

## **PREFACE**

The Historic Areas of f Istanbul was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1985, with 4 components: Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Park, Suleymaniye Mosque and its associated Conservation Area, Zeyrek Mosque and its associated Conservation Area and Istanbul Land Walls.

UNESCO World Heritage Committee, in its decisions, requests the State Parties to submit an updated report on the state of conservation to the World Heritage Center, including information, documents regarding the conservation status of the property and the stage of large-scale projects and restoration works affecting the property.

This report; has been prepared in accordance with the World Heritage Committee Decision 45 COM 7B 58 on the Historical Sites of Istanbul adopted at the 45th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and also with previous decisions, mission reports, ICOMOS recommendations, information and documents received from responsible and authorized organizations.

With this report, it is aimed to provide the Committee information and documentation on the state of conservation of the property and the progress of the plans, projects and works mentioned in the decision adopted at the 45th Session, which requests State Party to submit "An updated Conservation Status Report" to the World Heritage Centre by February 1, 2024 for consideration at the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee."

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report has been prepared in light of information and documents obtained from responsible and authorized organizations, along with the decision adopted during the 45th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, held between September 10-25, 2023, as well as previous decisions, mission reports, and ICOMOS recommendations.

The first section of the report provides information on the efforts made and the current status of the issues mentioned in the Committee Decision adopted at the 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee.

The report includes detailed information on the works being carried out for the "Definition of the Attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul Historic Areas" and more comprehensive consideration of them within the updating process of Historic Peninsula Management Plan, as requested by the World Heritage Committee Decision 45 COM 7B.58.

Furthermore, in line with the said decision, within the scope of the studies related to updating Management Plan, the Timber Houses Strategic Plan have been initiated and opinions from relevant institutions have been obtained and ongoing work in progress. This Strategic Plan will be a part of the updated Management Plan.

Another significant study subject highlighted in this section is the "Wooden Houses Strategy Plan" mentioned in the Committee Decisions. The activities coordinated by the Presidency of the Area and the work carried out by the institutions that are considered to contribute to the creation of the road map of the plan are summarized. In the report, a separate section is devoted to the current practices related to Wooden Houses, and examples are presented especially from the practices within the World Heritage Site.

The current studies on the state of conservation of the Hagia Sophia Mosque and the Kariye Mosque, as requested in the relevant decision 45 COM 7B.58, are an

important topic of the chapter. The management bodies established for the protection, development and maintenance of the historical, cultural, social and aesthetic value of the Hagia Sophia Mosque, the restoration works carried out, the visitor management plan, and the master plan works in preparation were included. At the same time, information on the plans and restoration works carried out for the Kariye Mosque, which is included in the decision, was presented.

In the context of Conservation and Restoration works, the Yedikule Fortress Restoration works and the noteworthy restoration of the Grand Bazaar are outlined in the report.

Additionally, Heritage Impact Assessment Reports prepared for the Land Walls Nation Garden, Yenikapı Cruise Port Project and Kazlıçeşme Marina projects, which are among the major infrastructure projects, were presented to the concerned authorities.

The second part of the report includes other activities undertaken within the Management Plan Area (Historic Peninsula). The restoration of the Land Walls and tourism route works, the restoration works of the archaeological sites of Edirnekapı, Sulukule and Silivrikapı Hipojesi, which are among the gates of the city walls, Culture and Art Center works of Yedikule Gas House, which is one of the important examples of industrial heritage, restoration, exhibition arrangement and landscaping of Istanbul Archeology Museums are examples of the works within this scope.

In addition to the ongoing works at the Hagia Sophia Historical Museum in Sultanahmet Square, the restoration of the Basilica Cistern, Kalenderhane Mosque, Sultan Ahmed Mosque and Süleymaniye Complex, the applications carried out for various buildings such as historical fountains, hazires, mosques and madrasas were shared as exemplary works in this regard.

A part of the section consists of studies on archaeological sites. Examples of Sultanahmed Archaeopark, Yenikapı Excavations 2nd Area Archaeopark, Saraçhane

Polyeuktos Church Archaeopark, Theodosius Harbor Archaeopark are presented. A brief summary of plans, projects and risk management in the area is also given.

Training, promotion, and awareness activities are highlighted as special priorities by the Presidency of Istanbul Historic Sites. Activities such as the 'Heritage Volunteers Program', conducted in partnership with the Ministry of National Education, archaeological site visits within the area, Zeyrek Academy addressing tangible and intangible cultural heritage on the Historical Peninsula, and various activities in fields like information, documentation, and research are exemplified within this context.