedures for reviewing or revoking the license for archaeological activity and underwater archaeological activity;
- Decision no. 560, dated 15.07.2020 Procedures for the selection of entities equipped with a license for design, implementation, supervision or testing of cultural assets;
- Decision no. 399, dated 13.05.2020 For the determination of the borders of the Durrës archaeological park;
- Decision no. 792, dated 07.10.2020, of the Council of Ministers *“On determining the special conditions and criteria for licensing, accompanying documents, subcategories of licenses, procedures for granting, suspension or revocation, as well as the annual quotation of licenses for interventions in cultural assets materials”;*

- Decision no. 199, dated 31.03.2021 "On the special licensing conditions, accompanying documents, procedures for reviewing or revoking the license, application fees and annual fee for exercising the commercial activity of cultural assets"
- Decision no. 220, dated 7.4.2021 "On the special conditions for issuing the permit, accompanying documents, as well as the procedures for reviewing or revoking the permit for conducting archaeological research.
- Decision no. 329 dated 2.06.2021 "*For some additions and changes in the decision no. 792, dated 07.10.2020, of the Council of Ministers "On determining the special conditions and criteria for licensing, accompanying documents, subcategories of licenses, procedures for granting, suspension or revocation, as well as the annual quotation of licenses for interventions in cultural assets materials"*.
- Decision no. 583, 6.10.2021 "On determining the procedures and ways of administering the database of stolen cultural assets".

The process of drafting the legal acts (by-laws) related to the Law 27/2018 shall continue during 2022 based on the Analytical Plan of the Ministry of Culture.

## **2.2 Monitoring Indicators**

The monitoring indicators that have been developed thanks to an International Assistance from the World Heritage Centre for the implementation of a 3-day Workshop for the site managers local governments and other stakeholders on this purpose, have started in 2017-2018 to be used by the Regional Directorates of National Culture of Gjirokastra and Berat (RDCH). The monitoring of cultural heritage assets in the world heritage site and buffer zone is part of the everyday work of the dedicated staff of the RDCH's. Monitoring is done through inspections on site of the specialists and technical staff which report to the department of archaeology and architecture in the respective RDCH's and afterword to the National Institute for Cultural Heritage and Ministry of Culture. The monitoring indicators for the protection of the OUV of the World Heritage property are provided in Annex 1.

## **2.3 Welcomes the submission of the various project proposals of the Project for Integrated Urban Development (PIUTD)-component, apart from the by-pass road for Gjirokastra and, noting that the PIUTD project has tourism development as central aim, requests the State Party to:**

1. *take into account the comments and recommendations provided by ICOMOS to improve the projects presented in Annexes 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 of its state of conservation report, for the further development of the project proposals and before their implementation*

The sub-projects that are part of the Project for Integrated Urban Development (PIUTD) have been part of the inspection list of the Reactive Monitoring Mission held by WHC-ICOMOS-ICCROM during 14-17 December 2021. An updated situation of these projects is mentioned in Chapter 4 of this SoC Report and is provided in the Annexes. Also the updated technical material of the projects have been sent upon request to the Mission experts. The state party states

its willingness to take into account the comments and recommendations of the advisory bodies and Reactive Monitoring Mission regarding PIUTD project.

2. *await further review by the Advisory Bodies of the projects presented in the Annexes 6 and 7 of its state of conservation report before taking any further decisions about their implementation;*

The projects presented in Annexes 6 and 7 of the SoC report in February 2021 are under implementation status. Also, these projects namely the rehabilitation of Çerçiz Topulli square and the By-pass of Gjirokastra have been an important part of the inspections list of the Reactive Monitoring Mission. Regarding the Bypass road, the state party has sent information to UNESCO in January 2021 and has not yet received any recommendations from the advisory bodies. Also, information about the Çerçiz Topulli square has been object of communications between the state party and UNESCO in 2019, and it has been part of the SoC Report February 2021. The state party is waiting for the Mission report and advisory bodies recommendations regarding these projects which implementation is ongoing.

- 2.4 ***Reiterates its request to the State Party that the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) be completed urgently taking on-board the previous requests of the Committee and be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before its implementation.***

The project is undertaken in the framework of ongoing decisions of the World Heritage Committee, regarding the urgent need for an Integrated Management Plan - PMI for the World Heritage Property "Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra". The drafting of an Integrated Management Plan requires the cooperation and co-ordination of numerous local, regional and national institutions civil society and community, as well as international assistance of experts in this field. In order to coordinate data from several local, regional and national institutions, field visits will be carried out within the World Heritage site of Gjirokastra and Berat and meetings and workshops, in order to undertake actions and deadlines set by all responsible institutions according to their areas of responsibility.

In 2020 IKTK has signed the Contract No.4500430097 with WHC. During 2021 a working group was set up by the internal staff of NICH and the stakeholders were officially invited to participate in the wider group of stakeholders and NICH has received confirmation of most stakeholders, creating a preliminary group of about 40 stakeholders.

Also IKTK and WHC have proceeded with the extension of the Contract No.4500430097 officially finalized. The project for the development of the final draft of IMP is foreseen to be completed by December 2022. To this end WHC shall proceed with the engagement of three international experts from ICOMOS and ICCROM.

#### **Work completed and in process so far**

- Preliminary program and baseline documentation finalized and submitted to the WHC.
- Development of a mobility plan for the collection of information from stakeholders (in process);

- Drafting a preliminary plan for conducting workshops with the participation of international experts (in process).

The state party really looks forward to the assistance of the advisory bodies through the engagement of its experts towards the successful implementation of this ambitious project.

#### 2.4.1 Develop an integrated urban conservation and development tool

The development of an integrated urban conservation and development tool is needed in terms of reinforcement of the current regulations for administration and integrated management for both historic centres. Based on the requirements of the Law 27/2018 “On Cultural Heritage and Museums” the regulations of administration for both historic centres are subject to be updated. In this framework the state party shall take into consideration this point of the Decision and shall explore funding possibilities to develop this tool as integral part of the updated regulations.

#### 2.4.2 The moratorium on new constructions within the property and buffer zones

Due to the approval of the General Urban Plans and their integration with the regulations for administrations of the Historic centres, the moratorium on new constructions within the property and buffer zone is no longer in place. Based on the Regulations for administration, new constructions apart the infrastructure interventions are not permitted within the WH property, while the new constructions proposals in buffer zone are subject to approval from the National Council of Tangible Cultural Heritage based on the requirement set for the different sub-zones of the buffer zones for each historic centre.

### ***2.5 Recommendations provided by the Advisory Bodies concerning the infrastructural projects***

The State party has welcomed recommendations provided by the Advisory Bodies concerning the infrastructural projects in both historic centres Berat and Gjirokastra. The procedure followed by the Ministry of Culture and by the National Institute for Cultural Heritage (in the role of national Focal Point of cultural world heritage) is to transmit the recommendations to the relevant stakeholders, site administrators and to the local governments. Also the Ministry of Culture and National Institute for Cultural Heritage in specific cases have requested coordination meetings between the parties towards the achievement of the implementation of the recommendations.

## **3 Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value**

### ***3.1 Investments and maintenance works in the Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra during 2021***

During 2021, RDNC Berat and RDNC Gjirokastra have undertaken a number of maintenance works financed by State Budget or owners. Annex 2 attached.



**4 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.**

***4.1 Ongoing projects in the Historic Centre of Gjirokastra and Berat – World Heritage***

In accordance with the paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, below there are a list of ongoing projects, as follows:

**4.1.1 Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD) in Berat:**

Annexes 3-8 provide technical updated information on projects related to PIUTD in Berat, namely:

- P01 – Restoration of Urban Landscape of Gorica Quarter
- P03 – Rehabilitation of Gorica Castle Trail
- P04 – Creation of a car parking near Gorica Bridge
- P05 – Restoration of Urban Landscape of Mangalem Quarter
- P06 – Requalification of Selamllëku Square
- P12 – Requalification and urban upgrading of Iliaz Vrioni Square,

**4.1.2 Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD) in Gjirokastra:**

*The “Identification, Design of prioritized measures to address urgent safety concerns and prevent loss of heritage structures in the Castle of Gjirokastra”*

The project is part of the “Integrated Urban and Tourism Development” program, handled by the ADF and financed by the World Bank. The intervention will be developed in 3 packages, more respectively:

- *Package I - Structural and Geological Stabilization*
- *Package II - Visitor's Content*
- *Package III - Museum Roof*

The project has been approved by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage through decision 133, date 12.03.2021. The implementation of works has started in October 2021 and works are expected to be completed within 13 months. Regarding this project, the State party has sent to UNESCO for review from the advisory bodies, the ToR-s for this project, in February 2021 as part of the SoC report. Following the Decision 44COM 7B/151 of the World Heritage Committee, the Ministry of Culture has transmitted the decision and recommendations to the respective Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage and Municipalities.

Updated information regarding this project is provided in Annex 9

### *Design and supervision of Gjirokastra System of Museums-Municipality of Gjirokastra*

The project is part of the “Integrated Urban and Tourism Development” program, handled by the ADF and financed by the World Bank. The project has been approved by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage through decision 235, date 24.07.2020. The implementation of works has started in January 2021 and is expected to be completed at the end January 2022.

The State party has sent the project to UNESCO for review from the advisory bodies, in February 2021 as part of the SoC report. Following the Decision 44COM 7B/151 of the World Heritage Committee, the Ministry of Culture has transmitted the decision and recommendations to the respective Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage and Municipalities.

Updated information regarding this project is provided in Annex 9

#### 4.1.3 By-pass of Gjirokastra – Section Nanxa Bridge – Dunavat Bridge

The project is approved by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage through decision No.7, date 15.01.2021. The project is transmitted from the National Institute for Cultural Heritage through official correspondence to UNESCO dated 20 January 2021. To date the state party has not received recommendations from the advisory bodies.

The project implementation has started from the Municipality of Gjirokastra in May 2021 and works are expected to be completed in May 2022. The project is implemented through the Albanian Development Fund with funding from the Government of Albania.

The implementation of this project was an important point of the agenda (meetings and site visits) of the Reactive Monitoring Mission 14-17 December 2021. Following the Mission, the State party is waiting for the Mission recommendations.

Updated information regarding this project is provided in Annex 9

#### 4.1.4 Underground Parking and supporting spaces – Çerçiz Topulli square, Gjirokastra

The project is approved by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage through decision No.302, date 21.08.2020.

The project implementation has started in January 2021 and works are expected to be completed in the end of January 2022. The project is implemented through the Albanian Development Fund ~~with funding from the Government of Albania~~

The implementation of this project was an important point of the agenda (meetings and site visits) of the Reactive Monitoring Mission 14-17 December 2021. Following the Mission, the State party is waiting for the Mission recommendations.

Updated information regarding this project is provided in Annex 9

## 5 Public access to the state of conservation report.

The State Party allows the World Heritage Centre to upload the full State of Conservation Report for public access on the World Heritage Centre's State of conservation Information System (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>).

## 6 Signature of the Authority



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
**MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

MINISTER OF CULTURE

  
ELVA MARGARITI



## **7 LIST OF ANNEXES**

**Annex 1** \_ Monitoring indicators for the protection of the OUV of the Property

**Annex 2** \_ Restoration and Maintenance Works 2021

**Annex 3** \_ P01 Restoration of Urban Landscape of Gorica Quarter

**Annex 4** \_ P03 Rehabilitation of Gorica Castle Trail

**Annex 5** \_ P04 Creation of a car parking near Gorica Bridge

**Annex 6** \_ P05 Restoration of Urban Landscape of Mangalem Quarter

**Annex 7** \_ P06 Requalification of Selamllëku Square

**Annex 8** \_ P12 Requalification and urban upgrading of Iliaz Vrioni Square

**Annex 9** \_ Table\_Update state of approval and implementation of the development projects