

REPORT
of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM
Reactive Monitoring mission
to the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' (Georgia)
23-27 September 2024



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The mission team would like to express its gratitude to the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati for its kind hospitality and for the excellent arrangements put in place to ensure the smooth running of the mission. The programme of the mission, combining meetings with various stakeholders with on-site visits and discussions, allowed the mission team to receive first-hand information on the progress made in the rehabilitation work at Gelati Monastery and to assess the overall state of conservation of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' and its management.

The mission team would like to convey its special thanks to Archimandrite Kirion (Oniani), Deputy Chairman of the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati and his colleagues Mikheil Gaprindashvili and Manana Vardzelashvili for their efforts in ensuring the success of the mission. Their presence throughout the mission, as well as that of David Lordkipanidze, Head of the National Scientific Council, were greatly appreciated.

The mission team was privileged to meet with Metropolitan Shio (Mujiri), the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal throne of Georgia and Chairman of the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati, and other representatives of the Patriarchate of Georgia.

Meetings with representatives of Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia / National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, local stakeholders and experts involved helped the mission team to obtain comprehensive information on the issues to be assessed. Our thanks go to all stakeholders for their inputs and efforts to make the mission as informative and fruitful as possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' in Georgia took place from 23 to 27 September 2024. The State Party invited the mission following Decision 45 COM 7B.54 of the World Heritage Committee (Riyadh, 2023). The purpose of the mission was to assess the conservation measures undertaken and the development and implementation of a holistic conservation programme since the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission, as well as the effectiveness of the management system and the overall state of conservation of the property.

Gelati Monastery, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994, is the masterpiece of the architecture of the Golden Age of Georgia. The monastery complex includes the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin (Main Church), St George's Church and other monastic buildings, which are renowned for their architectural and artistic value, including a well-preserved mosaic and wall paintings. However, deficiencies regarding the roofs installed on the Main Church in 2015-2018 led to moisture ingress and associated decay of the historic murals. The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property in November-December 2022 recommended that immediate action should focus solely on emergency treatment of the affected mural paintings, which should be kept to the necessary minimum and undertaken using materials compatible with the originals, while limiting the addition of water.

The present mission involved a comprehensive review of the current state of the monastery, including on-site inspections and meetings with various stakeholders: the Patriarchate of Georgia and its Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia and its National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, as well as local and foreign experts involved in the conservation efforts. The mission team also examined the updated Management Plan, the implementation of the recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission, and the development of a holistic conservation programme.

The findings and recommendations of this mission are intended to guide the State Party in improving the conservation and management of Gelati Monastery, and to ensure that further rehabilitation and conservation works achieve the best results for the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage property. They are also addressed to the World Heritage Committee, which will examine the state of conservation of Gelati Monastery at its 47th session (Sofia, 2025).

The main conclusions of the mission are as follows:

- The development of a holistic conservation programme, with plan and roadmap, is of utmost importance for the continuation of the rehabilitation and conservation works at the property.
- The limited cooperation between the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation under the Ministry of Culture and Sport is of concern; cooperation should be strengthened to ensure long-term protection and management of the property as a whole, including its buffer zone.
- The update of the Management Plan is a major achievement; it should, however, be further improved, notably with regard to the buffer zone, and finalised.
- The construction of an overall protective cover over the Main Church, including the cupola, to be completed by the end of 2024, is a key step in the rehabilitation

programme: it will allow the subsequent removal of the deficient glazed roof and the layers of fill beneath it to allow the process of gradual evaporation of moisture towards the exterior prior to the construction of a new roof. Careful design of the permanent roofing will be a crucial next step in the rehabilitation works.

- Substantial progress has been made in condition monitoring and non-invasive investigations of wall paintings in the Main Church. These investigations provide the foundation for the design, development and gradual implementation of remedial measures. However, the mission is concerned that the remedial treatments have not yet included those parts of the wall paintings that were treated during the previous intervention and assessed by the 2022 Advisory mission. The emergency interventions have to be implemented in all areas where the flaking of the paint layer and/or the disintegration and exfoliation of the preparatory layers currently leave very important decorative elements at serious risk of loss.
- The launch of a holistic safeguarding programme for the 12th-century mosaic in the apse of the Main Church is commendable and should serve as the basis for a detailed conservation plan for the mosaic, which, although well preserved, is in danger due to the detachment of most of its surface from the wall.
- Structural investigations of the Main Church should be extended to subsequently prepare an intervention project to restore the static adequacy of the monument, with emphasis on the upper parts of its structure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission recommends that the World Heritage Committee may consider commending the State Party for the steps taken since the 2022 Advisory mission to address the conservation challenges at the property and for reviewing and updating the Management Plan for the property, which includes indicators to monitor the state of conservation of the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

To improve the monitoring, protection, conservation and management of the property, the mission recommends that the State Party advance the rehabilitation and conservation programme and improve the overall state of conservation and management of the property on the basis of the specific recommendations outlined below.

Conservation programme

1. As a matter of priority, elaborate and submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies a holistic conservation programme, including a plan and roadmap. It should include, amongst others, condition assessment, clear responsibilities and processes to be undertaken, action priorities, successive intervention phases, methodology to be followed, and selection of materials to be used.
2. As part of the holistic conservation programme, develop designs and details of permanent roofing proposals, including water collection system, and submit them as soon as they are available to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.
3. Involve more Georgian conservators and plan capacity building where necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of the actions.

4. Complete the project for the placement of an overall protective cover over the Main Church, including the cupola.
5. Complete the external scaffolding to enable full access to the roofs and the facades.
6. Mural paintings: (i) undertake emergency interventions on the paint and preparatory layers of the decoration, which are in a precarious state and are at risk of crumbling/falling in several areas of the surfaces; (ii) in parallel, establish the relationship between the decay of the stone covering of the facades and the damage visible on the painted surfaces inside; (iii) collate and assess the results of all the investigations following the mission's observations in order to incorporate their conclusions into the conservation programme, which should include a chronological list of actions. The results of this exercise should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies as part of the holistic conservation programme.
7. The mosaic: following the conclusion of the assessment study, develop a detailed executive conservation plan for the safeguarding of the mosaic, within the holistic conservation programme, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.
8. Structural investigations: install automatic static monitoring system units at additional crucial points, in order to finalise a comprehensive report on the results of the long-term monitoring and recording of the static behaviour of the entire masonry of the Main Church, and subsequently to prepare an intervention project to restore the static adequacy of the monument, focusing on the upper parts of its structure.
9. Implement a stone conservation programme following the mission's guidance.
10. Complete the assessment of the rainwater collection and disposal system and propose improvements to it as part of the permanent roofing proposal to make it efficient in protecting the attributes conveying the OUV of the property.
11. Design an overall conservation project for St George's Church and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Protection and management

12. Work toward the re-establishment of close coordination and cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia (and its National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation) and the Patriarchate of Georgia (and its Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati).
13. Finalise the Management Plan for the property in accordance with the mission's observations, in particular regarding impact factors, visitor management and protection, and management of the buffer zone.
14. Revise the Master Plan of the property, taking into consideration:
 - the maintenance of the planning structure and the spatial quality of the ensemble;
 - the preservation and presentation of the attributes conveying the OUV of the property;

- the accommodation and liturgical needs of the monks;
- the access of believers to religious services in the monastery and the potential increase in the number of visitors, ensuring accessibility to the site for people with reduced mobility;
- the archaeological remains within the territory of the property, which should be subject to a comprehensive study for their conservation to be included in the Master Plan;

and submit the revised Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

15. The mission also recommends that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to take place in 2026 to assess the appropriateness of the conservation efforts undertaken, progress in the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, implementation of the Management Plan, steps taken to improve the management system, and the overall state of conservation of the property.

I. THE PROPERTY

The World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994 under criterion (iv), as an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history. Gelati Monastery is the masterpiece of the architecture of the 'Golden Age' of Georgia and the best representative of its architectural style, characterized by the full facing of smoothly hewn large blocks, perfectly balanced proportions, and the exterior decoration of blind arches. The Main Church of the monastery is one of the most important examples of the cross-in-square architectural type that had a crucial role in the East Christian church architecture from the 7th century onwards. Gelati is one of the largest Medieval Orthodox monasteries, distinguished for its harmony with its natural setting and a well-thought-out overall planning concept.

The Main Church of the Gelati Monastery is the only Medieval monument in the larger historic region of Eastern Asia Minor and the Caucasus that still has well-preserved mosaic decoration, comparable with the best Byzantine mosaics, as well as having the largest ensemble of paintings of the middle Byzantine, late Byzantine, and post-Byzantine periods in Georgia, including more than 40 portraits of kings, queens, and high clerics and the earliest depiction of the seven Ecumenical Councils.

The whole monastic precinct is included in the property and contains all the main 12th century buildings as well as those added in the 13th century. All the attributes necessary to express the Outstanding Universal Value are present and included in the area. No important original feature of the monastery from the 12th and 13th centuries has been lost during the centuries, and its landscape setting remains largely intact. Not all buildings are in a good state of conservation.

The property has a large buffer zone of 1,246 ha. Some development pressures exist in the buffer zone and the wider setting of the property, but the level of threats is low, and the processes are currently under control.

When inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994, the property also included Bagrati Cathedral in Kutaisi and was titled 'Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery'. Following rehabilitation works undertaken in Bagrati Cathedral that threatened the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property, the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2010 (Decision 34 COM 7B.88).

In 2017, the World Heritage Committee approved the significant boundary modification of the property to exclude Bagrati Cathedral (Decision 41 COM 8B.31) and decided to remove the property 'Gelati Monastery' from the List of World Heritage in Danger (Decision 41 COM 7A.20). In the same year, the Committee adopted the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property, which can be found in Annex VI.

The last Reactive Monitoring mission to the property was the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission in April 2012. The last Advisory mission to the property was the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission, which took place from 28 November to 2 December 2022. The full list of its recommendations is included in Annex VIII.

The current cycle of reactive monitoring of the property started in 2021. The latest World Heritage Committee's decision on this property is Decision 45 COM 7B.54 (Riyadh, 2023), which can be found in Annex II.

II. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

Gelati Monastery has been a Listed Monument of National Significance since the Soviet period and was listed in the Georgian National Register of Monuments by presidential decree in 2006. The cultural protection area was enlarged beyond Gelati Monastery to encompass the buffer zone in a Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection in 2014. The buffer zone is protected for its monuments but also for visual attributes.

The natural and cultural values of the surrounding landscape are regulated by the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage, the Forest Code of Georgia, the Law of Georgia on Soil Protection, the Law of Georgia on Environmental Protection and the Law of Georgia on Water, that constitute the legal framework for the management of the historical environment, forests and the rivers in the area. Applications for new constructions or reconstructions, including the infrastructure and earthworks within the buffer zone require the approval of the World Heritage Protection Council of Georgia at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

A Memorandum on Collaboration on Cultural Heritage Issues has been agreed between the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Culture of Georgia for all properties of the church. Until 2023, day to day management of the property was entrusted to the monastic community who live in the property, while longer term interventions were implemented by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

In 2023, an agreement was signed between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and the Patriarchate of Georgia, according to which the management of the conservation-rehabilitation process of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' was taken over by the temporary committee created by the Patriarchate. It is called the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati and led by Metropolitan Shio (Mujiri), the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal throne of Georgia.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia maintains the function of issuing permits, monitoring the monument and supervising the conservation processes. Its local representative unit is the Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-Reserve which is also responsible for visitors' reception.

The draft Management Plan, completed in 2024 and presented to the mission, is an updated version of the Management Plan for the property prepared in 2015 and updated in 2017. Initiated by the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati, it was prepared in accordance with World Heritage Committee's Decision 45 COM 7B.54 and involved a multidisciplinary working group with the participation of relevant national agencies, regional administration, local self-government and the community of Gelati Monastery.

III. THE MISSION

In its Decision 45 COM 7B.54 (Riyadh, 2023) the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' to assess the conservation measures taken, the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, including Conservation Master Plan and roadmap, the updating of the Management Plan, the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, and the overall state of conservation of the property. The State Party extended an invitation for such mission by the letter of 28 November 2023 from the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia under the Ministry of Culture.

Consequently, the Terms of Reference of the mission (Annex I) focused on assessing the conservation measures implemented since the December 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property, on examining the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, including the updating of the Management Plan, as well as on assessing the overall state of conservation of the property and evaluating factors and conservation issues that could potentially impact its OUV.

The mission team consisted of Alkiviadis Prepis (ICOMOS International), Monica Martelli Castaldi (ICCROM) and Irena Caquet (UNESCO World Heritage Centre). The mission took place over five full days, from 23 to 27 September 2024 (programme attached in Annex IV), and combined presentations on the main topics with on-site visits of various locations within the property and its buffer zone. It comprised meetings with different stakeholders, including meetings with the experts in charge of the current conservation works, with the foreign experts participating online.

The mission programme also included meetings in Tbilisi with the representatives of the Patriarchate of Georgia and with the representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, as well as a meeting in Kutaisi with the representatives of the Imereti Region and the municipalities of Tkibuli, Terjola and Tskhaltubo (full list of persons met is in Annex V).

The report of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property will be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session (Sofia, 2025). Its findings will be taken into account in the analysis of the state of conservation of the property, together with an updated report on the state of conservation expected from the State Party by 1 December 2024, which will be presented to the Committee at that session.

IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

A. CONSERVATION MEASURES UNDERTAKEN

It was rewarding for the Reactive Monitoring mission team to hear from the representatives of the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati (hereunder – the Temporary Committee), established by the Patriarchate of Georgia to lead the rehabilitation works at the monastery, that it is guided in all its actions by the recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property and the relevant ICOMOS Technical Reviews. This could also be ascertained *in situ*.

It is to be recalled that in its Decision 45 COM 7B.54 (Riyadh, 2023), the World Heritage Committee endorsed the recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission and requested the State Party to follow them in its pursuit of the programme to redress the conservation challenges at the property and to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, documentation on further emergency interventions and longer-term conservation strategy and measures, as well as relevant technical material, prior to implementation.

1. THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN (MAIN CHURCH)

1a. Installing an overall protective cover and full interior scaffolding

Following the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee (Decision 44 COM 7B.47, paragraph 4) and those contained in the 2022 Advisory mission report (recommendations 4 and 6), the Temporary Committee submitted to the World Heritage Centre in November 2023 a comprehensive project proposal on the arrangement of the temporary protective roofing over the Main Church. Developed in collaboration with Georgian and German specialists, it contained two architectural execution options for the protective roofing:

- one covering the entire structure of the church but excluding the dome in order to free the interior space of the church under the dome from the supports required for the stability of the dome's temporary cover thus allowing the continuation of liturgical services;
- and the second covering the entire church structure, including the dome.

The second option was recommended by ICOMOS in its Technical Review of February 2024. The Temporary Committee took this option forward.

Moreover, as recommended by the 2022 Advisory mission, an extended and secure scaffolding has been constructed in all areas of the church, allowing to assess and monitor all the upper parts of the mural paintings as well as the mosaic in the apse. The temporary roof will ensure air ventilation and allow the evaporation of the humidity towards the exterior of the church and not towards the interior painted surfaces.

The entire structure is made of two main components, one manufactured in Germany and the other in Georgia. The first one is allowing for the church to be covered from the outside and provides for pathways for workers on the northern and southern facades to safely access the roof. The use of supporting columns that would require iron piers of big size and length and deep foundations, has been avoided, in order not to put at risk archaeological layers. Instead, the solution found entails a big number of aluminium columns anchored in precast reinforced

concrete slabs laid on the ground surface. To avoid wind pressures, additional concrete weights were added in the lower parts of the structure. While the 2022 mission noted that “the sufficient overhanging of the temporary protective roof, installing gutters and reusing the rainwater drainage system did the most to prevent water from collecting at the base and from flowing on the facades of the building” (p. 22), it should be noted that the larger new overall protective cover will reduce significantly the use of the gutters and downspouts of the temporary roofing, as well as the existing rainwater drainage system.



Fig.1. View of the overall cover from the east

The structure made in Georgia provides static support and ensures accessibility to the internal walls for restorers. The supporting scaffolding in the interior of the church is both comfortable and safe and allows full accessibility to all upper areas and the apse – to the mural paintings and the mosaic. The scaffolding facing the mosaic in the apse has been modified and built according to the specific requests of the leader of the mosaic conservation-restoration team to accommodate the extensive work required to investigate the state of conservation of the mosaic and undertake the subsequent conservation project.

The steel structure that is designed to extend from the cupola windows with beams, will be used to support a metal ring, which will carry the construction covering the dome externally. With this solution, the dome cover will rest exclusively on the supporting scaffolding in the interior of the church, avoiding supplementary burden on the structure of the church. The lightning rod system remains active in place, mounted on top of the dome.

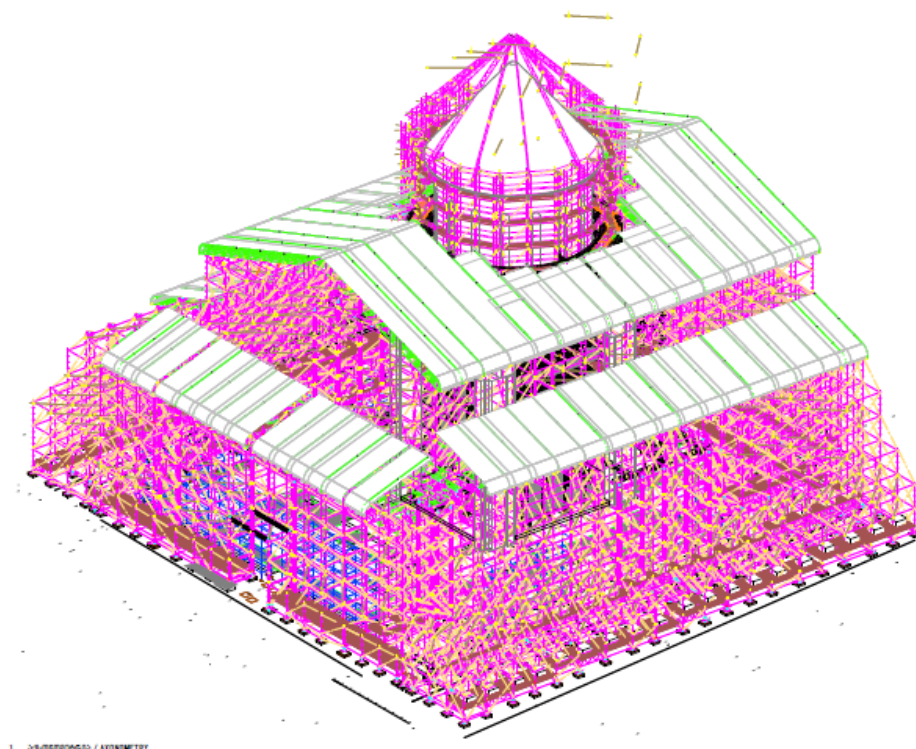


Fig. 2. The construction design of the protective cover over the Main Church

Conclusion and recommendation

The Reactive Monitoring mission considers that the outside cover structure, to be completed by the end of 2024, is well designed and executed, and is a necessary step in the rehabilitation works to be undertaken in the church from 2025 on. The cover, when completed, will allow the subsequent removal of the deficient roof and fill layers under it to enable the process of progressive evaporation of the moisture towards the exterior before the construction of a new roof.

The mission recommends completing the overall protective cover as soon as possible along with the completion of the external scaffolding to enable undertaking the activities recommended by the 2022 Advisory mission, such as the removal of the deficient tile roof to allow the drying of the extrados of the building, but also to allow thorough inspections of all the building's external wall surfaces.

With the completion of the temporary roofing underway, the State Party should turn its attention to developing designs and details of permanent roofing proposals, which should include an efficient water collection system, and submit them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

1b. Mural paintings

In Gelati Monastery, the work for the preservation of the mural paintings and of the surfaces with simple mural decorations, is very demanding. This is due to different factors, such as the conditions of the surfaces, the previous interventions, the decay problems of the external surfaces, the water collection system and the immense extent of the surfaces to be treated. The painted decorations in the Main Church, dating from different periods, constitute a very impressive cycle. At present, it is almost impossible to see the decorations from below due to

the presence of the large scaffolding that covers and fills all the spaces of the church, but a detailed documentation is ongoing for all the surfaces. This is a worksite which needs consistent organization and manual work in order to preserve all the surfaces. The possible organization of the worksite, for the emergencies and for the long-term work on all the surfaces, was not clarified during the inspection.

The conservation work on the mural paintings has been entrusted to a Georgian team led by two restorers, Lela Ninoshvili and Mariam Sagaradze, working under the scientific direction of two UK specialists from the Courtauld Institute, Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede. While the mission team could engage in exchanges with Lela Ninoshvili *in situ* and with Mariam Sagaradze in an online meeting, some of the questions posed by the mission could not be answered. Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede were not available even for a remote meeting, and the mission team was presented with a pre-recorded video message from the former, providing general information about the works and the conditions of the surfaces, with few specifications about criteria, and the overall approach to the future conservation plans.

From the reports made available to the mission, it is clear that up to date, the attention of the team has been focused mainly on the research (the control of the environmental values, the appropriate consolidation methodologies and materials, and other studies). This is partly in line with recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission, in particular regarding monitoring and documentation. However, attention has not been given to recommendation 1 of that mission about immediate emergency stabilisation works.



Fig. 3, 4. Flaking, scaling and powdering of paint layer

There are many very fragile areas of the paint layer, which could be lost without an immediate intervention. The mission team learned that no intervention on the paint layer is planned in the areas treated by the previous team of restorers. No clear reason has been given for this

decision, which remains unexplained for the mission team, including after having consulted the reports provided.

There are, however, emergency interventions that have to be considered and implemented regardless the source of deterioration and regardless of whether it has been reduced or eliminated¹. In such cases, it is important to act, in the best way possible, considering the re-treatability¹ of the surface and that the deterioration would not stop. In this context, a statement in the document “*Action Plan for wall painting critical areas, 1-23 December 2023*” is quite alarming. The text says: “Nothing can be done to mitigate the problems of paint layer exfoliation at this stage (any intervention at this stage would be likely to cause more harm)”.

For the possible emergency operations and for the final interventions, the mission team suggests to consider using only materials which will ensure the re-treatability of the area and will not reduce the porosity of the surfaces, such as mineral consolidants, and to follow the 2022 Advisory mission report’s suggestions and recommendations, which remain valid for this kind of interventions (see pp. 14-17 of the 2022 Advisory mission report).

Regarding the drying of the areas subject to infiltration from the outside, the time needed for a complete stabilization of the walls’ surfaces and of the internal environment of the monument is very long. For this reason, it is paramount to define the priorities in the conservation activities. It is recommended to proceed as described below and not to wait for the complete stabilization.

Conclusions and recommendations

The ongoing work for the preservation of the mural paintings decorating the Main Church is extremely challenging. There is an important investment of energy and time in the scientific investigations, as well as for the study of methodologies for the different operations to be carried out. There is, however, a concern with the delay in the emergency interventions. The mission has not been presented with a convincing reason for this delay. Additionally, there is a concern for the effective organisation of the overall rehabilitation works plan at Gelati, which requires good organisation, coordination and planning. Hence the importance of having a holistic conservation programme.

As regards to the mural paintings, the mission makes the following recommendations:

- Do not any longer delay emergency interventions on the paint and preparatory layers of the decoration, which are in a state of precariousness and face the risk of crumbling/falling in several areas of the surfaces.
- While continuing monitoring, allow for a brief review time, to go through, combine together, and understand the results of all the investigations undertaken in order to draw conclusions and design a holistic conservation programme, following these steps:
 - rapidly re-read the different studies, possibly by topic (for example: origin of infiltrations, disposal and collection of rainwater, relative humidity values, macroclimate / microclimate, etc.),
 - summarize the conclusions individually,
 - identify priorities,

¹ Re-treatability: the possibility to treat and intervene again in a certain area, even using different products. In modern conservation this concept substitutes the concept of “reversibility” (the possibility to remove a product applied on a surface in order to return to the original state, or situation, or previous condition).

- propose solutions,
 - combine solutions into a comprehensive and chronological list of possible actions,
 - process the conclusions into the conservation programme, which should include a chronological list of actions.
- Submit the holistic conservation programme, with plan and road map, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

1c. Mosaic

The decoration of the apse (upper section of the south wall of the church) features unique, beautifully crafted large figures set against a golden background. The mosaic is composed of glass and stone tesserae for the upper two-thirds, while the lower portion, approximately one-third of the scene, is executed in mural paintings. This painted section was added to fill the areas where the original mosaic had fallen or suffered severe damage over time.



Fig. 5. Angel on the right side of the mosaic. The diagonal black line marks where the upper part of the mosaic meets the lower part which is painted

On initial inspection, the mosaic surface appeared to be in good overall condition, largely complete with only minor gaps where tesserae are missing, and with minimal visible soiling. However, investigations of the mosaic's state of conservation undertaken by Roberto Nardi, a prominent mosaics conservator from Italy, and his highly qualified team from the Archaeological Conservation Centre in Rome have revealed severe damages and various previous restorations requiring a very complex intervention. Roberto Nardi emphasised during the online meeting with the mission team that “the mosaic, the apse, the church and its structures, and the external environment constitute a single, interconnected system” – a perspective that underpins his study, the scientific investigations carried out and in great part

accomplished, and the future proposals for the conservation of this invaluable artwork, to be presented by April 2025.

The possible content of the proposal for intervention, to be confirmed once the assessment is completed, was presented by Roberto Nardi during an online meeting with the mission team. It foresees as the first step careful operations of consolidation of the weaker areas of the preparatory layers, using infiltrations of mineral consolidants and hydraulic mortars, only where and when needed. This intervention is to be followed by a consistent and complex procedure, still in course of definition, needed to fill-in the large gap behind the tesserae surface in order to re-connect and join the surface of the mosaic to its original support.

During the mission team's online meeting with Roberto Nardi, a graphical vision of the extension of the detachment was presented together with a video of the internal inspection realized with a flexible video endoscope. Additional tests have been realized to evaluate the consolidation (superficial and deep), the salt extraction, the cleaning and a final finishing for the treated areas.



Fig. 6. Map of the large detachments for the 85% of the surface (from R. Nardi - Interim Report, 24 July 2024)

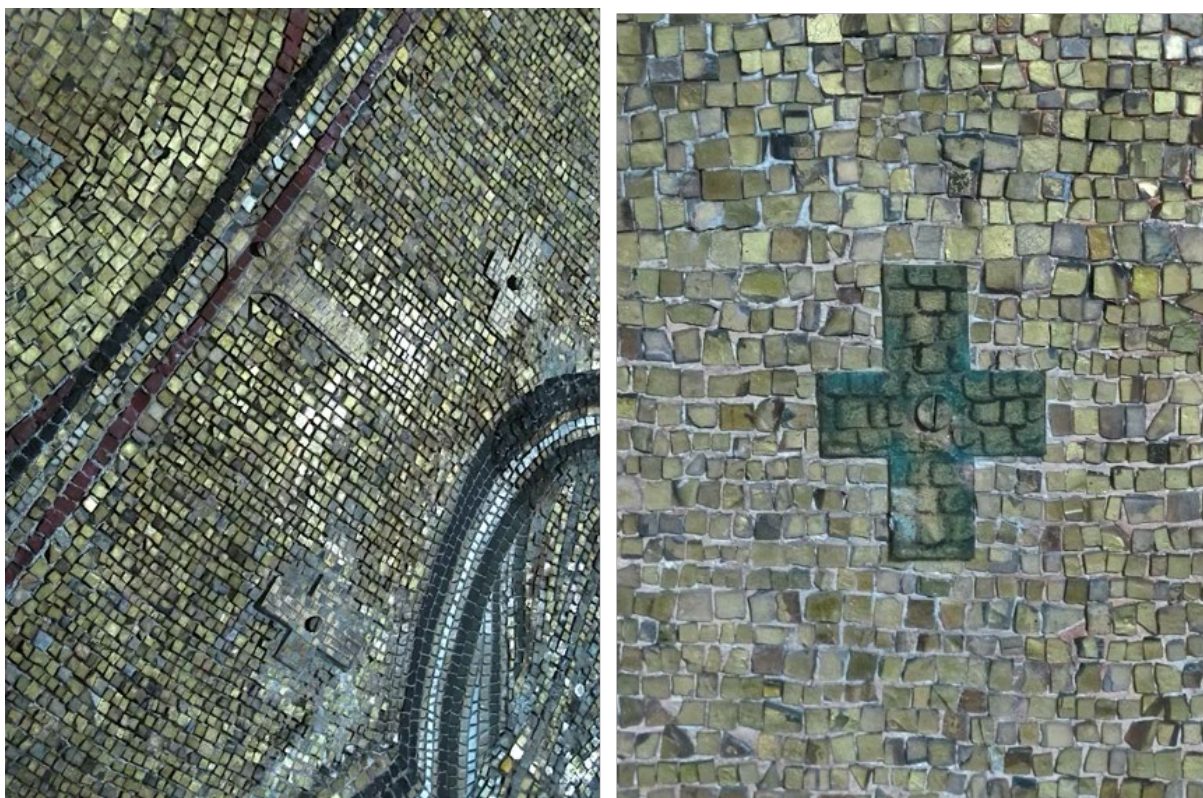


Fig. 7, 8. Metal pins with cross shaped flat head added historically to hold the surface. The flat part of the pins has been decorated in fake tesserae to imitate the rest of the surface



Fig. 9. Map of the treatment tests (from R. Nardi - Interim Report, 24 July 2024)



Fig. 10, 11. Cleaning tests (from R. Nardi - Interim Report, 24 July 2024)

Conclusion and recommendation

Regarding the final project for the conservation of the mosaic, the mission team considers that the approach and the methodology of the investigation are sound, as is the reasoning derived from thorough close observation, on site tests and scientific investigations results. The mission team is confident that the results of the study and the tests, including a risk assessment of the actual state of conservation, will be a solid basis for the executive conservation plan of the mosaic, which is the proposed final product of the study.

The mission recommends submitting the executive conservation plan of the mosaic to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies within the holistic conservation programme.

1d. Structural investigations and monitoring

The 'Plan for structural investigations and monitoring' includes two categories of actions: investigation of masonry structure materials and installation of structural and micro-climate monitoring systems.

The construction research campaign was conducted between November 2023 and May 2024 on the structures of the Main Church. Surveys involved both on-site tests and laboratory analyses on samples taken from the site. In particular, the tests on the masonry elements included videoendoscopic investigations, micro seismic – sonic investigations on masonry, mortar and aggregate samples, and laboratory analyses of the samples of mortar and aggregates. It was possible to establish that the masonry structure is three-layered: the two external faces, made of limestone blocks, enclose an internal less regular layer made of mortar and limestone fragments and irregular smaller blocks. The laboratory analyses have been completed, and the results achieved the objective of establishing the composition of the

bedding mortars and their state of conservation. Six sonic masonry investigation results indicated homogeneous masonry, which does not present particular internal defects and irregularities.

Moreover, the structural monitoring system 'DAS – Data Acquisition System' was installed in the Main Church in November 2023, aiming to effectively track and control the evolution of the crack pattern over time.

Additionally, micro-climate monitoring has been ongoing since December 2020. The structural hygrometric investigation in correlation with salt research was implemented with a refined methodology in 2024 and will continue gradually in case of need.

The first periodic report covered a period of time of approximately nine months, within which it was possible to observe the behaviour of the monitored lesions over the first half of the first thermal cycle in progress. To verify whether there is an evolutionary trend of the lesions, it is necessary to wait for the conclusion of the first thermal cycle, in November 2024. The results obtained so far of the behaviour of the wire transducers installed on the monitored lesions confirm the inverse relationship between temperature and deformation, which means that the deformation decreases as the temperature increases. No particular connection between the quantity of rainfall and the opening/closing of the lesions is evident.

As recommended by the 2022 Advisory mission, a 3D laser scanning of the church's interior and exterior has been completed. Additionally, a comprehensive drone survey has been completed, which enabled to generate orthophotography of the monument. The architectural-archaeological measurements provide the possibility to have a current architectural survey on which the pathology of the monument is being recorded with accuracy, as a basic study for the stone conservation project under implementation.

Mention should also be made of the laboratories that have been arranged in existing buildings and in prefabricated containers within the monastery, in which the conservators have the opportunity to work on immediate analyses and further investigations. Additionally, offices have been equipped in the old buildings to hold on-site and online meetings. These are positive developments compared to the situation two years ago.

Conclusions and recommendations

The preparatory stage of the structural investigations is currently implemented. The installation of an automatic static monitoring system that has been carried out to date and focusing on selected crucial visible main fractures is effective, but is not considered sufficient for the building. The mission recommends that automatic static monitoring system units should be installed in additional crucial points in order to prepare a comprehensive report on the results of the long-term monitoring and recording of the static behaviour of the entire masonry of the Main Church.

No information was provided regarding the state of the crack on the dome extrados meridian, and the scaffolding has not yet reached the top of the dome to allow checking its condition from the church interior. The forthcoming overall cover of the dome and the subsequent removal of the tiles will also allow the inspection of cracking on the dome extrados.

The mission reiterates recommendation 12 of the 2022 Advisory mission that "a thorough and accurate investigation with the help of devices of the long-term micro-movements on 3D that occurred in the cross arms building ashlar, with emergency emphasis on the west arm, is required" as well as recommendation 13 "to undertake a holistic structural investigation and

prepare an intervention project to restore the static adequacy of the monument, with emphasis on the upper parts of its structure". This should be done in parallel to the stone conservation programme (see 1e below).

1e. Stone Conservation Programme for the facades of the Main Church

The condition assessment of the mural paintings decoration on the internal walls needs to be combined with a careful assessment of the conservation conditions of the external surfaces of the walls, and in particular of the conditions of the stone surfaces and of the joints between stones. Inspections of the outside surfaces of the Gelati Monastery churches are important, because the stone surfaces appear to have seriously deteriorated in many areas. This is visible also in some of the archival images and should be put in relation with the internal damages, even if from now on, with the overall protective cover, the external walls will not receive any rainwater. As a preventive action, conservation measures should be implemented before the removal of the overall protective cover.

In the images of the different reports, the surface decay of the stone facades is very visible. The information provided in the reports does not show a clear connection between the damage on the external surfaces and the damage (both old and new) inside the Main Church. For this reason, mapping these areas is necessary to improve the understanding of potential connections.



Fig. 12. 2011 Photos of Gelati Main Church by Pino Dell'Aquila

The mission encourages to continue the monitoring project started in December 2020, taking under consideration the 2022 Advisory mission report indicator 1.10 "Microclimate monitoring and stabilization" and the suggestions of the "Structural hygrometric and micro-environmental state investigations" (2021-2022), by Alessandro Massari, regarding the duration of monitoring, the number and locations of sensors for measuring the air parameters to be installed, a sensor

to measure wind direction and intensity in the monastery area, the data recording intervals, and the conditions under which they are chronicled (depending on the condition of the doors, the presence of visitors, maintenance work, extraordinary openings, etc.).

Conclusion and recommendation

The mission team considers that the direct causes of the internal decay of the mural paintings are still not clearly identified in relation to the conditions of the exterior surfaces of the building. For this reason, the mission recommends implementing a comprehensive Stone Conservation Programme in two phases:

1. A comprehensive pre-conservation study:

- assessment of the condition of building materials of the facades of the Main Church (including references to previous interventions);
- survey of reasons and activation mechanisms for the deterioration of building materials;
- assessment of the location / size and the connections between cracks in the exterior and the interior of the Main Church;
- assessment of the connections between the external surface decay of the stones and the interior conditions of the walls of the Main Church and with the conditions of the water collection system;
- environmental condition assessment, including characterization of climate (including analysis of possible air pollution) and geology of the area adjacent to Gelati Monastery;
- in-situ analyses: visual examination, description and written documentation, visual documentation (photography and graphical mapping);
- laboratory analyses of samples of stone and mortar using the following methodologies: microscopic description of the sample, examination of the sample under the binocular, investigation of thin-sections for petrology-mineralogy of the sample, x-ray diffraction analyses, particle-size distribution – the results of these analyses should be presented in a textual as well as photo-documented form;
- laboratory experiments for consolidation methods for the different kinds of weathering decay of the building stones;
- study of biological deterioration;
- conclusions and recommendations.

This preliminary study should be undertaken in combination with a thorough investigation of the cracks in the interior of the monument as part of the overall monitoring of the structural stability of the building. The investigation should evidence also the connections between external surface decay of the stones and degradation phenomena on the surfaces of the interior walls. It might be useful to prepare a Visual Glossary of the Condition of Building Materials, according to the 'Illustrated Glossary on Stone Deterioration Patterns' prepared and published by ICOMOS-International Scientific Committee for Stone (2008), which should be adapted to the Gelati Main Church's condition phenomena.

Moreover, based on the results of the holistic static analysis of the building, the study of the intervention on the facades of the monument should pay particular attention to the previous enclosure of the windows in the south-western part of the dome, to determine whether the old enclosure should be removed and replaced with metallic tie-blades, or not.

2. Conservation works, based on the conclusions and recommendations of the comprehensive pre-conservation study:

- treatment of the problematic areas of the church facades;
- cleaning of the biological deterioration/salts;

- removal of unsuccessful previous interventions (mainly cement plaster / mortar);
- micro-consolidation and micro-filling of the stone surface: micro / hair cracks, scaling, flacking, powdering;
- consolidation of the facade stones;
- mortar injection / filling up the joints;
- completion / reconstruction of lost stone (especially missing stone cornices at the edges of the roofs, to re-establish the rainwater flow towards the correct directions).

1f. Water collection system

A document clearly outlining the correlation between external wall conditions and internal damage in the Main Church, as well as information regarding the state of the water collection system are missing, even if in the Environmental Monitoring report by Myriam Sagaradze (available on the Temporary Committee's website) there is much information on the internal climate inside the church.

Nonetheless, a comprehensive assessment of the condition of the entire water collection system is still required. This should include correlating the graphical mapping of the system with the degradation mapping of internal surfaces (such as stone surfaces, plaster, wall paintings and the mosaic) and establishing a schedule for regular monitoring and maintenance. The connection between the building's structural health and its decorative elements is critical. This relationship was a major focus in the initial reports, but has shifted more recently toward environmental considerations. This shift is due to findings that "the unstable climatic conditions can be considered as one of the main provocative factors for the wall painting deterioration at the Gelati Monastery complex" and that "the main factor influencing the microclimate (interior of the church) is the macroclimate (environment outside the church)" as cited in Environmental Monitoring by Myriam Sagaradze.

Conclusions and recommendations

The mission reiterates the unfulfilled recommendation 19 of the 2022 Advisory mission, in particular regarding the need to address the water runoff system at the site and the impact of capillary rise on the stones and mural paintings (lower parts of the walls). Care should be taken so that the rainwater coming down from the new overall protective cover of the Main Church is not allowed to freely soak into the ground around the church. Instead, it should be channelled into a temporary drainage system, which is proposed to be of precast concrete elements (easy to install and remove). An uncontrolled rainwater flow could create ponding of water in the bearing grounds of the metal structure of the cover.

The mission recommends completing the assessment of the rainwater collection and disposal system, which started in 2020, with the following considerations:

- the entire water collection system must undergo a close inspection, covering all its components (water flow from roof to roof, gutters, collection basins, downspouts, including final manholes and collection basins at the ground level) and including the water flow from the roofs to the final disposal points;
- documentation should be gathered for each segment's functionality;
- the above elements of the system should be identified and mapped according to whether they were part of (i) the original system, (ii) the repaired system, reflecting modifications from various repairs or "improvements" made to the original system, or (iii) the current system, which is performing rainwater collection and disposal functions today;
- the destination of water runoff from the temporary protective cover.

The inspection must also identify and map final water collection points at ground level, tracing the flow path and pinpointing any collection ponds or wet areas that may pose risks to the structure. In this context, with the installation of the temporary protective cover, attention must be paid to the collection of the water from the temporary protecting roofs, in order to guarantee the stability of both the building and the scaffolding itself, that can be compromised by any water running or collecting in an uncontrolled way on the ground.

Such inspection and assessment while the scaffolding is in place will provide valuable data on the future interaction between the building and the water system, which will be instrumental in the design of a new water collection system in conjunction with the design of a new permanent roof of the Main Church, and will enable better planning for long-term management.

2. ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

As for the Main Church, a 3D laser scanning of the interior and exterior and a comprehensive drone survey have been completed for St George's Church. The general measurements of the facades of the church are presented in the submitted documentation, while a detailed mapping of damages is still in progress.

Basic studies for the elaboration of the overall conservation plan are in progress and include (i) environment monitoring and wall paintings condition monitoring; (ii) salt analysis from the most critical mural painting areas (done); and (iii) mapping of the damages on the facades of the church (done). The study and design of the overall conservation project for St George's Church is expected in 2025.

Until a project for the placement of an overall protective cover is undertaken, care should be applied in effectively collecting rainwater from the roof and channelling it away from the foundations of the monument, given that the phenomena of moisture and the formation of salts on the internal and external walls (especially on the northern lower part) of the building continue unabated.

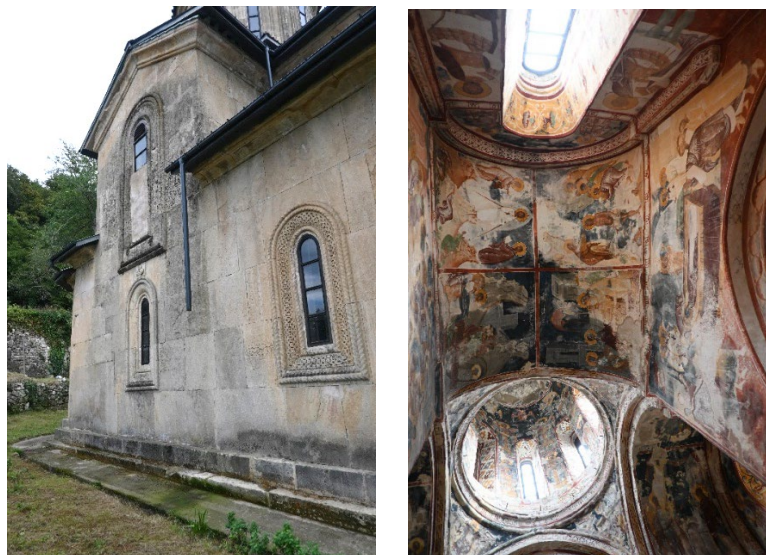


Fig. 13, 14. St George's Church: exterior view, north side, and effects of the interior damp

3. GELATI MONASTERY COMPLEX

3a. Emergency actions in response to the strong storm of February 2024

Due to heavy rainfall on 5-6 February 2024 accompanied by very strong winds, water penetration occurred in certain sections of the interior of both the Main Church and St George's Church. The Temporary Committee implemented emergency actions to install special protection of the vulnerable areas, such as installing rubber and metal sheet special protection on some joint points of the facade.

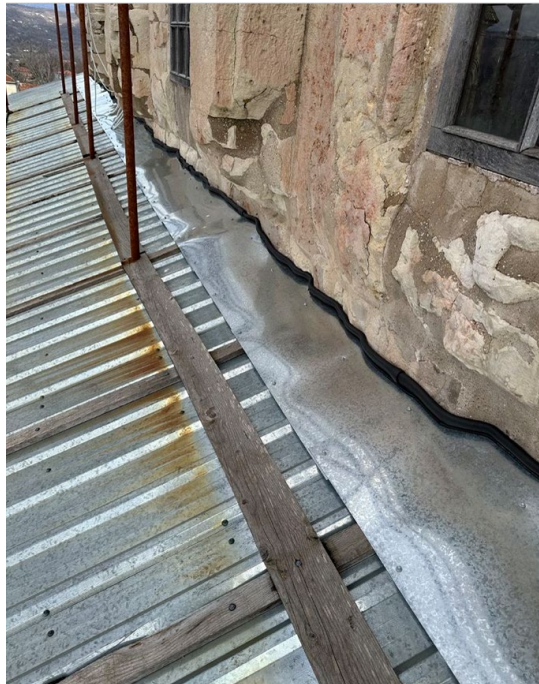


Fig. 15. The problematic joining line of the western facade vertical wall with the narthex temporary roofing - intervention after the storm

3b. Geophysical prospection

The magnetometer and electric resistivity prospection of the territory of the Gelati Monastery was held in May 2024 and covered all accessible areas around the Main Church. The measurements provided important information about hidden structures in the subsurface. Of particular note is the course of a canal and a large number of pits, as well as evidence of buildings north and south of the church. The remains of an earlier constructed apse were identified to the east of the church. The use of ground-penetrating radar (GPR) prospecting has been recommended by the study team as the next step, in order to receive accurate depth information for the findings. The mission supports this approach.

3c. Archaeological survey

As the draft Management Plan recognizes, “due to the lack of relevant knowledge and skills, as well as administration-financing difficulties, the state of archaeological remains is very unfavourable today” (p. 43). The results of the geophysical investigation, together with those of the conducted archaeological reconnaissance and excavations, should form the basis for the development of the archaeological research programme.

3d. Investigation of the inflow of groundwater to the monastery

Geological studies by drilling have been carried out around the monastery's exterior perimeter, and an underground water vein has been identified. The investigation will continue throughout all four seasons of the year and will support further development of the water diversion/drainage project (the first report is pending).

3e. Documentation and accessibility

The Temporary Committee is gradually producing detailed documentation on the multidisciplinary works of monitoring and condition studies, reports of all interventions undertaken to date, as well as elaborated roadmaps and programmes. To achieve transparency, a special website – www.gelatirehabilitation.ge – was created in 2023, where the documentation about rehabilitation works at Gelati is being uploaded and is freely accessible to the wider public. The website is extremely useful, allowing access to a vast collection of documents related to the monastery. Inspection reports, analyses, studies, images, drawings and plans gathered from 2007 to 2024 reflect the profound care and dedication invested in preserving this monument. The presented material is continually updated in step with the project developments. The website has a version in English.

3f. Capacity building

Local leaders of the conservation programme, in collaboration with international scientific and educational institutions, regularly organize various thematic workshops. To date, two courses have been conducted focusing on environmental monitoring, salt investigation and capacity building in physical intervention methods and strategies.

Conclusions and recommendations

Further geophysical, archaeological and groundwater inflow investigations are encouraged to allow a fuller picture of the property's characteristics and lay grounds for a holistic conservation programme.

Regarding Recommendation 16 of the 2022 Advisory mission to reduce air flows in the Main Church by installing temporary double-doors, particularly on the west side, the mission is of the opinion that depending on the conclusions of the study to be completed by November 2024, changes to the existing environment might be desirable or not.

B. MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE UPDATING OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

According to the legislation of Georgia, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia supervises the implementation and coordination of the general strategy and policy for the protection of cultural heritage. The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, which is subordinate to it, ensures the protection of the authenticity and integrity of the monument, the preservation of its OUV and the conservation of physical components. In 2020, the Agency's 'World Heritage Protection Council' was launched, to which representatives of national and local agencies and professional institutions involved in the management of the property were invited.

In 2023, an agreement was signed between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and the Patriarchate of Georgia, according to which the management of the conservation-rehabilitation process of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' was taken over by the temporary committee created by the Patriarchate.

According to the 2024 draft Management Plan for the property, "the National Agency for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Georgia maintains the function of issuing permits, monitoring the monument and supervising the conservation processes". However, during the meetings of the mission team with the Temporary Committee and, separately, with the representatives of the Ministry, it became apparent that the cooperation is very limited, and the National Agency's role is reduced to issuing permits for works with little time to examine them thoroughly.

This lack of cooperation was also apparent in the process of updating the Management Plan led by the Temporary Committee: its text recognizes that "in the process of developing the management plan, it was not possible to receive the information requested in writing and to organize working discussions with the relevant units of the Ministry and the Agency" (p. 8).

Moreover, as further comments on the draft Management Plan reveal, the management of the property as a whole, including its buffer zone (where the self-governments of Tkibuli, Terjola and Tskaltubo municipalities have leading roles), would benefit from closer cooperation and coordination amongst different stakeholders and especially, between the National Agency and the Patriarchate of Georgia.

Within the framework of the Temporary Committee, the Patriarchate of Georgia established two deliberative bodies – the National Scientific Council (5 members) and the International Advisory Council (7 members). According to the provisions of the Temporary Committee, all conservation projects in the Gelati Monastery complex are subject to deliberation, both in the National Scientific Council and the International Advisory Council.

However, having attended presentations by both Councils' members and having exchanged with the leaders of different conservation programmes and studies within the rehabilitation project, the mission notes the need for a professional decision-making leadership on crucial conservation problems regarding priorities, timing and modalities of interventions at each stage of intervention, combined effectively in a holistic manner. Although the presentations meant to assure that decision-making is made jointly within the framework of the Temporary Committee, the decision-making process in different areas of the rehabilitation works and their overall coordination lacks clarity. The mission is of the opinion that the coordination between different stakeholders needs further strengthening.

2. MANAGEMENT PLAN

2a. General comments

The draft Management Plan is an updated version of the Management Plan for the property prepared in 2015 and updated in 2017. The document was prepared in response to Decision 45 COM 7B.54 of the World Heritage Committee (2023). The draft Management Plan was developed in coordination with specialist groups involved in monument conservation programmes, with the methodological assistance of an international consultant. However, as recognized in the document itself, "the management plan working group was deprived of the opportunity to cooperate with the Agency in the preparation of the Terms of Reference or other preparatory works. Due to the lack of strategic cooperation, the management plan was limited

to the mandate of the current temporary management structure and made recommendations for its technical improvement” (p. 8).

The mission considers that the draft Management Plan was elaborated on a professional level, following an appropriate and effective structure allowing for a detailed analysis of the existing issues in the property and its buffer zone. The document describes the organization and scientific work produced to date under the Conservation Management Plan. The Strategic and Specific Management Objectives are important and clearly defined. Significant progress has been made in the analysis of the updated data within the buffer zone. Principles and guidelines for protection and zoning are under preparation and approval.

Of particular importance is the conservation and monitoring of the attributes of the OUV of the property, with their historical evidence, cultural significance and spatial quality analysed in detail and clarified in relation to the property and its buffer zone. Besides the difficulties of high-level collaboration, the multistakeholder engagement is an additional achievement in preparing this document: relevant national agencies, regional administration, local self-government, as well as the community of Gelati Monastery and other parties were involved in the work process.

The mission suggests a revision and completion of the short chapter ‘Impact factors’ (pp. 43-44), with newer and more in-depth data covering the wider area of the buffer zone and referring to atmospheric conditions (including seismic effects, strong wind, the danger of fire that already hit the monastery with tragic results) in addition to potential visitor and development impacts.

2b. Specific comments regarding visitor management

In the longer term and to facilitate the management of the future visitor flows to the monastery, which will undoubtedly increase, it is recommended to give consideration to the following:

- make the Visitor Center operational, aside with the proposed use of the Sokhaster area buildings;
- organise a parking lot for cars and coaches preferably in another near-by area, equipped with off-site visitor facilities, with electric shuttle vehicles to take some visitors up to the site while others can use the historic foot road up the hill to the monastery;
- develop regular and comfortable public transportation to the monastery; the reactivation of the electric railway network and its interconnection with special tourist trails can offer additional opportunities, in addition to reasons of the natural environment protection.

2c. Specific comments regarding the buffer zone

One of the virtues of the draft Management Plan is the systematic and analytical recording of the historic and cultural monuments and places of natural beauty within the buffer zone (Cultural Heritage Resources Inventory), including panoramic landscape analysis. The rich documentation proves that, quite rightly, the Gelati Monastery together with its buffer zone is an area characterized in the text as “organically developed cultural landscape” (p. 34). Further steps are desirable for the maintenance, highlighting and ensuring accessibility to the historic, cultural and natural monuments, as noted in the action framework of the document.



Fig. 16. View to Gelati Monastery and the valley from the chapel of St Nino Monastery

The mission considers, however, that the draft Management Plan does not provide a sufficiently detailed picture of the regional and local development projects that are underway or planned in the buffer zone, nor details about their impact on the natural environment and the wider setting of the Gelati Monastery.

The draft Management Plan informs that “now only two stone quarries and a few stone processing workshops are in operation” (p. 48). More detailed evidence on the extent, intensity and potential impact of the existing mining activity in the area should be provided, and a Heritage Impact Assessment should be mandatory for planned development activities in the buffer zone that might have an impact on the OUV of the property.

Tourism appears to be a sector with potential for growth. The Regional Tourism Department highlights the increasing tourist traffic in the area and aims to develop various forms of tourism. The mission notes that this will bring about additional development pressures (increasing the needs for food and tourist accommodation and transportation), which should be addressed properly over mid- and long-term. It is imperative to develop spatial planning documentation of the buffer zone, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development of territories and ensuring the protection of the attributes conveying the OUV of the property. In this regard, it is positive that the elaboration of a spatial and urban development plan and building design guidelines for the buffer zone is underway. The mission suggests making use of the guidelines included in the 2022 ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism.

Tourist trails are a means for environmental education and cultural heritage awareness and provide opportunities for tourism development. The existing monastic infrastructure on Mount Dokhora is one such opportunity. The tourist circuit connecting the Monasteries of Gelati and Motsameta that uses existing ancient roads connecting the historic, cultural and natural monuments has a great tourist value.

Tourist trails around the property could be further developed and could be a way of contributing to (i) relief from potentially large numbers of future visitors to the monastery; (ii) highlighting the historical-cultural importance of the wider area and its natural beauty and make it known to a greater number of visitors; (iii) extending the length of visitors’ stay in the area thus providing additional income for local tourist infrastructure; (iv) further development of the local economy.

Developing tourist trails would require (i) improving the condition of access roads and car parking spaces near the monuments; (ii) reviving the ancient paths for walkers (upgrade and

maintenance of their condition, signalling, equipment with recreation stops, viewpoints, water sources, etc.); (iii) installing appropriate infrastructure to avoid harmful effects on the natural environment (e.g. waste tanks and timely collection and removal of waste); (iv) ensuring the necessary basic reception conditions for visitors.

Moreover, the mission recommends that a suitable guide be produced, including all the monuments and the ancient paths leading to them, the most important points of natural beauty, the fauna and flora of the area, the accommodation offered with its amenities.

3. DRAFT REVISED MASTER PLAN

An overall design intent for a draft revised Master Plan of the property was presented as a preliminary project, with some of its ideas shared with the mission team, such as the new accommodation for the monks and the reuse of the Academy building.

The mission considers that a revised Master Plan should address the overall development of the property, while taking into account:

- maintaining the planning structure and spatial quality of the ensemble;
- preserving and showcasing the attributes conveying the OUV of the property;
- addressing accommodation and liturgical needs of the monks (including providing them with tranquillity, possibility of contemplation, and avoiding visitors' flow pressure);
- access of believers to religious services in the monastery and potential increase in the number of visitors, ensuring accessibility to the site by people with reduced mobility;
- the archaeological remains already found and what will be brought to light by the ongoing geophysical investigations and future archaeological excavations in the territory of the property – they should be subject of a comprehensive study for conservation to be included in the Master Plan.

Conclusions and recommendations

The mission considers that a very limited cooperation between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and the Patriarchate of Georgia hampers the effective management of the property with its buffer zone and within its wider setting. In particular, a successful implementation of the Management Plan, once it is finalised, is conditional on a close collaboration among different stakeholders, in particular the relevant sectors of the Government and the Patriarchate of Georgia. In this regard, the re-establishment of close coordination and cooperation between the Temporary Committee and the National Agency is imperative: the key aspects of monitoring and oversight to be carried out for the duration of the rehabilitation and post-rehabilitation work are under purview of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation in the framework of its statutory duties.

Regarding the draft Management Plan, the mission commends the Temporary Committee for achieving it in such a short time with the result of producing a high-quality document. The mission considers that the methodological approach of the draft Management Plan is exemplary, as is the completeness of the document. With further elaboration and completion, and taking into consideration the mission remarks and recommendations, it could be an effective management instrument for ensuring the protection of the attributes conveying the OUV of the property and a tool for managing future development issues in the property and its buffer zone.

Finally, the updated Management Plan and the draft revised Master Plan for the property should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS.

C. ENGAGING WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

The above-mentioned update of the Management Plan of the property was a joint effort by a number of local and national stakeholders – the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati, the regional administration, the local self-government, the community of Gelati Monastery as well as relevant national agencies. In the meeting of the mission’s team with those stakeholders during the presentation of an updated Management Plan, the following main factors impacting the state of conservation of the property were underlined: (i) natural environmental conditions (high humidity and dampness, strong wind and the area’s seismicity); (ii) potential visitor impacts; (iii) fire; and (iv) inappropriate new constructions.

In light of the deficiencies regarding the roofs installed on the Main Church in 2015-2018, which led to moisture ingress and associated decay of the historic murals and the subsequent rehabilitation programme, heavy rains combined with strong winds are currently the main cause of concern. The water penetration into the Main Church and St George’s Church, which occurred during the February 2024 heavy rainfall, is illustrative of the environmental conditions’ real and potential impacts on the main attributes of the World Heritage property.

As underlined above, the coordination between different stakeholders involved in the conservation and management of the property needs further strengthening, especially between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati. While the latter is leading the ongoing rehabilitation works at the monastery, the former is responsible for the World Heritage property’s monitoring and for supervising the conservation processes. However, the Ministry of Culture and Sport and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, not being actively engaged in the conservation processes, seem to have limited knowledge of the current state of conservation of the property. As a result, engaging with the representative of these key national stakeholders about current issues and future steps in the conservation, protection and management of the property had significant limitations. Recommendation 12 of this report aims to address this issue.

It is hoped that the implementation of the Management Plan for the property, once it is finalised, will offer an opportunity for all the stakeholders to strengthen their cooperation and be more actively involved in improving the overall state of conservation of the property and its management.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOLISTIC CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

While the State Party has submitted, prior to the mission, a corrective measures checklist and an integrated conservation plan for 2023-2027, a detailed and holistic conservation programme for the property is yet to be developed.

It should be noted that in its Decision 45 COM 7B.54, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to “submit the holistic conservation programme, with plan and roadmap, and the updated Conservation Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies”. This is of utmost importance for the continuation of the rehabilitation and conservation

works at the property, especially given the mission's concerns, highlighted above, about decision-making processes with regard to the conservation works.

A comprehensive conservation project, accompanied by a detailed action plan and roadmap, should include, amongst others: condition assessment, action priorities, methodology to follow, successive intervention phases, and selection of materials to be used. Special attention should be given to construction of a new roof in terms of statics, functionality (effective removal of rainwater) and the selection of suitable materials for the morphological integration of the construction into the medieval character of the monument. The holistic conservation programme should also clearly indicate who will lead and conduct different interventions.

Moreover, the mission would like to reiterate in this context recommendation 10 of the 2022 Advisory mission: given the long-term conservation and monitoring actions that will be required at Gelati, it is strongly recommended to involve more Georgian conservators (and plan capacity building if this is required), to ensure the long-term sustainability of the actions. The mission notes with satisfaction that this process has started.

In the framework of its advisory assistance to the State Party, the 2022 mission provided in its report a practical guide of indicators for monitoring the state of conservation of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property, which could be used to facilitate the preparation by the State Party of a holistic conservation programme for the property. The table below shows in the last column this mission's assessment of the actions undertaken so far for each indicator.

1. Church of the Nativity of the Virgin		
1.1. Overall plan	Develop an overall plan for the conservation of the church, with immediate and longer-term actions, with clear responsibilities, to be shared with stakeholders	In progress. Its general part has been defined in terms of actions of the work teams and the timeframe. However, as underlined above regarding the need for a holistic conservation programme, it should be comprehensive and detailed in order to serve as a reference document for further conservation works.
1.2. Protective roof	Immediately carry out a project for the placement of an overall protective coverage of the monument	The first phase of the work has been completed, which includes the arrangement of the external covering structure under the dome. The second phase, involving the construction of the dome's covering structure, will be completed by the end of 2024.
1.3. Remove tiles on the roof and loose material under it	Remove loose under-roof conglomerate fill to promote evaporation from the roof following the installation of an overall protective coverage and removal of the remaining tiles	It has been carried out partially and only over the western arm, under its temporary protective roof. Further actions are planned from the beginning of 2025, after the completion of the overall protective cover.
1.4. Analyses of mural paintings	Finalise analyses to identify painting techniques of the mural paintings	Scientific investigations will soon be completed. The next step should be the review and the comparison of all the results and the proposal of methodologies and materials for the interventions.
1.5. Accessibility and security	Extend and maintain secure scaffolding covering the full interior of the church, allowing access to all the upper areas	The scaffolding installed in the interior allows full access to all upper areas and the apse – to all mural paintings and the mosaic – with the exception of the space under the dome, where wooden planks are yet to be arranged.
1.6. Documentation and condition assessment	Undertake a thorough and detailed mapping of the existing state of conservation and the pathology of the wall paintings throughout the interior of the church and of the eastern arm mosaic	In progress. Work continues on the detailed documentation of the state of conservation and of the pathologies of the wall paintings. There is a need to start comparing the results of the condition assessment of the wall paintings and the mosaic with those of the external problems of the stone and water collection and disposal system. At the same time, there is a need to undertake emergency stabilisation of the most endangered parts of the wall paintings.
1.7. Periodic monitoring of mural paintings	Continue with the periodic monitoring of the mural paintings, to identify areas requiring emergency stabilisation treatments	Even if the restorers in charge of the works know where emergency stabilisation treatments are needed, no specific working plan for such emergency actions was presented and discussed during the mission. Mapping of the exterior surfaces is needed, as well as establishing connections between external and internal damages and phenomena.

	Periodically assess the evolution of the humidity content in the walls and on the surface of the wall paintings	A maintenance plan with monitoring of the environmental factors should be proposed.
1.8. Undertake emergency conservation treatments for the areas where the mural paintings are at risk	Follow recommendations contained in the report, to eliminate superficial salts, fix detached areas of paint layer, and consolidate areas of decayed plaster; produce a thorough and detailed documentation of the intervention treatments undertaken	In progress, but no clear plan for such emergency interventions was proposed nor discussed.
1.9. Monitoring the structural behaviour of the building as a whole	Undertake investigation of the condition and structural behaviour of the monument as a whole, with special emphasis on its upper parts	A structural monitoring system was installed in November 2023 on selected crucial points in the Main Church. The first periodic report of the structural studies is being finalized.
	Undertake structural conservation treatments based on the condition assessment	Based on the structural investigation, the conservation treatment is not envisaged at this stage.
	Ensure regular check of the electronic system (gauge) installed on the cupola	The scaffolding has not yet reached the top of the dome to allow checking its condition from the church's interior.
	Undertake investigation of the long-term micro-movements on 3D that occurred in the cross arms building ashlar	The preparatory stage is currently underway. The mission recommends the installation of automatic static monitoring system units at additional critical points, in order to prepare a comprehensive report with the results of the long-term monitoring and recording of the behaviour of the entire masonry of the Main Church.
	Fill the joints and complete broken / missing sections of the ashlar on the church facade using a natural hydraulic lime mortar	The conclusions of the studies and design of the conservation project are expected in 2025. The mission team advises proceeding with a Stone Conservation Programme in two phases: a comprehensive pre-conservation study (general assessment of the condition of the building materials), followed by conservation works (consolidation / reconstruction of the facade stones and mortars and micro-mortar fillings of the exfoliated and flaking surfaces of the stone, amongst other actions).
1.10. Microclimate monitoring and stabilisation	Follow the suggestions of the "Structural hygrometric and micro-environmental state investigations" (2021-2022) by Alessandro Massari	Micro-climate monitoring has been ongoing since December 2020; the structural hygrometric investigation in correlation with salt research was implemented by a refined methodology in 2024 and will continue in case of need.

	Install additional temporary double wooden doors (wind barriers) at the entrances to the naos while closing some of the windows to diminish air circulation inside the church and reduce evaporation on the mural paintings	Priority has been given, up to now, to the salt investigations avoiding altering the existing environment. Depending on the conclusions of the study to be completed by November 2024, changes to the existing environment might be desirable or not.
2. Saint George Church		
2.1. Overall plan	Prepare an overall plan for the conservation of the church, to be shared with stakeholders	At the first stage, a 3D laser scanning of the interior and exterior and a comprehensive drone survey have been completed. Detailed mapping of damages is still in progress. Conclusions of the different studies will have to be recapitulated, made visible through mappings and discussed in detail before preparing an overall plan.
2.2. Conservation treatments on facades	Fill the joints and complete broken / missing sections of the ashlar on the church facade using a natural hydraulic lime mortar	Implementation has not started yet. Interventions with mineral consolidants and micro-mortar fillings on the disintegrated and exfoliated areas of the stone are recommended.
2.3. Short-term actions	Follow the suggestions "Assessment-for-design Actions" and "Short-term Actions in St. George and Recommendations", made by ReStruere during the remote meeting of 28 September 2022	Implementation has not started yet.
2.4. Mapping, documentation and condition assessment	Undertake a detailed mapping and condition assessment of the mural paintings	Implementation has not started yet.
2.5. Emergency stabilisation treatments	Undertake emergency stabilisation treatments for the mural paintings, as required by the assessment and monitoring (and following the recommendations made for the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin)	Implementation has not started yet.
3. Water drainage system		
3.1. Completing and monitoring the water drainage system on site	Undertake periodic monitoring and documentation of the process on the roofs, the gutters and the downspouts, and the whole roof structure	In progress. Emergency actions have been taken in response to the strong storm in February 2024. Documentation and mapping need to be completed.
	Consider whether it is necessary to extend the drainage system to other areas of the monastery yard	Implementation has not started yet.
	Ensure constant monitoring of the entire water drainage system within the monastery courtyard	In progress.
4. The setting of Gelati Monastery		

4.1. The inflow of groundwater to the monastery yard	Conduct a geotechnical investigation and consider the possibility of moving groundwater flow outside of the enclosure wall of the complex	In progress.
4.2. Managing the visitor flow	Develop a plan for the operational use of the visitors' centre	Implementation has not started yet.
4.3. Facilitating the religious function	Develop plans for addressing the effect of increased visitor flow after finishing the restoration works	Implementation has not started yet.
4.4. Risk preparedness	Assess the necessity and scope of a risk preparedness programme	In progress.
4.5. Management plan	Review and update the management plan for the property	In progress.
5. Communication		
5.1. Closer dialogue among stakeholders	Ensure good coordination and communication between all teams working at the site, to make sure that the site is considered as a system and decision-making is made jointly	Good coordination and communication between all teams working at the site has been established. Decision-making is made jointly within the framework of the Temporary Committee.
	Pursue a closer dialogue with different stakeholders about the protection measures taken at the property, including through the World Heritage Protection Council of Georgia at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia	A closer dialogue has been achieved among various stakeholders regarding the protection measures taken at the property. However, dialogue between the Temporary Committee and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation remains problematic so far.
6. Capacity building		
6.1. Assessing capacity building needs	Assess if capacity building is required to reinforce the involvement of Georgian conservation professionals in the long-term conservation project for Gelati, to ensure sustainability of actions and the management of the property	Local leaders of the conservation programme, in collaboration with international scientific and educational institutions, regularly organise various thematic workshops. A holistic conservation programme will allow to continue capacity building of Georgian conservation professionals.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Protection and management

Since the 2022 Advisory mission to the property, a major change has occurred in the management of the rehabilitation works: the Patriarchate of Georgia – the owner of the Monastery – accepted the State's offer to fully lead these works. To that end, the Ministry of Culture and Sport and the Patriarchate signed a protocol in February 2023, according to which the Ministry's role is reduced to providing financial support for the works and 'remaining involved in the process in accordance with law'. In reality, the Reactive Monitoring mission found limited involvement by the Ministry and even limited awareness of the progress of the ongoing works. Throughout the mission, the mission team therefore interacted near-exclusively with the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati established by the Patriarchate to lead the works, which are progressing in the right direction. The mission team had only an hour-long meeting with the representatives of the Ministry, including the National Focal Point for the Implementation of the Convention.

The mission considers closer coordination and cooperation between the Temporary Committee and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation essential for long-term protection and management of the property as a whole, including its buffer zone.

It was rewarding for the mission to hear that the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati is guided in all its actions by the recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission and the relevant ICOMOS Technical Reviews. This could also be ascertained *in situ*. The Temporary Committee has two deliberative bodies – the National Scientific Council and the International Advisory Council – to assist it in its decision-making, and also benefits from having as a member the highly experienced former National Focal Point for the implementation of the Convention, who used to work for the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. However, the coordination between the two deliberative bodies needs further strengthening.

One of the key conclusions and recommendations of the mission is to develop, as a priority, and submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, a holistic conservation programme, with plan and roadmap. This document is of utmost importance for the continuation of the rehabilitation and conservation works at the property with clear objectives and timeline.

The update of the Management Plan is a major achievement of the Temporary Committee. It includes indicators to monitor the state of conservation of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property, in accordance with Decision 45 COM 7B.54. The update of the Management Plan was done through a participatory process involving relevant national agencies, the regional administration and local self-government, as well as the local communities. The draft Management Plan needs further processing in terms of critical presentation of major projects underway or planned within the buffer zone with regard to their potential impact on the attributes conveying the OUV of the property, with Heritage Impact Assessments factored in to assess any potential impacts. With further improvements as suggested in the present report, the Management Plan will be a solid reference document for the overall management of the property.

Historic and cultural monuments, natural landmarks and places of natural beauty analytically recorded within the buffer zone, should be protected more effectively by being integrated into a systematic maintenance and upgrading project in order to make them easily accessible and for their values to be perceived by visitors. Developing tourist trails around the property will

contribute to the promotion of visitors' understanding and appreciation of the harmonious relationship of Gelati Monastery with its wider setting. Moreover, close cooperation with the local community needs to continue strengthening to promote their contribution to maintaining the OUV of the property and their interest in sustainable socio-economic development of the area.

Conservation measures undertaken

A significant achievement in the rehabilitation works is the construction of an overall protective cover over the Main Church, including the cupola, which is in line with the recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission and the ICOMOS Technical Review of the project. It shall be completed by the end of 2024 and allow the subsequent removal of the deficient glazed roof and fill layers under it to enable the process of progressive evaporation of the moisture towards the exterior before the construction of a new roof. In Decision 45 COM 7B.54, the State Party has already been requested to submit designs and details of the permanent roofing proposal to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. This will be a crucial next step in the rehabilitation works.

Moreover, as recommended by the 2022 Advisory mission, an extended and secure scaffolding has been constructed in all areas of the church, allowing to assess and monitor all the upper parts of the mural paintings as well as the mosaic in the apse.

The mission notes that substantial progress has been made in condition monitoring and non-invasive investigations of wall paintings in the Main Church. The high quality and scientific level of their work produced to date are a successful example of such cooperation, which also contributes to capacity building of Georgian conservators. These investigations provide the foundation for the design, development and gradual implementation of remedial measures.

The conclusions of all the studies (on the technique of the paintings, the presence of salts, the environmental measurements, etc.) need to be combined into a complete conservation programme to be developed as a priority. In parallel, the remedial treatment programme, which has been initiated and which includes emergency stabilisation/treatment of critical areas, development of general stabilisation treatments and identification/development of specialist treatments, must be carried forward. The mission is concerned that so far, the remedial treatments have not included those parts of the wall paintings that were treated during the previous intervention and assessed by the 2022 Advisory mission. The emergency interventions have to be implemented in all the areas, previously treated or not treated, where the flaking of the paint layer and/or the disintegration and exfoliation of the preparatory layers are currently leaving very important decorative elements at serious risk of loss. The interventions have to be carried on using mineral consolidants to maintain the porosity of the surfaces as open as possible in view of the great amount of salts which are still active on the surfaces.

The Temporary Committee has also launched a holistic mosaic safeguarding programme in the Main Church led by a prominent mosaics conservator from Italy, Roberto Nardi, and his highly qualified team from the Archaeological Conservation Centre in Rome. It is very worrying that the ongoing investigation of the state of conservation of the exceptional 12th-century mosaic in the apse of the church confirmed that around 85% of it is detached from the wall and could be at risk of collapsing. The investigation shall be completed by April 2025 and serve as the basis for a detailed conservation plan for the mosaic.

Additionally, structural studies of the Main Church are ongoing along with the geological studies by drilling around the monastery's perimeter, which, once completed, will support further development of the water drainage project.

It is commendable that the Temporary Committee systematically prepares detailed documentation on the rehabilitation works, including all the interventions, monitoring and condition studies, and publishes it on a dedicated website (www.gelatirehabilitation.ge) to allow the various stakeholders and the general public to access information on the ongoing works.

Overall state of conservation of the property

The overall state of conservation of the property continues to be affected by the near-complete failure of the previous architectural restoration project, with substantial negative consequences, in particular the deficiencies of the roofs installed in 2015-2018, which led to moisture ingress and associated decay of the historic murals inside the Main Church and the St George's Church. The ongoing rehabilitation works are guided by the recommendations of 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property, with progress achieved in certain areas, as highlighted in the table above, while others remain to be addressed. Overall, major challenges remain, especially with regard to the wall paintings, which continue to be decaying in some parts, and with regard to the mosaic safeguarding programme. St George's Church is yet to receive the needed attention, the priority being the Main Church of the monastery.

In view of the conservation challenges faced, including the fragility of the murals in the churches, and the difficulties encountered in the overall management of the property, it is recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property during 2026 to assess the appropriateness of the conservation efforts undertaken, the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, the implementation of the Management Plan, the steps undertaken to improve the management system, and the overall state of conservation of this property.

VI. ANNEXES

Annex I: Terms of Reference of the mission

Terms of Reference Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property ‘Gelati Monastery’ (Georgia) (23-27 September 2024)

I. Purpose of the Reactive Monitoring mission

In its Decision 45 COM 7B.54 (Riyadh, 2023), the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property ‘Gelati Monastery’ to assess the conservation system in place and the steps undertaken to improve it, as well as the overall state of conservation of the property. In the same decision the Committee endorsed the recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission and requested that the State Party follow them in its pursuit of the programme to redress the conservation challenges at the property.

With regard to this purpose, the mission shall:

1. Assess the conservation measures taken and the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, including Conservation Master Plan and roadmap.
2. Examine the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, including the updating of the Management Plan.
3. Engage with local and national stakeholders to understand and report to their views on the state of conservation of the property.
4. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property and evaluate factors and conservation issues that could potentially impact on its OUV, including its conditions of integrity, protection and management as well as its monitoring system.
5. Report and provide recommendations on any other relevant issue observed during the visit.
6. Make recommendations to the World Heritage Committee on how to improve the monitoring, protection, conservation and management of the property.

II. Organization of the Reactive Monitoring mission

The State Party, through its competent authorities, should ensure that the mission is provided with all relevant information and documentation to enable it to review and assess the issues listed in paragraphs 1-6 above and that the mission is able to carry out on-site visits for a comprehensive inspection of the property. Should additional information be required, as identified during the mission, it should be provided by the State Party no later than two weeks after the end of the mission.

The State Party is requested to facilitate the necessary consultations through working meetings with stakeholders, including government authorities at the national and local levels,

the property management authority, national and international experts working on the World Heritage property and any other relevant stakeholders, and to facilitate a comprehensive inspection of the property.

In order to facilitate the preparation of the mission, the State Party should cooperate with the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM in preparing a detailed mission programme and a list of persons and institutions to be consulted, which should be submitted in draft form to the World Heritage Centre for review as soon as possible no later than 2 September 2024.

The following documents should be provided to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible and no later than 15 days prior to the mission:

- An updated detailed report on the actions carried out since the 2022 Advisory mission.
- A note on the progress made in the implementation of Decision 45 COM 7B.54 of the World Heritage Committee.

In accordance with established UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICCROM practice, their experts will not address the media or discuss the findings and recommendations of the mission, which should be presented only in the final report of the mission.

III. Report to be delivered

Following the mission, the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM will prepare a concise report in accordance with the terms of reference of the mission for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session. The mission report will follow the report format of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies Reactive Monitoring mission. Prior to finalisation, the report will be transmitted in electronic format to the State Party for verification of any factual errors.

Annex II: Last Decision of the World Heritage Committee

Decision: 45 COM 7B.54

Gelati Monastery (Georgia)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add.2,
2. Recalling Decision **44 COM 7B.47** adopted at its 44th extended session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
3. Commends the State Party on the efficiency with which it has attempted to address the deficiencies concerning the roofs installed in 2015-2018 in the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin and St George's Church and to prevent further decay of the historic murals, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and through engagement of international experts, as well as on the timely organization and facilitation of a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to provide recommendations on the way forward to address those deficiencies and other issues pertaining to the state of conservation of the property;
4. Endorses the recommendations of the 2022 Advisory mission to the property and requests the State Party to follow them in its pursuit of the programme to redress the conservation challenges at the property and to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, documentation on further emergency interventions and longer-term conservation strategy and measures, as well as relevant technical material, prior to implementation;
5. Takes note that redressing the conservation challenges at the property will require large financial resources over a long period, and reiterates its call for an increased mobilization of the international community to provide more financial and technical support to the State Party, including to enhance the capacity of Georgian experts whose increased involvement in the longer-term conservation efforts at Gelati is important for the sustainable conservation and management of the property;
6. Notes the submission of detailed expert reports to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, and the need to document all new interventions in detail, and further requests the State Party to:
 - a) Submit the holistic conservation programme, with plan and road map, and the updated Conservation Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - b) Submit designs and details of all new temporary and permanent roofing proposals to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - c) Continue engaging with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, either directly or through the submission of technical material for review,
 - d) Initiate a documentation programme that records the technical and process details of all interventions to the built fabric of the property;

7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to review and update the Management Plan for the property and to continue its efforts to develop indicators to monitor the state of conservation of the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, and further requests the State Party to submit the above to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
8. Encourages the State Party to pursue a closer dialogue with different stakeholders about the protection measures taken at the property, including through the World Heritage Protection Council of Georgia at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to invite during 2024 a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess the conservation measures taken, the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, including Conservation Master Plan and roadmap, the updating of the Management Plan, the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, and the overall state of conservation of the property;
10. Requests moreover 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.

Annex III: Composition of the mission team

- Irena Caquet, Programme Specialist, Europe and North America Unit, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO
- Alkiviadis Prepis, ICOMOS Advisor
- Monica Martelli Castaldi, ICCROM Advisor

Annex IV: Itinerary and programme of the mission as implemented

22 September 2024

Arrival of experts in Tbilisi

23 September 2024

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|-------------|--|
| 10:00-13:00 | Introduction meeting with the members of the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati |
| 15:00-16:30 | Meeting with Metropolitan Shio (Mujiri), the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne of Georgia, Chairman of the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati |
| 17:00-18:00 | Meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Sport / National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia |
| 18:00-19:00 | Meeting with ICOMOS Georgia |

24 September 2024

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 9:00-12:30 | Travel from Tbilisi to Gelati Monastery |
| 14:00-16:30 | On-site visit to the World Heritage property, part 1 (overall protective cover) |
| 17:00-19:00 | Meeting in Kutaisi on the updated Management Plan, with the local authorities and stakeholders |

25 September 2024

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 9:30-12:15 | On-site visit to the World Heritage property, part 2 (temporary scaffolding inside the Main Church, architecture and the mosaic) |
| 12:15-13:00 | Online meeting with Gerhard Wolf, Secretary of the International Advisory Council under the Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati and Director of the Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florence |
| 15:00-16:00 | Presentation and roundtable discussion on the state of conservation of the mosaic, with Roberto Nardi, Head of the Archaeological Conservation Centre in Rome (online meeting with discussion) |
| 16:00-18:00 | Presentations and roundtable discussions on structural studies and monitoring and on the overall protective cover and temporary scaffolding |
| 18:00-19:00 | Visit of the buffer zone, part 1 (Sokhasteri Monastery, St. Saba Church, St. Nino Church) |

26 September 2024

9:00-10:00	Visit of the buffer zone, part 2 (Motsameta Monastery)
10:00-13:00	On-site visit to the World Heritage property, part 3 (wall paintings in the Main Church)
15:00-17:00	<p>Presentations and roundtable discussions on the wall painting conservation methodology and approaches, salt weathering processes and diagnostic processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stephen Rickerby, international supervisor of the Gelati wall painting conservation programme (recorded message, no discussion)- Steffen Laue, Professor of Natural Sciences, Conservation and Restoration Programme, Potsdam University of Applied Sciences (online presentation, with discussion)- Mariam Sagaradze (online presentation, with discussion) and Lela Ninoshvili, Co-supervisors of the Georgian wall painting conservation team (on site visit and discussions)
17:00-18:00	Sharing of ideas on the future plans for the management and use of the World Heritage property
18:00-19:00	Visit of the Church of St George

27 September 2024

9:00-14:00	Travel back to Tbilisi
16:00-18:00	Concluding meeting among the mission's experts

28 September 2024

Departure of experts

Annex V: List of people met

Patriarchate of Georgia:

- Metropolitan Shio (Mujiri), the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal throne of Georgia; Chairman, Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati
- Metropolitan Theodore (Chuadze) of Akhaltsikhe and Tao-Klarjeti, Hierarchical Deputy, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia; Chairman, Financial and Economic Council, Patriarchate of Georgia
- Archimandrite Kirion (Oniani), Deputy Chairman, Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati
- Bishop Vakhtang of Nikortsminda (Liparteliani), Chairman, Department for the Discovery and Protection of Relics, Patriarchate of Georgia
- Archpriest Andria (Jaghmaidze), Head, Department of the Family Parishes, Patriarchate of Georgia

Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati:

- David Lordkipanidze, Head, National Scientific Council
- Ekaterine Gedevanishvili, Member, National Scientific Council
- Gerhard Wolf, Secretary, International Advisory Council; Director, Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florence (*online participation*)
- Anette Hoffmann, Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florence, International Advisory Council (*online participation*)
- Mikheil Gaprindashvili, Representative, Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati
- Manana Vardzelashvili, Representative, Temporary Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati

Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia / National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia:

- Tamar Ketiladze, Head, UNESCO and International Relations Unit
- Salome Jamburia, National Focal Point for the World Heritage Convention

Involved experts:

- Mariam Sagaradze, Co-leader, Wall Painting Conservation Team (*online participation*)
- Lela Ninoshvili, Co-leader, Wall Painting Conservation Team
- Vakhtang Zesashvili, Architect-Restorer (temporary roofing project and structural investigation)
- Rusudan Mirzikashvili (updated Management Plan)
- Roberto Nardi, Head, Mosaics Conservation Programme (*online participation*)
- Steffen Laue, Professor, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam (conservation and restoration of cultural heritage) (*online participation*)
- Christiano Russo, Studio Crocci (structural studies and monitoring) (*online participation*)

Local stakeholders:

- Levan Zalkaniani, State Representative, Imereti Region
- David Gordadodadze, Head, State Representative Administration, Imereti Region

- Mari Devidze, Imereti DMO (Destination Management Organization)
- Manana Kurtsikidze, Imereti DMO (Destination Management Organization)
- David Cherkezishvili, Mayor, Tkibuli Municipality
- George Lomtadze, First Deputy Mayor, Tkibuli Municipality
- Mirza Kochiashvili, Deputy Mayor, Tejola Municipality
- Shalva Chikobava, Head, Unit of Education, Culture and Tourism, Terjola Municipality
- Gela Tskipurishvili, Head, Infrastructure Unit, Terjola Municipality
- Zaza Ebraliidze, Head, Architectural and Infrastructure Unit, Municipality of Tskhaltubo
- Marekhi Kankadze, Head, Economic Development and Property Management, Municipality of Tskhaltubo
- Nona Badireishvili, Specialist, Unit of Culture, Education, Sport and Youth Affairs, Municipality Tskhaltubo

ICOMOS Georgia:

- Manana Tevzadze, Secretary General

Annex VI: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property

Brief synthesis

On the lower southern slopes of the mountains of the Northern Caucasus, Gelati Monastery reflects the 'golden age' of medieval Georgia, a period of political strength and economic growth between the reigns of King David IV 'the Builder' (1089-1125) and Queen Tamar (1184-1213). It was David who, in 1106 began building the monastery near his capital Kutaisi on a wooded hill above the river Tskaltsitela. The main church was completed in 1130 in the reign of his son and successor Demetris. Further churches were added to the monastery throughout the 13th and early 14th centuries. The monastery is richly decorated with mural paintings from the 12th to 17th centuries, as well as a 12th century mosaic in the apse of the main church, depicting the Virgin with Child flanked by archangels. Its high architectural quality, outstanding decoration, size, and clear spatial quality combine to offer a vivid expression of the artistic idiom of the architecture of the Georgian "Golden Age" and its almost completely intact surroundings allow an understanding of the intended fusion between architecture and landscape.

Gelati was not simply a monastery: it was also a centre of science and education, and the Academy established there was one of the most important centres of culture in ancient Georgia. King David gathered eminent intellectuals to his Academy such as Johannes Petritzi, a Neo-Platonic philosopher best known for his translations of Proclus, and Arsen Ikaltoeli, a learned monk, whose translations of doctrinal and polemical works were compiled into his Dogmatikon, or book of teachings, influenced by Aristotelianism. Gelati also had a scriptorium where monastic scribes copied manuscripts (although its location is not known). Among several books created there, the best known is an amply illuminated 12th century gospel, housed in the National Centre of Manuscripts.

As a royal monastery, Gelati possessed extensive lands and was richly endowed with icons, including the well-known gold mounted Icon of the Virgin of Khakhuli (now housed in the Georgian National Museum) and at its peak, it reflected the power and high culture of Eastern Christianity.

Criterion (iv): Gelati Monastery is the masterpiece of the architecture of the "Golden Age" of Georgia and the best representative of its architectural style, characterized by the full facing of smoothly hewn large blocks, perfectly balanced proportions, and the exterior decoration of blind arches. The main church of the monastery is one of the most important examples of the cross-in-square architectural type that had a crucial role in the East Christian church architecture from the 7th century onwards. Gelati is one of the largest Medieval Orthodox monasteries, distinguished for its harmony with its natural setting and a well thought-out overall planning concept.

The main church of the Gelati Monastery is the only Medieval monument in the larger historic region of Eastern Asia Minor and the Caucasus that still has well-preserved mosaic decoration, comparable with the best Byzantine mosaics, as well as having the largest ensemble of paintings of the middle Byzantine, late Byzantine, and post-Byzantine periods in Georgia, including more than 40 portraits of kings, queens, and high clerics and the earliest depiction of the seven Ecumenical Councils.

Integrity

The whole monastic precinct is included in the property and contains all the main 12th century buildings as well as those added in the 13th century. All the attributes necessary to express

the Outstanding Universal Value are present and included in the area. No important original feature of the monastery from the 12th and 13th centuries have been lost during the centuries, and its landscape setting remains largely intact. Not all buildings are in a good state of conservation.

Some development pressures exist, in the buffer zone and the wider setting of the property but the level of threats is low and the processes are currently under control.

Authenticity

Overall, the architectural forms, spatial arrangement and decoration fully convey their value. For a long period, major parts of the mural paintings were in a bad state of conservation. With the repair of the roofs, the process of degradation has been slowed down and restoration work undertaken although some remain vulnerable.

The Academy building which was roofless in 1994 at the time of inscription was re-roofed with reversible material in 2009. The extensive buffer zone allows a full appreciation of the harmony between the enclosed monastery and its natural setting.

Protection and management requirements

Gelati monastery has been a Listed Monument of National Significance since the Soviet period and was listed in the Georgian National Register of Monuments by presidential decree in 2006. The cultural protection area was enlarged beyond Gelati Monastery to encompass the buffer zone in a Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection in 2014. The buffer zone is protected for its monuments but also for visual attributes. The natural values of the surrounding landscape are regulated by the Forest Code of Georgia, the Law on Soil Protection, the Law on Environmental Protection and the Water law that constitute the legal framework for the management of the forests and the rivers in the area. Applications for new constructions or reconstructions, including the infrastructure and earthworks within the buffer zone require the approval of the Cultural Heritage Protection Council, Section for Cultural Heritage Protected Zones, and the Agency of Urban Heritage.

Conservation work is guided by the Conservation Master Plan, produced by the Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sports of Georgia in collaboration with the Orthodox Church of Georgia. This plan covers conservation of the built structures as well as proposals to support the revival of monastic life that started in the 1990s and the needs of visitors. Adequate resources for long-term conservation programmes need to be sustained. A system of documentation for all conservation and restoration work and tri-dimensional measuring and monitoring of the overall stability of the various monastic buildings need to be put in place.

A Memorandum on Collaboration on Cultural Heritage Issues between the Georgian Apostolic Autocephaly Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia has been agreed for all properties of the church. Day to day management of the property is entrusted to the monastic community who live in the property. Longer term interventions are implemented by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. Its local representative agency is the Kutaisi Historical Architectural Museum-Reserve who is also responsible for visitor reception.

The Management Plan 2017-2021 reflects contributions of the Church, and relevant government bodies and community groups who were involved in the consultation process. It aims to set out a shared vision for the property. The Plan was developed in harmony with the Conservation Master Plan, with the Imereti Tourism development strategy, and with the 2014

management plan for the Imereti Protected Areas that includes the valley and canyon of the Tskaltsitela River in the buffer zone. It needs approval to become fully operational and enforceable by relevant authorities. A Management Committee for the property remains to be appointed and it is necessary for key roles and responsibilities to be established.

Annex VII: Recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property

1. Immediate actions should focus on emergency stabilisation works. Further conservation work should be undertaken only once the structures, wall paintings and mosaics should be guided by a thoroughly designed and holistic conservation programme for the entire property and should be underpinned by systematic monitoring, research, and documentation. The existing Conservation Master Plan should be updated accordingly.
2. It is recommended that the State Party continue with the programme to redress the conservation challenges at the property following the recommendations contained in this report and submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies documentation on further emergency interventions and longer-term conservation strategy and measures, as well as relevant technical material, before implementation.
3. The management plan for the property should be updated to guide continuing conservation efforts.
4. Immediately carry out a project for the placement of an overall protective coverage of the monument, including the cupola, following the mission's remarks.
5. Ensure thorough and detailed documentation is continuously produced (both to monitor the condition of the wall paintings and to record all the treatments undertaken). This information must always be available to be used during the emergency conservation works, and for the constant monitoring of the mural paintings, which will be required over an extended period of time.
6. Extend and maintain secure scaffolding in all areas of the church, to be able to assess and monitor all the upper parts of the mural paintings as well as the mosaics in the apse.
7. Extend the condition assessment and monitoring to the mural paintings of the Church of Saint George where infiltrations may also have occurred when the roof was changed.
8. Develop a project and road map for the property, with clear responsibilities and processes to be undertaken. Detailed actions for the emergency treatments of the mural paintings in the upper parts of the vaults (and possibly the dome) should be kept to the minimum necessary, using compatible materials with the original ones, and limiting the addition of water as much as possible. The road map should also include the necessary monitoring of the condition of the paintings, of the environmental conditions inside the church, and of water levels inside the walls. There should also be a plan for the longer-term conservation of the mural paintings at the site, including more extensive conservation treatments, which may need to be reviewed over time, as the building and the mural paintings slowly dry and reach a stable condition.
9. The State Party is encouraged to pursue a closer dialogue with different stakeholders about the protection measures taken at the property, including through the World Heritage Protection Council of Georgia at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.
10. Given the long-term conservation and monitoring actions that will be required at Gelati, it is strongly recommended to involve more Georgian conservators (and plan capacity building if this is required), to ensure the long-term sustainability of the actions.

11. A detailed mapping of the existing state of conservation and the pathology of the wall paintings throughout the interior of the church is necessary, before the elaboration of a detailed project for the emergency and medium-term preservation of the wall paintings and mosaics.
12. A thorough and accurate investigation with the help of devices of the long-term micro-movements on 3D that occurred in the cross arms building ashlar, with emergency emphasis on the west arm, is required.
13. It is recommended to undertake a holistic structural investigation and prepare an intervention project to restore the static adequacy of the monument, with emphasis on the upper parts of its structure. It is advisable that Georgian scientific institutes and university laboratories be involved in the preparation of the project.
14. No work shall be carried out to permanently fix the cracks in the western arm, before the final investigations and the necessary measures resulting from the above study are formulated.
15. Implement a project for thorough filling of joints and completion of broken/missing sections of structural ashlar on the church facades. It is advised to use a repair natural hydraulic lime mortar satisfying the issue of compatibility (ensuring breathability and avoiding percolation of salt solutions to the original building stones), and the issue of the restoration of the mortars' mechanical performance (strength and porosity) to achieve sustainability.
16. Installation of additional temporary double wooden doors (wind barriers) at the three entrances to the naos is recommended, as well as closing of some of the open windows to reduce wind-driven moisture ingress, depending on the monitoring process results.
17. The mission encourages the National Agency and local professionals involved to continue the monitoring project started in December 2020, taking under consideration the suggestions of the "Structural hygrometric and micro-environmental state investigations" (2021-2022), by Alessandro Massari, regarding the duration of monitoring, the number and locations of sensors for measuring the air parameters to be installed, a sensor to measure wind direction and intensity in the monastery area, the data recording intervals, and the conditions under which they are chronicled (depending on the condition of the doors, the presence of visitors, maintenance work, extraordinary openings, etc.).
18. Ensure good coordination and communication between all teams working at the site, to make sure that the site is considered as a system, and decision-making is made jointly.
19. There is a need to address the water runoff system at the site and the impact of capillary rise on the stones and mural paintings (lower parts of the walls).
20. Regarding the Church of Saint George, there is an immediate need to work on external joints between stone blocks to ensure there is no water infiltration from the external walls, taking into consideration the suggestion in Recommendation 15 regarding the compatibility and sustainability of repair mortars.
21. Regarding the design of the new roof, the options for the "Design criteria determining the guidelines scenario" selected by the State Party during the remote meeting with ReStruere on 28 September 2022 are sound, with the following additional suggestions:

- to take increased measures for the durability of the new permanent roof construction considering the local environmental conditions of the harsh winter climate [relevant measures can be found in the respective Eurocodes];
- it is advisable to consider shaped copper for the final roofing layer – similar in the form to that applied in the past on the entrance to the Academy building in the Gelati Monastery and shows a close resemblance to the originally used stone slab cover.

Annex VIII: List of documents received from the State Party to inform the mission

Documentation received prior to the mission

- Implementation of the Corrective Measures to improve the State of Conservation according to the recommendations given by the Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the World Heritage property “Gelati Monastery” (Georgia) 28 November – 2, December 2022
- Integrated conservation plan, April 2023-2027, for the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’
- Draft Management Plan
 - Management Plan of the World Heritage property ‘Gelati Monastery’, done by the Provisional committee for the rehabilitation of Gelati, 2024. English version.
 - Integrated roadmap, implementation 2024-2028, for the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’. English version.
 - Conservation action plan and timetable for the years 2023-2027, for the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’.
 - Landscape visual panoramic analysis. Georgian version.
 - Cultural heritage inventory report. Georgian version.
- Project design of the overall protective cover of the of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin
- Documentation on the wall painting conservation
 - Wall painting conservation plan for the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin, by RICKERBY & SHEKEDE society.
 - Wall painting conservation and action plan, 2023-2027, for the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin and the Church of St George.
 - Wall painting conservation and timetable, 2023-2027, for the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin and the Church of St George.
 - Wall painting conservation programme, summary of the activities undertaken between April 2023 and August 2024 within the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’.
 - Wall painting Remedial Treatment of the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’, Phase 1, development of treatment strategy and methodologies: stabilisation of critical areas between March and April 2024, by the Gelati Temporary Rehabilitation Committee.
 - Wall painting Remedial Treatment of the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’, Phase 2, development of treatment strategy and methodologies: stabilisation of critical areas between July and August 2024, by the Gelati Temporary Rehabilitation Committee.
- Documentation on the conservation of the mosaics
 - General view on the mosaics of Church of the Nativity of the Virgin of the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’ by Roberto Nardi from the *Centro di Conservazione Archeologica*, Rome.
 - The mosaics of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin of the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’, Conservation programme, Phase 1, Documentation, diagnostics, study and Executive conservation plan by Roberto Nardi from the *Centro di Conservazione Archeologica*, Rome.
 - The mosaics of Church of the Nativity of the Virgin of the World Heritage Property ‘Gelati Monastery’, Conservation programme, Phase 1, Documentation, diagnostics, study and Executive conservation plan, Interim Report of July 2024, by Roberto Nardi from the *Centro di Conservazione Archeologica*, Rome.

- Structural investigations and monitoring of the Church of the Virgin, by *VI Studio and Studio Croci & Associati*
 - Plan for structural investigations and monitoring of the Church of the Virgin
 - Construction, research and monitoring plan for the Church of the Virgin Structural Investigations for the Church of the Virgin
 - Structural monitoring system, activities periodic report investigations for the Church of the Virgin
- Report on Geophysical Prospection of the Gelati Monastery, May 2024, by Gaia Prospection and Ludwig
- Programme of the 3rd International Workshop in Cultural Heritage Conservation held in Gelati Monastery from 3 to 6 October 2024.
- Architectural-Archaeological measurements of the *St George's Church*, Gelati Monastery by Architectural and Engineering Company "MN - Project"
- Gelati Rehabilitation Committee update on the State of Conservation of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery', February 2024
 - Gelati Monastery, Conservation, action plan and timetable of all activities for 2023 – 2027.
 - Wall painting conservation plan at the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin by Rickerby & Shekede wall painting conservation
 - Summary of wall painting conservation activities between April 2023-February 2024 supervised by Rickerby & Shekede wall painting conservation
 - Wall painting conservation, action plan (2023 - 2027) at the Churches of the Nativity of the Virgin and St George
 - Wall painting conservation, timetable (2023 - 2027) at the Churches of the Nativity of the Virgin and St George
 - Plan for Structural investigations and monitoring of the Church of the Virgin, by *VI Studio and Studio Croci & Associati*
 - The mosaics of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin of the World Heritage Property 'Gelati Monastery', Conservation programme, Phase 1, Documentation, diagnostics, study and Executive conservation plan by Roberto Nardi from the *Centro di Conservazione Archeologica*, Rome.

Documentation received following the mission

- PowerPoint presentation on the implementation of the corrective measures to improve the State of Conservation of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery' (2023 – 2024), by the Interim Committee for the rehabilitation of Gelati
- PowerPoint presentation on the Management Plan of the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery', by Rusudan Mirzikashvili (temporary Committee for Gelati Monastery rehabilitation)
- PowerPoint presentation on the temporary covering at Gelati Monastery, by Vato Zesashvili
- PowerPoint presentation on Gelati wall painting conservation programme: introduction and overview, by Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede
- Video presentation on the salt weathering processes in the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin, current knowledge and outlook, by Steffen Laue
- PowerPoint presentation on Gelati wall painting conservation programme: deepening understanding of condition through diagnostic process in support of treatment development, by Lela Ninoshvili and Mariam Sagaradze
- PowerPoint presentation on the implementation of the executive project for the conservation of the mosaic of the Virgin Mary in Gelati (February 2024 – April 2025), by Roberto Nardi

- Additional Material, PowerPoint presentation on cultural heritage inventory in the World Heritage property 'Gelati Monastery'
- Additional Material, the issue related to the final roofing material in Gelati Monastery
- Final list of participants to the meetings
- Photo of the lightning rod of the Main Church