

6. Regrets that the restoration of Charles Bridge was carried out without adequate conservation advice on materials and techniques and also requests the State Party to ensure that any future works are based on detailed assessment and documentation using skilled craftspeople and conservators;
7. Further requests the State Party to ensure that Pruhonice Park is protected and managed as an integral part of the World Heritage property;
8. Reminds the State Party of the buffer zone adopted at the time of the inscription and that any changes to this buffer zone have to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in conformity with the Operational Guidelines;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2011**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the requests above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.

88. Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) (C 710)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List
1994

Criteria
(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger
N/A

Previous Committee Decisions
29 COM 7B.75; 31 COM 7B.96; 32 COM 7B.91; 33 COM 7B.103

International Assistance
N/A

UNESCO extra-budgetary funds
N/A

Previous monitoring missions
November 2003 and June 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS reactive monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- a) General need for interior and exterior conservation work on the monuments;
- b) Insufficient coordination between the Georgian Church and the national authorities;
- c) Lack of co-ordinated management system;
- d) Major reconstruction of the structure of Bagrati Cathedral.

Illustrative material
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/710>

Current conservation issues

The Committee during its 33rd session reiterated its request to the State Party to urgently prepare, approve and submit to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies a management plan for the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, including a boundaries clarification document clearly indicating its buffer zones. The World Heritage Committee

further requested the State Party to provide detailed and complete information concerning the monitoring of the state of conservation of the property as well as the reconstruction project and a progress report on works carried out.

Finally the Committee invited the State Party to initiate an international donors conference designed to address major problems identified for all World Heritage properties in Georgia. The Committee also requested the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2011, a progress report, including the complete and detailed documentation concerning the new reconstruction project for Bagrati Cathedral, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.

In September 2009, the State Party submitted the *Bagrati Cathedral preliminary rehabilitation project*, the general report on the studies conducted within the framework of this project and the *Report on Bagrati Cathedral rehabilitation works*, requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session. These documents were reviewed by an ICOMOS panel, and on 17 February 2010, their comments were transmitted by the World Heritage Centre to the State Party.

Further, in March 2010 a meeting took place between representatives of the President of Georgia, of the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre.

At the invitation of the State Party, a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission visited the property from 11 to 17 March 2010, to review the state of conservation of the property, including the proposed reconstruction of Bagrati Cathedral (mission report available online at the following web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/34COM>).

On 1 December 2009, the State Party also submitted a document clarifying the boundaries of the property which is included in Working Document *WHC-10/34 COM/8D*.

The mission discovered that major interventions have already been carried out as the first phase of the project of reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral.

They noted serious negative interventions (reinforcement of foundations by an underground concrete ring around the monument, construction of reinforced concrete columns, original walls surface partially covered with stone slabs and iron reinforcement).

The future work that is being planned on the existing fabric appears even more drastic. The intention is to reconstruct all the missing parts of the interior and the exterior of the monument, in order to re-create the original building and restore its function as a church. That will be achieved through the installation of a “perimetric” ring of reinforced concrete on top of the existing walls, and through the establishment of new pillars of reinforced concrete in the places of the original stone pillars, reconstruction of the gigantic vaulted volumes and the cupola in reinforced concrete to be covered with a layer of stone cladding that imitates the original stone construction. The mission noted that only a part of the projected reconstruction is based on acceptable documentation while most is based on conjecture. It is possible to extend mouldings and to complete partially collapsed arches through geometrical projection but the heights of the vault, the shape of the drum and the height of the cupola are conjectural.

The Georgian study team in charge of this project informed the mission that the approach in place is the only way that the ruined church can be protected from the strong atmospheric conditions and from any future seismic activities and at the same time recover its full ecclesiastical function as a church.

The mission further noted that the contention of the Patriarchate Technical Office Representative that the monument was inscribed as “*a symbol of national identity and unit*”

did not conform to the reasons for inscription identified by the World Heritage Committee an achievement of medieval Georgian architecture, in half-ruined condition.

The mission recalled that the 2004 ICOMOS mission stated that “We gained the impression however that the determination to rebuild is so great that it may take place despite the risk of the building being removed from the World Heritage List as a result” and added that “We are of the opinion that ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee should make use of every form of persuasion to avoid rebuilding.”

The mission also presented to the State Party the document produced by ICOMOS in February 2010 analyzing the proposed reconstruction project for Bagrati Cathedral. Reflecting efforts to build consensus among the ICOMOS professional community, the document provides an in-depth consideration of all factors important in evaluating the reconstruction proposition and should be seen as the definitive assessment of this project within a conservation perspective.

The ICOMOS document presents the following brief conclusions:

- What is being proposed could be seen as a repeat of the “Evans case” in Crete Island, Greece one century later. It is not wise to repeat the faults of the past.
- The proposed reconstruction project aims to give back to the ruin of Bagrati Cathedral its authentic function as a cathedral and to create a new national symbol through the reconstruction. However, this will destroy much of its existing authentic substance as well as the authentic craftsmanship present in the ruin. This process will also destroy the authentic spirit and the “breath of history”, which future visitors will no longer be able to experience. Therefore, the project must be rejected on the grounds of being a severe threat to the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage property and its authenticity.
- ICOMOS considers that it should be possible to improve the present project in order to preserve the authenticity of the ruin while at the same time allowing it to be used as a church.

The mission expressed strong opposition to the reconstruction, which does not follow scientific methodologies for stone conservation, or the philosophy of the international conservation. The mission also expressed doubts about the “exceptional circumstances” justifying the reconstruction. While there seems to be a popular and political desire for this reconstruction, the building became a ruin many centuries ago and has already taken on a life and a history after its ruin.

The mission also noted that the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection has expressed its reservations regarding the reconstruction project.

Concerning Gelati Monastery, the mission noted that the master plan which was presented to the mission gives adequate answers to problems relating to the future needs of the monastic community, and of the visitors to the monastic complex. There is a proper organization of the functions inside the monastery grounds, taking into consideration the fact that the property is a living monument. There is, also, provision in case of a rising number of the monks, for them to be established in a nearby place, outside of the monastery grounds. The master plan very successfully dissociates the visitors’ facilities from the monks’ life, proposing that the new visitors’ buildings be erected outside the monastery grounds, while the visitors would follow an organized route inside the monastic complex.

The mission underlined that it is absolutely necessary to elaborate and implement the management plan of all components of the property, including a complex programme for the

structural conservation and restoration of the monuments, as well as a complex long-term programme.

Following numerous consultations with the national and local authorities and site visits, the mission prepared a draft desired state of conservation for the property based on its Outstanding Universal Value in view of its eventual inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the necessary corrective measures and the timeframe for their implementation. The World Heritage Centre transmitted this document to the State Party for comments.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies express utmost concern that work has already commenced on the first phase of the reconstruction project of Bagrati Cathedral without any approval of the overall concept and approach by the World Heritage Committee. Furthermore, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies are concerned that no adequate state of conservation report including detailed documentation has been carried out before reconstruction work commenced.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies consider that the reconstruction project will destroy much of the existing authentic fabric and authentic craftsmanship of the ruins, and would irrevocably impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, and could result in the World Heritage Committee considering the deletion of the property from the World Heritage List.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies also believe that alternative approaches to reuse the site based on contemporary development integrating the existing ruins are possible and deserve serious exploration.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies underline that the management plan of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (including a tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, a Urban Master Plan and a Conservation Master Plan of monuments) should be urgently prepared, approved and submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review.

Draft Decision: 34 COM 7B.88

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-10/34.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **33 COM 7B.103**, adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009),*
3. *Acknowledges the information provided by the State Party on the “Bagrati Cathedral preliminary rehabilitation project”, the general report on the studies conducted within the framework of this project and the “report on Bagrati Cathedral rehabilitation works”;*
4. *Notes the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission to the property;*
5. *Expresses its serious concern about irreversible interventions carried out by the State Party as part of the preparations for the Bagrati Cathedral reconstruction project prior to any review or approval of the project and its impact on the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property;*

6. Urges the State Party to halt immediately all interventions at Bagrati Cathedral, which threaten the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property;
7. Also urges the State Party to immediately adopt all necessary measures aiming to ensure the safeguarding of the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property, monitoring and survey of the state of conservation of the property, preparation, adoption and implementation of a Management Plan (including a tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, a Urban Master Plan and a Conservation Master Plan of monuments);
8. Invites the State Party to organise a consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators in order to consider how the interventions already carried out might be reversed entirely or in part and to consider the overall consolidation of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins;
9. Considers that the State Party has not complied with all the requests expressed by the Committee in Decision **33 COM 7B.103**, and that therefore the property is in danger in conformity with Chapter IV.B of the Operational Guidelines and **decides to inscribe the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger**;
10. Adopts the following desired state of conservation for the property based on its Outstanding Universal Value, in view of its future removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger:
 - a) The reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral halted,
 - b) Interventions already carried out at the Bagrati Cathedral reversed (entirely or in part),
 - c) The overall consolidation project of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins, elaborated in consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators, implemented,
 - d) The boundaries and buffer zone of all component parts of the World Heritage property precisely clarified,
 - e) A comprehensive management system including an Integrated Management Plan with tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, Conservation Master Plan for all components of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone and Urban Master Plan including land-use regulations approved and implemented,
 - f) Long-term consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery ensured;
11. Adopts the following corrective measures and the timeframe for their implementation:
 - a) Changes to be carried out immediately
 - The reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral halted and a consultation organized with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators in order to consider how the interventions already carried out might be reversed (entirely or in part) and how the overall consolidation of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins might be achieved,
 - b) Changes to be carried out within one to two years :
 - Interventions already carried out at the Bagrati Cathedral reversed entirely or in part (taking into consideration the underground reinforced concrete ring around the foundations of the building),

- *An overall consolidation project of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins elaborated in consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators,*
 - *Monitoring regimes for the physical conservation of all components of the property to ensure the long-term conservation, consolidation and protection of the World Heritage Property developed,*
 - *A clear institutional coordination mechanism, ensuring that the conservation of the property receives priority consideration within relevant governmental decision-making processes, established,*
- c) *Changes to be carried out within two to three years:*
- *Legislation adopted that assures the protection and maintenance of all the component parts of the World Heritage property in order to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value,*
 - *A comprehensive management system adopted that includes an Integrated Management Plan with tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, Conservation Master Plan for all components of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone and an Urban Master Plan including land-use regulations,*
- d) *Changes to be carried out within five years (after possible removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2 to 3 year) :*
- *Documentation and recording of all historical monuments as a digitized information database for management, conservation and planning purposes completed,*
 - *A full inventory of paintings including digitalization and reference system for all historical monuments of the property established,*
 - *Agreed restoration of all monuments, including paintings carried out,*
 - *A complex programme for the structural conservation and restoration of the churches, in Gelati Monastery to be carried out,*
 - *A complex programme for the systematic cleaning, conservation and restoration of the interior wall-paintings and mosaics in Gelati Monastery churches, with the involvement and collaboration of international specialists in this domain, to be carried out;*

12. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2011**, a report on the state of conservation of the property and on the steps taken to implement the World Heritage Committee's decision, including three printed and electronic copies of the draft management plan, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011, **considering that, if further reconstruction works are carried out on Bagrati Cathedral, the property might be in conformity with Chapter IV.C of the Operational Guidelines for an eventual deletion from the World Heritage List.**

90. City of Vicenza and the Palladian Villas of the Veneto (Italy) (C 712bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List
1994, extension 1996