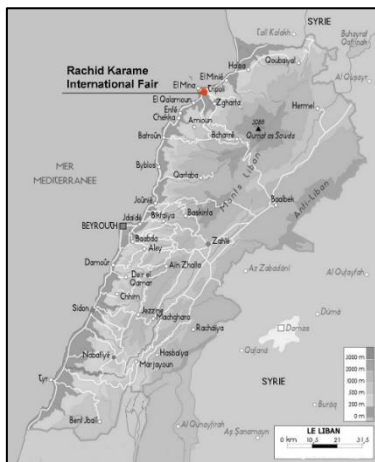


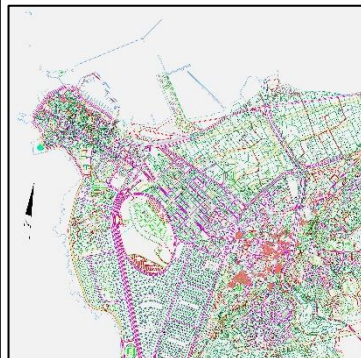
Executive Summary

State Party	LEBANON
State, Province or Region	North Lebanon
Name of nominated property	Rachid Karami International Fair-Tripoli
Geographical coordinates to the nearest second	34°26'16"N 35°49'27"E
Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property	The nominated property covers an elliptical area of 72 ha which corresponds to the limits of the original Fair site defined in 1962. It comprises a rectangle of 800m x 500m which contains all the components (buildings and open spaces) designed by Oscar Niemeyer in the 1960's (the core zone) and a buffer zone on the rest of the elliptical shape.

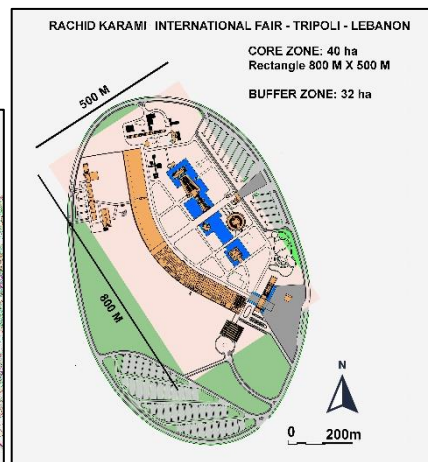
A4 size map of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone



Location of the Property within the State Party



Location of the Property within Tripoli



Plan of the Property Core & Buffer Zones

Criteria under which property is nominated	Criteria (i), (ii) and (iv)
Cultural Landscape	NO

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief synthesis

The “Rachid Karami International Fair” in Tripoli is an outstanding example of urban planning and architecture of the 20th century Modern Movement, with Oscar Niemeyer’s unique architectural language successfully integrated into the context of the Arab Near East.

Built in Tripoli, the capital of Northern Governorate in Lebanon and the second largest city in the country, and incorporating around 70 ha of multifunctional fair grounds space, it was meant to express high ambitions on international level and bring a sense of self-affirmation for post-independence Lebanon. Designed by Niemeyer as a new modern urban core for Tripoli between 1962 and 1967, this ambitious project consisted of dynamic curved structures of large spans and concrete shells, the largest in the Middle East at that time, generous multi-level public spaces and event venues.

The main building of the fair consists of a huge boomerang-covered exhibition space, a Grand Canopy 640 meters long and 70 meters wide, under which different countries could freely set up their pavilion spaces. The entrance to the fair complex begins at the southern end of the boomerang: a vast ramp leads to a raised portico from where the visitor discovers the entire composition. In the open space of the Brazilian "Tropical Garden" landscape, a series of educational, recreational and cultural facilities are situated, connected by water pools and pedestrian passages: the "Lebanese Pavilion" a square structure surrounded by a gallery with pointed arches, the Experimental dome-shaped theatre, the "Space Museum" with its helipad, the Children's pavilion, the Restaurant tower and the Housing zone which exhibits different modes of modern living. In the northern part, next to the housing zone, a ceremonial ramp leads to the outdoor amphitheatre, surmounted by a monumental arch forming a symbolic gateway to modernity and a current landmark in the city of Tripoli.

This vibrant architecture, which is a pure example of Niemeyer's Brazilian Modernist style that was infused with traditional elements of local architecture, was intended to express the aspirations of newly independent Arab people to partake in the universal process of modernization.

Because of its scale, daring structural solutions, the richness of its urban and architectural expression, the provision of vast modernist public spaces and gardens, and its links to post-independence identity building, and despite the deterioration of most of its structures and the endangered integrity of several components due to the aging of concrete, the Rachid Karami International Fair is one of the major representative works of modern architecture of the twentieth century in the Arab States.

b) Justification for Criteria

- **Criterion (i):** The Rachid Karami International Fair complex in Tripoli, designed with Oscar Niemeyer’s Brazilian Modernist principles as a new modern urban core for the city of Tripoli, is a major creation of the human genius, which represents a vivid expression of the principles and ideals advanced by the Modern Movement and effectively integrated in the context of the Arab Near East, near the historic centre of the city which is itself inscribed on the Tentative List.

The scale and monumentality of Fair complex and modern urban core project were closely linked to an ambitious development strategy and a process of self-affirmation expressing the search for Modernity and for a new identity during the 1960’s.

- **Criterion (ii):** The Rachid Karami International Fair project in Tripoli expresses in an exceptional way the vast modernization movement that developed in the Arab Near East since the 1950’s. The successful integration of Brazilian Modernist concepts into the context of the Arab Near East in Tripoli is also a vivid example of cultural exchange in the field of architecture.

Moreover, the close collaboration between Oscar Niemeyer, architect of the complex, and the Lebanese engineers who prepared the Technical studies, the Execution drawings, the Tender documents and supervised the execution of the project according to the architectural drawings prepared by the architect's office, was a remarkable example of technical exchange between different continents: Lebanese engineers and contractors gained valuable experience with sophisticated reinforced concrete structures of large spans and concrete shells, the largest in the Middle east at that time, while a new generation of Lebanese architects were inspired by Niemeyer's « Brazilian Modernism », which reflected in several of their works whether in Lebanon or in the Arab Near East.

- **Criterion (iv):** Oscar Niemeyer's monumental fairgrounds project in Tripoli is an outstanding example of World Fairs that emerged in the newly independent Arab countries to express national pride and partake in the universal process of modernization. It constitutes a unique example of a large-scale Modernist exhibit design typology, which rejects the usual international exhibitions model with its discordant sprawl of individual pavilions, and replaces it by an architectural typology characterized by simplicity and discipline where a single large main structure hosts the various pavilions and a set of minor spaces serve a social-reformative and educational purpose.

c) Statement of Integrity

Although the city of Tripoli has spread around the grounds surrounding the fair as was originally intended according to Oscar Niemeyer's urban vision, the site proposed by Niemeyer in the form of an ellipse has preserved in its integrity.

The nominated property covers an elliptical area of 72 ha which corresponds to the limits of the original Fair site defined in 1962. It comprises a rectangular core zone of 800m x 500m which contains all the components (buildings and open spaces) designed by Oscar Niemeyer in the 1960's and a buffer zone on the rest of the elliptical shape.

Almost all buildings structures were preserved according to Niemeyer's original design but are in a state of abandonment, while outdoor and landscaped areas are regularly maintained. Some reversible interventions on the Grand Canopy were dictated by modern uses. Another intervention on Niemeyer's collective housing prototype affected gravely the architectural quality of the component and erased the traces of the original design but attempts are done to restore the structure similar to its original condition. Several construction projects that would have affected the integrity of the complex were envisaged but were finally abandoned thanks to the mobilization of civil society which is keen to preserve an iconic site representing modern national identity and with the support of international heritage community.

The main threat to the integrity of the property comes from the state of conservation of most buildings that face serious problems of stability due to severe steel corrosion and the aging of concrete.

d) Statement of authenticity

Almost all components were preserved according to Niemeyer's original design. In most buildings of the complex, the structure defines the form and volume of the building and is proudly exhibited to the audience. The original main structures in the fairgrounds complex, which are mostly composed of authentic materials, are exemplary artefacts of early 1960's reinforced concrete produced by Lebanese industry.

However, the transformation of the collective housing prototype into a hotel affected gravely the authenticity of this component. In others components, interior finishes, fixtures, glazing, doors and equipment's were destroyed or looted during the war and no more exist. Some reversible interventions were done on the southern part of the Grand Canopy mainly dictated by modern uses.

The reflective pools and the hard landscape elements around the buildings are preserved according to the original design and the tropical gardens and their “Brazilian spirit” are still present on-site and regularly maintained.

The fairgrounds complex in Tripoli, which represents an outstanding material artefact of the ambitious “Golden Sixties”, still bears witness to an era of modernization and social liberalization in Lebanon and in the Arab near East.

e) Protection and Management

The Law N° 274- 10/03/2022 sets up an adequate legal framework for the protection of the property.

All the components (buildings and open spaces) designed by Oscar Niemeyer are included in the core zone which covers an area of 40 ha. Any new construction in the core zone is forbidden and rehabilitation, reconstruction or interior works are subject to the Ministry of Culture approval.

The buffer zone covers an area of 32 ha and any intervention in this zone is subject to the Ministry of Culture approval.

While most buildings in the fairground need immediate maintenance and structural repairs to preserve their integrity, UNESCO’s Regional Office in Beirut launched a project funded by the Getty Foundation, to develop a Conservation Management Plan for the entire property and the Buffer zone to guarantee the preservation of its cultural and historical value in any future development process. This Conservation Management Plan is doomed to be completed by end of 2022.

Because of the critical state of conservation of most buildings that face serious problems of stability due to severe steel corrosion and the aging of concrete, the property is nominated to be inscribed simultaneously on an emergency basis on the World Heritage List and on the List in Danger.

**Name and contact
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local institution:**

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