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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
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**ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE / COMITE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

**Thirty-fourth session / Trente quatrième session
Brasilia, Brazil / Brasilia, Brésil**

25 July – 3 August 2010 / 25 juillet – 3 août 2010

**Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties
inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or on the List of World
Heritage in Danger.**

**Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire: Etat de conservation de biens
inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et/ou sur la Liste du
patrimoine mondial en péril**

**JOINT WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/ICOMOS/ICCROM ADVISORY
MISSION REPORT /**

**RAPPORT DE MISSION DE CONSEIL CONJOINTE DU CENTRE DU
PATRIMOINE MONDIAL, DE L'ICOMOS ET DE L'ICCROM**

**BAGRATI CATHEDRAL AND GELATI MONASTERY (GEORGIA) /
CATHÉDRALE DE BAGRATI ET MONASTÈRE DE GHÉLATI (GEORGIE)**

15 - 17 March 2010 / 15 – 17 mars 2010

This mission report should be read in conjunction with Document /
Ce rapport de mission doit être lu conjointement avec le document suivant :
WHC-10/34.COM/7B.ADD

**REPORT ON THE JOINT
WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/ICOMOS/ICCROM ADVISORY MISSION
TO BAGRATI CATHEDRAL AND GELATI MONASTERY**

GEORGIA

FROM 15 TO 17 MARCH 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the mission are extremely grateful to the authorities of Georgia for their hospitality, support, availability and assistance, and would like to convey their gratitude especially to Dr Nikoloz Vacheishvili, Director General, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia, who provided valuable information on the current situation of the World Heritage property during the meetings and assisted in clarifying many of the complex issues.

The members of the mission were honored by the audience with His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II, and would like to express their thanks to all members of the Centre for Architecture, Restoration and Arts of the Patriarchy of Georgia, for their active participation to the meetings, presentations and site visits.

Special thanks go to all staff of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, in particular to Ms Rusudan Mirzikashvili, Head of the UNESCO and International Relations Unit, and Mr Peter Kankava, who assisted with the organization of the mission and facilitated the meetings with various experts, local officials and stakeholders interested in the conservation and protection of the World Heritage properties in Georgia.

Particular thanks go to the Georgian National Commission for UNESCO and its Secretary-General Ms Ketevan Kandelaki, who continuously supported and accompanied the mission team to the World Heritage properties.

PURPOSE OF THE MISSION

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 (Decision **33 COM 7B.103**).

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.

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 Director General of the National Agency confirmed his willingness to meet ICOMOS representatives after the reactive monitoring mission to Mtskheta, requested by the World Heritage Committee, in order to discuss possible ways forward prior to the finalization of the state of conservation report for this property.

The Georgian authorities also submitted the boundaries clarification document clearly indicating the buffer zones of the World Heritage property “Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery”. This document will be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session in 2010 (see document WHC-10/34.COM/8D).

In addition, the Georgian authorities submitted the Project for rehabilitation of the Gelati Monastery (see Annex).

At the invitation of the State Party, a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission visited the property from 15 to 17 March 2010, to:

- 1) Evaluate the progress of the work on the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex;
- 2) Review all information concerning the monitoring of the state of conservation of the property, including the proposed reconstruction project and a progress of the works carried out;
- 3) Evaluate the progress made in the preparation of an integrated management plan for the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From 15 to 17 March 2010, a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission assessed the state of conservation of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994.

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

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

Concerning Gelati Monastery, the mission notes that the master plan of this complex 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 underlines 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.

ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

GELATI

The monastic complex dominates the surrounding countryside. It is essential that this connection of the property with the natural and built environment is maintained in the future.

Positive measures

- 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 monks, for them to live in a nearby place, outside of the monastery grounds.
- The master plan very successfully dissociates the visitor facilities from the monks' life, proposing that the new visitor buildings be erected outside the monastery grounds, while the visitors would follow an organized route inside the monastic complex.
- Sufficient restoration of the Academy building. The future function and use of this building, within the framework of the master plan, was not clear to the mission.
- The careful excavations already made inside and outside the Academy building have produced very interesting finds, bringing unknown aspects of the medieval period of the monastery life to light. The finds inside the Academy have already been incorporated successfully in the restored building.

Recent Conservation History

Wall Paintings

In 2002-2003, conservation work was planned for the Church of the Virgin at Gelati Monastery. With this purpose the diagnostic research of frescos of the Church of the Virgin was carried out by the Cultural and Art Fund of Georgia.

The following work has been carried out:

- Study of the archives;
- Study of the condition of the paintings;
- Geological research of the area;
- Research of the moisture content;
- Laboratory research - chemical and biological analysis;

The Conservation of the Academy Building

The restoration of the Academy Building at Gelati has recently been concluded and the key points of this operation were presented as follows:

- Most of the interventions are considered to be reversible. The tiles were acquired locally, were cleaned and used for the roof. Most of them are probably from 19th century.

- Interventions were carried out by hand without the use of large mechanical equipment due to the problems of access to the enclosure of the Monastery.
- Observatory – a modern structure that had been installed on the outside of the Academy using iron and concrete was removed and replaced by a balcony constructed from more compatible materials.
- Wine Cellars – the remains of a wine cellar were found during the excavations and these were integrated in the restoration project. These have been well presented and are now visible to visitors through glass panels in the floor.

No cultural layers were encountered since the building was constructed on the bedrock but the building was constructed in three phases.

Recently there has been a lot of work on hydraulic and drainage issues associated with the stream that runs through the monastic complex and the fact that the complex is on the side of a steep hill.

Current conservation issues

A. Katholikon (Main church of the Virgin) – Exterior

- The monument suffers from serious problems of moisture, resulting from the unsatisfactory condition of the roof, rain gutters, window frames, drain pipes, and also, rising damp. The stone fabric faces serious structural problems and needs partial reconstruction (also, the roofing cornices on St. George church) and restoration (dome and northern part of the Katholikon church) – flaking, corrosion, cracks, loss of stone parts, open joints etc. There are improvised interventions in a number of places with Portland cement.
- During the Soviet period the roofs of the Churches at Gelati were protected using zinc sheeting which was attached to the cornices with iron clamps. While this sheeting serves its purpose to a certain extent in that it has reduced the effects of rainwater infiltration through the cracked and broken stone tiles of the original roof, it is unsatisfactory on a number of other accounts:
 - it is not an authentic material
 - it does not allow evaporation of water in any form that may be present beneath the zinc.

This water can be there through infiltration from other parts or through the process of condensation. Furthermore, it is aesthetically unsatisfactory.

The wind blowing under the sheeting creates certain stress with the danger that the sheeting may lift; in order to mitigate this risk the zinc is fixed to the cornices with iron braces. Stress is transferred through these braces to the stone which is now severely damaged in many places.

B. Katholikon (Main church of the Virgin) – Interior – The wall-paintings are in an alarming state of preservation.

The damages are focused mainly on the upper parts (dome, vaulting), as well as on the vertical surfaces of the walls:

- Absence of any conservation measures, colour loss, absence of consolidation of the substructure in cases of destruction of the coloured surface (in some cases this has been covered with Portland cement). The strong contradiction of the existing condition between the safe parts (with brilliant colours as if they had been recently painted) and the parts suffering from the consequences of humidity (which are disappearing) prove that the wall-paintings have been without any protection or conservation care for a long time. There are cases where even the substructure has fallen off and the stone fabric is now exposed (internal parts of the windows on the south cross arm wall). The wall-paintings of the north and south cross arm walls suffered in the past from rain water infiltration through the broken windows (visible water falling traces).

- The quarter-spherical surface of the altar apse. On the upper part – the darkish mosaic surface (1130) has not been cleaned for a long time. The additional wall-paintings on the lower part are in a bad state of preservation.

The top priority is roofing and the restoration of the windows in order to reduce to a minimum all types of infiltration.

C. Katholikon (Main church of the Virgin) – Upper part (women’s gallery)

- There are problems concerning the preservation and the final appearance of the vaulted covering and the floors stone construction.

D. Half-finished restoration works on the bell-tower in the monastery grounds.

E. St. George’s Church

- The same problems appear in St. George’s church, but it should be noted that the state of preservation of the wall-paintings (16th c.) is worse and, therefore, the need of urgent intervention is higher. More and more extensive interventions have been made with Portland cement on the damaged surfaces of the wall-paintings. Almost 60% of the plaster is detached from the wall. Extensive surfaces of the wall-paintings have already disappeared forever. Some places bear traces that show that rain water has run down the wall-paintings for a long time in the past. New icons have been nailed to the stone columns and on the wall-painting surfaces. Even wooden frames have been nailed on the stone columns of the original altar screen. The rising damp has already destroyed most of the lower part of the painted decoration of the walls. The whole stone vaulting surface of the exonarthex has been covered in an unacceptable way with white Portland cement.

Specific recommendations

- It is a matter of high priority that the authorities, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, prepare a detailed long-term programme for the systematic cleaning, conservation and restoration of the interior wall-paintings and mosaics with the involvement and collaboration of the international specialists in this domain.
- It is urgent that the State Party start the elaboration and implementation of the management plan of the property in consultation with all stakeholders.
- It is essential to maintain the dominating presence of the monastic complex over the town, as well as its connection with the natural and built environment, unspoiled in the future. This should be taken into consideration in the elaboration of the future urban plan, regarding the volumes, the heights and the views of any new town buildings.

BAGRATI

Brief History

The cathedral of Bagrati was built in the early 11th Century at the orders of King Bagrat III hence its name. An inscription in the church mentions “*cronicon 223*” which corresponds with the year 1003 AD.

During the Turko-Russian War it was destroyed by the retreating Ottoman troops. On 6 August, 1770 the Russian army bombed the Kutaisi stronghold from Mtsvanekvavila. The dome of the Cathedral crumbled, the pillars and the windows were destroyed and then a few years later it was hit again by Russian troops which left the building as a complete ruin.

Conservation History

1939-1992 the surviving structural elements were stabilized. The aim of this work was to consolidate and evaluate the ruin and there was no attempt to rebuild, to restore or to re-consecrate the church.

In 2001 all ecclesiastical buildings were handed over to the Georgian Orthodox Church for whom re-consecration was a priority.

In 2002 a company headed by I. Gremelashvili, was requested to prepare a preservation concept for Bagrati.

In 2003, Architectural Heritage Restoration Centre Ltd developed Bagrati Preservation Project. Structural designs were made by a team of structural designers of Capital Ltd.

Restoration – Reconstruction Proposals

In 2003 the “Centre of Reconstruction of Architectural Heritage” received a grant from UNESCO for processing the “Concept of Scientific Protection of Bagrati Cathedral”. The following works were planned and implemented during the project:

- The scientific and geological research of the Cathedral;
- Research on the building materials of the Cathedral;
- Engineering research of the Cathedral;
- Research of the inscriptions in the Cathedral;
- Historical-bibliographical research on the Cathedral;
- Archaeological research of the Cathedral;
- The analysis of the methodology of the reconstruction plan of the Cathedral;
- Concept of scientific protection of the Cathedral.

In 2004, ICOMOS took the view that any reconstruction must be carried out in keeping with the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its authenticity and therefore it would be more appropriate to retain the property as a ruin.

In 2005 a full technical, engineering, archaeological and architectural study was commissioned. The object of this study was to prepare the remaining structures for the reconstruction of the Cathedral so that it could be used for liturgical activities once again by the Georgian Church.

Two options were considered:

1. the first was to entail the creation of a light superstructure built from steel and glass that would provide protection from the elements,
2. the second was a fuller reconstruction using stone and reinforced concrete.

The option of conserving the ruins *de facto* was not taken into consideration.

In January 2008, the President of Georgia and the Georgian Orthodox Church initiated the reconstruction project of the Bagrati Cathedral with the intention of restoring the initial religious use and functions of the Cathedral, as previously discussed at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee (Suzhou, 2004).

The World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, July 2008) urged the State Party not to carry out any reconstruction work which may adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value and its authenticity and strongly urged the State Party not to

commence any constructions before consideration of the project by the World Heritage Committee.

The joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission in 2008 informed the authorities of the provisions in the *Operational Guidelines* concerning authenticity, in particular that the reconstruction of historic buildings is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances, and only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.

The authorities confirmed that the final decision will only be made after an analysis of reconstruction possibilities for the Cathedral has been completed, and following a review of the project by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and examination by the World Heritage Committee.

In the report, the State Party underlined that the rehabilitation of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery is a priority. The report mentioned some works accomplished. While these works mark the initial stage of the conservation process of Bagrati Cathedral, they seem also to be preparatory activities for its reconstruction: documentation, detailed examination of structures and stability of the walls, evaluation of the general state of conservation and examination of construction materials, preliminary art history research, as well as reuse of more than 400 authentic stone construction elements inventoried inside and outside the historic building. The detailed rehabilitation/reconstruction project of the Bagrati Cathedral has not been provided by the State Party as requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008).

Remarks

1. The mission ascertains that very serious interventions already started on the monument:
 - An underground ring of reinforced concrete around the foundations of the building has already been installed.
 - Parts of columns of reinforced concrete in the very places of the old stone columns have been constructed. The new, concrete columns have been covered by a thin layer of stone slabs.
 - The damaged exterior surface of the building has been partially covered with stone slabs similar to the original stones.
 - Exposed parts of the interior wall surfaces (where the original stones have disappeared) have been covered with iron reinforcement. A cement plaster has been applied to the reinforcement and a layer of stone cladding will follow, which will provide a thin new covering of these problematic surfaces.

The aforementioned reconstruction works have been begun without any systematic conservation, restoration and strengthening of the original fabric of the building in the places where it is at risk (open joints, missing parts of stones, cracks, breakage etc.). So, practically the monument continues to suffer from the atmospheric conditions and the ageing of the fabric, due to the absence of essential conservation work.

2. The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS have had no previous information from the State Party about the intention to start the reconstruction work on the World Heritage property. On the contrary, they have been informed about this activity by concerned individuals.

3. The future work that is being planned on the existing fabric is even more drastic, which, unfortunately, is a heterogeneous construction that already incorporates previous interventions. The intention is to reconstruct all the missing parts of the interior and the

exterior of the monument, in order to re-create the form of 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. This will be followed by the reconstruction of the gigantic vaulted volumes and the cupola in reinforced concrete which will ultimately be covered with a layer of stone cladding that imitates the original stone construction.

4. The architectural plans of this project were presented to the mission twice, following a request for additional information from the civil engineers of the team involved, and these have induced strong discussion between the members of the mission and the Georgian study team. The position of the study team is that this is the only way that the ruined church can be protected from the strong atmospheric conditions and from any future seismic action, which would moreover allow it to revive its full ecclesiastical function as a church.

5. The mission clearly expressed the strong antithesis to this hard reconstruction, which is outside the framework of any scientific deontology for the conservation/restoration of the monument’s stone fabric. Even more, the rehabilitation by total reconstruction is in conflict with the philosophy of the international principles, being accepted only in exceptional cases. Regarding that, the mission also underlined that the monument was not inscribed as “*a symbol of national identity and unity*” as was expressed by the Patriarchate Technical Office Representative, but as an achievement of medieval Georgian architecture, in a half-ruined condition. It was also underlined that this severe intervention obviously changes the conditions under which the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List, with probable consequences – In Danger Listing and beyond that the possible delisting of the property in compliance with the *World Heritage Convention*.

6. After that, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection has expressed its reservations regarding the presented reconstruction project and the will to envisage the perspective of an International Seminar on this matter. The Cultural Heritage Commission of the Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarchate Representative has kept a different position, clarifying that the Patriarchate is willing to make the ruined church liturgical and has thus accepted the rehabilitation of the monument as an offer by the State to the Church.

Considerations

1. The Cathedral at Bagrati was inscribed as a ruin as stated in the evaluation by the Advisory Body (ICOMOS) of the nomination file no. 710: “Bagrati Cathedral is ruined and may be considered *ipso facto* to be completely authentic.” The Advisory Body, in its evaluation, also “expressed grave doubts about the projects being discussed for the reconstruction of the Cathedral and its reconsecration as a church”
2. Article 86 of the Operational Guidelines states: “*In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.*” In the “Executive Summary of the Rehabilitation Project of Bagrati Cathedral (Justification of the Selected Methodology)” provided by the studio of I. Gremelashvili some 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 conjecture. The mission also has doubts as to

the “exceptional circumstances” in this particular case. 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.

3. In the 2004 ICOMOS Mission report carried out by Prof. Andrzej Tomaszewski he states 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 adds that “We are of the opinion that ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee should make use of every form of persuasion to avoid rebuilding.”
4. While the engineers from the architectural restoration company state that their project proposal will have sufficient seismic resistance, the mission expressed concern over the lack of flexibility and the excessive weight that will be placed on the medieval walls, as well as the methodology being used for their consolidation, which not only significantly reduces the material authenticity but may create additional conservation issues in the future through the choice of methods and materials.

Specific recommendations

- All interventions including the “consolidation” of the ruins should be suspended immediately.
- Taking into account that the State Party has not complied with all the requests of the World Heritage Committee (Decision **33 COM 7B.103**), and that therefore the property is in danger in conformity with Chapter IV.B of the Operational Guidelines, the mission recommends that the World Heritage Committee should consider inscription of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- Moreover, if the State Party decides to continue the reconstruction works at Bagrati Cathedral, the World Heritage Committee might propose that the property in conformity with Chapter IV.C of the Operational Guidelines, be proposed for eventual deletion from the World Heritage List.

CONCLUSIONS

THE CORRECTIVE MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION AND A TIMEFRAME WITHIN WHICH THE CORRECTIVE MEASURES WILL HAVE TO BE ACHIEVED

Following numerous meetings with the national authorities and site visits, the mission prepared, in consultation with the State Party, in view of an eventual inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, a draft desired state of conservation for the property, including corrective measures and timeframe for their implementation, as follows:

Draft statement of the desired state of conservation for the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, Georgia, based on its Outstanding Universal Value:

Desired state of conservation

- Reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral halted;
- Interventions already carried out at the Bagrati Cathedral reversed (entirely or in part);

- Overall consolidation project of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins, elaborated in consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators, implemented;
- 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;
- Long-term consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery ensured.

The necessary 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-two years :

- (i) 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);
- (ii) An overall consolidation project of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins elaborated in consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators;
- (iii) 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;
- (iv) 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-three years :

- (i) Legislation adopted that assures the protection of Outstanding Universal Value through the maintenance of all the components of the World Heritage property that convey its Outstanding Universal Value;
- (ii) 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 adopted.

D. Changes to be carried out within five years

- (i) Documentation and recording of all historical monuments as a digitized information database for management, conservation and planning purposes completed;

- (ii) A full inventory of paintings including digitization and reference system for all historical monuments of the property established;
- (iii) Agreed restoration of all monuments, including paintings, carried out;
- (iv) A detailed programme for the structural conservation and restoration of the churches in Gelati Monastery to be carried out;
- (v) A detailed 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.

ANNEX I

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Joint WHC-ICOMOS - ICCROM advisory mission to the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) 11-17 March 2010

- 4) Carry out a joint ICOMOS/ICCROM expert mission to the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery as requested/proposed by the World Heritage Centre and agreed by the State Party in September 2009;
- 5) Evaluate the progress of the work on the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex;
- 6) Review all information concerning the monitoring of the state of conservation of the property, including the proposed reconstruction project and a progress of the works carried out;
- 7) Evaluate the progress made in the preparation of an integrated management plans for the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery;

MISSION PROGRAMME

Thursday, 11 March 2010 : Arrival of the experts in Tbilisi

Meeting at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation. Discussion on the state of conservation of the Georgian World Heritage properties. Presentation of the inventory, documentation and protection zones established for the Georgian World Heritage properties.

Dinner offered by the Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia

Friday, 12 March 2010

1. Working Meeting at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation
 2. Audience with His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II
 3. Meeting at the Ministry of Culture
 4. Meeting at the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, UNESCO National Commission
 5. Meeting at private agency - Presentation of the Bagrati Cathedral reconstruction project
- Dinner offered by the Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia

Saturday, 13 March 2010

Departure from Tbilisi to Mtskheta

1. Walk in the rehabilitated historic centre guided by the local government representatives
 2. Meeting with the Mtskheta-Mtianeti Governor
 3. Visit at the Mtskheta Museum, meeting with Direction and presentation of the activities of the Greater Mtskheta Archaeological Museum-Reserve
 4. Visit to the Samtavro Necropolis
 5. Visit to the Samtavro Monastery, meeting with the Priest and the Abbess of the monastery
 6. Visit to the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral
- Departure to Tbilisi

Sunday, 14 March

Departure from Tbilisi to Mtskheta

Visit to the Jvari monastery

Lunch offered by the monks in the new monastery near Jvary

Departure to Kutaisi

Monday, 15 March 2010

Departure to Gelati

1. Visit to the Gelati Monastery

2. Meeting with the Gelati Bishop

3. Presentation of the projects and implemented works (Gelati and Bagrati) by private agencies

4. Visit to the Bagrati Cathedral

5. Meeting with the members of the Cultural Heritage Commission of the Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarchate

Dinner

Tuesday, 16 March 2010

Departure to Tbilisi

1. Debriefing meeting at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation

2. Meeting with the members of the Cultural Heritage Commission of the Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarchate

3. WHC/ICOMOS working meeting / Preparation of a joint mission report

Dinner

Wednesday, 17 March 2010: Departure

THE BAGRATI CATHEDRAL AND GELATI MONASTERY

Inscription history

Justification provided by the State Party :

Gelati Monastery

Gelati ensemble is a set of well preserved historical monuments. It is especially valuable for the preserved monuments of architecture, mosaic, mural painting, metalwork and enamel. Gelati was not only a monastery, but a centre of science and education, while the Academy, founded in the monastery, was one of the most significant centres of culture in the ancient Georgia. High skill of execution and expressiveness of the mosaic preserved in Gelati Monastery place it among the outstanding artistic monuments of the worldwide significance. Mural painting, chronological range of which comprises 12th-17th c., is a peculiar significant museum of Georgian monumental painting. Up to recently, the unique samples of Georgian metalwork were kept in Gelati; some of them are adorned with enamels, for instance 12th c. magnificent Khakhuli triptych 12-17th cc. icons are distinguished by lavish ornamentation and masterly execution. Illuminated manuscripts kept in Gelati are also the unique samples of Georgian culture.

Thus, Gelati monastery due to its architectural merits and magnificent samples of Georgian culture kept in it, is the unique treasury of culture. Such a collection of excellent monuments of high artistic value, gathered in a single ensemble, is a rare case in the history of the world culture.

Bagrati Cathedral

The outer appearance of the building is monumental and grand, varied and dynamic. Ornamental decoration contributes to the picturesqueness of the cathedral. The building amazes and fascinates the viewer by perfect proportions, free and perfect execution of the mouldings, ornaments, arches, light constructions.

Bagrati cathedral ornamentation makes it possible to trace the evolution undergone by Georgian architectural ornament in less than half a century; this ornamentation is an excellent sample of the world architectural plastics.

High artistic value of Bagrati cathedral goes far beyond the local significance. It is one of the best monuments of the medieval Christian architecture.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

[...] Detailed maps showing the areas proposed for inscription and the buffer zones, which had been omitted from the nomination dossier, were supplied to the mission. [...]

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion iv.

Inscription criteria and World Heritage values

The nominated property of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery correspond to criteria (iv) :

Criterion iv. Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery represent the highest flowering of the architecture of medieval Georgia.

Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee (refer to previous State of Conservation reports etc.)

**33rd session of the World Heritage Committee,
Seville, Spain 22-30 June 2009
Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B**

Main threats 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.

Conservation issues

The World Heritage Committee, at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), strongly urged the State Party to immediately start preventive conservation work on the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex, as well as to develop, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, a long-term programme for the systematic conservation of the mural paintings and mosaics with the involvement and collaboration of international specialists in this domain. The World Heritage Committee noted the State Party's intention to prepare a new reconstruction project for Bagrati Cathedral and requested the State Party to provide assurances that no reconstruction work shall commence until the State Party has provided complete and detailed documentation concerning this project for review by the World Heritage Committee. The State Party was requested to urgently prepare, approve and provide to the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, the management plan of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex, including the boundaries clarification document clearly indicating its buffer zones. The World Heritage Committee encouraged the State Party to organize an awareness-raising campaign for all World Heritage properties in Georgia and invited the State Party to prepare relevant documentation in order to initiate an international donors conference designed to address the major problems identified for all World Heritage properties in Georgia. The State Party submitted a state of conservation report dated 29 January 2009 which provides a summary of some activities accomplished and little information relevant to the state of conservation of the property. The State Party report underlined the main factors affecting the property which are the lack of a fast solution to the long-standing problems, the scarcity of the resources, as well as the unavailability of a flexible management; the negative climatic and environmental affect on the monument; the lack of qualified specialists in the domain of conservation, restoration and management of properties and unorganized visiting of the property.

a) Preventive conservation work on the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex

The State Party informed that monitoring activities at the property have been undertaken and provided the list of the accomplished works without any detailed report. On the basis of the evaluation of the stability of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, the State Party proposed technical measures aiming to increase the stability of the structures. The State Party also informed that the database, containing information on Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery has being created.

b) Reconstruction project for Bagrati Cathedral

In 2004, ICOMOS noted that any reconstruction must be carried out in keeping with the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its authenticity and therefore it would be more appropriate to retain the property as a ruin. In January 2008, the President of Georgia and the Georgian Orthodox Church initiated the reconstruction project of the

Bagrati Cathedral with the intention of restoring the initial religious use and functions of the Cathedral, which was previously discussed at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee (Suzhou, 2004). The World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, July 2008) urged the State Party not to carry out any reconstruction work which may adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value and its authenticity and strongly urged the State Party not to commence any constructions before consideration of the project by the World Heritage Committee. The reactive monitoring mission in 2008 informed the authorities of the provisions in the *Operational Guidelines* concerning authenticity and, in particular that the reconstruction of historic buildings is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances, and only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture. The authorities confirmed that the final decision will only be made after an analysis of reconstruction possibilities for the Cathedral has been completed, and following a review of the project by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and examination by the World Heritage Committee.

In the report, the State Party underlined that the rehabilitation of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery is a priority. The 2009 budget resources for the conservation of the monuments highlight the State policy regarding the preservation of the cultural heritage.

The report mentioned some works accomplished. While these works mark the initial stage of the conservation process of the Bagrati Cathedral, they seem to be preparatory activities of its reconstruction : - Technical status of the surface and underground bearing structures assessed and studied (laboratory research and analyses, fixation of micro and macro cracks, study of their length, width, depth and gaps, mapping and drafting passports of damages). - Research of construction materials, laboratory analyses (recommendations on compliance of the materials existing on the site with the materials to be used). - Preliminary art history research (bibliography, on-site research and recommendations, drafting reference and archive material list). The detailed rehabilitation / reconstruction project of the Bagrati Cathedral has not been provided by the State Party as requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008).

c) Management plan of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex

The State Party informed that all necessary documents have been prepared in order to start the elaboration and implementation of the management plan of the property. No documents have been submitted by the State Party in the report for review.

d) Boundaries clarification issue

The State Party underlined that the Law of Georgia "On the Cultural Heritage" determines a 1 km special protection area for the property. The protection zones of the monuments are being adjusted and expanded. No documents have been submitted by the State Party in the report for review.

e) Awareness-raising campaign and international donors conference

The State Party did not provide any view concerning the eventual preparation of the international donors conference designed to address major problems identified for all World Heritage properties in Georgia. The World Heritage and ICOMOS noted that the State Party should provide the detailed information on any accomplished works. Taking into account the brief summary report it would be necessary to obtain further detailed information concerning each element of the report, especially concerning the rehabilitation project, management plan and the conservation and monitoring work progress report, as well as the information on boundary issues. The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS remain greatly concerned by the scope of the problems, in particular the Bagrati Cathedral reconstruction project and the absence of the detailed report responding to the World Heritage Committee requests. The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS recall the

recommendation that the work programme designed to address the major problems identified with this property and the preparation of the donor's conference for all World Heritage properties in Georgia should be included in the Georgian Cultural Heritage Programme.

Decision 33COM 7B.103

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **32 COM 7B.91**, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),
3. Reiterates its request to the State Party to urgently prepare, approve and submit to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies the management plan of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, including the boundaries clarification document clearly indicating its buffer zones;
4. Requests the State Party to provide detailed and complete information concerning the monitoring of the state of conservation of property as well as the reconstruction project and a progress report on works carried out;
5. Invites the State Party to prepare relevant documentation in order to initiate an international donors conference designed to address major problems identified for all World Heritage properties in Georgia;
6. Also requests 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.

**32nd session of the World Heritage Committee,
Quebec City, Canada ; 2 - 10 July 2008
Document WHC-08/32.COM/7B.Add**

Main threats 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.

Conservation issues

The Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia submitted, as requested by the World Heritage Committee, at its 31th session (Christchurch, 2007), a state of conservation report dated 25 January 2008 confirming that no significant progress has been made since the World Heritage Committee's last decision.

A joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission carried out from 2 to 10 June 2008 to the Historic Monuments of Mtskheta and to the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, met all relevant representatives and discussed the following issues:

Bagrati Cathedral

In January 2008, the President of Georgia and the Georgian Orthodox Church initiated the reconstruction project of the Bagrati Cathedral based on the intention to recreate the initial religious use and functions of the Cathedral, which was previously discussed at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee (Suzhou, 2004). ICOMOS, in 2004, took a view that any reconstruction must be carried out in keeping with the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and its authenticity and therefore it would be more appropriate to retain the property as a ruin. The World Heritage Committee urged the State Party not to carry out any reconstruction work which may adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value and its authenticity and strongly urged the State Party not to commence any constructions before consideration of the project by the World Heritage Committee. The mission informed the authorities of the provisions in the *Operational Guidelines*

concerning authenticity, in particular that the reconstruction of historic buildings is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances, and only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture. The authorities confirmed that the final decision will only be made after an analysis of reconstruction possibilities for the Cathedral has been completed, and following a review of the project by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and examination by the World Heritage Committee.

The preparatory activities, including, documentation, detailed examination of structures and stability of the walls, evaluation of the general state of conservation and examination of construction materials, as well as reuse of more than 400 authentic stone construction elements inventoried inside and outside the historic building will be finalized by the end of 2008.

Following the evaluation of the state of conservation of this element of the World Heritage property, the mission noted the critical structural stability of the walls and recommended starting immediately, in parallel to any possible decision concerning the project, the preventive conservation works of the Bagrati Cathedral.

Gelati Monastery Complex

The mission evaluated the general state of conservation of the main components of the property.

- Virgin Mary Church:

The mission observed the damage of the roof, stone elements and accumulation of humidity in the north-eastern part of the Church and concluded that the exterior of the Cathedral is in need of urgent conservation/restoration work. The Ministry of Culture confirmed that a competition for an architectural conservation project had already been organized. The mission underlined the need for the authorities provide the project proposal for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies.

The mission noted that no preventive actions have been undertaken by the Georgian conservation services concerning the mural paintings of great value. Only in the narthex, has diagnostic research on the wall paintings of the Virgin Mary Church been carried out by the Cultural and Art Fund of Georgia in 2004-2005. However no conservation action has been taken.

The mission strongly recommended that the authorities prepare, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, a long-term programme for the systematic conservation of the mural paintings and mosaics with the involvement and collaboration of the international specialists in this domain.

- St George Church, St. Nicolas Church, Bell Tower

The architectural conservation project for these monuments is part of the above-mentioned competition organized by the Ministry of Culture. The mission expressed its concern about the increasing gravity of the physical situation of these monuments and strongly urged the authorities to undertake the necessary conservation works to ensure the long term survival of these monuments.

Management plan and boundary issues

In accordance with the 2007 Law on Cultural Heritage and with this Constitutional Agreement, the management of the religious cultural heritage properties still lies under the State Party's authority but is carried out in agreement with the Church. No management plan exists for the property. The mission recommended that the preparation of the World Heritage property management plan, in coordination with all relevant stakeholders, be added, as a priority, to the Cultural Heritage Programme.

In addition, the mission underlined the necessity to prepare an awareness-raising campaign for all World Heritage properties in Georgia, including installation of the plaques commemorating the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List.

The authorities did not mention their 2007 proposals concerning a new statement of authenticity/integrity, as well as a new approach to the justification of the property, including the possible re-nomination under two additional criteria, (i) and (ii). The mission did not consider that a re-nomination of the property under new criteria would be justified. However, the State Party should provide a draft of Statement of Outstanding Universal Value.

The mission recommended to the authorities that the work programme designed to address the major problems identified with this property and the preparation of the donors conference for all World Heritage properties in Georgia be included in the Georgian Cultural Heritage Programme.

Decision 32COM 7B.91

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-08/32.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **31 COM 7B.97**, adopted at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007),
3. Strongly urges the State Party to immediately start preventive conservation work on the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex, as well as to develop, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, a long-term programme for the systematic conservation of the mural paintings and mosaics with the involvement and collaboration of international specialists in this domain;
4. Also recalling the earlier discussions among the Advisory Bodies, international experts and the World Heritage Committee, notes the State Party's intention to prepare a new reconstruction project for Bagrati Cathedral in order to recreate its initial religious use and functions, and underlines that in accordance with Paragraph 86 of the Operational Guidelines the reconstruction of historic buildings is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances;
5. Requests the State Party to provide assurances that no reconstruction work shall commence until the State Party has provided complete and detailed documentation concerning this project for review by the World Heritage Committee;
6. Also requests the State Party to urgently prepare, approve and provide to the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, the management plan of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Complex, including the boundaries clarification document clearly indicating its buffer zones;
7. Encourages the State Party to organize an awareness-raising campaign for all World Heritage properties in Georgia;
8. Invites the State Party to prepare relevant documentation in order to initiate an international donors conference designed to address the major problems identified for all World Heritage properties in Georgia;
9. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2009**, 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 33rd session in 2009.

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| <p><i>31st session of the World Heritage Committee, Christchurch, New Zealand, 23 June – 2 July 2007 Document WHC- 07/31.COM/7B</i></p> |
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Main threats 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.

Current conservation issues

The World Heritage Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005) encouraged the State Party to take appropriate measures, including seeking of funds, to address conservation issues identified in the state of conservation report.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Georgia submitted a report on 12 March 2007 to the World Heritage Centre, dated January 2007. This report provides a comprehensive overview of all the issues relevant to the long term conservation of the property. This detailed report includes a proposal by the State Party for a new statement of significance, a statement of authenticity/integrity, a description of the situation for management, detailed monitoring reports concerning the physical condition of frescoes and materials within the two ensembles, and recently completed conservation work and studies addressing some of the problems identified.

More specifically, the report proposes a new approach to the justification of the property, including: nomination under two additional criteria, (i) and (ii), but without justification as well as a statement of authenticity/integrity not fully in compliance with the *Operational Guidelines*.

Concerning the lack of a management plan for the two properties, unresolved management conflict between Church and State and the physical state of conservation of the two ensembles the report provides observations included already its report of January 2005. The Committee's request (**29 COM 7B.75**) is not addressed in the State Party report. Indeed, all of the problems described at the time appear still in place, and in most cases worsened by the passage of time without positive treatment.

The current report also notes that the major reconstruction project for the structure of the Bagrati Cathedral, first questioned at the 28th session of the Committee (Suzhou, 2004), is no longer being considered.

The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS express their concern about the increasing gravity of the physical situation described of the two ensembles, the continuing inability of the State Party to provide the necessary management, and institutional conditions necessary to ensure the long-term survival of these monuments, and for the apparent failure to secure the necessary financial support to address previously defined problems.

Decision: 31 COM 7B.97

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **29 COM 7B.75**, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Regrets the late submission of the state of conservation report but notes the efforts of the State Party in reviewing the values, integrity and authenticity of the property;
4. Expresses serious concern about the continuing urgency of the problems described by the State Party report, and its inability to respond to these issues with appropriate managerial, institutional and financial measures;
5. Encourages the State Party to prepare, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS/ICCROM a 5 year work programme designed to address the major problems identified, for presentation to potential donors;

6. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission to assess the state of conservation of the property;
7. Strongly urges the State Party to initiate preparation of an integrated management plan for the World Heritage property, with the assistance of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
8. Also requests the State Party to provide a progress report to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2008** for examination by the Committee at its 32nd session in 2008.

**29th session of the World Heritage Committee,
Durban, South Africa, 10-17 July 2005
WHC-05/29.COM/7B.Rev**

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

Major reconstruction of the structure of Bagrati Cathedral; general need for interior and exterior conservation work of the monuments; insufficient coordination between the Georgian Church and the national authorities.

Current conservation issues:

The State Party submitted a state of conservation report on 1 February 2005 which outlined in great detail the current condition of each of the monuments that constitute the World Heritage property.

No conservation or consolidation works have been carried out over the recent decade for Bagrati Cathedral, and the lack of care has worsened its physical state. In 2003, the Centre for the Reconstruction of the Architectural Heritage produced the 'Concept of Scientific Protection of Bagrati Cathedral' with financial assistance from UNESCO, but there is no Management Plan. Factors affecting the property include harsh climatic conditions, an ineffective management system, lack of financial subsidies, and interventions by the clergy. In the context of 'The Concept of Scientific Protection of Bagrati Cathedral,' the following studies have been carried out: geological and seismic research; analysis of the physical state of the Cathedral; research into the building materials; bibliographical studies; archaeological research; analysis of the methodology of reconstruction; and the concept of protection. The structurally unstable parts of the monument have been recorded, as well as the preserved fragments of wall paintings.

With regard to the Gelati Monastery, the report stated that two interventions made by the local clergy have affected the appearance of the observatory building and St. Nicolas Church, and that no Management Plan existed. Factors affecting the property include harsh climatic conditions, an ineffective management system, the lack of financial subsidies, and interventions by the clergy. In addition, diagnostic research of the wall paintings of the Virgin Mary Church was carried out by the Cultural and Art Fund of Georgia. This included the study of the archives, the condition of the frescoes, geological research of the area, research of the moisture content, and laboratory research (chemical and biological analysis).

The condition of the basement, the walls, floors, and plaster was analysed. The condition of the fence needs attention.

The state of conservation report submitted by the State Party made no specific mention of the major reconstruction project for the structure of the Bagrati Cathedral discussed during the previous session of the World Heritage Committee. The World Heritage Centre is in contact with the State Party to seek clarification.

This state of conservation report shows that the State Party is well aware of the condition of these two World Heritage properties. However, no long-term, effective steps have been undertaken by the Georgian conservation services to confront the very serious problems

of these monuments. There are no Management Plans for the Bagrati and Gelati ensembles, and the UNESCO and UNDP-SPPD Heritage and Tourism Master Plan for Mtskheta has not yet been translated into Georgian. With regard to problems of funding, the State Party should be encouraged actively to undertake initiatives with international donor institutions in order to fulfil the highest priority need for the protection and conservation of the monuments.

Serious problems exist stemming from the current legal framework for monuments in Georgia, and particularly those relating to the ownership and management of religious monuments. To this is added the lack of strong and effective control of monuments and archaeological properties at all administrative levels. It is clear, however, that although ownership of ecclesiastical monuments in Georgia is constitutionally vested in the Georgian Orthodox Church, the management of these monuments is the responsibility of the State. In consequence, the state authorities should accept permanent responsibility for the preservation and protection of religious monuments as well as historical buildings and archaeological properties, and act in a timely manner to prevent any destructive intervention and reconstruction activity.

Decision: 29 COM 7B.75

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document **WHC-05/29.COM/7B.Rev**,
2. Recalling its Decision **28 COM 15B.93**, adopted at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004),
3. Encourages the State Party of Georgia to take appropriate measures, including seeking of funds, to address conservation issues identified in the state of conservation report;
4. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2007** with an updated report for examination by the Committee at its 31st session (2007).

**28th session of the World Heritage Committee,
Suzhou, China, 28 June – 7 July 2004
WHC-04/28.COM/15B**

Conservation issues:

During a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta (Georgia) from 8 to 16 November 2003, observations were also made on the state of conservation of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery. The mission observed that the exterior of the buildings of Gelati Monastery is in good condition. The windows, however, need to be conserved to keep out the wind and rainwater as damages have been caused to the mural paintings particularly on the southern wall. In Bagrati Cathedral scaffolding from the previous conservation work still stands against the wall of the fortress, and open trenches indicate that archaeological excavation have been left incomplete.

Conservation work on the chapel in the fortress and the walls of the cathedral also need to be concluded. The authorities of Georgia intend to undertake a major reconstruction of the structure, either by using artificial stones to recreate the original form of the building or to use glazed steel to build a transparent dome, which can be illuminated. ICOMOS, however, took a view that any reconstruction must be carried out in keeping with the outstanding universal value of the property and its authenticity and therefore it would be more appropriate to retain the site as a ruin.

Decision **28 COM 15B.87**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Acknowledging the outcomes of the joint UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property,
2. Takes note with concern of the conservation problems affecting the property and encourages the State Party to respond to them taking into account the recommendations made by the mission;
3. Urges the State Party not to carry out any reconstruction work which may adversely affect the outstanding universal value and its authenticity and strongly urges the State Party not to commence any constructions before consideration of the project by the Committee;
4. Requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre an updated report by 1 February 2005 so that the World Heritage Committee may examine the state of conservation of the property at its 29th session in 2005.

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| 18th session of the World Heritage Committee Phuket, Thailand, December 1994 |
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Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery

The Committee inscribed this property on the World Heritage List and requested the ICOMOS mission evaluation report to be transmitted to the State Party.

ANNEX III

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Current reconstruction works



South entrance - absence of conservation work



Restoration works on eastern facade



The new stone slabs



Project for rehabilitation of the Gelati Monastery ¹
Presentations by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection - Georgia

Diapositive
1

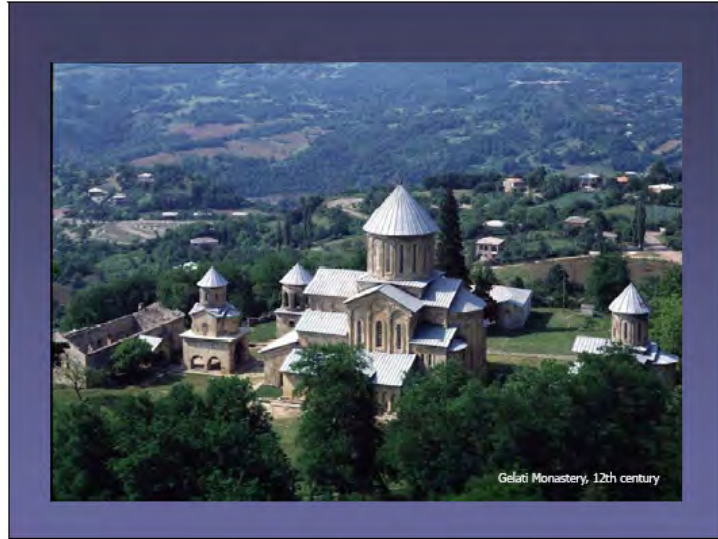


Diapositive
2



¹ Note : this Project submitted by the State Party in January 2010 is under review by the Advisory Bodies.

Diapositive
3



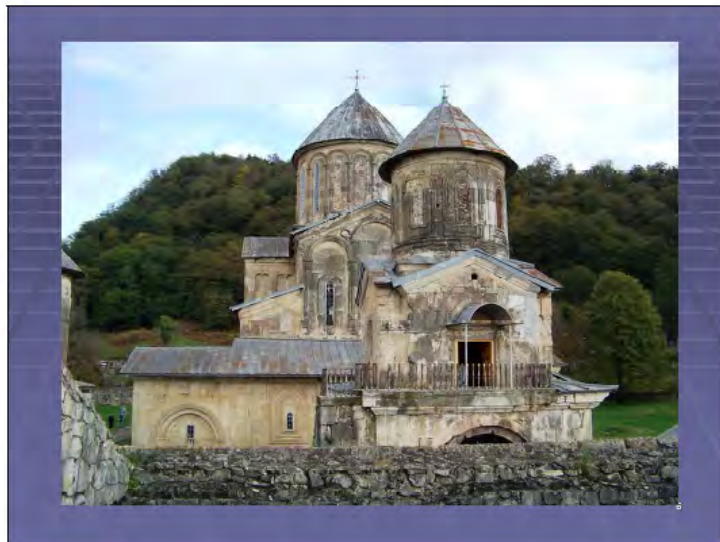
Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
6



Diapositive
7

The project addressed the following challenges

- stone conservation;
- conservation/restoration of unique wall paintings;
- lack of infrastructure: absence of itineraries, billboards, road signs, security systems, facilities for the disabled, shopping and recreational facilities, first aid centres, etc;
- regular movement of heavy vehicles in the surroundings of the site;
- lack of utilities.
- installation of water removal system needed at all structures of the monastery: the water leaking from the roofs as well as sprinkles affecting the walls from other sides cause damage to the exterior surfaces as well as the unique murals covering the inner walls;

Diapositive
8

1960s inadequate restoration/conservation



roofing: although the buildings have no serious substantial damage, the roofing method selected under restoration work implemented in the 1960s has proved inadequate (the building now has a tin roof; tin sheets are fastened onto a squared timber with wooden cylindrical shafts imitating stone slabs). Particularly affected is the part of the drum which supports the naves and quences.

Diapositive
9



Diapositive
10



Diapositive
11



Diapositive
12

Measurements

The Church of the Nativity of the Virgin, the main building of the monastery, was surveyed by German and Spanish specialists

Restoration Project prepared by Prof. Uwe Lauchtemann and Annabel Gonzales



Diapositive
13

Mural Paintings

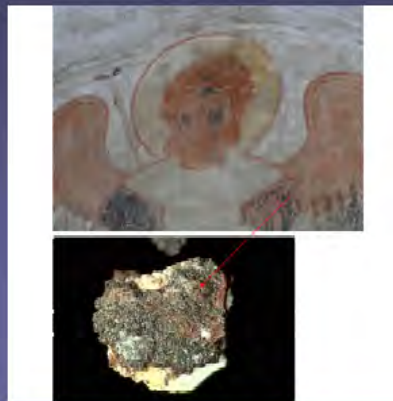
The damages of the wall paintings were analyzed and assessed, following which recommendations were developed



Church of the Nativity of the Virgin, 12th Century
Mosaic Decoration

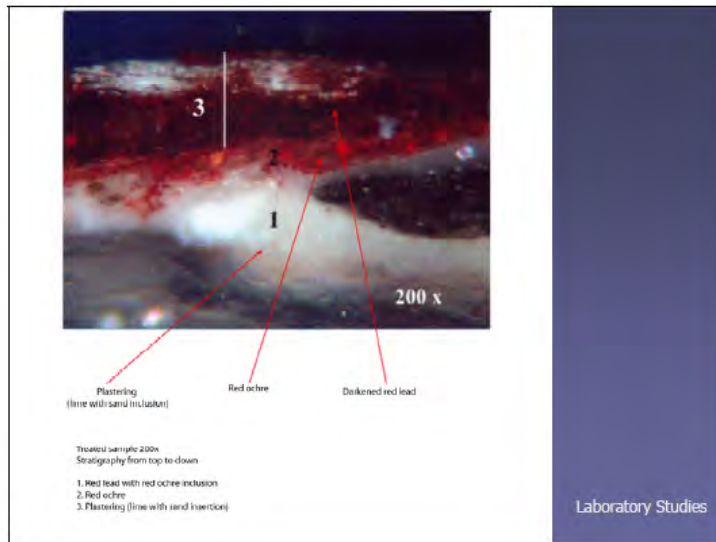
Diapositive
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The report was built onto the results of the laboratory studies conducted at the Faculty of Restoration of the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts.



Laboratory Test of Mural Painting

Diapositive
15



Diapositive
16



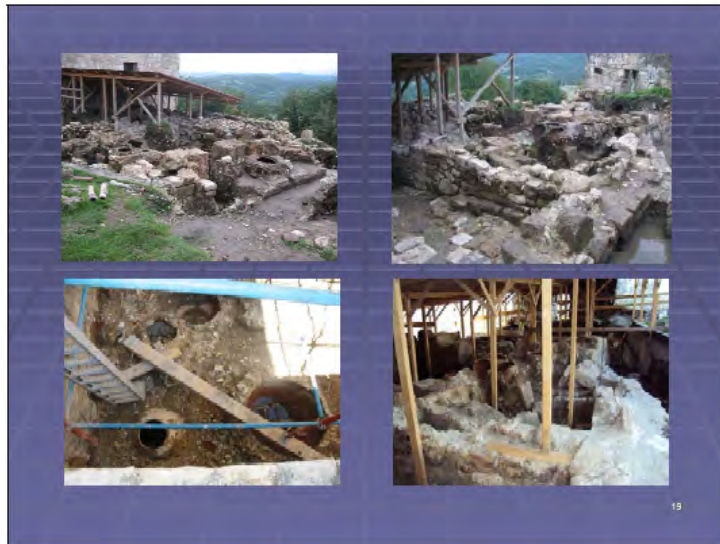
Diapositive
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Diapositive
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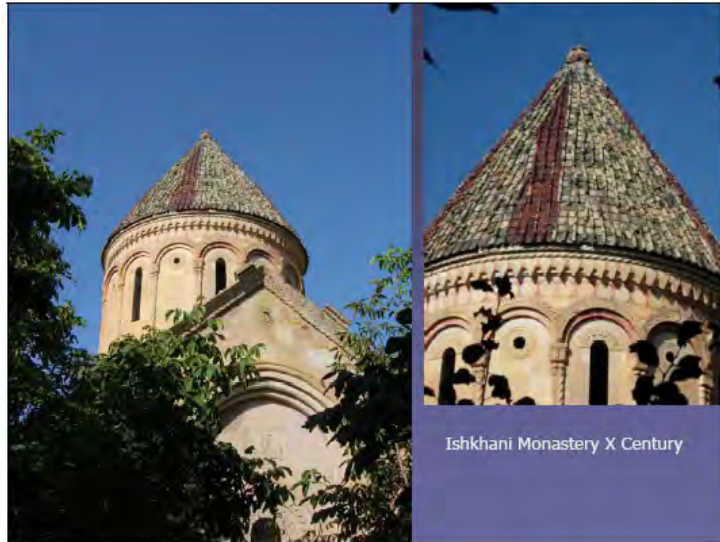
Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
23

Addressing all aspects, the project developed entails all the components needed for full rehabilitation, including:

- rehabilitation project for each structure located within the confines of the site;
- primary assessment of damages of Gelati murals, recommendations on the methodology to be used for the proper diagnosis and conservation measures;

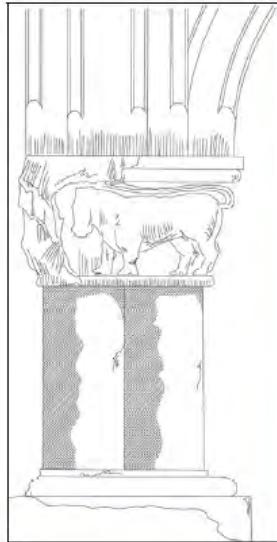


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Diapositive
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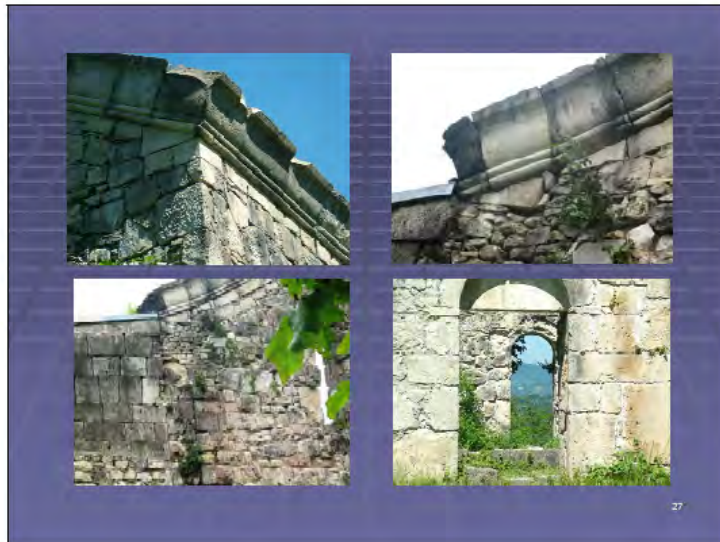
- a functional zoning plan of the area;
- a master plan of the site and its surroundings;
- designs for installing proper amenities on the site (power and water supply, sewage, heating/ventilation, weak currents, storm water systems);
- designs for interior and exterior lighting;
- design for a security system;
- improvement work along the itineraries;
- Dendrological project;
- designs for the reconstruction of contemporary buildings within the site;
- designs for reconstruction/reuse of the buildings incorporated into the circuit wall of the monastery;
- designs for minor architectural details and public amenities;
- list of proposed works and respective cost-estimates.

Diapositive
26



26

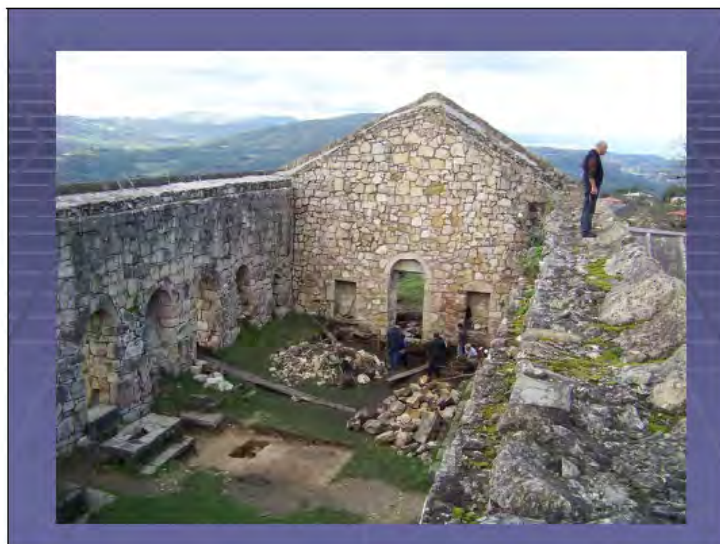
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
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Diapositive
31



Diapositive
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Diapositive
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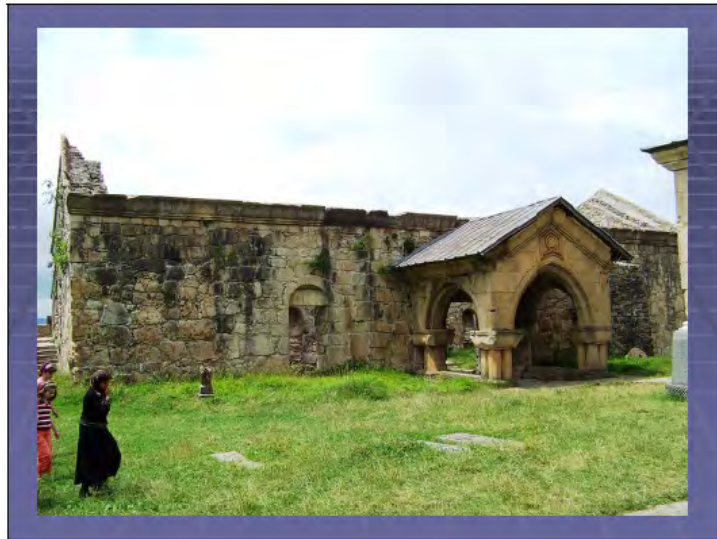
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34



Diapositive
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Diapositive
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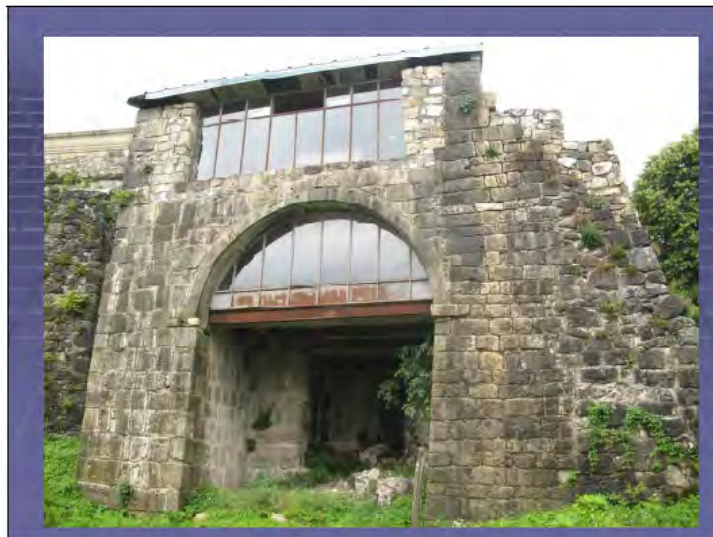
Diapositive
37



Diapositive
38



Diapositive
39



Diapositive
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