SYRIA EXPO
2020 DUBAI

الأمانة
السورية
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Syria Trust for
Development

Restoring Syrian heritage & reviving local communities workshop

20-21 March 2022

EXPO 2020 DUBAI UAE

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Restoring Syrian heritage & reviving local communities

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الأمانة السورية للتنمية
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A technical workshop
coordinated by the Syria Trust for Development

Expo 2020 Dubai | March 20-21, 2022

Presentation of the workshop

The fabric of Syrian society and its economy has been severely harmed during the eleven-year war, and the major cities of the country have been significantly damaged: from Damascus to Aleppo, to Homs, Daraa, Raqqa, and Deir Ezzor. The cultural heritage of Syria has also been greatly hurt. Syrian World Heritage Sites (Palmyra, Aleppo, Crac des Chevaliers, Bosra, Damascus, Qal'at Salah el-Din and the Ancient villages of Northern Syria) as well as other world-known cultural heritage sites (such as Apamea, Ebla, Mari, Doura-Europos, etc.) have been heavily damaged by combats, shelling and bombing, pillaging, looting and occupation. The communities living in those areas have been heavily impacted, with great human losses, displacements and disruption of the social and economic life.

In the past five years, reconstruction and recovery programs have been implemented in some Syrian cultural heritage sites, with the help of national and international organizations and experts, with positive impacts on the life of returning communities. The overall situation of reconstruction and recovery of heritage sites remains nevertheless critical, due to the lack of resources, technical/expert support and the blockage of financial contributions of the international bodies that played a crucial role in the safeguarding of heritage sites before the war.

Recently, however, international sanctions that prevented non-governmental organizations to contribute to the conservation of heritage sites have been lifted (see the following link: https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/31/542.516), thus allowing International Foundations, Museums, Research Institutions and Universities to return to Syria in order to support and implement projects aimed at restoring damaged sites and revive the communities neighbouring these sites.

Time has come therefore to launch a meaningful and targeted campaign aimed at supporting the reconstruction and restoration of Syrian cultural heritage, and the recovery of its communities, with the help of all those who believe that heritage is a value for humanity, away from any political considerations.

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In recent years, International organizations have underlined the importance of culture and cultural heritage in the process of recovery after disasters and conflict. The main current international policy in this area is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, that explicitly recognises that inequality and poverty are direct drivers of vulnerability, and establishes the role of culture as a component of recovery processes after disaster and conflicts.

In 2015, UNESCO issued the Strategy for the Reinforcement of UNESCO's Action for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Addendum, concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards, an in 2017, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) produced a Guidance on Post-Trauma Recovery and Reconstruction for World Heritage Cultural Properties. Building on the above initiatives, the 2018 Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage provided a number of principles, underlining the need to follow people-centered approaches in reconstruction and recovery processes and to fully engage communities. Finally, in 2018, The World Bank and UNESCO issued jointly a position paper: CURE, Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery, a set of policy and practical guidelines focusing primarily on the role of cultural heritage in recovering social fabrics affected by disasters and conflicts. The restoration, reconstruction and recovery of Syrian heritage and of the communities living around heritage sites will be fully in line with these recommendations and policies and can constitute an important example of international cooperation on culture-centered socioeconomic recovery processes.

The Workshop on 20-21 March intends to present in detail to the public and to interested partners the current situation of Syrian cultural heritage sites and of the communities living around them, with a special focus on the six sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, in order to discuss priorities, ways of cooperation and the implementation of plans. It intends to be a clear call for action.

The Workshop will bring together national and international experts and non-governmental organizations active in the field of cultural heritage conservation, in order to create the conditions to mobilise international cooperation and reorganise the networks of technical exchange and collaboration that have supported the conservation of Syrian cultural heritage and archaeological research for over a century.

Reconstructing the heritage sites of Syria and recovering their social and economic fabric requires a long-term mobilisation of resources and expertise in the field of heritage conservation, restoration, archaeology, management and socioeconomic development.

The Workshop, organised by the Syria Trust for Development, intends to contribute to launching this complex but much needed reconstruction and recovery effort.

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Workshop Program

SATURDAY 19 MARCH	
16:30	Meeting with all panelists at Meeting Room 3 & 4 of the hotel.
20:00	Dinner reception at Millennium Central Downtown Hotel.
SUNDAY 20 MARCH	
08:15	Bus departure from Millennium Central Downtown Hotel.
09:30 - 10:00	Welcoming of Participants to EXPO, DEC South, Upper Level, Suite 1.
10:00 - 10:15	Introduction and presentation of the workshop by Fares Kallas, Trustee, Syria Trust for Development.
10:20 - 10:30	Opening remarks by Omar Shehadeh, Chief International Participation Executive Officer, Expo Dubai 2020.
10:45 - 11:15	*The status of Syria's World Heritage Site*s, by Lina Kuteifan, Director of International Relations, DGAM, Syria.
11:15 - 11:30	**Coffee Break**
Panel Discussion 1 :	***The Role Of International Organisations For Syrian Cultural Heritage.***
11:30 - 12:30	**Moderator:** Luis Monreal, Agha Khan Trust For Culture. **Panelists:** Mikhail Piotrovsky, General Director of the State Hermitage Museum. Hiba Aziz, Director of The Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH). Zaki Aslan, ICCROM. Nazeer Awad, Director, DGAM. Salvatore Russo, University of Venice-IUAV.
12:30 - 13:00	Q&A Session
13:00 - 14:00	**Lunch Break**
14:00 - 14:30	*Culture for Development,* Alessio Re, Fondazione Santagata for the Economics of Culture.

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Panel Discussion 2 :	***Experiences in recovering cultural heritage and local communities.***
14:30 - 15:30	**Moderator:** Ajmal Maiwandi, Aga Khan Director, Afghanistan. **Panelists:** Francesco Bandarin, former UNESCO ADG Culture. Amra Hadzimuhamedovic, Center for Cultural Heritage, International Forum Bosnia, Director. Giovanni Fontana Antonelli, Expert & Cultural Heritage Consultant. Mounir Bouchenaki, former UNESCO ADG Culture. Grazia Tucci, Director of the GECO Laboratory, University of Florence.
15:30 - 16:00	Q&A Session
16:00 - 16:15	**Coffee Break**
Panel Discussion 3 :	***The case of Aleppo.***
16:15 - 17:15	**Moderator:** Thierry Grandin, Architect, Aleppo. **Panelists:** Shadi Al-Elshi, CEO, Syria Trust for Development. Daniele Pini, Architect, Urban Planner and Conservator, Italy. Tamim Kasmo, Archaeologist, Committee for the restoration of the Umayyad Mosque. Sakher Olabi, DGAM Aleppo. Hala Rizk, UNDP Syria.
17:15 - 17:35	Q&A Session
17:35 - 17:45	*The 'Third Paradise',* by Michelangelo Pistoletto.
17:45 - 18:00	Concluding remarks, Fares Kallas, Trustee, Syria Trust for Development.
19:00	Dinner at Alkebulan, EXPO.
21:00 - 21:30	Meeting point at DEC South for bus departure from EXPO to Millennium Central Downtown hotel.

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MONDAY 21 MARCH	
08:15	Bus departure from Millennium Central Downtown hotel.
10:00 - 10:30	*Other Syrian heritage sites of global importance,* Dr Houmam Saad, Deputy DG, Director of Excavation, DGAM.
Panel Discussion 4 :	***The case of Palmyra.***
10:30 - 11:30	**Moderator:** Reme Sakr, Syria Trust for Development. **Panelists:** Nazeer Awad, Director General, DGAM. Yves Ubelmann, President of ICONEM. Krzysztof Jakubiak, Head of Polish archaeological mission in Palmyra. Natalia Soloveva, Deputy Director of IIMC, RAS. Francesco Bandarin, former UNESCO ADG Culture.
11:30 - 11:45	Q&A Session
11:45 - 12:00	**Coffee Break**
Panel Discussion 5 :	***The role of the international archaeological missions.***
12:00 - 13:00	**Moderator**: Pierre Leriche. **Panelists**: Balazs Major - SHAM Mission. Frances Pinnock, Director of the joint archaeological mission in Ebla. Davide Nadali, Director of the joint archaeological mission in Tel Ferzat. Kay Kohlmeyer, HTW Berlin Director of the Archaeological mission in Aleppo Citadel. Marina Pucci, University of Firenze. Houmam Saad, Director of Excavation, DGAM.
13:00 - 13:30	Q&A Session

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13:30 - 14:30	**Lunch Break**
Panel Discussion 6 :	***Cooperating in the conservation of heritage sites in Syria.***
14:30 - 15:30	**Moderator:** Alessio Re, Fondazione Santagata for the Economics of Culture. **Panelists:** Samir Abdulac, President, ICOMOS working group on the safeguarding of Syrian heritage. Fares Kallas, Trustee, Syria Trust for Development. Ammar Abdulrahman, Frei Universität Berlin, Near Eastern Archaeology and Excavation Management. Ebrahim al-Khalifa, Deputy Director, UNESCO Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage, Bahrain. Nada Hosking, Director, Global Heritage Fund. Karmov Timur Mikhailovich, Director of the Expeditionary Volunteer Association.
15:30 - 16:00	Q&A Session.
16:00 - 16:15	Concluding remarks, Fares Kallas, Trustee, Syria Trust for Development.
19:00	Dinner at Rising Flavors, EXPO 2020 Dubai.
21:00 - 21:30	Meeting point at DEC South for bus departure from EXPO to Millennium Central Downtown hotel.