



**The challenges of World Heritage recovery -
an international conference on reconstruction**

**The Royal Castle
Warsaw, Poland
6-8 May 2018**

**Government of the Republic of Poland
in cooperation with the
UNESCO World Heritage Centre**

**Background document on the Challenges of
World Heritage Recovery –
The reflection on reconstruction within
World Heritage properties as a
complex multi-disciplinary process**

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1. Background

1.1 Objectives

Following the World Heritage Committee's Decisions 40 COM 7 and 41 COM 7, the conference will work towards developing new guidance to reflect the multi-faceted challenges that reconstruction brings, its social and economic contexts, the short-and long-term needs of World Heritage properties, and the idea of reconstruction as a process that should be undertaken within the framework of the World Heritage Convention and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the properties;

World Heritage Committee Decision 41 COM/ 7

14. *Noting the continued need to address the issue of reconstruction in World Heritage properties following conflicts or disasters, expresses its satisfaction that several international meetings have taken place or are being planned on recovery at large, and reconstruction in particular, and welcomes the offer of the Government of Poland to host an international conference on Reconstruction to provide guidelines to the World Heritage Committee to be held in Warsaw in March 2018;*
15. *Encourages the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to continue, with all relevant stakeholders, the reflection on reconstruction within World Heritage properties as a complex multidisciplinary process, towards developing new guidance to reflect the multi-faceted challenges that reconstruction brings, its social and economic context, the short- and long-term needs of properties, and the idea of reconstruction as a process that should be undertaken within the framework of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the properties;*

The challenges of World Heritage recovery

In recent years, more and more frequent destruction of the most outstanding examples of human heritage has been taking place. This happens both as a result of armed conflicts and natural disasters. Those occurrences that arouse general anxiety and compassion are also the cause of deliberations and discussions on how to proceed and prevent it. The question about the way and scope of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged sites become more frequent and more urgent. The need to develop systemic solutions, in particular in relation to World Heritage properties, is growing rapidly.

The place of the conference is deliberately chosen. Poland, and Warsaw in particular, has experienced the tragedy of deliberate destruction and the need to deal with various kinds of challenges aimed at returning to normal functioning. The Historic Center of Warsaw (1980), one of the first inscriptions on the World Heritage List, was also a precedent. The OUV of this property has been noticed, among others in the comprehensive reconstruction of the city destroyed in the material layer, the basis for reconstruction of the strength of the spirit and the determination of the nation. This entry for many years had a significant impact on understanding the concept of the authenticity of World Heritage sites and forming the approach to the issue of reconstruction.

1.2 Bringing the current knowledge and experience together for World Heritage

Reconstruction has been on the front stage of the conservation debate since the Great War of the 20th century. This intensified in the aftermath of World War II with the 1964 Venice Charter and the 1972 World Heritage Convention and subsequent academic and professional documents and reports extending over different cultures and political structures. The past decades have brought new challenges in the form of natural disasters, climate change and conflicts.

In terms of World Heritage, discussions on issues related to reconstruction started already with the first inscriptions, relating to cultural heritage destroyed after the World War II. This generated a statement encapsulated in paragraph 86 of the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO 2017) that clearly indicates:

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.

Since the intentional destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas (Afghanistan) in 2001 and the major destructions in Iraq, Syria, Mali, Libya, Yemen and other conflict regions (see Annex 6.3), a new debate started on reconstruction and a number of international expert meetings were organized (non-exhaustive list):

UNESCO

- International expert meeting for the *rehabilitation of Mali's cultural heritage* (UNESCO, February 2013)
- *Post-conflict reconstruction in the Middle East Context, and in the Old City of Aleppo in particular* (Paris, June 2015) <https://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1286/>
- First International *Technical and Coordination Meeting for the recovery of Aleppo's heritage* <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1639/> (Beirut, March 2017)
- UNESCO technical meeting and International Symposium on *The Future of the Bamiyan Buddha Statues: Technical Considerations and Potential Effects on Authenticity and Outstanding Universal Value* (Tokyo, September 2017)

ICOMOS

- Workshop on *Post-Trauma reconstruction* (Paris, September 2016), which led to draft guidance available here: <http://openarchive.icomos.org/1763/>
- Workshop on *Post-Trauma reconstruction* (Paris, January 2018) which led to case-studies.
- *Global Case-Study Project on Reconstruction – matrix for the compilation of case-studies.*

ICCROM

- ICCROM Forum on *Cultural Heritage in Postwar Recovery* (Rome, 4 – 6 October 2005)
- *Post-conflict reconstruction of historic cities*, Louvre-Lens Museum in partnership with the ICCROM-Sharjah regional centre (Louvre-Lens, 20 – 21 January 2017).
- *Documenting Our Heritage at Risk* with Incontro di Civiltà (Rome, 19 -20 May 2017)

- Thematic Discussion on *Post-Conflict Reconstruction – Recovery and Community Involvement* (Rome, 29 November – 1 December 2017 as part of the ICCROM 30th General Assembly)

Academia

- University of Montreal Round Table, *from conservation to reconstruction: how World Heritage is changing theory and practice* (Montreal, March 2016)
<http://www.patrimoinebati.umontreal.ca/en/activities/round-tables/2016-from-conservation-to-reconstruction-how-world-heritage-is-changing-theory-and-practice/>

UNESCO is currently launching, in partnership with the World Bank, a "White Paper" on the *reconstruction of cities following conflict or major natural disaster*. This document will draw on the current reflection within the heritage sector, notably on the work accomplished so far by UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICCROM (as indicated above). This has taken into account the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), including a glossary of definitions, as well as the social humanitarian and developmental aspects of post-trauma recovery strategies, to develop a multi-sectoral approach to the reconstruction of cities having a significant cultural heritage dimension.

The World Bank/UNESCO study will explore the following aspects of the reconstruction process: (i) the nature of the destruction process and its overall impacts on the urban fabric and social structure, including the various forms of trauma; (ii) the existing cultural, economic and legal conditions and traditions and their adequacy for the urban reconstruction process; (iii) the decision-making process on which the reconstruction was based: national and local laws and regulations, agencies in charge, financial mechanisms, selection of beneficiaries etc.; (iv) the ways that architecture and urban planning projects have integrated the cultural, social, economic and political aspects of reconstruction; (v) public engagement processes, and the role played by civil society organizations in reconstruction; (vi) public-private arrangements in the management and financing of the reconstruction; (vii) investment in cultural infrastructure and in culture safeguarding policies within the reconstruction process; (viii) the implementation process of the reconstruction policies along time and their effectiveness with respect to the established goals; the long-term transformation of the areas subject to reconstruction policies from architectural, urban planning, economic and social perspectives.

This paper will also look at the inter-relationships between the Culture of Recovery and the Recovery of Culture, as may be applied through the World Heritage Convention relating to the processes of nomination, evaluation, management, monitoring and reporting.

1.3 Conference Participation

- **Host Country - Poland:**
Ministry of Culture and National Heritage,
National Heritage Board of Poland,
National Commission for UNESCO
- **International Organizations:** UNESCO: through the World Heritage Centre, UNISDR, UN Habitat, World Bank and Global Alliance for Urban Crises
- **Advisory Bodies:** ICOMOS-International and ICCROM
- **Experts** presenting case studies: (See case studies in Annex 3)

2. Discussion

2.1 Defining the Terms - Taxonomy

For this paper the two terms, *Recovery* and *Reconstruction*, need to be clarified in order to appreciate their distinction and relevance.

Recovery can be defined as a set of strategies used to assist communities to rebuild themselves after a disaster occurs. Recovery embraces many other strategies for rehabilitation of physical, social, cultural, environmental, and economic attributes of a property. Moreover, recovery should be seen as a comprehensive and complex multi-disciplinary process to manage the aftermath.

Within the designation of physical recovery, many different interventions may be applied. These have included consolidation, conservation, restoration, anastylosis, reconstruction as a replica or reconstruction in a new form or with new materials

Recovery is defined¹ as 'a return to a normal state of health, mind, or strength; the action or process of regaining possession or control of something stolen or lost; the process of removing or extracting an energy source or industrial chemical for use, reuse, or waste treatment.

The definition of *reconstruction* includes the action or process of reconstructing or being reconstructed; a thing that has been rebuilt after being damaged or destroyed; an impression, model or re-enactment of a past event formed from the available evidence; a reproduction of an original state. *Reconstruction* is considered one of the alternative strategies in the field of physical Recovery.

Other definitions will be according to the World Heritage Convention and Operational Guidelines and the documents of the bodies involved in Recovery processes, notably the World Heritage Review No.86. A UNESCO/World Bank White Paper is being developed during 2018 and their recommendations will contribute to institutional cooperation.

2.2 Events of Destruction

The understanding of the events that led to the destruction of a property is essential in reviewing the options for recovery while identifying the stakeholders involved and the diverging perceptions of these events.

- Distinction between **causes for destruction** (e.g. natural disasters, wars, conflicts, deterioration). This will relate to the diverging attitudes in a positive acceptance of recurring natural events with a negative rejection of wars and conflicts.
- Distinction between **types of destructions** (e.g. fires, flooding, storms, bombing)

The case-studies will focus on the interventions that have taken place over the past 70 years and will reflect the diversity of urban examples that have been implemented in the light of current seminal texts of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies while drawing conclusions to generate guiding principles to be adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

¹ Oxford Dictionary Definition

2.3 Responding to the Statement of OUV

The processes of nomination, evaluation and management of World Heritage properties are rigorous, with a Statement of OUV following an extensive geo-cultural and global comparative analysis. Mapping what is left and not just what has been lost turns the focus onto what has survived. It allows us to identify the values that the surviving fabric retains and the new values that it may have been gained as a consequence of the disaster or trauma. Some questions may be addressed:

- What are the **values** that have been lost as result of the event?
- What relevant interventions can be applied to recover the attributes of the values?
- Can we discover new values? Is one of the values in ‘the event’?

(vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria); (OUV Selection Criteria)

- There is a need to identify the multiple stakeholders involved in the short, medium and long term recovery. As cultural heritage values should be the focus of recovery of heritage places, values must always be clearly stated, as well as who values the place and their association with the place. Also, who are the stakeholders undertaking the recovery and why? (see Annex 6.1.2)

2.3.1 Authenticity and Integrity

The conditions of authenticity and integrity are major contributors to the decision-making processes. Paragraph 82 of the Operational Guidelines indicates that the conditions of authenticity are met if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes and that, in Paragraph 87, the property should satisfy the conditions of integrity:

- includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value;
- is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property’s significance;
- suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

The results of the events can be understood through the documentation of the remaining assets based on the physical loss of attributes and the conditions of integrity.

- We need to understand the values that are lost with their attributes, in order to understand the motives for reconstruction
- What documentation do we need for reconstruction to demonstrate authenticity?
- What are the attributes, both tangible and intangible, that have been destroyed? (e.g. building, work of art or public space in form and use)
- How much do we need to reconstruct in order to demonstrate the Integrity?

(See texts in Annex 6.1)

2.4 Before, During and After

There is a cyclic relationship between the state of conservation during an event, the subsequent consequences after and the lessons learned in hindsight. The human dimension is critical in engaging the local communities for the processes of recovery and needs to be addressed as an integral part of the action. Some natural disasters are prolonged while most conflict events are of long duration, witnessing years of strife and questioning the processes of reconstructions at any particular time. Here, interim actions by NGO's and local initiatives may provide much needed hope and should be considered within an overall dynamic strategy.

The UNISDR Resilient City Campaign provides 10 points for the resilient city and with relevance for post-events – see Annex 6. This includes guidance to Build Back Better.

- When is the good time to start discussing reconstruction?
- Who should be involved and consulted in the process?
- How can we ensure a reconstruction process that preserves the property rights and cultural heritage of the displaced and returnees?

2.4.1 Developing alternatives strategies

The alternative strategies will be dependent on many factors including the economic potential, extent of the destruction and cultural significance. These strategies can only be evaluated in a more comprehensive policy document of recovery, which will take into account opportunities, such as the UNISDR – Build Back Better Resilient Cities Campaign and new challenges as applying 'culture for sustainable development' and relating to the relevant UNESCO Recommendations and the New Urban Agenda – see the relevant texts from the Kuala Lumpur Declaration in the Annex.

- How can the Recovery of Culture / Culture of Recovery be applied in each case?
- What are the alternative strategies and their combinations ranging from full reconstruction to full new development?
- What are the pros and cons for reconstruction as a strategy of recovery?
- What are the advantages of reconstruction as one of the strategies?
- Destruction as a key to new opportunities, whereby renewal is one of the options (Build Back Better, Build New)

2.4.2 Reconstruction of the Tangible and the Intangible

While the recovery processes will identify those attributes that remain, the reconstruction focuses on those attributes that have been lost due to the event. Not all attributes have the capacity for reconstruction, especially those relating to materials, while spirit and feeling will need to engage with intangible qualities.

It should also be considered that reconstruction is only one of many actions that can be used in the recovery of cultural heritage. Other actions may include doing nothing, consolidation, conservation, restoration, and anastylosis. Appropriate interpretation may also play an important role in decisions on what conservation actions to be taken.

Recovery of cultural assets must respond to, and be part of, the ongoing recovery of the affected communities within it exists and with which it is associated. This may involve recognizing and addressing different social needs and sometimes conflicting perspectives on what should be recovered.

- What are we reconstructing?
- How is it being reconstructed?

2.5 Sustainability and Resilience

Goal 11 of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is to “make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. The targets of this goal clearly state that there is a role for cultural and natural heritage to play in achieving these goals (Target 11.4), that this should also include the need to decrease the direct economic losses caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations (Target 11.5). The need to provide multiple solutions often creates a redundancy that could be a necessity as an enabler of resilience for the city while prioritizing reconstruction areas based on human needs. This highlights the importance of culture (especially local culture) in the city resilience and the recovery process.

- How can the Short, Medium and Long Term Strategies be reconciled in providing immediate aid, hope and recovery for the local communities affected?
- How can a more responsive approach be developed in appreciating the Economics of Reconstruction?
- How can reconstruction be applied to promote SDG - Goal 11 and provide social identity?

2.6 Recovery as a Multi-Disciplinary Process

Target 11.9 of the SDG clearly states that the need for implementation of “integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels”. This is underscored in the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape.

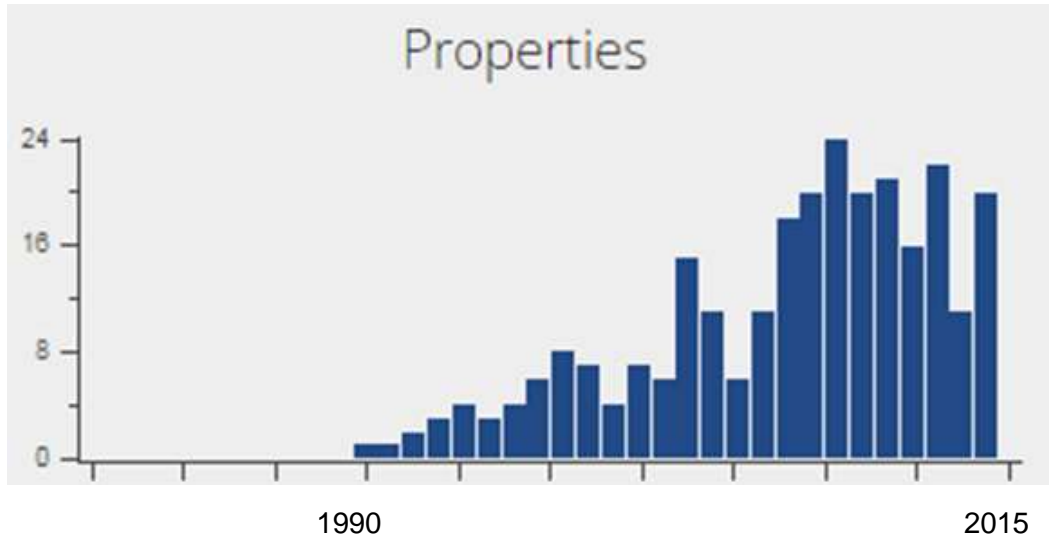
- How can the post-conflict reconstruction be established on premises of accountability and social justice?
- Which disciplines are taking part in the process?
- What are the relationships between these disciplines in the process of recovery?
- Who should be involved and consulted in the process?
- What are the relevant questions to ask and to which stakeholders and who may assume the role of watchdog?
- What is the role of academics, researchers, and policy makers in this discussion?

2.7 Assessment of the state of conservation decisions on ‘reconstruction’

Since 1990, a total of 271 reports presented to the Committee related to the term ‘reconstruction’; these reports concerned 88 cultural heritage properties, located in 58 States Parties.

Table 1 highlights the fact that while a few discussions took place in the initial phase of the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, a considerable increase was noted after the systematic presentation of state of conservation reports (starting in the 1990s) and the systematic and intentional destruction of cultural heritage in recent years.

Table 1: Evolution of the number of properties related to “reconstruction” (1990-2015)

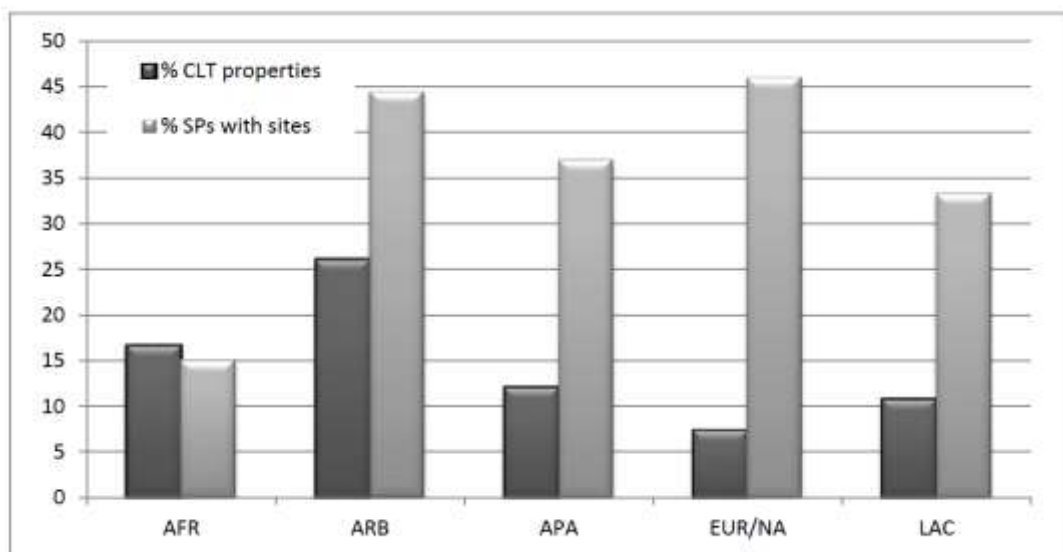


The following threats to the conservation of heritage and “reconstruction” have been identified:

1. Lack of/inadequate management Plan or System (178 reports / 67 properties)
2. Housing projects (128 reports / 41 properties)
3. Inadequate management activities (111 reports / 37 properties)
4. Ground transport infrastructure (44 reports / 18 properties)
5. Deliberate destruction of heritage (37 reports / 16 properties)
6. Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (34 reports / 12 properties)
7. Lack of/inadequate legal framework (31 reports / 19 properties)

Although deliberate or intentional destruction is only ranked 5th it may quickly rise to number one in the years to come as the question of reconstruction becomes key in the recovery phase, potentially less for archaeological sites, but more (and more urgent) for cities and urban ensembles.

Table 2: Number of cultural properties with ‘reconstruction’ issues by region and percentage of States Parties with sites by region



In analyzing the situation of the properties concerned the following topics emerge:

Natural

- Natural or human-induced disasters

Human-made

- Direct terrorist attacks
- Damage during conflicts
- Reconstruction policies for cities
- Reconstruction policies for sites

The relevant decisions are in Annex 6.3.

2.8 Conclusions

In conclusion, we need to provide further guidance to the World Heritage Committee to address pressure from governments for rapid rebuilding and reconstruction and establish a combined approach among the Advisory Bodies on methodologies, guiding principles and frameworks to assist States Parties. This should include:

- further reflections on the existing paragraph 86 of the current Operational Guidelines (2015): “...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.” Is this paragraph adequate for today’s situation of destruction at an unprecedented global scale?
- reviewing existing doctrinal texts and their current relevance, including the *Riga Charter on Authenticity and Historical Reconstruction in Relationship to Cultural Heritage*, October 2000”;
- providing informed inputs on current debates among experts, authorities, the interested public as well as communities living in and around World Heritage sites on “reconstruction”, rehabilitation, rebuilding, “restoration” and “resilience” and other conservation approaches to allow for informed discussions and raise awareness among people on the ground of available options;
- encouraging a joint discussion with natural heritage experts who have similar debates including those on “reintroduced species” into World Heritage properties; i.e. to review “authenticity for natural heritage” (see Dudley 2011); This is also important as the exchange between the natural and cultural heritage experts is not only required for mixed sites and cultural landscapes, but in the overall framework of the only international legal instrument which covers both fields. This will further contribute to the application of the concepts of authenticity and integrity.

3. Structure of the Meeting

3.1 The panel discussions

Panels will address five major topics that will generate the guiding principles based on practical experiences and case-studies

- Panel 1: Integrative approach for recovery – Challenges and opportunities
- Panel 2: The Processes/Context of Recovery - taking stock of the past experiences: Documentation
- Panel 3: History and Memory
- Panel 4: Communities and cultural rights
- Panel 5 – The challenges of Urban Heritage recovery

3.2 Case Studies

The case studies selected for the meeting focus on the urban context for a number of reasons: the complexity and huge dimensions of the reconstruction, the urgency (as people return – often rapidly- after the disaster and destruction and require decent living conditions) and to develop guidance to decision makers at all levels. However the following points and cases were also considered and may be referred to during the discussions, as it would not be possible to consider all cases with individual contributions during the conference.

- Events of destruction
- Causes for destruction (natural disasters, wars, conflicts)
- Types of destructions (fires, flooding, storms, bombing, terror)

War (Between States):

- Warsaw, Poland (World War II, 1944-1945)
- Gdansk, Poland (World War II, 1944-1945)

Conflict:

- Beirut, Lebanon (Lebanese Civil War, 1975-1990)
- Dubrovnik, Croatia (Croatian War of Independence, Siege of Dubrovnik, 1991)
- Sarajevo, (Bosnian War- Sarajevo, 1992-1994)
- Buddhas of Bamiyan, Bamiyan, Afghanistan (Destruction by Taliban, 2001)
- Aleppo, Syria (Syrian Civil War, Battle of Aleppo, 2012-)
- Timbuktu, Mali (Civil War, 2012)
- Old City of Mosul, Iraq (Civil War, 2014 -)

Natural Disasters:

- Citadel, Sans Souci, Haiti (Earthquake, 2010)
- Kathmandu Valley, Nepal (Earthquake, 2015)

Other:

- Kasubi Tombs, Uganda (were almost completely destroyed by a fire in March 2010)

ICCROM activities for recovery

ICCROM has been giving attention to disaster risk management and post-conflict recovery since the publication of *Between Two Earthquakes* by Bernard Feilden in 1987. The topic has been integrated into many ICCROM courses over the years.

More recently, ICCROM has turned its attention to post-conflict recovery through a symposium was held at the Louvre-Lens Museum in France in partnership with the ICCROM-Sharjah office. This meeting took place from in January 2017 when over the course of the symposium, experts gathered to discuss the various actions of international organizations for post-conflict reconstruction of historic cities. They presented the state of theoretical developments in this field, and discussed several case studies in Europe and the Middle East in order to draw potentially relevant lessons for the future. Some of the conclusions of this meeting included:

- The post-conflict reconstruction of historic cities must be the subject of effective cooperation at all levels.
- Cultural heritage must be placed in its social, economic, political and environmental context, as per the principles of integrated heritage management.
- Haste must be avoided and the necessary time taken for reflection, consultation, evaluation and weighting of interests.
- Any commitment to a peace process must include the protection of cultural heritage in its agenda.
- Development assistance should no longer be limited to traditional areas of development cooperation, and should gradually encompass the field of cultural heritage protection.

At the end of the symposium, a number of short-term actions were agreed upon, including developing effective documentation tools for fieldwork.

The topic of documentation was also taken up at a two-day international conference, *Documenting the Heritage at Risk* - a partnership of ICCROM and Incontro di Civiltà. The result of this meeting was the "Rome Appeal" which called for Member States of UNESCO and ICCROM to take the necessary measures to document their cultural heritage, as provided for in international instruments and to share data to create a common knowledge platform for cultural heritage.

In the field of capacity building, ICCROM has recently proposed a new programme area in its Programme and Budget on *Protecting Cultural Heritage in Times of Conflict and Disasters*. Activities within this programme include courses on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural heritage (in partnership with UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICOM and Ritsumeiken University) and *First Aid to Heritage in Times of Crisis* *with partners from the Netherlands, the United States, UNESCO and others). A number of publications, field projects, meetings and courses will also be organized in the field of disaster risk management and post-conflict recovery by the ICCROM-Sharjah office in order to respond to the specific needs arising from the Arab States region.

ICCROM will continue to work with partners around the world to promote sustainable processes for the protection and recovery of heritage in times of crisis.

UNESCO / World Bank CONCEPT NOTE

Integrating Culture, Recovery and Reconstruction for Sustainable Urban Development

Activity Summary

Through a collaborative process with UNESCO, this activity will prepare a framework and operational guidelines for the planning, financing and implementation of activities during post-disaster/conflict reconstruction in urban areas. The activity will adopt the 3P (people-based focus; place-based approach; and policies) framework for rebuilding sustainable cities that are resilient, productive and inclusive.

Problem Statement

1. By 2030, disasters will cost cities around the world some \$332bn, with the concentration of people and assets in cities making them vulnerable to cascading failures in the wake of a disaster. Conflicts and climate induced displacement is pushing even more people towards cities. Presently, 66 million people are displaced with roughly one-third of those settling in cities, but numbers are expected to grow significantly in the future, because of climate change. It is estimated that the world will be two-thirds urban by 2050, with informal settlements in unsafe areas, slums and squatters with limited infrastructure and services, exacerbating disaster risks.
2. Historic areas within cities are often subject to a high level of risk. This is due to their often-coastal location, a consequence of their foundation as maritime trading hubs, but also to the inherent vulnerability of their built fabric, especially in developing countries, where historic urban cores are often the location of poor and marginalized groups, who reside and earn their livelihood in often degraded, decaying and congested areas where real-estate values are low, and resources for conservation are insufficient. In conflicts, moreover, cultural landmarks and the historic core of cities are often the victims of collateral damage, during fierce street combats, or even deliberately targeted due to their symbolic meaning. In fact, disasters and conflicts have a broader impact on the ability of the affected populations to enjoy their cultural rights in general, including by limiting access to heritage, but also intangible practices and creativity.
3. Experience shows how culture, encompassing both heritage (tangible and intangible) and creative industries, is not just a vulnerable asset when cities are affected by some shock or stress, but is in fact a major resource for their resilience and recovery. Culture is a vital part of cities, integral to their identity and underpinning their dynamism as hubs of economic development. Conserving and adaptively re-using the historic urban environment contributes to the quality of life of their inhabitants in many ways. In addition to strengthening their sense of belonging, social cohesion and providing a pleasant environment, it also mitigates excessive urbanization, attracts tourists and visitors as well as investments, while providing for green, locally-based, stable and decent jobs. Cultural industries and creativity are also an essential factor of urban renewal, as they bolster a city's image and contribute to its socio-economic development, thus improving the living standards of the inhabitants. Investments in cultural institutions and activities will support a creative economy and further promote sustainable urban development. A heritage-driven urban development policy also contributes to mitigating and adapting to climate change, since conserving the existing fabric (built with traditional techniques and local materials and skills) is more environmentally friendly than demolishing and reconstructing.

ICOMOS Guidance on Post Trauma Recovery and Reconstruction for World Heritage Cultural Properties

The background for issuing this document is set by the scale, persistence and nature of destructive events of recent times. These dramatic losses, the results of natural processes and human action, have renewed awareness of the vulnerability of our cultural inheritance -heritage which includes places whose attributes are of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ (OUV) - and awareness of the commitment of the overall international community to the common purpose of preserving and transmitting it to future generations. The magnitude of natural disasters such as those that have affected Nepal, Cuba or Italy, and the destruction, whether intentional or not, caused by armed conflicts on sites in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, the former Yugoslavia and Mali among many others, create unprecedented challenges for recovery and possible restoration. Conservation actions address partial destruction of properties and the fact that the events may affect areas that extend far beyond the properties protected through their World Heritage designations. The imperatives of transmission persist in each circumstance and have brought sharply into focus the variety of issues of reconstruction in damaged World Heritage properties in particular, most challengingly where these include areas or values that support living communities. In this context, the status of reconstruction of heritage within the broader framework of post-disaster recovery is established through reference to the accumulated experience of action and reflection.

Global Case Study Project on Reconstruction - matrix for the compilation of case studies

At the Colloquium on Post-trauma Reconstruction held in Paris in March 2016, several of the working groups tasked with examining the main themes identified the difficulty of establishing a body of reflective experience. It was deemed difficult to relate the experiences in each case to that of others and to therefore draw robust conclusions that might have wider application to other degraded or damaged sites. In response to this difficulty identified the ICOMOS project aims to develop an appropriate matrix for case studies of damaged heritage sites that allows for wider, shared learning and appropriate action in the recovery process. While the primary focus in the project has been on affected World Heritage properties, it is expected that the matrix might have broader application, that it might be used in a wide range of situations, at different scales and at different times, during or after events. It could be useful in anticipatory contexts such as in disaster planning preparations or in management plans.

University of Montréal Round Table:

The 11th Montreal Round Table (2016), *From conservation to reconstruction: how World Heritage is changing theory and practice*, examined current interest in reconstruction as a way to recover meaning and significance at historic places. Heritage experts, specialists from diverse disciplines, student delegates and academics from Canada, France, Israel, Japan, Nepal, United Kingdom and United States of America explored the impact of recent World Heritage Committee decisions on the theory and practice of conservation.

The agenda was structured to present a broad overview of the subject followed by specific sessions on conservation doctrine, regional approaches, changing attitudes, alternate approaches and a case study of the reconstruction of the Timbuktu mausoleums in Mali. The participants discussed the possibility of introducing new tools that would draw on other disciplines, expressed interest in the social dimension of the reconstruction debate and supported actions that could help communities to reach their full potential. The Proceedings are available in a [PDF format](#)

4 Principles for Recovery and Reconstructions

The summary of the debates will be provided by the Rapporteurs and the experts' panel presentations to further accompany the Guiding Principles for Recovery and Reconstruction to be summarized at the concluding session.

To provide guidance five issues may be addressed in generating principles for recovery during the conference.

4.1. Integrative Approach for Recovery

- Using the HUL and Integrative Management approach: Reconstruction as enabler of sustainable development.
- The reconstruction act should be based on consideration of different alternatives (including do-nothing)
- Immediate short-term coordination of international supporting agencies
- Consideration of multi-disciplinary action by local institutions
- Human Recovery to be prioritized: how can the recovery of the heritage be used to improve conditions for recovery of communities
- The disciplines together can be harnessed to improve conditions for local communities.

4.2. The Processes of Recovery – taking stock of past experiences: Documentation

- The need for documentation before disaster strikes (since disasters strike without warning, documentation should always be a priority)
- Documentation of the existing, using new and traditional technologies
- Documentation will provide the evidence for the test of authenticity and condition of integrity
- Listen to Alternative Narratives
- Generating future scenarios
- Use Local Knowledge and wisdom for the crafts of reconstruction

4.3. History and Memory

- Respond to Urban Traces of the historic layers
- Identify Places of Memory: Tangible and Intangible
- Endeavor to Recover Lost Authenticity
- Recovery of places that people share and have a role in defining the identity of community or communities' memory

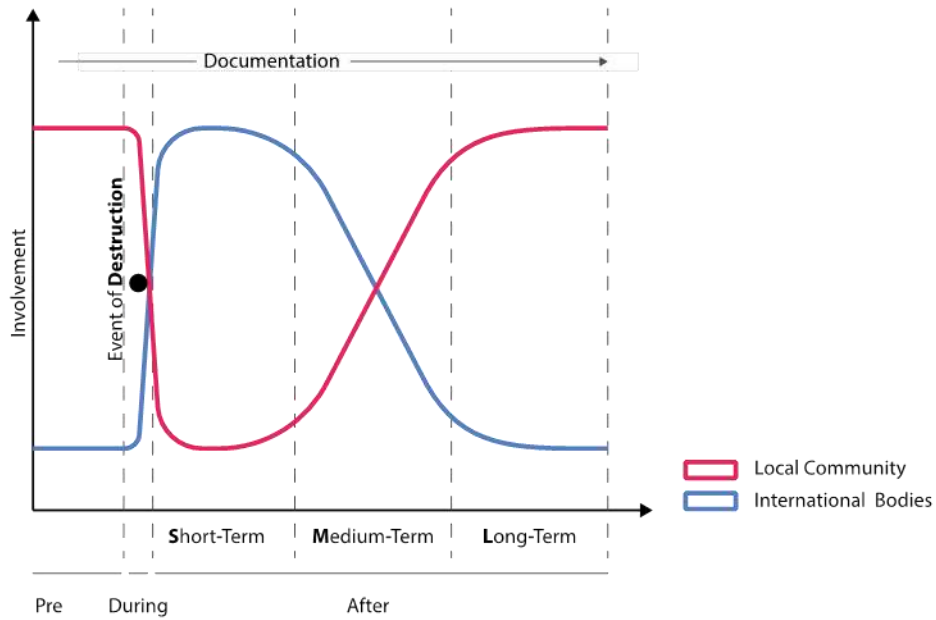
4.4. Communities and cultural rights

- Understanding the acceptance of disasters in the cultural contexts: beliefs, and traditions
- Training on Disaster Risk Management
- Maintaining traditional craftsmanship while developing new skills
- Building capacity of a wide range of actors in the recovery process including communities, political and institutional actors, and heritage and other professionals
- Accept diverse values and interpretation;

4.5. The challenges of Urban Heritage recovery

- Disasters as an opportunity for revisiting the urban and monumental values (improving the past – Build Back Better);
- Monuments as the backbone of the city resilient;
- Applying new technologies and interpretations;
- Differing approaches to recovery of monuments and the urban fabric together with the application of relevant charters and mechanisms;
- Strengthening participatory processes and community engagement in recovery alternatives;

Table 3 – Involvement of local communities and international bodies in the participation processes in short, medium and long term actions



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6. Annexes

6.1 Extracts from relevant texts

6.1.1 Venice Charter, 1994

Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity. (Introduction)

The conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose. Such use is therefore desirable but it must not change the lay-out or decoration of the building. It is within these limits only that modifications demanded by a change of function should be envisaged and may be permitted. (Article 5)

The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification which would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed. (Article 6)

All reconstruction work should however be ruled out "a priori". Only anastylosis, that is to say, the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts can be permitted. The material used for integration should always be recognizable and its use should be the least that will ensure the conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form. (Article 15)

6.1.2 Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention

Authenticity

86. 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.

Integrity

88. Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity therefore requires assessing the extent to which the property:
- a) includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value;
 - b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance;
 - c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

89. For properties nominated under criteria (i) to (vi), the physical fabric of the property and/or its significant features should be in good condition, and the impact of deterioration processes controlled. A significant proportion of the elements necessary to convey the totality of the value conveyed by the property should be included. Relationships and dynamic functions present in cultural landscapes, historic towns or other living properties essential to their distinctive character should also be maintained.

6.1.3 The UNISDR Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient Checklist Summary

1. Put in place organization and coordination to understand and reduce disaster risk, based on participation of citizen groups and civil society. Build local alliances. Ensure that all departments understand their role in disaster risk reduction and preparedness.
2. Assign a budget for disaster risk reduction and provide incentives for homeowners, low income families, communities, businesses and the public sector to invest in reducing the risks they face.
3. Maintain up to date data on hazards and vulnerabilities. Prepare risk assessments and use these as the basis for urban development plans and decisions, ensure that this information and the plans for your city's resilience are readily available to the public and fully discussed with them.
4. Invest in and maintain critical infrastructure that reduces risk, such as flood drainage, adjusted where needed to cope with climate change.
5. Assess the safety of all schools and health facilities and upgrade these as necessary.
6. Apply and enforce realistic, risk compliant building regulations and land use planning principles. Identify safe land for low income citizens and upgrade informal settlements, wherever feasible.
7. Ensure that education programmes and training on disaster risk reduction are in place in schools and local communities.
8. Protect ecosystems and natural buffers to mitigate floods, storm surges and other hazards to which your city may be vulnerable. Adapt to climate change by building on good risk reduction practices.
9. Install early warning systems and emergency management capacities in your city and hold regular public preparedness drills.
10. After any disaster, ensure that the needs of the affected population are placed at the centre of reconstruction, with support for them and their community organisations to design and help implement responses, including rebuilding homes and livelihoods.

6.1.4 UN Habitat Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030

We recognize that today we face emerging challenges that require urgent actions, including:

- Recognizing that crises are increasingly urban, which calls for inclusive urbanization tools adapted to local contexts and to the nature of natural and human made disasters and conflicts, as well as to guide humanitarian assistance, fast track recovery, and contribute to building and sustaining peace.

- Managing the complexities of increased migration into cities, at all levels, leveraging positive contributions of all and using more inclusive planning approaches that facilitate social cohesion and create economic opportunities;
- Understanding the impact of new technologies and potential of open and accessible data, which require governance and design models that help to ensure no one is left behind;
- Addressing growing social and cultural inequalities, lack of access to economic opportunities that are increasingly manifested in cities.
- Responding to environmental degradation and climate change concerns.

6.1.5 Burra Charter, 2013

Article 20. Reconstruction

20.1 *Reconstruction* is appropriate only where a place is incomplete through damage or alteration, and only where there is sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state of the *fabric*. In some cases, reconstruction may also be appropriate as part of a *use* or practice that retains the *cultural significance* of the place.

Places with social or spiritual value may warrant reconstruction, even though very little may remain (e.g. only building footings or tree stumps following fire, flood or storm).

The requirement for sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state still applies.

20.2 *Reconstruction* should be identifiable on close inspection or through additional *interpretation*.

6.2 Textual Timeline

1933- Athens Charter, CIAM IV

1940- Treatment of Ancient Buildings Damaged in War Time, SPAB

1954- The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954 and 1999 Protocols).

1964- International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter), ICOMOS, Venice.

1979, 1999, 2013 Burra Charter, The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance

1994 Nara Document on Authenticity

2000- The Riga Charter on Authenticity and Historical Reconstruction

2011 – UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape

2012- Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, WHC

2012- Venice Declaration on Building Resilience at the Local Level towards Protected Cultural Heritage, UNISDR

- 2015- Reconstructing after disasters: Build Back Better, UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Sendai, Japan
- 2015- The Bonn Declaration on World Heritage, 39th session of the World Heritage Committee
- 2017- ICCROM 30th General Assembly, Rome
- 2018 Davos Declaration Conference of Ministers of Culture - Towards a European vision of high-quality Baukultur
- 2018- Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030

6.3 Case Studies at the World Heritage Committee

These case-studies are based on reporting to the World Heritage Committee:

6.3.1 Natural or human-induced disasters

The situation is slightly different for post-disaster situations, namely after the earthquakes in Haiti or Nepal.

In Decision 38 COM 7B.44 on the National History Park – Citadel, Sans Souci, Ramiers (Haiti), the Committee first acknowledged the suffering from the impact of the earthquake. This is interesting, as the World Heritage site has only been slightly damaged whereas the effects on the management of heritage through the destabilization of the country after the earthquake have been considerable.

“Recognizes the extreme social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities facing the State Party and by extension the impacts on its heritage assets;

Welcomes the measures taken by the State Party to implement the decisions of the World Heritage Committee, and acknowledges the efforts of the Institute for the Protection of National Heritage to ensure the safeguard of the property, as well as the ongoing efforts to raise awareness and inform local communities;

Notes the latest results of the studies on the structural stability of the Citadel and the emergency shoring work that have been made, and requests the State Party to continue and finalize the work of structural reinforcement, in cooperation with technical and financial institutions, and to submit for approval as soon as possible the conservation plan of the buildings;”

In Kathmandu Valley (Nepal) the “reconstruction issues” did not start with the recent earthquake, but long beforehand as outlined in 2012 (Decision 36 COM 7B.66):

“Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre detailed information, including independently prepared heritage impact assessments, for proposed developments for the revised new road, the airport extension or any other major scheme of development, conservation or reconstruction, in particular for the Bhaidegah Temple in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies;”

After the earthquake Decision 39 COM 7B.69 on Kathmandu Valley (Nepal) does not directly mention reconstruction, even though the recovery phase was already in full swing:

“Takes note of the information provided by the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies concerning the actions undertaken in response to the devastating earthquake and acknowledges the efforts made by the Department of Archaeology of Nepal to ensure the safeguarding of the property in spite of the difficulties being experienced;”

It seems that for Nepal, the situation on the ground is quite difficult due to the scale of the destruction and also to different approaches which may be taken by stakeholders as to rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction.

In the case of a fire which devastated the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda), discussions are on-going with local and national stakeholders and different missions were undertaken to assist in decision making:

Decision 38 COM 7A.26 in 2014, for example welcomed “the continuing commitment of the State Party to pursue the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga and the restoration of the wider property;” A year later, in 2015 the Decision 39 COM 7A.23 reads slightly different and also expressed concerns:

“Notes the progress made on the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga and congratulates the State Party for its continued commitment to this work;

Expresses its concern that the timelines provided in the state of conservation report for the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga are overly optimistic, and in order to better reflect the need for careful work to be carried out on the thatching, and on the redesign and installation of a fire protection system, requests that the State Party provide a revised, realistic reconstruction project timeline, with clearly defined benchmarks; “

It is also interesting to note that this is one of the few cases which relies on full documentation due to a 3D scanning which was carried out by CyArk a few years earlier. This would allow for best practice restoration or reconstruction in line with the Operational Guidelines currently in force.

6.3.2 Terrorist attacks

A high number of terrorist attacks have been carried out against World Heritage sites, namely in Syria, Iraq or Mali. The number of decisions concerning Timbuktu increased since the attacks in 2012, especially due to the fact that the reconstruction was seen as a positive measure by the State Party, by local authorities and communities, as well as by the international community.

At its 38th session in Doha in 2014 (Decision 38 COM 7A.24) the Committee discussed in detail the destruction and restoration of the Mausoleums in Timbuktu (Mali):

“Congratulates the State Party for having accomplished significant progress enabling the commencement of the reconstruction of the mausoleums on 14 March 2014;

Notes with satisfaction the preparation of a restoration and reconstruction strategy for damaged cultural heritage in northern Mali detailing the reconstruction method for the destroyed mausoleums, and appreciates the place accorded to the role of the communities, the responsible families and the corporation of masons in this process;

Warmly welcomes the reconstruction of the two mausoleums alongside the outer west wall of the Djingareyber Mosque (Sheik Babadger and Amadou Fulani), as well as the

daily documentation work undertake throughout this reconstruction so as to better understand the organization of the work, the working relations between the masons and the owner families and planning the reconstruction of the remaining mausoleums;”

This was followed by Decision 39 COM 7A.21 on Timbuktu (Mali) in 2015:

“Expresses its appreciation to the following countries and institutions for their contribution to UNESCO-Mali Action Plan, and for their gesture of support to the reconstruction of mausoleums, which their representatives showed on 8 April 2015 in Timbuktu: South Africa, Morocco, Switzerland, Norway, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Croatia, Mauritius, Bahrain, Andorra, European Union, USAID, and the World Bank;

Requests the State Party, once the situation in the northern region of Mali is stable, to invite a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate the general state of conservation of the property and progress achieved in the restoration of the mosques and the reconstruction of the mausoleums, and to prepare all the corrective measures as well as a Desired State of Conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);”

Both the 2014 and 2015 Decisions express direct support for reconstruction in the case of Timbuktu. This was different for another property in Mali, the Tomb of Askia, where the World Heritage Committee in its 2014 Decision (38 COM 7A.25) stated:

“Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

[...]

Avoiding further reconstruction work particularly on the excavated ruins north of the Academy building; [...]

Notes with satisfaction the preparation of a rehabilitation and reconstruction strategy for the damaged cultural heritage of North Mali, that includes the rehabilitation of the Tomb of Askia;”

It demonstrates that a case by case approach is taken for each instance of intentional destruction by terrorists. The June 2015 publication by UNESCO “La Sauvegarde des Biens du Patrimoine Mondial. Un Enjeu Majeur Pour le Mali” provides further details concerning the complexity of the overall project of the safeguarding, reconstruction and rehabilitation, restoration and revitalisation of Mali’s World Heritage. It also seems that the Committee is more in favour of “reconstruction”, when an overall strategy has been devised which guides specific actions at individual properties.

As for decisions concerning Iraq, such as the 2016 Decision 39 COM 7A.25 on Ashur (Qal’at Sherqat) (Iraq) issues related to the security situation in relation to the assessments concerning heritage prevail and only indirect mention (“prior to any action on the ground”) instead of direct reference to reconstruction can be found:

“Commends the State Party for its efforts to ensure the protection of the property in spite of the difficult prevailing situation;

Also requests the State Party, as soon as the security conditions allow the responsible authorities to visit the site, to carry out a rapid assessment of the state of conservation of the property and submit the results of this assessment to the World Heritage Centre prior to any action on the ground;”

In some cases, such as in Decision 39 COM 7A.26 for the Samarra Archaeological City (Iraq) direct preventive measures are requested:

“Commends the State Party for its efforts to ensure the protection of the property in spite of the difficult prevailing situation and requests it to reinforce this protection by ensuring that no ostentatious religious signs are displayed at the property;”

The Committee has also taken general actions like in 2015 on “Conflict situations in the Arab Region” (Decision 39 COM 7):

“Recommends that the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies develop a post-conflict strategy, including means to extend support for reconstruction of damaged World Heritage properties through technical assistance, capacity-building, and exchange of best practices taking into account the conclusions made by the two seminars recently held by World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on this subject”.

In this instance, reconstruction was interpreted as a positive action requiring global support, which must be taken in alignment with theoretical, methodological and practical recommendations and guidance developed by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS.

Somehow different reads the 2015 General Decision on the World Heritage properties in the Syrian Arab Republic (39 COM 7A.36):

“Further urges the State Party to safeguard damaged properties through minimal first aid interventions, to prevent theft, further collapse and natural degradation, and refrain from undertaking conservation and reconstruction work until the situation allows, for the development of comprehensive conservation strategies and actions that respond to international standards in full consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;”

The Committee made it clear that it would not approve plans for rapid reconstruction but only to such actions based on thorough conservation strategies which adhere to international standards and doctrines, as well as overall Action Plans and Strategies. In the meantime and until such strategies are developed minimal first aid interventions are recommended.

6.3.3 Damage in conflicts

Similarly the Committee took decisions concerning sites which have been affected by collateral damage in broader conflicts such as in Yemen in 2015. Decision 39 COM 7A.37 on the Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) states:

“Commends the State Party for the preparation of the draft “National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016 – 2020” and the proposal for a complementary Action Plan to be developed during 2015;”

A similar paragraph is also contained in the decision on the Old City of Sana’a in Yemen in 2015. Major discussions are on-going regarding plans for rapid reconstruction envisaged by some local or national actors especially in the urban contexts.

6.3.4 Reconstruction policies for cities

One of the questions, which came up while preparing this paper was: is there a different approach or policy related to “reconstruction” when dealing with different categories or types of sites, such as cities or archaeological sites. When we look at cities (outside of conflict zones), it is interesting to note that most of the issues identified concern the urban context in Eastern Europe and the post-soviet development in Central Asia:

For example Decision 39 COM 7B.74 of 2015 on the Historic Centre of Shakhrisyabz (Uzbekistan):

“Notes the information provided by the State Party on the works envisaged within the “Programme for complex measures for development and reconstruction of Shakhrisyabz City”;

Also requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to review the proposed development and reconstruction programme, to evaluate the general state of conservation of the property, to review its current management and planning system, and to advise the authorities on the conservation issues at the property;”

Another example is Decision 39 COM 7B.82 of 2015 concerning the Kremlin and Red Square, Moscow (Russian Federation):

“Takes note of the ICOMOS Advisory mission report and further requests the State Party to suspend the possible plans for the reconstruction of the historically lost buildings on the territory of Kremlin within the property, which could represent a threat to its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), [...]”

Similarly Decision 38 COM 7B.31 on the Historic Centre of the City of Yaroslavl (Russian Federation) asking for confirmation of the cancellation of a reconstruction project:

“Also notes that the excavated remains of the original bell tower of the Cathedral of the Assumption are being conserved and requests the State Party to confirm that the proposed reconstruction of the bell tower has been cancelled.”

For a number of years Kiev: Saint-Sophia Cathedral and Related Monastic Buildings, Kiev-Pechersk Lavra (Ukraine) was also a concern for the Committee, including with Decision 39 COM 7B.85 in 2015:

“Expresses its concern about the reconstruction of the lost buildings undertaken at the property that can potentially erode its conditions of authenticity and requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, technical details, including Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs), for all proposed projects that may threaten the OUV of the property;”

It seems that the experts who drafted the Riga Charter were well aware of attempts to not only reconstruct buildings, but to ‘reconstruct’ certain periods of history and national identity.

6.3.5 Reconstruction policies for sites

When applying these questions to sites, similar issues appear. For example, Decision 38 COM 8B.42 on the inscription of Bolgar Historical and Archaeological Complex (Russian Federation) concerns a site which was already the subject of discussions on the issue of authenticity as early as the 2001 World Heritage session in Helsinki:

“Considers that the integrity and authenticity of the site have been affected by recent construction and restoration activities and these conditions cannot be met with regard to criterion (iii) as the testimony of the civilization of the Volga Bulgars or the Golden Horde, and, thus, also considers that this nomination could now be justified only in relation to criteria (ii) and (vi);”

Note that even at the nomination stages, these issues come up frequently:

Another example is shown in Eastern Europe with Decision 38 COM 7B.32 on the Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation):

“Reiterates its concern about the possible reconstruction of the monastery buildings and other major interventions in the landscape of the property given their potential impact on its OUV, and also reiterates its request to the State Party to submit, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, to the World Heritage Centre technical details, including Heritage Impact Assessments, for proposed projects that may threaten the OUV of the property;”

The most radical approach was taken by the Committee concerning Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, Georgia. It entailed a delisting or removal of a part of the property which was reconstructed against experts' advice. Decision 39 COM 8B.35 makes this evident:

“Refers the major boundary modification of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, Georgia, back to the State Party in order to allow it to [...]:

Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following [...]:

b) Avoiding further reconstruction work particularly on the excavated ruins north of the Academy building;”

Among the cases most discussed by the international community is the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley (Afghanistan), a site inscribed after the destruction of the Buddhas as a cultural landscape (and not a monument). Decision 39 COM 7A.39 is quite outspoken in terms of reconstruction:

“Takes note of the need to consider future reconstruction policies for the Buddha niches, and reiterates its request to the State Party, when considering options for the treatment of the Buddha niches, to ensure that proposals are based on feasibility studies which include:

an agreed overall approach to conservation and presentation of the property,

an appropriate conservation philosophy based on the OUV of the property, [...].”