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JERUSALEM AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 35 C/RESOLUTION 49 AND 186 EX/DECISION 11

SUMMARY

This document is presented pursuant to 186 EX/Decision 11, by which the Executive Board requested a follow-up report on this item.

The document reports on the implementation of the Action Plan, as well as on other projects for the Old City of Jerusalem, all of which are mainly financed through voluntary extrabudgetary contributions.

The Report by the Director-General on the implementation of 35 C/Resolution 49 and 186 EX/Decision 5 related to the Ascent to the Mughrabi Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem is presented in document 187 EX/5.

No decision is proposed.

I. Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem

1. The remaining funds of the first phase of the Action Plan funded by the Italian Government have been allocated to a new conservation/training project – the Rehabilitation of Al Saha Compound Facades – to be carried out with the Technical Unit of the Franciscan Custodia of the Holy Land. The training component of this project, which is fundamental for improving the conservation skills of local workers, involves testing the Rehabilitation Manual produced in the framework of the Action Plan.

2. As presented in document 186 EX/11, on 14 October 2010, Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian experts met at UNESCO Headquarters, with the aim of reactivating the Action Plan and of designing the framework for the UNESCO/ICCROM/ICOMOS mission to Jerusalem that had been requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010). The World Heritage Centre has submitted the draft terms of reference as a potential framework for the mission to the Israeli authorities by letters dated 13 April 2011 and 27 July 2011. On 28 July 2011, the Israeli authorities, while reiterating their intention to move towards agreed Terms of Reference for such mission to which they remain committed, informed the World Heritage Centre that it would receive comments in the near future.

3. The conservation project of the Saint John Prodromos Church, funded by the Leventis Foundation of Cyprus, and implemented in close collaboration with the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate, started in July 2009. The architectural survey was carried out as well as some archaeological research. The detailed restoration project has been finalised and works should start shortly. However, the archaeological explorations revealed structural disorders due in particular to sanitation issues which would require additional funding to be addressed.

II. Other projects

4. As a follow-up to the project for the establishment of a Centre for Restoration of Islamic Manuscripts, located in the Madrasa Al-Ashrayfiyyah within the Haram ash-Sharif, a capacity building project, with funding from the Organization's regular programme (\$190,000) aiming at providing training to new and existing staff in the fields of paper restoration and electronic inventory was completed in June 2011. The objective was to ensure the long-term conservation of its invaluable collection of manuscripts and other historic documents. To this end, a tailor-made modular training programme was delivered by international experts, focused on paper restoration and conservation, documentation, and on reinforcing managerial and organizational practices. A final phase of the project to be funded by Norway will start in September 2011 with the objective to further develop the capacities of the staff in conservation of the manuscript collections, a process which requires the application of complex conservation techniques.

5. Following the recruitment of four permanent staff by the Jordanian authorities, the development of the project for the "Safeguarding, Refurbishment and Revitalization of the Islamic Museum of the Haram ash-Sharif and its Collection", funded by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (US\$1,130,000), which started in 2009, has been progressing well. Expert consultants were contracted in 2010 to assess the inventory needs of the collections, including data management. The museum's staff has participated in two training modules in January and June 2011 and basic computer equipment has been purchased to ensure that an electronic inventory can take place.

6. At the 186th session of the Executive Board in May 2011, Decision 186 EX/11 was adopted by consensus, recalling the previous decisions concerning Jerusalem and inviting the Director-General to implement related decisions, guided by the principle of decision-making by consensus.

7. At the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee in June 2011, a draft decision was submitted by seven States Parties. Despite many efforts, no consensus could be reached among the concerned parties and the decision was adopted without amendments. The World Heritage Committee reiterated its request for a reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem to

be carried out jointly by the World Heritage Centre, ICCROM and ICOMOS. It also requested to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism to both the Old City and the Mughrabi Ascent, and to reactivate the Action Plan.

8. Should additional information become available, the Secretariat will issue an addendum to the present document before the 187th session of the Executive Board, in order to inform the Members of the Board about any related recent development.