

Name of World Heritage property	State Party	ID number
<i>Old walled City of Shibam</i>	<i>Republic of Yemen</i>	<i>C 192</i>

STATE PARTY'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE OLD WALLED CITY OF SHIBAM, YEMEN – INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN DANGER

Ministry of Culture - GOPHCY– March 2017

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 40TH SESSION (Istanbul, 2016), CONCERNING THE OLD WALLED CITY OF SHIBAM

Decision: **40 COM 7A.25**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/16/40.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions 22 BUR V.B.72 and 39 COM 7B.60, adopted at the 22nd session of its Bureau (UNESCO, 1998) and at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015) respectively,
3. Expresses its concern at the recent damage caused to the Old Walled City of Shibam as a result of armed conflict, and that the property continues to be subject to significant threats from natural elements, and a lack of organizational support and material resources for physical conservation projects;
4. Acknowledges the efforts of the General Organization for the Preservation of Historic Cities in Yemen (GOPHCY), the local authorities, and the community of Shibam to protect and conserve the property despite the very difficult conditions in the city;
5. Notes with regret that, owing to the security situation in Yemen, it has not been possible to prepare a management plan for the property, nor to progress on the draft 'National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016 - 2020' nor to prepare a complementary Action Plan and requests the State Party to ensure that both the management plan and the Action Plan, when prepared, should address the current situation and include provisions for conservation of damaged buildings, local community awareness, and should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
6. Also requests the state party to invite a joint world heritage center /ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property, once the security situation has improved, to assess current conditions at the property, to advise on short-term repair and conservation works and to contribute to the development of a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);
7. Welcomes the continuing support of the German Agency for

International Cooperation (GIZ) for Yemeni cultural heritage;

8. Calls on the international community to provide financial support for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's cultural heritage, adopted at the UNESCO Expert meeting in July 2015;
9. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 **February** 2017, 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 41st session in 2017;
10. **Decides** to retain the Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

1. Executive summary of the report

The old walled city of Shibam as a world culture heritage site in danger, up to now still suffering of several challenges and threats, mainly by armed conflict and war, as well it is subject to significant threats from natural factors. The old walled city of Shibam has been many times subjected to floods, it was partially destroyed by water in 1532 declination. In addition to that, Shibam is subjected by other threats, by fanatic groups like Dae'sh, and Al-Qaida.

Despite the very difficult situation experienced by the country, state party has applying several measures to stabilize the state of conservation for Shibam property, like ;

- By local team rapid assessments and classification of the damaged buildings, has been applied. (report sent to UNESCO Doha office)
- With local authority restoration of 10 more damaged residential buildings, done, the owners were returned. And some awareness activities as well.

International community supports are requested to protect and preserve the world cultural heritage in Yemen, according to their obligation.

Even though, lack of local and national resources, as well absence of financial supports, the GOPHCY staff in Shibam, could carry out any technical studies, if some international assistance and support could provide.

State party need of urgent support to finance the work of processing in preparing the technical and financial proposals for emergency plan. Eager to more support in the field of capacity building, promoting, fundraising and management during this period.

Our thanks and appreciation to the Director General of UNESCO for their support and solidarity, as well to all international experts and WH and the committee and advisory bodies.

Special thanks and appreciation to the German government for permanent support to Yemen in heritage protection, and its willingness to continue this support.

2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision, paragraph by paragraph

2.1 The Old walled City of Shibam is currently subject to significant threats from natural elements .The old walled city of Shibam has been many times subjected to floods, it was partially destroyed by water in 1532. Thus flood protection is among the reasons given for the traditional form of its unique high-rise houses; others include the need to conserve agricultural land (the city is surrounded by groves of date palms). In 2008 Shibam has survived, from a devastating flood hit Hadramout governorate.

In 2010, a project called " Project for the Development of Shibam Oasis", as part of the Sustainable Food Security Program, helped in designing a comprehensive development plan for the conservation and use of the Shibam Oasis, it was considered as a buffer zone of the World Heritage Site. Over a period of 10 months, the project rehabilitated the traditional flood irrigation system around the historic city of Shibam, it was funded by GIZ .

Today, Shibam is subjected by other threats, a terror attack by fanatic groups like Dae'sh, and Al-Qaida .On Friday 20th November 2015, car was exploded on the main road near the city wall, It caused severe damages on the facades , terraces and removal of the windows of some historical buildings, in particular those are located on the southern and western part of the city. Moreover, due to the current war and conflict status of the country, lack of administration support and material for physical conservation projects been exaggerated by economic, security and political circumstances due.

2.2 Despite the absence of basic resources and deterioration of socioeconomic situation, GOPHCY Shibam branch have carried out several measures in conservation contacts like;

- Forming a technical team to conduct filed damage survey, according to UNESCO Doha and ICCROM approved rapid assessment form.
- Forming a follow-up committee contain of technical team of GOPHCY, members of local authority and members of local community in Shibam.
- Classification of the damage buildings.
- Intervention to restore the most 10 damaged historical buildings, funded by Hadramout governor.
- Returned the families, that have been displaced, to their houses after intervention.
- Organized a workshop, aims to increase awareness of culture heritage protections by involving local community and local authority, considering the actual crises and armed conflict escalation.
- With local Hadramout Radio station, arrange and broadcast awareness program targeting all categories of Shibam society, like school children , university students and communities within heritage sites.

2.3 Current difficult situation and instability in the country ,due to the war, and armed conflict was the main reason of resources lacking , that prevented

implementation of any action concerning the National Strategy until now . The state party is waiting for WHC and other related concerned international organization to assist in revision of the draft strategy according to the current status , as well assistance for promotion and, prepare the financial proposals, are utmost demand, the Action Plan and management plan ought to address the current situation including provisions for conservation of damaged buildings, local community awareness and attracting national and international support.

2.4 Since this moment the state party offers a certain open invitation to Joint World Heritage Center/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to visit Yemen to evaluate state of conservation of the property and identify measures needed to reverse the decay and ensure the conservation and protection of the property, urgently.

2.5 Unfortunately, because of the current difficult situation in the country, the support of the German Agency for international Cooperation (GIZ) have been terminated.

2.6 In this current conflict situation of the country, **the state party** is requesting the WHC and all other concerned international organization to play their vital role and commitments for providing the immediate supports, for regeneration of conservation projects, The state party is in urgent need of real immediate international partners support.

2.7 We consider that, it is urgently important , to get the possible consultation and support of the World Heritage Center and Advisory Bodies, to develop a set of emergency and corrective measures with a timeframe for implementation, as well as a desired state of conservation not the removal the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party

- Armed conflict escalation
- Lack of resources
- Socioeconomic situation deterioration
- Natural factors and decay

4. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area (core zone and buffer zone and/or corridors) that might be envisaged.

N/A

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

State Party ,doesn't mind to upload the report for public access.

Signature Of The Authority