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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

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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

MISSION REPORT / RAPPORT DE MISSION

**Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) (708bis)
Monuments historiques de Mtskheta (Géorgie) (708bis)**

19 – 24 February 2018 / 19 – 24 février 2018



REPORT

Joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS / ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage property

Historical Monuments of Mtskheta



GEORGIA

FROM 19 TO 24 FEBRUARY 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Executive summary**

Considering the main problems and factors affecting the World Heritage property Historical Monuments of Mtskheta identified in previous reports, the Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS / ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, Georgia, from 19 to 24 February 2018 has undertaken the following activities and provides the corresponding response to each one of the specific matters raised by the terms of reference:

1. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues that could impact adversely on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity.

The mission has the opinion that basic conservation issues of the property remain crucial, as they were identified in the previous Reactive Monitoring missions. The historic urban landscape of Mtskheta is currently undergoing step-by-step changes with increased commercial tourism development, rehabilitation of public spaces and changes in the overall historic urban landscape, as well as environmental degradation due to lack of waste and water / sewage management. These threats, if not addressed in time with appropriate and immediate measures, may impact in the mid-term on the attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity.

2. Review progress in achieving long-term protection, consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of Mtskheta and their setting;

The mission notes the positive conservation projects referring to the Minor Church and the bas-reliefs of the Great Church on Jvari Monastery. ICOMOS had approved in 2014 the results of a study of the structural pathology of Svetitskhoveli cathedral and had encouraged the State Party to proceed with an application project. However, no progress has occurred so far. A new archeological protection zone in the area of Samtavro Valley was conducted within the Project on Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage. In 2017 NACHPG in close collaboration with ICCROM completed the first stage of the multi-annual project on establishment of the training platform in the field of cultural heritage in Georgia (2015-2017).

3. Assess the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection of the property through the Decree on the Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization.

The Decree of the Moratorium has had a positive impact, successfully tackling uncontrolled land privatization and development within the Mtskheta Protection Zone. To improve the protective instruments, the State Party adopted in June 2017 the Unified Visual Protection Area by the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia under the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage (2007). A preliminary concept proposal regarding enhancement of green public spaces of the Historic City of Mtskheta was briefly announced to the mission by the representatives of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Municipal Development Fund (MDF) of Georgia.

4. Assess the development by the Georgian authorities, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, of a shared strategic spatial planning vision, integrating heritage and landscape as an essential component of the future city.

The mission notes: lack of awareness by the local community of World Heritage commitment; of the benefits and constraints, positive and celebratory measures; lack of an overall shared vision for the development of the city of Mtskheta as a guiding principle for the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation and for all decision-making.

5. Review the progress made in the establishment of a clear institutional coordination mechanism and collaboration amongst the different institutional stakeholders, namely the MoESD, MoC, Ministry of Infrastructure, and the NACHP but also with other ministries and agencies, the Patriarchate, and the Municipality of Mtskheta ensuring that the conservation of the property receives priority consideration at relevant governmental decision-making bodies, and in planning policies and processes.

The mission concludes that while the State Party has made significant progress in establishing a clear institutional coordination and mechanism, it is not fully implemented and operational in daily practice. Neither the Steering Committee, nor the municipality and civil society are involved in the development of the ULUMP concept yet. There is lack of a functioning participatory process and communication within all levels of planning and management.

6. Review the progress made by the State Party with the implementation of the World Heritage Centre recommendations provided within the framework of the UNESCO Technical Assistance to Georgia, notably regarding the development of Urban Planning Documentation.

The elaboration of a comprehensive set of mapping and planning documentation for the preparation of the ULUMP has been achieved. On the basis of updated databases and site surveys by the Technical Assistance project the borders of built-up regulation zone areas, archaeological zones and the historical landscape protection zone were corrected. The proposition is to be reviewed by the relevant government authorities before approval by the Government.

7. Assess the establishment, in line with the WH Committee Decision adopted at its 34th session in 2010 (34 COM 7A.27), of a state programme involving the Georgian Patriarchate for the protection and conservation of World Heritage religious properties in Georgia.

Since January 2017, the Mtskheta City Municipality has established a Temporary Working Group for Urban Planning in charge of the technical elaboration and implementation of the Urban Planning Documentation. Its work is overseen by a Steering Committee composed of the representatives of the main stakeholders: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, NACHP and The Patriarchate.

8. Assess all ongoing and planned projects, which may impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

The Patriarchate of Georgia informed the mission team regarding the announcement, by the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, of a contest for the concept of “Second Jerusalem” project in the Historical Landscape protection zone and the Buffer Zone of the property. The interventions include a new pedestrian bridge over the river Aragvi and universal baptistery in the Mtkvari-Aragvi riverside area of Mtskheta. It also includes related infrastructure with new walkways, connecting roads and look-outs at the historically important area at the banks of the Aragvi and Mtkvari rivers and by the Jvari Church.

List of recommendations

1.1. Components of the property

The mission recommends the following activities:

1.1.1. Svetichkhoveli Cathedral Church

1.1.1. The mission underlines once more the necessity for addressing the structural integrity problems of the monument and encourages the State Party to proceed with an intervention project to be submitted to the World Heritage Center for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

1.1.2. The study for the restoration of the pyramidal cover of the built "*proskynitarion*" and the Episcopal throne to be submitted to the World Heritage Center for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

1.1.2. Jvary monastery - Great Church

1.2.1. A complex program to check the static adequacy of the building to be submitted to the World Heritage Center for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

1.2.2. Extensive project for the maintenance and restoration of the building blocks of the walls. A specialized program of preservation and protection of the rest historical reliefs on the surfaces of the church.

1.2.3. Examine the possibility of partial restoration - completion of the southern porch of the church.

1.2.4. Undertake archaeological excavations in the monastery's surrounding area.

1.2.5. Develop a comprehensive risk management plan, including measures to restrict access for the visitors to the not secured, from the structural point of view, places.

1.2.6. To begin construction of the Visitors' Center.

1.2.7. Examine the possibility of moving away from the field of view of the surrounding area of the Jvari monastery the nearby telephony antennas.

1.1.3. Jvary monastery - Minor Church

1.3.1. Complete the stone conservation project for the original masonry

1.3.2. The mission has the opinion that the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia should:

- either to re-elaborate the already incorporated new building stones in a manner that works aesthetically with the original authentic fabric,
- or to attempt to remove the new material of this intervention and to realize a more adequate restoration.

1.1.4. Samtavro Nunnery

The representative of the monastery expressed the desire for an extension of the nuns' cells wing to an adjacent land owned by the nunnery. The project, when studied, should be submitted to the World Heritage Center for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

1.1.5. Samtavro Valley

1.5.1. The State Party to examine the possibility for collaboration with foreign Archaeological Schools able to bear the financial burdens of excavation, preservation of findings, and publication of the results.

1.5.2. The facilities at the entrance of the archaeological site could be further developed, securing a proper place for providing printed information material and refreshment (soft drinks, café, water etc.), box office, first aid kit.

1.2. Urban planning / master plan

2.1. The main recommendation of the mission is to maintain the Moratorium until the appropriate urban planning documentations are adopted and introduced, as well as the control and monitoring is fully in place.

2.2. There is still confusion among the citizens about the contents and implementation of the Moratorium. Information is needed about the steps required for the lifting of the regulation and about the monitoring and management of the historical core of the town, after the expiration of the Moratorium. A priority need is to reinforce the role of the municipality in all training and capacity building programmes for the planning and management of Mtskheta.

2.3. The mission reiterates the recommendations from the UNESCO Technical Assistance regarding the need to link all urban planning options to the strategic vision and a implementation and monitoring strategy.

2.4. For an effective protection and management, the advisory technical assistance ICOMOS has provided regarding the development projects (as outlined in the following chapter) in order to review and harmonize the range of protective urban, rural and natural conservation instruments should be taken into consideration in the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. Capacity building on integrated management of cultural and natural heritage is recommended with the support of ICCROM / IUCN World Heritage Leadership programmes.

1.3. Development projects

1.3.1. Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defense Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church

The mission considers purposeful to recommend the realization of the project initially proposed by the NACHPG, namely the demolition of this particular western part of the defense wall and its rehabilitation using the same materials. A better historical documentation is requested for all later interventions / changes on this part of the defense wall.

1.3.2. Samtavro Monastery Garden

The mission recalls ICOMOS suggestion that the Project Proposal submitted by the State Party on Verdure of the Territory Adjacent to Samtavro Monastery be supported.

1.3.3. Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari

Following the ICOMOS Technical Review of December 2017, the mission considers that the State Party be advised that they can proceed with the implementation of the proposed project “*The Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari in Town of Mtskheta*”.

1.3.4. Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP)

The mission supports ICOMOS's opinion that the implementation of the WREP SR Project is admissible, under the condition that a specific heritage monitoring plan is integrated into construction works schedule and properly maintained, and that a revegetation project for the pipe road sides will be realized after the construction.

1.3.5. Mtskheta New Archaeological Museum

The mission underlines that the notes prepared following the UNESCO World Heritage Centre Technical Assistance Mission in 2016, as well as the notes in ICOMOS Technical Reviews in 2017 have been taken into account in the latest and improved plans of the New Archaeological Museum.

Further remarks

The mission suggests to be taken into consideration are as follows:

An Urban Study of the Micro-district Adjacent to the Project Site to be elaborated within the frameworks of the foreseen Study Regulation Areas. This should be used as a baseline to define the urban design area, to specify existing priority elements which must be maintained or modified, as urban requirements for an operational design project for the New Archaeological Museum.

The proposal to erect a bridge over the north trench to the entrance of Samtavro Nunnery is considered appropriate.

Earthworks for construction of the new additional building should be performed under archaeological supervision.

1.3.6. New development proposals

The mission recalls the § 172 of the Operational Guidelines under which the State Party of Georgia is invited “to inform the World Heritage Committee, through the Secretariat, of their intention to undertake or to authorize in an area protected under the Convention major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. Notice should be given as soon as possible (for instance, before drafting basic documents for specific projects) and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved”, regarding the following projects:

1.3.6.1. The “Second Jerusalem” project in the Historical Landscape protection zone and the Buffer Zone of the property, by the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia.

1.3.6.2. The following World Bank (RDP3) financed project: “Historic Town of Mtskheta – Enhancing and connecting green public spaces – Preliminary summary of description of scope and main tasks for consultancy service”.

1.3.6.3. The representative of the monastery expressed the desire to elaborate a project for an extension of the nuns' cells wing to an adjacent land owned by the nunnery.

1.3.6.4. The study for the restoration of the original form of the pyramidal cover of the built “*proskynitarion* and Episcopal throne in Svetitskhoveli cathedral.

Moreover, the mission recommends that impact assessments should be included already at the strategic level in conformity to the 2011 *ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment for Cultural World Heritage Properties*. This has been included in the recommendations for sustainable tourism considering the specificity of World Heritage (Georgia's national tourism strategy 2025-revised Action Plan for 2018-2019, October 2017).

1.4. Governance / institutional collaboration

1.4.1. The mission highlights the importance of a coordinated inter-ministerial and institutional decision-making process regarding the protection of the World Heritage property. A continuous dialog and transparency between all stakeholders of the Master Plan should be the guiding principle for all actors, especially at the conceptual stage of new proposals.

1.4.2. The priority need is to reinforce the role of the municipality in all training and capacity building programmes for the planning and management of Mtskheta. The mission urges to initiate raising awareness of the World Heritage benefits and commitments among the local authority and all the citizens and stakeholders.

1.4.3. The mission underlines the general recommendation on the integrated planning process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation, that the responsibility of the Steering Committee should be in practice as soon as possible and that no project, independently of its contents and potential positive or negative impacts, could be realized without the active support of all relevant stakeholders, including the Local Authorities, and without the approval of a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance to the 2011 *ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment for Cultural World Heritage Properties*.

1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE MISSION

(Please note that all background documents are provided in the Annexes 8.1 – 8.5)

At its 41th session, Decision 41 COM 7B.44 (see Annex 1) the Committee took note that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission had been invited by the State Party to review the state of conservation of the property, as well as the progress achieved in implementing the World Heritage Committee's Decision.

The mission was carried out from 19 to 24 February 2018. It assessed the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues that could impact adversely on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity. The mission also assessed the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection of the property through the Decree on the Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization, as well as reviewed progress in achieving long-term protection, consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of Mtskheta and their setting (detailed Terms of reference of the mission is available in annex 8.1 of the report).

2. NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

2.1. Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

2.1.1. Protected area legislation

Since the 1990s, the protection of the property has been regulated on the basis of the national cultural heritage and spatial planning legislation. The system of cultural heritage protection zones was enforced in 2006 and amended in 2012.

The following legal provisions have been adopted:

- Draft Code on the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Georgia (2015)
- Buffer Zone by the World Heritage Committee (41 COM 8B.44).
- Legal provisions for the Unified Visual Protection Area adopted by the Decree of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection in Georgia (2016)

2.1.2. Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization

2.1.2.1. Background

In 2009 at its 33rd session (Seville) the World Heritage Committee decided to inscribe the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta on the List of World Heritage in Danger (33COM7B.102). The Committee was especially concerned with uncontrolled land privatization and development within the Mtskheta Protection Zone; the lack of a Management Plan for the World Heritage property; unclear sharing of the responsibilities between the Georgian Church, which is the owner of the properties, and the relevant state agencies, which are responsible for their maintenance and management; the lack of conservation policy. The 2015 World Heritage Committee Decision 39COM 7A.41 recommendations are as follows: *“to establish a unified buffer zone, to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including in particular the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting, and provide this enlarged buffer zone with appropriate protection, and to submit a minor boundary modification proposal of the unified buffer zone of the property to the World Heritage Centre, prior to any further works being completed on the Urban Land-Use Master Plan”*.

In 2015, based on the Decree (No 411.03/8/2015) of the Government of Georgia, a moratorium was established on construction activities within the boundaries of Mtskheta cultural landscape until December 2016, and the elaboration and validation of a revised Mtskheta Urban Land-Use Master Plan.

In 2016, the World Heritage Committee with its Decision: 40 COM 7A.29 decided to remove the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta from the List of World Heritage in Danger, taking note of *“the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection to the property through the Decree on the Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization as well as a revised Urban Land-Use Master Plan which has yet to be finalized and implemented in accordance with World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS recommendations”*.

2.1.2.2. Existing condition

Moratorium is temporarily imposed to prevent uncontrolled development at first on the Aragvi riverside. It is a fact that the moratorium stopped the construction of new buildings in this area. The later expansion of moratorium (till the end of 2018) on the historical core of Mtskheta city as well, prevented the uncontrolled construction of new private buildings throughout the whole area.

Conclusions and recommendations

- The mission finds that Moratorium has decisively contributed to the effective preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation by giving an opportunity to collect, to record and systematize all the necessary data from field research.
- There is still confusion among the citizens about the contents and implementation of the Moratorium. Information is needed about the steps required for the lifting of the regulation and about the monitoring and management of the historical core of the town, after the expiration of the Moratorium, till the final approval of all relevant

planning documentation.

- The main recommendation of the mission is to maintain the Moratorium until the appropriate urban planning documentations are adopted and introduced, as well as the control and monitoring is fully in place.

2.1.3. Status of the property, boundaries, regimes of protection and territorial planning

2.1.3.1. Buffer zone

The revised boundaries of the World Heritage property's buffer zone were adopted by the World Heritage Committee (41 COM 8B.44). The enlarged buffer zone provides for a unified buffer zone for the three components of the property and encompasses the historical, natural and spiritual setting and context of the property.

To improve the protective instruments in the buffer zone, the State Party adopted in June 2017 the Unified Visual Protection Area by the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia under the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage (2007).

The mission compliments on the work done within the UNESCO/Georgia Technical Assistance project including the elaboration of a comprehensive set of mapping and planning documentation.

The buffer zone encompasses urban, rural and natural designations but no additional management instruments for the coordination of these are foreseen for the buffer zone. Accordingly, the mission reiterates the considerations given in the advisory technical assistance ICOMOS has provided regarding the development projects that for an effective management and monitoring of the buffer zone the different provisions for the urban, rural, and natural designations to be harmonized in order to ensure a full protection. A comprehensive analysis of the current situation and overall trends within the whole buffer zone should be done as part of the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. Capacity building on integrated cultural and natural heritage management should be further strengthening.

However, the mission found that both the justification and function of the buffer zone – and the World Heritage property as a whole - is still unclear for the stakeholders, especially among the residents, local stakeholders and the local authority in Mtskheta. It is urgent to clarify the constraints and opportunities of a World Heritage status regarding both the property and its buffer zone. The adoption of the new buffer zone border modification and the ongoing process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation offer a very timely opportunity to inform about the World Heritage management framework.

Conclusions and recommendations

The mission welcomes the modified buffer zone, which will strengthen the integrated management of the property.

For an effective protection and management, the ICOMOS Additional Recommendations to review and harmonize the range of protective instruments should be taken into consideration in the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. Capacity building on integrated management of cultural and natural heritage is recommended with the support of ICCROM/IUCN World Heritage Leadership programmes.

The mission recommends that the local authority continuously informs its staff, the citizens, all stakeholders including developers about the function of the buffer zone and includes this in all capacity building and awareness building activities. These should be initiated without

delay and in parallel with the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.

2.1.4. Cultural Heritage Protection zones / Regeneration priorities

To improve the protective instruments within the buffer zone a proposal for the Cultural Heritage protection zones has been elaborated by the NACHPG with the help of UNESCO Technical Assistance team in 2017. The proposal is developed in accordance with the national law on Cultural Heritage with an aim to provide territorial protection for the historic urban fabric, the sensitive areas that require specific building regulations, the archaeological areas and the historical landscape. The Individual Protection Zones as well as General Protection Zones are legally binding in the process of elaboration of the land use and spatial planning regulations. The proposition is to be reviewed by the relevant government authorities before approval by the Government.

On the basis of updated databases and site surveys by the Technical Assistance project the borders of built-up regulation zone areas, archaeological zones and the historical landscape protection zone were corrected.

Conclusion and recommendations

- The mission commends the thorough work with the identification of the cultural heritage protection zones and the development of an updated urban planning database. The boundaries of the archaeological protection zone now show a cohesive area and the historical landscape protection zone corresponds to the buffer zone delimitation.
- The mission supports the expert recommendations for the proposal, especially regarding the zoning on both river banks and the highway and notes that the aerodrome construction area, on the right side of the road to Mtskheta, on the Mtkvari coast, should be included in the landscape protection zone and be subject to new landscaping measures.
- The mission reiterates the recommendations from the Technical Assistance regarding the need to link all urban planning options to an implementation strategy

A draft Terms of Reference for the following World Bank (RDP3) financed project was presented to the mission: “Historic Town of Mtskheta – Enhancing and connecting green public spaces – Preliminary summary of description of scope and main tasks for consultancy service”.

The scope of these presented ToR is to revitalize the area along the Araqvi bank and to harmonize the urban landscape with the green landscape, to develop this environment as green area and finding what kind of investors are accepted for this Study Regulation Area in parallel to support the Master Plan and the implementation of the projects.

The aim is to “prepare detailed designs and receive supervision services of the enhancement of the public use of green areas along the Araqvi River, in the Historic Town of Mtskheta and related pedestrian and cycling connectivity and access to these recreation areas and to improve visitor’s access to Jvari Monastery”. This assignment is planned to connect with another sub-project in RDP3, which targets the improvement of management of access and trails of the Tbilisi National Park and its gateway villages.

These interventions are in the Buffer Zone of the World Heritage property. The aim is to be a consistent part of the ongoing comprehensive urban plan and apply the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach as well as harmonized with the process of gradual moratorium lifting.

- The final ToR should respond to the previous UNESCO recommendations. Any additional adjustments and new proposals, which were not reviewed within the framework of the UNESCO Technical assistance, should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before decisions are taken to implement projects and/or any tender is launched.
- The design services to be carried out include an access and circulation scheme for no-motorized movements, a detailed design including an integrated investment program; development of preliminary designs, guidelines and preliminary estimates for the area financed under RDP3 and development of detailed designs for selected investment projects and supervision services.
- The mission asked several questions about the ToR proposal which was presented, taking into consideration that there are multiple and possibly contradictory factors in this very sensitive area, which is crucial for the support of the OUV of the property, namely:
 - The lack of baseline and analysis for the justification of the limits of the plan.
 - What is the connection between this selected area and the archaeological area of Samtavro, which is just aside? What is the connection between the project area and the surrounding area of Svetitskhoveli Cathedral?
 - The project aims at improvement of visitor's access to the Jvari Monastery especially from the western part of the hill, which is very difficult to access. Moreover, there is a look-out illustrated in front of Jvari Monastery. The question is how this will impact on the overall visitor access by the main road and the organization of the surrounding entrance area, which continue needing urgent improvement (main entrance; parking place; proposed Visitors' Center; visual impact from the nearby mobile masts etc.) and the risk preparedness measures for the whole complex – see: 4.2 Physical state of the property).
 - The lack of a baseline analysis of the impacts of project on cultural, spiritual, natural and overall environmental values possible alternative uses of the area.
 - One of the main questions of the mission has been about how and under which regime the control and monitoring will continue to be done after the expiration of the moratorium (end 2018) while waiting for the final adoption of the Urban Planning Documentation. The mission was informed that the time-line for preparing some selected Study Regulation Areas is end of March 2018. Their approval will give possibility for the State Party to remove the moratorium, before the expiration of the date, in these areas – only.

Conclusions and recommendations

- The main recommendation of the mission is to maintain the Moratorium until the appropriate urban planning documentations are adopted and introduced, as well as the control and monitoring is fully in place.
- The mission compliments the State Party for the detailed work done with the correction of the General Protection Zones which constitute a high quality and useful tool for the conservation and management of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.

- The mission welcomes the references to HUL approach and the aim to have a consistency with World Heritage standards. The importance of the synchronization with process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation must be stressed and a detailed work-plan with the Steering Committee must be established in order to achieve an integrated and transparent decision-making process.
- The mission also finds that there are preliminary investments plans for the area by the Municipal Development Fund which are currently been discussed at an early stage. The mission expresses its concern about how the dialogue and collaboration about the regulation of this very sensitive area is been done and if all the stakeholders, especially the Steering Committee are involved. In particular, the Local Authorities are supposed to be invited to give their opinion within the Steering Committee according to the framework of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.
- However, the attached map to the ToR proposal for Detailed Urban Design study with its target areas to select priority investments and the pedestrian /cycling/trails, access and mobility does not illustrate an integrated and holistic approach to the Historic Urban Landscape of the World Heritage property and its Buffer zone. The mission recommends they should be re-considered in order to clarify the main focus and scope of the project.
- The mission notes that the project area includes a natural environment together with very heterogeneous elements such as new housing buildings, an abandoned old market, and old blocks of apartments and an open-air theatre from the socialist era – all of which should be included in the project in order to reach the goal of a comprehensive and integrated development of the whole area.
- The mission underlines the general recommendation on the integrated planning process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation, that the responsibility of the Steering Committee should be in practice as soon as possible and that no project, independently of its contents and potential positive or negative impacts, could be realized without the active support of Local Authorities and without the approval of a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance to the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance for Heritage Impact Assessment at World Heritage Properties.

2.1.4.1. Urban Planning Documentation/Terms of Reference for Urban Land Use Master Plan, Historical cultural Base Plan and Building Regulations Plan

Up to date, spatial – territorial planning documents have not been developed for Mtskheta. The Terms of Reference for Development of Management Documentation for Spatial-Territorial Development of Mtskheta by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia were presented to the mission; however, the English translation was submitted later.

The mission reiterates the recommendations from the Technical Assistance Report (2017) that all urban planning options should be linked to an implementation strategy and that a hierarchy of regeneration priorities should be done. It could be developed even before the completion of the Urban Planning documentation.

2.1.5. Management system / Management Plan

A World Heritage management plan has been prepared in 2012 but it has not been implemented.

The Cultural Heritage Protection zones which were developed under Technical Assistance in UNESCO/Georgia Agreement 2015-2017 are under approval (see chapter 2.3.2). The mission reiterates the conclusions from the Technical Assistance that the establishment of Cultural Heritage Protection Zones is a step forward in the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.

Within the framework of UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme and based on the Georgia Tourism Strategy 2025 a workshop was organized in 2017. The workshop advised to initiate the work with developing tourist management baseline in order to give guidance to solve the imminent problems. The utilization of UNESCO tools for monitoring tourism is recommended. A strategic vision with a destination approach for the sustainable tourism including religious tourism was found necessary, as well as the support for the involvement all stakeholders.

2.1.6. Institutional structure and coordination mechanisms between relevant parties

2.1.6.1. National authorities

The Prime Minister of Georgia has taken Mtskheta World Heritage and spatial planning issues under his personal control since June 2017. The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia was assigned to further coordinate and lead the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. Upon the request of the State Party, UNESCO-WHC provided on-site assistance to the Ministry in designing the updated Terms of Reference for the elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation according to international standards. The Technical Committee (with the involvement of: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, National Tourism Administration, the National Environmental Agency, the Agency for Protected Areas, Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, Mtskheta municipality) and the planning team (composed from the experts of: MoESD, MoC, NACHP, Mtskheta Local Government and the Government of Georgia) was set up to work with the UNESCO-WHC expert.

2.1.6.2. Local authorities / Municipality of Mtskheta

As a result of the changes in self-government system in autumn 2017 Mtskheta self-governing town was merged with the Mtskheta Municipality. The change of administrative boundaries has ensured to embrace all the territory of the buffer zone of the Mtskheta World Heritage property within single administration. In line with UNESCO-WHC recommendations, the Unit for Spatial Arrangement and Infrastructure was created within Architecture Department of the Mtskheta municipality self-government; additionally, Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Centre has been established by the self-government to increase capacities of the local administration in cultural heritage and tourism management.

Since January 2017, the Mtskheta City Municipality has established a Temporary Working Group for Urban Planning in charge of the technical elaboration and implementation of the Urban Planning Documentation. Its work is overseen by a Steering Committee composed of the representatives of the main stakeholders (Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, NACHP, The Patriarchate)

2.1.7. Capacity Building

Capacity building has been a cross-cutting issue during the Mtskheta World Heritage Management Plan and Land Use Urban Plan development activities recent years. The Georgia/UNESCO Agreement for technical assistance 2015-2017 addressed capacity building as one of the four specific activities focusing on heritage-led urban planning for

national and local authorities.

The mission learned that these workshops, the on-the-job experience for NACHPG and the local authority team and the technical assistance of the international expert were found to be very useful by the participants. Especially the study trip for the members of the Technical Committee to France to share good practice was appreciated.

The NACHPG has capacity building as one of its priorities. The aim is a reform in training policy and it has already started with an EU funded activity. In 2017 NACHPG in close collaboration with ICCROM completed the first stage of the multi-annual project on establishment of the training platform in the field of cultural heritage in Georgia (2015-2017). Assessment reports on wall painting conservation, archaeology and urban rehabilitation have been developed by ICCROM experts.

2.1.7.1. Capacity building needs on local level

- The mission learned that within the municipality there is an interest and commitment to raise the awareness and capacity of planning and management and they have profited from the technical assistance activities. During meetings and discussions with the Mtskheta Municipality, the Church, and local stakeholders the mission could conclude that the priority need is to reinforce the role of the municipality in all training and capacity building programmes for the planning and management of Mtskheta. The technical staff would then be enabled to directly carry out work or to commission and supervise external consultancies for both studies and technical tasks. The UNESCO Final report (2017) from the World Bank funded Georgia/UNESCO agreement equally stresses the necessity that the technical staff of Mtskheta Municipality should be seconded to the Urban Planning Documentation project for a mutual learning process.
- Moreover, the integrated management and urban planning training should involve different stakeholders and aim at a cooperation between heritage experts and other sectors within the municipality, and public and private external actors. For example, an effective buffer zone management and monitoring requires the integration of environmental and cultural sectors and joint work on conservation and monitoring. The ongoing ICCROM/IUCN World Heritage Leadership programme, among others, addresses integrated natural and cultural heritage management. It could be timely to use the occasion of the adoption of the Buffer Zone to organize information meetings for the local authority and the citizens about the meaning and consequences of the new World Heritage buffer zone.
- The mission was also frequently reminded about the need to develop and implement appropriate participatory planning tools. Specific thematic capacity building activities related to the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme, disaster risk preparedness, among others, have also the potential to bring together different professionals and the public.
- Equally important is raising awareness among residents about World Heritage benefits and constraints. The mission underlines the necessity of a broad approach in awareness building about the Mtskheta World Heritage. This could include the use World Heritage educational programs and toolkits, considering the success of the educational program Archaeology for kids in Samtavro valley. Other activities which were discussed during the visit in Mtskheta included linking with other World Heritage properties and by initiating celebratory activities like a World Heritage Day.

Recommendations

- The mission reiterates the recommendations from the UNESCO/Georgia Technical Assistance project regarding the need to develop integrated capacity-building strategy

involving the stakeholders from relevant sectors. This activity should address, among others, capacity-building about integrated natural and cultural heritage management, participatory processes and visitor management.

- The continuity of the capacity building and on-the-job training activities initiated during Technical Assistance project should be secured and involve all the professional staff of the municipality together with MoESD, NACHPG and other relevant authorities.
- Equally, the mission urges to initiate raising awareness of the World Heritage benefits and commitments among the local authority and all the citizens and stakeholders. The priority need is to reinforce the role of the municipality in all training and capacity building programmes for the planning and management of Mtskheta. The activities can be started with small steps without waiting for the finalisation of the Urban Planning Documentation. These activities can also be a pro-active tool in establishing cooperation between different sectors and can be taken before and in parallel to the overall process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. The adoption of the new buffer zone can be taken as an occasion to arrange information meetings on all local levels about World Heritage in practice.

3. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES / THREATS

The mission underlines the following main issues / threats:

3.1. *Svetichkhoveli Cathedral Church*

- Lack of a building stones conservation programme and of an intervention project addressing the structural integrity problems of the monument

3.2. *Jvary monastery - Great Church*

- Lack of a complex program to check the static adequacy of the building and of an extensive project for the maintenance and restoration of the building blocks.

3.3. *Samtavro Nunnery*

- Outstanding stone erosion problems at the base of the monument.

3.4. *Samtavro Valley*

- The results of previous archaeological research continue to remain in urgent need of conservation and presentation and cleaning from planting. No further archaeological excavations have been undertaken in the area so far.

3.5. *Historic Urban Landscape*

- Increasing tourism pressure with a rehabilitation of new public spaces and commercial tourism facilities
- Lack of awareness by the local community of World Heritage commitment; of the benefits and constraints, positive and celebratory measures
- Lack of an overall shared vision for the development of the city of Mtskheta as a guiding principle for the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation and for all decision-making
- Lack of human resources for and awareness of World Heritage management

- Lack of an established participatory process and communication within all levels of planning and management
- Environmental degradation due to lack of waste and water / sewage management. This is especially visible regarding the rivers Araqvi and Mtkvari and their riverbanks.

These threats, either individually or in combination, if appropriate and immediate measures are not taken to address them, may impact in the medium term on the attributes which contribute to the OUV of the property, either not allowing proper planning of the ULUMP nor its proper implementation through the active synergy of all stakeholders.

4. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

- The mission notes the positive conservation projects referring to the Minor Church and the bas-reliefs of the Great Church on Jvari Monastery. ICOMOS had approved in 2014 the results of a study of the structural pathology of Svetitskhoveli cathedral and had encouraged the State Party to proceed with an application project. However, no progress has been done so far. A new archeological protection zone in the area of Samtavro Valley was conducted within the Project on Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage.
- In conclusion, the mission has the opinion that basic conservation issues of the components of the property remain crucial, as they were identified in the previous Reactive Monitoring missions. There is an urgent need these issues to be addressed before starting having a negative impact to the state of the Outstanding Universal Values of the property.

4.1. Conservation strategy

4.1.1. A. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Church

During 2014 Joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission, an extensive and systematic study of the pathology of the cathedral had been presented with regard to the structural stability of the monument, directed by Prof. Giorgio Croci. ICOMOS had approved the results of this project and had encouraged the State Party to proceed with an application project for the treatment of the problems. However, no progress has been done to this direction so far. The mission was informed that the NACHPG, considering that this work is not urgently needed for the carrying capacity of the building, deems appropriate the collection of additional data on this case. The Agency prioritizes a project addressing the erosion problems of the building blocks of the cathedral's external surfaces and then to proceed with the implementation of the project for strengthening the static adequacy of the monument.

4.1.2. Jvari monastery

4.1.2.1. The Great Church (*katholikon*)

A joint stone conservation and training project by Ministry of Culture through the NACHPG and ICCROM established in 2005, worked on the conservation of the Great Church's bas-reliefs, and completed in October 2011. As a result the three major reliefs have been cleaned, fixed and conserved, and protected from further erosion, under the harsh weather conditions of the site. The systematic work was done with the consultancy of Mr. Simon Warrack from ICCROM, who guided a workshop of local craftsmen.

4.1.2.2. Minor Church

During the years 2016-17, a Stone Conservation Project was implemented on the Minor

Church of the Holy Cross Monastery by the NACHPG, with the consultancy of Dr. Stefano Volta. Main phases of this project were:

- Condition assessment
- Identification of building materials and laboratory tests
- Identification of decay and mapping
- Intervention project elaboration

The mission was informed that the work will be continued and completed covering all the damaged original surfaces of the fabric of the Minor Church.

4.2. *Physical state of the property*

4.2.1. *Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Church- Remaining problems*

4.2.1.1. *In cathedral's interior*

- Large elongated cracks in the main vertical bearing elements of the cathedral (pillars), as well as on constructive arcs of the central nave.
- Rough cement repairs in many places on the pillars fabric.
- There is an emergency need to conserve the frescoed surfaces on the built “*proskynitarion*” for the worshipers and the Episcopal throne.

4.2.1.2. *On cathedral's exterior*

- Basic conservation problems concerning the long-term complex negative results of the moisture (erosion process) on the building blocks, and especially in the lower part of the cathedral (“*crepidoma*”) still remain unsolved.
- Partial collapse of building blocks surface from the dome drum of the cathedral.
- Cracks on the building blocks should be addressed within the framework of the general study for the static strengthening of the building.

4.2.1.3. *In the surrounding area of the cathedral complex*

- Devices for air conditioning of the Episcopal residence, as well as TV disks are visible on the defense walls.
- No conservation/restoration work has been undertaken on the three-partied opening fabric above the gate at the main entrance to the complex.
- Final arrangement of the perimeter moat not completed yet: Big prefabricated slabs of reinforced concrete and various construction materials are still placed on the north and east exterior side of the defense wall of the cathedral complex.
- The main pedestrian street on the south side of the cathedral complex, which collects the largest number of tourist shops and visitors, does not function as a pedestrian street because the installed barrier system is ineffective there. There is a permanent big number of private cars parked on this pedestrian area, just aside the cathedral

defense walls.

4.2.2. Jvari Monastery

4.2.2.1. The Great Church (*katholikon*)

The Great Church continues to exhibit the same complex conservation problems identified in the previous World Heritage Center/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Missions. These are problems of cleansing, reinforcing, fixing, filling, replacing building blocks, conservation of the building stones, and - corresponding cleaning and editing of the constructive joints.

The mission has enabled to its members to provide a more detailed and analytical presentation of the pathology of the building blocks of the monument, as follows:

On the exterior surfaces

- Extensive erosion of building blocks, due to rising (mainly) and descending moisture, retained in the fabric. The effects are mostly found in the lower zone of the vertical surfaces of the building and above the basements (*crepidoma*), where rainwater has the potential to remain and erode for longer period of time. In some cases, subsequent cement interventions not only did not prevent the corrosion of the building blocks, but rather increased it because they facilitated the maintenance of rain water (and consequently its adverse effect, particularly during the winter months).
- Expansion of construction joints between building blocks, which exacerbates the phenomenon of corrosion due to frost.
- Inadequate filling of the constructive joints, in the past.
- Flaking of the building blocks surfaces (even in repeated layers) and *kyphosis* (sinking), due to the frost phenomenon.
- Breakage / cracking / missing parts of building blocks, which diminish their bearing capacity and aggravate further on the corrosion phenomenon.
- Development of micro-organisms on the surface of building blocks, due to moisture.
- Color variations on the building block surfaces, due to different quality stones, used during previous repairs.
- Gradual disappearance of the original decorative bas-reliefs on the openings frames, either by breaks and collapses of parts thereof or due to strong winds and friction by the transferred sand particles.
- Extensive graffiti with engraved inscriptions by the occasional church visitors has deeply damaged the surfaces of the stones.
- Wounds by explosions during wars (a gunshot was treated by the NACHPG - ICCROM conservation team on the middle bas-relief on the apse of the Great Church).
- The southern side with the only one entrance to the Great Church appears particularly problematic. It is a fact that during previous years conservation works have been undertaken on the *parekklesion* (chapel) and on the remaining part of the entrance porch. However, it is undisputed fact that the decorative reliefs and especially those on the gate lintel exhibit the greatest degree of stone erosion. Jvari has been an important pilgrimage site since its founding and is considered one of the most sacred places in all of Caucasus. The Great Church is still used today for major celebrations. Taking under consideration the high number of visitors, as well as the fact that this half-destroyed entrance is practically uncovered, not providing any kind of protection,

the mission would suggest to the NACHPG to consider a possible proposal for partial completion - reconstruction of the remaining section of the entrance porch.

- In this way the original appearance of the porch will be rehabilitated (in a distinct way of aesthetic diversification between old and new material) and, above all, will ensure protection against the hard weather conditions for both the visitors of the Great Church and the remaining historical reliefs. Additionally, that will eliminate the feeling of an "open wound" created by the present state of the porch and will help the visitor to more fully understanding the original appearance of Jvari Great Church in its totality.
- Inside the Great Church no conservation / restoration work has been done. The situation remains the same as during the previous World Heritage Center/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Missions, with the exception of the removal of the small rough stand for candles and religious souvenirs next to the entrance of the Church.

Consequently, the mission reiterates the previous findings on the fabric, as following:

- Long vertical cracks on the large apses and on their arches;
- Moisture on the upper surfaces of the apses hemispheres;
- Breaks and loss of fabric on many parts of building elements.

4.2.2.2. The Minor Church

Taking under consideration the unsuccessful results of the previous intervention for filling the missing parts of the Minor Church with new material, and its' current "artificial" appearance, the opinion of the members of the mission is that the overall "recovery" of the original form of the Minor Church remains a major problem (recalling on this point the remarks of "A Heritage and Tourism Master Plan" of 2003, p. 42-43). The addition of the new building material has been made with a non-adequate restoration methodology, and by using reinforced concrete that has been covered with new stones. The final result is in complete contrast to the texture and the *matiera* and ultimately the overall aesthetic effect with respect to the original material. An additional negative factor is the unsatisfactory quality of the new material used, which has already begun to exhibit aging phenomena similar to those of the original fabric. Finally, the completion of the missing parts with wooden structures has been accepted mainly for protective reasons.

Consequently, key problem remains how to rehabilitate the overall original form of the Minor Church in a way that does not compromise the authenticity of its material and aesthetic appearance.

4.2.3. Samtavro Nunnery

Like the Joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission in 2014, this mission highlights outstanding stone erosion problems at the base of the monument, which should be addressed accordingly.

4.2.4. Samtavro Valley

The results of previous archaeological research in the Valley (excavated tombs, walls, ovens and hobs belonging to prehistoric residential complexes) continue to remain in urgent need of conservation and presentation and cleaning from planting. No further archaeological excavations have been undertaken in the area so far.

4.3. Positive or negative developments in the conservation of the property, its buffer zone and settings

4.3.1. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Church

4.3.1.1. Positive evidence:

In cathedral's interior

- Light fixtures re-arranged in a better way, so as not to disturb visitors;
- Electrode wires housed in metal pipes;
- Concerning the built and wall-painted "*proskynitarion*" and Episcopal throne, the architect-restorer N. Zazunishvili, head of the supervision service on the permitted works on the cultural heritage monuments, presented in situ to the mission the results of an exploratory study for the restoration of the original form of their pyramidal cover.

In the surrounding area

- A lift for disabled people in the main entrance of the monastery and a ramp to the small bookstore were constructed;
- A new outdoor lighting system has been installed;
- Explanatory labels placed for guests in the courtyard of the monastery;
- A model of the cathedral at the entrance of the monastery complex and explanatory signs (Brail system) for blind visitors.

4.3.2. Jvari Monastery

4.3.2.1. The Great Church (*katholikon*)

Positive evidence: The removal of the small rough stand for candles and religious souvenirs next to the entrance of the Church.

4.3.2.2. Minor Church

Positive evidence: The members of the mission visited the monument on site and found that the 2016-2017 work had a very positive result on the repair and maintenance of the damaged surface of the building blocks. It is also favorable that a sufficient number of Georgian young students and specialists were included in the intervention group, gaining experience. The analytical presentation, the methodology and the type of work performed are presented in the ppt attached to the materials of this mission.

4.3.2.3. Surroundings

Positive evidence: The mission was informed about the NACHPG project for providing systematic archaeological excavations in the surrounding area of the Great Church. The fact is extremely positive because by this way it is possible unknown aspects of the monument's building history to be revealed. The mission therefore considers that care should be taken to ensure that any remarkable on-site findings (after being properly preserved and protected) are included in an integrated monastery visiting program to be planned in the future.

Negative evidence:

- It is particularly noteworthy that no restrict measures have been taken so far for visitors

at points dangerous to them. The need for basic protection measures (e.g. wooden or metal fence) has been highlighted already in “A Heritage and Tourism Master Plan” of 2003 (p. 43-44), and repeatedly in the previous World Heritage Center/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Missions.

- No progress has been made on the realization of the Visitors’ Center project, whose designs have long been submitted to the World Heritage Center and where visitors could get basic information about the original appearance and historical development of Jvari monastery - which is not possible today.
- ICOMOS had in the past and has highlighted once more (on the occasion of the Western Route Export Pipeline Sectional Replacement Project - October 2017), the need the State Party to examine the possibility of moving away from the field of view the nearby telephony antennas. This emphasis remains valid.

4.3.3. Samtavro Nunnery

Positive evidence: The constructions of the Religious Museum for visitors in the western part of the nunnery courtyard, as well as of the shrine of the famous Georgian monk Gabriel inside the church, have been successfully completed (both projects had been submitted and approved by the World Heritage Center).

4.3.4. Samtavro Valley

Positive evidence: The positive measure of the new archeological protection zone in the area of Samtavro Valley was conducted within the Project on Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage. The correction was made on the basis of the archeological research, existing in the Project Proposal of the Updated Master Plan of the 2016. The materials of this research were reviewed and corrected in accordance with the decision of the Archeological Council. The new unified Samtavro archaeological site is to be discussed with the Local Authorities this Spring and before the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee (24 June to 4 July 2018). The mission considers it important to ensure for the visitor a seamless movement within the archaeological site, from the Valley to Samtavro Nunnery and then to the New Archaeological Museum, under the majestic unobstructed -views to Jvari and Armatzikhe hills.

4.3.5. Mtskheta City – Historic Urban Landscape

The mission witnessed during site visits several changes in the historic core of the city which are directly related to the results of Moratorium's (and to what extent) effectiveness.

- There are a large number of large private buildings (private houses or tourist accommodation facilities) along the river Mtkvari which are built up before Moratorium. A great part of these structures have already been completed, while in others their completion has been stopped.
- A large number of tourist stands, mostly wooden constructions, for the sale of local products and for the provision of elementary services to visitors has developed along the southern part of Svetitskhoveli Cathedral defense walls and around the so-called "oldest town house" as a small artificial tourist district. It is certain that this little neighborhood did not exist before Moratorium and the Joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission of 2014.
- Some roads and pedestrian walkways have been constructed and paved with concrete slabs and standard street furniture. It is unknown whether these constructions have followed an existing public spaces design plan or have been initiated by the (previous) Local Authorities. However, they have resulted in a modern standard character of the public spaces in the historic centre of Mtskheta city, which

the Master Plan has to take under consideration.

- It is positive that basic infrastructure networks (water, electricity, gas) have been placed underground. However, devices for air conditioning, as well as TV disks are visible on the facades and on the roofs of the buildings, everywhere. It is recommended a single wired TV network to be installed for the city. The problem with cooling-heating system devices is more complex, and the Technical Office of the Local Authorities, established for the implementation and monitoring of the Master Plan and Management Plan, should make specific proposals to conceal them.
- On the bank adjacent to the convergence of Mtkvari and Aragvi rivers there is an open area that, as perceived, is strongly claimed by both the Local Authorities and the Church - it seems that each one has his own plans for the future development of this area. This area by the Antiokia Nunnery is where the main part of the “New Jerusalem project” new baptistery area, supported by Patriarchate of Georgia, is proposed to be developed.
- The comparative examination of older and current photographs shows that a strong front of private housing development has already been formed up to the west hill of the city. This area offers great views to the historical core of the city, to Jvari hill, Armatzikhe hill and the surrounding hills. Visible are some new unfinished constructions right above Samtavro Nunnery. However, all this building activity has been temporarily frozen, under Moratorium. The views of these hills are recognized as an important part of the cultural landscape of the Mtskheta (Cultural Landscape Study 2012).

Conclusion – recommendations

- The historic urban landscape of Mtskheta is currently undergoing step-by-step changes with increased commercial tourism development, rehabilitation of public spaces and changes in the overall historic urban landscape. Therefore, the mission urges all stakeholders concerned, including the municipality, to consider starting a design and conservation strategy on the short-medium and long-term vision which could be implemented before the completion of the urban planning documentation, as recommended by the Technical Assistance project by UNESCO/Georgia Agreement.
- Intermediary and short-term solutions should be developed to prevent any imminent problem from increased visitor pressure. Based on the Georgia Tourism Strategy 2015 it is advised to initiate the work with developing a tourism management vision and agree on a policy in order to give guidance to solve the imminent problems. The requirement to develop impact assessments (including heritage impact assessments) for all proposals on strategic and/or project level should be considered.

5. Outstanding Universal Value and Heritage Impact Assessments of the planned project proposals

5.1. *Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defense Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church*

In October 2016, the NACHPG had submitted to the World Heritage Center a project for the partial dismantling and reconstruction - with the same materials - of a section of the western defense wall of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, due to its muddy and dangerous condition. In support of the wall to be rehabilitated, a concrete reinforced structure was proposed at the interior side. ICOMOS based on the data available from previous missions (and in particular on the state of conservation of the exterior façade of the defense wall) and on the materials submitted with the project, found it unnecessary to deploy that wall. It was recommended to attempt to conserve the wall by keeping the existing openings as evidence of previous

supposed historical constructions that were leaning on the interior side of the wall.

However, the in-situ assessment and the explanations given during the collaboration with the architect-restorer Mr. N. Zazunishvili, head of the supervision service on the permitted works on the cultural heritage monuments, revealed to the mission a different picture, especially for the interior side of the wall. The relatively good condition of the exterior façade of the defense wall is false, as the interior side of the wall is really in danger of collapsing. Two of the supporting cylindrical retaining walls have collapsed and the third remaining is already broken. Also, the supposed “historical openings” are not related to the medieval history of the monastery but are the result of changes made during the construction of a building added in the last decades of the 20th century. Finally, the whole of the upper part of the existing wall has also been reconstructed in an earlier, relatively recent period.

Recommendations

On the basis of the above, the mission considers it appropriate to recommend the realization of the initially proposed by the NACHPG project, namely the demolition of this particular western part of the defense wall and its rehabilitation using the same materials. A better historical documentation is requested for all later interventions / changes on this part of the defense wall. The wall will get its original form as it had been before the construction of the auxiliary building in the last decades of the 20th century. Consequently, no openings that have considerably weakened the wall will be maintained. Additionally, the original, cylindrical, retaining walls will be reconstructed, reinforced internally according to the project plans, ensuring by this way the safety of the defense wall. Finally, the wall is approved to be reinforced additionally at its base with a reinforced concrete wall, to be constructed hidden beneath the current surface of the ground.

5.2. Samtavro Monastery Garden

The mission recalls ICOMOS suggestion (see: Technical Review from October 2016) that the Project Proposal submitted by the State Party on Verdure of the Territory Adjacent to Samtavro Monastery be supported.

5.3. Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari

Following the ICOMOS Technical Review of December 2017, the mission considers that the proposed project “*The Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari in Town of Mtskheta*” is fully integrated into the historical built and natural environment of Mtskheta, without producing aesthetically-unacceptable results. The proposed new bridge project fully satisfies the operational and traffic needs of the city’s population, while addressing both the current and future needs of the city’s visitors. The traditional simplicity of the metallic construction of a single span arch does not affect the natural environment and does not have any impact on the elements of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property. Therefore, the mission considers that the State Party be advised that they can proceed with the implementation of the proposed project “*The Bridge Construction on the River Mtkvari in Town of Mtskheta*”.

5.4. Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP)

A. The State Party of Georgia submitted the Heritage Impact Assessment Report of WREP Sectional Replacement Project Proposed in Proximity to World Heritage Site – Historical Monuments of Mtskheta to the World Heritage Centre, which was transmitted to ICOMOS for review and comments in December 2016.

- Assessment by ICOMOS-Georgia experts has revealed that WREP SR Project does not contain high risks of direct impact on Outstanding Universal Value of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta. The construction process will have a temporary impact on

the intangible values and ~~is-reducible~~ can be scaled-down. It can be concluded that the implementation of the WREP SR Project within Jvary Monastery Landscape Protection Zone is admissible, under the condition that a specific heritage monitoring plan is integrated into construction works schedule and properly maintained, and that a revegetation project for the pipe road sides will be realised after the construction.

- The mission supports ICOMOS's opinion is that the overall assessment of the significance of impact is minimum (considering the soil surfaces after excavations on pipeline road slopes) and in any case manageable.

Recommendations to mitigate impacts

- Appropriately designed pipeline road slope protection and stabilisation: The simplest and most cost- effective means of stabilising bare soil surfaces is through the use of vegetation; Rehabilitation of the pipeline road slopes by means of revegetation of the exposed mineral soil to prevent erosion and reduce visual impacts.
- Transport Movement: The work schedule should be made in agreement with the major stakeholders of the management of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta: National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, Patriarchate of Georgia, local governance authorities, and an *Agreed Calendar* on schedule should be elaborated. It will mitigate impact on pilgrims' and visitors' movement and hindrance of planned works.

B. The State Party of Georgia submitted the Cultural Heritage Management Plan of Western Route Export Pipeline Sectional Replacement (WREP-SR) Project Proposed in Proximity to World Heritage Site – Historical Monuments of Mtskheta to the World Heritage Centre on July 2017, which was then transmitted to ICOMOS for review and comments.

- The Cultural Heritage Management Plan of WREP-SR Project builds upon the conclusions presented by the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) report for Mtskheta World Heritage site developed by ICOMOS Georgia and undertaken as part of the (ESIA), and suggestions given by UNESCO - ICOMOS after review of the HIA report.
- The mission endorses the Conclusions of the ICOMOS Technical Review (of July 2017) that the Cultural Heritage Management Plan addresses and fully covers UNESCO – ICOMOS' and the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia suggestions regarding the *Western Route Export Pipeline Sectional Replacement (WREP-SR) Project Proposed in Proximity to World Heritage Site – Historical Monuments of Mtskheta*.

5.5. Mtskheta New Archaeological Museum

The mission underlines that the notes prepared following the UNESCO World Heritage Centre Technical Assistance Mission in 2016, as well as the notes in ICOMOS Technical Reviews in 2017 have been taken into account in the latest and improved plans of the New Archaeological Museum. The suggested changes (which are already accepted by the project team) aimed to improve the relationship between the old and the new building, the architectural mass-formation of the museum ensemble, as well as its internal functionality, regarding the old amphitheatre and the new building spaces.

Further remarks the mission suggests to be taken into consideration are as follows:

- An Urban Study of the Micro-district Adjacent to the Project Site to be elaborated within the frames of the foreseen Study Regulation Areas, as part of the Urban Land Use Master Plan. A detailed analysis of the current condition of the urban tissue, regarding

the setting of the former cinema building and the surrounding built environment and urban landscape in view of identifying the main assets, attributes and heritage values. This should be used as a baseline to define the urban design area, to specify existing priority elements which must be maintained or modified, as urban requirements for an operational design project for the New Archaeological Museum.

- In this regard, additional measures should be undertaken in the small deadlock behind the former cinema building, to upgrade and properly integrate these buildings into the built and natural environment of the new Archaeological Museum.
- The proposal to erect a bridge over the north trench to the entrance of Samtavro Nunnery is considered appropriate, because this will allow the immediate and uninterrupted passage of the visitors from the World Heritage property to the New Archaeological Museum.
- Earthworks for construction of the new additional building should be performed under archaeological supervision.

5.6. “New Jerusalem” - Concept of the pedestrian bridge and universal baptistery

The Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (adopted in 2014) highlights that “Mtskheta has maintained its role as the spiritual and cultural centre of the country, assumed ever since the introduction of Christianity in the region “. ICOMOS international pointed out in 2014 the “symbolic ideas related to The Holy City of Mtskheta as the Second Jerusalem, in which the most significant religious monuments in the area are enrolled in a circle representing monuments of the real Jerusalem”. ICOMOS also noted that these sites are functionally linked through a litany (religious procession), which represents the venerable pilgrimage to the holy city of Christendom – Jerusalem and that this interpretation where monuments were intended to evoke the real Jerusalem has international comparisons.

This interpretation has similarities with other places. In its final 2017 Advisory Service Report, UNESCO recommended that the “Patriarchate of Georgia organize a workshop to discuss the linkages between the World Heritage Convention and the heritage of religious interest, the definition of associated spiritual values, the research in the field of religious tourism and pilgrimage, and the role of the religious community in the management of the World Heritage property”.

The winning project proposal was made available by request of the mission as an additional document (see Appendix VII). Consequently, the mission had no opportunity to comment on the project concept, possible alternative solutions or on the positive or negative impacts of the design project. The proposal is a comprehensive design project in the Historical Landscape protection zone and the Buffer Zone of the property. The interventions include a new pedestrian bridge over the river Aragvi, related infrastructure with new walkways, connecting roads and look-outs at the historically important area at the banks of the Aragvi and Mtkvari rivers and by the Jvari Church. A new square and new buildings for visitors and baptistery are proposed near Antiokia Nunnery and an extensive landscaping of the surrounding areas include a new baptism canal and a basin for the baptism process, under- and overpasses of existing roads and other visitor infrastructure arrangements.

Recommendations

- As a general remark, it is very problematic that a large and comprehensive project like this is being considered separately from the preparation of the Master Plan for the World Heritage property. Clearly there is a disconnect between the actions of the various stakeholders. It is of great concern that neither the Steering Committee, nor the municipality and civil society were involved in the development of the project concept. A continuous dialogue and transparency between all stakeholders of the

Master Plan should be the guiding principle for all actions, especially at the conceptual stage of new proposals.

- In addition, according to the § 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the World Heritage Centre should as soon as possible, before drafting basic documents for specific projects, be informed of all major developments which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. Moreover, the mission recommends that impact assessments should be included already at the strategic level. This has been included in the recommendations for sustainable tourism considering the specificity of World Heritage (Georgia's national tourism strategy 2025-revised Action Plan for 2018-2019, October 2017).
- Taking into account that all new development proposals mentioned to the mission are being elaborated in parallel to the process of development of the Urban Planning Documentation, requested by the World heritage Committee, the mission provides some preliminary comments on such an approach developed in parallel to the planning and decision-making process within the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. However, it strongly urges the SP and the Mtskheta Urban Planning Steering Committee to take into consideration these measures without delay.
- The mission recommends that advisory assistance from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to guide such a complex process could formally be requested by the Georgian authorities.
- In addition, the mission reiterates the recommendations from the UNESCO/Georgia Agreement inviting the Patriarchate of Georgia to organize, in close collaboration with all relevant stakeholders in Georgia, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, an international workshop to publicly discuss the existing, in several countries, concept of "New Jerusalem", as well as to exchange on challenges and best-practice case-studies in this domain.

6. Summary of the consultation meetings

6.1. Meeting with the National Authorities

6.1.1. National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia headquarters

During the meeting the mission members were presented:

- The results of the Project for Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage by Dr. Marina Tumanishvili, Chief Specialist of the UNESCO and International Relations Unit – Head of the working group. The detailed Report was shared in English text (see Appendix VII).
- An Intervention Report regarding the Stone Conservation Project for the Minor Church of Holy Cross Monastery by Prof. Nana Kuprashvili and Mrs Tamar Meliva, from the Restoration Faculty at the State Academy of Fine Arts (see Appendix VII).
- The project for the New Archaeological Museum of Mtskheta by Mr. Kakha Trapaidze, PhD, Chancellor of the State Academy of Fine Arts, head of the project team, and Mr. Zaza Iashvili, Architect.

6.1.2. Round table meeting at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development

(with participation of MoESD, Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia, National Agency for

Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, National Tourism Administration, Patriarchate of Georgia, and the Municipality of Mtskheta)

The mission was updated about the presented situation of the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation. The meeting brought up an overall issue of the need for more communication between the stakeholders, especially between the ministries and the municipality.

6.2. Meeting with the Local Authorities

In the meeting with the local authorities the mission received complaints about a "rigid" implementation of Moratorium, which implied questions about the total prohibition of any construction within the controlled area, including even elementary structures / conversions to serve daily needs.

What was emphasized by the Local Authorities is the complaint that to date no dialogue has been established with them on key decisions being taken for the future of Mtskheta city within the framework of the preparation of the Master Plan.

The lack of any information and the absence of a meaningful dialogue with the residents have created a situation of a strong mistrust, even an *apriori* negative attitude towards the future decisions of the Master Plan – even before any presentation to them.

The mission learned that there is an active involvement of the Local Authority in the process of the preparation of the Urban Planning Documentation and in situ help for the update of information and plans. Consequently, this active involvement should be encouraged. For a true participation it is crucial that the residents can embrace the plan as theirs by developing their own vision of the future city and that the Management Plan is the tool for the realization of their goals.

This empowerment of the local community requires specific attention. The mission highlighted the overall Mtskheta Urban Planning goal to have a participatory process and that the Local Authorities need to be fully involved and have complete and in-depth information as soon as the completion of the preliminary stage of the Master Plan. At the same time, the mission stressed the need for the Local Authorities themselves to start a dialogue with the *residents*, so that all the different groups of the citizens can express themselves in time in order to co-create a framework of principles and views on the future of the city, making their own contribution on the Master Plan. Learning of best practice in other World Heritage cities has proven to give inspiration and confidence in this work and the mission expressed the readiness by the World Heritage Center and the Advisory Bodies to provide help creating an appropriate framework for the citizen participation.

6.3. Meeting with Architectural, Art and Restoration Council of the Patriarchate

The Council stressed that maintaining the balance between the spiritual and natural heritage of Mtskheta is a priority issue of the Church. The most important problem now is the lack of awareness of the local community of the benefits of living in the Holy Capital of Georgia. The concept of "Second Jerusalem" will bring more pilgrims and tourists to Mtskheta and give it an additional recognition. The mission recommended the organization, by the Patriarchate and relevant national authorities, of an international conference which would be a positive step for Mtskheta and would allow for sharing practice and get international advice. The mission brought up the project for the new pedestrian bridge and universal baptistery which had not been officially presented to the mission by the national authorities in charge of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (e.g. Ministry of Culture). The mission also learned that no dialogue with the municipality or with other Mtskheta Urban Planning stakeholders including NACHPG had taken place. The mission welcomed the opportunity to discuss the issue in the present meeting and pointed out the necessity that all projects,

especially at initial level, should be linked to the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation and the management plan work. As additional information the Patriarchate of Georgia informed the mission team of its support regarding the results of the contest.

6.4. Meeting with National Committee of ICOMOS – Georgia

ICOMOS representative had the possibility to have a warm meeting with the Chairman Mr. Merab Bochoidze and members of the executive committee of the National Committee of ICOMOS – Georgia at the traditional house in the old Tbilisi district, which host's the Georgian Committee offices. The ICOMOS International representative clarified the purpose of the Joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission to Mtskheta and thanked ICOMOS Georgia representatives for their continued involvement and support of the aims and objectives of ICOMOS.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Conservation strategy

Conclusion - Recommendations

The mission notes that although some of the following recommendations have been introduced in previous missions and despite the positive conservation projects referring to the bas-reliefs on the eastern part of the Great Church and the western façade of the Minor Church on Jvari Monastery that have taken place to date, it is necessary the State Party to go on with the following:

7.2. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Church

- A building stones conservation programme is a first priority. On the basis of the previous agreement between Georgia and ICCROM, and taking into account fruitful collaboration in domain of stone preservation, Georgia is invited to request ICCROM to provide its technical assistance. In addition to its previous recommendation, ICOMOS underlines once more the necessity for addressing the structural integrity problems of the monument and encourages the State Party to proceed with an intervention project, based on the results of the approved structural assessment project. Cracks on the church facades should be addressed within the framework of the general study for the static strengthening of the building.
- The study for the restoration of the original form of the pyramidal cover of the built "*proskynitarion*" for the worshipers and the Episcopal throne should be completed and submitted to the World Heritage Center for review by the Advisory Bodies.

7.3. Jvary monastery - Great Church:

- A complex program to check the static adequacy of the building.
- Extensive project for the maintenance and restoration of the building blocks of the walls.
- Particularly, a specialized program of preservation and protection of the rest historical reliefs on the surfaces of the church.
- Examine the possibility of partial restoration - completion of the southern porch of the church.
- Execute archaeological excavations in the monastery's surrounding area
- Restrict measures to be taken for the visitors at points dangerous to them and develop

a comprehensive risk management plan

- To begin construction of the Visitors' Center for Jvari monastery
- Examine the possibility of moving away from the field of view of the surrounding area of the Jvari monastery the nearby telephony antennas.

7.4. Jvary monastery - Minor Church:

- Complete the stone conservation project for the whole original masonry.
- Review the problem of the total recovery of the original form of the church, with adequate interventions on the new material incorporated, in a manner that it works aesthetically with the original authentic fabric. The mission has the opinion that the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia should be seriously minded:
 - either to re-elaborate the already incorporated new building stones in a manner that works aesthetically with the original authentic fabric,
 - or to attempt to remove the new material of this intervention and to realize a more adequate restoration.

7.5. Samtavro Nunnery

The representative of the monastery expressed the desire for an extension of the nuns' cells wing to an adjacent land owned by the nunnery. The mission clarified that requests within the area protected by the World Heritage Convention should be addressed to the Georgian authorities in charge for the implementation of the Convention, and to be transmitted to the World Heritage Center for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies.

7.6. Samtavro Valley

- The State Party to examine the possibility for collaboration with foreign Archaeological Schools able to bear the financial burdens of excavation, preservation of findings, and publication of the results.
- The facilities at the entrance of the archaeological site could be further developed, securing a proper place for providing printed information material and refreshment (soft drinks, café, water etc.), box office, first aid kit.

7.7. Development of a sufficient and effective mechanism for monitoring the Master Plan implementation

7.7.1. Governance and institutional collaboration

The importance of the synchronization of all proposals on strategic level with process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation must be stressed and a detailed work-plan with the Steering Committee must be established in order to achieve an integrated and transparent decision-making process.

The mission underlines the general recommendation on the integrated planning process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation, that the responsibility of the Steering Committee should be in practice as soon as possible and that no project, independently of its contents and potential positive or negative impacts, could be realized without the active support of Local Authorities.

A Technical Commission, consisting of architects (with experience on conservation - restoration and management of cultural heritage), structural engineer, urban planner, electric-mechanical engineer (expert on energy issues), economist-developer and sociologist is recommended to settle within the local community - but administratively independent of local authorities (perhaps depended from the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Energy and Development). Among the main duties of this working team on a daily basis will be:

- General monitoring of the implementation of the Master Plan.
- Preliminary assessment of applications for construction permits with the object of improving the existing situation / modifying constructions / additions / new buildings within the Buffer Zone, and especially within the zones where a special protection regime will be established - *the Study Regulation Areas*.
- Preliminary control of all new facilities - development funding within the Buffer Zone.

After the on-site assessment, the Technical Commission would advise the Technical Council accordingly to make the final decision.

7.7.2. Development projects

A general requirement of a strategic and/or project level Impact Assessments (including Heritage and other appropriate Impact Assessments) for all proposals which may have a potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property can be introduced in parallel to the adoption of the Urban Planning Documentation. These, and other proactive measures as Risk Preparedness Plans can be envisaged even while Mtskheta World Heritage property Management Plan is under preparation.

7.7.3. Awareness and capacity building

After the completion of the *Studies on Regulation Areas*, and in order to achieve maximum participation by the local population in the Master Plan implementation process, the NACHPG should issue a user-friendly guide with special instructions addressed to residents living and working in the Protection zone, informing them of what is permitted and how it can be implemented, and what is not permitted. On the basis of this popular guide, the Technical Commission of the community would advise residents on the capacity building to implement small-scale improvements to their daily lives.

The mission recommends that the local authority includes information about the use and function of the buffer zone in all capacity building and awareness building activities, including citizens, developers and other stakeholders. These could be initiated without delay and follow the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.

The capacity building and on-the-job training activities during the UNESCO/Georgia Technical Assistance project should be continued without delay and involve all the professional staff of the municipality together with MoESD, NACHPG and other relevant authorities. The capacity building should also address integrated cultural and natural heritage management, participatory planning and visitor management.

Equally, the mission urges to initiate raising awareness of the World Heritage benefits and commitments among the local authority and all the citizens and stakeholders. The activities can be started with small steps immediately and could be done in parallel with the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation without waiting for its adoption. These activities can also be a pro-active tool in establishing cooperation between different sectors and can be taken before and can feed into the overall process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.

8. ANNEXES

- 8.1. Terms of Reference
- 8.2. Composition of mission team
- 8.3. Programme
- 8.4. List of participants in the meetings
- 8.5. Background documents
- 8.6. Illustrations
- 8.7. Additional material delivered during the mission

8.1. Terms of Reference

Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS / ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, Georgia, 19 – 24 February 2018

At its 41th session, Decision 41 COM 7B.44 (see Annex 1) the Committee took note that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission had been invited by the State Party to review the state of conservation of the property, as well as the progress achieved in implementing the World Heritage Committee's Decision.

Considering the main problems and factors affecting the World Heritage property Historical Monuments of Mtskheta identified in previous reports (state of conservation reports reviewed by the WH Committee, WH Committee Decisions, State Party reports, Reactive Monitoring Mission reports, Final report of the UNESCO Technical Assistance to Georgia etc); the mission shall undertake the following activities:

1. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues that could impact adversely on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity;
2. Review progress in achieving long-term protection, consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of Mtskheta and their setting;
3. Assess the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection of the property through the Decree on the Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization ;
4. Assess the development by the Georgian authorities, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, of a shared strategic spatial planning vision, integrating heritage and landscape as an essential component of the future city;
5. Review the progress made in the in establishment of a clear institutional coordination mechanism and collaboration amongst the different institutional stakeholders, namely the MoESD, MoC, Ministry of Infrastructure, and the NACHP but also with other ministries and agencies, the Patriarchate, and the Municipality of Mtskheta ensuring that the conservation of the property receives priority consideration within relevant governmental decision-making bodies, and in planning policies and processes;

6. Review the progress made by the State Party with the implementation of the World Heritage Centre recommendations provided within the framework of the UNESCO Technical Assistance to Georgia, notably regarding the development of Urban Planning Documentation;
7. Assess the establishment, in line with the WH Committee Decision adopted at its 34th session in 2010, of a state programme involving the Georgian Patriarchate for the protection and conservation of World Heritage religious properties in Georgia;
8. Assess all ongoing and planned projects, which may impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

8.2. Composition of mission team

- Anna Sidorenko, representative of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Mr. Alkiviades Prepis, ICOMOS representative
- Ms. Katrin Lizitsin, ICCROM representative

8.3. Programme

Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to
the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, WHS
Tbilisi- Mtskheta, Georgia
Spring, 2017

Proposed Draft of the Mission Program

	Activities	Venue
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrival of Reactive Monitoring Mission experts to Tbilisi - Meeting with the NACHPG administration and General Secretary of Georgian National Commission for UNESCO - Meeting with the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia - Meeting with the representatives of the Patriarchate of Georgia 	NACHPG office, Tbilisi Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection, Tbilisi Patriarchate of Georgia, Tbilisi
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with the Governor of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Mtskheta Majoritarian and Mtskheta Municipality Authorities - Visiting of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta, WHS and its surroundings – Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Samtavro nunnery, Jvari Monastery and other sites of Mtskheta 	Mtskheta
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with the stakeholders - Wrap up meeting with the NACHPG administration - Departure of Reactive Monitoring Mission experts 	NACHPG office, Tbilisi

8.4. List of participants in the round-table meeting on 20 February 2018

Round Table Meeting at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development with participation of all parties/stakeholders:

Representatives of the Mission:

- Mr. Alkiviades Prepis, representative from ICOMOS
- Ms. Katrin Lizitsin, representative from ICCROM

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia:

- Ms. Irma Kavtaradze, Deputy Minister
- Ms. Nino Gventsadze, Head of Spatial Planning and Building Policy Department
- Mr. Kakha Potskhishvili, Deputy Head of the Spatial Planning and Building Department

National Tourism Administration

- Ms. Tamar Maisuradze, Head of the Turistic Products and Infrastructure Development Department

Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia:

- Ms. Rusudan Mirzikashvili, Director of the Cultural Heritage Department

National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia

- Ms. Marina Tumanishvili, Chief Specialist of the UNESCO and International Relations Unit
- Ms. Manana Vardzelashvili, Head of the UNESCO and International Relations Unit
- Ms. Mariam Kuparadze, specialist of the UNESCO and International Relations Unit

Patriarchate of Georgia:

- Mitropolitan David
- Father Besarion

Municipality of Mtskheta:

- Mr. Dimitry Khundadze, Majoritarian Deputate to the Parliament of Georgia
- Mr. Giorgi Kapanadze, Mayor of Mtskheta Municipality
- Mr. Gogi Abuashvili, Head of the Spatial Planning unit of the Mtskheta Municipality
- Mr. Revaz Mamulashvili, Head of the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Centre of Mtskheta

Municipal Development Fund of Georgia

- Mr. Ilia Ghudushauri, Deputy Director
- Nutsa Datuashvili, Project Coordinator

Special Government Coordinator

- Mr. Paata Shanshiashvili, international Expert, Government Coordinator (placed in the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia)

8.5. Background documents

8.5.1. Inscription History of the World Heritage Property

The World Heritage property of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994, under Criteria: Cultural site (iii) and (iv) during the 18th Session of the Committee.

Brief Description: The historic churches of Mtskheta, former capital of Georgia, are outstanding examples of medieval religious architecture in the Caucasus. They show the high artistic and cultural level attained by this ancient kingdom.

Statement of Significance (Statement of the State Party) : “City-museum, architectural reserve, Mtskheta is a multi-layered monument, testifying to the great scope of building activity and high culture of the country. Preserved architectural monuments and unearthed archaeological material testify to the high artistic value of building and minor arts in various epochs, beginning from the 2nd mill. B.C. to today.

The architectural monuments of Mtskheta, being stage-making in the development of Georgian architecture are at the same time extremely significant for the study of the medieval architecture of the whole Christendom. Besides they are striking examples of the unity of architecture with the surrounding landscape.

Of special value from the artistic and historical points of view are the monuments of monumental painting (mosaic floor in "Dionysius Maison" in Dzalisa, 2nd c. A.D.) and metalwork (goldsmithery) discovered in Mtskheta. Special place in Semitic epigraphic is occupied by Armazi inscriptions, giving vast valuable data for the study of the written language in general and making it possible to deal with the origin of Georgian written language anew”.

Advisory Body Statement: The nomination dossier submitted by the Republic of Georgia was accompanied by a number of books and other documents. Most of these are written in Russian or Georgian, neither of which is a working language of the World Heritage Convention. The most useful book, *Georgien: Wehrbauten und Kirchen*, is in German, another non-working language. More importantly, the only map provided showing the “Protective Zones of Mtskheta”, was a very small-scale photographic print of a much larger map; the barely decipherable legends were, in any case, all in Georgian. However, new maps showing the areas proposed for inscription on the World Heritage List, together with buffer zones, were supplied to the mission, together with a summary of the Georgian protection legislation, as required by the Operational Guidelines.

Recommendation: That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria iii and iv.

- Criterion iii : The group of churches at Mskheta bear testimony to the high level and art and culture of the vanished Kingdom of Georgia, which played an outstanding role in the medieval history of its region.
- Criterion iv : The historic churches of Mskheta are outstanding examples of medieval ecclesiastical architecture in the Caucasus region.

8.5.2. Decisions: 41th to 18th sessions of the Committee and Bureau

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 41TH SESSION, Krakow, Poland, 2 – 12 July 2017. WHC-17/41.COM/41

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/17/41.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decisions 38 COM 7A.17, 39 COM 7A.41 and 40 COM 7A.29, adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015) and 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the progress made by the State Party with the implementation of the recommendations, notably improvements to the Urban Land-Use Master Plan (ULUMP);
4. Also welcomes the progress made by State Party in establishing a Temporary Working Group for Urban Planning and Steering Committee;
5. Takes note of the tripartite agreement signed between the State Party and UNESCO, and the World Bank (Georgia/UNESCO Agreement,) to provide technical assistance in the elaboration of the Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta;
6. Encourages the State Party to develop a detailed operational workplan and procedures for the revision and finalisation of the ULUMP and development of the Master Plan, as well as ensuring stakeholder involvement and proceed with the finalisation and implementation of the ULUMP and Master Plan, as a matter of priority;
7. Encourages the State Party to implement the recommendations and advice of the technical assistance reports provided in the framework of the Georgia/UNESCO Agreement;
8. Requests the State Party to ensure that, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, any projects which may be proposed in the future in the immediate and wider setting of the World Heritage property be submitted to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible, before any tender is launched or decision taken to implement projects;
9. Recommends that the State Party reviews the projects, such as the Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP) sectional replacement, the rehabilitation of the fragment of the Western Wall of the Defense Wall at Svetitskhoveli Church and the Mtskheta Archaeological Museum collection conservation and new building finalisation, according to the recommendations provided;
10. Takes note with satisfaction that the State Party has submitted the proposal for a minor boundary modification of the unified buffer zone;
11. Also takes note that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission has been invited by the State Party and also requests that it be undertaken before 31 December 2017;
12. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2018, 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 42nd session in 2018.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 40TH SESSION, Istanbul, Turkey, 10 – 17 July 2016. WHC-16/40.COM/41

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/16/40.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decision 39 COM 7A.41, adopted at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015),
3. Welcomes the important work and commitment by the State Party to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) forms the core of the development of the Urban Land-Use Master Plan (ULUMP);
4. Notes the measures taken by the authorities to guarantee protection to the property through the Decree on the Moratorium on Urban Development and Land Privatization as well as a revised ULUMP which has yet to be finalized and implemented in accordance with World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS recommendations;

5. Decides to remove the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
6. Recommends that the State Party take into consideration the recommendations provided by the 2015 and 2016 World Heritage Centre technical assistance missions, and by ICOMOS, notably to:
 1. Strengthen the strategic spatial planning vision and ensure that the urban dimension of the property be fully reflected in the policies, measures and tools adopted to ensure the conservation of the latter, using if necessary the approach carried by the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011),
 2. Address the governance issue at the local level in order to ensure adequate planning, efficient management and decision making,
 3. Pursue a stakeholder involvement strategy and methodology, together with communication tools,
 4. Review the administrative borders especially in relation to the Jvari site, in order to finalize and implement the ULUMP including supportive land use regulations, and a management plan, and also continue to ensure the long term conservation of monuments and archaeological sites through the development of adequate plans and restoration programmes;
7. Welcomes the establishment of a unified buffer zone, encompassing the landscape surrounding the components, including in particular the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting and requests the State Party to provide this enlarged buffer zone with appropriate protection, and to submit a minor boundary modification proposal of the unified buffer zone of the property to the World Heritage Centre;
8. Also welcomes the initiative of the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations;
9. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2017, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 39TH SESSION, Bonn, Germany, 28 June - 8 July 2015. WHC-15/39.COM/41

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decision 38 COM 7A.17, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to improve the protection of all components of the property and its buffer zone and, more particularly, introducing a moratorium on any development in the zone next to the Aragvi and Mtgvari rivers banks declared as a non aedificandi zone until the Urban Land-Use Master Plan and unified buffer zone are approved and implemented to curb uncontrolled development;
4. Notes with appreciation that an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism has been established with the purpose to ensure that the conservation of World Heritage properties receive priority consideration within the governmental decision-making processes and that a Heritage Code and a World Heritage law are currently in the last stages of approval by the respective authorities and encourages the State Party to sustain these efforts and to secure that all necessary resources and regulatory regimes are in place;
5. Acknowledges the steps taken in addressing the corrective measures through training and capacity building activities, as well as the development, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and partnership with the World Bank, of a project towards the completion of the Urban Master Plan, as well as strengthening the management system through the self-governing status bestowed to the City of Mtskheta and the cooperation agreement with the Patriarchate of Georgia, ensuring co-management of protection and conservation of historical churches;

6. Takes note of the findings and recommendations made by the joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission and the joint World Heritage Centre/World Bank Advisory mission, carried out to the property in November 2014;
7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to establish a unified buffer zone, to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including in particular the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting, and provide this enlarged buffer zone with appropriate protection, and to submit a minor boundary modification proposal of the unified buffer zone of the property to the World Heritage Centre, prior to any further works being completed on the Urban Land-Use Master Plan;
8. 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, for all proposed projects that may have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
9. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2016, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
10. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger and to examine the implementation of the corrective measures at its 40th session in 2016, in view of the possible removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 38TH SESSION, Doha, Qatar, 15 - 25 June 2014. WHC-14/38.COM/16

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decisions 34 COM 7A.27, 35 COM 7A.30, 36 COM 7A.31 and 37 COM 7A.33 adopted at its 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011), 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012) and 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013) sessions respectively,
3. Acknowledges the detailed information provided by the State Party on the progress made to implement the corrective measures and urges the State Party to finalise its work on all the corrective measures adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010) by the end of 2014, including to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2015, the Urban Land-Use Master Plan, including zoning regulations with particular emphasis on the establishment of no-construction zones, strict limits to development rights and a conservation master plan and which should take into consideration the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, its specific landscape setting, as well as important views and connection lines;
4. Requests the State Party to invite a joint ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the property to assess the progress achieved in implementing all corrective measures in order to reach the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
5. Also requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to provide advice to the State Party in finalising the Management Plan and the World Heritage State Programme;
6. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2015, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the implementation of all corrective measures, as well as a minor boundary modification proposal for a unified buffer zone of the property, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session in 2015;
7. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 37TH SESSION,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 16-27 June 2013
Document WHC-13/37.COM/20

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-13/37.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decisions 34 COM 7A.27, 35 COM 7A.30 and 36 COM 7A.31, adopted at its 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011) and 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012) sessions respectively,
3. Acknowledges the detailed information provided by the State Party on the progress made to implement the corrective measures and urges the State Party to continue its work on all the corrective measures adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010);
4. Reiterates its request to the State Party to submit a minor boundary modification proposal for a unified buffer zone of the property to enhance the protection of the property and to allow a clear understanding of the archaeological and visually sensitive areas around the property;
5. Notes that a draft Management Plan was submitted by the State Party and encourages the State Party to strengthen the Plan by clearly identifying the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value as the basis for legal protection, planning processes and management;
6. Also notes that the State Party has halted inappropriate developments within the property and its setting and also urges the State Party to finalize the Urban Land-Use Master Plan, including zoning regulations with particular emphasis on the establishment of no-construction zones, strict limits to development rights and a conservation master plan and which should take into consideration the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, its specific landscape setting, as well as important views and connection lines;
7. Encourages the State Party to adopt as a matter of urgency the Urban Land-Use Master Plan as a major step towards the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
8. Notes with concern that the proposed location of the waste water treatment plant would have a highly negative impact on the sensitive river landscape that forms the setting for the monuments, and requests the State Party as a matter of urgency to re-locate the plant to a position that does not impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
9. Takes note that the State Party plans to develop a national law for World Heritage properties in Georgia, as well as a "5C World Heritage Programming Approach";
10. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2014, 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 38th session in 2014;
11. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE AT ITS 36TH SESSION,
Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, 24 June – 6 July 2012

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-12/36.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 35 COM 7A.30 adopted at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011),
3. Acknowledges the detailed information provided by the State Party on the progress made to implement the corrective measures and urges the State Party to continue its work on all the corrective measures adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010);
4. Also urges the State Party to define the buffer zone of the property to allow a clear understanding of the archaeological and visually sensitive areas around the property and to submit this proposal as a minor boundary modification of the property;

5. Expresses its great concern regarding developments being undertaken by the State Party in the vicinity of the property within the area of the river Mtkvari bank, between the Svctitskhoveli Cathedral and Jvari church, and further urges the State Party to halt developments within the property and its setting until details of proposed developments, together with Heritage Impact Assessments, have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review and comments by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions have been made;
6. Notes that the State Party intends to complete a Management Plan for the property by the end of 2012, requests the State Party to ensure that this Plan recognises that the property is an ensemble of religious monuments within a very sensitive historical environment, and also requests it to submit the draft of this plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
7. Invites the State Party to consider the development of a national law for all World Heritage properties in Georgia;
8. Further requests the State Party, in coordination with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, to develop a "5C strategic World Heritage country programme" proposal, based on the State Programme for the protection of Georgian cultural heritage, to serve as a consolidated basis for cooperation within the State Party to enhance the implementation of its commitments within the framework of the World Heritage Convention;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2013, 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 37th session in 2013;
10. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Decision adopted the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011)
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The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-11/35.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decision 34 COM 7B.27 adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010),
3. Notes the efforts made by the State Party in the implementation of the World Heritage Committee's decisions with regard to the corrective measures aimed at future removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
4. Urges the State Party to submit proposals for a buffer zone as a minor boundary modification, as well as to develop and finalize the Urban Land-Use Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta;
5. Also urges the State Party to adopt legislation that ensures adequate protection of the property and of any defined buffer zone and wider setting so as to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value;
6. Encourages the State Party to continue developing strategies to enhance awareness of World Heritage among stakeholders and developers;
7. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the property to assess the progress in the implementation of the corrective measures;
8. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2012, a detailed state of conservation report, including a progress report on the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session in 2012;
9. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-10/34.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 33 COM 7B.102, adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009),
3. Notes the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Commission to ensure co-ordination of all World Heritage matters;
4. Also notes the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the property in March 2010;
5. Reiterates its serious concern about the state of conservation of the different components of the property, and the slow rate of progress made by the State Party in addressing urgent issues;
6. Adopts the following Desired State of Conservation for the property, for its future removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger:
 - a) The World Heritage property with clearly marked boundaries and buffer zone precisely identified,
 - b) The Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta, including land-use regulations and conservation master plan approved,
 - c) A comprehensive management system, including an Integrated Management Plan of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, approved,
 - d) Long-term consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments in Mtskheta ensured;
7. Adopts the following corrective measures and the timeframe for their implementation:
 - a) Changes to be effected within one year - Precise identification of the World Heritage property and clearly marked boundaries and buffer zones by the following actions:
 - Prepare adequate maps showing clear limits of all components of the property,
 - Undertake topographic and archaeological surface surveys including the archaeological remains, important historical monuments and landscapes,
 - Define the boundaries of the World Heritage property according to the results of the relevant surveys,
 - Develop a 5-year training programme for the conservation and management of the site, possibly with participation at sub-regional/regional level,
 - Develop a monitoring mechanism for the physical conservation of the buildings and archaeological sites,
 - Define and prioritize the long-term conservation and consolidation measures within the World Heritage property;
 - b) Changes to be effected within one/two years –
Implementation of the Urban Land-Use Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta, including operating plans and conservation master plan by the following actions:
 - Establish complete cadastral information (land ownership), in publicly available and easily accessible format, for all land within the World Heritage property and its buffer zone,
 - Establish clear operating plans and strict limits to development rights and management regulations within the property and its buffer zone, to ensure the long-term protection and conservation of the World Heritage property,
 - Ensure that development rights on existing private or leased lands within the property are clearly defined and strictly controlled,
 - Adopt and implement the Urban Land-Use Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta, including all aspects of infrastructure rehabilitation, zoning regulations with particular emphasis on the establishment of no-construction zones, the institutional reform and capacity building, community relations, and tourism development,
 - Make publicly available the information on land-use for all lands within the property and its buffer zone, in easily accessible format, to ensure transparency in land use and allocations;

- c) Changes to be effected within two/three years - Ensured site management by the following actions:
- Adopt legislation that assures the protection and maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value of the whole of the World Heritage property and its component parts,
 - Adopt the necessary priority for the conservation of the property in national policy, planning and budgets, and take pro-active measures to solicit donor support for property management and conservation,
 - Develop and implement an Integrated Management Plan for the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, including:
 - a tourism strategy,
 - strategic guidelines for the integrated multi-stakeholder approach to the conservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings,
 - design guidelines for new constructions and the street furniture,
 - clear guidelines for the type of management, religious or visitor infrastructure that can be built within the World Heritage property,
 - Develop and implement a management system,
 - Undertake appropriate training in conservation and management for the staff in charge of the preservation of the property,
 - Establish a clear institutional coordination mechanism ensuring that the conservation of the property receives priority consideration within relevant governmental decision-making processes,
 - Develop a state programme for the protection of World Heritage religious properties in Georgia, as a legal framework for co-management under which the respective responsibilities of the State Party and the Georgian Patriarchate are effectively established, monitored and evaluated in relation to the protection and conservation of the property,
- d) Changes to be effected within five years (after possible removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2 - 3 years) - Long-term protection and conservation of the historical monuments and the archaeological remains in Mtskheta by the following actions:
- Complete the documentation and recording of all historical monuments and archaeological remains in a digitized information database for management, conservation and planning purposes,
 - Establish a full inventory of paintings including digitalization and reference system for all historical monuments in Mtskheta,
 - Implement restoration of the paintings,
 - Develop a special programme on the protection of all archaeological components of the City of Mtskheta;
8. Urges the State Party to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a draft retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011;
9. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2011, a detailed state of conservation report, including a progress report relevant to the implementation of the corrective measures, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011;
10. Decides to retain the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

33rd session of the World Heritage Committee, Seville, Spain / 22-30 June 2009
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Decision 33COM 7B.102

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision 32 COM 7B.90, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),
3. Expresses its serious concern about the state of conservation of the different components of the property;

4. Regrets that the State Party report did not adequately address the preparation of legal and technical provisions to address the various threats, the aspect of land privatization, the development of an integrated management plan and the development of a special programme on the protection of all archaeological components;
5. Further regrets that the State Party did not submit documents clarifying the exact boundaries of the protected area of the property and its buffer zone;
6. Notes with regrets that some components have lost their authenticity due to restoration works conducted with unacceptable methods;
7. Decides to inscribe the Historic Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) on the List of the World Heritage in Danger;
8. Urges the State Party to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value a proposed desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of the World Heritage in Danger, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session in 2010;
9. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS mission to the property in early 2010 to assess the state of conservation of the property;
10. Also requests to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2010, a report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendation contained in Decision 32 COM 7B.90, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session in 2010.

32nd session of the World Heritage Committee, Quebec City, Canada / 2 - 10 July 2008
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Decision 32COM 7B.90

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-08/32.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 31 COM 7B.96, adopted at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007),
3. Notes the substantive efforts of the State Party in defining and establishing the Cultural Heritage Programme, including legal assessments and relevant conservation, protection measures;
4. Expresses its serious concern about the privatization processes of land situated in the vicinity of the World Heritage property, and strongly urges the State Party to immediately halt these processes before the boundary clarification and the preparation of a "Special Statement on protection of World Heritage properties in Georgia" defining the World Heritage property's status and its buffer zones are completed;
5. Recalls its request to the State Party to give highest priority to development of an integrated management plan for the property;
6. Invites the State Party to establish a Special State Commission on World Heritage in order to officially share the responsibilities between all relevant State institutions and national, local and religious authorities in ensuring an appropriate legal protection and management of this property;
7. Urges the State Party to immediately start the implementation of an integrated multistakeholder approach to the conservation of Jvari Church in coordination with ICCROM and relevant international experts on stone conservation;
8. Also expresses its serious concern about the state of conservation of the archaeological components of the World Heritage property, their progressive deterioration and the abandonment of conservation efforts by the State Party, noting that this loss has a major impact on the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity and integrity of the property and further urges the State Party to develop a special programme on protection of all archaeological components;
9. Encourages the State Party to undertake global monitoring of the structural stability of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and implement special interventions for the conservation of the paintings;
10. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2009, a progress report including all above mentioned documents, as well as the boundaries clarification document, and if relevant, the boundaries modification proposal, for examination

by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009, with a view to considering, in the absence of substantial progress, the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

31st session of the World Heritage Committee, Christchurch, New Zealand, 23 June – 2 July 2007

Decision: 31 COM 7B.96

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 29 COM 7B.64, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Regrets the late submission of the state of conservation report by the State Party but notes substantive efforts in defining and establishing clear zones of protection;
4. Encourages the State Party to continue implementation of the integrated multistakeholder approach to the conservation of Jvari Monastery and urges the State Party in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to develop similar work programmes over the next ten years for the other monument complexes the property;
5. Strongly urges the State Party to give highest priority to development of an integrated management plan for the site to be built with the full involvement and collaboration all stakeholders based on the 2003 Masterplan;
6. Requests that the State Party invite a joint UNESCO-ICOMOS mission to assess the state of conservation of the property, including reconstructions, new developments and any impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity and integrity of the property;
7. Also requests the State Party to provide a progress report to the World Heritage Centre on 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

Decision 29COM 7B.64

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-05/29.COM/7B.Rev,
2. Recalling its Decision 28 COM 15B.69, adopted at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004),
3. Urges the State Party of Georgia to define core and buffer zones of the property;
4. Expresses its serious concern over the state of conservation of this property and urges the State Party to take urgent and appropriate measures;
5. Encourages the State Party to implement the Master Plan developed by UNESCO and UNDP in 2003;
6. Recalls the importance of cooperation between the State Party and stakeholders for the conservation of the property.

7. Requests the State Party to solve the problem of the illegal and inappropriate additions to the old Catholicos Palace that strongly affects Mtskheta's outstanding universal value.
8. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with an updated report by 1 February 2007 for examination by the Committee at its 31st session (2007).

Decision 29COM 8B.1 - Changes to Names of Properties (Historical Monuments of Mtskheta)

At the request of the Georgian authorities the Committee is asked to approve a change to the English and French names of the City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994.

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-05/29.COM/8B,
2. Approves the proposed name change to the City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta (Georgia) as proposed by the Georgian authorities. The name of the property becomes Historical Monuments of Mtskheta in English and Monuments historiques de Mtskheta in French.

28th session of the World Heritage Committee, Durban, South Africa 10-17 July 2005
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Decision 28COM 15B.69

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Noting the outcome of the joint UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property,
2. Expresses its serious concerns for the lack of management mechanism for the property as well as insufficient coordination between the Georgian Church and the national authorities in safeguarding the outstanding universal value of the property;
3. Urges the State Party to change the name of the property to "Historic Churches of Mtskheta" as suggested by the World Heritage Committee at its 19th session in 1994, following the original ICOMOS evaluation at the time of the inscription that refers to the Churches of Jvari, Samtavro and Armatsikhe as the components of the property, and to prepare a detailed map indicating their core and buffer zones;
4. Encourages the State Party to implement the Master Plan developed by UNESCO and UNDP in 2003;
5. Requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre an updated report by 1 February 2005 so that the World Heritage Committee could examine the state of conservation of the property at its 29th session in 2005.

27th session of the World Heritage Committee,
Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room XII
30 June – 5 July 2003

Decision 27 COM 7 (b) 62

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Recalling the decision taken at the 26th session of the Committee in 2002 (26 COM 21 (b) 46), to carry out a mission to the property and for a report to be provided by the State Party,
2. Reminds the State Party of its responsibilities as described in Article 6 of the World Heritage Convention to ensure the preservation and conservation of World Heritage properties;
3. Urgently requests the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and the State Party to work closely together to ensure timely organisation of a joint mission and for a detailed report to be completed in order that the World Heritage Committee can examine the state of conservation of the property at its 28th session in 2004.

26th session of the World Heritage Committee,
Budapest, Hungary, 24 - 29 June 2002

Decision 26COM 21B.46

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Strongly urges the State Party of Georgia to provide before the 1 September 2002, a report on the on-going constructions and degradations at the site;
2. Requests the Government authorities to ensure that all these works are halted and that no further restoration works or constructions in close proximity to the Cathedral be undertaken;
3. Requests that the authorities invite an UNESCO-ICOMOS mission to the site in the near future and that a report be presented for examination at its 27th session in June/July 2003.

23rd session of the World Heritage Committee,
Marrakesh, Morocco, 29 November - 4 December 1999

City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta (Georgia)

From 1996 to 1999 an amount of US\$ 36,800 was made available under technical cooperation for expert services on a management and tourism policy. A preliminary study for a Master Plan for the heritage and tourist policy for the World Heritage site was prepared.

In September 1999, the major elements of this study were presented during a World Heritage Centre mission to potential donor institutions in the form of "Terms of Reference for 9 Actions". As a result, a project is being prepared with UNDP (to be financed by UNDP and the World Heritage Fund) for the development of a Heritage and Tourism Master Plan.

The mission team particularly noted the critical conditions of two archaeological sites: the Armaztsikhe and the Samtavros Veli sites. Furthermore, the mission took note of a plan to build a new bell tower within the enclosure of the cathedral.

The Observer of Germany inquired about the results of the previous assistance and pointed out that urgent interventions and rehabilitation works are needed in the site. These issues should be taken into account by the Committee when examining a request for technical co-operation for the preparation of the Master Plan.

The Bureau decided to transmit the report to the Committee for examination and recommended the following for adoption:

"The Committee welcomes the initiative of the Government of Georgia and the Mtskheta Foundation to develop a Heritage and Tourism Master Plan for the City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta. It expresses its full support for this initiative that will provide the appropriate framework for a coherent set of actions to be financed by different sources and donor institutions. The Committee recognizes that on the middle and long-term major investments will be required for the actual implementation of the Master Plan and calls upon States Parties, international institutions and organizations to collaborate in this effort.

The Committee urges the Government of Georgia to take immediate measures for the protection of the Armaztsikhe archaeological site and for the recuperation of the total area of the Samtavros Veli Necropolis site. It requests the Georgian authorities to provide the plans for the bell tower at the cathedral for further study by ICOMOS."

World Heritage Committee 18th session / Phuket, Thailand / December 1994

The City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta : The Committee, in inscribing this property on the World Heritage List, suggested to the State Party to change the name to "Historic Churches of Mtskheta".

8.5.3. Protective Arrangements and Management Systems

(Information compiled from the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value)

Protection and management requirements (2014)

Based on the respective legal acts of the National Legislation of Georgia enforced in 1940 and 1957, Mtskheta and its surroundings were granted the status of Archaeological-Architectural Reserve in 1977. Mtskheta was defined as a town-museum and a plan for its development, which provided for the preservation of the scale and townscape, was approved in 1973. Since the 1990s, the protection of the property has been regulated on the basis of the national cultural heritage and spatial planning legislation.

The system of cultural heritage protection zones was enforced in 2006 and amended in 2012. A Management Plan has been prepared but there are still challenges in improving the site management mechanism and the coordination between the different management stakeholders. This would guarantee more coherent decision making over the land use in the buffer zone of the property and prevent inappropriate interventions in the landscape setting of the property. The implementation of Urban Land-Use Master Plans, which include zoning regulations to establish no construction zones and limit development in relation to the attributes of the property and specific landscape setting, with associated important views and connection lines, will be crucial for sustaining the conditions of integrity.

8.5.4. Retrospective Inventory

Location City of Mtskheta, Province of Mtskheta-Mtianeti

Serial Nomination Table

Serial ID	Name of site element	Area (ha)	Buffer (ha)	Centre point coord.:
708-001	Sveti Tskhoveli Church			N41 50 38 E44 42 59 *
708-002	Samtavro Church and Monastery			
708-003	Mtskhetis Jvari (The Church of the Holy Cross-Mtskheta)			
TOTAL				

NG in nomination. Coordinates for town only. Source: FRG confirmed by Garmin

Boundary Description:

According to the report of the ICOMOS evaluation mission by Dr. Nevsat Ilhan and Mr. John Warren (May-June 1994),

"The mission considers the three principle sites, comprising five churches, to be authentic.

10.2 The churches in the town, together with their lesser confreres, are a natural group, but their visual cohesion is insufficient to justify the designation of a single site and the two principle churches [Santavro and Sveti Tskhoveli cathedral] are, therefore, recommended for separate individual designations: likewise, the extramuros church of the Jvari (Holy Rood).

10.3 A buffer zone is proposed embracing the churches in the town and the Jvari Church sufficient to protect their environs and principal views. The buffer zone is less extensive than the zone of protection afforded by the state.

[...]

10.6 The mission recommends the inclusion of the sites at Mtskheta with buffer zones as defined on the accompanying plans. ..."

This interpretation was confirmed in 2000. In a letter from Herman van Hooff, Senior Programme specialist to Mr. Dimitiri Grindadze dated 16 October 2000, Mr. van Hooff notes that the maps [items #07, 08, 09 below] had never been transmitted to the World Heritage Centre. Based on the mission statement quoted above, he writes: "it is now our understanding that the following three churches form part of the World Heritage site:

- Sveti Tskhoveli Church
- Samtavro Church and Monastery and
- Mtskhetis Jvari (The Church of the Holy Cross-Mtskheta)

The City-Museum Reserve of Mtskheta would then form the buffer zone to the three churches."

COMMENTS: Based on the maps submitted to ICOMOS, the boundaries are clearly defined, but new maps on a topographic or cadastral base should be provided.

item #03 (excerpt from scanned version) item #07 [connects on north end with next sheet]

item #08 [connects on south end with previous sheet] item #09

Legend for sheets one and two (items #07, 08)

8.5.5. Minor Boundary Modification

1) Area of the property (in hectares): please indicate a) the area of the property as inscribed and b) the area of the property as proposed to be modified (or the area of the proposed buffer zone). (Note that reductions can be considered as minor modifications only under exceptional circumstances).

- The area of the property as inscribed: 3.85 ha
- The area of the Buffer zone as inscribed: 8.73 ha
- The area of the proposed Buffer Zone: 2382.5 ha

2) Description of the modification: please provide a written description of the proposed change to the boundary of the property (or a written description of the proposed buffer zone).

With an aim to ensure the effective protection and management of the World Heritage Site, the integrated Site Management Plan was elaborated in 2012 with the financial support of the World Monuments Fund. Two years later, this work was further enhanced with the Pilot Study of the Mtskheta Cultural Landscape (National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, 2014). The spatial analysis of the Mtskheta cultural landscape and visual basins of the World Heritage Monuments conducted in the process of elaboration of the Management Plan and verified through the pilot landscape study allowed to outline an area which is equally important for the protection and management of all three components of the World Heritage Site (Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Jvari Monastery, Samtavro Nunnery) and the historic landscape of Mtskheta per se.

The methodology of spatial analysis included the on site assessment as well as assessment of legal protection system in place and review of the World Heritage Committee recommendations and Reactive Monitoring mission reports. One of the departure points for analysis was the national Law on Cultural Heritage, more particularly the system of automatic individual protection areas. The article 36 of the Law defines Individual Visual and Physical Protection areas to enter into force automatically from the moment of listing a property. The World Heritage Sites enjoy the largest area of protection which encompasses a 1000 m radius circle around the site, as a minimum, which can be enhanced (only) based on the detailed analysis.

The GIS allowed to identify all automatically defined individual protection areas for the World Heritage Site components in the real space, to compare it to the de facto visual perception areas made visible with the help of the GIS tools, and through their juxtaposition to outline a territory which represent the core of Mtskheta's cultural landscape with three spatial and architectural landmarks Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Jvari Monastery and Samtavro Nunnery, the main area of their perception and also the area which can be actively perceived from these sites. The perimeter which was outlined as a result of the analysis was in full accordance with the World Heritage Committee resolutions as well as Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations.

At the final stage of works the detailed mapping border of the area took place in full geographic detailing fixed in UTM coordinate system.

3) Justification for the modification: please provide a brief summary of the reasons why the boundaries of the property should be modified (or why a buffer zone is needed), with particular emphasis on how such modification will improve the conservation and/or protection of the property.

Despite the fact that a complex system of individual as well as general protection zones were established at the national level for protection of the Mtskheta's architectural, urban, archaeological, landscape heritage (2006, 2007, 2012), the world heritage buffer zone remained an inadequately small territory adjacent to the Samtavro nunnery that is an archaeological area of Samtavro necropolis. This territory (8.73 ha) was in no way sufficient to enable protection of any of the three components of the World Heritage Site. The retrospective inventory implemented in 2011-2012 by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia brought up the need to bring the Buffer Zone in accordance with the World Heritage Committee and Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations.

The World Heritage Committee requested the State Party (35 COM 7A.30; 36 COM 7A.31; 37 COM 7A.33; 38 COM 7A.17; 39 COM 7A.41; 40 COM 7A.29) to identify the unified buffer

zone for the property in such manner as to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting, and to submit a minor boundary modification proposal of the unified buffer zone of the property to the World Heritage Centre.

The revised Buffer Zone for the World Heritage Site was developed in the course of the elaboration of the Site Management Plan. The conducted spatial analysis and the revised boundaries of the property received positive evaluation from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS (CTL/WHC/6705/GE/EC/AS, 03.07.2013). The proposed Buffer Zone boundaries were further reviewed based on the Mtskheta Cultural Landscape Pilot Survey. Finally the boundaries of the Buffer Zone were revised in the process of elaboration of Mtskheta Urban Land Use Master Plan process which was completed in May 2016.

As a result of the process the Unified Visual Protection Area (Buffer Zone) of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta was adopted by the Decree of Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia in June 2016 (N03/212, 28.06.2016).

4) Contribution to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value: please indicate how the proposed change (or the proposed buffer zone) will contribute to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

Landscape is an integral component of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta WHS. Its value was repeatedly admitted and put forward in different documents related to the property: Nomination Dossier, Evaluation report, numerous Monitoring Mission Reports, etc. The preservation of landscape has become the crucial and the most challenging issue in the management of the Mtskheta World Heritage property. Inadequate interventions in landscape and consequent negative impact preconditioned the inscription of the site into the list of the World Heritage in Danger in 2009. The establishment of the unified Buffer Zone has been seen as the key step towards safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta.

The territory of the proposed Buffer Zone thoroughly covers 2382.5 ha and includes all components of the World Heritage Site (Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Jvari Monastery, Samtavro Nunnery), the areas of their visual perception as well as the areas actively perceived from these sites. Thus the proposed Buffer Zone safeguards Mtskheta's historical landscape in its entirety, including the river banks and hills adjacent to the historical town. It provides additional layer of protection, promote rehabilitation of the degraded parts of landscape and prevention of inadequate interventions.

5) Implications for legal protection: please indicate the implications of the proposed change for the legal protection of the property. In the case of a proposed addition, or of the creation of a buffer zone, please provide information on the legal protection in place for the area to be added and a copy of relevant laws and regulations.

The buffer zone of the Mtskheta Historical Monuments, WHS is formalized at the national level by the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage (2007) in the legal form of an Individual Visual Protection Area adopted by the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia.

The Visual Protection Area is a territory around a listed building which for safeguarding historically formed setting and context of a monument and ensuring its adequate visual perception. The regime inscribed in the Law on Cultural Heritage prohibits any activities within the Visual Protection Areas "that may inflict damages on a historically set environment of a monument and impair its optimal vision, its high-quality interpretation or diminish its significance". All intervention proposals within the perimeter of the Visual Protection Area are forwarded by the local municipality to the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia for consideration and approval.

The Individual Protection Zones as well as General Protection Zones, are legally binding in the process of elaboration of the land use and spatial planning regulations.

6) Implications for management arrangements: please indicate the implications of the proposed change for the management arrangements of the property. In the case of a proposed addition, or of the creation of a buffer zone, please provide information on the management arrangements in place for the area to be added.

The proposed change of the Buffer Zone perimeter follows and strengthens the multi-stakeholder, integrated management approach to the property as it was introduced through the Management Plan in 2012. It does not require additional management instruments. The inter-ministerial committee led by the Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia will follow the processes within the Buffer Zone perimeter as suggested by the Management Plan.

The key stakeholders taking active part in the management of the territory are:

The Mtskheta Municipality and the self-governing town of Mtskheta (established since 2014) are responsible for general management, provision of communal infrastructure and services, including the regulations of the spatial development within the boundaries of the unified Buffer Zone. Both the municipality and the self-governing town of Mtskheta administrations issue permits for any new construction, extension or reconstruction of existing structures within their administrative boundaries. Within the limits of the Buffer Zone, all applications need to be reviewed, and approved by the Cultural Heritage Protection Council - Section for Cultural Heritage Protected Zones and Urban Heritage of the National Agency. As for the World Heritage Site and other listed cultural heritage monuments within the unified Buffer Zone all the permits are issued by the National Agency upon the recommendations of the Cultural Heritage Council - Section on Listed Buildings.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia was established in 2008 as an entity of public law under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia. The National Agency is responsible for management and monitoring of national monuments and World Heritage Sites in the country and for granting permits for conservation and rehabilitation projects. Since 2009 the UNESCO and International Relations Unit has been established within the NACHPG responsible for overall management of the issues related to Georgian World Heritage Sites.

All the applications for new constructions, or reconstruction, including the infrastructure and earthworks within the unified Buffer Zone require the approval of the Cultural Heritage Protection Council - Section for Cultural Heritage Protected Zones and Urban Heritage of the National Agency. The involvement of the Cultural Heritage Council ensures that all new works do correspond to the OUV of the site.

The local management agency is the Great Mtskheta Archaeological Museum Reserve. Following the institutional reform in the field of cultural heritage in 2008, the Great Mtskheta Archaeological Museum-Reserve along with other museum-reserves in the country has become a structural division of the National Agency. The Museum-Reserve is in charge of the educational, promotional activities as well as monitoring of the area.

The Ministry of Cultural and Monuments Protection of Georgia: The inter-ministerial Advisory Council to the Minister provides advice to the Minister in special circumstances, where the processes require higher level coordination and commitment by different state authorities.

The Patriarchate of Georgia: is the legal owner of the site and is responsible for day-to-day management, maintaining and enhancing the authentic functions of the site that is the religious use, as well as implementation of the small scale maintenance works. All the physical

interventions carried out by the legal owner on the components of the property require the prior approval of the Cultural Heritage Council – Section on Listed Buildings of the National Agency, which is responsible for reviewing the applications for interventions or research works and advising the Director General of the National Agency on relevant action, whether to approve, to ask for review or to disapprove the application.

In 2016 the Memorandum on Collaboration on Cultural Heritage issues has been signed between the Georgian Apostolic Autocephaly Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, which provides an important tool for coordination of actions and cooperation between the two institutions.

The full list of the stakeholders involved in the management of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta and description of their responsibilities are provided within the Site Management Plan, as submitted to the World Heritage Centre in 2012.

8.5.6. Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The Historical Monuments of Mtskheta are located in the cultural landscape at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari Rivers, in Central-Eastern Georgia, some 20km northwest of Tbilisi in Mtskheta. The property consists of the Jvari Monastery, the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the Samtavro Monastery.

Mtskheta was the ancient capital of Kartli, the East Georgian Kingdom from the 3rd century BC to the 5th century AD, and was also the location where Christianity was proclaimed as the official religion of Georgia in 337. To date, it still remains the headquarters of the Georgian Orthodox and Apostolic Church.

The favourable natural conditions, its strategic location at the intersection of trade routes, and its close relations with the Roman Empire, the Persian Empire, Syria, Palestine, and Byzantium, generated and stimulated the development of Mtskheta and led to the integration of different cultural influences with local cultural traditions. After the 6th century AD, when the capital was transferred to Tbilisi, Mtskheta continued to retain its leading role as one of the important cultural and spiritual centres of the country.

The Holy Cross Monastery of Jvari, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Samtavro Monastery are key monuments of medieval Georgia. The present churches include the remains of earlier buildings on the same sites, as well as the remains of ancient wall paintings. The complex of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in the centre of the town includes the cathedral church, the palace and the gates of the Katolikos Melchizedek that date from the 11th century, built on the site of earlier churches dating back to the 5th century. The cruciform cathedral is crowned with a high cupola over the crossing, and there are remains of important wall paintings in the interior. The rich sculpted decoration of the elevations dates from various periods over its long history. The small domed church of the Samtavro Monastery was originally built in the 4th century and has since been subject to various restorations. The main church of the monastery was built in the early 11th century. It contains the grave of Mirian III, the king of Iberia who established Christianity as official religion in Georgia.

The Historical Monuments of Mtskheta contain archaeological remains of great significance that testify to the high culture in the art of building, masonry crafts, pottery, as well as metal casting and processing, and the social, political, and economic evolution of this mountain kingdom for some four millennia. They also represent associative values with religious figures, such as Saint Nino, whose deeds are documented by Georgian, Armenian, Greek and Roman historians, and the 6th-century church in Jvari Monastery remains the most sacred place in Georgia.

Criterion (iii): The historical monuments of Mtskheta bear testimony to the high level of art and culture of the vanished Kingdom of Georgia, which played an outstanding role in the medieval history of its region. They express the introduction and diffusion of Christianity to the Caucasian mountain region and bear testimony of the social, political and economic evolution of the region since the late 3rd millennium BC.

Criterion (iv): The historic churches of Mtskheta, including Jvari Monastery, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Samtavro Monastery, are outstanding examples of medieval ecclesiastical architecture in the Caucasus region, and represent different phases of the development of this building typology, ranging from the 4th to the 18th centuries.

Integrity (2014)

The Historical Monuments of Mtskheta is a serial property that includes the Holy Cross Monastery of Jvari, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Samtavro Monastery, all attributes that represent the development of the building typology from the 4th to the 18th centuries. The components of the property have retained their material integrity and significant features conveying their Outstanding Universal Value. The impact of deterioration processes is controlled through ongoing conservation and maintenance programmes. The monuments form important landmarks within the cultural landscape of the Mtskheta river valley. The visual qualities of the setting are maintained through legal and administrative measures as part of the management regime. However, unifying the buffer zone remains a crucial measure to enhance the protection of the property and to allow a clear understanding of the archaeological and visually sensitive areas around the property. Potential threats to the setting of the property, derived from development projects, will also need to be controlled through appropriate land use planning.

Authenticity (2014)

There have been a number of reconstructions and restorations at the Jvari Monastery, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Samtavro Monastery. Many of the works carried out in the 19th century were typical for their time and do not conform to modern conservation standards. Notwithstanding, in terms of materials and techniques, the architectural ensemble retains a relatively high level of authenticity, while the authenticity of the setting and the archaeological sites is significantly high. In addition, Mtskheta has maintained its role as the spiritual and cultural centre of the country, assumed ever since the introduction of Christianity in the region.

Protection and management requirements (2014)

Based on the respective legal acts of the National Legislation of Georgia enforced in 1940 and 1957, Mtskheta and its surroundings were granted the status of Archaeological-Architectural Reserve in 1977. Mtskheta was defined as a town-museum and a plan for its development, which provided for the preservation of the scale and townscape, was approved in 1973. Since the 1990s, the protection of the property has been regulated on the basis of the national cultural heritage and spatial planning legislation.

The system of cultural heritage protection zones was enforced in 2006 and amended in 2012. A Management Plan has been prepared but there are still challenges in improving the site management mechanism and the coordination between the different management stakeholders. This would guarantee more coherent decision making over the land use in the buffer zone of the property and prevent inappropriate interventions in the landscape setting of the property. The implementation of Urban Land-Use Master Plans, which include zoning regulations to establish no construction zones and limit development in relation to the attributes of the property and specific landscape setting, with associated important views and connection lines, will be crucial for sustaining the conditions of integrity.

8.5.7. 2015-2017 UNESCO-Georgia Agreement / Cultural Heritage Advisory Service

2017 Summary Report

The following activities were implemented within the Agreement for the collaboration in the form of advice and assistance provided by the UNESCO-WHC to the State Party:

- Activity 1: Urban planning, conservation, management of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta
- Activity 2: Assistance for the Upstream Process and harmonization of the national Tentative List
- Activity 3: Capacity-Building
- Activity 4: Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism

Activity 1: The main focus of the collaboration was to support Georgian Authorities in elaboration of the urban land use master plan for the towns of Mtskheta including the World Heritage Property and its buffer zone, meeting quality standards for conservation, management and development.

In the context of the World Heritage Committee recommendations, the goals achieved under this component are:

- Boundaries of the World Heritage property's buffer zone, revised and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2017: In response to the World Heritage Committee request to revise the buffer zone of the property in such manner as to encompass the landscape surrounding the components, including the panorama along the rivers and the mountain setting, the State Party implemented specific territorial analysis and the Unified Visual Protection Area (Buffer Zone) of the Historical Monuments of Mtskheta was adopted by the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia in June 2016 (N03/212,28.06.2016). The enlarged buffer zone was submitted to the WHC in the form of Minor Boundary Modification and approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017 (41 COM 8B.44), by which the area of the buffer zone was increased from 8.73 ha to 2382.5 ha.
- Cultural heritage protection zones identified by NACHP in collaboration with WHC experts, in the process of approval by the Government: In 2016-2017 under the methodological assistance of the WHC experts the proposal for Cultural Heritage Protection Zones for the town of Mtskheta was developed by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation in accordance with the national law on Cultural Heritage (# 47-08-IS, 8 May 2007) with an aim to provide territorial protection for the historic urban fabric, the sensitive areas that require specific building regulations, the archaeological areas and the historical landscape. The draft proposal is to be reviewed by the relevant government authorities before approval by the Government.
- Revision of the structure and boundaries of local administration: As a result of the changes in the number of self-governing towns the Mtskheta self-governing town was merged with the Mtskheta municipality, as it was the case prior to the reform in 2014. This has resolved the issue of management of the World Heritage property and the buffer zone and brought it under single administration. In response to the UNESCO-WHC recommendations the Spatial Arrangement and Infrastructure Unit, with the divisions for Spatial Arrangements, Architectural permissions and Infrastructure has been established at the local administration. The Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Center has been also created as an independent public entity under the local administration.
- Mtskheta Land Use Master Plan: Due to the fact that the Mtskheta ULUMP elaborated by a private company in 2014-2016 by the order of local government, was found incomplete by UNESCO-WHC (report of July 2016), the document was not approved by the Mtskheta

Municipality. Considering the complexity of the subject, necessary coordination among stakeholders at the national level, as well as financial and human resources, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development was assigned to further coordinate the project by the Prime Minister's decision. The Temporary Regime (Moratorium) on Urban Development and Land Privatization in the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta (Decree of the Government of Georgia N411, 03.08.2015) has been prolonged until 31 December 2018 (Governmental decree N119, March 7, 2017) on the condition that the full set of town planning documentation shall be approved. Furthermore, to facilitate the project and to achieve elaboration of proper management and protective instruments for Mtskheta, upon the request of the State Party, UNESCO-WHC provided the direct on-site assistance that was not initially foreseen in the advisory service by the Agreement. An international expert was based in Tbilisi, at the MoESD from July to October 2017 to assist in revising the ULUMP, designing the Terms of Reference for the future works, defining methodology and objectives of urban planning, elaboration of the brief and preparation of the related documentation. The work of the expert was facilitated by the Technical Committee, in which the all relevant institutional stakeholders were invited: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD), Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia (MoC), Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Regional Development, National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia (NACHPG), National Tourism Administration, the National Environmental Agency, the Agency for Protected Areas, Municipal Development Fund of Georgia, Mtskheta local self-government and the planning team composed from the experts of MoESD, MoC, NACHP, Mtskheta local government and government of Georgia.

As a result, the ToR for development of the urban planning documents were elaborated, including:

- Set of complete and integrated base maps of different scales;
- Description of the methodology;
- Set of revised maps of the ULUMP on the newly created base map in A-CAD;
- A reference to existing legislation, including the phasing of the project and the expected outputs;
- Detailed descriptions of the outputs and graphic standards, the professional profiles and qualifications, the evaluation mechanism and suggestions concerning the involvement of relevant stakeholders and local community in planning process.
- Terms of Reference for additional Sector Studies;
- Maps with proposed cultural heritage protection zones drafted on the newly created base map.

Activity 2: Within the framework of the Agreement signed between UNESCO and Georgia for Cultural Heritage Advisory Service, the assistance to the State Party in revision of national Tentative List was foreseen as part of the upstream process for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The activity contributed to analysis of the current Tentative List of Georgia and priority sites identified by the Georgian authorities, also to strengthening collaboration between the MoC and Ministry of Environment (MoE) in the field of World Heritage; particularly important was the consultations with the WHC on the ongoing nomination of Colchis Wetlands and Forests managed by the Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia (APA) and planned for submission by 2019.

The workshop on the revision of the Tentative List with participation of relevant stakeholders was hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection on 27-28 September 2017.

Activity 3: The capacity building component has been cross-cutting throughout the whole project. However, this Activity was mostly designed to support Activity 1 and thus has targeted improving skills and capacity for heritage-led urban planning by national and local authorities.

The Activity encompassed different actions:

- On-the-job capacity building for NACHPG and local authority team as well as coaching the team working on the ULUMP during 2015-2016 expert missions, joint field visits, meetings with the stakeholders and experts;
- The lectures/presentations on urban conservation, planning methodology, and the Historic Urban Landscape approach for the wider public and professionals (scholars and students);
- The study visit for members of the Technical Committee aimed at increasing the institutional and technical competences of the national and local authorities to study the good practices in the domains of conservation and management, protection of historical urban landscapes, urban development and heritage strategies and policies of spatial planning.

Activity 4: Cultural Heritage Promotion with Sustainable Tourism envisaged assisting the Georgian authorities in the assessment of the National Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in the context of the goals of the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme.

- As a result of the activity, the guidance on a sustainable tourism approach for World Heritage properties in Georgia was provided by UNESCO-WHC expert and the dedicated workshop hosted by the MoC in September 2017. The National Tourism Administration of Georgia updated Action Plan based on the consultations during the workshop.

8.6. Additional material received by during and after the mission

- Project on Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage (presentation ppt.)
- Minor Church Jvari monastery stone conservation work (presentation ppt.)
- Report on Project Proposal on Correction of General Protection Zones of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage (pdf.)
- Summary Greening Mtskheta consultancy services (pdf.)
- Support letter by The Patriarchate of Georgia to UNESCO World Heritage Centre and to Joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Mission to MTSKHETA World Heritage Property (20.3.2018)
- საკონკურსო დოკუმენტაცია ხიდის - Tender documentation for the Competition on the project design of baptism territory within the New Jerusalem project (text in Georgian, by The Patriarchate of Georgia)
- Intangible resources: the Holy City of Mtskheta - the Second Jerusalem (text by The Patriarchate of Georgia)
- The holy capital of Mtskheta Second Jerusalem (ppt presentation by The Patriarchate of Georgia)
- Master Plan for the Competition on the project design of baptism territory within the New Jerusalem project, in Georgian (pdf by ICOMOS-Georgia)
- Proposed concept and bridge design in New Jerusalem project (ppt in Georgian and English, by ICOMOS-Georgia)
- Terms of reference for Development of Management Documentation for Spatial-Territorial Development of Mtskheta

8.7. *Illustrations*

The illustrations are available in an attached presentation of the photographic material.

**JOINT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / ICOMOS / ICCROM
REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION
TO HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF MTSKHETA (GEORGIA)
FROM 19 TO 24 FEBRUARY 2018
ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL**

GENERAL VIEWS



1. General view from Jvari hill as in 2014



2. General view from Jvari hill as in 2018



3. General view from Jvari: 8 - private residential complex / 9 - Town Hall / 10 - National Intellectual Property Centre of Georgia / 11 - remains of non-constructed building of the House of Justice / 12 - Police Station / "Pikris Gora" area entering into Samtavro Archaeological site (under development before moratorium)

NEW BUILDINGS ALONG THE MTKVARI RIVER BANK



4. The new buildings along the bank of Mtkvari river as in 2014



5. The new buildings along the bank of Mtkvari river as in 2018



6,7. The back side of the new buildings along the bank of Mtkvari river (2018)



8. New private buildings just near the convergence of Mtkvari and Aragvi rivers (2018)



9. Enhancing and Connecting Green Public Spaces in the buffer zone of the Mtskheta World Heritage site



Pedestrian/Cycling/Trails, access and mobility

Areas to be targeted by the Detailed Urban Design study to select priority investments



10. The area for developing the New Jerusalem project according to the contest

NEW JERUSALEM PROJECT



11. Master plan of the New Jerusalem project according to the contest



12. One of the oldest photos of Mtskheta with the confluence of Aragvi and Mtkvari rivers: no traces of any bridge to Jvari hill is visible



13. The area for developing the Universal Baptism within the New Jerusalem project 1



14. The area for full development of the New Jerusalem project 2



15. Proposed plan of New Jerusalem project and bridge design



16. The Universal Baptism area within the New Jerusalem project



17. The area for developing the Universal Baptism within the New Jerusalem project 3



18. The area for developing the Universal Baptism within the New Jerusalem project as in 2001



19. The area for developing the Universal Baptism within the New Jerusalem project 4



20. Contamination on Aragvi river side

JVARI MONASTERY



21. Visible antennas



22. Temporary parking place in front of the entrance to the site



23. Jvari Monastery



24. Jvari Monastery



25. Jvari Monastery – The Great Church – eastern side



26. Jvari Monastery – The Great Church – Eastern side – Bas-reliefs



27, 28. Jvari Monastery – The Great Church – Eastern side – conserved bas-reliefs on the eastern side



29. Jvari Monastery – The Great Church – Eastern side – The third bas-relief before conservation



30. Jvari church- Condition of the entrance porch as in 2010



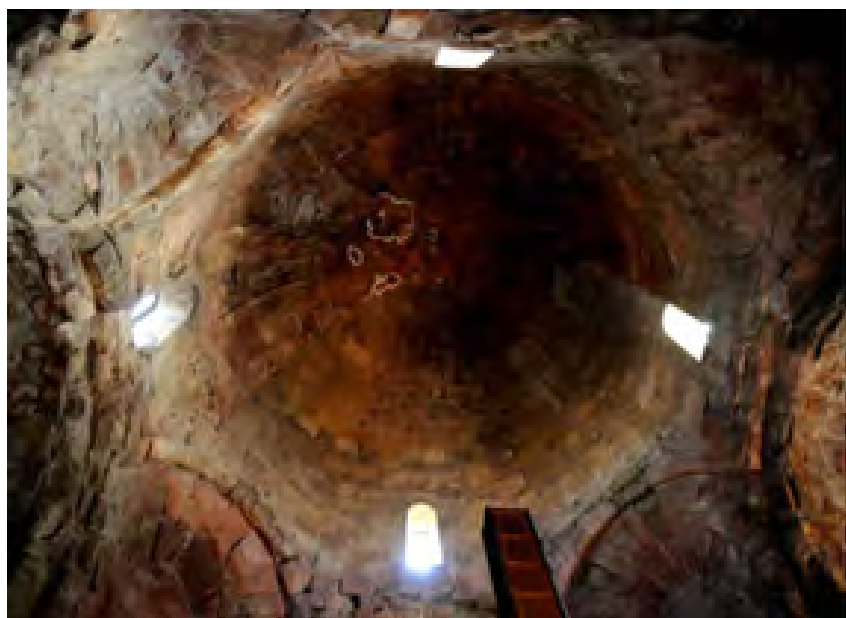
31. Jvari church- Condition of the entrance porch as in 2018



32,33. Jvari church- Condition of the entrance porch as in 2010 (left) and 2018 (right)



34, 35, 36. Jvari church- Condition in the interior as in 2018



37. Jvari church- Condition in the interior as in 2014



38. Jvari church- Condition in the interior as in 2010



39,40. Jvari church – Great Church – Existing condition of the building blocks



41,42. Jvari church – Great Church – Existing condition of the building blocks



43.The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – existing condition



44. The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – during the reconstruction works in 2001



45,46,47. The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – existing condition after the conservation works



48. The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – existing condition of the relief decoration



49. The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – existing condition of the relief decoration



50,51,52. The Minor Church at Jvari Monastery – existing condition of the relief decoration

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE HISTORICAL CORE OF MTSKHETA



53. Mtskheta – View from Armaztsikhe: Svetitskhoveli cathedral and south part of the city
(photo by Dmitri Ermakov, 1890)



54. Mtskheta – View from Armaztsikhe hill, as in 2001



55. Mtskheta – View from Armaztsikhe hill, as in 2018



56. Mtskheta – View from Armaztsikhe: Svetitskhoveli cathedral and west part of the city (as in 2001)



57. Mtskheta – View from Armaztsikhe: Svetitskhoveli cathedral and west part of the city (as in 2018)



58. Mtskheta – general view of the historical core of the city (2001)



59. Mtskheta – general view of the historical core of the city (2010)



60. Mtskheta – general view of the historical core of the city (2018)



61. Mtskheta – new development on the west part of the city (as in 2018)

MTSKHETA HISTORICAL CORE



62,63. Mtskheta city – the square before Svetitskhoveli church as in 2001



64. Mtskheta city – the square before Svetitskhoveli church as in 2014



65. Mtskheta city – the square before Svetitskhoveli church as in 2018



66. Mtskheta historical core – a street near Svetitskhoveli church as in 2001



67. Mtskheta historical core – a street near Svetitskhoveli church as in 2018



68. Mtskheta, historical core – the same area near Svetitskhoveli church as in 2001



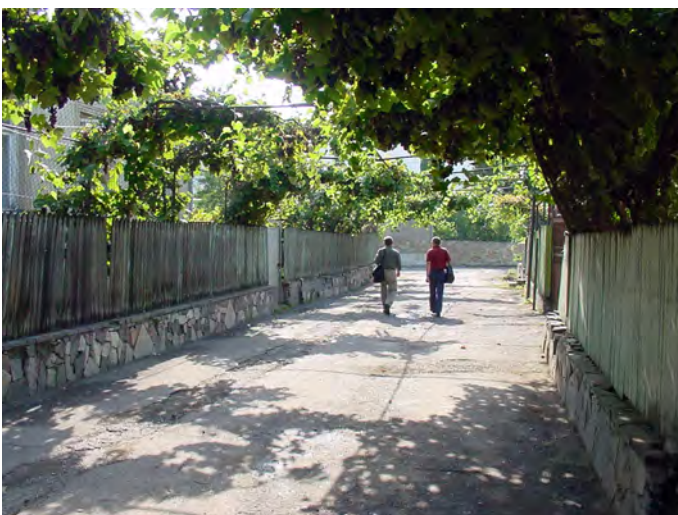
69. Mtskheta, historical core – the same area near Svetitskhoveli church as in 2018



70. Mtskheta historical core – typical street scene as in 2001



71. Mtskheta historical core – typical street scene as in 2018



72,73. Mtskheta historical core – some places remain almost untouched till now (2001, left and 2018 right)



74. Mtskheta historical core – the square before Svetitskhoveli entrance



75. Mtskheta historical core – the Info Center before Svetitskhoveli entrance



76,77. Mtskheta historical core – the square before Svetitskhoveli:
row of houses as in 2001 (left) and in 2018 (right)

SVETITSKHOVELI CATHEDRAL CHURCH



78. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Church



79,80. Svetitskhoveli monastery complex – view to entrance and to monastery ground



81-85. Svetitskhoveli monastery complex – existing condition



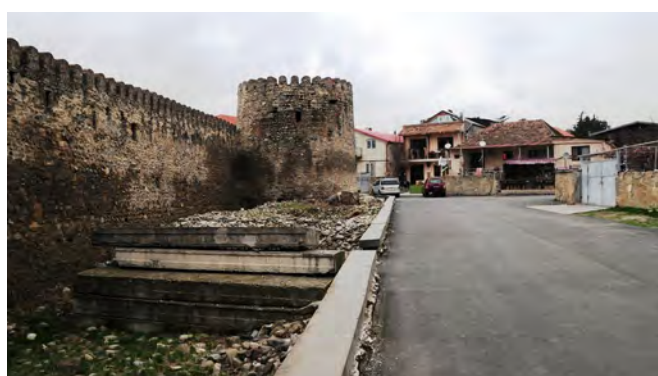
86-93. Svetitskhoveli cathedral church – existing condition



94,95. Svetitskhoveli cathedral church - Episcopal residence back side, as in 2001 (left) and 2018 (right)



96,97. Svetitskhoveli cathedral church - Episcopal residence back side, as in 2018



98-100. Prefabricated slabs of reinforced concrete and various construction materials are still placed on the north and east exterior side of the defense wall of the cathedral complex

TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE “OLDEST TRADITIONAL HOUSE”



101. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house area, as in 2010



102. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house area, as in 2018



103. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house as in 2000



104. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house as in 2012



105,106. Mtskheta – the area around the oldest traditional house as in 2018



107. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house as in 2000



108. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house as in 2018



109, 110. Mtskheta – the area around the oldest traditional house as in 2000 (left) and 2018 (right)



111,112. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house area



113. Mtskheta – the oldest traditional house area



114,115. Mtskheta – buildings aside Svetitskhoveli monastery complex as in 2001 (left) and in 2018 (right)



116,117. Mtskheta – buildings aside Svetitskhoveli monastery complex as in 2001 (left) and in 2018 (right)

DEVELOPMENT ALONG ARAGVI RIVER SIDE



118-120. Mtskheta – buildings development on the Aragvi river side

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

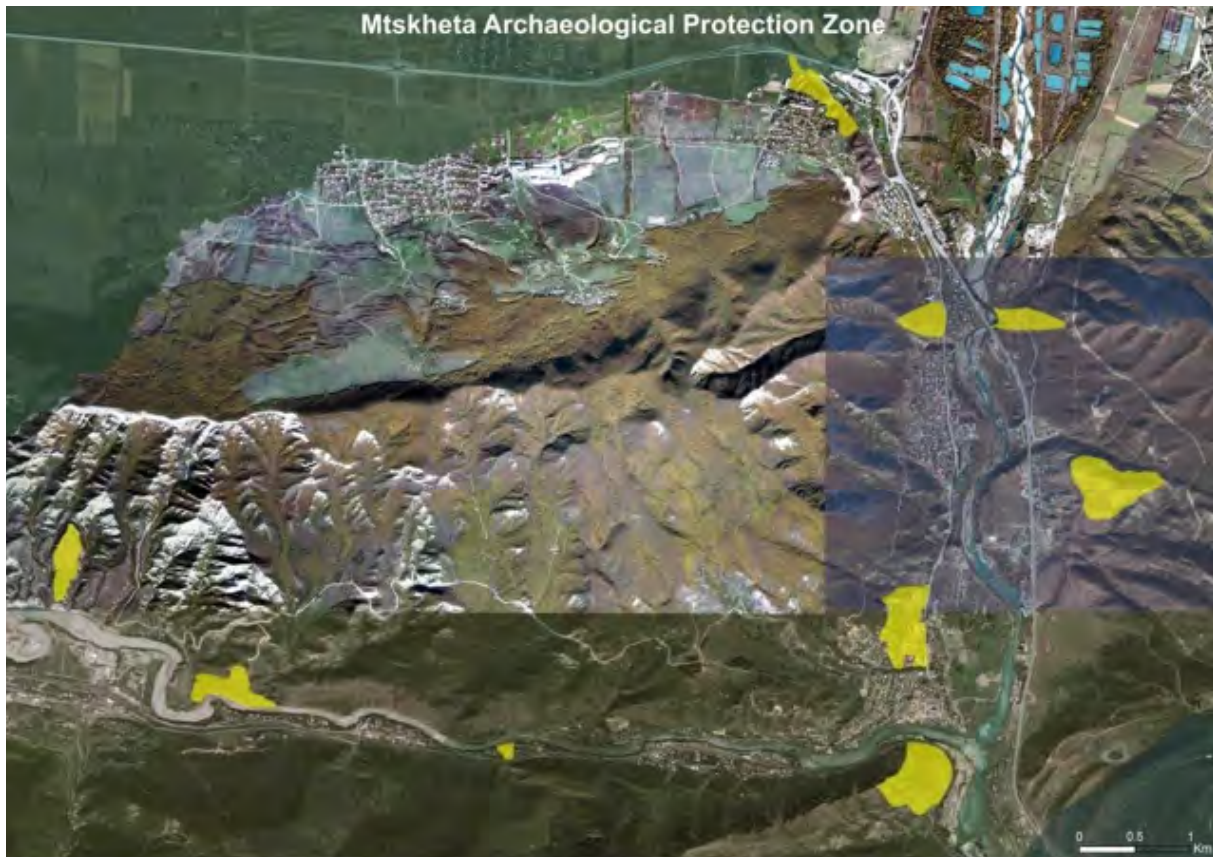


121. The central square before the old cinema and future New Archaeological Museum building



122. The urban connection between the New Archaeological Museum building and Santavro Nunnery and Valley

CULTURAL HERITAGE GENERAL PROTECTION ZONES



123. Project for modification of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage General Protection Zones proposed by Working Group of National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. Archaeological Protection Zone (Project – Final)



124. Project for modification of Mtskheta Cultural Heritage General Protection Zones proposed by Working Group of National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. Archaeological Protection Zone (Project – Final)
archeological protection zone of Samtavro Valley, corrected by Archeological Council

SAMTAVRO NUNNERY



125,126. Samtavro Nunnery



127,128. Samtavro Nunnery



129,130. Samtavro Nunnery grounds as in 2010 (left) and in 2014 (right)



131,132. Samtavro Nunnery grounds as in 2018. The monastery religious museum and part of the existing cells



133. Samtavro Nunnery grounds as in 2018 – separation wall between the visitors' and nuns' areas



134. The adjacent land owned by Samtavro Nunnery for a possible extension of the nuns' cells

SAMTAVRO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE



135. Samtavro archaeological site – general view of the excavations area



136. Samtavro archaeological site – view to the excavations area in 2018



137. Samtavro archaeological site – view to the excavations area in 2001



138. Samtavro archaeological site – existing condition of the excavations



139. Samtavro archaeological site – existing condition of the excavations



140. Samtavro archaeological site – existing condition of the excavations



141. Samtavro archaeological site – condition of the excavations as in 2001

SVETITSKHOVELI CHURCH – WESTERN PART OF THE DEFENCE WALL



142,143. Rehabilitation of the Fragment of the Western Part of the Defense Wall of Svetitskhoveli Church.



144-146. Condition of the exterior façade and of the problematic interior façade of the wall.

ARMATZIKHE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE



147,148. Armatzikhe archaeological site



149. Modern “creative” architecture just on the river Mtkvari bank – view from Armatzikhe archaeological site



150. Assessment on Armatzikhe archaeological site

MISSION MEETINGS AND ON SITE WORK



151. Meeting with NACHPG/MoC



152. Round Table Meeting at the M0ESD with participation of all parties/Stakeholders



153. The working group in Mtskheta



154. The working group in Svetitskhoveli monastery



155. Meeting at the Municipality of Mtskheta



156. Meeting with the representatives of Patriarchate of Georgia



157. Visiting the Religious Museum at Samtavro Nunnery



158. Meeting at the office of ICOMOS - Georgia