

H.E. Mr Gocha Javakhishvili
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary
Permanent Delegate
of Georgia to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO

31 October 2023

**Culture Sector
World Heritage Centre**

Ref: CLT/WHC/EUR/23/14540

Dear Ambassador,

As you are aware, at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023), the World Heritage Committee examined the state of conservation of the following World Heritage property: '**Gelati Monastery**'.

You will find attached in Annex I, the Committee Decision **45 COM 7B.54**, concerning this property. In this Decision, the Committee requested your authorities to submit an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of its recommendations by **1 December 2024**, for consideration at its **47th** session in 2025.

At its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), the Committee adopted a specific compulsory format for the submission of state of conservation reports by the States Parties. The format is included in the Operational Guidelines and attached to this letter in Annex II for ease of reference. You are kindly requested to use this format for the submission of the report on the aforementioned property, in one of the working languages of the Convention, English or French (Decision **39 COM 7**) and by the above-mentioned deadline.

I would also like to call upon your authorities to do their utmost to comply with the above-mentioned statutory deadline for the submission of the report in order to ensure sufficient time for exchange and dialogue between them, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on the issues at stake before the next report to the Committee is produced.


In addition to the examination of individual reports on the state of conservation of properties, the Committee also discussed more general conservation issues and adopted Decisions **45 COM 7.1** and **45 COM 7.2** to clarify its position on a number of current conservation issues and to provide guidance to States Parties in this regard. I therefore strongly encourage you to also consider these decisions.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 12 September 2023, transmitting the letter from Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne of Georgia and Chairman of the interim Committee for the Rehabilitation of Gelati, His Eminence Metropolitan Shio (Mujiri), providing the latest information on the state of conservation of the property, its management and the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property. I am confident that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, which the Committee has requested the State Party of Georgia to invite during 2024, will provide further useful recommendations based on the assessment of the conservation measures taken, the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, including the Conservation Master Plan and roadmap, the updating of the

Management Plan, the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, as well as the overall state of conservation of the property. While awaiting the invitation of the mission and the suggestion of possible dates by your competent authorities, please note that the costs of the reactive monitoring missions are borne by the World Heritage Fund.

I thank you for your continuous collaboration and support in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and remain,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Assomo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lazare Eloundou Assomo
Director

Enc.

cc: Georgian National Commission for UNESCO
National Focal Point for the implementation of the Convention
ICOMOS International
ICCROM

**World Heritage Committee
Extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023)**

Decision: 45 COM 7B.54

Gelati Monastery (Georgia)

The World Heritage Committee,

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

7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to review and update the Management Plan for the property and to continue its efforts to develop indicators to monitor the state of conservation of the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, and further requests the State Party to submit the above to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
8. Encourages the State Party to pursue a closer dialogue with different stakeholders about the protection measures taken at the property, including through the World Heritage Protection Council of Georgia at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to invite during 2024 a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess the conservation measures taken, the development and implementation of the holistic conservation programme, including Conservation Master Plan and roadmap, the updating of the Management Plan, the steps undertaken to improve the management system and its effectiveness, and the overall state of conservation of the property;
10. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session.

**Format for the submission of state of conservation reports
by the States Parties (Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines)**

Name of World Heritage property (State(s) Party(ies)) (Identification number)

1. Executive Summary of the report

[Note: each of the sections described below should be summarized. The maximum length of the executive summary is 1 page.]

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

[Note: The State(s) Party(ies) is/are requested to address the most recent Decision of the World Heritage Committee for this property, paragraph by paragraph.]

If the property is inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Please also provide detailed information on the following:

- a) Progress achieved in implementing the corrective measures adopted by the World Heritage Committee

[Note: please address each corrective measure individually, providing factual information, including exact dates, figures, etc.]

If needed, please describe the success factors or difficulties in implementing each of the corrective measures identified

- b) Is the timeframe for implementing the corrective measures suitable? If not, please propose an alternative timeframe and an explanation why this alternative timeframe is required.

- c) Progress achieved towards the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value *[Note: this includes conservation issues which are not mentioned in the Decision of the World Heritage Committee or in any information request from the World Heritage Centre]*

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

[Note: this report will be uploaded for public access on the World Heritage Centre's State of conservation Information System (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>). Should your State Party request that the full report should not be uploaded, only the 1-page executive summary provided in point (1.) above will be uploaded for public access].

6. Signature of the Authority