



State of Palestine

**State of Conservation Report (2019) for
Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town - Palestine (Ref.1565)**



Palestine – Hebron – Jan.2020

The State of Conservation Report (SOC) for the World Heritage Property (WHP) **Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, (1565)** was prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and Hebron Rehabilitation Committee.

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HEBRON/AL-KHALIL OLD TOWN (Palestine) (C1565)

1. Executive Summary

This report addresses the issues raised by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision 43 COM 7A.29. It also includes a submission of a revised version of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Values (SOUV), Desired State of Conservation for removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and the corrective measures within a provisional timeframe. This SOUV version has evolved from the consultations with UNESCO experts, and the advisory bodies experts, complying with the World Heritage Committee's decision 42 COM/7A.Add.2.

The report confirms that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), Hebron Municipality (HM), and Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) remain committed to safeguarding the OUV of the property, including the conditions of authenticity and integrity and the protection and management regime. It also shows the progress achieved in the elaboration of Conservation and Management Plan (CMP), within the framework of the International Assistance (*No IA2018-3007*). CMP will be finalized during July 2020, in accordance with the contract signed with UNESCO- Ramallah office in May 2019.

The report also summarizes the work that has been undertaken, which is improving the conditions of the WHP, in addition to initiatives designed to promote the socio-economy of the local community, and their awareness toward the values of the property. However, the site is still vulnerable due to the illegal procedures and violations of the Israeli Occupying Power (IOP) including new plans, illegal excavations that are harmfully affecting the authenticity and integrity of the site, in addition to hundreds of other violations (according to HRC annual report 2019) towards the local community and their freedom of access to places of worship. Accordingly, **the State of Palestine wishes to retain the property “Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town” on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision

(Decision 43 COM 7A.29/Annex)

Having considered Document WHC/19/43.COM/7A.Add.3.Corr,
Recalling Decision 41 COM 8B.1, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017), which did not include a SOUV, and noting that in compliance with Paragraph 154 of the Operational Guidelines, when deciding to inscribe a property on the World Heritage List, guided by the Advisory Bodies, the Committee adopts a SOUV for the property,
Taking note of a preliminary proposed SOUV contained in the state of conservation report submitted by the State Party,
Takes note of the consultations held between experts from UNESCO, the State Party and the Advisory Bodies, to discuss the proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), the proposed Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and the related corrective measures, as well as the proposed Management and Conservation Plan for the property, and **invites** the State Party to continue its efforts to finalize the above documents;

Decides to consider the examination of a draft SOUV for the property at its 44th session in 2020;

The State Party has sent another revised version of SOUV, DSOCR, and the related corrective measures during September 2019, which is also attached to this report for ease of reference (*Annex1*). This revised version has evolved from the consultations with UNESCO and Advisory Bodies experts. Accordingly, the State Party would appreciate the formal adoption of it during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

On the other hand, the State Party has been working diligently in the elaboration of CMP, within the framework of the International Assistance (*No IA2018-3007*), and direct technical support of UNESCO-Ramallah office. The main partners (MoTA, HRC, & HM), were very keen to involve the local community among other stakeholders to understand and analyze the site values including OUV, and other values through several meetings, surveys, and workshops alongside the whole work plan stages. In Jan 2020, MoTA will send the second progress report to the UNESCO-Ramallah, which included detailed information on the following activities:

1. Finalize the data collection process, and the field surveys as planned.
2. Implement meetings and workshops with the local community, to identify the values embodied in the World Heritage Property” WHP”.
3. Draft of Chapter1 (CMP context), and Chapter 2 (Identification of the property, significance, and physical attributes).
4. Physical attributes assessment
5. Implement the legal studies, assessment of urban regulations.
6. Draft of Chapter 4 (Ownership, Legal & Institutional frameworks)
7. Finalize the Tourism study.
8. Finalize the Socio-Economic study.
9. Implement a capacity building training on 3D documentation.

In the meantime, the CMP’s objectives, strategies, and action plans are being drafted , before developing the effective management system that maintains the values of the property, including the conditions of authenticity and integrity. The State Party would be pleased to send the draft of the CMP to the WHC by the end of April 2020, for review and comments.

Deplore the ongoing Israeli excavations, works, construction of private roads for settlers and of a Wall inside the Old City of Al-Khalil/Hebron which are illegal under international law and harmfully affect the authenticity and integrity of the site, and the subsequent denial of freedom of movement and freedom of access to places of worship and asks Israel, the occupying Power, to end all violations which are not in conformity with the provisions of relevant UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions;

The State Party welcomes this important decision, and denounces the continuous threats by IOP, through its illegal procedures, which clearly violates the 1972, &1970 Conventions, among other International Conventions and Charters mentioned in the previous SOC report, but also the new construction plans within the core zone of the WHP, as detailed in section 4 of this report. Several NGOs & International Bodies have been reporting on different violations that constitute threats and/or damage to the site or to the local community. HRC, through its legal office, reports regularly

about acts of vandalism, property damage, and other attacks or incidents in and around the old town of Hebron/Al-Khalil. During 2019, for instance, 804 violations were reported by HRC (353 Violations on the local citizens, 296 Violations on the public properties, and 155 Violations on the private properties). *This report and other reports could be accessed via HRC website: <http://hebronrc.ps/index.php/ar/monthly-annual-reports>.*

Commends the State Party for the actions which are being taken to conserve significant attributes of the Property;

Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information on current conservation and development projects, particularly projects which have potential adverse impact on heritage, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

It's worth mentioning that Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has become almost entirely abandoned until 1996, due to the political situation mainly, therefore, neither developers, nor residents used to invest, construct, or even to live there until the establishment of HRC, which has been working on conserving and rehabilitating these buildings to bring residents back, by using a minimum intervention basically, among other activities enhancing the living conditions, and the socio-economy of the local community in addition to other incentives resulted in the regeneration of almost 70% of the town, while the rest 30% are still abandoned!. *Please also see section 2.c for more details on the current conservation projects and activities during 2019.*

The site has become more attractive place since its inscription on the World Heritage list in 2017, The State of Palestine is more conscious of potential threats due to urbanism in the future as mentioned in the 3d-cycle periodic report of Hebron-Al-Khalil WHP recently. At the meantime, An effective Management mechanism controlling any future large scale development or major restoration has been developed in line with the recently endorsed Tangible Cultural Heritage law (No.11, 2018), which clearly prevents any new construction inside the borders of the property, whereas any major restoration project must be pinned on the results of Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Accordingly, the state party assures its commitment to submit to the World Heritage Center, for review by the advisory bodies, detailed information on any major restorations or new constructions which may affect the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

On the other hand, the State of Palestine continues reporting on the development projects planned by the IOP which adversely impact the OUV, integrity, and authenticity as detailed in section 4 of this report, and previous SOC reports.

2. a. Progress achieved in implementing the corrective measures adopted by the World Heritage Committee

Corrective measures have not been formally adopted by the Committee; therefore, the state party has sent another revised version of DSOCR, and the related corrective measures during September 2019, which is also attached to this report for ease of reference. (*Annex2*)

b. Timeframe for Implementation of the Corrective Measures

A timeframe for the implementation of the proposed corrective measures has been set out (*Annex3*), However, it could be amended depending on the DSOCR, and the CMP which is being elaborated, to ensure that all indicators and their timeframes are specific and applicable.

According to the indicators and timeframe outlined in (*Annex3*), the Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), are planned to be achieved within a period of 10 years. However, the first DSOCR, “Dismissing all of the Occupying Power’s plans and/or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity”, is not defined within this timeframe. Dismissal of the plans is largely dependent on actions and decisions taken by the IOP authorities, which are beyond the control of the State of Palestine.

c. Progress achieved towards the Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the list of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)

DSOCR have not been formally adopted by the Committee as mentioned before; however, the progress being achieved in the elaboration of CMP is an important key to ensuring adequate and effective safeguarding of the property and its inherent OUV, which is also considered an important corrective measure achieving the DSOCR, particularly section c. (*Annex 2*)

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value

Following the previous SOC reports dated 2018, & 2017, there have been a number of significant achievements in protecting, conserving, and presenting the OUV of Hebron/Al-Khalil WHP. In addition, there has been significant progress in relation to the maintenance and adaptive reuse of abandoned buildings and open spaces. This approach is based on the minimum intervention. It has resulted in the revitalization of these building, and spaces, in addition to maintaining its OUV, integrity and authenticity. The following are the main conservation and maintenance projects among other activities implemented by HRC recently:

Conservation & maintenance of the Al- Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of Patriarchs

The work was started in 1998 and continues to this day based on the comprehensive master plan 2015-2040, (*further details on this plan could be accessed <http://www.hebronrc.ps/images/stories/MP%20English.pdf>*). The conservation of this significant monument has been given special interest according to its distinctive OUV. During 2019, the following conservation works were finished among other daily maintenance works as follows:

1. Conservation of the decorative paintings in Al-Ishaqia.
2. Conservation and gilding the decorations of AL-Mihrab in Al- Ishaqia



Conservation and gilding the decorations of AL-Mihrab in Al- Ishaqia

3. Cleaning the decorations and the Quranic Verses around the dome of the sacred cave
4. Maintenance of the western entrance of the mosque
5. Maintenance work of Ablution and preparing executive plans for the rehabilitation of the infrastructure around.
6. Cleaning the roof of the mosque and maintaining the lead plates on it.
7. Preparing executive plans for the firing project in the mosque





Maintenance & Cleaning works for the
roof of Al- Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of patriarchs

Rehabilitation of infrastructure

The project aimed at maintaining the archways in the Old Town's center through maintenance of plaster, pointing paint, lime wash of alleys and arches, maintenance of stone tiles, and replacement of the damaged manholes. This project was funded by SIDA through the UNESCO-Ramallah, and was completed by the end of 2019.



WHP



Rehabilitation of infrastructure in the

In addition to the rehabilitation of infrastructure in the buffer zone of the WHP was carried out by Hebron Municipality.



Rehabilitation of infrastructure in the buffer zone of WHP

Rehabilitation of Al-Emar playground

The project aimed to converting a neglected and disused a land plot located in the eastern part of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, into a public space as children playground , which also encourages social interaction among residents there. This project was funded by the Polish Government and opened to the public by the beginning of 2020.



Al-Emar playground before and after rehabilitation

Regular maintenance of historic buildings

This project aims to improve the living conditions of residents, and also guarantees the sustainability of conservation; as well as raising the local community's awareness towards the best practices for cultural heritage preservation. During 2019 more than 650 apartments in different areas within the WHP boundaries were maintained. It's worth mentioning that part of this work is being carried out by the residents themselves, using traditional materials provided by HRC, and under its direct supervision. This new approach emphasizes the importance of cooperation and shared responsibility towards the conservation of cultural heritage, in addition to raising the local awareness by practice.



Regular maintenance of historic buildings

Preventive Conservation

Preventive Conservation project has been launched in September 2019, it includes structural consolidation, stabilization and maintenance for 11 apartments under risk. The project preceded with a comprehensive documentation of historical buildings within the WHP, being funded by the Turkish Cooperation (TIKA), and planned to complete by March 2020.

Emergency Protection

The project aims to protect residents near the Israeli settlements from the continuous attacks geared by radical settlers. During 2019, more than 100 metal protections were installed as an emergency response mitigating the impacts of these attacks.



Metallic protection

Regular maintenance of schools within the WHP

This project is carried out by HM, it provides regular maintenance of all schools within the WHP, and different works are usually performed such as the maintenance of playgrounds, toilets and other internal and external necessary repairs

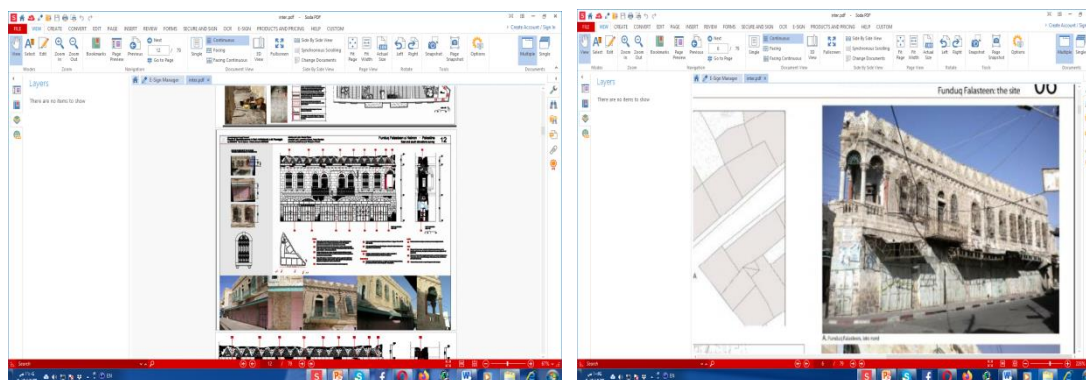


Maintenances of schools within the WHP

Adaptive Reuse of a heritage building as an interpretation center

The project has been targeting a significant cultural heritage building located in the buffer zone near the entrance of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town. This building has been unoccupied for more than two decades and has fallen into disrepair, which urged the importance of bringing it back into use conserving its assets, and embodied values. Several meetings, field visits, and public consultations took place in 2019, prior the decision of adaptive reuse of this building into an interpretation center, which also corresponds to the Tourism Development Strategy prepared by the main partners in close cooperation with local community representatives among other related stakeholders. HRC has been implementing this project since the end of 2019, with a fund from SIDA through the UNESCO-Ramallah, and it will finish by the mid of 2020. Whilst, MoTA will

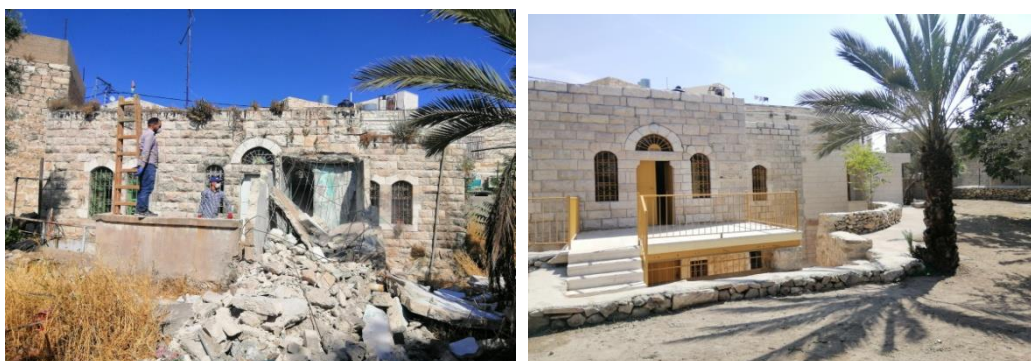
hold the responsibility of operating and managing the interpretation center, which is designed to present Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town's history, values, assets, people, life,...etc.



Preparation and documentation

Adaptive reuse of heritage building to a tourism promotion center

The project has been targeting an abandoned historical building located in the buffer zone of the WHP, it was rehabilitated and adapted in order to be occupied as the headquarters of the Tourism Unit of Hebron Municipality, which works on the development of the tourism sector in the Old Town in particular and in The City of Hebron in general. This project was rehabilitated by HRC with a fund from SIDA through the UNESCO-Ramallah; it was finished by the end of 2019. Whilst, HM will hold the responsibility of operating and managing the promotion center,



The building before and after rehabilitation

AL-Ibrahimi Mosque's parking lot

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has received more visitors since its recognition as a WHP in 2017. The State Party rehabilitated AL-Ibrahimi Mosque's parking lot to accommodate more tourist buses within the WHP.. The project was funded by SIDA through the UNESCO-Ramallah, and finished by mid 2019.



The parking before and after rehabilitation

Cultural Activities

During 2019, various cultural activities were implemented with an aim to encouraging tourism in Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, and to raising awareness of both tangible and intangible heritage among the local community

(For more details please see Annex 4)

Capacity Buildings

Building capacities in heritage preservation is considered as a priority, in this regard two training workshops were held during 2019:

The first was on documentation of architectural heritage by using modern techniques, such as the laser scanning technique. While the second workshop targeted the promotion of cultural heritage through training 23 tourist guides to cover the shortage of licensed guides in the Old town of Hebron.



The training on the documentation of heritage using the laser scanner

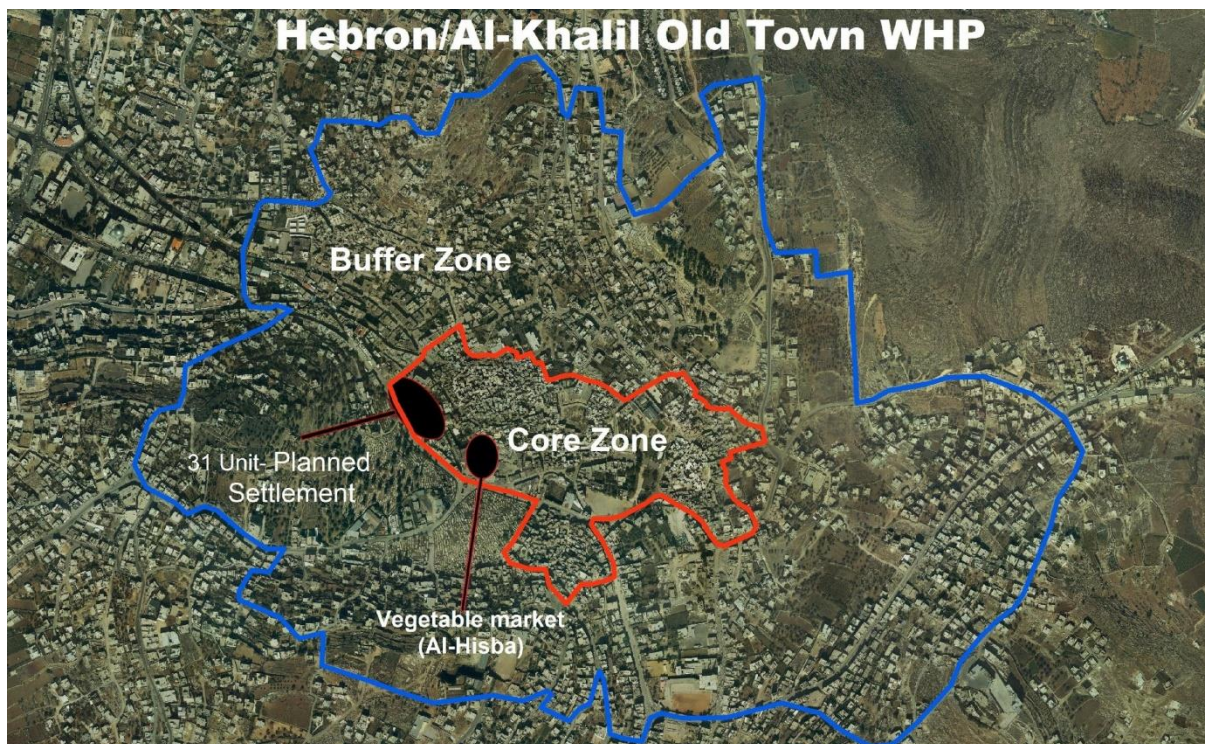
4. Future Issues Identified by the State Party

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

The State Party under paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and with reference to the previous SOC reports 2018, and 2017 notifies the World Heritage Committee of a new plans and violations by IOP, which constitute threats and/or damage to the WHP. The following Israeli occupation plans, among other actions, are affecting Hebron/Al-Khalil's OUV as well as its physical attributes and their authenticity and integrity.

Plan to construct a new Israeli settlement in the old vegetable market (Al-Hisba)

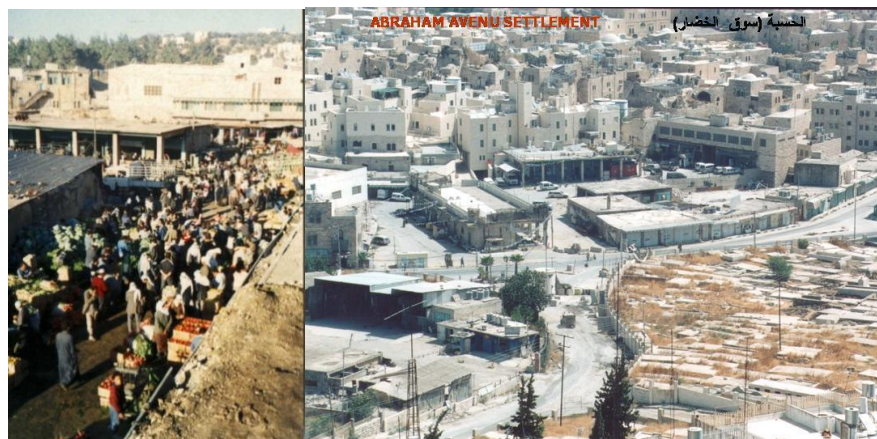
On the first of December 2019, The Israeli Minister, Naftali Bennet, ordered the construction of a new settlement for Israeli settlers in the old vegetable market (Al-Hisba) within the core zone of the WHP, which is recognized as a historical building that embodies significant cultural values, mainly social and economic ones as well as its historical value. This new settlement will result in the demolition of dozens of Palestinian shops in the area, and will affect the urban pattern of the Old Town. (Please see the Aerial photo below)



Aerial photo showing the old and new settlement plans within the core zone of WHP

This Military Order is illegal and in violation of the international conventions and Bilateral Palestinian –Israeli Agreements and Accords, especially, the Hebron Protocol of 1997. This new Order obviously violates the Security Council Resolution (2334), which confirms the illegality of Israeli settlements and procedures in Occupied Palestine. Currently, there are five illegal Israeli Settlements built into the Old Town of Hebron. Three of them are inside the core zone, and the other two are in the buffer zone.

This Order will strongly affect the OUV of the WHP, its physical attributes, authenticity and integrity. This procedure is an explicit violation of the World Heritage Decision (Decision: 41 COM 8B.1), which inscribed Hebron's Old Town on the list of the World Heritage List and on the World Heritage List in Danger. It creates a new illegal administrative entity to serve the political interests and land grabbing policy of the IOP. It provides Israeli settlers with additional power to further seize or destroy Palestinian properties, obstruct the management and conservation of the WHP, and the physical master plan of the entire city. Furthermore, it will enable the new illegal entity to take unilateral management and urban decisions, violating the management system of the WHP, and subsequently devastating its integrity and authenticity, such as destroying historic heritage, constructing new buildings and towers, basic infrastructure, new roads, or widening historic alleys and lanes, and conducting illegal archaeological activities. It will negatively affect the ability of Palestine to manage and conserve this property. Meanwhile, it enables acts of vandalism, property damage, hinders conservation interventions, impedes accessibility to various components of the WHP, and abuses the land-use and urban planning of the entirety of Hebron City.



To the right, AL-Hisba market before closure, a vital place in the Old Town
To the left, the market after closure, an empty and abandoned place



To the right, the damage caused by occupation power, Old Town
To the left, an Architectural 3d drawing showing the plan for the new Israeli settlement

Plan for the erection of an electric elevator in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of Patriarchs

On 12 December 2019, the Hebrew websites published a chart of a set of changes that intended to be done in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of the Patriarchs; one of these changes is the erection of an electric elevator. By doing so, they completely ignore the Outstanding Universal Value of this monument, and the impact of such interventions on its authenticity and integrity.



Photos show the proposed elevator

Illegal excavations in Al-Zatrai house

On the 8th of August 2019, the Israeli settlers carried out illegal excavations at Al –Zatri house which is located in the core zone of the WHP, and had been occupied by Israeli settlers in the 23th

of March 2017. These excavations cause a dangerous threat on the structure of this house and affect its stability. It is worth to indicate that this house is considered a distinctive model of the traditional Mamluk houses (*ahwash*) in Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town.



Photos showing the excavations carried out by Israeli settlers

5. Public access to the State of Conservation Report

The State Party agrees that the full State of Conservation Report can be made publicly available via the WH center's Information System.

6. Conclusion

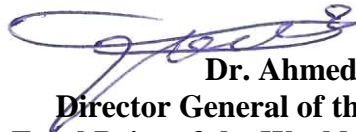
As highlighted in this State of Conservation Report, the State of Palestine conducted several projects and activities during 2019 to conserve and sustainably develop the WHP and its OUV, including rehabilitation of the traditional buildings, enhancement of community engagement in the conservation and management of the WHP, and raising public awareness towards the WHP's OUV.

The threats resulting from the Israeli Occupying Power's plans, including construction of new illegal Israeli settlement in the old vegetable market, and illegal excavations within the WHP remain valid until a binding decision, in conformity with Article 6 Section 3 of the World Heritage Convention (1972), is adopted by concerned Israeli authorities. It is critical to the long term stability of this WHP, its integrity and authenticity, that this threat is disabled through binding action.

In spite of considerable achievements and the positive efforts of various stakeholders in enhancing the state of conservation of the property and its surroundings as well as the dismissal of some of threats to the WHP, The State of Palestine wishes to retain the property **“Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town” on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

7. Signature of the Authority

This State of Conservation Report (SOC) for the World Heritage Property (WHP) **Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town** (C1565) was prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in close cooperation with Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and Hebron Municipality.



Dr. Ahmed Rjoob
Director General of the World Heritage
Focal Point of the World Heritage Convention

Annex 1: Revised Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)

Brief Synthesis

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town is one of the oldest living cities and spiritual centres in the world. Its numerous ancient, well preserved, monuments and buildings bear witness to a rich and prosperous past, through a series of successive and overlapping civilizations from very early antiquity until modern times. The World Heritage Property constitutes an important part of the continuous fabric of the present city that dates back to at least the Mamluk and Ottoman periods (13th –20th century AD). The property is surrounded by a protective buffer zone comprised of the foothills around the Hebron/Al-Khalil valley and of archaeological remains that include Tell Rumeida.

The old town expanded on three hills and into the valley around Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex, an outstanding and multi-layered example of architecture, illustrates significant stages in human history and is one of the main elements that shaped the Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town. Traditions, religious and spiritual beliefs have been the foundation of the town's cultural character for many centuries, the site being sacred to three great monotheistic religions. The town's location on one of the main commercial routes in the region is another important factor that has influenced the town's characteristics. The town became a meeting place for different faiths and cultures, with socio-economic and cultural exchange occurring throughout the centuries. The Outstanding Universal Value of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town is demonstrated by its existence as an exceptionally complete and well-preserved example of urban and vernacular architectural elements which reflect the human values of the Hebron/Al-Khalil community. The main attributes of Outstanding Universal Value can be observed within the limits of the old town, including the Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex, *Suqs*, *Khans*, *Zawiyas*, *Maqams*, *Takiyya*, and *Hammams*, the traditional quarters and the *Khalili* ahwash, as well as the town's historical setting, and its design.

Criterion (ii)

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town represents an outstanding example of a community built around the interchange of human values. Since its creation, the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has been a source of great inspiration to surrounding communities and to their social, religious, and spiritual values. The site has been in continuous religious use since the Roman period to this day. Herod the Great, a Roman client king of the region, built a monumental enclosure (*temenos*) around the Cave of Machpelah; and a church was probably built inside the enclosure during the Byzantine Period, for Christian devotees. In the Umayyad Period, a mosque was also built inside the enclosure; and the cenotaphs were placed in their present position. In the Crusades period, the mosque was converted into a church, known as the Castle of Saint Abraham. After Saladin reconquered the area, the church was converted back into a mosque, which became known as the Haram Al-Ibrahimi.

The main roads of the town connect the different quarters in Hebron/Al-Khalil to Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex. The property was also a place of pilgrimage and an important station along the commercial routes in the region. The relation with the prophet Ibrahim and the presence of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has attracted pilgrims from around the world, making Hebron/Al-Khalil a meeting place for a great variety of faiths, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. This intermixing has led to a

high degree of socio-economic and cultural exchange throughout the centuries reflected in the many public buildings of the property, including *Suqs*, *Khans*, *Zawiyas*, *Maqams*, *Hammams*, and the *Takiyya*.

In the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, Hebron/Al-Khalil became a significant centre of Sufism. Sufis, who came from different cultural backgrounds, found a promising environment in the vicinity of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi, and subsequently Sufi *zawaya* (sing. *zawiya*) were built throughout the city's quarters and become one of their distinguishing features

For more than a millennium, the *Takiyya*'s tradition (Hospice- free kitchen) of the Hebron/ al – Khalil influenced the whole region as evidenced in early historic accounts from the 9th century presented in the *Takiyya* of this day. Similar charitable institutions were later established in Jerusalem, Istanbul, Damascus, and Cairo.

Criterion (iv)

Hebron/al Khalil Old Town is an outstanding example of an urban district which has remarkably preserved historical fabric. It has also preserved the morphology and residential typologies dating back to the Mamluk period, all of which contribute to the visual and structural integrity of the cityscape. The residential neighbourhoods of the old town were built in a *hosh* system. The *hosh* system is a congregation of separate room units or groups of rooms clustered around several small courtyards. They are found in different locations and levels, which have organically evolved into distinctive tree-shaped residential structures.

The continuity of buildings on the outer edges of the town made it difficult to access the town and created an effective defence system of “rampart houses”. These included hidden nooks and circuitous alleyways that played a protective role against intrusions. This system can still be observed clearly from within the old town in the road system and urban structures, which are perfectly preserved to this day.

Criterion (vi)

The Hebron/Al-Khalil's Old Town is one of the holiest cities in the world for three monotheistic religions. For centuries, Hebron/Al-Khalil was a town in which prophets visited, lived, and were buried. Traditions and religious beliefs for the three monotheistic religions, have been its cultural foundation and the source of enduring values carried from one generation to the next. Furthermore, the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham's spirit of generosity and hospitality has been and continues to be deeply ingrained into the traditions of Hebron/Al-Khalil. A key attribute of these traditions is the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham's *Takiyya* (Hospice), established before the 9th century AD, which has continued until today to offer meals to the poor and visitors.

In the Mamluk period, 13th century AD, Hebron/Al-Khalil became a significant center of Sufism. Sufis found a promising environment in the vicinity of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi and, subsequently, sufi *zawaya* (sing. *zawiya*) were built throughout the city and have become one of its distinguishing features

Statement of Integrity

After the Roman and Byzantine periods, the original city moved from Tell Rumeida to the valley adjacent to Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of the Patriarchs, and became the focal point of the town and strongly influenced its development. The boundaries of the property correspond to the boundaries of the continuous fabric of Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, during the Mamluk period. Hebron/al Khalil Old Town has remarkably preserved its Mamluk historical urban fabric as well as the morphology and residential typologies of *Hara* and *ahwash* (plural of *hosh*). These create an intricate network with a magnificent hierarchy influenced by the location of Ibrahimi

mosque/Tomb of the Patriarchs. This serves as a hub, connecting the various neighbourhoods in the old town and contributes to the visual and structural integrity of the cityscape.

Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs monumental complex has been a source of great inspiration to surrounding communities and to their social, religious, and spiritual values. It has been in continuous religious use since Roman period to this day. The importance of this sacred place is evident in the town's structure.

Whilst Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has never been protected by town walls, its limits are well marked by the topography and the "rampart houses" built on the town's external perimeter, some of which have survived to this day.

These attributes have been generally preserved, despite the destruction that has affected certain districts of the town in the 1960s, particularly since the Israeli Occupation. The property is very vulnerable due to the political situation and Israeli settlement activities inside the property and in its buffer zone. As well there are military physical restrictions imposed by the Israeli Occupation which threaten its physical integrity. Nevertheless, efforts are made to mitigate any adverse effects of development and/or neglect to the integrity of the property.

Statement of Authenticity

The morphological configuration of the old town and the spatial organization of the urban fabric, dating back to the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, have remained mostly unchanged, and the main distinctive attributes have been retained. The authenticity of the urban structure and of the buildings, quarters and *hoshs* have also remained intact. The property has retained its use and function which are attested in a number of public buildings, such as Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of Patriarchs complex, *zawiyas* and *hammams* dating back to the Mamluk period. Function is strongly demonstrated through the continued maintenance, conservation and veneration of the property's attributes that are observed within its limits, most notably, the monumental site of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque/The Tomb of the Patriarchs. The sanctity of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque and the spirit of generosity and hospitality of the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham has been and continues to be deeply instilled into the traditions of Hebron/Al-Khalil through its Takiyya (Hospice) which continues to offer meals to the city's poor and visitors. Conservation efforts made in the old town since the mid-1990s have, to a great extent, preserved the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, and contributed to continuity of uses. These efforts led to a return of the inhabitants and an effective urban regeneration of the old town. The use of traditional materials and techniques in these restoration operations has contributed to the protection of the authenticity of the old town and in the reactivation of craftsman trades.

Protection and management requirements

Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town possesses a high level of legal protection, both at the national and local levels. At the national level, it is protected by the law on Tangible Cultural Heritage (No. 11, 2018) for the protection, conservation and management of tangible cultural heritage in Palestine, as well as by the Jordanian law (No. 79, 1966) on building and zoning of towns, villages, and buildings. At the local level, protection of the property is based on the municipal physical master plan for the city of Hebron and the "*Hebron's Old City: Preservation and Revitalization Master Plan 2015-2040*", a strategy to manage and conserve the old town's urban planning, infrastructure, education, tourism, public health, economy, social development, and other important sectors. As per the law on Tangible Cultural Heritage (No. 11, 2018), the property is managed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in close cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf, Hebron Municipality, Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, and the local community. The local community involvement is made through workshops, seminars, in order to enhance the current management and state of

conservation of the property, the above mentioned partners are closely cooperating in preparing the Management and Conservation Plan, in order to establish an effective management system and maintain the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity, and integrity of the property .

Annex 2: Desired State of Conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)

The State of Palestine is committed to the removal of Hebron/Al-Khalil from the World Heritage list in danger. Therefore, the stakeholders have diagnosed and assessed the factors affecting the WHP in order to develop the most appropriate and plausible plans and actions to achieve the Desired State of Conservation, as well as key Corrective Measures to be adopted by the World Heritage Committee for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as follows:

- A. Dismissing all of the Occupying Power's plans and/ or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity.
- B. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that any development plans in the property, the buffer zone and the setting do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.
- C. Adoption of an integrated effective Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP.
- D. Achieving appropriate conservation and safeguarding of the WHP's OUV, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.

2. B. Proposed Corrective Measures to achieve the DSOCR

- A.1 Take all possible measures to obtain the dismissal of all of Occupying Power plans and actions that affect the OUV of the property including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural and urban fabric, illegal excavations, separation barriers, access blocks and street closures.
- A.2 Dismiss all of the Israeli Occupying Power illegal regulations imposed on the local Palestinian authorities which hinder the maintenance and conservation of the property.
- B1. Develop and promulgate bylaws and urban regulations to protect the historic environment of the WHP, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.
- B2. Develop a process for strategic and heritage impact assessments for all significant planning and development projects in the property, its buffer zone, and its setting.
- C1. Preparation and implementation of a Comprehensive and integrated Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP that involves all concerned stakeholders with emphasis on the local community.
- C2. Develop and implement an efficient practical management and monitoring system based on the best practices for the WHP.
- D1. Implement conservation projects to enhance the quality of the historic environment of the WHP and improve the socio-economic status and the living conditions of the local community.
- D2. Enhance the capacity building of practitioners, institutions, networks and communities to work together towards effective conservation and management of the WHP.
- D3. Conduct a comprehensive inventory and documentation of the physical attributes of the WHP's OUV used to assess their State of Conservation and generate an integrated database system for the WHP.

Annex 3 : The Indicators and Timeframe for Implementation of the DSCOR and Corrective Measures

| | DSOCR & Corrective Measures (CM) | Indicators | Rationale | Method of Verification | Timeframe of CM | Timeframe of DSCOR |
|---|--|---|--|---|------------------|--------------------|
| A | <p>Dismissing all of the Occupying Power's plans and/ or actions affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Property (WHP) and its authenticity and integrity.</p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>A1. Take all possible measures to obtain the dismissal of all of the Occupying Power plans and actions that affect the OUV of the property including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural and urban fabric, illegal excavations, separation barriers, access blocks and street closures.</p> <p>A.2 Dismiss all of the Israeli Occupying Power illegal regulations imposed on the local Palestinian authorities which hinder the maintenance and conservation of the property.</p> | <p>A1. A final and binding decision by Israel dismissing the plans and/or actions affecting the attributes of the WHP's OUV.</p> <p>A2. A final and binding decision by Israel dismissing illegal regulation imposed on the Palestinian authorities which hinders the maintenance and conservation of the property.</p> | <p>The WHP is currently threatened by several of Israel's/the Occupying Power's plans and actions that may irreversibly affect the property's OUV.</p> <p>The Occupying Power must dismiss all plans and actions including building settlements, destruction of parts of the architectural fabric, illegal excavations, separation barriers, access blocks, or any other actions that may negatively affect the OUV of the property.</p> | <p>A1.1 binding Israeli decision is adopted and no subsequent plans and/or actions might affect the OUV.</p> <p>A1.2 Barriers, blocks, and closures are removed.</p> <p>A1.3 Free circulation and movement throughout the WHP.</p> <p>A2 Binding Israeli decision is adopted and no subsequent plans and/or actions might affect the OUV.</p> | No specific date | No specific date |

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|---------------------------|--|--|---|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------|------|--|
| B | <p>Mechanisms are in place to ensure that any development plans in the property, the buffer zone and the setting do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.</p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>B1. Develop and promulgate bylaws and urban regulations to protect the historic environment of the WHP, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.</p> <p>B2. Develop a process for strategic and heritage impact assessments for all significant planning and development projects in the property, its buffer zone, and its setting.</p> | | <p>Effective bylaws are needed to ensure the protection of the property at the national and local levels.</p> <p>Ensure that all significant planning and development projects do not negatively affect the OUV of the property.</p> <p>Preparation of an MCP for the WHP is urgently needed to ensure the sustainability of the OUV, and to preserve its authenticity and integrity, which had been facing various threats and challenges.</p> | | 2021- 2028 | 2021- 2024 | 2022- 2028 | 2020- 2023 | 2021- 2024 | 2022- 2028 | 2029 | 2029 | |
| | <p>Adoption of an integrated effective Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP.</p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>C1. Preparation of a Comprehensive and integrated Management and Conservation Plan for the WHP that involves all concerned stakeholders with emphasis on the local community.</p> <p>C2. Effective implementation of the</p> | <p>B1. Endorse and implement bylaws and regulations in accordance with the tangible cultural heritage law (No 11. 2018), as well as the local government regulation and bylaws in line with the above law.</p> <p>B2. Process of the Impact Assessment is established and adopted by related authorities.</p> <p>C1. Preparation and endorsement of the MCP.</p> <p>C2. Monitoring the effective</p> | | <p>B1.1 monitoring that the bylaws are endorsed</p> <p>B1.2 monitoring of the effective implementation of the endorsed bylaws</p> <p>B2.1 Monitoring of the establishment and adoption of the process of Impact Assessment by the related authorities.</p> <p>B2.2 Monitoring of significant planning and development projects using the above assessment tools.</p> <p>C1. Adoption of the MCP by all relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>C2.1 Effective Implementation of the management and conservation plan.</p> <p>C2.2 Implementation of assessment and monitoring strategies and</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| D | <p>Achieving appropriate conservation and safeguarding of the WHP's OUV, its physical attributes, integrity and authenticity.</p> <p><i>Related Corrective Measure(s):</i></p> <p>D1. Implement conservation projects to enhance the quality of the historic environment of the WHP and improve the socio-economic status and the living conditions of the local community.</p> <p>D2. Raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV and Enhance the capacity building of practitioners, institutions, networks and communities to work together towards effective conservation and management of the WHP.</p> <p>D3. Conduct a comprehensive inventory and documentation of the physical attributes of the WHP's OUV used to assess their State of Conservation and generate an integrated database system for the WHP.</p> | <p>D1. Implementing conservation projects and related social programs to safeguard the WHP including maintenance projects for vulnerable parts of the WHP, such as Qaytoun Quarter.</p> <p>D2.1 Developing programs to raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV.</p> <p>D2.2. Improving conservation and management capacity-building by conducting a number of technical training programs.</p> <p>D2.3 Establishing economic incentives for the local community.</p> <p>D3.1Developing and implementing documentation and inventory projects for generating a database for the management of attributes of the WHP.</p> <p>D3.2Establishing and executing</p> | <p>Although conservation program of the Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town has been in effect since 1996, further efforts are needed to improve the quality of the historic environment, the socio-economic status and living conditions of the local community, raise awareness about the WHP and its OUV, and enhance capacity building of professionals working for the property.</p> | <p>(1) Monitor conserved attributes of the WHP.</p> <p>(2) Regular evaluation of conservation program.</p> <p>(3) Evaluation of training program.</p> <p>(4) Regular Evaluation of economic program and incentives.</p> <p>(5) Evaluation of the documentation and database system.</p> | 2022 -2028 | 2029 |
|---|---|--|---|---|------------|------|

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| | | conservation guidelines. | | | | |
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Annex 4: Cultural Activities during 2019, in Hebron Al-Khalil Old Town

Various activities were implemented during 2019, aimed at encouraging tourism towards Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town, in addition to raising awareness in both tangible and intangible heritage among the local community. Partners believe in the importance of such activities in promoting the perception of heritage, traditions, and customs, whilst its design targets a diverse group of people with different scopes, but ultimately encourages their pertinence to heritage.

The following activities were performed:

- Ramadan Night Celebration in Salayme Neighborhood
- Ramadan Night Celebration in Shuhada Street
- Ramadan Night Celebration in Wad Alhussein
- Ramadan Night Celebration in Al Sadaqa Public Park
- Ramadan Night Celebration in Lamar Guesthouse
- Eid Alfiter Fun Days in Amr School playground
- Eid Alfiter Fun Days in Tal Rumaide Area
- Eid Alfiter Fun Days in Salaymeh Neighborhood
- "Baldatuna Ajmal" Summer Camp in the old city of Hebron.
- "Assumod" Summer Camp in Tal Rumaida
- Taste and Buy Festival
- Fuzi Muzi Show
- Imar Chess Championship
- Eid Adha Cookies Competition
- Tawjehi Students Honoring
- School Stationery Exhibition
- Palestinian Open Breakfast and Free Shaving Day
- Birzeit University Students Tour in the Old City
- Al Najah University Students Tour in the Old City
- Hebron Grapes Days Fair 2019
- Al Quds Open University Honoring Ceremony
- Press Open Day
- Fun Day for Children with Down Syndrome
- The Palestinian Heritage and Local Cuisine Festival
- Opening of "History and Civilization" Stone Mural
- Tourism Promotion in the Old City of Hebron Conference
- The Palestinian National Olive Festival
- Al Quds University Students Tour in the Old City
- Open Breakfast Day
- Open Medical Day

Hebron Rehabilitation Committee Sports Team
Visits to Ibrahimi Mosque on Fridays

(See photos below)



Cultural activities in Hebron/Al-Khalil WHP - 2019



Cultural activities in Hebron/Al-Khalil WHP - 2019



Cultural activities in Hebron/Al-Khalil WHP - 2019



State of Palestine

**Summary of State of Conservation Report (2020)
for**

**Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town - Palestine
(Ref.1565)**



**Bethlehem, Palestine
January, 2021**

'Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town' World Heritage Property (WHP), (Ref. 1565) was inscribed on the World Heritage List as an emergency on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi); and immediately on the List of World Heritage in Danger after acknowledging that the property is faced with serious threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics and for which an immediate action by the World Heritage Committee is needed. The World Heritage Committee (WHCom) has adopted the decision (Decision: 41 COM 8B.1) during its 41st session held on July 7th, 2017 in Krakow/Poland.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee has been postponed to June/July 2021. In reference to the summary records of the 14th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee held online on 2 November 2020, the Committee took a decision regarding the State of Conservation Reports. It states that *“With regard to the state of conservation cycles, individual reports foreseen for examination by the 45th session in 2021 would simply be examined together with all those planned for the 44th session in 2020. For properties facing conservation issues of utmost importance and for which a report was initially planned in 2020, the States Parties concerned would have the possibility to provide the Secretariat with additional information by the deadline of 1 February 2021, at the latest”*.

The last SOC report addressed many issues concerning the Management and Conservation of the World heritage Property and responses to the World Heritage Committee’s Decision 43 COM 7A.29. However, the situation has extremely changed by the beginning of 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. It has affected most of the aspects of life not only for the property but also all aspects of life. The pandemic has resulted in the entire lockdown of Hebron/Al-Khalil since the beginning of March/2020 until the end of May /2020. Afterward the city was partially reopened under a specific measures and restrictions that are still in place. Also, it has heavily hit tourism activities in the Property. Most of tourist facilities, souvenir shops, restaurants, and guest houses have been closed, which affected the income of inhabitants working in this sector (see fig.2).

The State of Palestine confirms all information mentioned in the previous SOC report, and its commitment to safeguarding the OUV of the property, including the conditions of authenticity and integrity in spite of the additional challenges prevailed due to COVID-19 pandemic and its ramifications. Recently, the State Party submitted a pre-final version of the Management and Conservation Plan which is elaborated within the framework of the International Assistance

No IA2018-3007 in accordance with the contract signed with UNESCO- Ramallah Office in May 2019.

On the other hand, the Israeli Occupation violations have continued inside the WHP during 2020. For example, on 13 May 2020, Israel (the occupying power) issued an expropriation order for the lands to be used for the implementation of the elevator project, which was described in the previous SOC report. In 25 January, 2021 the Israeli Occupying Power has prevented conservation works in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/ Tomb of Patriarchs using a military orders (see fig.1)



Fig.1 preventing conservation works



Fig. 2 Semi empty streets due COVID-19 pandemic

In light of the above-mentioned information, Palestine wishes to retain the property **“Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town”** on the List of World Heritage in Danger.