

Recommendations of the Second UNESCO/ICOMOS Expert Working Group on the Preservation of the Bamiyan Site

Munich, 18–20 December 2003*

Consolidation of the cliffs and niches

1. General

In view of the presence of anti-personnel mines at the Bamiyan site, further demining should be an integral part of all consolidation efforts and be included in future budgets;

- a) *Information now available on the destructive effects of seismic hazards at the Bamiyan site should be included in future consolidation plans;*
- b) *Investigations should be completed in areas that are not yet accessible, in particular in the lower eastern part of the Small Buddha, and in the lower western part of the Large Buddha. In addition, isostatic maps should be developed and tests on the effectiveness of grouting and anchoring, as well as on the compatibility of old and new materials and further rock mechanic laboratory tests, should be carried out;*
- c) *A long-term monitoring system of the cliffs and weather conditions should be installed in 2004. It is essential to include capacity building programmes for the local community in the installation and maintenance of this monitoring system. It would also be desirable to install a basic earthquake monitoring unit and to carry out a study on the effect of the 1956 earthquake;*
- d) *The Archaeological Survey of India will be consulted in order to obtain information on consolidation work carried out in Bamiyan in the 1970s.*

2. Small Buddha niche

- a) *Plans for the preservation of the Buddha silhouette should be developed and emergency conservation measures started;*
- b) *The final consolidation of the Small Buddha niche should be carried out, notably through stabilizing the remaining upper eastern part of the niche;*
- c) *It is recommended that consolidation work start on the upper western part.*

3. Large Buddha niche

- a) *Plans for the preservation of the Buddha silhouette should be developed and emergency conservation measures started;*
- b) *Water infiltration should be limited.*

Conservation of the fragments of the statues of the Buddha

1. *The fragments of the statues should be covered during winter 2003/2004 in order to protect them from deterioration. ICOMOS will provide funds for this purpose to the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture;*
2. *The safeguarding and conservation of the fragments will be a priority in 2004. Appropriate techniques for moving the fragments out of the niches should be studied, taking into account their fragility and their weight. The fragments should be protected by a temporary roof;*
3. *The fragments should be placed outside the niches under shelter. At the Small Buddha site, an appropriate location (possibly below the slope) will be determined in which to place them;*
4. *Detailed geological analysis of the back of the niches and the fragments should be carried out in order to determine the original position of the fragments. For this purpose, the 3-D documentation successfully carried out by the Japanese firm PASCO should be complemented by studies by ICOMOS in cooperation with the Universities of Aachen and Cologne. The Geological Department of the University of Kabul will be invited to cooperate. Training and capacity building for Afghan students should be included;*
5. *The appropriate conservation, notably the stabilization of this particular kind of rock, should be further studied by ICOMOS stone restorers;*
6. *Further studies of the presentation of the fragments in situ should be initiated.*

* Abridged version without recommendations on preservation of wall paintings and archaeological activities, for full text see H@R 2004/2005, p. 30f.