

Property Name	Country	Identification No.
Old city of Sana'a	Republic of Yemen	C 385

STATE PARTY REPORT ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF OLD CITY OF SANA'A, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN DANGER

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN - MINISTRY OF CULTURE - GENERAL AUTHORITY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CITIES, YEMEN. JANUARY 2024.

**The World Heritage Committee,**

**Decision: 45 COM 7A.49**

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.
2. Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.26 adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
3. Commends the efforts undertaken in capacity building, awareness raising, damage assessment, documentation and emergency interventions at the property, and requests that they continue in consultation with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies;
4. Expresses its continuing concern at the damage caused to the cultural heritage of Yemen as a result of armed conflict, and that the Old City of Sana'a has incurred irreversible destruction and continues to be vulnerable, owing to the current security situation, ongoing social change and continuing lack of support and resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;
5. Urges the State Party to:
  - a) Submit information on all major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, while recalling that major transformations, should be assessed in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, as they could have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.,
  - b) Pursue the elaboration of proposals for a boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification in close coordination with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies, to be submitted in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines,
  - c) Consider ratifying the Second Protocol (1999) of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
6. Commends the outcomes of the first phase of the UNESCO/EU Cash for Work Project in Yemen, the launch of the new EU funded UNESCO Project 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage, as well as the implementation of the Japan-funded project 'Building Climate-resilient Communities in Historic Cities in Yemen through Strengthened Disaster Risk Management and Awareness';
7. Notes with concern that current circumstances and lack of resources continue to prevent progress with the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020 and the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage;
8. Reiterates the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the processes required to enable the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the implementation of corrective measures, as soon as the situation in Yemen allows;
9. Continues to urge all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, especially sites on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and appeals to all States Parties to cooperate in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347;

10. Reiterates its previous calls to the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures;

11. 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 44th session in 2020;

12. Decides to retain Old City of Sana'a (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

### 1- Summary of the report:

The old city of Sanaa as world heritage list in Danger, Despite financial constraints and difficulties, the Ministry of Culture, represented by the General Authority for Preserving Historic Cities (GOPHCY), has taken some conservation actions according to the available capabilities.

Also, Through the Center for Studies and Architectural Training (CATS), GOPHCY continues to hold qualification courses for staff working in heritage, administrators, technicians, and traditional workers to raise awareness of the importance of preserving the style and traditional building material when doing any work inside the old city.

And, Due to the deteriorating economic conditions and lack of resources in (GOPHCY), as well as the delay in launching the second UNESCO project for a whole year, the old city of Sana'a witnessed only a limited number of preservation projects that were funded through local government agencies, the most important of which is the project Restoration and insurance of 45 damaged historical buildings by (GOPHCY) and with local funding from the Municipality of the Capital.

Old Sana'a still faces many challenges and threats, foremost among which are the effects resulting from the political and economic crisis that caused the deterioration of the social and economic situation of the population, which created difficulty for owners in carrying out the usual regular maintenance for their homes. Climate changes and heavy rains over the past years also caused the partial collapse of a number of historical buildings, such as the Al-Yadumi House in Al-Abhar Neighborhood.

Despite the intervention and support provided by the European Union through UNESCO, and some support provided by local government agencies, (GOPHCY) expresses its concern about the deterioration of the damaged buildings that were not intervened in, as the intervention will not include all the damaged historical buildings.

-The State Party, through its representative (GOPHCY), affirms its keen interest in protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of Old Sana'a (OUV) and is committed not to implement any large projects in the property without consulting the World Heritage Center and its advisory bodies.

It also confirms that there are some projects being adopted by some local partners that are still under study and consultation with ICOMOS and will not be allowed to be implemented until all conditions specified by the World Heritage Center are met.

(GOPHCY) specialists believe that no modification should be made to the current borders of the Old City because the time is not appropriate.

The World Heritage Center also calls for urging the UNESCO office in Doha to adopt a project to conservation plan for Old Sanaa within the project funded by the European Union, through which the final borders of Old Sanaa can be drawn correctly and thoughtfully. Whereas (GOPHCY) has developed a work plan to implement the project and lacks the necessary funding for it.

(GOPHCY) will seek to urge the government to sign the Second Protocol (1999) as soon as the political situation in Yemen stabilize.

The State Party thanks UNESCO and the European Union for the support provided in the cash-for-work project and confirms its keenness to ensure the success of the second phase of the project in cooperation with all local and international partners. It emphasizes that what was implemented in the previous stage was an appropriate intervention to protect the damaged buildings in Old Sana'a, but the support allocated in the previous and subsequent stages is not sufficient to save all the damaged buildings in Old Sana'a, as the previous and current projects included only 20% of the damaged historical buildings.

Also, concerned reiterates its open invitation to the World Heritage Center and the World Council to reactivate the supervisory mission to visit Yemen, evaluate the level of city conservation, define measures to address the effects of war and ensure sustainable protection of the city as soon as possible, And work to remove the city from the danger list as soon as circumstances permit.



Also, The State party will continue to work and consult with the World Heritage Center and its affiliated bodies and the representative of UNESCO in Sana'a and all local heritage authorities to work to get the old Sanaa out of the list of endangered heritage immediately after the end of the war.

3. The responses of the requested party to the questions of the World Heritage Committee, paragraph 27 paragraph

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