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CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirtieth Session

Vilnius, Lithuania
8-16 July 2006

**Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: Examination of the State of Conservation of World
Heritage properties**

**7A. State of conservation reports of the properties inscribed on the List of World
Heritage in Danger**

SUMMARY

This document contains information on the state of conservation of **one natural and two cultural properties** inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies therefore submit herewith reports for review by the Committee. Where appropriate, the World Heritage Centre or the Advisory Bodies will provide additional information during the session of the Committee.

- 11.** Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (Senegal) (N 25)
- 28.** Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines) (C 722)
- 34.** Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (proposed by Jordan) (C 148rev)

Decision required: The Committee is requested to review the following state of conservation reports. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

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STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS

NATURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

11. Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (Senegal) (N 25)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List:

1981

Criteria:

N (iii) (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

2000. The property was also inscribed in the List of World Heritage in Danger from 1985 to 1988.

Threats and Dangers for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

The uncontrolled spread of the invasive species *Salvinia molesta* and its threat to the environment, economy and human health of the region.

Benchmarks for corrective measures:

Benchmarks were proposed by the 2005 IUCN-UNESCO mission including:

- a) Approval of a new management plan;
- b) Functional reorganisation of Park Authority;
- c) Implementation of an effective programme for the control of invasive species; and
- d) Establishment and implementation of a schedule of water inflows that fully responds to the ecological needs of the property.

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures:

A workshop was organized in April 2006, which proposed a 3 year action plan (2006-2008) to achieve the benchmarks. It is recommended that the implementation of the benchmarks be reviewed in 2007.

Previous Committee Decisions:

28 COM 15A.7

29 COM 7A.7

International Assistance:

Total amount provided to the property: USD 253,567 for emergency assistance, technical assistance and training

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds:

N/A

Previous monitoring missions:

UNESCO/IUCN/Ramsar mission in 2000 and 2001; IUCN/UNESCO mission in 2005; UNESCO and IUCN participation in multi-stakeholder workshop, April 2006.

Main threats identified in previous reports:

- a) Invasive species;
- b) Systematic water management system not operational;
- c) Lack of hydrological monitoring;
- d) Salinisation of soils;
- e) Cattle grazing;
- f) Hunting;
- g) Lack of management plan and sustained funding;
- h) Poor management capacity and constant changes in staff;
- i) Poor visitor management.

Current conservation issues:

A State Party report was received on the 15 March 2006 in response to the recommendations of the 2005 IUCN-UNESCO monitoring mission and at request of the 29th session of the Committee. The report noted that the Park authority is currently being restructured, and an experienced Conservator has taken up office. Park rangers are being trained and will be in place during the course of 2006. In addition, 35 'eco-guards' from the surrounding villages assist staff with all field work in the Park, including ecotourism. 3 new vehicles have been acquired and the rangers will have more mobility than before to allow them to intervene where necessary. A new team is also managing the Biological Station, and will focus on research. The Station has its own budget for the first time and has been placed under the authority of the Conservator, as recommended by the 2005 mission. The pelican breeding site will be rebuilt for greater sustainability in 2006 with the support of the Government of the Netherlands. In response to the 2005 monitoring mission, the State Party has also improved signposting in the park and successfully removed cattle from the property in all zones except in areas where their presence is considered beneficial to control the vegetation.

In relation to invasive species, the State Party report noted an improvement in the control of *Pistia* (Water Lettuce), despite the spread in 2005, and expects that the situation should continue to improve in 2006 with biological control methods. Further work needs to be done to ensure better control of *Typha*, which is linked to the level of water and requires ongoing hydrological monitoring. The spread of other species is also causing some problems and a report is currently under preparation on water management and invasive species.

The report provides no information on the implementation of a schedule of water inflows to respond to the ecological needs of the property. Overall, however, the State Party report notes that the National Parks Authority has become aware of the problems at the property and is working to improve its state of conservation.

Since submission of the State Party report, in direct follow-up to the 2005 IUCN/UNESCO mission and with funding and technical support from the World Heritage Fund, World Heritage Centre, IUCN and other partners, a multi-stakeholder workshop took place at the property from 24-27 April 2006. The aim of the workshop was to prepare a plan of action for the property with the engagement of scientists, various NGOs and former conservators of the

Park, to take the necessary actions for the achievement of the benchmarks identified by the 2005 monitoring mission. The workshop successfully developed a plan with a series of specific actions that should be implemented between 2006 and 2008 to achieve the set benchmarks, including a budget and timetable. This Action Plan aims to complete the current management plan which notably describes the correct hydrological management system. However, it is not clear the level to which this Action Plan will be officially adopted and supported by the State Party, or the level of funding available for its implementation.

Based on the State Party report and outcomes of the April 2006 workshop, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN note that considerable progress has been made in following up on key recommendations of the 2005 monitoring mission and toward meeting each of the benchmarks. With the development of the Action Plan (2006-2008) and the engagement of a new Conservator, the state of conservation of the property should continue to improve in the coming years. It is now critical that the Action Plan and the planned changes in the management of the property are fully resourced and implemented in the course of the next year. IUCN notes that there is a constant risk of the spread of invasive species due to modified hydrological system caused by the upstream dam, and therefore the hydrological management system currently in place must be carefully controlled and monitored on an ongoing basis, along with a regular programme of biological control for species like *Pistia* and *Salvinia molesta*. With this work fully underway, and on the basis of assessing further progress in implementing planned activities, it should be possible to consider removing the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2007.

Finally, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN note that the Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary has been recognised as part of the recently approved UNESCO Senegal Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (which includes the Djoudj Bird Sanctuary and Diawling National Park in Mauretania and the City of Saint-Louis). Furthermore, the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) has also recently included the Transboundary Reserve in the second phase (2005-2009) of the UN Foundation supported COMPACT programme (Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation), which offers financial and technical assistance to community-based initiatives in and around eight World Heritage properties.

Draft Decision: 30 COM 7A.11

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-06/30.COM 7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling its Decision **29 COM 7A.7**, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),*
3. *Commends the State Party for its considerable efforts to improve the state of conservation of the property in line with the 2005 IUCN-UNESCO monitoring mission and for developing a 3 year action plan to achieve the benchmarks set by the Committee at its 29th session (Durban 2005) with the support of partners and experts in a multi-stakeholder workshop;*
4. *Urges the State Party to formally approve the Action Plan (2006-2008) and commit the necessary resources to its full implementation as soon as possible, including by deploying and training the necessary personnel by the 1 October 2006;*

5. *Encourages donors and partners to give particular attention to supporting the Ministry of Environment in the effective implementation of the Action Plan (2006-2008) for Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary;*
6. *Urges the State Party to put in place a management committee and a scientific committee, preferably by the end of 2006, engaging relevant partners and expert, to guide and assess the implementation of the Action Plan (2006-2008);*
7. *Recognises that excellent progress has been made in reaching the benchmarks proposed by the 2005 IUCN-UNESCO monitoring mission, and that it is expected that the implementation of the Action Plan, along with careful management and monitoring of the hydrological system will further consolidate conservation efforts towards the agreed benchmarks, so that the Committee may consider removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2007;*
8. *Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with an updated report by **1 February 2007**, on the state of conservation of the property, in particular on progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the 2005 monitoring mission and the approval and implementation of the Action Plan, for examination by the Committee at its 31st session in 2007;*
9. ***Decides to retain Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (Senegal) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

ASIA-PACIFIC

28. Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines) (C 722)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List:
1995

Criteria:
C (iii) (iv) (v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger:
2001

Threats and Dangers for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

- a) The abandonment of the terraces due to neglected irrigation system and people leaving the area;
- b) Unregulated development threatening the heritage area;
- c) Tourism needs are not addressed;
- d) Lack of an effective management system.

Benchmarks for corrective measures:

Benchmarks for corrective measures and a time frame for their implementation, identified by the World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission of April 2006, are proposed in the report and Draft Decision, for the consideration of the Committee.

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures:

Benchmarks for corrective measures and a time frame for their implementation, identified by the World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission of April 2006, are proposed in the report and Draft Decision, for the consideration of the Committee.

Previous Committee Decisions:

27 COM 7A.25

28 COM 15A.27

29 COM 7A.26

International Assistance:

Total amount provided to the property: USD 153,200 for Preparatory Assistance, Training and Emergency Assistance.

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds:

Total amount provided to the property: N/A.

Previous monitoring missions :

ICOMOS/IUCN Monitoring Mission September 2001; UNESCO Expert Mission June 2005; World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Monitoring Mission April 2006.

Main threats identified in previous reports:

- a) Lack of an effective site management authority and adequate legislation;
- b) Absence of a finalized strategic site management plan;
- c) Development of inappropriate river control structures and irregular construction in the rice terraces;
- d) Diminishing interest of the Ifugao people in their culture and in maintaining the Rice Terraces;
- e) Lack of human and financial resources.

Current conservation issues:

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage property took place from 18 to 24 April 2006 as requested by the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee (**29 COM 7A.26**). The objective of the mission was to assess the steps taken by the State Party to implement the recommendations of earlier missions in September 2001 and June 2005 and the feasibility of the Conservation and Management Plan of the Rice Terraces in the Philippine Cordilleras (June 2004). The mission also defined benchmarks for corrective measures to address the threats to the property with a view to possible removal of the site from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The mission noted the serious concern expressed and the strong commitment shown for the conservation of the rice terraces by the local communities. It is important to acknowledge the efforts made by local governments towards the implementation of the plans and proposals contained in the 2004 Conservation and Management Plan. Such Plan addressed all the principal issues for the protection of the World Heritage property, however it has not been implemented as expected due to the lack of an effective management structure. The main

question to address at this stage is ensuring a management coordination mechanism and human and financial resources for its immediate implementation.

The mission also identified as a priority the need for new tools and strategies for the assessment of potential long-term negative impacts of development proposals affecting the World Heritage property. In particular, the following issues were considered: a) Institutional requirements for an effective management mechanism; b) Immediate actions for the maintenance of the rice culture, for sustaining the social and environmental context of the rice terraces and encouraging their economic viability; c) cultural tourism development and Infrastructure development management.

The mission findings are dealt with more in detail below.

A sustainable management mechanism is not yet in place. As recognized in the previous missions, it is urgent to progress with the implementation of the existing Conservation and Management plan and day-to-day management at municipal and village (barangay) level. The local stakeholders expressed their frustration with the limited action following the previous consultations and the insufficient explanations received as to the opportunities and constraints associated with the World Heritage commitment.

The two previous management authorities (Ifugao Terraces Commission and Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force-BRTTF) were established at national level. It was felt that a community-based, more diversified and localized management mechanism may provide the necessary sustainability and responsiveness for the needs of the living cultural landscape. The State Party has therefore proposed to replace the Ifugao Rice Terraces Cultural Heritage Office (IRTCHO) with a provincial structure whose management would be closer to the local communities. The assignment of a focal point in each municipality and, in some cases, the creation of a cultural heritage office is a realistic next step proposed by the municipal governments.

Short term funding from local government sources has been provided from the revenue allotments of the province and the municipal government. Funds have been made available by the national and local governments to repair some of the community irrigation systems and terraces. However, more co-ordinated long term funding and a more sustained local resource generation mechanisms, including tourism revenues, and marketing of local produce need to be explored and initiated.

There is a general need for relevant baseline data responding to traditional value systems in order to set up effective monitoring. The community-based land use and zoning processes, which have been initiated in the clusters of Kiangan and Hungduan, should be encouraged in order to guide local community actions and provide regulations over tourism and infrastructure development which are consistent with local heritage values. There is an opportunity to complement and support the ancestral domain claims of the local farmers under the current law. Local land use maps should reflect the watershed and irrigation system of the terraces in the five clusters.

The viability of the rice terraces is linked to the benefits the traditional use and the maintenance of the eco-cultural system bring to the Ifugao people. Development of community-based strategies for the support and introduction of complementary and culturally appropriate livelihood opportunities is a priority issue. The recommendations in the previous reports include actions for the maintenance of the rice terraces and rice production in its

traditional mode and highlight the need for innovative solutions to encourage rice farming and marketing. Some current initiatives for marketing and developing the traditional “*tinawon*” rice are being explored but further research and development is needed.

The indigenous knowledge systems regarding the building and maintenance of the terraces and irrigation systems and watershed management may disappear if not passed on. Many attempts are therefore being made by the local government to keep the practices alive. Research and documentation of local heritage histories have been initiated by the provincial government. A school of living traditions has been supported in the Ifugao State College of Agriculture and Forestry. However, emphasis appears sometimes to be placed on the conservation of traditional practices for the exclusive purpose of living “performances”, not for their actual application to the management of the land. To address this problem, raising awareness programmes have been initiated together with a “adopt a terrace” programme.

The urgency of adaptive cultural tourism management was highlighted in the 2001 mission. An eco-tourism program is included in the Conservation and Management Plan. However, a coordinated cultural tourism strategy targeting appropriate tourism and channelling tourism income directly for the local community and to support the maintenance of the rice terraces is not yet in place and tourism initiatives are not coordinated within the World Heritage property. Although the mission agreed on the importance of tourism access to the area, as highlighted in the 2001 mission, priority should be in assessing the carrying capacity of the different clusters according to their distinctive character and ensuring ways to control culturally acceptable tourism. The awareness about the problems and potentials of tourism regarding additional livelihood opportunities for the local community seem to be high, and there is a quest for guidance and best practice.

The urgency of managing unregulated development and assessing the impacts of infrastructure projects on the cultural landscape has been expressed in the previous missions. In 2005, a UNESCO mission evaluated the status of a mini-hydro power plant which was proposed for construction in Ifugao Province, where the World heritage property of the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras is located. The mission found that the proposed hydro plant had not proceeded. The mission, therefore, concentrated on the review of another project entitled ‘Construction of Flood Controls in the Three Barangays (villages) of Hungduan for the Preservation of the Rice Terraces’ which at the time was 90% completed. This project consisted in a series of reinforced-concrete retaining walls built along the bottom of the valleys, allegedly to protect the cultivated areas from the impact of recurrent floods. The 2005 mission made a number of recommendations to mitigate the potential adverse environmental impacts on the property derived from the project; reduce the risks associated with the inappropriate construction of the walls; and to develop adapted standards for design of infrastructure within special heritage areas.

This flood control project in the Hungduan cluster, indeed, has been planned and executed in the absence of a proper environmental impact assessment (EIA), or even of an “initial environmental examination”(IEE) required for environmentally critical areas in the Philippine legislation. The local government of Hungduan has only begun to implement the recommendations of the previous mission to reinforce the structure for safety purposes. It is raising funds to complete the recommended actions while the community will provide counterpart labor for the activity. The proposed mini-hydro plan, on the other hand, has been relocated from Hungduan cluster to Mappit and Ambabag, areas outside the WH perimeter, but which may be a potential expansion site or a buffer area for the World Heritage property.

The World heritage Centre has been asked to review this new proposal, for which an EIA does not appear to have been done.

A requirement for the conduction of an appropriate EIA, including provisions for cultural heritage impact assessment, would indeed be essential to maintain the integrity of the World Heritage property. For this to happen, however, it is apparently necessary to officially designate the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras as an “environmental critical area”, which is apparently not the case today. In this context, it would be also very important to ensure that expertise on heritage conservation and traditional knowledge are included in the EIA Review Committee in order to gauge impact on all aspects of the cultural landscape.

In summary, despite the efforts made and some progress on specific issues, the recommendations of the September 2001 and June 2005 UNESCO missions have yet to be acted on and there has been no reported significant improvement in the human/financial resources available to manage the property and implement the conservation master plan (in response to Decision **29 COM 7A.26**) in order to sustain the Rice Terraces as living, dynamic cultural landscape.

Draft Decision: 30 COM 7A.28

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-06/30.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **29 COM 7A.26**, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),*
3. *Notes with great concern the findings and recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS / IUCN monitoring mission (18-24 April 2006), in particular that, despite the efforts made by the local and provincial authorities for the restoration of the irrigation systems of the rice terraces, little progress has been made towards implementing the recommendations of the September 2001 and June 2005 missions;*
4. *Regrets that a functioning site management mechanism has not been established and that the site Conservation and Management Plan has not been implemented;*
5. *Notes with further concern that the resources allocated by the national authorities and Ifugao Provincial Government are inadequate to address the conservation challenges identified in the Conservation and Management Plan prepared with Emergency Assistance from the World Heritage Fund;*
6. *Requests the State Party to implement the following corrective measures, which constitute the conditions for the removal of the property from the List of the World Heritage in Danger, **by end of 2007**:*
 - a) *Establish a functioning management mechanism at the provincial and municipal levels, and ensure that adequate human/financial resources are made available to implement the Conservation and Management Plan for the property;*
 - b) *Put in place zoning and land-use plans responding to community-based activities and traditional value systems;*

- c) *Provide regulations over tourism and infrastructure developments to encourage community based tourism which benefits the Rice Terraces and the local communities;*
 - d) *Develop a resource strategy at the national, provincial, municipal and village (barangay) levels and put in place a five year plan, according to the management objectives determined in the Conservation and Management Plan, with top priority given to the regular maintenance and stabilisation of the rice terraces and lifeline irrigation systems so as to reverse their deterioration. The strategy will include the establishment of a long-term programme to prevent the extinction of traditional rice cultivars (seeds) safeguarding traditional rice varieties associated with the agricultural practices of the rice terraces;*
 - e) *Establish appropriate development control procedures for development projects in the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordillera, including by designating the World Heritage cluster sites of the Rice Terraces and their supportive eco-system (i.e. watershed system) as “environmental critical areas”, where an environment impact assessment (EIA) is required for any proposed development projects. Cultural heritage conservation expertise should be also included in the EIA review committee;*
 - f) *Strengthen the reforestation programme to include a wider range of endemic trees species to protect the watershed system for the rice terraces and prevent the introduction of exotic species in the private or communal watersheds of the rice terraces;*
7. *Also requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and IUCN), in collaboration with the State Party, to assist the site managers of the Rice Terraces, as appropriate, to build capacity on sustainable tourism planning and management;*
 8. *Further requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2007**, with a detailed report on the state of conservation of the property, taking into consideration the benchmarks for corrective measures proposed by the April 2006 Reactive Monitoring Mission, for examination by the Committee at its 31st session in 2007;*
 9. ***Decides to retain the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

JERUSALEM

34. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (proposed by Jordan) (C 148rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List:
1981

Criteria:

C (ii) (iii) (vi)

Year of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

1982

Threats and Dangers for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

Excerpts from the Report of the Rapporteur of the Sixth Session of the Committee, Paris, 13-17 December 1982 (document CLT 82/CH/CONF.015/8)

31. ... they considered that the situation of this property corresponds to the criteria mentioned in the ICOMOS note and, in particular, to criteria (e) (significant loss of historical authenticity) and (f) (important loss of cultural significance) as far as "ascertained danger" is concerned, and to criteria (a) (modification of juridical status of the property diminishing the degree of its protection), (b)(lack of conservation policy) and (d) (threatening effects of town planning) as far as "potential danger" is concerned. [...]

33. After discussion, the Committee decided [...] to inscribe the "Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls" on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Benchmarks for corrective measures:

No benchmark has ever been established to correct the present situation of the site, except mitigation measures including an Action Plan developed within the initiative of the Director-General.

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures:

Any timeframe, still to be decided, will have to be discussed within the Experts Committee convened by the Director-General for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem.

Previous Committee Decisions:

27 COM 7A.29

28 COM 15A.31

29 COM 7A.31

International Assistance:

N/A

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds:

Total amount allocated to the property: USD 3,166,033 (since 1988)

Previous monitoring mission(s):

February-March 2004, World Heritage Centre-ICOMOS-ICCROM

September 2005, World Heritage Centre and experts

December 2005, World Heritage Centre and experts

March 2006, World Heritage Centre and experts

June 2006, World Heritage Centre and experts

Main threat(s) identified in previous report(s):

a) Natural risk factors;

b) Lack of planning, governance and management processes;

- c) Alteration of the urban and social fabric;
- d) Impact of archaeological excavations;
- e) Deterioration of monuments;
- f) Urban environment and visual integrity;
- g) Traffic, access and circulation.

Current conservation issues:

This State of Conservation Report is based on information collected by the World Heritage Centre and by the experts during the missions conducted in the past two years in the framework of the initiative of the Director-General of UNESCO (the *Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the old city of Jerusalem*) as well as information provided by local institutions and organisations. At the 28th session of the Committee (Suzhou, 2004), the World Heritage Centre presented a report on the state of conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem based on previous reports by the Special Advisers to the Director-General of UNESCO for Jerusalem, and on the report to the Executive Board of UNESCO (170 EX/10 Rev) of the mission carried out in February-March 2004 by the Director of the World Heritage Centre, the Director-General of ICCROM and the President of ICOMOS (Document WHC-04/28.COM/15A). Additional missions by the World Heritage Centre and experts were undertaken in September and December 2005, in March and June 2006, within the framework of the elaboration of the *Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem*.

A) State of Conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls

Natural Risks

The Old City of Jerusalem is situated in an area known for its seismic activities. Major earthquakes have in the past damaged important monuments such as the Holy Sepulchre (the Chapel of the Sepulchre of Christ is still waiting for the reparation of the damages suffered during the 1927 quake) or the al-Aqsa Mosque. Smaller quakes are frequent, the last having been registered on 11 February 2004 with 4.9 to 5.3 on the Richter scale. While seismic risks for the inhabitants and the monuments exist, no risk prevention plan has been so far established.

Planning and Governance

Owing to the current political situation, the Old City of Jerusalem lacks a coherent institutional and planning coordination framework, which would ensure the appropriate management and conservation of its cultural heritage.

Since 1967, the Old City of Jerusalem is de facto administered by the Israeli authorities. Therefore, all new constructions and conservation projects are in principle subject to the administrative jurisdiction of the Municipality. However, although the Israeli Antiquities Authority requires a permit for any building activity within the Old City, in reality, most building activities within the Old City, especially small interventions, are presently carried out without any permit. The Municipality of Jerusalem has prepared a Master Plan for the City, which includes a Detailed Plan for the Conservation of the Old City at a scale 1:1250. This document, prepared with the support of the Israeli Antiquities Authority, is currently under discussion. An overall study for the Revitalisation of the Old City of Jerusalem has been prepared in 2004 by the Welfare Association, a NGO involved in social projects in the Old City.

Among the Palestinian institutions, the main actor is the Islamic Waqf, the largest single owner in the Old City, which is responsible for the maintenance and conservation of al-Haram ash-Sharîf, as well as for the safeguarding of all other properties of the “endowment”, i.e. all Islamic monuments and other estate properties (over 1,500) in the Old City. Within the Christian communities, the main entities involved are the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, the Custody of the Terra Sancta (Franciscans), the Armenian Patriarchate and the Coptic Patriarchate.

Alteration of the urban and social fabric

The population density in the Old City has reached very high levels, especially in the past decade. Today, this relatively small area is subject to extraordinary pressures, due to population increase as well as security measures affecting the circulation of people and materials and the accessibility to holy sites, while the traditional links and exchanges with the communities of the hinterland have been severed by the construction of the wall.

A combined result of overcrowding and the lack of an effective management and conservation system within the Old City is the uncontrolled spreading of building activities, resulting in the continuous alteration of the urban fabric. Additions on the rooftops and the densification of existing buildings, which in recent years have completely changed the traditional urban landscape of the Old City, are the most common of these various types of alteration. The lack of maintenance, owing to ownership issues, administrative problems in obtaining the necessary permits and lack of financial resources are among the factors affecting the state of conservation of the urban fabric of the Old City.

Some new projects are presently under consideration. In particular, the project to build a new residential area on the site of the current parking lot on the southern edge of the Jewish Quarter within the walls, near Bâb an-Nabî Dâ`ûd (also called Zion Gate), is under discussion. This project aims to build an underground parking lot above the archaeological layers (estimated to be at about 6 metres under the present surface level), with access external to the Walls. According to information collected during the late mission by the World Heritage Centre (June 2006), a trial archaeological excavation in this area may be started in the near future.

Another development project being considered is a new Israeli settlement close to the North-East corner of the Old City, in the area called “Burj al-Laqlaq”, in the Muslim Quarter. The proposed project has been recommended by the Local Planning Commission, but has not been presented to the District Planning Commission for approval, nor has been approved by the Israeli Antiquities Authority. Archaeological excavations are presently underway in the location of the proposed project. This project has raised controversy for its nature and because it affects one of the few remaining open spaces of the Old City. In 2005 the Director-General of UNESCO has asked the Israeli Authorities to withdraw the proposal.

In the plaza facing the Western Wall, a new project is currently under implementation. Archaeological excavations were conducted in the area in the past year, and the plan for the construction of an educational building to the west of the plaza is currently in the last stages of approval, pending the completion of the archaeological evaluations.

In the Jewish Quarter, the Hurva Synagogue, originally built in the 1860s and destroyed after 1948, is presently being rebuilt in its original form.

Impact of archaeological research on the conservation of cultural heritage

Since 1967, an extensive investigation of the archaeological subsoil in the Old City has been undertaken by the Israeli authorities, leading to several excavation campaigns over the past 39 years, in contradiction with the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed conflict and the 1956 UNESCO Recommendation on international principles applicable to archaeological excavations.

Inside the Old City, excavations are taking place under a series of buildings, in the vicinity of the Hammam Al-Ain, under the former Ohel Yizhak Synagogue. According to the latest information received (mission by the World Heritage Centre, June 2006), the excavations are currently suspended due to lack of funds, while the reconstruction of the synagogue destroyed in the 1936 riots is continuing.

Further to the collapse, in February 2004, of the northern side of the embankment supporting the entrance ramp to al-Ḥaram ash-Sharîf, a provisional structure has been established. Possible solutions for the public entrance ramp are currently being evaluated by the Israeli Antiquities Authority. This project could be associated to archaeological excavations and has not yet been finalised. The Islamic Waqf expressed its preoccupation for these excavations as they affect a very sensitive area between the Western wall and the already excavated surroundings of the South-West corner of the al-Ḥaram ash-Sharîf.

Deterioration of monuments

Besides their cultural and artistic value, the Jerusalem monuments have overwhelming religious and symbolic significance to millions of people. The lack of maintenance is one of the main problems affecting the state of conservation of monuments of the Old City of Jerusalem. Many monuments are in a very bad state of conservation and require urgent intervention. Very often, controversies around property ownership between the different communities cause serious delays or blockages of needed interventions. The most evident case is the situation of the Birkat Hammam el-Batrak (also known as Pool of Hezekiah), a seasonal pool located in the centre of the Old City, completely surrounded by houses and with only one access, that has been turned into a garbage dump. As the ownership of the access to the Pool is contested between different communities, no work is allowed to clean the area and remove a serious health hazard.

Another problem is the inability to conduct conservation works in the Muslim quarter according to a planned schedule, owing to unforeseeable changes in administrative and security measures. The restoration works at the Madrasa al-Ashrafiya inside the al-Ḥaram ash-Sharîf, for example, have suffered great delays owing to the difficulty to get through the necessary building materials and workers, due to the strict access and security measures implemented by the Israeli authorities.

Impacts on the visual integrity

In the immediate surroundings of the Old City, the following projects are presently being implemented or under discussion:

- (i) the reorganisation of the traffic infrastructure around the Walls, comprising a new system of roads and tunnels (completed) and the “Jerusalem light rail” which will connect West Jerusalem to the Old City and to the Israeli settlements north and south of the town. This project can have a beneficial effect in reducing traffic, but for its proximity to the Walls, affects visually the immediate surroundings of the Old City;

- (ii) the completion of the Mamilla project, after over a decade of inaction due to legal disputes between the developer and the Authorities;
- (iii) the construction of the Mount Zion Hotel, approved over three years ago, which will affect the area above Wadi Jahannin (also known as Hinnom Valley). Detailed plans for this building are under preparation.
- (iv) the construction by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre of the “Centre for Human Dignity” on the location of an abandoned Muslim cemetery (presently called “Independence Park”) at some five to eight hundred meters from the Old City; this construction may impact on the urban landscape;
- (v) The construction of a Cable car from Bâb an-Nabî Dâ’ûd (also known as Zion Gate) to the old Railway station. According to information received, this is a very preliminary suggestion still under discussion.

As the site of the Old City of Jerusalem does not have a buffer zone, legal protection of the immediate surroundings is limited. The creation of a buffer zone would certainly be necessary from a technical viewpoint, but it has proven difficult for political and legal reasons.

The Master Plans currently being processed by the Israeli authorities have identified a buffer zone that includes the visual space of the Old City. In addition, there are two detailed Plans for the areas to the north of the Old City between the west and the east central areas. Whereas there are guidelines to ensure a stepped height limit, higher buildings are being approved beyond these guidelines up to 24 stories on the far ridge towards the west entrance of the city. In the central area to the north of the Bab al-Amud (also known as Damascus Gate) and Bab al-Sahera (also known as Herod’s Gate), additional floors will be allowed. A Plan is under preparation for the areas that will aim at preserving the areas between the Old City and Wadi al-Qilt at Silwân (also known as Kidron Valley) and Wadi Jahannin (also known as Hinnom Valley).

Traffic, access and circulation

Except for the new infrastructures being planned outside of the Old City, no new traffic infrastructure has been built. Traffic inside the Old City is regulated and restricted, but it is quite heavy during peak hours and days despite regulations in place. In consideration of the peculiar structure of the site, vehicular circulation should be excluded from the Old City as much as possible and parking should not be allowed except temporarily for utilitarian reasons.

B) The Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Jerusalem

Further to decision 170 EX/3.6.1. adopted by the Executive Board in October 2004, and based on the guidelines set and proposals made by the international Committee of experts at its January 2005 meeting, the Secretariat has started elaborating the Action Plan. Thanks to the generous financial contribution from the Government of Italy, as well as assistance provided from the government of Spain, and with the agreement of the concerned parties, the following activities have been initiated by the World Heritage Centre and are currently being finalised:

1. Needs Map for the Conservation of Historic Monuments and Sites

This component of the Plan will identify all the historic monuments and sites of the Old City, their state of conservation, use, typology, ownership and heritage value, and generate a basic information tool to prepare conservation and possible adaptive re-use projects. In this first phase, it is planned to identify monuments and sites, transfer the data on a GIS, and carry out the survey of a limited number of monuments/sites.

2. Project Profiles

A number of conservation and restoration project sheets (between 15 and 20) will be elaborated among those identified during the preparation of the Needs Map, in order to prepare the implementation of the 2nd phase of the Action Plan. The project profiles will identify specific areas or buildings, their state of conservation, their current and potential use, and the main restoration and conservation measures to be undertaken. The project sheets will contain a preliminary project description accompanied by a budget estimate of the interventions.

At the end of this phase, a booklet will be designed and published in order for it to be submitted to potential donors for funding. This booklet, which could be made available also on-line, will be the first fund-raising tool to mobilise international support to carry out the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem.

3. Improvement of Housing

This project aims at the improvement of the quality of the housing stock and of the living conditions of the inhabitants preserving the ordinary architectural elements of the urban fabric as an essential component of the World Heritage Site of Jerusalem. Different activities are planned:

a) *Elaboration of a Manual for Housing maintenance and rehabilitation; a technical handbook for professionals and craftsmen:*

The Manual will be a practical and operational rehabilitation tool, designed to bring simple and illustrated answers to concrete problems through technical files.

b) *Training courses to disseminate the Manual:*

The training of local experts and craftsmen is an essential step to disseminate the Manual. Moreover, the involvement of the communities living in the area is a prerequisite for their participation in future maintenance.

4. Development of micro credit schemes

In parallel with the preparation of the Manual, a feasibility study has been undertaken to develop a housing renovation and conservation micro-credit system for the residents of the Old City of Jerusalem. It should also aim at identifying possible financing sources.

5. Revitalising cultural life

In accordance with the guidelines defined by the International Committee of Experts, which stressed in the Action Plan the need for awareness programmes for the local population - focusing on women and youth – and for capacity-building of local professionals in heritage conservation and management, a number of cultural activities have been identified, which could take place in renovated houses or premises, and will be discussed during the second meeting of the Committee of Experts in September 2006. These include training activities to support craftsmanship.

The second meeting of the International Committee of Experts will be convened on 4 and 5 September 2006, in order to examine the progress made in the preparation of the Action Plan.

Draft Decision: 30 COM 7A.34

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-06/30.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling its Decision **29 COM 7A.31** adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Further recalling 32 C/Resolution 39 of the General Conference of UNESCO and 172EX/Decision 18 of the Executive Board of UNESCO, as well as the provisions of the four Geneva Conventions (1949), the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and the related Protocols, and the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the inclusion of the Old City of Jerusalem in the World Heritage List and in the List of World Heritage in Danger, and the recommendations, resolutions and decisions of UNESCO on the protection of the cultural heritage,
4. Affirming that nothing, in the present decision, which aims at the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem, shall in any way affect the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, in particular the relevant Security Council resolutions on the legal status of Jerusalem,
5. Reiterates its concern as to the obstacles and practices, such as archaeological excavations or new constructions, which could alter the outstanding universal value of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem, including its urban and social fabric as well as its visual integrity;
6. Asks the Israeli Authorities to provide to the World Heritage Centre all relevant information concerning the new buildings planned in the Western Wall Plaza, as well as the plans for the reconstruction of the ramp leading to the al-Haram ash-Sharîf;
7. Invites all authorities and institutions to cooperate constructively for the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and in particular to facilitate access of materials and technical staff for the restoration of Monuments and Housing in the Old City, in particular in the al-Haram ash-Sharîf;
8. Requests the World Heritage Centre to report on the progress in the preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem for the consideration of the Committee at its 31st session in 2007;
9. Further requests the concerned parties to collaborate with the World Heritage Centre in this endeavour and invites all the States Parties to contribute to its implementation through extra-budgetary funding;
10. Congratulates the Director-General of UNESCO for his commitment in pursuing a comprehensive initiative for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem;
11. **Decides to retain the Old City of Jerusalem on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**