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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**Extended forty-fifth session  
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
10-25 September 2023**

**Item 7A of the Provisional Agenda:  
State of conservation of the properties inscribed  
on the List of World Heritage in Danger**

**Summary**

In accordance with Section IV B, paragraphs 190-191 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee shall review annually the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This review shall include such monitoring procedures and expert missions as might be determined necessary by the Committee.

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language:  
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/45COM/documents>

All state of conservation reports will also be available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>

**Decision required:** The Committee is requested to review the following state of conservation reports. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

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## **CULTURAL PROPERTIES**

### **ARAB STATES**

#### **31. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)**

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981

Criteria (ii)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1982-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

(cf. Document CLT 82/CH/CONF.015/8)

"[...] the situation of this property corresponds to the criteria mentioned in the ICOMOS note and, in particular, to criteria (e) (significant loss of historical authenticity) and (f) (important loss of cultural significance) as far as "ascertained danger" is concerned, and to criteria (a) (modification of juridical status of the property diminishing the degree of its protection), (b) (lack of conservation policy) and (d) (threatening effects of town planning) as far as "potential danger" is concerned. [...]"

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (in 1982)

Total amount approved: USD 100,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: approximately USD 5,000,000 (since 1988)

Previous monitoring missions

February-March 2004: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission; from September 2005 to May 2008: 6 experts missions within the framework of the elaboration of the Action Plan for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem; February-March 2007: special World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission sent by the Director-General of UNESCO for the issue of the Mughrabi ascent; August 2007, January and February 2008: missions for the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism; March and December 2009: World Heritage Centre missions; December 2013, October 2014, February 2015 and June 2015: project missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- High impact research / monitoring activities
- Housing
- Natural risk factors
- Management systems/management plan; lack of planning, governance and management processes;
- Alteration of the urban and social fabric
- Impact of archaeological excavations

- Deterioration of monuments
- Urban environment and visual integrity
- Traffic, access and circulation; effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure

*Illustrative material* see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/>

*Current conservation issues*

At the time of preparation of this document, no report on the state of conservation of the site has been received from the concerned parties.

Since the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, the Secretariat received joint letters from the Permanent Delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO on 13 September 2021, concerning works close to the Al-Yousifieh Islamic Cemetery, which is located next to the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem; on 18 January and 20 June 2022, expressing concern about the project to build a cable car over East Jerusalem; and on 25 April and 4 August 2022 referring to archaeological excavations and tunneling works adjacent to the outer pillars of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. In addition, the Secretariat received a letter dated 7 July 2022 from the Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO with enclosed letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Palestine, expressing concerns regarding archaeological excavations and tunneling works at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

The Secretariat followed up with Israel, State Party to the Convention, asking it to provide relevant information. With regard to the cable car project, the Secretariat reiterated the importance of having a Heritage Impact Assessment, in order to analyse possible effects and consequences of this project on the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property in its setting. A reply has not been received yet.

Moreover, the Secretariat received two joint letters from the Permanent Delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO dated 10 March and 11 April 2023, concerning the prevailing situation at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, including reported “construction works and excavations”, as well as a reported “violation of the right to worship and the desecration of a Holy Site”. In addition, in a joint letter dated 6 June 2023, the two Permanent Delegations reported “violations” at the property, including in relation to “excavations in the Umayyad Palaces Complex” and the “destruction and transfer of historic stones”.

Furthermore, several letters were received from Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO. Two letters dated 11 and 13 April 2022, addressed recent developments at the property, and three letters dated 15 April, 10 May and 23 May 2022 referred to the situation at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and the respect of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. A letter was also received from the Chairperson of the Arab Group to UNESCO dated 4 January 2023, and reported “blatant violation of relevant UNESCO conventions” at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

Other letters received from the Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO expressed concerns regarding Christian churches located within the World Heritage property. Three letters dated 26 April 2022, 12 April 2023 and 17 April 2023 reported on “restrictions” to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In addition, a letter dated 27 January 2023, reported on “vandalism at the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem”, and another one dated 7 February 2023, reported on “the destruction of a statue” in the Church of the Flagellation.

The Secretariat followed up with Israel, State Party to the Convention, asking it to provide relevant information. In response to the Secretariat’s enquiry, a letter was received from Israel dated 19 April 2023.

**Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.31**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having considered Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.4 and the Annex attached to this decision,
2. Recalling its previous decisions concerning the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls,
3. Decides that the status of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls relating to the World Heritage List remains unchanged as reflected in Decisions **44 COM 7A.10** and **44 COM 8C.2** of its last session.

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**ANNEX**

**The World Heritage Committee**

**Extended 45th session of the Committee (45 COM)**

**Item 31: Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan)**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.4,
2. Recalling the relevant provisions on the protection of cultural heritage including the four Geneva Conventions (1949), the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its related protocols, the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970), the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the New Delhi UNESCO Recommendation of 1956 concerning excavations undertaken in occupied territories, the inscription of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls at the request of Jordan on the World Heritage List (1981) and on the List of World Heritage in Danger (1982) and related recommendations, resolutions and decisions of UNESCO,
3. Reaffirming that nothing in the present decision, which aims at the safeguarding of the authenticity, integrity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem on both sides of its Walls, shall in any way affect the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, in particular the relevant Security Council resolutions on the legal status of Jerusalem, including United Nations Security Council resolution 2334 (2016),
4. Also reaffirming the importance of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls for the three monotheistic religions,
5. Reminding that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and status of

the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the "basic law" on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith,

6. Further recalling the 24 decisions of the Executive Board: 185 EX/Decision 14, 187 EX/Decision 11, 189 EX/Decision 8, 190 EX/Decision 13, 192 EX/Decision 11, 194 EX/Decision 5.D, 195 EX/Decision 9, 196 EX/Decision 26, 197 EX/Decision 32, 199 EX/Decision 19.1, 200 EX/Decision 25, 201 EX/Decision 30, 202 EX/Decision 38, 204 EX/Decision 25, 205 EX/Decision 28, 206 EX/Decision 32, 207 EX/Decision 38, 209 EX/Decision 24, 210 EX/Decision 36, 211 EX/Decision 33, 212 EX/Decision 43, 214 EX/Decision 22, 215 EX/Decision 36 and 216 EX/Decision 33, and the 11 decisions World Heritage Committee decisions: **34 COM 7A.20, 35 COM 7A.22, 36 COM 7A.23, 37 COM 7A.26, 38 COM 7A.4, 39 COM 7A.27, 40 COM 7A.13, 41 COM 7A.36, 42 COM 7A.21, 43 COM 7A.22 and 44 COM 7A.10,**
7. Regrets the failure of the Israeli occupying authorities to cease the persistent excavations, tunnelling, works, projects and other illegal practices in East Jerusalem, particularly in and around the Old City of Jerusalem, which are illegal under international law and reiterates its request to Israel, the occupying Power, to prohibit all violations which are not in conformity with the provisions of the relevant UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions;
8. Also regrets the Israeli refusal to implement the UNESCO request to the Director-General to appoint a permanent representative to be stationed in East Jerusalem to report on a regular basis about all aspects covering the fields of competence of UNESCO in East Jerusalem, and reiterates its request to the Director-General to appoint, as soon as possible, the above-mentioned representative;
9. Stresses again the urgent need to implement the UNESCO reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, and invites the Director-General and the World Heritage Centre, to exert all possible efforts, in line with their mandates and in conformity with the provisions of the relevant UNESCO conventions, decisions and resolutions, to ensure the prompt implementation of the mission and, in case of non-implementation, to propose possible effective measures to ensure its implementation;
10. **Decides to retain the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

### **38. Hebron/AI-Khalil Old Town (Palestine) (C 1565)**

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2017

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2017-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

The State Party outlined a series of threats in the nomination file, but none were specified by the World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Draft submitted by the State Party following an expert meeting in Paris in December 2018, in accordance with Decision **42 COM 7A.28**. Currently under review.

### Corrective measures identified

Draft submitted by the State Party following an expert meeting in Paris in December 2018, in accordance with Decision **42 COM 7A.28**. Currently under review.

### Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1565/documents/>

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (2018)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1565/assistance/>

### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 375,400 from the Government of Sweden for physical rehabilitation; USD 30,000 from the World Heritage Fund budget line dedicated to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Absence of Statement of Outstanding Universal Value at the time of inscription
- Management systems/management plan: Need of a management plan (resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1565/>

### Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022 and 30 January 2023, the State Party submitted reports on the state of conservation of the property, which are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1565/documents/>, and present the following information:

- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), Hebron Municipality (HM), and Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) remain committed to safeguarding the OUV of the property;
- A revised draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), a proposed Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and the related draft corrective measures have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- Progress has been made towards the elaboration of the Management and Conservation Plan (MCP), within the framework of International Assistance under the World Heritage Fund. A revised draft MCP has been prepared, with local community involvement, following a technical review by ICOMOS;
- Several cultural activities were also carried out, while significant projects for protecting, conserving, and presenting the OUV of the property include conservation and maintenance of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of the Patriarchs, conservation of historic buildings, rehabilitation of 80 commercial stores, and maintenance and adaptive reuse of abandoned buildings and open spaces, including new uses as a museum and a nursery, as well as Hammam al-Naiem (Turkish Bath);
- Tangible Cultural Heritage Law (No.11, 2018), prohibits new construction inside the property, and requires Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for major restoration works;
- According to the reports, the property remains vulnerable due to violations, including acts of vandalism, which affect the property and local community. These comprise more than 700 reported violations in 2021, commencement of works for an electric elevator in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/ Tomb of Patriarchs and related impacts, demolition of the nearby Hosh Al-Shareef and Qafisheh as well as seven commercial stores in Al-Hisba market, new construction, in addition to the prevention of conservation work, and an attack on the visitor centre.

In addition, UNESCO received several letters from the State Party and from the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, expressing deep concern about potential threats to the property and the above-mentioned activities, including reported illegal excavations, the construction of the electric elevator, the prevention of conservation work and demolition of commercial stores in Al-Hisba market. The Secretariat followed up with Israel, requesting the relevant information. A reply has not been received yet.

The State Party considers that the property should remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

*Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM*

The State Party has submitted to the World Heritage Centre a revised draft SOUV, prepared in accordance with the process adopted through Decision **42 COM 7A.28**. The State Party has also submitted a finalised version of the MCP, which has been subject to a technical review by ICOMOS. The adoption of the SOUV by the Committee is required for the finalisation and consideration of the draft DSOCR and draft corrective measures. The SOUV is also a fundamental foundation for the MCP, which should be adjusted once the SOUV is adopted and the DSOCR is finalised, as recommended in the ICOMOS technical review. Nevertheless, the ICOMOS technical review acknowledges that the MCP is a robust document that sets out the management system and structure for the property and concludes that it could be adopted pending finalization of the SOUV and DSOCR.

The efforts of the State Party to undertake activities for the conservation and management of the property, and for socio-economic benefits for the local community, are welcome and should be encouraged.

The Tangible Cultural Heritage Law and requirements for HIAs and EIAs for major restoration projects have previously been commended by the Committee. The scale and extent of activities, and in particular the reported commencement of work related to the planned electric elevator at Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of Patriarchs represent potential threats to the OUV of the property. In accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, comprehensive details of any significant conservation and development project should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse. In the meantime, works on this project should not proceed.

All parties should continue to avoid any action that would cause damage to the property and its OUV and all possible measures should be taken to protect the property, in particular to refrain from physical damage, prevention of conservation projects, and inappropriate new development projects within the property and its buffer zone.

It is recommended that the property remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

**Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.38**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having considered Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decisions 42 COM 7A.28, 43 COM 7A.29 and 44 COM 7A.16, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/Online, 2021) sessions respectively,*
3. *Decides that the status of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town relating to the World Heritage List remains unchanged as reflected in Decision 41 COM 8B.1 of the World Heritage Committee.*

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## ANNEX

### The World Heritage Committee

#### Extended 45th session of the Committee (45 COM)

4. Having considered Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.4,
5. Recalling Decision **41 COM 8B.1**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017), which did not include a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), and noting that in compliance with Paragraph 154 of the Operational Guidelines, when deciding to inscribe a property on the World Heritage List, guided by the Advisory Bodies, the Committee adopts a SOUV for the property,
6. Taking note of a revised draft SOUV contained in the state of conservation report submitted by the State Party,
7. Takes note of the consultations held between experts from UNESCO, the State Party and the Advisory Bodies, as well as the ongoing exchanges, with regard to the revised draft SOUV, the draft Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and the related corrective measures, and invites the State Party to continue its efforts to finalize the above documents;
8. Decides to consider the examination of a draft SOUV for the property at its 46th session;
9. Also takes note of the Management and Conservation Plan (MCP) for the property and requests that once the SOUV for the property is adopted and the DSOCR is finalised, the MCP be amended in collaboration with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies;
10. Deplores the ongoing Israeli excavations, works, construction of private roads for settlers and of a Wall inside the Old City of Al-Khalil/Hebron which are illegal under international law and harmfully affect the authenticity and integrity of the site, and the subsequent denial of freedom of movement and freedom of access to places of worship, and asks Israel, the Occupying Power, to end all violations which are not in conformity with the provisions of relevant UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions, and further takes note with concern of reports of works related to the electric elevator;
11. Commends the State Party for the actions which are being taken to conserve significant attributes of the property;
12. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information on current conservation and development projects, particularly projects which have potential adverse impact on heritage, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
13. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
14. Also decides to retain Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (Palestine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

### **39. Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) (C 1492)**

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2014

Criteria (iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2014-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Potential construction of a separation fence (wall)
- Abandonment of terraces and afforestation
- Impact of socio-cultural and geo-political transformations

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6245>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6245>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6989>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2016-2016)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Potential construction of a separation fence (wall)
- Abandonment of terraces and afforestation
- Impact of socio-cultural and geo-political transformations
- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system
- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species
- New constructions within the property's boundaries

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/>

Current Conservation issues

On 31 January 2022 and 30 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/documents> and present progress in addressing conservation issues previously identified by the Committee, as follows:

- The management system has been approved and a Site Manager assigned by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) to ensure the implementation of the Management Conservation Plan (MCP) in collaboration with Battir Municipality, Beit Jala Municipality and Hussan Village Council and in cooperation with the property's steering and management committees. Several meetings and workshops were held to follow up on, review and update the MCP;
- The Site Manager follows up projects and activities and monitors any violations within the boundaries of the property;

- A project for a detailed urban plan and building bylaws for specific areas in the buffer zone, implemented with the support of the UNESCO Ramallah Office, is under finalization. It aims at regulating interventions in Battir old town and ensuring the compatibility of urban development with the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- Progress is made towards the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) by implementing the corrective measures as follows:
  - Dismissal of plans to build a "Wall" along the property, or within its setting: Plans to build a "wall" throughout the property remain suspended. The definitive dismissal of these plans is essentially beyond the State Party's control,
  - Adequate conservation of the agricultural terraces and their associated components, including watchtowers and drystone walls throughout the property: Implementation of projects to rehabilitate agricultural lands, dry-stone walls, watchtowers and traditional structures has continued and technical guidelines for building and rehabilitating dry stone walls are being prepared,
  - Adequate restoration in place of the irrigation system and the development of an adequate sewage system to protect water quality in the property: The project for the water canal system was completed in 2021. Water quality inspections and maintenance are carried out regularly. Improving the sewage system requires significant funding that has not been secured yet. The responsible authorities continue with previously adopted temporary protection measures,
  - Protection in place for the property and its buffer zone, and Management plan and a monitoring system adopted and sustainable management system in place: The MoTA's General Directorate for World Heritage has set out a framework for Operational Management Systems for all World Heritage properties, which relies on Site Managers and Steering and Management Committees as leading actors. The involvement of key public and private stakeholders and local communities in the management is envisaged. The appointed Site Manager, with the Management Committee, is tasked with the implementation of the MCP monitoring system. The land-use plan and related by-laws will be endorsed when finalized;
- Other activities include agricultural practice improvement, conservation and rehabilitation, cleaning, capacity building, improvement of the socio-economic status of the community, festivals, and awareness-raising, among others;
- Upcoming projects include the establishment of a parking lot, a visitor interpretation centre and services in Battir with funds from Germany; the sewage network and wastewater treatment plant projects for Battir and Hussan are pending due to funding issues;
- Several specific threats with a negative impact on the OUV of the property continue to be reported, including:
  - Urban development within and around the property,
  - Illegal construction and expansion of Israeli settlements on agricultural lands in the property, buffer zone, and surrounding hills, and setting up of pitched tents to establish a new settlement, in addition to the previously reported plan for the establishment of a large Israeli industrial zone covering part of the buffer zone, and, the new tunnel and bypass road (Road 60),
  - Destruction of a paved road, uprooting of trees and destruction of olive trees with pesticides, and arson in the property and its buffer zone, and prevention of recovery projects,
  - Prevention of agricultural work in Al-Makhrour area and demolition of previous rehabilitation works made on watchtowers.

The State Party wishes for the property to be retained on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

*Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM*

The State Party demonstrated progress throughout 2021 and 2022 in implementing the necessary measures to achieve the DSOCR and responding to the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee.

A general framework for the management systems of World Heritage properties in Palestine has been developed by the MoTA's General Directorate for World Heritage, a Site Manager has been assigned to the property and a Steering and Site Management Committee seems also to have been established. This represents an important advancement in strengthening the management system of the property. However, since involving local public and private relevant actors in the property's management is crucial for its effectiveness, it would be important to receive further detailed information on the members of these committees and their roles and tasks.

Maintenance and rehabilitation projects for attributes of the agricultural landscape and essential infrastructure, awareness-raising initiatives, and local product promotion continue to be implemented despite limitations and unfavourable conditions. Temporary alternatives and measures continue to be enacted to counter the lack of funds to improve the sewage system; however, as already noted, in the long run, the solution adopted – low-cost tanks – implies risks for human health and the environment and should be considered a short-term solution. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate to the State Party the urgent need to seek funds for improving the sewage system as a priority.

The information that a detailed urban plan and related bylaws to control urban development are underway is to be welcomed. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit this plan and related regulations as soon as they are finalized.

In 2023, a project for a bus parking lot, a visitor interpretation centre and services, is planned for implementation. It is recommended that the documentation of the project be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS.

The State Party continues to report violations within the property and its buffer zone, threatening the property's OUV. Additionally, in March 2022, UNESCO received a letter from the Permanent Delegation of the State of Palestine to UNESCO concerning the setting up of "a nucleus of a new illegal settlement" within the property. The Secretariat followed up with the State Party of Israel, requesting the relevant information. Through its Office in Ramallah, UNESCO was informed that this settlement outpost was eventually dismantled.

To monitor progress with the implementation of the corrective measures vis-à-vis the actual state of conservation of the property, it is crucial that this progress is measured against the inventories carried out during the preparation of the MCP that show the current assessed situation on the ground.

It is recommended that the property be retained on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

### **Draft decision: 45 COM 7A.39**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.4,*
2. *Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.17, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou /online, 2021),*
3. *Commends the State Party for its efforts to improve the state of conservation of the property and to implement the corrective measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and in particular the restoration and the preparation of guidelines for the drystone walls and the rehabilitation of the watchtowers;*
4. *Also commends the State Party for having appointed a Site Manager for the property to work with the Steering and Site Management Committees, and requests the State Party to submit further detailed information on the membership, roles and tasks of these committees to the World Heritage Centre;*
5. *Encourages the State Party to continue seeking the required funds to undertake the development of a sufficient sewage system as a priority;*

6. *Encourages the State Party to develop and implement the land-use plan and related bylaws to avoid uncontrolled urban growth within the property and its buffer zone, with the full involvement of the municipalities and local communities;*
7. *Takes note with concern of the reports of ongoing illegal constructions and other developments within the property and its buffer zone;*
8. *Further requests the State Party to submit the project documentation for the proposed bus parking lot and visitor interpretation centre to the World Heritage Centre before any final decision is taken and to continue to inform the World Heritage Centre of any proposed plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse;*
9. *Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;*
10. ***Decides to retain Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***