



STATE OF CONSERVATION
FOR
TOMBS OF BUGANDA KINGS AT KASUBI – (UGANDA)

PROPERTY ID NO C1022

IN RESPONSE TO WHC: 45 COM 7A.25

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2,
2. Recalling Decisions 35 COM 7A.17 and 44 COM 7A.4 adopted at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011) and extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021) respectively,
3. Welcomes the completion of the reconstruction of the Mazibu Azaala Mpanga, the restoration of the Bujjabukala (gate house) and the close collaboration of the State Party with the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Regional Office in Nairobi and the Advisory Bodies;
4. Commends the strong commitment and engagement of the Government's national and local authorities, as well as the traditional management of the Buganda kingdom authorities, and the Kasubi local communities, as the custodians of sacred sites;
5. Acknowledges the continued financial commitment of the Government of Japan, through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage, the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund (HEF) and the World Heritage Fund to the installation of a firefighting system for the tombs area of the property;
6. Also acknowledges the Government of Norway's financing of the World Heritage Centre project aiming at developing the guidelines by promoting the application of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) to safeguard heritage in African contexts, which took this property as a case study, also welcomes the efforts made towards re-evaluating the buffer zone boundary alignment, defining development guidelines for the buffer zone and aligning local planning regulations with the safeguarding, maintenance and transmission of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the requirements of its protection and management, and requests to the State Party to:

1. Continue its efforts to establish an improved buffer zone alignment, complete guidelines for the buffer zone in collaboration with World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, guided by the approach of HUL, and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
2. Submit the amended local planning regulations that accommodate the guidelines for the buffer zone to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

7. Notes the conclusions and recommendations of the 2023 joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and strongly encourages the State Party to implement these recommendations;
8. Also encourages the State Party to proceed with updating the Management Plan for the property aligned with HUL including to:
 1. Update the Disaster Risk Management Plan into the existing Management Plan,
 2. Align the Management Plan with the existing Master Plan,

3. Provide mechanisms to harmonize the Management Plan with the buffer zone guidelines currently under development,
 4. Include a tourism management component in the Management Plan based on a thorough understanding of the carrying capacity of the property,
 5. Translate the corrective measures defined for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSCOR) into management actions to be implemented continuously for the protection and management of the tangible and intangible attributes of the property;
9. Also commends and congratulates the State Party, as well as the Buganda Kingdom and its partners for substantively completing the implementation of the corrective measures defined for achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);
 10. Decides to remove the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
 11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 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 47th session.

Executive Summary.

In line with the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of 1972, whereby the State Parties are required to prepare a State of Conservation report to ensure the protection of Properties. The report was developed in close consultation with Stakeholders. This report outlines the desired state of conservation and current status of the Tombs of Buganda at Kasubi, World Heritage Site. This is in line with the WHC decision 45 COM 7A.25 44 COM.

Noting that the decisions are made with the aim of emphasising the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Property. The report also provides specific responses to the decision on the State of Conservation of the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi World Heritage Committee Decisions 45 COM 7A.25 44 COM. It also provides an update about the progress on the reconstruction of Muzibu Azaala Mpanga, and progress with the development of the buffer zone guidelines

The reconstruction of Muzibu Azaala Mpanga progressed greatly well as it is in the final stages. The grass thatching process was fully executed and finished to the conservation experts' satisfaction. The interior restoration works including bark cloth cladding of the wooden poles and the different non – load bearing wall partitions were constructed to completion as well as the Artefacts restorations and reeds - make entrances were completed to the conservation experts' satisfaction.

The Tombs of Buganda Kings buffer zone guidelines is an ongoing activity and is being undertaken in a consultative participatory approach of all stakeholders. But due to the magnitude and finances involved, the exercise has been phased, to allow the lead institutions solicit for funding to facilitate the consultations. Once completed a realignment with the KCCA Development Plan to protect the Property and its OUVs.

The Tourism management plan was also developed and is being implemented by Buganda Kingdom. The main objective of the tourism plan was to provide an operational framework for the development of sustainable tourism management at the Tombs of Buganda at Kasubi world heritage site. Among the specific objectives highlighted in this plan, was to

- (i) Protect the site and its Outstanding Universal Values,
- (ii) Create wider appreciation and understanding of the site in the local communities and beyond,
- (iii) Enhance visitor experience engaging with the site and,

Among others, the committee encouraged the State Party to update the Disaster Risk Management Plan, Alignment with the Master Plan, Mechanisms on improving the buffer zone in line with the HUL 2011 guidelines, and translating corrective measures defined in the removal of the property on the World Heritage List in Danger into management actions to be implemented continuously.

This report therefore provides measures taken by the State Party to achieve the desired state of conservation in response to issues raised by the committee and ICOMOS in 2023 WHC Meeting. The report further acknowledges the recommendations made by the World Heritage Center experts towards the conservation of the buffer zone. The State Party notes that legal and binding buffer zone guidelines/regulations are key to achieve the conservation of the buffer zone in the fast-growing urban city.

1. Continue its efforts to establish an improved buffer zone alignment, complete guidelines for the buffer zone in collaboration with World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, guided by the approach of HUL, and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies

Response

A pilot project that aimed at promoting the application of the approach of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) to safeguard heritage in African urban heritage was undertaken by the team of experts from UNESCO World Heritage Center. The proposed recommendation from this pilot project shall be used as baseline to develop the required Heritage Conservation guidelines for the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi World Heritage Site buffer zone area. A financial request towards this activity has been submitted to the World Heritage Center.

2. Submit the amended local planning regulations that accommodate the guidelines for the buffer zone to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

Response

The process for amending the local planning regulations to accommodate the guidelines is still a work in progress. This will only be achieved after developing the buffer zone guidelines that will be legally binding and approved by the KCCA

1. Update the Disaster Risk Management Plan into the existing Management Plan

Response

The process for updating the Disaster Risk Management Plan (DRMP) into the Existing Management Plan was commenced and is still ongoing.

2. Align the Management Plan with the existing Master Plan.

Response

This is under process; the National Technical team and Site technical teams were also merged so as to implement the Masterplan. The process of aligning all management plans with the master plan is undertaken as the interior decoration is being completed.

3. Provide mechanisms to harmonize the Management Plan with the buffer zone guidelines currently under development

Response

Strategies proposed in harmonization of the management plan with the buffer zone guidelines are;

- ✓ *Integrate site management plan with metropolitan KCCA plan under development*
- ✓ *Develop tourism linkages with the greater Kampala as a win-win for tourism in Kampala.*
- ✓ *By-laws by KCCA to be passed to safeguard buffer Zone*

4. Include a tourism management component in the Management Plan based on a thorough understanding of the carrying capacity of the property

Response

A tourism management plan has been developed, which will be integrated into the Masterplan. A pilot study on the carrying capacity is being undertaken before the site is officially opened to understand how the site values and attributes will be maintained amidst the high tourist numbers expected after the official opening.

5. Translate the corrective measures defined for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSCOR) into management actions to be implemented continuously for the protection and management of the tangible and intangible attributes of the property

Response

The following management Actions have been put in place and will further be strengthened in the development of the Integrated Masterplan that is under development. These actions specifically responds to the corrective measures that were identified by ICOMOS. It should be noted that as of November 2024, all the issues raised by ICOMOS that required strengthening has been achieved including the interior decorations and improving on the working conditions of the custodians (see table 1).

Table 1. Proposed management Actions in response to the DSCOR

DSCOR	Achieved Y/ N	Management Action proposed
a) Completion of appropriate reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga, including an effective and appropriate fire protection system and taking into account the results of a survey of the traditional building practices of the other Ganda tombs, and the restoration of the related buildings associated with Ganda craftsmen,	Y	Muzibu Azaala Mpanga, construction completed and further training of traditional artisans, Youths undertaken and this will be continuous.

b) Existence of a disaster risk management strategy including installation of an effective fire protection system for the whole of the property,	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DRMP is being intergrated with the Masterplan, for easy monitoring and evaluation. A permanent assistant Engineer to oversee the mechanical works for the firefighting system employed by Buganda Kingdom now on site.
<p>d) Conservation of the key attributes of the overall property, including fences and boundary trees, and <u>the removal of inappropriate buildings.</u></p> <p>e) Management structures in place to ensure that the custodians and craftsmen have appropriate living and working conditions,</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is part of the masterplan that is being developed by restoring all buildings as it was in the 1938 model.

ANNEX 1;



The Image (*front side*) showing the External present status of the Muzibu – Azaala – Mpanga (MAM), the main Building at the Site.



The Image showing the interior present status of the Muzibu – Azaala – Mpanga (*MAM*), the main Building at the Site.



The Image showing the interior side of the reeds-make door of the Muzibu – Azaala – Mpanga (MAM) with an open section of the door-way.



The Image showing the main entrance of Muzibu – Azaala – Mpanga (*MAM*) with a closed section of the door-way.