



**State of Conservation Report (2023)**  
for

**HEBRON/AL-KHALIL OLD TOWN (Palestine) (C 1565)**



Hebron-Palestine  
January 2024

The State of Conservation Report (SoC) for the World Heritage Property (WHP): Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (C 1565) was prepared by the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA).

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## 2 Executive Summary

This report addresses State of Conservation of the World Heritage Property Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town and the concerns raised by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision 45 COM 7A.38. It also includes submission of a revised version of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Values (SOUV) (Annex 1), Desired State of Conservation for removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) (Annex 2), and the Corrective Measures within a provisional timeframe (Annex 3). This SOUV version has developed through consultations with UNESCO experts and advisory bodies per the World Heritage Committee's decision 42 COM/7A.Add.2. This progress was possible through subsequent follow-ups between the State Party and the World Heritage Committee throughout 2023. Consequently, the State Party would greatly appreciate the formal adoption of this version by the World Heritage Committee during its upcoming 46th session in 2024.

The report affirms the ongoing commitment of the State of Palestine to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. This commitment extends to maintaining the conditions of authenticity and integrity, as well as upholding the established protection and management system. Additionally, the report highlights the notable progress made in formulating the Management and Conservation Plan (MCP) under the International Assistance framework (No IA2018-3007).

The report also provides a summary of the initiatives undertaken during 2023 to enhance the living conditions of the World Heritage Property (WHP). These efforts aim to improve the socio-economic well-being of the local community and raise awareness about the property's values. Despite these positive endeavors, the property remains vulnerable to illegal actions and violations executed by the Israeli Occupying Power (IOP). These include the implementation of new plans, construction of settlements, and illegal archaeological excavations. In addition to numerous violations against the local community, which are affecting their freedom of movement and access to places of worship. These procedures are significantly detrimental to the authenticity and integrity of the WHP. **Consequently, the State of Palestine expresses its desire to maintain the property "Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town" on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

### 3 Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee (Decision 45 COM 7A.38/Annex)

***Para. 2 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,***

***Para. 3 Taking note of a revised draft SOUV contained in the state of conservation report submitted by the State Party,***

***Para. 4 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;***

***Para. 5 Decides to consider the examination of a draft SOUV for the property at its 46th session;***

***Para. 6 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 Bodie;***

The State of Palestine has been working diligently in the elaboration of MCP, within the framework of the International Assistance (No IA2018-3007), and direct technical support of UNESCO-Ramallah office. The main partners; the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC), and Hebron Municipality (HM); were very keen to involve the local community among other stakeholders to understand and document the OUV, and other associated values of the site through several meetings, surveys, and workshops alongside the whole work plan stages. In line with the contract signed with UNESCO-Ramallah Office in May 2019, the final version of the MCP was submitted to the World Heritage Centre (WHC) by February 1, 2022, with consideration given to ICOMOS comments on the MCP from the Technical Review in June 2021. Subsequently, additional comments on the final MCP version were received by the State Party from the ICOMOS Technical Review on February 23, 2023. The State Party affirms its dedication to addressing these comments, based on the Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) specified in Annex 1 attached to this report.

***Para. 7 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;***

Despite the efforts of the state party to manage and conserve the OUV, integrity and authenticity of the property, the property remains vulnerable to illegal actions and violations by the Israeli Occupying Power (IOP). These include the implementation of new plans, construction of settlements, and illegal archaeological excavations. In addition to numerous violations against the local community, which are affecting their freedom of movement and access to places of worship. These actions pose threats and/or cause damage to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP), including its physical attributes, as well as impacting its authenticity and integrity. Among the various Israeli occupation plans and actions, the following are particularly noteworthy:

- **Demolition of Commercial Stores in Al-Hisbeh market within the core zone of the property.**

The demolition of five commercial stores in Al-Hisbeh market within the core zone of the property occurred on April 18, 2023, by Israeli settlers. It is important to note that these stores are privately owned properties. The HRC faced restrictions in restoring these commercial stores, as they have been closed for 23 years due to an Israeli military order. These stores constitute an integral part of the architectural fabric of the World Heritage Property (Figure 1).

This violation holds significant consequences, as it adversely impacts the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The demolition results in irreversible damage to the architectural fabric, posing a direct threat to the property's authenticity and integrity.



*Figure 1 The commercial stores in Al-Hisbeh market before and after demolition by Israeli occupation power*

- **Destruction of the arched and domed entrances at the historic Bus Station.**

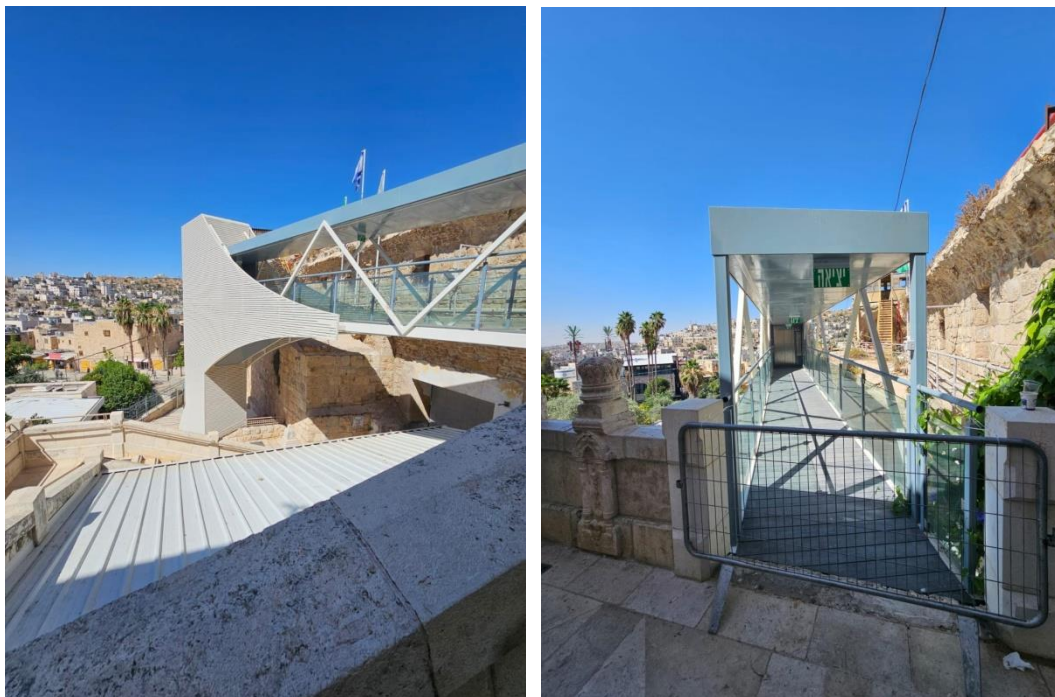
On July 9, 2023, Israeli settlers demolished the arched and domed gates at the entrances of the historic Bus Station located in the core zone of the property, with the intention of constructing a large settlement comprising 30 residential units. The Bus Station, owned by Hebron Municipality, has been situated within an Israeli military area for 40 years. This drastic action aims to erase one of the main attribute of the property which holds a significant value for the community. The station serves as evidence of the vital historical connection between the property and the new center of the city, as well as other Palestinian cities. Furthermore, the construction of such an extensive settlement is anticipated to have adverse effects on the townscape, as well as on the authenticity and integrity of the architectural fabric of the property.

- **The construction of an electric elevator in Ibrahimi Mosque/ The Tomb of the Patriarchs.**

On July 15, 2023, the Israeli Occupying Power completed the construction of an electric elevator and pathways, designed to serve Israeli settlers to the Ibrahimi Mosque/ The Tomb of the Patriarchs. Inappropriately, establishing this elevator resulted in the destruction of significant segments of the town's history, as it was built on an excavated area revealing

archaeological remains dating back to crucial historical eras in the town's history. This action is particularly alarming as it poses a threat to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, adversely impacting its authenticity and integrity.

The archaeological remains that were unearthed during the construction of the electric elevator and pathways possess high evidential value, serving as tangible illustrations of crucial aspects of the property's history. Simultaneously, the contemporary steel construction associated with the elevator is adversely affecting the integrity of the architectural fabric of the property. This modern intervention is causing distortions to the traditional pattern of the property, further compromising its historical authenticity and overall traditional character (Figure 2).



*Figure 2 The electric elevator after construction*

- **Imposing a blockade and curfew on the property.**

Since the commencement of the war in Gaza on October 7, 2023, the Israeli occupation authorities have imposed a curfew on most neighbourhoods, declaring the area a military zone surrounded by military checkpoints and cement barriers. This curfew, still in effect to date, encompasses areas within the core zone of the property as well as its buffer zone (Figure 3). This arbitrary action isolates a substantial geographic area of the property from its surroundings, both geographically and socially, thus negatively impacting the integrity of the property. The curfew has profoundly affected the citizens of the property, preventing them

from attending their jobs and conducting daily activities. Furthermore, the curfew has severely restricted residents' access to essential resources such as food, medicine, infant formula, and cooking gas. The humanitarian organizations and medical teams are prohibited from reaching the affected areas, leaving citizens isolated, fearful, and vulnerable to potential risks in a hazardous environment. The closure not only subjects the citizens of the property to stress but also compels many to immigrate due to the compounded difficulties arising from the actions of both occupation authorities and settlers.

Moreover, the ongoing isolation and curfew have impeded HRC from fulfilling its responsibilities in maintaining and conserving buildings within these areas. This situation is adversely impacting the authenticity of these historic structures and disrupting the overall management process of the property.

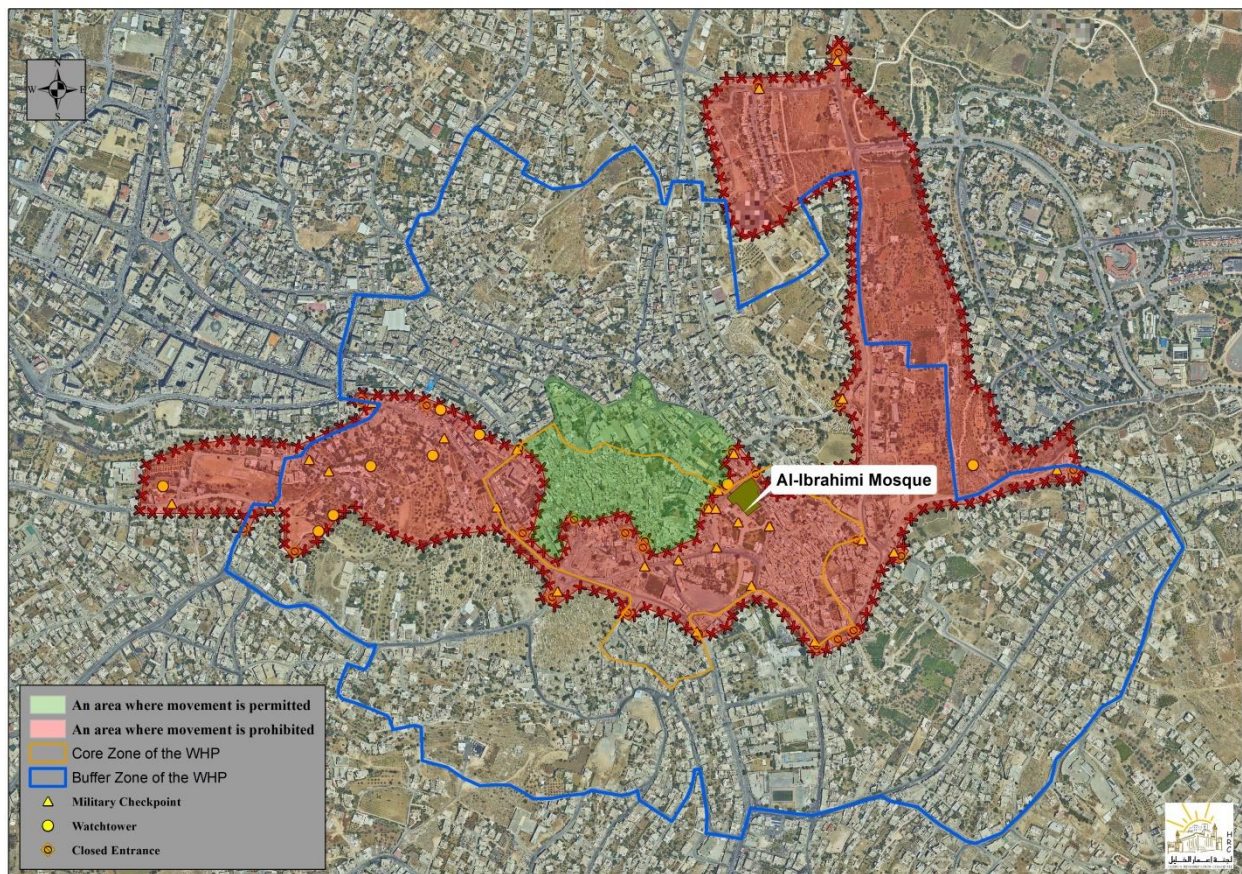


Figure 3 shows the boundaries of closed areas where residents are subjected to curfew by Israeli military orders

***Para 8. Commends the State Party for the actions which are being taken to conserve significant attributes of the property;***

During the 2023 year, there have been notable accomplishments in protecting, conserving, and presenting the OUV of the WHP. Substantial progress has been made in terms of maintaining, adaptively reusing abandoned structures, and rehabilitating infrastructure. This

approach prioritizes minimal intervention while emphasizing community involvement, leading to the revitalization of buildings and spaces, and ensuring the preservation of OUV, integrity, and authenticity. The following conservation works took place in 2023.

- **Conservation & Maintenance of Ibrahimi Mosque/ The Tomb of the Patriarchs**

Commencing in 1998, the ongoing efforts are grounded in the comprehensive master plan spanning from 2015 to 2040 (*further details on this plan can be accessed:*

<https://www.hebronrc.ps/index.php/en/about/staratigic-plan>

The conservation of this noteworthy monument holds particular significance, aligning with its distinct Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). In 2023, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC), in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Endowment (MoRE), undertook the maintenance of the space designated for the call to prayer (Dikkat al-Muballigh),(Figure 4).



*Figure 4 Maintenance of Dikkat al-Muballigh in the Ibrahimi Mosque/ The Tomb of the Patriarchs*

- **Regular Maintenance of Historic Buildings.**

This project aims to enhance the living conditions of the property's residents while ensuring the sustainability of conservation efforts and raising awareness within the local community regarding best practices for cultural heritage conservation. In 2023, maintenance activities were conducted on nearly 207 apartments situated in various areas within the WHP boundaries (Figure 5).

It is noteworthy that a portion of these maintenance tasks is actively undertaken by the residents themselves, utilizing traditional materials provided by HRC and supervised directly by the organization. This innovative approach underscores the significance of cooperation and shared responsibility in cultural heritage conservation, contributing to raising local awareness through practical engagement.





*Figure 5 Regular Maintenance of historic buildings (before and after)*

- **Restoration of Zahdeh Historic House**

The project focuses on an exceptional residential house located in the heart of the Old Town, exemplifying a distinctive architectural style within the traditional urban context. The initiative encompasses the restoration of this house and the provision of essential facilities, emphasizing a minimal level of intervention. Funded by the Arab Monetary Fund, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) has been actively implementing this project throughout 2023. The house is expected to be completed and inhabited by the Zahdeh family by the beginning of 2024 (Figure 6).



*Figure 6 Zahdeh Historic House (Before &After)*

- **Restoration and Adaptive Reuse of Al-Sharabati Building (Community center)**

The project has been dedicated to the revitalization of the Al-Sharabati Building, a significant residential structure in the Old Town. This building exemplifies a distinct style of residential architecture that evolved beyond the confines of the urban fabric, showing intricate details

and high artistic values. The primary objective of the project is the restoration of the building and reusing it as a community center that serves the residents of the Old Town and its adjacent areas.

The conservation methodology employed focuses on adapting the building with a minimal level of intervention. The management of the building will be entrusted to three cooperative women's associations. The HRC has actively promoted and facilitated the involvement of local community institutions in overseeing the operations of this community centre. The project, initiated in mid-2023, has been made feasible through funding from the German Government via KFW. As of the latest update, 60% of the restoration work has been successfully completed, and the project is on track for public opening in early 2024 (Figure 7).



*Figure 7 Al-Sharabati Building (Before &After)*

- **Adaptive Reuse of Historic Buildings for Government Headquarters**

The project focuses on a cluster of buildings situated in the Old Town, aiming to restore and reuse them as government headquarters. The conservation methodology employed emphasizes adapting the structures with minimal intervention. The primary goal is to improve the delivery of government services to the WHP residents while also fostering the attraction of new residents to the area. HRC has successfully rehabilitated these headquarters, and they are presently operational under the management of the pertinent government ministries. This adaptive reuse initiative underscores the commitment to preserving historical architecture while contemporaneously serving the evolving needs of government administration (Figure 8).



*Figure 8 One of the government headquarters in the WHP*

- **Rehabilitation of the Infrastructure for the Northern Entrance of the Old Town**

In recent years, the HRC has dedicated substantial efforts to revitalize the infrastructure of the Old Town. This commitment stems from the belief that rehabilitating the infrastructure is a vital step towards improving the living conditions in the Old Town, given its significant impact on population stability and the attraction of new residents.

Throughout 2023, extensive restoration and maintenance work has been undertaken on the pavement of the western entrance to the Old Town. This entrance holds particular importance for accessing the Old Town, particularly by vehicles such as cars and buses, owing to its high traffic volume from visitors to the Ibrahimi Mosque and incoming tourists. The project also incorporated additional activities focused on enhancing the aesthetics of facades and contributing to environmental improvement through tree planting (Figure 9). HRC successfully executed this comprehensive initiative throughout 2023, with funding from the Arab Monetary Fund.



*Figure 9 Maintenance of the infrastructure for the northern entrance of the old town*

***Para. 9 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 that have potential adverse impact on heritage, per Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;***

In the case of future major interventions or new construction projects that might impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Property, the State of Palestine is dedicated to informing the World Heritage Committee (WHC). This commitment reflects the State Party's dedication to transparency and adherence to international guidelines for heritage conservation. Moreover, adhering to the new law for Tangible Cultural Heritage (No. 11, 2018), the State of Palestine commits to conducting appropriate Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) and/or Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) before implementing significant interventions or proposed developments within the WHP.

## **2. Progress achieved in implementing the corrective measures adopted by the World Heritage Committee**

Corrective measures have not been formally adopted by the Committee; therefore, the state party has sent another revised version of DSOCR, and the related corrective measures during September 2019, which is also attached to this report for ease of reference (Annex2).

A timeframe for the implementation of the proposed corrective measures has been set out (Annex3); however, it could be amended depending on the DSOCR, and the CMP which is being elaborated, to ensure that all indicators and their timeframes are specific and applicable.

According to the indicators and timeframe outlined in (Annex3), the Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) is planned to be achieved within 10 years. However, the first DSOCR, "Dismissing all of the Occupying Power's plans and/or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity", is not defined within this timeframe. Dismissal of the plans is largely dependent on actions and decisions taken by the IOP authorities, which are beyond the control of the State of Palestine.

### **2. b Is the timeframe for implementing the corrective measures suitable? If not, please propose an alternative timeframe and an explanation of why this alternative timeframe is required.**

It is not applicable since the DSOCR and the corrective measures have not been approved yet.

## **2. c. Progress achieved towards the Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the list of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)**

As mentioned earlier, the DSO CR has not yet been formally adopted by the Committee. Nevertheless, the progress made in developing the MCP is a crucial factor in ensuring the proper and effective safeguarding of the property and its inherent Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). This progress is also deemed a significant corrective measure, particularly in relation to section c as outlined in Annex 2, with the aim of achieving the DSO CR.

## **4 Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value**

A range of awareness-raising and empowerment initiatives and events has been successfully executed for diverse segments of the local community. This concerted effort has significantly increased the engagement of the local community in the management and conservation of the property. The subsequent section outlines the principal Conservation and Maintenance projects, alongside other recent activities implemented by HRC.

In 2023, various initiatives were undertaken in collaboration with the local community to foster awareness of both tangible and intangible heritage. The primary goals were to alleviate the pressures resulting from occupation measures and stimulate tourism in Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town. The partners involved strongly believe in the importance of these activities in shaping perceptions of heritage, traditions, and customs. The design of these activities caters to a diverse audience, aiming to instill a sense of connection to heritage. Some of these activities include:

- The Third Grape Festival, conducted in the Old Town over three days, highlighted the various grape varieties for which the city of Hebron is renowned. The festival also featured an array of grape products and showcased numerous handicrafts and artisanal works (Figure 10). This event was organized in collaboration with various city institutions.



*Figure 10 Excerpts of the Third Grape Festival*

- Diverse exhibitions were held to spotlight intangible heritage, with a particular focus on the esteemed handicrafts of the Old Town. These exhibits included traditional glass and ceramic pieces, along with finely hand-embroidered items (Figure 11). To provide a comprehensive understanding, seminars were conducted to explore different facets of these crafts. The seminars were organized through the joint efforts of the HRC and in partnership with the Women's organization, ensuring an enriching experience for all.



*Figure 11 Fine Art exhibition*

- Organizing sessions for children to ease stress and offering psychological relief amid Israeli occupation measures. The meetings also serve to increase awareness about cultural heritage and emphasize the significance of its conservation (Figure 12).



*Figure 12 Stress relief and awareness activities for children in the WHP*

- A workshop focusing on enhancing project management and monitoring skills. This workshop was specifically designed for businesswomen and proprietors of small initiatives within the local community of the Old Town.
- An awareness-raising workshop was conducted to address occupation violations against education, targeting individuals and institutions within the local community.

Moreover, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) actively engaged in the Fifth World Heritage Site Managers Forum, convened in al-Riyadh in September 2023. This forum serves as a pivotal networking platform for site managers involved in natural, cultural, and mixed World Heritage properties. Its primary objectives are to empower participants, facilitate the exchange of knowledge, and expand networks and experiences on an international scale.

## 5 Future Projects/Issues Identified by the State Party

***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.***

There are currently no plans for significant restorations, alterations, or new construction within the property and/or the buffer zone(s) in the coming years. However, should there be any future major interventions or new construction projects that could impact the Outstanding Universal Value of the Property, the State Party is committed to informing the World Heritage Committee. This commitment underscores the State Party's dedication to transparency and adherence to international guidelines for heritage conservation.

## 6 Public access to the State of Conservation Report

The State Party agrees that the full State of Conservation Report can be made publicly available via the WH center's Information System.

## 7 Signature of the Authority

The State of Conservation Report for the World Heritage Property "Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town" (C 1565) has been meticulously compiled by the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. This report serves as a comprehensive assessment of the current status, conservation efforts, achievements, and challenges faced by the property. Through collaborative efforts and cooperation, the State of Palestine is committed to ensuring the sustainable development and conservation of the World Heritage Property and its Outstanding Universal Value.

Dr. Ahmed Rjoob  
Director General of the World Heritage  
Focal Point of the World Heritage Convention

## 8 Annexes

### Annex 1: Revised Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)

#### Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

##### Brief Synthesis

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town is one of the oldest living cities and spiritual centers in the world. Its numerous ancient, well preserved, monuments and buildings bear witness to a rich and prosperous past, through a series of successive and imbricated civilizations from very early antiquity until modern times. The World Heritage Property constitutes an important part of the continuous fabric of the present city that dates back to at least the Mamluk and Ottoman periods (13<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> century AD). The property is surrounded by a protective buffer zone comprised of the foothills around the Hebron/Al-Khalil valley and of archaeological remains that include Tell Rumeida.

The old town expanded on three hills and into the valley around Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/ The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex, which is an outstanding and multi-layered example of architecture illustrates significant stages in human history and is one of the main elements that shaped the Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town. Traditions, religious and spiritual beliefs have been the foundation of the town's cultural character for many centuries as the site is revered by three monotheistic religions. Thanks to its location along one of the main commercial routes in the region, the town became a meeting place for different faiths and cultures, with socio-economic and cultural exchange occurring throughout the centuries. The Outstanding Universal Value of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town is demonstrated by its existence as an exceptionally complete and well-preserved example of exceptional urban and vernacular architectural elements which reflect characteristics inspired by the human values of Hebron/Al-Khalil's people. The main attributes of Outstanding Universal Value can be observed within the limits of the old town, including the Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex, *Suqs*, *Khans*, *Zawiyas*, *Maqams*, *Takiyya*, and *Hammams*, the traditional quarters and the ahwash, as well as the town's historical setting, and its design.

**Criterion (ii):** Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town represents an outstanding example of a community built around the interchange of human values. Since its creation, the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has been a source of great inspiration to surrounding communities and to their social, religious, and spiritual values. The site has been in continuous religious use since the early Roman Period to this day. Herod the Great, a Roman client king of the region, probably built a monumental enclosure (*temenos*) around the Machpelah/ al-Ghar al-Sharif. During the Byzantine Period a church was probably built inside the enclosure. In the Umayyad Period, a mosque was also built inside the enclosure; and the cenotaphs were placed in their present position. In the Crusades period, the mosque was converted into a church, known as the Castle of Saint Abraham. After Saladin reconquered the area, the church was converted back into a mosque, which became known as the Haram Al-Ibrahimi.

The main roads of the town connect the different quarters in Hebron/Al-Khalil to Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex. The relation with the prophet Ibrahim and the presence of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has attracted pilgrims from around the world, making Hebron/Al-Khalil a meeting place for a great variety of faiths, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. This intermixing has led to a high degree of socio-economic and cultural exchange throughout the centuries reflected in the many public buildings of the property and beyond, including *Suqs*, *Khans*, *Zawiyas*, *Maqams*, *Hammams*, and the *Takiyya*.

In the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, Hebron/Al-Khalil became a significant centre of Sufism. Sufis, who came from different cultural backgrounds, found a promising environment in the vicinity of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi, and subsequently Sufi *zawaya* (sing. *zawiya*) were built throughout the city's quarters and become one of their distinguishing features.

For more than a millennium, the *Takiyya*'s tradition (Hospice- free kitchen) of the Hebron/Al-Khalil influenced the whole region as evidenced in early historic accounts from the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD presented in the *Takiyya* of this day. Similar charitable institutions were later established in Jerusalem, Istanbul, Damascus, and Cairo.

**Criterion (iv):** Hebron/al Khalil Old Town is an outstanding example of an urban district which has remarkably preserved—historical fabric. It has also preserved the morphology and residential typologies dating back to the Mamluk period, all of which contribute to the visual and structural integrity of the cityscape. The residential neighbourhoods of the old town were built in a *hosh* system. The *hosh* system is a congregation of separate room units or groups of rooms clustered around several small courtyards. They are found in different locations and levels, which have organically evolved into distinctive tree-shaped residential structures.

The continuity of buildings on the outer edges of the town made it difficult to access the town and created an effective defence system of “rampart houses”. These included hidden nooks and circuitous alleyways that played a protective role against intrusions. This system can still be observed clearly within the old town in the road system and urban structures, which are perfectly preserved to this day.

**Criterion (vi):** The Hebron/Al-Khalil’ s Old Town is one of the holiest cities in the world for three monotheistic religions. For centuries, Hebron/Al-Khalil was a town in which prophets visited, lived, and were buried. Traditions and religious beliefs for the three monotheistic religions, have been its cultural foundation and the source of enduring values carried from one generation to the next. Furthermore, the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham’s spirit of generosity and hospitality has been and continues to be deeply ingrained into the traditions of Hebron/Al-Khalil. A key attribute of these traditions is the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham’s *Takiyya* (Hospice), established before the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD, which has continued until today to offer meals to the poor and visitors.

In the Mamluk period, 13<sup>th</sup> century AD, Hebron/Al-Khalil became a significant centre of Sufism. Sufis found a promising environment in the vicinity of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi and, subsequently, sufi *zawaya* (sing. *zawiya*) were built throughout the city and have become one of its distinguishing features.

### **Statement of Integrity**

After the Roman and Byzantine periods, the original city moved from Tell Rumeida to the valley adjacent to Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex, and became the focal point of the town and strongly influenced its development. The boundaries of the property correspond to the boundaries of the continuous fabric of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, during the Mamluk period.

Hebron/al Khalil Old Town has remarkably preserved its Mamluk historical urban fabric as well as the morphology and residential typologies of *Hara* and *ahwash* (plural of *hosh*). These create an intricate network of alleys, which is influenced by the location of Ibrahimi Mosque/Tomb of Patriarchs that connects the various neighbourhoods in the old town and contributes to the visual and structural integrity of the cityscape. Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has been a source of great inspiration to the three monotheistic religions and to the surrounding communities and their social, religious, and spiritual values. It has been in continuous religious use since early Roman period to this day. The importance of this sacred place is evident in the town's structure. Whilst Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has never been protected by town walls, its limits are well marked by the topography and the "rampart houses" built on the town's external perimeter, some of which have survived to this day.

The property is very vulnerable due to the political situation. The Israeli settlement activities and procedures inside the property and in its buffer zone are illegal under the international law, including ongoing excavations, works, construction of private roads for settlers, military and mobility restrictions, and roadblocks, inside the Old City of Al-Khalil/Hebron, which harmfully affect the integrity of the site. Nevertheless, efforts are made by the State of Palestine to mitigate any adverse effects of development and/or neglect to the integrity of the property.

### **Statement of Authenticity**

The morphological configuration of the old town and the spatial organization of the urban fabric, dating back to the Mamluk and Ottoman periods have remained mostly unchanged, and the main distinctive attributes have been retained. The authenticity of the urban structure and of the buildings, quarters and *hoshs* have also remained intact. The property has retained its use and function which are attested in a number of public buildings, such as Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs complex, *zawiya*'s and *hammams* dating back to the Mamluk period. Function is strongly demonstrated through the continued maintenance, conservation and veneration of the property's attributes that are observed within its limits, most notably, the monumental site of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs. The spirit of generosity and hospitality of the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham has been

and continues to be deeply instilled into the traditions of Hebron/Al-Khalil through its *Takiyya* (Hospice) which continues to offer meals to the city's poor and visitors. Conservation efforts made in the old town since the mid-1990s have, to a great extent, preserved the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, and contributed to continuity of uses. These efforts led to a return of the inhabitants and an effective urban regeneration of the old town. The use of traditional materials and techniques in these restoration operations has contributed to the protection of the authenticity of the old town and in the reactivation of craftsman trades.

### **Protection and management requirements**

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town possesses a high level of legal protection, both at the national and local levels. At the national level, it is protected by the law on Tangible Cultural Heritage (No. 11, 2018) for the protection, conservation and management of tangible cultural heritage in Palestine, as well as by the Jordanian law (No. 79, 1966) on building and zoning of towns, villages, and buildings. At the local level, protection of the property is based on the municipal physical master plan for the city of Hebron and the “Hebron's Old City: Preservation and Revitalization Master Plan 2015-2040” , a strategy to manage and conserve the old town’ s urban planning, infrastructure, education, tourism, public health, economy, social development, and other important sectors. As per the law on Tangible Cultural Heritage (No. 11, 2018), the property is managed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in close cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf, Hebron Municipality, Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, and the local community. The local community involvement is made through workshops, seminars, in order to enhance the current management and state of conservation of the property , the above mentioned partners are closely cooperating in preparing the Management and Conservation Plan, in order to establish an effective management system and maintain the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity, and integrity of the property.

Notes: At the time of the nomination evaluation, ICOMOS could not visit the property therefore the statement of integrity and authenticity and the protection and management requirements could not be assessed on the ground. In addition, at the moment of inscription of the property, the aim for a comprehensive vision for the management of the property is made more difficult by the constraints imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, on zone H2 in the old town.

## **Annex 2: Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)**

The State of Palestine is committed to the removal of Hebron/Al-Khalil from the World Heritage list in danger. Therefore, the stakeholders have diagnosed and assessed the factors affecting the WHP in order to develop the most appropriate and plausible plans and actions to achieve the Desired State of Conservation, as well as key Corrective Measures to be adopted by the World Heritage Committee for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as follows:

- A. Dismissing all of the Occupying Power's plans and/ or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity.
- B. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that any development plans in the property, the buffer zone and the setting do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.
- C. Adoption of an integrated effective Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP.
- D. Achieving appropriate conservation and safeguarding of the WHP's OUV, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.

### **2. B. Proposed Corrective Measures to achieve the DSOCR**

- A.1 Take all possible measures to obtain the dismissal of all of Occupying Power plans and actions that affect the OUV of the property including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural and urban fabric, illegal excavations, separation barriers, access blocks and street closures.
- A.2 Dismiss all of the Israeli Occupying Power illegal regulations imposed on the local Palestinian authorities which hinder the maintenance and conservation of the property.
- B1. Develop and promulgate bylaws and urban regulations to protect the historic environment of the WHP, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.
- B2. Develop a process for strategic and heritage impact assessments for all significant planning and development projects in the property, its buffer zone, and its setting.
- C1. Preparation and implementation of a Comprehensive and integrated Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP that involves all concerned stakeholders with emphasis on the local community.

- C2. Develop and implement an efficient practical management and monitoring system based on the best practices for the WHP.
- D1. Implement conservation projects to enhance the quality of the historic environment of the WHP and improve the socio-economic status and the living conditions of the local community.
- D2. Enhance the capacity building of practitioners, institutions, networks and communities to work together towards effective conservation and management of the WHP.
- D3. Conduct a comprehensive inventory and documentation of the physical attributes of the WHP's OUV used to assess their State of Conservation and generate an integrated database system for the WHP.

### Annex 3: The Indicators and Timeframe for Implementation of the DSCOR and Corrective Measures

	DSOCR & Corrective Measures  (CM)	Indicators	Rationale	Method of Verification	Timeframe of CM	Timeframe of DSOCR
A	<p>Dismissing all of the Occupying Power's plans and/ or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity.</p> <p><b>Related Corrective Measure(s):</b></p> <p>A1. Take all possible measures to obtain the dismissal of all of the Occupying Power plans and actions that affect the OUV of the property including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural and urban fabric, illegal</p>	<p>A1. A final and binding decision by Israel dismissing the plans and/or actions affecting the attributes of the WHP's OUV.</p> <p>A2. A final and binding decision by Israel dismissing illegal regulation imposed on the Palestinian authorities which hinders the maintenance and conservation of the property.</p>	<p>The WHP is currently threatened by several of Israel's/the Occupying Power's plans and actions that may irreversibly affect the property's OUV.</p> <p>The Occupying Power must dismiss all plans and actions including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural fabric, illegal excavations, separation barriers, access blocks, or any other actions that may negatively affect</p>	<p>A1.1 binding Israeli decision is adopted and no subsequent plans and/or actions might affect the OUV.</p> <p>A1.2 Barriers, blocks, and closures are removed.</p> <p>A1.3 Free circulation and movement throughout the WHP.</p> <p>A2 Binding Israeli decision is adopted and</p>	<b>No specific date</b>	<b>No specific date</b>

	excavations, separation barriers, access blocks and street closures.  A.2 Dismiss all of the Israeli Occupying Power illegal regulations imposed on the local Palestinian authorities which hinder the maintenance and conservation of the property.		the OUV of the property.	no subsequent plans and/or actions might affect the OUV.		
B	<p><b>Mechanisms are in place to ensure that any development plans in the property, the buffer zone and the setting do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.</b></p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>B1. Develop and promulgate bylaws and urban regulations to protect the historic environment of the WHP, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.</p> <p>B2. Develop a process for strategic and</p>	<p>B1. Endorse and implement bylaws and regulations in accordance with the tangible cultural heritage law (No 11. 2018), as well as the local government regulation and bylaws in line with the above law.</p> <p>B2. Process of the Impact Assessment is established and adopted by related authorities.</p>	<p>Effective bylaws are needed to ensure the protection of the property at the national and local levels.</p> <p>Ensure that all significant planning and development projects do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.</p>	<p>B1.1 monitoring that the bylaws are endorsed</p> <p>B1.2 monitoring of the effective implementation of the endorsed bylaws</p> <p>B2.1 Monitoring of the establishment and adoption of the process of Impact Assessment</p>	<p><b>2021- 2028</b></p> <p><b>2021- 2024</b></p> <p><b>2022- 2028</b></p> <p><b>2020- 2023</b></p> <p><b>2021- 2024</b></p> <p><b>2022- 2028</b></p>	<p><b>2029</b></p> <p><b>2029</b></p> <p><b>2029</b></p>

C	<p>heritage impact assessments for all significant planning and development projects in the property, its buffer zone, and its setting.</p> <p><b>Adoption of an integrated effective Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP.</b></p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>C1. Preparation of a Comprehensive and integrated Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP that involves all concerned stakeholders with emphasis on the local community.</p> <p>C2. Effective implementation of the management and conservation plan.</p>	<p>C1. Preparation and endorsement of the MCP.</p> <p>C2. Monitoring the effective implementation of the MCP.</p>	<p>Preparation of an MCP for the WHP is urgently needed to ensure the sustainability of the OUV ,and to preserve its authenticity and integrity, which had been facing various threats and challenges.</p>	<p>by the related authorities.</p> <p>B2.2 Monitoring of significant planning and development projects using the above assessment tools.</p> <p>C1. Adoption of the MCP by all relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>C2.1 Effective Implementation of the management and conservation plan.</p> <p>C2.2 Implementation of assessment and monitoring strategies</p>		
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				and activities as per the MCP action plan.		
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Achieving appropriate conservation and safeguarding of the WHP's OUV, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.</b></p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>D1. Implement conservation projects to enhance the quality of the historic environment of the WHP and improve the socio-economic status and the living conditions of the local community.</p> <p>D2. Raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV and Enhance the capacity building of practitioners, institutions, networks and communities to work together towards effective conservation and management of the WHP.</p>	<p>D1. Implementing conservation projects and related social programs to safeguard the WHP including maintenance projects for vulnerable parts of the WHP, such as Qaytoun Quarter.</p> <p>D2.1 Developing programs to raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV.</p> <p>D2.2. Improving conservation and management capacity-building by conducting a number of technical training programs.</p> <p>D2.3 Establishing economic incentives for the local</p>	<p>Although conservation program of the Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has been in effect since 1996, further efforts are needed to improve the quality of the historic environment, the socio-economic status and living conditions of the local community, raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV, and enhance capacity building of professionals working for the property.</p>	<p>(1) Monitor conserved attributes of the WHP.  (2) Regular evaluation of conservation program.  (3) Evaluation of training program.  (4) Regular Evaluation of economic program and incentives.  (5) Evaluation of the documentation and database system.</p>	<b>2022 -2028</b>	<b>2029</b>

	<p>D3. Conduct a comprehensive inventory and documentation of the physical attributes of the WHP's OUV used to assess their State of Conservation and generate an integrated database system for the WHP.</p>	<p>community.</p> <p>D3.1Developing and implementing documentation and inventory projects for generating a database for the management of attributes of the WHP.</p> <p>D3.2Establishing and executing conservation guidelines.</p>				
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