



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

State Party

Palestine

State, Province or Region

Governorate of Jericho and Al Aghwar, Jericho

Name of Property

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

Ancient Jericho/ Tell es-Sultan

E 35° 26' 38.62»

N 31° 52' 16.69»

Textual description of the boundary (ies) of the nominated property

Ancient Jericho/ Tell es-Sultan is a roughly-oval shape, or ovoid-shaped mound adjacent to the perennial spring of 'Ain Es-Sultan a mid-fertile land of alluvial soil suitable for agriculture. It is located 10 kilometres northwest of the Dead Sea and 1.5 kilometres north of the modern Jericho (Ariha) city in the lower part of the Jordan Rift Valley close to the western steep cliffs that fringe the Jericho plain at 250 meters below sea level, making it the lowest ancient town in the world. The site rises approximately twenty-one meters above its surroundings and covers an area of about 5.93 hectares.

The Property lies at the base of the mound along the break of the slope between mound and flat plain, including the spring of 'Ain es-Sultan at the east. The 'Ain es-Sultan Refugee camp is immediately to the north, some commercial centres and tourist facilities to the south, and an open landscape to the west. The area of the core zone is 5.93 ha. Surrounded by a buffer zone that contains its immediate environs that might have potential impact on it.

The Buffer Zone includes an extensive area entirely protected the archaeological Tell and its immediate surroundings. It is drawn to incorporate all areas which contribute to the visual setting of the Property and its physical features with an area of 22.53 ha. The area of the Property together with the Buffer Zone is 28.46 ha.

Criteria under Which Property is Nominated (Itemize Criteria)

Criterion (ii): Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan exhibits the interchange of cultural and spiritual ideologies with civic living, creating developments in architecture, technology, arts, and the domestication of plants and animals, particularly during the Neolithic and the Bronze ages (Early Bronze age II-III; Middle Bronze age I-III).

Criterion (iii): Ancient Jericho/ Tell es-Sultan bears an outstanding testament to cultural traditions and ancient civilizations. As the oldest fortified city in the world, it is a fundamental milestone in the history of humanity for more than ten thousand years, one of the first settled agricultural society in the world, based on domestication of plants and animals, a main centre of Neolithic Revolution, and one of the earliest instances of ancestor worship in the world.

Criterion (iv): Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan is an outstanding example of Neolithic development of a permanent sedentary settlement, which illustrates a significant stage in human history. Of all the ancient sites in the world, Ancient Jericho best illustrates the development of Pre-Pottery Neolithic A permanent urban centres with its defensive architecture that included walls, a ditch and a massive stone tower, which were unique architectural and technological innovations at the time. During the Bronze Ages Ancient Jericho was among the best examples in the Levant clearly illustrating construction techniques of the Middle Bronze ramparts.

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief Synthesis

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan is the oldest fortified town in the world, dated to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A (9th millennium BC). It was protected by stone walls, a massive stone tower, and a ditch. Ancient Jericho dates back more than 10,000 years and 4000 years before any other similarly fortified city. Its inhabitants were among the first humans to rely on agriculture for subsistence, which is attested by its granaries and stone tools used for harvest. The excavations of Ancient Jericho document the world's oldest fortified town whose residents would have needed to create effective social, political, and economic structures and a sustaining culture to build and manage a town of 2000-3000 inhabitants.

Thanks to Kathleen Kenyon's brilliant new archaeological techniques that she developed on digs at Ancient Jericho, humanity's shared heritage is better understood. Jericho's Neolithic funerary practice of plastering and decorating skulls of the deceased is an indication of ancestor worship and a religious belief system. Ancient Jericho's location in the Jordan Valley along a 'bottleneck' of the Fertile Crescent and on a main east-west trade route made Ancient Jericho an important intercontinental trading hub between Africa, Asia, and the Mediterranean basin contributing to the exchange of goods as well as cultural values, ideas, and beliefs.

During the early Bronze Ages, Jericho became one of the most glorious Canaanite city-states with outstanding defensive fortifications and a highly developed city-centre with well-designed streets flanked by richly furnished houses. In the Middle Bronze age

Jericho's 'engineers' developed theretofore remarkable techniques to construct its nearly impregnable walls and ramparts. However, after repeated military campaigns against all Canaanite city-states, the Egyptian Pharaohs destroyed Ancient Jericho. Afterward, Ancient Jericho was barely inhabited and no longer served as an urban center of the Jericho oasis which developed elsewhere on the oasis but still within the cultural and spatial context of the grand ancient city. Ancient Jericho's unique culture and continuity for more than 10,000 years continues in the modern city of Jericho. Today's residents drink water from the same springs and irrigate the same fields through the sophisticated system of canals originally developed by Ancient Jericho.

Justification for Criteria

Criterion (ii): Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town planning or landscape design.

The natural resources and strategic location of Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan made it an essential link for the widespread interchange of cultural and religious ideologies and for spreading its innovations in architecture, technology, art, and domestication of plants and animals which made Ancient Jericho a major node of human development for millennia. It was one of the oldest and main centres for ancestor worship that influenced other sites in the Near East during Pre-Pottery Neolithic A and B, and contributed to the establishment a shared cultic heritage, attested by the mortuary practice of decorating the skulls of the deceased. The geographic location of Ancient Jericho along major trade routes, its surplus agricultural production, architectural development, art, and handicrafts indicate a flourishing cultural centre for local, regional and long-distance commerce. Along with trading material goods, Jericho would have exchanged values, ideas, experiences, and innovations. In the modern era Jericho continues to contribute to cultural understanding through Kathleen Kenyon's new method of excavation that was developed at the site (the 'Wheeler-Kenyon method') which has become the gold standard for archaeological excavations in the Near East and Anatolia.

Criterion (iii): Bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan is an outstanding testament of the cultural traditions of ancient civilizations over ten thousand years and provides an exceptional opportunity for continuing archaeological research. As the oldest fortified town in the world, it is a fundamental milestone in the history of humanity as one of the first settled societies in the world that was based on the domestication of plants and animals, and a centre of the Neolithic Revolution. Archaeological research has documented almost continuous occupation over ten millennia consisting of 29 successive phases of ancient civilization which include fortification systems, irrigation from perennial springs, houses, public architecture, arts, and skull rituals attributed to Neolithic ancestor worship.

Criterion (iv): Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan is a unique and outstanding example of Neolithic development of a permanent sedentary settlement which illustrates a significant stage in human history. Of all the ancient sites in the world, Ancient Jericho best illustrates the development of Neolithic permanent urban centres with its defensive architecture that included walls, a ditch and a massive stone tower, which were unique architectural and technological innovations at the time and for the next 4000 years. During the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A era, Jericho was the only fortified Neolithic town in the world unparalleled at any other contemporaneous location in the Near East or worldwide. It included the world's first dressed roof stone slabs (lintels), an internal staircase, novel wall construction, and new tools and technology to complete the work. Ancient Jericho is an unparalleled example of the development of urban housing from simple shelters (late Natufian era) to semi-subterranean round houses (PPNA), to rectangular residential structures (PPNB), to pit dwellings (PNA), to rectangular houses (PNB). It also provides evidence of the development of construction materials and techniques from lightwood to dried mud-bricks built on stone foundations and polished lime-plastered floors. Ancient Jericho's cultural and material achievements would have required and bear testament to socio-political and economic systems capable of supporting long-term and large-scale public construction projects.

During the Early and Middle Bronze Ages Ancient Jericho again became the centre of life in the Jericho oasis with outstanding defensive fortifications. The sophisticated construction techniques of the three Middle Bronze Age (MB) earthen ramparts make Ancient Jericho among the best examples in the Levant clearly illustrating construction techniques of the MB ramparts which are well demonstrated in the excavated areas.

Statement of Integrity

The boundary of the property of Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan contributes to its legal protection and preserves its integrity. Its 5.93 hectares encompass all attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, which reach back over ten millennia. The buffer zone of 22.53 hectares further protects the property from future development that might have negative impact. The property is owned by the State of Palestine and managed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The Ministry controls and monitor all interventions at the site according to international conventions and charters. Although much of the buffer zone is owned by private, Islamic and Christian endowments, it is safeguarded from inappropriate development by the Protection Law of Tangible Cultural Heritage (no. 11, 2018) and by the physical spatial plan of the Jericho Municipality. These provisions can control the buffer zone's land-use, new developments, new buildings, etc. Although, the spring of 'Ain es-Sultan is currently separated from the property by a public road, the State Party has endorsed building an alternative route at a distance from the property so as to retain Ancient Jericho's integrity.

Archaeological excavations have been conducted at the property since 1868 which have revealed exceptional archaeological significance from the Natufian to Ottoman periods. These archaeological discoveries represent the historical wholeness of the property and are

intact and preserved with minimum conservation interventions. The Neolithic fortification system is well preserved and consists of a stone tower with an internal passageway and staircase, a ditch, and walls. The tower is best observed at Trench I, but other Neolithic attributes are preserved beneath backfill as a conservation measure. Features and attributes of the Bronze Age and later periods, especially the fortification systems and residential quarters, are preserved within the boundaries of the property.

Statement of Authenticity

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan presents a high degree of authenticity in terms of design, materials, craftsmanship, and setting which have been repeated and carefully documented by international and national teams of archaeologists for over a century. Neolithic and Bronze Age fortification systems, residential quarters, and city design illustrate the development of architectural and urban patterns of life in the Neolithic and Bronze periods. They provide unquestionable testaments of the oldest Neolithic fortified town on earth and one of the most important Canaanite city-states in Palestine. The original design and form of these attributes are extremely well preserved in situ within the stratigraphy of the excavated areas and in the non-excavated areas throughout the property. The original architectural designs and building techniques of the Neolithic and Bronze Age fortification systems (including Early Bronze Age defensive walls and Middle Bronze Age ramparts) are substantially intact and clearly demonstrated in Trenches I, II, and III and in square M. The original building materials and construction techniques are clearly identified across Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan. The property and its attributes have been conserved in concert with international standards based on minimal interventions to avoid any reconstruction that might adversely affect its authenticity. Some archaeological remains have been conserved after excavations, especially the Bronze Age mud-brick structures, by using compatible and reversible mud-plaster and new mud-bricks to protect the most vulnerable remains.

The setting of the Ancient Jericho within its cultural context and in its organic relation with the Jericho oases is preserved and protected by the Palestinian Tangible Heritage Law (no. 11, 2018) and Jericho Municipality's physical spatial plan.

Protection and Management Requirements

Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan possesses a high level of legal protection at both the national and local levels. The property is protected by the Tangible Cultural Heritage Law (no. 11, 2018) for the protection, conservation, and management of the tangible cultural heritage of Palestine. It provides legal protection in line with international standards and the provisions of international conventions that have been ratified by Palestine. The law unifies the Palestinian legal framework that protects its tangible cultural heritage and strengthens its management, conservation, and promotion of the property. Ancient Jericho/Tell es-Sultan is owned by the State of Palestine and managed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiques (MoTA) as a National Archaeological Park. MoTA must approve all significant plans, interventions, and activities inside the property and its surroundings which are identified as an archaeological area on the physical urban plan of the Jericho Municipality.

The buffer zone is protected by Jordanian law (no. 79, 1966) on the building of and zoning for towns, villages, and structures, and the municipality's bylaws and regulations. This law

provides additional protection to the property and its buffer zone based on the physical urban plan for the city of Jericho. The physical urban plan identifies the property as a protected archaeological area under the provisions of the Tangible Cultural Heritage Law (no. 11, 2018) which prohibits any change of its current land-use classification without official MoTA endorsement. The buffer zone is owned primarily by private individuals and the Islamic and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Endowments, and is managed and protected by Jericho Municipality (JM) through the physical urban plan. JM in cooperation with MoTA must approve all significant plans, interventions, and developments in the buffer zone. A detailed Management and Conservation Plan for the property will be developed in close cooperation with the Jericho Municipality and related stakeholders to enhance the current management system and to establish special protective land-use regulations for the buffer zone in order to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity, and integrity.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

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