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Организация  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## Culture Sector World Heritage Centre

H.E. Ms Viviane Aleyda Morales  
Hoyos  
Ambassador Extraordinary and  
Plenipotentiary of Colombia to France  
Permanent Delegation of Colombia to  
UNESCO  
UNESCO House

Ref.: CLT/WHC/LAC/CMT/AS/2912 24 July 2019

Dear Ambassador,

As you are aware, at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019), the World Heritage Committee examined the state of conservation of the following World Heritage property: **Port, Fortresses and Group of Monuments, Cartagena**.

You will find attached in Annex I, the Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.99**, concerning this property. In this Decision, the Committee requested your authorities to submit an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of its recommendations by **1 December 2020**, for consideration at its 45th session in 2021.

I would like to draw your attention to the several important pending conservation and management issues noted in this most recent Decision, namely the urgent need to finalize the remaining Special Management and Protection Plans (PEMPs), including the establishment of suitable buffer zones, to protect the property from continuous development pressures that could affect the property's integrity and authenticity. These management tools should also address ongoing concerns regarding gentrification, changing public use and social dynamics, particularly in the Historic Centre.

The Committee also highlighted its concern over the Aquarela real estate development project, being a symptom of this lack of an adequate management and regulatory framework. In this sense, it urged the national authorities to ensure that the project does not proceed and to consider the demolition of the existing tower, given its potential to jeopardize the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), particularly in terms of visual integrity.

As noted in Decision **43 COM 7B.99**, I invite you to submit to the World Heritage Centre the remaining PEMP for review when they are finalized, and to maintain us informed of any other important developments in the property before the submission of the next state of conservation report.

.../

At its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), the Committee adopted a specific compulsory format for the submission of state of conservation reports by the States Parties. The format is included as Annex 13 of the *Operational Guidelines* and attached to this letter for ease of reference. You are kindly requested to use this format for the submission of the report on the aforementioned property, in one of the working languages of the *Convention*, English or French (Decision **39 COM 7**) and by the above-mentioned deadline.

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

In addition to the examination of individual reports on the state of conservation of properties, the Committee also discussed more general conservation issues and adopted Decisions **43 COM 7.1**, **43 COM 7.2** and **43 COM 7.3** to clarify its position on a number of current conservation issues and to provide guidance to States Parties in this regard. I therefore strongly encourage you to also consider these decisions.

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

Yours sincerely,



Mechtild Rössler  
Director

Enc.

cc: Colombian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO  
Mr Alberto Escovar Wilson-White, National Focal Point for Cultural World Heritage  
ICOMOS International  
ICCROM  
UNESCO Office in Quito

**World Heritage Committee  
43rd session (Baku, 2019)**

**Decision: 43 COM 7B.99**

**Port, Fortresses and Group of Monuments, Cartagena (Colombia) (C 285)**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **36 COM 7B.98** adopted at its 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012),
3. Expresses its appreciation to the State Party for the invitation of an ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property in December 2017 to advise local and national authorities on important topics related to the property's conservation and management, and commends the State Party on the actions undertaken since to implement the mission's recommendations, and the collaboration between the Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Cartagena in this regard;
4. Requests the State Party to continue facilitating mechanisms to support channels of communication and agreement among the national and local authorities responsible for the management of the property, to clarify management competencies and to continue strengthening the capacity of local authorities, particularly the Institute of Heritage and Culture of Cartagena (IPCC);
5. Takes note of the finalization and approval of the Special Management and Protection Plan (PEMP) for the Walled Enclosure and San Felipe Castle in March 2018, and also requests that its implementation phase begin without delay;
6. Regrets that the finalization and approval of the other two PEMP's envisaged for the property, as well as the delimitation of the property's boundaries and establishment of buffer zones, have not yet been completed, despite repeated requests from the Committee since 2008;
7. Further requests the State Party to address the concerns of gentrification and changing social dynamics, public access to the property, and social appropriation of heritage in the corresponding PEMP's under development for the property, in order to protect its integrity and authenticity in light of continuing tourism and development pressures;
8. Urges the State Party to finalize and approve the PEMP's for the Historic Centre and for the Fortifications and Structures of the Bay as matters of utmost priority, taking into consideration the 2017 mission's recommendations, and to provide an electronic copy of the finalized plans for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit a Minor Boundary Modification in accordance with Paragraphs 163-164 of the *Operational Guidelines* to clarify the limits of the property as follow up to the Retrospective Inventory process and to establish buffer zones, immediately following the completion and approval of the PEMP's for the property;

10. Expresses its strong concern, in line with the assessment of the 2017 ICOMOS Advisory mission, regarding the impact of the Aquarela project on the values that sustain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and also takes note of the National Council for Cultural Heritage's similar conclusion in this regard;
11. Also urges the State Party to ensure that further construction of the project does not proceed, to finalize the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the Aquarela project in conformity with the ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties, with a specific section focusing on the potential impact of the project on the property's OUV, and to strongly consider the demolition of the existing building as a mitigation measure;
12. Requests moreover the State Party to complete its study and evaluation of the Hotel Santa Catalina project and to issue recommendations for mitigation measures to address any identified impacts on the OUV of the property;
13. Requests in addition the State Party to implement fully the recommendations of the 2017 ICOMOS Advisory mission, with particular attention to management effectiveness and management structures, and conservation action plans, including the preparation of a Conservation Plan for the Historic Centre of Cartagena;
14. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2020**, 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 45th session in 2021.

## ANNEX II

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

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

1. Executive Summary of the report

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

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

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

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

Please also provide detailed information on the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

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

6. Signature of the Authority