

REPORT ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE CENTRAL SECTOR OF THE IMPERIAL CITADEL OF THANG LONG – HA NOI

Heritage's name: **Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Hanoi**

Member country: **Vietnam**

Heritage number: **Application/Nomination file 1328**

1. Executive Summary

This State of Conservation report responds to the request of the World Heritage Committee, presenting a summary of progress in implementing the Committee's recommendations in the Resolution No.34 (COM8B.22); and the recommendations of the Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Advisory Mission in July 2023 to the World Heritage Property "Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Ha Noi (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam), as per the Director of the World Heritage Centre's official letter ref. CLT/WHC/APA/HG/NH/23/114 dated 16 November 2023 and the letter of the WHC focal point dated 15 December 2023.

(Annex 1: Report of the Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Advisory Mission to the World Heritage Property "Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Ha Noi")

As highlighted in Section 2 of this SOC report (pages 5-10), Viet Nam has conducted various activities, including research and management actions, since the inscription of the property in the World Heritage List in 2010. There have been significant achievements in all dimensions, from archaeological research, strengthening the overall management plan, investing in professional personnel and building management capacity, enhancing visitor management plan, specifying and implementing monitoring plan, and coordinating overall management works to wider buffer-zone of the property. The series of continual actions have resulted in important research findings which has contributed to clarifying the property's Outstanding Universal Value, especially by strengthening the representation and authenticity of the heritage elements associated with the criteria (ii) and (iii) under which the property was listed. The coordination of Ha Noi City Peo-

ple's Committee and the strong support of central government, including related ministries have resulted in the handing over of several buildings and elements that date to late 20th century and which contribute towards enhancing criteria (vi) of which the property is also listed. These results fully respond to the Committee's recommendations at the time of inscription.

The research and works carried out in deepening the knowledge and understanding of the royal axis and the key elements contributing to the site's OUVs have however, been undermined notably by two buildings constructed during the colonial era. The two buildings with no significant architectural and historical values have posed serious difficulties in fully experiencing the original spatial organization of the Imperial Citadel built on the principles of geomancy and further hindering the practice of associated cultural and religious traditions, expected of a world heritage site grounded on its local historical context.

The Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Advisory Mission agreed and recommended the removal (controlled dismantling) of these two buildings based on scientific considerations. The Joint Mission however made a set of eight recommendations requiring a careful preparation and approach to achieve effective and positive results to the overall well-being of the property. Section 3 of this SOC report (page 10-35) presents in details the research, analysis, plans and preparation made by responsible agencies of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. The section covers in details both the controlled dismantling plan of the two buildings namely the Artillery Building (CT 04) and Operational Department Building (CT 17) in particular; and the strategic vision and long-term management plan of the property. This affirms the highest attention and consideration the Government of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and all other related management agencies pays to a common goal of protecting the World Heritage Property and upholding its OUVs.

Specific research findings, overall management plan and procedures of controlled dismantling of the two mentioned buildings, together with careful documentation and solutions for preservation and exhibition of objects and artifacts are also presented in in details in the annexes.