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State of Conservation report

BAALBEK

LEBANON

C294

1- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This report presents the management and preservation efforts at Baalbek Citadel, focusing on the site's famous temples and surrounding archaeological areas. It highlights past and ongoing conservation work, including measures taken by the Ministry of Culture and the Directorate General of Antiquities, often in collaboration with international bodies such as the German mission- DAI, UNESCO office in Lebanon, ...

In 2013, an urban master plan for Baalbek emphasizes protecting the site's surroundings, preventing inappropriate construction, maintaining green spaces, and ensuring local community integration. Additionally, projects funded by organizations like the World Bank and the Italian government have facilitated site improvements, including a new entrance. Key initiatives include structural reinforcements, restorations, and the creation of modern tourist paths.

The two major projects so-called BTAP 1 and 2 have targeted the preservation of significant structures, such as the Temple of Bacchus, the Great Courtyard of Jupiter, the Temple of Venus, and Arab Arches. Later efforts focused on reinforcing the six columns of Jupiter and improving visitor access through infrastructure upgrades.

The report also highlights the ongoing efforts in permanent site maintenance. This includes regular removal of weeds, particularly given the unstable climate, and the adoption of modern technology to preserve both the stone structures and the plant diversity within the site. Additionally, the impact of the 2024 war demonstrated the need for specialized expertise to assess and mitigate damage caused by severe strikes on the archaeological surroundings.

In response to the war of 2024 in Lebanon, Baalbek was granted the "Enhanced Protection" by UNESCO (Decision 4, EXT.COM 4.5), along with 33 other archaeological sites and museums under the Second Protocol of The Hague Convention of 1954. This resolution was adopted at UNESCO's extraordinary meeting in Paris on November 18, 2024.