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**REPORT ON THE JOINT WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / ICOMOS / ICCROM
REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION TO
FORTS AND CASTLES, VOLTA, GREATER ACCRA, CENTRAL AND WESTERN REGIONS
(GHANA)**

1 to 11 February 2020



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
	ACRONYMS	ii
	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS	iii
	Mission findings	iv
	Recommendations	vii
<hr/>		
1.	BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION	1
1.1.	Inscription History and Statement of Outstanding Universal Value	1
1.2.	Mission Terms of Reference	2
1.3.	Mission Team	3
1.4.	Mission Programme	3
1.5.	Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee	3
<hr/>		
2.	PREVIOUS MISSIONS AND WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE DECISIONS	5
<hr/>		
3.	NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY	9
3.1.	Protected area legislation	9
3.2.	Institutional framework	9
3.3.	Management	11
3.4.	Response to the Recognition of Values under International Treaties and Programmes	11
<hr/>		
4.	IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES / THREATS	15
4.1.	Management Effectiveness	15
4.1.1.	Absence of a National Cultural Heritage Inventory and poor information management	15
4.1.2.	Lack of Human Resources Capacity	15
4.1.3.	Insufficient financial support	16
4.1.4.	State Party processes for implementation development projects and general stakeholder management	16
4.1.5.	Property boundaries and buffer zones	17
4.1.6.	Poor site presentation and interpretation	18
4.2.	Nature and extent of threats to the property, taking into consideration the natural values for which the property was inscribed, and specific issues outlines by the WH Committee (TOR3)	22
4.2.1.	Urgent and immediate need for structural integrity	22
4.2.2.	Coastal erosion	24
4.2.3.	Illegal construction	25
4.2.4.	Urban pressure	26
4.2.5.	Encroachment	26
4.2.6.	Incorrect interventions	27
4.2.7.	Neglect and abandonment	28
4.2.8.	Lack of sanitation	29
4.2.9.	Adaptive reuses of the property's components	30
4.2.10.	Long-term stabilisation and intervention	31
4.2.11.	Development projects	32

Table:	Threats and factors – an overview by component	35
4.3.	Positive or negative developments in the conservation of the property since the last report to the World Heritage Committee	36
4.4.	Information on any specific threat or damage to or loss of Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and/or authenticity for which the property was inscribed (TOR2)	36
<hr/>		
5.	ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY	39
5.1.	Evaluation of the overall state of conservation of each property component, giving particular attention to the conditions affecting OUV, integrity and/or authenticity, and protection of each component (TOR1 + TOR 4)	39
5.1.1.	Fort Prinzenstein, in Keta	39
5.1.2.	Fort Fredensborg, in Old Ningo	40
5.1.3.	Fort Vernon, in Prampram	41
5.1.4.	Fort Augustaborg, in Teshie	42
5.1.5.	Christiansborg Castle, in Osu	43
5.1.6.	Ussher Fort, in Usshertown	44
5.1.7.	James Fort, in Jamestown	45
5.1.8.	Fort Good Hope, in Senya Beraku	46
5.1.9.	Fort Patience, in Apam	47
5.1.10.	Fort Amsterdam, in Abandze	48
5.1.11.	Fort William, in Anomabu	49
5.1.12.	Fort Nassau, in Mouri	50
5.1.13.	Fort Fredericksborg, in Amanful	51
5.1.14.	Cape Coast Castle, in Cape Coast	52
5.1.15.	Fort William (Lighthouse) in Cape Coast	53
5.1.16.	Fort Victoria, in Cape Coast	54
5.1.17.	St. George’s Castle, in Elmina	55
5.1.18.	Fort St. Jago, at Elmina	57
5.1.19.	Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda)	58
5.1.20.	Fort English (British Komenda)	59
5.1.21.	Fort San Sebastian, in Shama	60
5.1.22.	Fort Orange, in Sekondi	62
5.1.23.	Fort Batenstein, in Butre	63
5.1.24.	Fort Metal Cross, in Dixcove	64
5.1.25.	Fort Dorothea, in Akwida	66
5.1.26.	Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Princess Town	67
5.1.27.	Fort St. Anthony, in Axim	68
5.1.28.	Fort Apollonia, in Beyin	69
5.2.	Assessment of the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint Advisory Mission of 2019 and of Decision 43 COM 7B.106 of the World Heritage Committee (TOR5)	70
5.3.	Review of whether the values on the basis of which the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List are being maintained	76

6.	FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	79
6.1.	Findings	79
6.1.1.	Components missing Integrity and Authenticity	79
6.1.2.	Structural Integrity	79
6.1.3.	Threats and risks affecting the property	80
6.1.4.	Lack of maintenance and a regular conservation approach	80
6.1.5.	Management effectiveness	80
6.1.6.	Increase of development projects	81
6.1.7.	Poor regulation and management of development approvals and implementation	81
6.1.8.	Lack of Boundaries and Buffer zones	81
6.1.9.	Lack of Capacity Building	82
6.1.10.	Lack of strategic vision for the entire property	82
6.1.11.	Lack of adequate site interpretation	82
6.1.12.	Lack of database, documentation and research	83
6.2.	Recommendations	85
<hr/>		
7.	BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND ONLINE REFERENCES	91
<hr/>		
8.	ANNEXES	93
1.	Retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session (2012, St. Petersburg) – Decision 36 COM 8E	
2.	Terms of reference.	
3.	Mission team (with bios).	
4.	Itinerary and programme.	
5.	Mission participants and persons met during the mission	
6.	Recommendations from the 2019 Advisory Mission Report.	
7.	State of Conservation reports on the property examined and Decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee in 1996, 1998 and 2019	
8.	Google-earth maps and overviews	
9.	Photographs of all the property components	



FORT SAN SEBASTIAN (SHAMA)

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The Mission Team recognises and values the efforts being undertaken to accomplish significant conservation of the FORTS AND CASTLES, VOLTA, GREATER ACCRA, CENTRAL AND WESTERN REGIONS, in Ghana.

ACRONYMS

AWHF	African World Heritage Fund
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GMMB	Ghana Museums and Monuments Board
GPHA	Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
MBM	Minor Boundary Modification
NATCOM	Ghana National Commission for UNESCO
NTDP	National Tourism Development Plan
SEIA	Social-Economic Impact Assessment
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
UNESCO-Ghana	UNESCO Office in Accra
UNESCO-WHC	UNESCO - World Heritage Centre
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WHAM	World Heritage Advisory Mission
WHC	World Heritage Centre

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2020 joint UNESCO / ICOMOS / ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions World Heritage property took place from 1 to 11 February 2020 on invitation of the State Party of Ghana. The invitation was extended in response to the request made by the World Heritage Committee request (Decision 43COM 7B.106), specifically tasking the mission to 'assess the state of conservation of all the components of the property and the potential threats they are facing, the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory mission [of 2019], and progress in the delineation and protection of buffer zones and preparation of the Management Plan'.

The Reactive Monitoring Mission is to be considered in conjunction with the Advisory Mission that took place from 28 April to 2 May 2019, which initially aimed at assessing the Tourism Development project at St. George Castle in Elmina, but actually managed, to a certain extent, to address also the conservation, promotion and management of part of the property. Several key issues to be addressed were identified by the Advisory Mission Team, such as the need to urgently inspect the 28 forts and castles, the need to submit the property's boundaries and buffer zone protection for all the components, the need to identify and prevent the impact of factors affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, the need to assess the OUV, and the integrity and the authenticity of each one of the 28 components that constitute the serial nomination. From these issues, several recommendations were outlined (see Annex 8.6.), and concerns were raised of potentially putting the property on the World Heritage List in Danger, should the condition of the property not be mitigated urgently, and should the deterioration of the state of conservation not be contained, if so warranted after a full inspection of each component of this serial property. The Reactive Monitoring Mission team also identified that some components have suffered major deterioration in their integrity and authenticity, and advises that the State Party conduct an assessment of those components' significance in relation to their contribution to the OUV. To this end, the State Party will need to engage in a combination of measures such as delineation of boundaries, definition of buffer zones, documentation, research (including archaeological excavation, where necessary), enhanced interpretation, management, and community involvement. The assessment of these measures will subsequently assist the Committee in determining whether those components can still be justifiably included as part of the property.

However, it can be stressed that both missions of 2019 and 2020 have been organised precisely because of a new dynamic and momentum gained by the State Party that aims to reactivate its efforts for the safeguarding of cultural heritage, which was also echoed in the declaration of 2019 as the "Year of Return". In the context of UNESCO, the State Party's submission in 2017 of the International Assistance Request for the preparation of a management plan for the property was the first major signal of that reactivation.

In the wake of this dynamic, a number of international partners were also getting ready to support Ghana at various levels for a stronger promotion and conservation of cultural heritage. This has also shed light on not only specific conservation issues of the property's components, but also on more general needs in terms of institutional capacities at national level, which should be addressed also with other international, and multi- and bilateral partners.

This has proved to be efficient already with regard to the consolidation project for Fort Amsterdam funded by the European Union, halted immediately after the 2019 mission and the subsequent decision by the World Heritage Committee, in order to revise the project entirely so as to address the urgent need for the consolidation of the Fort. Since then, other initiatives have come up or gained pace, such as the creation of a National Heritage Committee with initial funding from UNESCO's Participation Programme, or the possible commitment of France to support training and capacity building in the fields of archaeology and tourism, including a strong component on World Heritage. It

can therefore be said that the challenges that the property and the State Party face can be met with a growing number of opportunities and means.

MISSION FINDINGS

The findings presented in Chapter 6 of this report and on the basis of which the Mission team formulated its recommendations had already been anticipated in part by the Advisory Mission conducted to 7 of the property's components in 2019, now expanded to all 28 components that were visited from the 1st to the 11th of February 2020. This report recognises that the scope of the challenges is immense, and the stakes very high.

The mission reiterates the need for major development projects and major interventions at the forts and castles to be planned on the backdrop of this Mission's findings, insisting that they be halted if already in more or less advanced planning or implementation stages so that no irreversible actions are taken that could affect the property's OUV. All such interventions and projects must be submitted for review, to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

A major finding is that some **components are missing integrity and authenticity** which threatens the property's Outstanding Universal Value. The components concerned are thoroughly addressed in the report and the question is raised about how to deal with these components and how they could possibly continue to carry and convey the values for which the property's OUV was inscribed. The State Party is therefore encouraged to develop and present concepts for improved conservation and enhanced interpretation, allowing them to reflect the values for which the property was inscribed.

Indeed, the **lack of adequate site interpretation**, coupled with the **lack of database information, documentation, and research**, are central issues that the State Party must tackle. Being inscribed exclusively based on criterion (vi) recognising that the property is "*a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora*", interpretation is crucial, as the components of the inscribed property need to convey this "emotive symbol". Preserving, maintaining and promoting the physical integrity of the components is fundamental in order to maintain the Forts and Castles as some of the best-preserved material testimonies of this part of human history. They can play an important part in the recognition of the way the history and the legacy of the slave trade continue to act in the contemporary world.

This implies also the major opportunity to engage in the current efforts to develop new strategies for strengthening and revitalising **UNESCO's Slave Route Project**. Ghana can indeed become a primary actor in giving new relevance to the project.

Yet, the 28 components reveal a lack of coordinated interpretation and presentation among the entire property, which itself is not well perceived in its entirety, leaving each component mostly on its own. The full potential of this World Heritage property is indeed far from being protected and valued adequately, which leaves the door open for unregulated development projects that can irreversibly affect the OUV of the property.

As to documentation, research and the need for a database, the lack of records, drawings or historical inventories from each one of the 28 components is a major problem. The absence of a property database that can be accessed by GMMB staff keeps the national heritage organisation from responding in an efficient, procedural, and comprehensive way to the rising threats and challenges faced by the property.

With regard to the physical state of conservation, this report addresses in particular the issue of **Structural Integrity** that also represents an urgent and immediate need to be addressed by the State Party. Several of the components are facing increasingly vulnerable conditions notably due to abandonment, neglect and lack of conservation and maintenance. This has resulted in several

components revealing serious structural movement and instability, causing severe damage to some of the forts to the extent that parts will collapse and detach from the component if they are not consolidated in the near future.

In conjunction with this, the report further discusses **threats and risks affecting the property**. In addition to the structural integrity of the forts and castles, those threats encompass coastal erosion, illegal construction, urban pressure, encroachment, incorrect interventions, neglect and abandonment, lack of sanitation, development projects, and adaptive reuses of the property's components. Of particular concern are the threats from continued increase of coastal erosion, as well as aggressive rains, factors that are attributed to climate change. The site visits allowed the mission to identify several factors that have evolved into serious threats to the attributes of the property. If no action is taken, and the property is furthered impacted, it could risk the potential loss of the attributes that hold Outstanding Universal Value.

The State Party will therefore need to find solutions to the **lack of regular maintenance and conservation** that is caused by the observed abandonment and neglect, and which has resulted in the degradation and ultimately, in the damage of the components. In most of the forts and castles, regular maintenance activities, such as the cleaning of gutters and downpipes, the removal of small plants and roots from holes, the repair of small cracks, the replacement of broken roof tiles, etc. are not addressed. Consequently, small issues develop to become huge problems, and ultimately threats to almost all the components.

More broadly, this issue relates to the issue of **Management effectiveness**. The Mission Team noted that the management of the property is negatively impacted by lack of properly and effectively coordinated conservation capacity (technical and expertise), lack of research and documentation of sites, poor financing, and inadequate and poorly trained human resources, as well as a high staff turnover resulting in poor institutional memory and information management. There is also no systematic compliance with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, in particular the OUV based Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011). This is consistent with the State Party not having guidelines and procedures to guide the management and conservation of the Forts and Castles, thus adopting varying approaches/methodologies over time, resulting in various conservation inconsistencies. It was noted that there are no processes to be followed in making conservation interventions or an accountable structure, such as a Scientific & Technical Conservation Council that would guide and take responsibility for conservation decisions. The management planning process now initiated through support of International Assistance funding is expected to address some of these shortcomings.

The State Party is indeed facing many challenges and pressures due to the decades of poor management of the property that today generally translates into a **lack of a strategic vision for the entire property**. The State must engage in a strategic planning process with a view to addressing the challenges in a more coordinated manner with measurable targets and milestones. This must also include increased **Capacity Building**, which is currently lacking. The poor management of the property is directly linked to a very thin human resource capacity resulting in overstretched officials who are unable to keep up with the requirements of managing such a complex establishment. The GMMB officials have, to a large extent, not been properly trained in the technicalities of managing a World Heritage property and are not or are insufficiently familiar with the 1972 World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines. Many of the property's components do not have caretakers, and, where they have been assigned, they fulfil multiple roles including security, interpretation, cleaning, education, cashiers and sometimes conservation. The caretakers also do not receive the regular training that would permit them to be able to meet the requirements and expectations of their portfolios.

Moreover, few conservators and artisans working for GMMB are familiar with the conservation requirements for World Heritage properties such as maintaining authenticity and integrity. As already noted by the 2019 Advisory Mission, there is a serious lack of expertise and skills in GMMB in areas such as archaeology, architectural conservation, tourism management, among many others. However, 60 new positions for the GMMB have been approved by the country's Public Service Commission. This presents an opportunity for GMMB to instigate a clear needs identification and prioritisation prior to the recruitment process in order to ensure that the new recruitments address the current skills gap.

Another area of findings obtained by this mission is the **increase of development projects** of which several are being prepared and planned, if not already implemented, with major economic interests but hardly any consideration for the sites they are likely to impact, or with inadequate approach to tourism development that does not incorporate or respect site interpretation capable of bringing out the attributes of OUV and the values expressed in criterion (vi). An illustration of this would be the large-scale Jamestown fishing Harbour complex in Accra, for which detailed plans have been requested without success by the GMMB from the competent state agency and the international funding partner in order to share them with the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies. Other examples are Tourism development projects that can also harm the property, as seen at Fort Metal Cross, or potential projects as the Elmina Heritage Bay tourism project, which prompted the 2019 Advisory Mission. While the development project at Fort Amsterdam has been put on hold in order to reorient it towards structural consolidation, the State Party did not comply with the precise request of the World Heritage Committee for all development projects to be halted. Indeed, at St. George Castle in Elmina or at Fort St Anthony in Axim, large areas have been paved next to these two components to serve as parking lots or other community use, without archaeological works being firstly addressed.

These examples point to **poor regulation and management of development approvals and implementation**. Ad hoc approaches and approval of developments at some sites constituting the Forts and Castles, without following a systematic and well-established procedure, keep the State Party from ensuring that the OUV, authenticity, and integrity of the Forts and Castles are retained.

Of concern is also the lack of cooperation between different State agencies involved in development projects. A prominent example of this is the Ghana Tourism Authority that is proceeding with tourism developments at St. George Castle in Elmina, without having carried out the required impact assessments and disregarding a letter issued by the GMMB calling for the halting of the works. The Mission Team also found that there is no coordination or synergy between the authorisation processes of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and those of the GMMB. Developers can obtain an environmental authorisation from the EPA and proceed with developments without getting required heritage impact assessments from the GMMB.

Last, but certainly not least, an urgent and important issue that the State Party must address and that relates to many of the issues mentioned above such as management, interpretation, regulation or conservation, is the **lack of Boundaries and Buffer zones**. These have still not been clearly defined, despite the repeated request to this end by the World Heritage Committee over more than 2 decades. This is a necessary starting point of any understanding of the property and the protection of its OUV. It was observed throughout the mission that most stakeholders do not know what constitutes the property boundaries, as the lack of clear boundaries means that there is no signage that indicates the limits of the property and its buffer zone. As already observed by the Advisory Mission, none of the components of the property has a buffer zone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings summarised above, the mission team formulated **17 recommendations** hereafter detailed in full. In addition to alerting to serious conservation issues and needs, these have the aim of offering as much guidance as possible for future actions for safeguard this heritage through improved management, efficient and sustainable conservation, as well as revisited and improved heritage interpretations and perspectives for sustainable tourism. They aim to provide assistance and orientation for the State Party of Ghana to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value and the highly symbolic legacy of the Forts and Castles of Ghana be preserved for future generations.

Recommendation 1 – REASSESS THE SERIAL PROPERTY IN ITS ENTIRETY BY CONSIDERING THE INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF EACH COMPONENT

Considering the fact that there are questions as to the contribution to OUV (including authenticity and integrity) of several components of the property, the State Party should foresee, in the short term, reassessing the entire property, with particular regard to the contribution of each component to the overall OUV (including its authenticity and integrity) of the Property as a whole. This reassessment should verify whether the attributes can still contribute to the property's OUV. This process requires the prior definition of the boundaries of the serial property as inscribed. It also presupposes the creation of a database, together with a full inventory and research being conducted, and the conceptualisation for adequate and enhanced site interpretation. Once this reassessment has been completed and the results submitted to the World Heritage Committee it will be possible to determine the appropriate next steps, including whether or not the State Party should revise the list of components, as contained in the RSOUV, and/or consult with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, on a possible boundary modification.

Recommendation 2 – DEFINITION OF PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AND BUFFER ZONE

The lack of defined property boundaries and buffer zones is a major threat to the protection of the property. The property currently has no system of protection against development pressures in the immediate surroundings of its components. The State Party should immediately embark on a process of delineating boundaries of the property as inscribed, as well as creating adequate buffer zones for each component, as previously recommended in the Advisory Mission Report (p.14), and requested by the World Heritage Committee, in conformity with paragraph 14 from the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO-WHC, 2017, paragraph 104). The cartography showing the boundaries of the serial property as inscribed, and meeting all technical requirements established by the Operational Guidelines, should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in the framework of the Boundary Clarification process, for further noting by the World Heritage Committee. As to the buffer zones, these should be prepared considering relevant values around the components and should be submitted under the Minor Boundary modification process.

In the course of this exercise, distinct attention should be given to Fort Vernon at Prampram, which was not mentioned in the original nomination neither by the name of the fort, nor by the indication of the town of Prampram, but included in the RSOUV adopted by the Committee at its 36th session (Decision 36 COM 8E, 2012, St. Petersburg). Considering that this component completely lacks any authenticity and integrity and does not contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, it is recommended that the State Party first clarify whether it should not have been included in the RSOUV.

Recommendation 3 – CONDUCT A STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY EVALUATION

It is fundamental to set out urgent and immediate structural measures on all the forts and castles that are at risk of having detached elements in danger of falling. It is also imperative to undertake a full physical condition assessment for each component of the property. The physical condition assessment will provide the opportunity to evaluate the actual structural integrity condition and a detailed state of conservation analysis of each fort and castle. This will help establish, for both short- and medium-terms, a thoughtful intervention proposal, as well as a comprehensive stabilisation intervention for the long-term, if needed.

Recommendation 4 – DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The Mission Team recommends that a Disaster Risk Management Plan which includes attention to impacts of Climate Change be prepared for the entire property, as well as for each component. Identification of potential hazards and threats, as well as the assessment of risks, should be part of the plan in order to establish procedures on how to face, prepare and adapt to the risks identified, including climate change impact. If the State Party has already developed a National Disaster Risk Management Plan to respond to emergency preparedness dealing with Disaster Management arrangements and Disaster Risk reduction, the Disaster Risk Management Plan for the World Heritage property should be integrated within the overall National Disaster Risk Management Plan.

Recommendation 5 – NEED FOR A CONSERVATION PLAN

The State Party should develop a Conservation Plan addressing conservation and maintenance for the entire property. A Conservation Plan will clearly address the guidelines and the procedures on how to conserve and maintain each component (e.g., how to develop a lime plaster/mortar/etc.; which materials and measurements are needed; how to clean the wall; how to apply the plaster/mortar on the wall, etc.). This will help guide fort managers/caretakers to address the most adequate conservation requirements, and to avoid possible wrongdoings and/or incorrect interpretations and/or interventions regarding what is expected of them. The Conservation Plan should be included in the Management Plan under development.

Recommendation 6 – ALLOCATION OF A PERMANENT FUND FOR EACH FORT & CASTLE

A permanent fund should be allocated to each fort and castle and should be directed solely to maintenance activities. This will help to avoid further degradation of the components and will ensure that fort managers/caretakers have the financial means to address preventive and regular activities of maintenance, such as cleaning gutters, repairing, lime-washing, etc. (avoiding for instance, to address only partial limewash of a component, as happened in St. George Castle in Elmina and at Cape Coast Castle).

Recommendation 7 – CREATION OF A SCIENTIFIC & TECHNICAL COUNCIL

GMMB should have a structured process for making conservation-decisions. A Scientific & Technical Council should be established to deal with the overall approach to the conservation and interpretation of the property. This Scientific & Technical Council should be composed of architects, archaeologists, historical engineers, experts in conservation, etc. This Council should establish the procedures to be addressed (following the results of the physical condition assessment); it should prioritise conservation interventions; define the type of limewash and the colour to apply in a fort that has not been painted for centuries or has never been limewashed before; it should propose ways to proceed; it should give technical advice; etc. This Technical Conservation Council would support the relevant work being

carried out by the GMMB Conservation Chief Architect and the GMMB Caretakers at each component. It will also assure that the Conservation Plan will be applied.

Recommendation 8 – NEED FOR LONG-TERM STABILISATION AND RESTORATION

Long-term stabilisation and restoration approaches are needed in several forts and castles, following the identification of different threats that affect the property. Before the removal of cement plasters, cements pavements, the distinct concrete block additions, etc. which have a very negative impact in the property, it is fundamental to first prepare the stabilisation and the restoration projects of the forts and the castles that were negatively impacted.

Recommendation 9 – IMPROVING MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Management effectiveness has been found to be very weak. Urgent interventions aimed at strengthening and improving processes and activities need to be addressed. GMMB should urgently address capacity building by providing adequate finances, improving staff competence through targeted training, and strengthening research collaboration with institutions such as universities.

GMMB should also strengthen management effectiveness by working closely with local chiefs and other state role players such as the District Assemblies who can assist with issues such as sanitation and buffer zone management through development and enforcement of bylaws. GMMB should ensure that the management plan under development addresses the shortcomings of management effectiveness.

Recommendation 10 – HALT ALL CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, INCLUDING PROJECTS, AT AND AROUND ANY COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY

The Mission Team reiterates and supports the recommendation of the 2019 Advisory Mission (Recommendation 1), urging the State Party at any level to halt entirely all development projects currently being planned or even implemented until a full examination of their potential impact on the property can be undertaken. The State Party should further ensure, including with national and international technical and financial partners, that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA) and, where appropriate, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) be systematically included in the planning stages (work plans and budgets) and shared with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Heritage impact assessment should follow the process of the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011).

Recommendation 11 – DEVELOPMENT AUTHORISATIONS

There is urgent need to streamline development processes by various levels and agencies of the State Party, to address the current situation where one agency can authorise or carry out development without regard for the responsibilities of another State Agency. The State Party should introduce legislation that synchronises the authorisation processes of the GMMB, the Environmental Protection Agency and the other players, such as the District Assemblies, to ensure that their roles complement each other. Clear procedures need to be considered for development projects, including the need for Heritage Impact Assessments, and/or Social Impact assessments, as well as Environment Impact assessments, when necessary. Also, these procedures should ensure that major development projects cannot be implemented without referral to and approval of the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies, in conformity with paragraph 172 from the Operational Guidelines.

Recommendation 12 – NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

To address Capacity Building among GMMB human resources will help create a more effective team, with a more strategic and pro-active approach, in order to respond to the needs of the property. GMMB, as part of filling the 60 approved new positions, should conduct a skills analysis with the purpose of recruiting skilled and competent professionals dedicated to the 28 components of the World Heritage property. The GMMB should develop a focused World Heritage training programme for officials responsible for the property with prioritisation of caretakers, conservators and inspectors. This specific training on World Heritage should be also considered under the support of AWHF and the Advisory Bodies. This will allow the workers to be more skilled and knowledgeable on World Heritage matters, which would help create a team dedicated to long-term results.

Recommendation 13 – NEED FOR A STRATEGIC VISION

GMMB should develop a strategic vision for the entire World Heritage property, with a defined desired state of conservation and measurable milestones. The vision should clearly identify the conservation and management needs for all the components and outline the actions to be implemented, as well as the resources to be made available for the short-, medium- and long-term management of the property.

Recommendation 14 – INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF EACH COMPONENT

The State Party should address site interpretation and the presentation of each fort and castle, as well as of the property as a whole, in addition to the physical and structural conservation and the definition of boundaries and buffer zones. This is crucial for maintaining the OUV of the property, which is inscribed on criterion (vi) recognising that the forts and castles are "*a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora.*" This engages a large array of actors and stakeholders, from the levels of the local communities to the District and the national authorities. The contribution of local communities and GMMB caretakers becomes particularly essential when valuing the attributes of OUV of each component. The GMMB should develop an interpretation strategy to be implemented across all components in order to enhance the attributes of the property's OUV.

Recommendation 15 – ENGAGE IN STRENGTHENED INVOLVEMENT IN UNESCO'S SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT

It must be noted that Ghana has taken the full measure of the importance of actively engaging in UNESCO's Slave Route Project, currently in the process of developing new strategies. In addition to and as part of the development of a site interpretation strategy, the State Party is encouraged to participate critically in the development and implementation of activities and programmes aiming at history education, capacity-building (in particular for managers of memorial sites or museums), and the production and dissemination of new knowledge on the issues surrounding the issue of slavery and its consequences on contemporary societies.

Recommendation 16 – NEED TO CREATE A DATABASE, DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH

GMMB needs to create a centralized database of all the data, regarding the 28 components that constitute the property. There is a need to develop a more systematic and consistent approach for the creation of a database, with clear procedures for identification, data collection and data protection of all the documentation regarding the property. This database should be both physical and digital, and should have means of high protection, to avoid being easily hacked by outsiders, or removed by staff.

It is therefore recommended to address a more consistent research regarding archaeology, history and interpretation of the property, as well as site survey to create updated drawings and documentation collection for each one of the 28 components. To develop this database, it is fundamental to locate and to gather existing reports, documentation, maps, surveys, and any data that can contribute to a comprehensive and rich database.

Recommendation 17 – NEED TO EXPEDITE THE REVIEW OF THE EXISTING LEGISLATION

The State Party indicated that a new national heritage legislation has been drafted and submitted to the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2016. This process has dragged on for too long and should be expedited with commitment to timelines. It is recommended that the State Party conclude the review and the update of National Heritage legislation without further delay.

Recommendation 18 – REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION IN 2022

It is also recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to invite another Reactive Monitoring mission in 2022, to assess the property's state of conservation, to consider progress made on the Management Plan for the property and the delineation of boundaries a buffer zone and protection regimes for each component, and to assess progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission of 2019 and the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission of 2020.



FORT METAL CROSS (DIXCOVE)

1. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

1.1. Inscription History and Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The World Heritage property of Ghana “Fort and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions” was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979 during the 3rd session of the World Heritage Committee under Decision CONF 003 XII.46 (Cairo and Luxor, 1979). It was the 34th property to be inscribed since the adoption of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, therefore it is amongst the oldest World Heritage properties.

The complete retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property is provided in Annexe 8.1, and it was adopted well after inscription. It comprises the following elements:

“These fortified trading posts, founded between 1482 and 1786, and spanning a distance of approximately 500 km along the coast of Ghana between Keta in the east and Beyin in the west, were links in the trading routes established by the Portuguese in many areas of the world during their era of great maritime exploration. The castles and forts were built and occupied at different times by traders from Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Germany and Britain. They served the gold trade of European chartered companies. Latterly they played a significant part in the developing slave trade, and therefore in the history of the Americas, and, subsequently, in the 19th century, in the suppression of that trade.

The property consists of three Castles (Cape Coast, St. George’s d’Elmina and Christiansborg at Osu, Accra), 15 Forts (Good Hope at Senya Beraku; Patience at Apam; Amsterdam at Abandzi; St. Jago at Elmina; San Sebastian at Shama; Metal Cross at Dixcove; St. Anthony at Axim; Orange at Sekondi; Groot Fredericksborg at Princesstown; William (Lighthouse) at Cape Coast; William at Anomabu; Victoria at Cape Coast; Ussher at Usshertown, Accra; James at Jamestown, Accra and Apollonia at Beyin), four Forts partially in ruins (Amsterdam at Abandzi; English Fort at British Komenda; Batenstein at Butre; Prinzensten at Keta), four ruins with visible structures (Nassau at Mouri; Fredensborg at Old Ningo; Vredenburg at Dutch Komenda; Vernon at Prampram and Dorothea at Akwida) and two sites with traces of former fortifications (Fredericksborg at Amanful, Cape Coast and Augustaborg at Teshie, Accra).

The basic architectural design of the Forts was in the form of a large square or rectangle. The outer components consisted of four bastions/batteries or towers located at the corners, while the inner components consisted of buildings of two or three storeys with or without towers, in addition to an enclosure, courtyard or a spur. Many have been altered, during their use by successive European powers, and some survive only as ruins.

St. George’s d’Elmina Castle, built in 1482, is one of the oldest European buildings outside Europe, and the historic town of Elmina is believed to be the location of the first point of contact between Europeans and sub-Saharan Africans.

The castles and forts constituted for more than four centuries a kind of ‘shopping street’ of West Africa to which traders of Europe’s most important maritime nations came to exchange their goods for those of African traders, some of whom came from very far in the interior.

They can be seen as a unique “collective historical monument”: a monument not only to the evils of the slave trade, but also to nearly four centuries of pre-colonial Afro-European commerce on the basis of equality rather than on that of the colonial basis of inequality. They represent, significantly and emotively, the continuing history of European-African encounter over five centuries and the starting point of the African Diaspora.

It is noteworthy that the property is one of the very few inscribed exclusively on **Criterion (vi)**, recognizing that *"the Castles and Forts of Ghana shaped not only Ghana's history but that of the world over four centuries as the focus of first the gold trade and then the slave trade. They are a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora."*

1.2. Mission Terms of Reference

The full Terms of Reference document for the mission is provided in Annexe 8.2. This document indicates that the Mission Team shall:

1. Evaluate the overall state of conservation of each of the property's components, giving particular attention to the conditions of authenticity and integrity that make up its Outstanding Universal Value;
2. Assess all possible factors that are affecting the components that face or could face potential loss of the Outstanding Universal Value, and if preventive measures have been taken such as an action plan and time frame; in that regard, to the extent possible, the Mission Team shall seek to ascertain which attributes and components of the property have been compromised, including confirming which ones still exist (and in what state) or those that may have been lost overtime;
3. Give particular attention to threats stemming from implemented, ongoing or planned developmental projects and adaptive reuses at the components of the property that were, are or would be implemented without advice from the World Heritage Committee and Advisory Bodies, in terms of the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
4. As regards the need to clearly define the boundaries of the property's components and the respective buffer zones, examine the extent of the vulnerability this causes or may cause to the individual components and the property as a whole, such as lack of protection and urgent intervention, abandonment and neglect, incorrect interventions, encroachment, illegal developments, urban pressure, large scale investments surrounding the forts and castles, etc. which may threaten the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the property;
5. Assess the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission of 2019 as well as of Decision 43 COM 7B.106 of the World Heritage Committee, in particular:
 - a. the request to halt all restoration works and development projects, notably at St. George's Castle at Elmina and Fort Amsterdam at Abandze and the measures taken to address the various concerns, including;
 - b. the delineation of boundaries and a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes;
 - c. the review and update of the national heritage legislation that protects heritage, including World Heritage properties in Ghana, so as to align it to good practices and approaches in heritage management;
 - d. the progress made in the development and implementation of the Management Plan for the property, notably through the implementation of the International Assistance;
 - e. The creation of a centralised database covering the 28 components as a platform to be physically and digitally accessed and consulted by GMMB staff. This database is expected to improve monitoring and decision-making regarding conservation of the property;
 - f. the development and implementation of capacity building for the GMMB staff and designated site managers.

1.3. Mission Team

The Mission Team was composed of:

- Ms Mariana CORREIA (ICOMOS)
- Mr Thabo KGOMOMMU (ICCROM)
- Mr David STEHL (UNESCO, World Heritage Centre)

Additional information on the Mission Team members and accompanying Ghanaian counterparts is provided in Annexe 8.3. and 8.5.

1.4. Mission Programme

The Reactive Monitoring Mission was carried out from 1 to 11 February 2020 and included the visit of all 28 components of the World Heritage property within 9 days, as well as meetings with various stakeholders at the national level in Accra. The team was also able to meet with local stakeholders, mainly caretakers, and in some cases also local Chiefs.

The full mission programme and itinerary can be found in Annexe 8.4.

1.5. Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee

The World Heritage Committee has examined the state of conservation of the property three times since its inscription in 1979 as a World Heritage property: in 1996, in 1998, and more recently, in 2019.

Three main areas of threats were identified and are still accurate: (1) environmental pressures; (2) lack of buffer zones and development pressure; and (3) lack of adequate funding for a regular maintenance and conservation of the property's components. These factors that had been considered to be resolved in 1998, are unfortunately still or again of concern today. Taking into account earlier reports of 1996 and 1998, the most recent SOC report of 2019 highlighted the following factors affecting the property: erosion and siltation/deposition, housing, management systems/management plan, water (rain/water table), wind, and other threats such as the salt-laden atmosphere.

It is important to highlight the State Party's endeavours to improve/maintain the state of conservation of the property's components, for example, through the development of a management plan, the projects for Fort Amsterdam or St. George's Castle in Elmina, and institutional initiatives such as the creation of a National Heritage Committee. However, the main issues identified in 2019 are causing – and have been causing over a prolonged period of time already – accelerated degradation of the various components whose integrity is also threatened by a lack of buffer zones and subsequent protection, and consequently possible future large-scale development projects and increasing urban pressure.



2. PREVIOUS MISSIONS AND WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE DECISIONS

In the 41 years since its inscription on the World Heritage List in 1979, the property "Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions" had never received a Reactive Monitoring mission, nor an Advisory mission. The 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission, which is the subject of the present report, is the first of its kind to the property following the first Advisory mission conducted in 2019. The number of SOC reports examined by the World Heritage Committee is similarly low, with only three occasions on which this occurred, including the one presented to the Committee in 2019. The Mission Team also noted that the Committee decisions regarding this property were in the main not implemented and not monitored. Evidently, it is notable that since inscription of the property on the World Heritage List over four decades ago, there were too few occasions in which the state of conservation of the property was monitored and assessed.

Based on what the Mission Team was able to observe during the 9-day long visit of the 28 components, the several conservation issues and the progressive decay overtime or punctual events throughout the past decades would have warranted an intervention by the World Heritage Committee – or, in its early years, by its Bureau – if the issues had been more urgently brought to its attention, for example through the activation of the Reactive Monitoring process and a more regular state of conservation reporting to the Committee¹.

For example, as early as 1980, one year after the property's inscription, the ocean devastated Fort Prinzenstein at Keta, dragging a considerable proportion of that component into the sea. It was only 16 years later, in the first state of conservation report, that it was recognised that Fort Prinzenstein was threatened with encroachment by the sea. Another 14 years later, when the Committee adopted the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) for the property at its 36th session (St. Petersburg, 2012), the statement on its integrity recognised that "*some of the ruins are susceptible to wave action. The sea has attacked a major part of Fort Prinzenstein, but its protection has been enhanced by the construction of a sea defence wall, and efforts are being made to stabilise the remaining parts.*" (Decision **36 COM 8E**). While the sea defence wall has indeed been erected with riprap, there appears to be no clear record of what was actually destroyed by the ocean, and what remains of the Fort is today in serious condition despite commendable efforts by the caretaker with limited means at their disposal.

Another example would be Fort Metal Cross at Dixcove, which, in 2001, was transformed into a hotel/Bed and Breakfast, including the construction of a swimming pool, visitor lodges, decorations made of cement in the style of ancient Roman ruins, and even the installation of amenities such as a private bathtub on the roof of the Fort. This project benefited from the support of the GMMB at the time and was formalised through a Lease Agreement signed with a foreign investor, evidently with the good intention to seize the opportunity of providing support to the development of a local tourism economy. In the absence of a buffer zone and corresponding local by-laws, there was no evident basis to perceive this project as an almost irreversible encroachment on that component. The numerous conflicts between the investor and the local community that subsequently followed were the subjects of some media attention, however it was not brought to the attention of the World Heritage Centre or the World Heritage Committee.

It was not until the Elmina Heritage Bay project was brought to the attention of the World Heritage Centre in 2018 after the approval by the Committee of the International Assistance Request for the preparation of a management plan for the property (Decision 42 COM 13) that an Advisory Mission was envisaged and finally carried out in May 2019.

¹ Reactive Monitoring, as it exists today, was only established progressively over time and was not activated for this property in the first decades following its inscription.

With regard to reporting, when examining the property's state of conservation in 1996, 1998 and 2019, the World Heritage Committee's decisions can be summarised as follows (the full decision texts are presented in Annexe 8.7.):

a) Decision: CONF 202 IV.7 (Mérida, 1996)

In 1996, the Bureau congratulated the Government of Ghana for its efforts in mobilising international assistance for the establishment of a Castles Maintenance Trust Fund. It also commended the current major conservation programme in Elmina and Cape Coast that should have served as a model for the conservation of the Castle of Osu, Accra². It also recommended that protective action be taken to identify the buffer zones and protect the other coastal forts most at risk, and that special attention be paid to the project financed by World Heritage Fund: Fort Prinzenstein at Keta.

b) Decision: CONF 203 VII.35 (Kyoto, 1998)

Two years later, the Committee recognised the sites as protected monuments in the custody of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), with the exception of James Fort, Accra and Fort William, Anomabu, which were then still being used as prisons. Despite periodic inspections of the components and major conservation works carried out from 1992 to 1997 on Cape Coast Castle, St. George's Castle, and Fort St. Jago both in Elmina within the scope of the Historic Preservation component of the "Central Region Integrated Development Programme", funded by UNDP and USAID, it was stressed that regular maintenance and conservation were severely affected by the limited financial resources of the GMMB.

Recognising environmental pressure, lack of buffer zones and development pressure, as well as a lack of adequate funding for the regular maintenance and conservation of the site's as the main threats they face, the Committee:

- Urged the national authorities to ensure that all the Forts listed as World Heritage are not used for unrelated purposes such as prisons and that their World Heritage values are preserved;
- Recommended that priority should be given to sustainable conservation and not to the repurposing of buildings for tourism purposes;
- Recommended that action be taken to urgently define buffer zones around the properties, as well as other protective measures to stop further environmental degradation of the areas in the direct vicinity of the World Heritage sites;
- Recommended that the national authorities in Ghana submit an Emergency Assistance request with regard to the urgent conservation works on some of the Forts;
- Encouraged the authorities to implement awareness building activities amongst the population.

c) Decision: 43 COM 7B.106 (Baku, 2019)

In 2019, finally, one year after having approved funding under the International Assistance programme for the preparation of the property's first ever Management Plan, the Committee took note of the fact that an Advisory mission to seven property components was carried out, and examined the first SOC report on the property in 21 years. The Committee:

- Requested the State Party to ensure that the proposed Management Plan consider the current lack of effective site management for the majority of the property's components, as well as identified threats;

² Elmina, Cape Coast and Osu (Accra) host the only components classified as "Castles": St. George's Castle at Elmina (popularly known as Elmina Castle), Cape Coast Castle and Christiansborg Castle (popularly known also as "Osu Castle"). As pointed out by Albert van Dantzig, these castles are "the former headquarters of respectively the Portuguese (later of the Dutch), the British and the Danes." (1980, p. vii)

- Reiterated its request to the State Party to progress, as a matter of urgency, with the delineation of a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes;
- Welcomed the State Party's invitation of a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to assess restoration works and development projects at St. George's Castle at Elmina and Fort Amsterdam, and also requested the State Party to halt all projects until the recommendations of the mission had been addressed;
- Took note of the recommendations of the 2019 Advisory mission and invited the State Party to start implementing them with no delay;
- Further requested the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in early 2020, to assess the state of conservation of all the components of the property and the potential threats they are facing, the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory mission, and progress in the delineation and protection of buffer zones and preparation of the Management Plan;

Finally, the Committee requested the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 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 44th session, in 2020. That 2020 SOC report was submitted to the World Heritage Centre during this Reactive Monitoring mission and could therefore be considered by the Mission Team before most of the site visits.

MUSEUM

3. NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

3.1. Protected area legislation

The 28 components of the Forts and Castles World Heritage property are protected monuments under the custody of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) in terms of the National Liberation Council Decree (NLCD) 387 of 1969, (now known as Act 387 of 1969), which was further strengthened by the Executive Instrument (E.I.) 42 of 1972 and 29 of 1973. Act 387 of 1969 has provisions for the control of antiquities, establishing and defining the functions of the governing board and regulations necessary for the protection of the antiquities. Executive Instrument 29 of 1973 addresses the export of antiquities, the sale of antiquities and management of national monuments, while Executive Instrument of 42 of 1972 provides the framework for establishing the list of national monuments. Overall, and under the ambit of these national laws, GMMB is responsible for managing all movable and immovable heritage in Ghana, establishing and managing museums, maintaining a National Register for cultural heritage, declaration of national monuments, structures, objects and sites of historical and cultural significance and promoting the sustainable use of the heritage. As a World Heritage property, the Forts and Castles of Ghana are subject to the obligations arising from the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the related Operational Guidelines on its implementation. However, the 1972 World Heritage Convention is yet to be formally recognised in the statutes of the national heritage laws or bridged through a by-law.

The Mission Team noted that the State Party has commenced a process of developing a new national heritage law. The Mission Team established that the process had started more than two years ago and it is now with the office of the Minister. The draft legislation still needs to be submitted for review by the Justice Ministry and the Attorney General's Office. Then it will go onto a parliamentary process starting with the select Committee before final adoption by the Parliament. The State Party did not commit to timeframes for the processes to be completed. A copy of the draft legislation was not shared with the Mission Team, resulting in the Mission Team not being able to assess whether the draft legislation goes far enough in addressing the weaknesses of the current heritage law. Among the key weaknesses in the current legislation is lack of alignment with the Environmental Protection Agency Act of 1994 (Act 490) which governs environmental impact assessments. This is demonstrated by the fact that the Environmental Protection Agency is able to grant development authorization without considering heritage impacts or consulting with GMMB on developments affecting cultural heritage. The Mission Team noted with concern the apparent lack of urgency displayed by the State Party towards getting a new national heritage legislation in place.

3.2. Institutional framework

GMMB, as a government department, reports to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and is administered using a centralised institutional framework, in which Heads of Departments for both Museums and Monuments Divisions are stationed at the Head Office in Accra. These Divisional Heads are supported by staff appointed in various capacities (such as site managers, architects, artisans, tour guides, security, etc.) to manage specific regions of the country and sites. Decision-making regarding conservation, research, interpretation, sustainable development, local community involvement and operations for the Forts and Castles is thus centralised at GMMB Headquarters.

The 2019 Advisory Mission Team noted with concern that this institutional framework and governance approach was being adversely affected by the following issues: lack of properly and effectively coordinated conservation capacity (technical and expertise); lack of research and documentation of sites; lack of a database regarding the World Heritage property; lack of financial and human resources (also worsened by the inability of GMMB in retaining employees); among others. The GMMB has also

been affected by a high staff turnover, which resulted in poor institutional memory and information management.

The Mission Team noted that the status of the Forts and Castles as a World Heritage property, until now was not taken into consideration or influenced by a decision-making process within and outside GMMB. The World Heritage property has been subjected to the same decision-making regime that is applied to any other heritage site under the GMMB. The 2019 Advisory Mission noted that there is no system for compliance with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, in particular the OUV based Heritage Impact Assessment process recommended by ICOMOS (see also: ICOMOS, 2011). This includes the absence of monitoring mechanisms to identify threats and avoid or mitigate them in advance, as a preventive strategy. This has resulted in ad hoc approaches and approval of developments at some sites constituting the Forts and Castles, without following a systematic and well-established procedure to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity, and integrity of the Forts and Castles are retained.

Examples of these problematic processes include St. George Castle, Fort Anthony and Metal Cross Fort and Fort Amsterdam where tourism projects and tourist parking lots were planned by the State Party to be implemented without being subjected to Impact Assessment processes and the provisions of the Operational Guidelines. The Mission Team also noted, with concern, the lack of cooperation between different State agencies. This was clearly demonstrated through the actions of the Ghana Tourism Authority that, despite a letter issued by the GMMB calling for the halting of the tourism development at Elmina, allowed the implementation of the paved parking lot without the required impact assessments, and the approval of the archaeological excavation team.

The Mission Team, through observation of conservation interventions at several components, as well as discussions with GMMB officials, confirmed the findings of the 2019 Advisory Mission team, which noted with concern that the State Party does not have guidelines or procedures to guide the management and conservation of the Forts and Castles, hence the varying approaches/methodology being used, resulting in conservation inconsistency, for instance relating to the conservation and restoration materials. The processes of deciding on conservation interventions within GMMB require urgent attention. Currently, decisions are left to individuals, and thus their decisions cannot be moderated. It is the view of the Mission Team that GMMB should establish a Technical Conservation and Scientific Council to be charged with assessing and advising appropriate conservation measures. The Mission Team reiterates the Advisory Mission's observation that a lack of resources (human and financial) has resulted in a serious level of neglect, as well as the progressive deterioration of certain components of the property. In some areas, this poses serious health and safety risks for both the staff and visitors. The situation needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency, especially in relation to the structural integrity of most components.

While national laws controlling the implementation of developments at a general level exist, including the requirement to comply with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) frameworks in Ghana, the GMMB does not have specific policies and regulations governing decision making on proposed developments at cultural heritage sites, including World Heritage properties.

The recent approval granted to the GMMB to recruit 60 new officials presents an important opportunity to make changes to the organisational structure. The GMMB should create positions, whose roles are deliberately defined by the objectives of World Heritage management. The structure should also be configured in a way that enables standard application of conservation decisions across all components of the World Heritage property. GMMB should also have integrated reporting arrangements across the divisions that are charged with decision making for the management of the various components. It is advisable that an office/position be created to monitor and report on conservation and other management decisions that affect the property.

3.3. Management

As the Advisory Mission already noted with concern, there is no structured and/or integrated processes for management planning within GMMB resulting in conservation, development and other management decisions being taken and implemented on an ad hoc basis. There are many role players within the State Party with direct and indirect interests in the property and its surroundings who, in the absence of integrated planning, take their own decisions and implement projects without due consideration of the World Heritage status of the property. Examples of this include the parking lot development at Fort Anthony and at St. George Castle, which were implemented by the Ghana Tourism Authority without consulting GMMB or carrying out impact assessments.

International assistance has been secured for the development of a Management Plan for the Forts and Castles. The State Party should use the management planning process to bring together all key role players into the planning process of developing an overarching management framework (guidelines and principles), site-specific plans, and ensuring linkages with other regional planning tools such as those of District Assemblies. The management planning process should assess all current and potential future threats and develop appropriate responses with clear roles and responsibilities for all affected role players. For example, District Assemblies have a clear responsibility regarding the issue of sanitation around the property's components and therefore actions related to improvement of sanitation should be clearly attributed to the District Assemblies.

In implementing the management planning process, GMMB should, as far as possible, identify and work with experts from Universities and other institutions (regional and international). The Integrated Management Plan should have an overarching framework and approach, to guide all site-specific actions. The Mission Team was unable to establish the state of conservation of the property at the different periods from inscription to date. It is therefore critical that the management planning process should also establish what the desired state of conservation should be for the property and set management targets for the attainment of that desired state. The Plan should also clearly define the human and financial resources required to deliver the set targets effectively.

The Mission Team also observed that because of the many challenges that the State Party faces due to decades of poor management of the property, the GMMB places too much reliance on the upcoming management process funded by the World Heritage Committee International Assistance allocation. In discussions with GMMB officials, it was clear that the management planning process is expected to address most of the problems that the property faces. Currently the GMMB seems to be overwhelmed by the myriad of challenges and is responding in an uncoordinated manner, thus creating a risk of making mistakes that may exacerbate their problems.

As part of the management planning process, the GMMB should undertake a strategic planning process that will enable them to address the challenges in a more structured manner with measurable targets and milestones. The Strategic Plan will enable GMMB to address those wider challenges, such as GMMB's organisational structure and financing arrangements faced by the organisation in general. These have an impact in the management of the property but cannot be addressed in the management plan of the property.

3.4. Response to the Recognition of Values under International Treaties and Programmes

The official UNESCO register informs that Ghana is party to 17 Conventions, Agreements and Protocols. The full list can be found on UNESCO's website at the following address:

<https://en.unesco.org/countries/ghana/conventions>.

While the 1972 World Heritage Convention was ratified by Ghana as early as 1975, all other major Conventions in the field of culture, with the exception of one¹, were only ratified by 20 January 2016, with a much greater time delay between the adoption of the respective Conventions and Ghana's ratification:

- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (Paris, 1970).
- Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (Paris, 2001).
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris, 2003).
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Paris, 2005).

The Mission Team would like to point out that each of these Conventions are, or can be, of particular significance to the safeguarding of the Forts and Castles, and that the State Party should clearly explore the linkages between all these conventions to create such synergies, including the activation of specific forms of support, such as international funds established under these conventions, as well as international cooperation that would allow contributing to, and therefore enhancing, the conservation, management and promotion of the property.

The pertinence of each of these Conventions, and the connections between them and the World Heritage Convention, can be roughly outlined as follows:

- The **1970 Convention**, often abbreviated as the Convention for the **fight against illicit trafficking of cultural objects**, is evidently of importance due to the considerable amount of cultural objects, already in museums, still to be discovered in the framework of archaeological excavations, or even as private collection items and property in Ghana or abroad. This convention provides the framework in which the identification, inventory, protection and valorisation of these objects can be ensured.
- The **2001 Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention** is also of importance, since all of the property's components are built on the coast either in immediate proximity of or in contact with the ocean, or only a few 100 metres away. The Forts and Castles served as trading posts with major maritime activities, and it stands to reason that the maritime areas in the immediate vicinity of the Forts and Castles may still host numerous archaeological remains that are testimonies of their history. This is important, in particular considering the role these trading posts played in the slave trade and considering the standard narrative of slaves leaving these fortresses through a "Door of No Return". From here, they were transported to ships waiting off the coast which would then leave on their long journeys. Therefore, when delineating the buffer zones for each of these components, it would be appropriate to include those areas reaching out into the ocean. This has precedent in the Historic Town of Grand-Bassam in Côte d'Ivoire, inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2012.
- With regard to the **2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**, it is important to bear in mind that the property has been inscribed exclusively based on Criterion (vi), which requires the property to be, among other things, associated with events or living traditions, ideas or beliefs. The Forts and Castles, having been "*the focus of first the gold trade and then the slave trade*", are recognised to be "*a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora*".² Much of that

¹ Ghana has not yet ratified the "1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict" and its two Protocols (of 1954 and 1999).

² At the time of inscription, the definition of that criterion requires that a nomination demonstrate that the property is "most importantly associated with ideas or beliefs, with events or with persons, of outstanding historical importance or significance". Having undergone several revisions, that criterion now requires a property "to be directly or tangibly associated

history, outside of academic debates, has found its way into local and collective memory and contributes, in varying degrees, to their cultural identities. It did indeed become increasingly clear during the Mission that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage must play a central role in the conservation and promotion of the property.

The Mission Team noted that several of the forts attract local communities for specific cultural purposes and functions, such as festivals or funerals. For example, many forts host either within, on the outer walls or in the immediate vicinity shrines that have a socio-cultural and religious function for the community³. Some forts also host festivals. The case of Fort Metal Cross in Dixcove is a particular example, as the Lease Agreement signed in March 2001 between the GMMB and the Leasee Robert A. Fidler even included the obligation "*to permit and welcome the local people of Dixcove to enter the Property in an orderly manner for a period of one day [per year] in order to Perform their annual Kundum Festival in accordance with the accepted Traditional rites and requirements*" (paragraph 8.d of that agreement). This passage somewhat echoes Article 13.d (ii) of the 2003 Convention that calls for States Parties to "adopt appropriate legal, technical, administrative and financial measures aimed at [...] ensuring access to the intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage".

Moreover, several forts and castles host a museum or exhibition space with a primary focus on the slave trade and on the history of the edifice, the site and the local community. However, the case of Fort Apollonia at Beyin shows that an exhibition within a fort can also focus exclusively on the local history and present-day culture (traditions, language, music, crafts, economy, etc.) as a conciliating counterbalance to the dominating discourse on slavery, considered by the paramount Chief to be entirely negative and detrimental to the perception he would like to see of the N'zeema community. St. George's Castle in Elmina or Cape Coast Castle also have an art market or shop that can promote and sell local craft traditions, therefore also contributing to the safeguarding of living heritage.

- Finally, one could also imagine more multi-purpose usages of the sites that could account for Ghana's implementation of the **2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**. Such usages could consist of cultural events and programmes, including art exhibitions, workshops and seminars, concerts, etc., but also educational programmes geared to the youth and artists through international exchanges and partnership events focusing on themes that connect with the sites, etc. That said, these forms of usages should ensure that any event should take care not to deny, deform, or trivialise the memory of the site.

with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance". However, the view that this criterion should (preferably) be used in conjunction with other criteria has been expressed by the Committee in the revised Operational Guidelines as from 1980.

³ The link between the property components and the existing shrines should be addressed and studied further; this could not be sufficiently addressed by the Mission Team as most components had already been visited when the importance of shrines was brought to the Mission Team's attention.



ENGLISH FORT (BRITISH KOMENDA)

4. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES / THREATS

4.1. Management Effectiveness

4.1.1. Absence of a National Cultural Heritage Inventory and poor information management

The Mission Team noted as previously raised by the 2019 Advisory Mission the absence of a national inventory on cultural heritage sites as expected of GMMB. Management of information has been generally poor resulting in the Mission Team being unable to make basic assessments and judgement calls on key issues related to the state of conservation of the property. The GMMB has not kept records of conservation issues and interventions carried out on the property's different components. There is also no information on the state of conservation of the property as at the time of nomination. As a result, the Mission Team was generally unable to establish the period by which most of the physical changes were implemented including whether some were before or after nomination.

The Mission Team therefore reiterates the Advisory Mission's request for a process that should establish the state of conservation for the 28 components. The development of the inventory should include compiling of documentation and information critical to the maintenance and restoration of the Forts and Castles. The State Party should attend to this process as a priority and should collaborate with Universities and independent experts who have worked on various components of the property over the last few decades and possess a wealth of information. This inventory should at first, be focused on the property and its components, but later on, it could expand to include other heritage sites in Ghana and be conceived in such way as to be used in combination with other inventories, for example of intangible heritage or cultural objects.

4.1.2. Lack of Human Resources Capacity

The GMMB has a very thin human resource establishment resulting in overstretched officials who are unable to keep up with the requirements of managing such a complex establishment hence the poor management of the World Heritage property. The officials currently working for GMMB have largely not been capacitated to manage the property as a World Heritage property, with most not being familiar with the 1972 World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines. The inadequacy of staffing is clearly demonstrated by the fact that a significant number of the property's components do not have caretakers. The caretakers are required to have multiple roles including addressing security, interpretation, cleaning, education, cashiers and sometimes conservation. This is an impossible task and the result is that the caretaker ends up playing the security and depending on the individual caretaker's level of enthusiasm also providing some interpretation. The caretakers do not receive regular training to be able to meet the expectations of the portfolios.

The few conservators and artisans working for GMMB are not familiar with conservation requirements for World Heritage properties, such as maintaining authenticity and integrity. Some of the conservation interventions they implement at the property's components compromise the property's authenticity. An example of this is the introduction of foreign material without justification in repairing some structures. The Mission Team also confirmed, as found by the Advisory Mission, that there is a serious lack of expertise and skills in GMMB, in areas such as archaeology, architectural conservation, tourism management among many others, despite the State Party training personnel via the regional programmes such as the Africa 2009, African Nomination Training Programmes (AWHF), among others. This is adversely affecting the management and conservation of the property. Though acknowledging the recent appointments, these are not sufficient given the magnitude of conservation work that needs to be implemented by the State Party. The State Party should consider appointing more architects, conservators, archaeologists, and historical engineers on the establishment, to ensure the effective

conservation and management of the property, including upskilling the current staff on conservation and the requirements of the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

The Mission Team was informed that 60 new positions for the GMMB have been approved by the country's Public Service Commission. It is crucial that the GMMB should undertake clear needs identification and prioritisation prior to the recruitment process before they start recruiting new staff, in order to ensure that the new recruitments address the glaring skills gap that is currently faced by the organisation. The State Party should clarify the timeframes for implementing the new appointments and how many of the new positions will directly benefit the property.

4.1.3. Insufficient financial support

The Mission Team confirmed as already observed by the Advisory Mission that GMMB is struggling to implement conservation activities at the property, due largely to insufficient budgetary allocation from Central Government. This situation has witnessed the State Party undertaking limited conservation activities with the support of donors. A Strategic Plan should be developed to address organisational funding and technical and human resource capacity development, among other things. The development of the Integrated Management Plan for the property should be linked to resourcing, in order to increase its chances of being successfully implemented.

The State Party indicated during discussions with the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture that the Cabinet has approved the hiring of new officials for the GMMB, as well as the establishment of a Culture and Heritage Fund. It is not clear however when the Fund will come into operation, how much funds will be allocated to the Fund and what percentage of those funds will be for the benefit of the GMMB in general, and the property in particular. The State Party should clarify how the Fund will benefit the property and also indicate the timeframes for the Fund to come into effect.

4.1.4. State Party processes for implementation of development projects and general stakeholder management

As already noted by the Advisory Mission, there is limited involvement of other stakeholders in the management of the property, resulting in missed opportunities as stakeholders or role players, who could bring value to conservation and management of the property, are not engaged. Such stakeholders include District Assemblies, Universities, Architectural Colleges, Tourism Sector (including the Ghana Tourism Authority, GTA), local communities, independent and individual cross-cutting experts, among many others. As already discovered through the 2019 Advisory Mission to the property, this Mission Team confirmed that the State Party does not have effective processes in place to decide on and approve projects in and around the property. There is no consistency in implementing authorisations through environmental impact assessments or heritage impact assessments. There is no coordination between different State Party role players involved in decision-making (GMMB, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), District Assemblies, Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), etc). The EPA can issue an environmental authorisation without consulting with GMMB. District Assemblies also do authorise development without consultation with either GMMB or EPA. Development projects are also carried out without compliance with paragraph 172 from the Operational Guidelines, which require the State Party to inform the World Heritage Centre at the early planning stages before irreversible decisions are taken.

A clear demonstration of the ineffectiveness of State Party processes is the development around St. George Castle. Following the Committee's decision requesting the State Party to halt the developments, GMMB issued a letter requesting work stoppage. Although the GTA stopped the Tourist development project, it continued implementing the paved parking lot, without informing the GMMB.

Land around most of the forts belongs to the traditional chiefs, who can sell to any developer without first consulting with GMMB. The chiefs need to be engaged and the roles and responsibilities of the chiefs versus that of the GMMB should be clarified.

Until recently, GMMB had not engaged with District Assemblies in management of the property's components. In discussions with GMMB officials, it was clear that the lack of engagement with the District Assemblies resulted in missed opportunities, for instance on issues like improved sanitation around the property's components. District Assemblies are responsible for bylaws and they could assist the GMMB with improving sanitation through bylaw enforcement. District Assemblies could also play a role in regulating the size/ heights of buildings authorised for construction near the property's components, thus improving view shed/ vistas protection.

The GMMB should consider putting in place a structured process for various government agencies involved in making decisions (including development) that affect the property and ensure regular interaction between GMMB and the affected agencies.

A stakeholder engagement framework is also desirable in order to improve relations and cooperation with the different stakeholders, for the betterment of property management.

4.1.5. Property boundaries and buffer zones

The Mission Team confirmed, as already observed by the Advisory Mission Report, that the property's components do not have defined boundaries and that none of them have buffer zones either. The State Party has considered the property's boundaries to be the outer walls of each castle and fort. This creates many problems, as the immediate areas surrounding the forts have tended to be treated as being outside of the property and therefore not subject to management attention and protection. The situation becomes more complicated when it comes to components that are ruins or traces of forts as neither the GMMB officials, nor communities living in and around the components, nor any other stakeholder is able to tell where the boundaries of such site begin and end.

The purpose of a buffer zone is to protect the World Heritage property, mainly from illegal construction, urban pressure, encroachment, etc. According with the Operational Guidelines, a buffer zone is:

"...an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. The area constituting the buffer zone should be determined in each case through appropriate mechanisms. Details on the size, characteristics and authorized uses of a buffer zone, as well as a map indicating the precise boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, should be provided in the nomination" (UNESCO-WHC, 2017, paragraph 104).

The Mission Team reiterates the request of the Advisory Mission Report that all the components should have a clear buffer zone to protect the property from pressures and threats. The State Party should also publish protective regulations and laws, and implement regular site inspections, to prevent new building in the property and those that are erected around the property without impact assessments and approval.

It is regrettable that the State Party has not defined the buffer zones as already requested by the World Heritage Committee in 1998 (CONF 203 VII.35). The State Party should define these buffer zones with urgency. Clear boundaries of each component should also be defined and made known to stakeholders. Once the boundaries and buffer zones are approved by the World Heritage Committee, the State Party should consider installing markers and site signage in the limits of the buffer zone and

core of the property, as well as put in place awareness strategies to inform local communities about these boundaries.

The Mission Team also discovered that the components listed in the original nomination differ from the components mentioned in the Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV). There is a new component (Fort Vernon) that was added in the RSOUV which was not in the original nomination. The Mission Team recommends that Fort Vernon be removed as a component of the property, in order to correct the error made during the development and adoption of the RSOUV. The Mission Team also noted that the site of the Fort Fredericksburg component has a new church building built on it with no traces of the fort. The site of Fort Augustaborg was also noted as having serious challenges. The bits of wall shown to the Mission Team seem to be traces of the fort that are now incorporated into people's houses. The GMMB is also not fully certain of the exact site of Fort Augustaborg, as they presented an open space a few hundred meters away from the wall traces to the Mission Team, which they suspected to be another potential site for the fort. The Mission Team recommends that the State Party conduct an assessment of the remains of Fort Fredericksburg and Fort Augustaborg, in order to establish if they still contribute to the OUV of the property.

The issue of buffer zones, raised in both the 1996 and 1998 decisions, was key for the protection of the property from encroachment that had already been identified as a threat at that stage. The State Party in the meantime, has not complied with the decision and no buffer zones have been designated, resulting in encroachment continuing unabated. The Mission Team had confirmed that buffer zones were never established and that the State Party is only now commencing with an exercise of designating buffer zones. The Mission Team calls on the Committee to request the State Party to delineate the buffer zones without any further delays.

4.1.6. Poor site presentation and interpretation

The property was inscribed exclusively on criterion (vi), the recognition of OUV therefore depends on the conservation of all attributes that tangibly communicate the intangible and "emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora". Interpretation is therefore key to the conservation and management of the property, and the Mission Team considers this a central challenge that the State Party needs to address with the utmost urgency.

From the beginning, it was rapidly clear that the property hardly has any markings, visitor notices or signage that identifies the components as being part of a World Heritage property. The Mission Team, in engagements with communities living in and around the property's components, gathered that the people living in those areas were not aware of the World Heritage status of the property. The general presentation of the property's components is in a very poor state with the immediate surroundings of most components and the inside of a few components affected by poor sanitation.

Very few components have physical interpretation and most of them are not identified as part of a World Heritage property. At some sites, visitors must rely on the caretaker to provide information on the site and its history, resulting in the quality of the visitor experience being dependent on the oral abilities of the caretaker. For the majority of components, no printed or written information is available. Instances were observed where visitors wandered through the buildings unaccompanied and unsupervised, as the caretaker was preoccupied with other activities, and with no proposed visiting itineraries at their disposal, potentially letting them access even unsecure and unsafe areas. This results in the visitor having no understanding of the different spaces they are exploring inside the forts and castles.

Most of the components present opportunities for good quality exhibitions that will enhance the visitor's experience and support the presentation of the attributes that gives the property its Outstanding Universal Value. Itineraries should be developed, which in several cases should include areas away from the main component, such as what appears to be old landing docks at Fort William

or James Fort, or the lighthouse island near Fort Metal Cross. The much-needed delineation of buffer zones is also necessary with regard to interpretation with attention that may be given to potentially still unexplored areas such as the two little islands off the shore of Fort Anthony that may have had a strategical importance in the past and where archaeological remains may be found.

The issue of insufficient and weak interpretation, however, should not come as a surprise to the State Party. Already in 2012, the National Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027) (NTDP) recognised:

"Interpretation at the sites is weak, where it exists at all. Although guides at the sites may be very knowledgeable and be able to provide information, this is only one of the methods, which should be available for visitors to learn more about the site and its history." (P. 81)

The importance to develop informational, directional and services signage¹ is also addressed in the NTDP (page 274), which affirms that *"there is a lack of tourism signage throughout Ghana including directional signs to tourist destinations and attractions, signs to tourist facilities and services and interpretation panels at attractions"* and calls for the government *"to formulate a tourism signage policy to develop a system based on international designs, general content and guidelines on standard symbols to be used around the country"*, making reference to recommendations and guidelines of UNWTO. Certainly, a good start was the installation, on 8 February 2020, of two signs at Cape Coast Castle and St. George's Castle displaying the official UNESCO Temple/World Heritage Convention logo with the name of the property and of the component. This had received financial support from the UNESCO-Accra Office and serves as a model for a unified main entrance signage, to be replicated at the other components.

The property also lacks a comprehensive and harmonised interpretation that encompasses all of the 28 components. The Mission Team noticed that, if information is provided on a specific site, it rarely refers to other components (rare exceptions are Cape Coast and St. George's Castle due to their proximity, or some of the components in the Western Region that are explained in the rather well presented exhibition in Fort Anthony, in Axim.

Visitors' reception facilities, as well as museum or exhibition spaces, and a minimum of amenities where basic services are provided (like a reception desk or office, parking spaces, also toilets and possibly some catering) must be an essential part of ensuring site interpretation and visitors reception. This is possible only if the use of a component for various purposes (Guesthouse or administrative use, for example) also includes promotion as a heritage site and tourist attraction. Simultaneous uses should be envisaged where this cannot be done within a site (where only ruins or traces are left), such facilities could be housed nearby.

At the time of this Mission, only 10 out of 28 components featured some form of exhibition space (or foresee to create one), such as full museum spaces, exhibition rooms, dungeons, or the presence of informational signage offering a visitor an itinerary through the site. Some sites at least offer the possibility to have a tour guide leading through the visit. The combination of Guest House and heritage site can also be useful, as it provides for both, site interpretation and local tourism economy. But such opportunities are hardly exploited – only three components are designated as Guesthouses (Fort Good Hope, Fort Groot Fredericksborg and Fort Metal Cross), but only Fort Good Hope was available for bookings, while Groot Fredericksborg was under renovation and Fort Metal Cross having suspended its services as a Guesthouse. Fort Patience is a fourth component that was undergoing development

¹ There are main three categories of tourism signs. Directional signs: designed to guide tourists along the most appropriate routes during a journey, particularly where destinations and attractions are difficult to find ; Services signs: indicating the locations of facilities and services including rest areas, information centres, restaurants, accommodation, entertainment centres, shopping areas, car parks, toilets, medical centres and so on ; Informational signs: providing information at the attraction or destination on the background, history and/or stories about the attraction or destination.

works to transform it into a Guesthouse, but no business plan was elaborated yet. However, this latter case raises questions, as the plan is to have the Guesthouse run as a business project by the GMMB, which is unusual.

Training of tour guides, or at least of caretakers, should also be envisaged. This should also include training not just on single components, but also on other components considering the possible itineraries that could be developed for visits of several sites.

Crucial for the reception of visitors are also the sanitary conditions in and around the components. As already indicated above (see 4.1.1), the cleanliness of the immediate components is in several cases dependent on the caretaker who seek to ensure fair site visiting conditions for tourists. Caretakers also address site interpretation, whereas Guest Houses would ensure maintenance and cleanliness mainly for catering, not interpretation purposes.

However, in numerous cases, the paths leading to the sites lack sanitary conditions and infrastructures. The absence of sewerage systems or waste management is a major problem in that regard. An updating addition to the NTDP in 2012 already recognised that *"the quality of the [tourism] resources suffer, generally, from poor standards of cleanliness and sanitation, particularly in public areas and from the effectiveness of some authorities, including the District Assemblies, to enforce planning control and guidance which has led to inappropriate development to the detriment of tourist resources"*.

Walking to and around several components can consequently hamper the visiting experience as visitors are discomforted by strong smells and areas polluted with plastic waste and sometimes, even used as open air toilets. Examples are Fort Victoria, Fort St. Jago and Fort William (Lighthouse). Access to sites can also lead over to beaches that are often used by the local communities as "toilets", as was the case at Fort William at Anomabu, notably the area around and leading to the remains of the old landing dock, or Fort Dorothea. The latter is interesting insofar as access to the immediate area around the ruins is restricted to local chiefs who use it as a cemetery; the local population is not allowed to enter. This translates into a visit without waste and smells (these, however, reappear as soon as one returns in the "public" area), allowing for visitors to benefit from a unique experience in a picturesque setting. This shows, in addition to the roles of District Assemblies, how important the implication and the authority of traditional leaders is. They must be central actors when addressing such long-standing practices and habits.

Some components must be accessed by walking through residential courtyards and small alleys (Fort Augustaborg, Fort Nassau, Fort Vredenburg, Fort Batenstein). Residents do not usually expect visitors to walk through and this could create a sentiment of awkwardness and discomfort for residents and visitors alike. There should be clearly designated paths in agreement with the local communities, when access to sites requires it, respecting the privacy of residents and ensuring the visitor's sentiment of being welcome, expected and invited. While it is not a strict requirement, it should be possible to access each component and ensure interpretation (through signage, an exhibition space, etc.), maintenance, etc. This would provide visiting opportunities that may also be an important incentive to ensure conservation, community engagement and economic development.

The scope of this challenge currently goes beyond the authority of the GMMB as this requires, like for the issue of delineating the buffer zones, concerted efforts and cooperation with Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), the lack of which is still hampering site interpretation, among other issues.² There must be an effort to assess how coordination between the Ministry and

² The NTDP (page 122) provides useful explanations to better understand the situation which seems to prevail: *"Sanitation and waste management require infrastructure such as landfills, treatment centres and sewerage, which is often lacking in rural and urban areas. The lack of waste management facilities is a major problem. As a consequence, illegal dumping of waste both on land and in the sea is a regular occurrence, including by tourism firms. A major constraint hampering the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to provide these facilities is the acquisition of land to build landfills and treatment centres. Often traditional rulers control land and they are not willing to allow landfills or treatment plants in*

the MMDAs can be improved, and they should evidently have a role to play in Tourism Management, which must also be a central element of the Management and Conservation Plan and its integrated Action Plan.

The fact that the portfolios of Cultural Heritage and Tourism are now placed under one Ministry, represented by the GMMB and the GTA respectively, should be a clear benefit and yield important synergies for the property. This is an improvement compared to when the NTDP was adopted³. Nevertheless, it still seems that more is to be done to ensure that coordination between these two agencies is more efficient and pursues the same objectives and a common vision.

GMMB should also work with other role players, notably **national and international Universities** (Departments of African studies, History, Anthropology, Archaeology, etc.) in identifying interpretation and presentation opportunities that can be implemented at the different components. A targeted education and awareness programme should also be considered for schools located near the forts and castles, as well as the communities living in and around the property's components.

A greater range of actors must be considered and mobilised when tackling this challenge of revamping and boosting interpretation. Indeed, there are many accommodation establishments, but also schools, clubs and associations, near most of the property's components who can be engaged and partnered with, to distribute information about the property through brochures and other forms of communication.

While the combined challenges of interpretation and sanitation evidently require substantial efforts and investments, it appears to be necessary to develop a fund mobilisation strategy to favour the development of sustainable local tourism economies with the objective to support and create livelihoods through the attraction of national and international tourists education and research programmes, as well as the development of cultural industries in a broader sense (see chapter 3.4 on the pertinence of UNESCO's different cultural Conventions), while respecting the conservation prerogatives. Indeed, the entire undertaking must be based on a vision and an approach that the conservation of the property represents a whole range of opportunities for local economic developments.

Moreover, important contributions to interpretation can be made at the international level. Ghana should consider engaging actively in UNESCO's Slave Route Project, which is currently in the process of developing new strategies in order to revitalise the programme and make it broader with an inclusive and integrated approach.

UNESCO's Executive Board at its 209th session⁴ reminded that over the past 25 years, this project has produced knowledge, developed scientific networks and accompanied and supported memorial initiatives on the theme of slavery. It is however recognised today that the issues surrounding the question of slavery and its consequences on contemporary societies have changed considerably and that new orientations and ambitions for the Project must be developed in order to respond better to these new challenges for the international community.

The Forts and Castles should position Ghana at the centre of these efforts that seek to broaden the scope, connect with new areas (such as cities and youth), and strengthen links with the General History of Africa (GHA) project. The aim is "to give [the project] new relevance to its positioning and broaden

their area. MMDDAs need to enforce environmental regulations that are prescribed by law and if possible, extend services to tourism firms to assist them to follow the regulations."

³ In 2012, the NTDP stated (page 81): "*The GMMB come under the administration of the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture and, in practice, there are limited formal linkages with the Ministry of Tourism and/or the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA). This lack of co-ordination reflects in, for example, the lack of any specific or consistent signage strategy, which could promote the sites that are available to the public.*

⁴ See Document 209 EX/5.I.F discussed by the 209th session of UNESCO's Executive Board (Paris, 29 June – 10 July 2020), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372741_eng

its impact in terms of history education, capacity-building, particularly for managers of memorial sites or museums, and the production and dissemination of new knowledge" on the theme of the Slave Routes.

Finally, the finalisation of the present report coincided with various events around the World, in particular in the United States of America, as well as in the United Kingdom, which have brought to light the necessity to readdress the history of the slave trade and of slavery, as well as the pressing need to address and intensify education and public awareness of these issues. The broad and intense public debate on the history and the responsibility for the events over the past 400 years (causing some to even label it a moment of reckoning, as expressed by the controversies in the USA and the UK on statues in public spaces that represent historical figures who were associated with the slave trade) shows how it is still important to enhance education and intercultural dialogue.

In this context, very often, attention is drawn to those places where these events happened, and the forts and castles of Ghana are primary and essential places where the material remnants of these events provide for the tangible settings that carry this emotive symbolism for which the property has been inscribed on the World Heritage List. More than just being an opportunity, the State Party may even consider it a duty to ensure that this property participates in this effort of education and intercultural dialogue, as this was already expressed in the declaration of 2019 as the "Year of the Return" and reiterated in the now ongoing initiative of "Beyond the Return".

Here again, the link to the Slave Route Project is relevant, and the aforementioned document of the Executive Board recognises the objective to broaden the project's scope of action, "in particular on issues relating to human rights, social inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-racism in contemporary societies and modern slavery."

The current context may also inspire concrete actions and funding opportunities, in particular from international partners, that would support all aspects of the conservation and promotion of the property and its components, as discussed throughout this report, with the objective to ensure that this heritage may sustainably play a central role in the understanding of history and in addressing the needs for dialogue and reconciliation, while also valorising the culture of today's local communities and responding to the requirements of sustainable development.

4.2. Nature and extent of threats to the property, taking into consideration the natural values for which the property was inscribed, and specific issues outlined by the WH Committee (TOR 3)

4.2.1. Urgent and immediate need for structural integrity

There is a need for urgent structural measures to address the consolidation of several forts' unstable walls, which can fall at any time. This is the case, for instance, at:

- a) Fort Vredenburg, in Dutch Komenda;
- b) Fort Fredensborg in Old Ningo;
- c) Fort Nassau in Mouri;
- d) English Fort, in British Komenda.



Figs. 1 to 4 – Structural instability of some of the walls in Fort Vredenburgh (Fig.1), Fort Fredensborg (Fig.2), Fort Nassau (Fig.3), and English Fort (Fig.4)

The instability of the remains in these forts and very fragile walls threaten the community that lives nearby, and especially the children that play close to the walls. As a prompt and proactive response to save lives, support posts should be installed to secure vulnerable walls and to address preventive action.



Figs. 5 to 8 – Structural instability in Fort Prinzenstein (Figs.5 & 6) and Fort Vernon (figs.7 & 8)

Several other forts are unstable and should also have urgent and immediate measures to prevent the fort to further collapse. Following structural support, a comprehensive physical condition assessment should be considered. This will contribute to the definition of procedures to consolidate the overall structure. The forts that are under immediate threat of collapsing are:

- a) Fort Prinzenstein, in Keta;
- b) Fort Vernon, in Prampram.



Figs.9 to 11 – The roof wooden structure is falling in the northwest and the ceiling in the northeast of Fort St. Jago, in Elmina.

It is also most important to address urgent consolidation of some parts of the forts that are falling. This is the case, for instance, in St. Jago in Elmina, where the wooden roof structure (figs.9 & 10), in the northwest of the fort, and the second-floor wooden ceiling (fig.11), in the northeast of the fort, are unstable. This can become a major threat for the life of caretakers and visitors/tourists.



Figs. 12 to 15 – In St. Jago Fort, the northwest bastion is sinking due to unstable ground.



Figs. 16 to 19 – In Fort Groot Fredericksborg, the southeast bastion (figs.16-18) and the southwest bastion (fig.19) are sinking.

Fig. 20 – In Fort Fredensborg, the roots inside the last wall are separating wall elements and damaging, beyond recovery.

In addition, several of the forts have their **bastion corners sinking**. This means that the structures at the angles of the forts (the most outward projected structures from the curtain walls of the fortresses) have their walls with major cracks due to foundations settlement. This happens due to foundations laying in **unstable soil** originating from:

- a) Deforestation of the area surrounding the forts, with subsequent decay of the roots or water infiltration, as in Fort Jago, in Elmina, but also in Fort Batenstein;
- b) Termites attacking roots buried underneath the bastions, as is the case of some of the bastions of Fort Groot Fredericksborg.

The cracks that were observed in the bastions of both forts evolved very fast, due to soil instability. Some parts of the forts are extremely vulnerable. They are already detached and may fall in the near future. Urgent preventive actions need to be addressed to avoid further damage in the impact of the attributes that contribute for the property's OUV.

In the case of Fort Fredensborg, the roots that grew inside the last remaining south wall, are separating the wall elements and damaging the overall wall structure, beyond recovery, which is well observed in fig. 20. This is happening also, in several of the walls of Fort Groot Fredericksborg.

4.2.2. Coastal Erosion

Coastal erosion affecting the base of several fort walls was observed in numerous components, as well as the erosion of exposed foundations. This was the case of Fort Vernon in Prampram (figs. 23 & 24), of Fort of Good Hope (fig.87), of Fort Amsterdam (fig.100), of Fort William in Anomabu (Fig.107), among several others.

Some decades ago, following the World Heritage listing of the 28 forts and castles from Ghana, the sea was so strong that two thirds of Fort Prinzenstein in Keta, were washed away. The sea had destroyed a wide part of the fort (more details in subchapter 5.1.1. Fort Prinzenstein in Keta). This can be well observed from figs. 54 to 56.



Figs. 21 & 22 – Sea erosion, removal of stones and exposed foundations are visible in English Fort (British Komenda).
 Figs. 23 & 24 – Erosion of the wall base and exposed foundations are also visible in Fort Vernon in Prampram.

Furthermore, due to **erosion**, and in some cases the collection of stones by the communities to build houses, such as in English Fort in British Komenda (see fig. 167 & 168), several stone layers disappeared or are dragged away from the Fort’s exterior walls.

4.2.3. Illegal construction

Inside the World Heritage forts, illegal construction was built without GMMB authorization. This was the case for instance in Fort Metal Cross, where a swimming pool and Greek type cement columns were built near the fort, in order to entertain the guests. On the terrace rooftop of the fort, a bath tube was also built, which brought some impact to the local population. These illegal additions should be removed as they create a major disruption and change the overall perception of the fort’s OUV attributes.



Figs. 25 to 27 – A swimming pool, roman style cement columns, and a bath tube were built in and around Metal Cross Fort.

In James Fort, several cement block walls were built on the top of the original structure (figs.28 & 29), which interferes with the OUV attributes of the fort. In Fort Nassau (fig.30), and in Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda), besides encroachment, the last surviving walls of the fort are surrounded by illegal construction. In Fort Prinzenstein, cement buildings and even open showers (figs.31 & 32) were observed in the east side, built against the fort walls. Fort Prinzenstein also has on its rooftop, cement structures built during the last decades (and now abandoned), as it can be observed in fig.31. It can be also observed a white limed-wash cement building on the top of English Fort (British Komenda). In Fort Orange, during the XX century, several additions built in cement blocks were widely added to the original structure. In Fort Apollonia, a concrete structure was built next to the Fort, to hold the water tank that provides water to the fort.



Figs. 28 & 29 – Cement bricks were added to the walls of Fort James.



Figs. 30 to 32 – Illegal construction was built around Fort Nassau (fig.30), and Fort Prinzenstein (figs.31 & 32).

All the new parts that were previously mentioned were added to James Fort, Ussher Fort, Fort Prinzenstein, Fort Nassau, Fort William, St. George Castle in Elmina, English Fort (British Komenda), Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda), Fort Orange, and Fort Apollonia. These additions should be removed to the extent possible, without endangering the original elements.

4.2.4. Urban pressure

Urban pressure has been a rising threat especially when urban centres grow around the historical forts. This was observed in several different components, such as:

- a) Fort Orange in Sekondi, with new buildings erected too close to the fort (fig.33);
- b) Fort Metal Cross, with high-rise buildings and restaurants near the fort (figs.34 & 35);
- c) Ussher Fort in Ussherstown, with a 7th floor glass building built close to the fort;
- d) St. George Castle in Elmina, with a concrete market being built near the castle;
- e) Fort Amsterdam, with several new constructions being erected around the fort.



Figs. 33 to 35 - Urban pressure is increasing around Fort Orange (fig. 33) and around Fort Metal Cross (figs. 34 & 35), through high-rise buildings and new concrete houses (fig. 34), and a new open-air restaurant (fig. 35).

4.2.5. Encroachment

Encroachment was detected in several World Heritage components. In some cases, it was about shelters built for daily selling of food (figs.36 & 37); in other cases it was detected that areas around the components were used for storage (fig.38), or for shelters firstly built with non-lasting materials (as wood and metal sheeting), and then, through time were replaced by cement blocks or concrete houses. These intrusions were built too close to the listed forts and castles. This was the case, for instance, in Fort Vernon (fig. 36), in English Fort (English Komenda) (fig. 37), in Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda), in Fort Amsterdam, in Fort Ussher, in James Fort (fig.38), among several others. The State Party will not be able to prevent encroachment effectively until they clearly define and make known the boundaries and the buffer zones of the property.



Figs. 36 & 37 – Encroachment in Fort Vernon and in English Fort (British Komenda)



Figs. 38 & 39 – Human pressure brought by daily encroachment, in James Fort, and around Fort Metal Cross.

4.2.6. Incorrect Interventions

Several incorrect interventions have occurred during the last decades. Most common are:

- a) Cement plaster that is now failing and cracking, can be observed in several forts. This is the case in Fort Groot Fredericksborg (fig. 44), in Fort of Good Hope (fig. 41), in Fort William in Anomabu. In Fort William and in St. George Castle in Elmina there are cement pavement in the terrace tops, which adds excessive weight to the original walls of the components.
- b) Introduction of modern materials, such as in the Fort Prinzenstein (fig. 42), and Fort Metal Cross.
- c) Introduction of new pavement, without addressing first archaeological excavations (figs. 45 & 46). The application of modern materials did not take into consideration their impact in the site. This was observed in St. George Castle in Elmina, on the paved parking lot, and in St. Anthony Fort in Axim, on the football field.



Fig. 40 – New additions, modern materials and even unintegrated sewer pipes were introduced in James Fort.

Fig. 41 – Use of cement plaster was applied in Fort of Good Hope, in Senya Beraku.

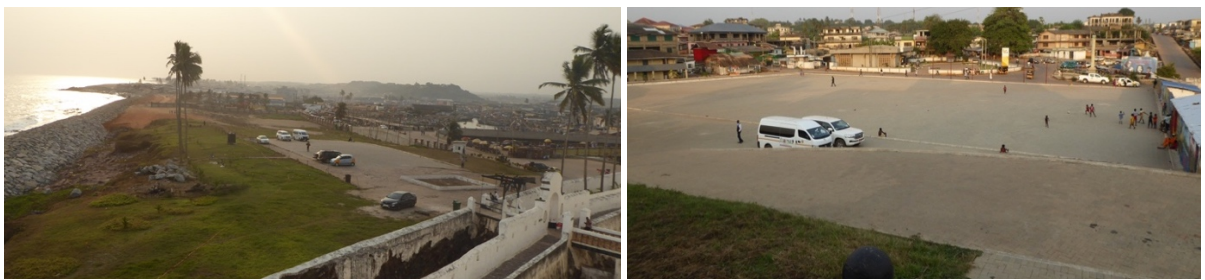
Cement plasters and cement pavement in some of the terraces should be removed to the extent possible, without endangering the original elements. This will contribute to stop degradation and negative impact on the attributes of the overall property.



Figs. 42 – Several new additions with modern materials were addressed in Fort Prinzenstein.

Fig. 43 – In Fort Vernon, the addition of a new building and the use of concrete and cement are quite visible.

Fig. 44 – In Fort Groot Fredericksborg, as in other forts, cement plasters were used during decades, and are now separating.



Figs. 45 & 46 – New pavement introduced in front of St. George Castle in Elmina (fig. 45) and of St. Anthony, in Axim (fig. 46).

4.2.7. Neglect and abandonment

Abandonment and neglect were observed in several forts, such as, in:

- a) Fort Prinzenstein in Keta. In spite of the caretaker's effort, the lack of maintenance resulted in a strong degradation and even neglect of the ruins following the fact that two thirds of the component were washed away by the sea (see fig. 52).
- b) Fort Ussher in Usshertown, where several rooms had to be closed down, following the strong rains from April 2019. As a result, roofs and ceilings are falling apart.
- c) Fort Vernon in Prampram. The fort is totally abandoned (as observed in figs. 50 & 51), and some rooms are even used as public toilets.
- d) Fort Victoria located in the middle of bushes with difficult access.
- e) Fort St. Jago where the lack of cleaning the gutters and the walls contributed for a higher degradation of the Fort.
- f) Fort Vernon is a clear example of total abandonment, which is perceived on the high damaged structure. Local population uses the fort for fishnets storage, to hang drying clothes, and as a public toilet.
- g) Fort William, in Anomabu looks abandoned due to lack of maintenance. The local library located on the second floor of the fort is abandoned and degraded, which does not help for the local community to consult or to borrow books.



Figs. 47 to 49 – Neglect on clearing out gutters; and lack of wall cleaning and wall lime wash at St. Jago Fort walls



Fig. 50 to 52 – Total neglect and abandonment of Fort Vernon (figs. 50 & 51) and neglect of the ruins of Fort Prinzenstein (fig.52).

In some cases, there has been such a long neglect and abandonment of the components that GMMB is not sure of the Fort's location. This is also due to lack of centralized GMMB documentation. The location of the forts, where there is some uncertainty, are:

- a) Fort Augustaborg, with two possible locations.
- b) Fort Fredericksborg, where there is no physical remain left to prove its existence.

In other cases, due to the high level of degradation, it can be perceived that during decades, there was a total **lack of maintenance from GMMB**, when addressing the Fort's preservation. This was the case of most of the forts and castles, except for Fort Good Hope, Fort Patience, Fort William, Cape Coast Castle, St. George of Elmina, Fort St. Jago, Fort San Sebastian, Fort Orange, and Fort St. Anthony.

Occasionally, it was observed that some caretakers, even without resources, do their best to clean the gutters, to remove weeds, etc. This was observed in Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Fort Amsterdam, in Fort Good Hope, and in Fort St. Jago. In other cases, some caretakers also address the interpretation of the sites, to better prepare the site visit for tourists. This was particularly impressive in Fort William. Other forts also have dedicated caretakers who present site interpretation, even with very little resources. This was observed in Fort Prinzenstein, and in Fort Apollonia, among several others.

4.2.8. Lack of sanitation

Several forts have no sanitation infrastructure, nor public toilets. As a result, local communities and visitors use the fort walls (as in the case of Fort Good Hope) or the fort surroundings, as in the case of Fort William, Fort William (lighthouse), Fort Dorothea, among others. It was also observed people using the interior spaces of the forts, as public toilet (as noticed in Fort Vernon). All of this has a negative impact on the visiting experience, due to the unsightly view and the strong smell, besides the lack of sanitation.



Fig. 53 to 56 – Fort exterior corners used as public toilet in Fort Good Hope (fig.53); interior space used as toilet in Fort Vernon (fig.54); existing toilets that are not working in Fort William (lighthouse) (fig.55); and open toilets in St. Jago in Elmina (fig.56).

In other cases, as in Fort Prinzenstein in Keta, it was observed people using the beach near the fort as a public toilet. In some other forts, public toilets did not work, so the sewer would not circulate. This was the case in Fort William (lighthouse) and Fort Orange, where bathrooms sanitation was not proper for use. Due to public health, a comprehensive approach needs to be developed towards sanitation infrastructure inside and around the forts.

4.2.9. Adaptive reuses of the property's components

The issue of adaptive reuse has come up, as a threat that requires closer consideration. The Mission Team observed and established that the State Party has not been able to maintain adequately the components of the property that are not being used, but also components that are being incorrectly used.

For example, in 1998, Fort James and Fort Ussher were actively being used as prisons. The ministry responsible for prisons was in charge of dealing with maintenance and general care of the forts. This allowed the forts to maintain a good structural integrity and, generally, a good state of conservation. That year, the Committee adopted Decision 22 COM VII.35, requiring the State Party to close down the prisons, a decision that was complied with by the State Party leaving the buildings under the care of GMMB, which did not have resources to carry out even basic maintenance. In a very short space of time, as happens with most unused buildings, the state of conservation of those forts started to deteriorate badly. The actual state of conservation of the affected forts is a direct consequence of the decision to close down the prisons, which did not give due consideration to the future use and maintenance of the forts. The resultant situation raises a question of how to approach the issue of adaptive reuse and use compatibility.

Also, of main concern is how some forts are still being used nowadays. This is the case of Metal Cross Fort on which an adaptive reuse from the tenant resulted in an abusive use of the fort. The tenant built around the fort, swimming pools, a concrete restaurant, several small buildings, without permission, according to GMMB, without following paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. These new infrastructures were built without Heritage Impact Assessments, just relying on the decision making of the tenant, which was clearly inconsistent with the preservation of the component's attributes. In other cases, as in Fort Good Hope, it was also perceived that the State Party rented the Fort to a tenant that sub-rents to other people. GMMB should have clear rules of what to do and not to do, within the components, and what are the consequences, if rules are broken.

The State Party could explore possibilities of getting different agencies and possibly private sector players to make use of the forts and castles, but in ways that would sustain the structural integrity, authenticity and the attributes that carries the OUV of each individual component, as well as the entire property.

4.2.10. Long-term stabilisation and intervention

Long-term stabilisation and intervention are needed in several forts and castles, following the identification of the different threats that impact the state of conservation of the property. In this concern, after careful analysis of the 28 components, it is fundamental to stabilise the structures followed by intervention (consolidation, conservation or restoration). The decision needs to be carefully considered, before developing the intervention project and submitting it for evaluation by the WHC and its Advisory Bodies, following paragraph 72 of the Operational Guidelines. In this concern, the forts and castles that need to have a long-term intervention strategy are:

- a) Fort Prinzenstein, in Keta – Several parts of the fort are falling which requires intervention strategies, through immediate and urgent structural consolidation, followed by long-term stabilisation and intervention in the fort.
- b) Fort Fredensborg, in Old Ningo – The remaining parts of the fort need to have a proper archaeological assessment, a structural consolidation of the different parts and a comprehensive interpretation strategy.
- c) Fort Vernon, in Prampram – The fort has multiple problems that need to be addressed. Careful analysis of its state needs to be considered, as well as being part or not of the World heritage listed property, before establishing a conservation strategy to the fort.
- d) Fort Augustaborg, in Teshie – Needs to have a careful identification of the different parts that constitute the fort, as well as a comprehensive research and analysis of the fort's authenticity and integrity, before protection and interpretation are addressed.
- e) Christiansborg Castle, in Osu – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be consolidated and original parts need to be identified, for a proper and truthful interpretation of the castle.
- f) Fort Ussher, in Usshertown – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally stabilised and a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- g) Fort James, in Jamestown – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally stabilised and a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- j) Fort Amsterdam, in Abandze – The fort needs to be consolidated. Intervention is already being addressed through a European Union project.
- k) Fort William, in Anomabu – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to have a long-term strategy established, in order for a comprehensive interpretation of the fort to be addressed.
- l) Fort Nassau, in Mouri – The remaining parts of the fort need to have a proper archaeological assessment, a structural consolidation of the different parts, removal of modern additions, and a comprehensive interpretation strategy.
- m) Fort William (Lighthouse) in Cape Coast – Due to its degradation, the fort needs to be repaired and restored, to offer proper conditions of living to the caretaker and a secure and safe experience to all the fort visitor's.
- n) Fort Victoria, in Cape Coast – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- o) St. George's Castle, in Elmina – The fort needs to have cement plaster and cement pavement removed, in the framework of a long-term sustainable strategy.
- p) Fort St. Jago, at Elmina – The fort needs to be urgently and structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.

- q) Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda) – The remaining parts of the fort need to have a proper archaeological assessment, a structural consolidation of the different parts, removal of modern additions, and a comprehensive interpretation strategy.
- r) English Fort (British Komenda) – The remaining parts of the fort need to have a proper archaeological assessment, a structural consolidation of the different parts, removal of modern additions, and a comprehensive interpretation strategy.
- s) Fort San Sebastian, in Shama – There are some parts of the fort that need repair and structural consolidation.
- t) Fort Orange, in Sekondi – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- u) Fort Batenstein, in Butre – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- w) Fort Metal Cross, in Dixcove – Due to several different incorrect interventions, the fort needs to be carefully assessed in terms of authenticity and integrity, and modern parts should be removed.
- v) Fort Dorothea, in Akwida – Due to its degradation and abandonment, some parts of the fort need to be structural consolidated. If well stabilised, other parts might be able to remain surrounded by tree roots, if a long-term consolidation plan is considered, as well as an interpretation strategy is established.
- x) Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Princess Town – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be immediately and urgently structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.
- y) Fort Apollonia, in Beyin – Due to its degradation and abandonment, the fort needs to be structurally consolidated and then, a long-term strategy of intervention needs to be addressed.

4.2.11. Development projects

During the last years, there has been a rising interest from foreigner investors on the World Heritage Forts and Castles from Ghana, or around the areas where they are located. Large scale projects are being prepare, which resulted on the request from the World Heritage Committee to halt all the restoration works and development projects. The development projects under consideration are:

- a) In James Fort, in Jamestown. There is a development information billboard close to the component presenting the “Jamestown Fishing Harbour Complex project” (from the Advisory Mission Report, see fig.12 & 13 in p.18, and 6.1.2 in p.43). The Harbour Complex will totally surround James Fort and will transform the traditional livelihoods of fishing communities around the site, as it will substitute the historic fishing port of Jamestown by a Chinese-backed mechanised factory (The Conversation, 2019).
- b) St George in Elmina. Requested by Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), a Tourism Development Project was being prepared since 2018, by ARCHXENUS Architectural firm. The project was being planned for the surroundings of the Castle of Saint George in Elmina. Two versions of the project were already presented. Following the Advisory mission, that took place in 28 April – 2 May 2019, the project was halted, until a formal request would be submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies. Nonetheless,

following the mission report, a paved parking lot was built in front of St. George Castle and all the archaeological area was planted with grass.

- c) Fort Amsterdam in Abandze. The Italian NGO “Ghana Fort Amsterdam ONLUS” and CLARICE ARCHITETTI ASSOCIATI, with the support of the Ghana Fort Amsterdam ONLUS Country Director Mr Daniel Ohene, developed the “REACTING project: Fort Amsterdam Restoration for the activation of Tourism in Ghana”. Under the European Development Fund and the programme “Promoting Local Economic Development in Ghana”, the project was submitted and approved to be funded by the European Union. Following several reunions and a technical report (Perucchio, 2019), highlighting the instability of some of the fort walls, as well as the Advisory Mission report calling attention for the possible threat to the attributes of Fort Amsterdam, works were halted by the NGO. As a result, the NGO prepared a consolidation project, which was submitted to the World Heritage Centre, by the State Party, and following paragraph 172, of the Operational Guidelines. At present, a technical review of the consolidation project is being addressed by ICOMOS.
- d) Groot Fredericksborg in Princess Town. According to GMMB, there was an investor interested to finance a development project of 100 million in the fort and in its surroundings (from the Advisory Mission Report, see 6.2.1 in p.44).

The numerous projects can be considered a threat to the property, especially as some of them do not take into consideration the preservation of the attributes that contribute for the OUV of the property. Nonetheless, the State Party should submit to the World Heritage Centre, a complete documentation of all the new projects or of the heritage interventions encompassing the components and their surroundings, as the buffer zones are still not implemented. This is very important to follow, as it complies with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, considering it may affect the OUV of the property.



Threats and factors - An overview by component

		Structural instability (see 4.2.1.)	Long-term stabilisation and intervention needed (see 4.2.10.)	Need for short-term repairs	Coastal erosion (see 4.2.2.)	Illegal construction (see 4.2.3.)	Incorrect interventions (see 4.2.6.)	Urban pressure (see 4.2.4.)	Encroachment (see 4.2.5.)	Neglect and abandonment (see 4.2.7.)	Poor or lack of sanitation (see 4.2.8.)	Adaptive reuses (see 4.2.9.)	Development projects (see 4.2.11.)	Need for interpretation strategy (see 4.1.6.)
	Fort Prinzenstein (Keta)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Fort Fredensborg (Old Ningo)	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x				x
	Fort Vernon (Prampram)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Fort Augustaborg (Teshie)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Christianborg Castle (Accra / Osu)	x	x	x	Partially		x			x		Admin. Offices		x
	Fort Ussher (Accra / Ussherstown)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		Admin. Offices	x	Partially
	Fort James (Accra / Jamestown)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x
	Fort Good Hope (Senya Beraku)			x	x		x	x	x	x		Guest house		x
	Fort Patience (Apam)			x	x	x	x		x	x		Guest house		x
	Fort Amsterdam (Abandze)	x	x	x	x			x	x	x			x	x
	Fort William (Anomabu)			x	x	x				x				Partially
	Fort Nassau (Mouri)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x				x
	Fort Fredericksburg (Amanful)					x	x	x	x	x				x
	Cape Coast Castle (Cape Coast)			x	x		x	x	x	Partially		Admin. Offices		Partially
	Fort William (Lighthouse) (Cape Coast)	x	x	x	x		x			x				x
	Fort Victoria (Cape Coast)	x	x	x	x		x			x				x
	St. George's Castle (Elmina)	x	x	x		x	x	x		Partially		Admin. Offices	x	Partially
	Fort St. Jago (Elmina)	x	x	x			x			x				x
	Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Fort English (British Komenda)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
	Fort San Sebastian (Shama)	x	x	x	x		x		x			Admin. Offices		x
	Fort Orange (Sekondi)	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		Admin. Offices (GPHA)		x
	Fort Batenstein (Butre)	x	x	x						x				x
	Fort Metal Cross (Dixcove)			x	x	x	x	x				Guest house		x
	Fort Dorothea (Akwindia)	x	x	x	x					x				x
	Fort Groot Fredericksborg (Princess Town)	x	x	x		x	x			x		Guest house	x	x
	Fort St. Anthony (Axim)			x			x	x	x	x				Partially
	Fort Apollonia (Beyin)			x	x	x	x		Partially	x				Partially

4.3. Positive or negative developments in the conservation of the property since the last report to the World Heritage Committee

The various issues relating to positive or negative developments in the conservation of the property over the past year are addressed in length in the various chapters of this report, and more elaborately in chapter 5.2. However, considering that for many years very little had been done for the conservation and promotion of the property, these recent developments were of particular interest as they can be a valuable barometer for the pace that the implementation of the World Heritage Convention is gaining.

Since the last report on the state of conservation over the property submitted to the World Heritage Committee in 2019, there have been several developments both, positive and negative ones, be it at the level of the GMMB, of the seven site components that had been visited by the 2019 Advisory Mission, or at some of the other components that had not been visited but that had developments occurring probably after the recommendations made by the Advisory Mission and the Decision of the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session.

As a brief reminder, in addition to the demand from the State Party to implement the 14 recommendations of the 2019 Advisory Mission, the Committee in its decision had focused its requests on the need to address the current lack of effective site management for the majority of the property's components and identified threats, the delineation (as a matter of urgency) of a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes, and the immediate need to halt all development projects until the recommendations of the Advisory Mission have been addressed.

The Mission Team can confirm that the State Party has taken the observations and recommendations of the 2019 Advisory Mission very much to heart and made substantial efforts to address them with awareness of their urgency. The major development projects in Elmina and at Fort Amsterdam have been halted insofar as the full scope of intervention has not been launched. The State Party also conducted an inspection mission, benefited from capacity building with the support of the UNESCO office in Accra, engaged in the establishment of a National Heritage Committee (with support under UNESCO's Participation Programme), and increased the staff of the GMMB by about 60 people in order to tackle these challenges.

However, no progress has been made with delineating the buffer zones of the components, including addressing the institutional obstacles stemming from the very limited authority of the Ministry on urban planning over the various District Assemblies. There are gaps in the necessary coordination between government agencies and institutions. This becomes apparent in the absence of progress made with regard to development projects that are very much out of the hands of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, notably the construction of fishing harbours, in particular the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex in Accra, but also at several other property components which must be addressed urgently with the relevant government agency and, if relevant, foreign investment partners. Another example is the construction of a large paved parking lot in front of Fort Anthony constructed in late 2019, which raises the same concerns as the one built at St. George's Castle in Elmina. This also shows that several issues identified during the Advisory Mission could have been addressed at other components not visited in 2019. The Mission Team therefore considers that one of the major challenges that must be tackled, as soon as possible, is to mobilize the government in its entirety around the urgent need to safeguard this heritage from decaying any further.

4.4. Information on any specific threat or damage to or loss of Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and/or authenticity for which the property was inscribed (TOR2)

All of the above-mentioned threats can be observed in varying combinations and degrees at each of the property's components. The accumulated impacts over 41 years since the inscription of the property of the World Heritage List, combined with an unsatisfactory response to the Decisions of the

World Heritage Committee in the past, reflect the complexity of the state of conservation as much as of the property itself. It is urgent that these combinations of threats and factors impacting each component be considered as one major threat to the OUV of the property that warrants the urgent implementation of the necessary actions recommended or suggested.

A major threat to begin with and which favours all those identified in this report, is the widespread lack of understanding, knowledge and perception of all the Forts and Castles, as one single World Heritage property, albeit serial, that calls for an integral approach to interpretation, conservation and management. This has to be integrated at all levels of the State Party, from the local communities all the way up to all government institutions, and even beyond to international partners that may support or participate in the framework of development projects. There needs to be a general awareness of the value of the property as a whole, and the political will to take the important measures to address all these threats at each component.

This generalized and shared understanding is crucial. In that context, it is an advantage that the attributes of OUV generally remain and can be enhanced through numerous means and supported by research and through various national and international programmes, such as the Slave Route project that would favour an even larger interpretation. Indeed, the inscription on the basis of criterion (vi) alone may seem limited at times, but in fact it allows for a broad array of possibilities to increasingly bring out those attributes that feed into the narrative on the property's OUV.

Regarding specific threats or damage impacting the World Heritage property, several threats were identified. The most common and emergent threats were presented in subchapter 4.2 "Nature and extent of threats to the property". These include: structural integrity of the forts and castles, coastal erosion, illegal construction, urban pressure, encroachment, incorrect interventions, neglect and abandonment, lack of sanitation, development projects, and adaptive reuses of the property's components. It was possible to recognise the different threats, as all the 28 components were visited and their state of conservation was assessed.

The most prominent threat was the structural instability existing in several of the forts, which in some cases, already damaged some parts of the components (as is the case of Fort Prizensten in Keta). In other cases, the structure is so unstable that might fall at any moment (as observed in some remains at Fort Nassau or Fort Fredensborg), or the cracks are so evident that some parts of the forts will rapidly evolve to detach from the component (as is the case of the edge of the southern bastion in Fort Groot Fredericksborg or of the western bastion in St. Jago).

It was also observed that the lack of research and interpretation, and the neglect and abandonment of most of the components resulted on the fact that some of the forts have lost entirely the attributes that hold the Outstanding Universal Value, their integrity and their authenticity for which those components were inscribed. This was the case of:

- a) Fort Fredericksborg in Amanful, as the site does not present any evidence or trace of the component (more detailed information in 5.13.);
- b) Fort Augustaborg, as the last remain walls were absorbed by local housing and very little evidence can be traced, besides GMMB is not sure if the supposed location of this fort is the original one (more detailed information in 5.1.4);
- c) Fort Vernon, as the building is falling apart and has many additions that have no relationship with the attributes of the property (more detailed information in 5.1.3).

The factors described above have over the past decades progressively damaged the physical fabric of the components thus creating potential danger to the OUV, which if not addressed as a matter of urgency may constitute ascertained danger that would warrant consideration of the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List in Danger, in conformity with paragraphs 178 and 179 of the Operational Guidelines.



FORT ST. ANTHONY (AXIM)

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

5.1. Evaluation of the overall state of conservation of each property component, giving particular attention to the conditions affecting OUV, integrity and/or authenticity, and protection of each component (TOR1 + TOR4)

The Mission Team succeeded in visiting all 28 components constituting the property within nine full days and more than 1500 km of road travel. The Team had the opportunity to obtain general information and impressions *in situ* which are summarised below. At each site, the Mission Team focused on the structural integrity of the Forts and Castles, the authenticity and general sense of place of the components, the impact of the absence of buffer zones, the existing or possible site and heritage interpretation (or lack thereof) stretching from the emotive feeling triggered by the place over signage to visitor's reception facilities and museums/exhibition spaces (where possible). During these visits, several hundreds of photographs had been taken that will be archived at the World Heritage Centre and will constitute probably, what is one of the most comprehensive and detailed illustrated overviews of the entire property to date.

This chapter gives brief accounts of each component presented in geographical order from east to west, starting with Fort Prinzenstein in Keta, near the border to Togo, to Fort Apollonia at Beyin less than 20km away from Côte d'Ivoire. The Mission Team also noted that available documentation on the property does not spell out the contribution of individual components to the OUV. This is a deficiency that should be remedied as soon as possible by the State Party, in order to contribute to better management of the property's attributes. Due to this information deficiency, the Mission Team could not comment on the contribution of individual components to the OUV.

5.1.1. Fort Prinzenstein, in Keta

Two thirds of the fort have been washed away by the ocean since inscription (as it can be observed in figs.54 to 56). Despite the rip rap sea defence about 40m away from the fort, the site still remains exposed to the threat of coastal erosion. The remaining part is highly deteriorated and needs structural consolidation, as well as restoration intervention, followed by regular future maintenance. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered high, but possible to address.



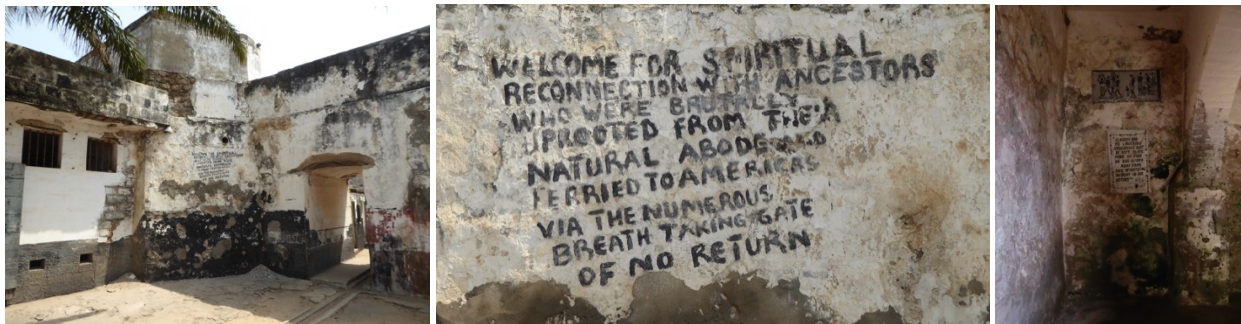
Figs. 57 to 59 – Google view of Fort Prinzenstein (fig.57); existing limits of the fort (fig.58); model of the original fort (fig.59).



Figs. 60 to 62 – Southwest view of Fort Prinzenstein (fig.60); south view of the fort with visible part missing (fig.61); and new arch against ancient wall with interpretation panels for visitor's information (fig.62).

There is some illegal construction in the north side of the fort (see figs. 31 and 32). When the fort was being used as a prison, some structures were built to house prison guards. There is an opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority. There are serious structural challenges that need to be addressed through urgent consolidation and repairs (as mentioned in subchapter 4.2.1. and also observed in figs. 5, 6, and 42). The local community led by the local chief takes care of the fort and addresses minimum maintenance and cleaning of the fort. GMMB provided some guidance to the community for the maintenance work.

Interpretation also needs to be addressed and further developed, however building on already existing elements and generally, a conscience of the history the site stands for. The local chief and the caretaker are available to receive visitors who can provide comments in a visitors' book (which shows that the site managed to attract respectable numbers of visitors throughout the years). The site has a designated "Museum" room which only has a tinkered model of the original fort (see fig.56) and has no information panels. A signage panel exists in front of the fort but does not indicate that the fort is part of a World Heritage property. The fort also features a "dungeon of no return", where visitors can view old chains and shackles fixed on the floor, and some panels provide some general information on the transatlantic slave trade (fig. 62).



Figs. 63 & 64 – Interpretation written by the caretakers on the wall of the north ancient bastion of Prinzenstein.

Fig. 65 - Original ancient dungeon with written explanation and graphic drawing contributing to the interpretation of the site.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component were impacted by the part of the fort that had been washed away. The remaining part of the fort still carries the values of authenticity and partial integrity but remains vulnerable to possible threats from the rising sea, as well as illegal construction in the north side, and accelerated deterioration due to lack of conservation and maintenance. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out further through improved site presentation and interpretation, as well as larger contextualisation, in order to enhance its intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.2. Fort Fredensborg, in Old Ningo

There are only traces of Fort Fredensborg left, consisting of two standing walls (figs. 64 & 65). The site looked very clean at the time of the Mission Team visit, being visibly cleared just before (see fig.63), which seems to have been carried out using heavy machinery/ graders. While done with good intentions, during this clearing process, archaeological evidence may have been damaged or lost as this exercise was not carried out under the supervision of GMMB archaeologists. This observation is corroborated by the comparison with photographs taken by the GMMB during the October 2019 inspection mission before the clearing of the vegetation on the site. Indeed, these show that a larger piece of masonry was located next to the major ruin element that has now disappeared. Also, the

cannons that were collected and deposited on the north side of the cleared camp (see fig. 66), were located earlier at various spots next to the remaining walls, although it can be questioned whether these locations were the cannons' original placements.



Figs. 66 to 69 – The only remains left from Fort Fredensborg, in Old Ningo.

The two remaining walls are structurally unstable, as can be observed in figs. 2, 67 & 68. There is an urgent need to consolidate the walls to prevent them from collapsing. The site does not have immediate encroachment and although it is regrettable that archaeological evidence may have been damaged, a site boundary and buffer zone can still be delineated. Both walls are also in great danger and can collapse at any time. Also, the construction of a sea defence which is planned for the near future can interfere with the reading of the few and ancient remaining traces.

Nevertheless, the site, which was already categorized as ruins "with large fragments still visible", can well contribute to the site interpretation of the property. Historic accounts do exist of its construction by the Danish in the first half of the 18th century, its role as a trading-station for slave traders, but also of its role in the Ashanti-Akim war¹. In addition to the development of signage, site interpretation can be enhanced by maintaining good conditions to receive visitors, training local tour guides, integrating the site in a visitors' itinerary that includes the other components in the area, as well as the creation of a local museum nearby that can relate the events that happened there.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component has been impaired by the recent site clearing, which appears to have destroyed archaeological evidence. Besides, the accelerated degradation of the ruins throughout the years, just left two barely standing walls, as physical remains of the fort. However, the collected cannons could contribute to the interpretation of the site but need to be protected. In its present state of conservation, the values of the property's OUV may no longer be fully supported by this component. The State Party should therefore seek to develop and enhance site presentation and interpretation, including through increased documentation and research, in order to allow for the component to better bring out and demonstrate the attributes of the property's OUV it carries.

5.1.3. Fort Vernon, in Prampram

This fort is completely run down by resident occupation and activities, such as fishing nets storage, clothes drying, etc. The building is falling apart in most areas and present a safety hazard to the community and to visitors (observed in figs. 7, 8, 23 & 24). The building is now made up of many additions that have no relationship with the attributes of the property (see figs. 43, 70, & 71). Next to the fort, there is also a wide artificial water channel that separates the fort from the community housing. The Mission Team also noted that Fort Vernon was not in the nomination dossier but was

¹ "This new fort, called 'Fredensborg', was quite well built and armed, but very soon it had to stand the test of its strength. In 1742 Akim was defeated by Ashanti, and Ashanti troops in that year attacked Ningo. The townspeople sought refuge in the fort, but it was too small to protect all of them, and many of those who had to stay outside were massacred. Fort Fredensborg remained a fairly important trading station, especially for slave traders, but after the abolition it soon decayed, and by 1835 only one man was stationed in the fort 'to maintain the flag'. When the British bought it in 1850 with the other Danish possessions, it was already in ruins. At present only a few fragments of its walls can be seen." (Van Dantzig, 1980, p. 57)

mentioned in the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, without any record of a boundary modification having been submitted and considered by the Committee.



Figs. 70 to 72 – In Fort Vernon, cement additions from previous years, were followed by prominent neglect (figs.70 & 71). Decayed foundations of Fort Vernon (fig.72).

With no remains or any evidence of the presence of the former fort, site interpretation is not possible as this is the case at most of the other components. On the Southside of the structure facing the ocean, some old foundations can be seen and that allegedly were part of the former fort (see figs. 23 & 24). However, these appear to be highly insufficient to qualify as a recognizable ruin with a minimum of integrity in order to provide proper site interpretation.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: Lack of structural integrity (figs.7 & 8), encroachment (fig. 36), incorrect interventions (fig. 43), neglect and abandonment (figs.50 to 52), are just some of the multiple factors and threats facing this component. No caregiver was identified, neither any local authority. The Mission Team found this component completely lacking any authenticity and integrity. The component does not contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The State Party should formally request the Committee to amend the RSOUV, in order to correct this error.

5.1.4. Fort Augustaborg, in Teshie

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. The bits of walls shown to the Mission Team, as traces of the fort, are now fully incorporated into people's houses (see figs. 70 to 72). The GMMB is also not fully certain of the exact site of Fort Augustaborg, as another open space was presented to the Mission Team, a few hundred meters away from the first visited wall traces. GMMB suspects that this second location, used today for communal gatherings and as a parking lot, might also be the former location of Fort Augustaborg, due to its designation by some people of the local community as "the place of the old building", some suspected traces of foundations, and the fact that old cannons are still there (see fig.73).



Figs. 73 to 76 – Traces from Fort Augustaborg (first possibility – figs.73 to 75, and second possibility – fig.76).

It must be noted that the residents now living at Augustaborg are aware of the place to be some sort of a heritage site and eager to receive visitors, but they were not aware of it being a component of a World Heritage property and also do not have formal ties with the GMMB. A sign above the access to the area with the wall traces welcomes visitors and shows old photographs of the fort, already in ruins.

Access to the site is difficult with no directional signage in place and leading through private properties. The area of the wall traces is insecure, part of the outer wall has collapsed, and the stones are still dispersed on the rocks below at the ocean shore. Visitors who adventure to visit this site have to accept unsanitary conditions on the rocks below and endure strong smells. The current visiting conditions and the largely impossible site interpretation are unlikely to draw attention to visitors who, coming from Accra, would have to cope also with an extremely long day trip for almost nothing to see.



Fig. 77 – Sign welcoming what is believed to be the entrance of Fort Augustaborg

Assessment of the component’s contribution to the property’s Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component have been impaired by the modern houses which incorporated the “traces” of the fort. The fact that the State Party considers two possible locations for Fort Augustaborg, further strengthens the argument that the fort's attributes cannot be identified, and that it retains neither its authenticity nor its integrity. In its present state of conservation, the values of the property’s OUV may no longer be fully supported by this component. The State Party should therefore seek to develop and enhance site presentation and interpretation, including through increased documentation and research, in order to allow for the component to better bring out and demonstrate the attributes of the property's OUV it carries.

5.1.5. Christiansborg Castle, in Osu

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. There are enough open spaces around the component presenting an opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component’s boundaries as a matter of priority, indicating clearly the original castle to be distinguished from the various additions. The component has for a long period been used as the seat of government and had as such been kept in a good state of conservation. However, since the government moved out, the component is beginning to look abandoned and is experiencing structural deterioration with several ceiling collapses observed by the Mission Team (fig.79), which had been intact in 2019.



Figs. 78 to 80 – Christiansborg Castle, in Osu has the front façade well kept, but the inside and the rear façades need intervention. In fig. 78, it is also well observed the signpost at the front of the Fort, not related with the site’s interpretation.

According to GMMB, the open spaces in the park areas of the component adjacent to the castle hold some archaeological evidence, as revealed by ongoing archaeological excavation. However, car wrecks have been dumped on the grounds, thus compromising the presentation of the component. The ongoing neglect makes the component vulnerable and should be contained urgently by finding alternative uses for the castle.

In terms of interpretation, it must be reminded that this component is one of only three castles, while all the others are Forts (or what is left of them) and played a major role as the former headquarters of the Danish presence. Also, being located in Accra but relatively spared so far from urban pressure and encroachment due to its long-time use as the seat of the government, today, in principle, it could become one of the most prominent landmarks in Accra to draw tourists, while being given a new and appropriate purpose (museum, cultural centre, etc.). Instead, no World Heritage related signage is in place, despite some visitors with tour guides. The only dominant sign is the one of the ECOWAS Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC). Important to mention is the fact that visitors are exposed to increased insecurity as the ceilings collapse, and the entire edifice seems to be left to deteriorate progressively. This is regrettable, considering also the huge potential of the entire area between the castle and the Independence Square to the west, where cultural development projects could be conceived respecting heritage conservation prerogatives, with recreational areas, such as parks for example, and various restauration services and facilities.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain present but could be threatened if the building is allowed to continue deteriorating, as some of the rooms (see fig. 79) and rear façades (see fig.80) are highly deteriorated. In some cases, it even threatens some parts of the structural integrity of the castle, as recalled by the Advisory Mission report (see p.19 of the report). The physical fabric, which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries can be enhanced through site presentation and interpretation. The values of the property's OUV are also supported by this component.

5.1.6. Ussher Fort, in Usshertown

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. The surroundings of the fort have been heavily developed with a number of high-rise buildings (as mentioned in p.16 from the Advisory Mission Report). A buffer zone is also needed to regulate the high-rise buildings that may still come up, as well as possible impact from the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex that is nearby. The fort was used as a prison for a considerably long period and has had many structural changes which already existed at the time of the property's nomination. Since, the closure of the prison, the fort has suffered rapid structural deterioration. Sections of the fort are in a relatively good state of conservation, as they are used as a museum and offices for the GMMB. Most of the original fort is still intact but there is an urgent need for structural consolidation and repairs.



Figs. 81 to 84 – Ussher Fort, in Usshertown is highly deteriorated and needs urgent intervention (figs.81 to 83). A wide signpost, at the entrance of the fort, doing publicity to a Beach Resort, also interferes with the site interpretation (fig.84).

Interpretation of the site is provided in particular through the slavery museum that is currently undergoing repair works on the roof, as well as conceptualization of a new exhibition scenario that aims to also present other forts and castles of the property that cannot be visited by visitors who won't leave Accra during their stay. The museum can be accessed without going through the old prison areas, and this part of the Fort is indeed in much better state of conservation than the rest. Depending on the nature of the interventions that will be chosen for the structures that are in disrepair, a number of new purposes can be envisaged for the site to better serve its interpretation, thus adding another destination for national and international visitors, but also for the local population of Accra.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain largely intact but could be threatened if conservation interventions are not carried out soon. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is mostly in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.7. James Fort, in Jamestown

The surroundings of the fort have been heavily developed with a number of high-rise buildings some of which are still under construction. On the seaside, the definition of a buffer zone should also include the opportunity exists to delineate an extended core area, by including an ancient landing dock that remains largely unnoticed to the point that the GMMB did not draw any attention to it during the mission. Moreover, the construction of the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex, to which the 2019 mission already alerted to, is launching in 2020 and no information on the project, as was requested by the 2019 mission, was provided. Judging from the model of the project displayed on the sign board at the top of the path leading down the harbour area, this project could significantly impact not just the visual integrity, but also imply the possible destruction of the old landing dock. The site could basically end up hidden and absorbed by this project. A buffer zone is also needed to regulate the high-rise buildings that may still come up.



Figs. 85 to 87 – Fort James, in Jamestown is highly deteriorated, and damage can be already observed.

The fort was used as a prison for a considerably long period and has had many structural changes. These structural changes were already introduced at the time of the property's nomination. Since the closure of the prison, the fort has suffered rapid structural deterioration and is currently looking abandoned. Considering the front entrance and the fortifications facing the ocean, major parts of the original fort are still intact but there is an urgent need for structural consolidation (see fig. 86) and repairs (see fig. 87).

In various respects, the site resembles the neighbouring Ussher Fort, except that there is no interpretation. Depending on the interventions that will hopefully be envisaged on the decaying structures inside the Fort, very development opportunities could potentially be introduced and ensure appropriate site interpretation for visitors, or also become an attraction point for the local population.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain largely intact but could be threatened if conservation interventions are not carried out soon. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place, but this could be seriously threatened by the construction of the Fishing Harbour Complex. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.8. Fort Good Hope, in Senya Beraku

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. The seaside area of the fort has not been encroached upon possibly owing to its inhabitable steep slope. There is an increasing risk of erosion that threatens the eastern and northern walls of the fort (see fig.87). The west and north-west sides of the component have been encroached upon all the way to the fort's outer walls (fig.85). The front of the fort is being used as an open parking area.



Figs. 88 to 91 – Encroachment (fig.88), cement plaster (fig.89), wall erosion (fig.90) and ancient dudgeons being used as storage (fig.91), can be observed in Fort Good Hope, in Senya Beraku.

Like other components, urban pressure in the fort's surrounding is a concern that may threaten the component if buffer zones are not designated. Although, it will be difficult to remove the structures and inhabitants who have encroached into the fort's immediate surroundings, it is still possible to designate a buffer zone for this component, which would address possible future high-rise buildings that may be necessitated by the urban pressure. The fort has several incorrect cement interventions (see figs. 41 & 89) that should be removed, before it damages the structure. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered low and possible to contain.

Interpretation could generally be ensured and enhanced, the site provides very good conditions to this end. The fort is currently used as a guest house, therefore already managed to receive visitor, mainly Ghanaians who come on weekends for specific events, like funerals. As was noted at other components, Fort Good Hope is a good example that shows that given a specific purpose and use, conservation is generally much better than in other components that are not used, although some improvements here should positively impact conservation, management and interpretation. At present, the dudgeons where the slaves were gathered, an important attribute for the OUV of the Fort, are improperly used as a storage for beverages (female dudgeon – fig.91) and as a living room for the caretaker family (male dudgeon). The proper use of the facilities to accommodate the caretaker and his family, as well as guests, should be worked out, while ensuring that the use as a private residence does not hamper the visiting experience when there are guests. With some investment, the GMMB could also envisage providing for a residence for the caretaker in the immediate vicinity of the Fort for which guest room and restaurant catering, as well as the installation of a small museum/exhibition space could be organised. Installation of signage and the development of a promotional concept could offer the opportunity for visitors to discover yet another site of the property and A stopover as part of an itinerary between Accra and Cape Coast or Elmina.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and do not face an immediate threat.

Although the component is currently being used as a guest house, the physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes remain fully in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.9. Fort Patience, in Apam

The fort was being lime-washed during the Mission Team visit (fig. 94). This was being done without addressing first, an archaeological and physical condition analysis of the fort, followed by the identification of the origin of pathologies and subsequent repair of the degradation and damage. Also, photo documentation of Fort Patience and its walls was not addressed before the whitewash. In the façades and inside walls, lime wash is being addressed before: (i) the cleaning of wall fungus, which is observed in several of the interior rooms (see fig. 95) and exterior walls; but also (ii) the fixing of structural problems existing in exterior walls (as seen in figs. 92 & 93). That is why regular maintenance could prevent from deterioration of structural impairment issues.



Figs. 92 to 96 – Lime wash at Fort Patience is hiding fungus on the walls and structural issues that need to be addressed.

It was also observed that workers were consolidating holes in the north wall's foundations (fig. 93), without cleaning first the growing vegetation and the roots detected in-between wall elements. The mortar being used during repair had 10% cement, 30% lime and 60% sand. More research needs to be addressed with Ghana universities, to identify the best type of lime and the right mortar mixture to use, when addressing repair and strengthening of historic structures facing salt damage, due to coast climate weather in specific hot climates, as in Ghana.

Besides, sewer and water pipes exposed in the fort walls (see fig.96) should be better addressed to avoid jeopardising visual integrity of the fort (this also happened in fort William – lighthouse, in Fort Orange, as well as other components). The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered moderate, but possible to contain.

Fort Patience, like the other components, does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. There has been some encroachment of residential structures on two sides of the fort. The area immediate to the outer walls of the fort still present opportunities to demarcate the core area. A buffer zone should also be delineated in order to protect the component from possible future high-rise buildings that may appear due to urban pressure.

Fort Patience is currently undergoing renovation works inside in order to transform it into a guest house, which would then be the second component used as a guest house near Fort Good Hope. The facilities also foresee the installation of a small museum which would ensure that the Fort can combine this development project for the local tourism economy with the need to ensure adequate interpretation. The particularity of the project is that it is planned as a GMMB-run Guest House, it therefore would not repeat the controversial experience of leasing the site to a private investor as was the case at Fort Metal Cross. As a government agency, the GMMB is not a for-profit organisation and it remains to be seen how future revenue from this business will be used at the local level, and how the promotion will be done in order to attract tourists and other visitors. Development of signage

and the scenario for a small exhibition will certainly be steps beneficial to the site. However, while the school at the fort's backside does not represent a greatly disturbing encroachment, the latrines made of bricks represent sanitary concerns that could also negatively impact the visiting experience of the site.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.10. Fort Amsterdam, in Abandze

The access to Fort Amsterdam is difficult and unsafe, as both ramp and cement steps are uneven and in very bad condition (as observed in figs. 97 to 99). Improvement of the access facilities need to be addressed, as soon as possible. The component has some walls that need structural consolidation and repairs (see figs. 101 to 103). Crack monitoring devices were incorporated in some of the fort walls to monitor the advance of vertical fissures (fig.100). Some small samples were also extracted from the fort walls for geotechnical analysis (fig.104).



Figs. 97 & 100 – Access to Fort Amsterdam in Abandze (figs.97, 98 & 99), and a crack monitor device to measure fissures (fig.100).

There is also vegetation growing on the walls of the component causing walls to crack. The vegetation should be removed as a priority and its removal should be sustained as part of regular maintenance. Fort Amsterdam continues to have encroachment and urban pressure in its immediate surroundings. This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered medium.



Figs. 101 to 104 – Need for structural consolidation in Fort Amsterdam (figs. 101 & 102), wall erosion (fig. 103) and a hole left by a drill when extracting soil for analysis (fig.104).

One of the major development projects that the 2019 Advisory Mission had addressed was the project entitled "REACTING – REstoration of fort Amsterdam for the ACTivation of Tourism IN Ghana", funded by the European Union with the objective to support the development of sustainable tourism in the coastal areas of Ghana, through the rehabilitation of Fort Amsterdam and the creation of a vocational training centre on tourism inside the Fort. The project was halted, as requested by the World Heritage

Committee, after concerns were expressed about reconstruction projects within the fort and about the structural integrity of the outer walls (see chapter 5.2). While that project will be revised in order to focus entirely on consolidation and the occasional training centre to be located elsewhere, it is yet to be clarified which concrete measures for the use of the Fort in its interpretation are foreseen. But it appears to be clear that this forward holds enormous potential as a heritage site that could greatly benefit a local tourism economy, in particular given its favourable location on the much-frequented road between Cape Coast and Accra.



Figs. 105 to 107 – Encroachment and urban pressure continues to grow near the fort. Visitor centre in one of the fort rooms.

Assessment of the component’s contribution to the property’s Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain present and not facing an immediate threat. There is a tourist room for visitors to rest and to buy local handicrafts (see fig. 107). The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation, in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property’s OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.11. Fort William, in Anomabu

Fort William looks abandoned and neglected (see figs. 108 to 110). Buildings have no glass in the windows, so interior rooms are exposed to the elements. Even the room where the library was located, presents very degraded walls and damaged books (fig. 111). In the interior rooms, several wooden pavements are in-danger to fall. Following the shutdown of the prison, the lack of use of the fort, resulted in a strong neglect of the fort maintenance. Recently, there was an attempt to stop material degradation, through the use of cement plaster (see fig. 109). However, the incorrect use of cement plaster in historical buildings constructed of stone and lime plaster, resulted later on material chunks to fall, dragging parts of the ancient wall material. The fort is also impacted by sea erosion, as observed in the east side of the fort (fig. 110). This resulted in missing stones from the wall base.



Figs. 108 to 111 – Interior terrace at Fort William (fig.108), inadequate cement plasters (fig.109), impact of the sea erosion in the East side of the building (fig.110), and abandoned library at the fort (fig.111).

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. The component has not been encroached presenting an opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component’s boundaries as a matter of priority. The fort has some

structural challenges that require urgent attention. The fort is generally not well maintained both inside and outside, thus undermining the site presentation. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered medium and possible to contain.

Fort William was in several respects a positive surprise to the Mission Team, as the caretaker is personally engaging considerably in ensuring that the site attracts tourists. With hardly any financial means at his disposal, he has developed a small exhibition in the entrance space of the Fort, displaying photographs related to the slave trade and containing conciliatory messages for visitors, especially to the African diaspora. The fort is also operating a small gift shop, and according to GMMB there are two shrines located in the dungeons. In addition to these efforts, the caretaker has also created a Facebook page dedicated to the presentation of the fort and he developed a small promotional leaflet.



Figs. 112 to 114 – Paintings and photos hung by Fort William caretaker. They bring a very strong emotional bond to the site.

There is consequently a lot of potential for very good site and enhanced interpretation, and the definition of a buffer zone will be important as there are additional structures, probably remains of landing docks located about 220m east of the fort, accessible across the beach. Unfortunately, visitors motivated to walk to this area must accept strong smells as the area is used by locals as an open-air public toilet. As these landing docks are very likely part of the component, it is necessary to address these sanitary issues as well.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain largely intact with some dungeons and exterior walls threatened by recently introduced concrete plastering (e.g., fig. 109). However, there is a need to establish strategies to slow down the rapid degradation of the fort. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance its intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.12. Fort Nassau, in Mouri

Of the former fort, only ruins remain with few walls standing (see figs. 115 & 118). These remains are almost entirely absorbed and incorporated by residential structures (see figs. 116 & 119) and a concrete building inside and over the component (see figs. 118 & 119). The component can be classified as abandoned. The few walls that remain are in a very poor state of conservation and facing collapse. Comprehensive archaeological research is needed, as pieces and elements are found abandoned around the site. Encroaching and urban pressure totally surround the last standing remains (see figs. 116 & 117). The degree of residential encroachment is such that this component may not be saved. The State Party needs to take some hard decisions on the future of the component as removal of squatters might be impossible to implement whilst the continued occupation guarantees eventual loss of the component. GMMB should look at whether any form of site boundaries is still possible, as this component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone.



Figs. 115 to 119 – View of the remain walls still standing in Fort Nassau (fig.115), urban pressure (fig.116), encroachment (fig.117), and a new concrete religious building that was erected touching the last remains of the fort archaeological walls (figs.118 & 119).

Nevertheless, the remaining ruins are similar to those of Fort Fredensburg at Old Ningo and hold interesting potential for site interpretation as "*today the ruins of the fort still show the vast quantities of Dutch brick used for building its walls*" (Van Dantzig, 1980, p. 13). It was from there that the Dutch launched their final assault on Elmina in 1637. But in view of the apparent irreversible encroachment, the restitution of some form of integrity and authenticity, coupled with the definition of a buffer zone and the securing of the remaining ruins and archaeological evidence, would require tremendous effort and investments. These would have to include strong and highly profitable incentives for the local population to clear these grounds which today are very difficult to access and can only be visited by inappropriately walking through private residential areas.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component has been impaired by residential encroachment and activities. The OUV attributes are considered impaired for this component as its sense of place, spirit and feeling has been compromised by mass squatter occupation. The component's contribution to the OUV may need to be assessed by the State Party with a view to establish and implement measures that can enhance its value to the property.

5.1.13. Fort Fredericksborg, in Amanful

The site where traces of the fort are supposed to be has no evidence of such traces. A new cement church building has been erected on the hill, where the fort supposedly stood (fig.121). The grounds have been disturbed over time for new constructions, making it unlikely that any archaeological studies will yield information that could be of any use. At present there are only a few rocks (see figs. 124 to 126), but no clear evidence of the fort existence could be observed. Urban pressure and construction continue (see fig. 122). A public toilet was erected just next to the church, to serve the local community (see fig. 123). The uncontrolled developments are rated very high and the site is considered lost.



Figs. 120 to 123 – Fort Fredricksborg location: difficult access to the site (fig.120); new building in the supposed site location (fig.121); urban pressure and construction being developed at the site (fig.122); public toilets at the site (fig.123).

Although historic sources indicate that Fort Fredricksborg was used by the Danish as their headquarters for a short period before being taken by the British who called it Fort Royal (Van Dantzig,

1980), there is strictly no visible trace left and it is obvious and evident that, in the absence of any attributes, site interpretation is impossible.



Figs. 124 to 126 – No remains were observed that could indicate the existence of Fort Fredricksborg at that location.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: Based on the site visit and the visual inspection of the component, its authenticity and integrity is non-existent and the values of the property's OUV are no longer visibly supported by this component. For it to remain listed as a component of the property, the State Party must develop and enhance site presentation and interpretation, including through increased documentation and research (archaeological excavations should be envisaged to that end), notably by developing a narrative that brings out the connection of the Fort with Cape Coast Castle, in order to allow for the property to better bring out and demonstrate the attributes of OUV it carries.

5.1.14. Cape Coast Castle, in Cape Coast

Cape Coast Castle is one of the few components regularly visited by school children (on their annual visits to relevant Ghana heritage) and by national and international tourists. Nonetheless, the castle is exposed to elements and lack of maintenance, resulted in a high deterioration of the exterior walls and interior rooms (see figs. 128 to 130). The deterioration is due to the growing of mould fungus that originate from high moisture and lack of air circulation. On the exterior walls, local caretakers have tried their best to maintain the site. However, limited resources and lack of capacity building of GMMB workers, resulted on the regular use of paint that might not be adequate for historical structures. This is the case, when instead of applying lime wash, a plastic based paint is used on walls, resulting in the peeling of the paint (see fig. 128). On the interior spaces, before applying any type of preventive protection, it is important to consider if the rooms are part of the interpretation circuit, as the way to address maintenance and the materials to be applied, would be different for an ancient slave dudgeon or for a room dedicated to local community handicraft selling or to the exhibition of art, as the three types of rooms are part of this component.



Figs. 127 to 130 – Encroachment near Cape Coast Castle (fig.127); occasional use of plastic paint instead of lime wash (fig.128); and interior rooms deterioration due to growing mould fungus originated from high moisture (figs.129 & 130). Historical dudgeons, where slaves were kept, should not be restored or limewashed. They should only be conserved, to avoid further deterioration.

Encroachment and urban pressure are also observed around Cape Coast Castle (fig. 127), with open spaces that offer opportunity for a buffer zone only available on the seaside. This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. A proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone are still possible to delineate, which should be addressed by GMMB, as a matter of priority. The component is structurally in a good condition and does not face any immediate threats.

Cape Coast Castle is, together with Saint George's Castle in Elmina, the best preserved and the most visited tourist attraction In Ghana. The Castle fulfils pretty much all the requirements for proper site interpretation, despite certain improvements that could be made in terms of better signage but also a more inclusive presentation of the component together with the two other components present in Cape Coast. All in all, site interpretation is satisfactory, and visitors can visit not only the Castle and its museum, but also purchase local craft items at the artisan market that is located in the smaller inner court in the Castle's western section. The castle also hosts a children's library as well as GMMB offices, which gives it additional purpose.



Figs. 131 to 134 – Photos, paintings, documents and ship recreation to present castles and forts interpretation.

Assessment of the component’s contribution to the property’s Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries can be felt through site presentation and interpretation. The presentation of the site can be improved. The values of the property’s OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.15. Fort William (Lighthouse) in Cape Coast

At Fort William (Lighthouse), there is advanced corrosion of the steel works (as observed in figs. 135 to 138). Even the metal stairs to access the component are highly corroded and are unstable, creating a dangerous situation to the Fort's inhabitants and visitors. There is a need to address developing structural impairment issues through structural repairs as soon as possible.



Figs. 135 to 138 – Concrete deterioration due to steel corrosion (figs.132 to 134). Corrosion of the metal stairs (fig.135).

There are also several problems related with water evacuation, as it affects the base of the exterior walls. It can be observed that in the past, cement plasters were applied to protect the wall base (see fig.139) but are now getting looser and some parts are falling (as observed in fig.141). In other cases, lime plaster is fading away due to the constant drop of water and lack of maintenance (see fig.140). In the basement of the component, high humidity and lack of maintenance brought a high deterioration of the ceilings (see fig.142) and to the bathrooms used by the caretaker and by her

family. This resulted in very poor sanitation infrastructure. There is a need to address sanitation infrastructure, water interior and exterior drainage, and to consolidate ceilings, walls and foundations, but also electric installations. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered high, and the need for repairs is urgent.



Figs. 139 to 142 – Problems resulting from water dropping at Fort William (Lighthouse) (figs.139 & 140); erosion on the basement of the exterior wall (fig.141); firebrick degradation on the basement vault and electrical unsecure wiring (fig.142).

Compared to most other components, Fort William (Lighthouse) has had no encroachment to its immediate surroundings. This presents a great opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component’s boundaries as a matter of priority.

However, interpretation is largely absent and access to the site is not easy to find at first, as no directional signage exists. The walk up to the fort leads through an area that has hardly any sanitation infrastructure and lacks waste management, and this creates strong smells for the visitors, and is even more importantly of concern in terms of public hygiene and health. It will be important to tackle this issue with the relevant District Assembly, ideally as part of a local development plan that aims at improving the state of conservation of the site (including better security to access the fort) and at enhancing site interpretation. This can be supported with informational signage, but it would also be useful to train tour guides who usually offer their services only at Cape Coast Castle so that they may offer tours of the three Cape Coast sites.

Assessment of the component’s contribution to the property’s Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The use of the component for residential purposes should be managed in such a way that it does not interfere with the presentation of the site. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property’s OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.16. Fort Victoria, in Cape Coast

Fort Victoria is surrounded by vegetation (fig.143), which was being cleared during the Mission Team visit. The fort has some structural problems (see fig.144) that should be addressed soon, before visitation increases. The vertical access to the fort is via thin and fragile metal stairs (see fig.145), which should be repaired, as well as the fort foundations that are starting to be exposed (see fig.145). The fort is abandoned and neglected (figs.143 & 146) and needs to be cleaned and maintained. The only closed space inside the fort was used to storage provisions, in case of siege. The access to the component is also in bad condition (see figs.143 & 147) and needs to be cleaned and arranged. Fire in the surrounding vegetation can become a threat, if not properly monitored. Therefore, cleaning the surrounding vegetation should avoid possible fires, and would reduce the use of the fort surroundings as a public toilet.



Figs. 143 to 147 – Fort Victoria is surrounded by bushes (fig.143), has some structural cracks (fig.144), foundations exposed and fragile metal stairs (fig.145), vegetation growing inside the fort (fig.146) and an unclear access to the fort (fig.147).

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. Compared to most other components, Fort Victoria has had no encroachment to its immediate surroundings. This presents a great opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority. There is a need to arrest developing structural impairment issues through regular maintenance and clearing of vegetation that is growing on the component's walls and creating cracks that weaken the structures of the component. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered low and possible to contain, although structural issues should be addressed.

The access to Fort Victoria resembles that of Fort William lighthouse, leading uphill in an area it also has some waste laying around. In the early 1990s, a private investor, Mr Frempong whom the Mission Team had the chance to meet, had constructed a hotel at the foot of the Hill, hoping to benefit from the site as a heritage attraction. To this end, according to Mr Frempong's account, he created a little bar on the hilltop right next to the component with the objective to valorise the site while offering a setting to receive visitors who could also enjoy a very nice view of all Cape Coast and the sea. He also had telescopes pointing out to the other forts. However, the GMMB told him to remove these recreational installations, explaining that this was a World Heritage property. Unfortunately, there was no consideration for alternative usages, therefore, leaving the site abandoned. Mr Frempong's action is actually the kind of initiative that should be encouraged, to be done in consultation with MBE and the district assembly, as part of a local development plan. In addition to rehabilitating the state of conservation of the site, other measures should be foreseen, such as installation of signage, improvement of the conditions to access the site and the training of tour guides so that Fort Victoria can be integrated into a visiting itinerary of Cape Coast.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. Fort Victoria's OUV relays also to the surrounding forts and hills. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation, in order to enhance its intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.17. St. George's Castle, in Elmina

St. George's Castle is very impressive which is why it is one of the highlights of tourism, in Ghana. Due to the climatic challenges, and the lack of maintenance of the castle, deterioration is rising, which is damaging its state of conservation. GMMB local team partially lime-washed the castle but did not conclude this work (figs.149 to 150), due to shorten of resources. This is also evidenced by the cannons that are abandoned in the surroundings of the castle (fig.151), and are not transported for protection, to the interior of the component.



Figs. 148 to 151 – In St. George in Elmina, lack of maintenance is observed (fig.148), in spite of the partial lime-wash, which has not been concluded (figs.149 & 150). Cannons are also abandoned in the beach, in the surroundings of the castle (fig.151).

Due to lack of maintenance, several elements are deteriorating fast, resulting in damage to the castle. This can be observed in several of the interior rooms (see fig. 152 & 156); in walls that have exterior plaster falling, due to incompatibility of materials (fig. 153); in the roof terrace on the eastern side that is revealing structural instability (figs. 154 & 155); and wooden beams that are curving (fig. 156). This is probably due to the heavy weight brought by the cement terrace (figs. 154 & 155) on the top of a traditional structure. The castle needs to have, as soon as possible, a physical condition assessment before the situation gets worse.



Figs. 152 to 156 – In St. George Castle in Elmina, lack of maintenance resulted in interior degradation (fig. 152); wall degradation (fig.153); terrace structural instability (figs.154 & 155), which caused unstable beams underneath the roof terrace (fig.156).

There is immense urban pressure in the component's immediate surroundings making the property vulnerable. There are enough open spaces around the component presenting an opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority and it could consider defining a common buffer zone for St. George's Castle and Fort St. Jago (see section 5.1.17 below). The lack of a buffer zone and proper regulation of development around the



Fig.157 – Overview of St. George Castle in Elmina. View on a poster hanging on one of the walls at St. George Castle.

property has already exposed the property to damaging developments. The Elmina Heritage Bay tourism development project being implemented by the Ghana Tourism Authority is one of the damaging projects which has seen earthworks being carried out in an archaeological area without authorization by GMMB nor compliance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. During the last year, a new pavement with cement blocks was introduced in front of St. George castle, without addressing first, archaeological excavations (observed in figs.45 & 157). The application of modern materials was addressed without taking into consideration their impact in the site. In general, the

component is well presented, and its original fabric remains intact. However, the component is vulnerable to unauthorised developments, which may not be sympathetic to the property's attributes.

As to interpretation, the site in Elmina is the first major European construction in Africa south of the Sahara, founded by the Portuguese in 1482. This Castle, together with Cape Coast Castle, is promoted as one of the country's main tourist attractions, conveying the values and attributes for which the property has been inscribed on the World Heritage List.

While site interpretation can be considered to be rather good and appropriate, with the Castle having a museum and an artisan/crafts shop, (the Castle also hosts offices of the GMMB's Central and Western Regional unit), as well as tour guides and generally an effective promotion internationally, it could however be enhanced in a more inclusive and comprehensive manner, informing the World Heritage property as a whole, given that most visitors at the Fort generally do not visit the other components. The State Party wishes to develop the site as a major tourist attraction, in particular through the tourism development project, which prompted the 2019 Advisory Mission. The State Party is yet to fully respond to the recommendations of that mission, notably to conduct HIA and an SIA, and it is important that the new project clarify the conceptual approach to site interpretation in the framework of that development project.

However, the Mission Team also noted that the concerns regarding the possible negative impacts by the planned concrete market were not yet addressed. The project seems to have been halted, but no information was made available to the Mission Team on any aspects of its future implementation and therefore continues to raise concerns about how it will affect the visual integrity of both, St. George's Castle and Fort St. Jago. The construction of the concrete market and its impact on the OUV of St. George Castle in Elmina, had been mentioned in p.16, of Advisory Mission report.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact but could be threatened if development around the Castle is not controlled. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries can be felt through site presentation and interpretation. The presentation of the site can be improved. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.18. Fort St. Jago, in Elmina

Fort St. Jago in Elmina has several physical condition issues that need to be addressed. There is a general lack of maintenance, which has a strong negative impact on the component, resulting in its high degradation. The northwest bastion is sinking due to deforestation and soil settlement (fig.158). A structural consolidation of this bastion needs to be urgently addressed to avoid the growing of the fissures and the inevitable separation of parts of the fort. More details were mentioned in chapter 4.2.1 Structural Integrity of the Forts and Castles (see figs.12 to 15).



Figs. 158 to 161 – St. Jago in Elmina has several threats that are impacting the component

Due to lack of maintenance, some of the building roofs in Fort St. Jago have broken tiles, which have not been replaced. This will probably cause roof infiltrations in the near future. Also observed, was the general lack of clearing out the gutters and of wall lime-wash, resulting in the increased

deterioration of the fort walls (figs. 47 to 49). The northwest tower has its wooden roof structure falling (fig.161), as a result several wooden beams are securing the roof (more information available in chapter 4.2.1 Urgent and immediate need for structural integrity – see figs.9 to 11). There are several isolated interventions done with cement plaster, incorrectly addressed on the top of wooden elements. It was also observed that plastic based paints were sometimes used, to protect wooden elements in windows or doors. This would be an inadequate option, as the type of paint used was incompatible with the material of the surface, the wood.

Compared to most other components, St Jago has had no encroachment to its immediate surroundings. This presents a great opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone which, as mentioned earlier, must give due consideration to the neighbouring St George’s Castle. GMMB should delineate the component’s boundaries as a matter of priority. There is a need to arrest developing structural impairment issues through regular maintenance and clearing of vegetation that is growing on the component’s walls and creating cracks that weaken the structures of the component. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered low and possible to contain.

Fort St. Jago is located on the top of a hill and dominates the panorama of Elmina. It is at about 400 metres walking distance from St. George’s Castle, its integrity includes visual communication with the latter and both components are also historically related. But despite this proximity to the Castle, Fort St. Jago provides for no visitor’s reception whatsoever and the component also features some security concerns as a result of its abandonment. With proper rehabilitation works on the edifice, there should be very good conditions for enhanced site interpretation, and the absence of encroachment around the fort could provide for opportunities for having a recreational area (such as park, of which there don’t seem to be any) for both the local communities and visitors to Elmina. In that regard, it is rather surprising that the initial concept of the Elmina Heritage Bay tourism development project completely ignores Fort St. Jago.

Assessment of the component’s contribution to the property’s Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and do not face an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property’s OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.19. Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda)

Located on the left bank of the Komenda river, the fort is in ruins with several walls standing. Its present condition is similar to the one of Fort Nassau in Mouri, as the remaining ruins have been completely absorbed by various residential constructions (see figs.162 to 165). The GMMB refers to the people in these houses as squatters, which implies an important lack of regulation, while at the same time informing the Mission Team that many people occupy these housings, for fishery activities during the daytime while their homes are elsewhere.



Figs. 162 to 165 – Abandonment, encroachment and urban pressure at Fort Vredenburg / Dutch Komenda.

The component has been completely occupied by residents who have erected residential and business structures inside and over the component. Fort Vredenburg is classified as abandoned by the GMMB. The walls are in a poor state of conservation with most of them facing collapse. Newly introduced structures have integrated the original walls impairing the site's integrity. Some stones were collected from the component to become part of the foundations of the houses under construction by the residents (see fig.165). The massive residential occupation that has occurred over decades is likely to be irreversible and the State Party will need to assess whether this component should remain as part of the property, as continued occupation by the local community presents site presentation and interpretation conundrum. GMMB should look at whether any form of site boundaries is still possible.

The site still holds potential for site interpretation that could be coupled with the one at British Komenda on the right bank of the river, at only about 500 metres linear distance away. Although it can be accessed easily, the site can only be visited by inappropriately walking through private areas and without any signage in place. Site interpretation is non-existent, and it is highly unlikely that locals have much knowledge of what these ruins represent.

Like at Fort Nassau, the apparent irreversible encroachment is a major problem. The restitution of some form of integrity and authenticity, coupled with the definition of a buffer zone and the securing of the remaining ruins and archaeological evidence, would require tremendous effort and investments, including strong and profitable incentives for the local population to clear the area, as part of a local development project. Should something of the sort ever be envisaged, it is essential that the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies be consulted from the very beginning, in conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component has been impaired by residents' occupation and activities. The OUV attributes are considered compromised for this component as its sense of place, spirit and feeling has been interfered with by residential encroachment. The State Party should therefore seek to develop and enhance site presentation and interpretation, including through increased documentation and research, in order to allow for the component to better bring out and demonstrate the attributes of the property's OUV it carries. However, the Mission Team concluded that the values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.20. Fort English (British Komenda)

The fort, located on the right banks of the Komenda river, is mostly in ruins with some parts of the original structures still intact. The north side of the fort has almost disappeared, but the south side is still present, which reveals partial integrity of the component. The component has been encroached and is currently occupied by local residents, some of whom have erected makeshift structures attached to the original walls. The current unregulated occupation by local residents threatens the structures and should be urgently addressed by the State Party. There are visibly incorrect interventions that were previously applied, such as application of concrete to support the walls (fig.171) and new buildings on the top of the old fort (see figs. 170 & 171).



Figs. 166 to 168 – Some parts of Fort English are standing and are still in good condition (fig.166); however, other parts are facing high erosion especially regarding the exposed mortar from the stone masonry (figs. 167 & 168).

A clear demarcation of the core zone is urgently needed along with a buffer zone that can regulate unsympathetic constructions in the immediate surroundings for the fort and avoid that the larger open area facing toward the beach, be used as depot to stockpile construction bricks, as was the case at the time of the mission's visit (fig.170). There is also strong wall erosion in some parts of the fort (well observed in figs. 167 & 168). Mortar was not strong enough to hold the masonry together. However, walls are well consolidated in other parts of the fort (observed in fig. 166). Several archaeological features are exposed and deserved more research (see fig.169). Moreover, the cave dudgeons are totally open (fig.172), which can jeopardise the safety of children that play there or nearby.



Figs. 169 to 172 – Encroachment is rising near the remains that are in ruins (fig.169); Material workshops occupy the open spaces (fig.170); new materials were introduced in the recent past (fig.171); some of the cave dudgeons are still open (fig.172).

With regard to site interpretation, unlike its neighbour in Dutch Komenda, this component can be rehabilitated for adequate site interpretation, as it can build on the existing attributes of OUV, although the fort is mostly in ruins and with less than half of the original structure left. Residential encroachment is rather minor and should be possible to reverse. Although the Mission Team was not given access to some rooms at the ground level for inspection, there could be the possibility to rehabilitate these rooms for a caretaker's office and a visitor's reception space in order to improve site caretaking and interpretation. Installation of signage and promotion of the site to attract visitors who could easily reach Komenda after a 5 km drive off the main road between Takoradi and Cape Coast. However, the Mission Team noticed that there was once a bridge across the Komenda river connecting British and Dutch Komenda. Reconnecting both sides (possible today mainly along the beach but without cars) could eventually benefit the visits to both, English Fort and Fort Vredenburg. This could also be the opportunity to tackle the enormous pollution of plastic waste existing on the shores of the river.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component is under threat from resident activities and from incorrect conservation interventions. The fort has been listed as a partial ruin and its physical fabric, which is directly associated with the intangible attributes, is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation, in order to enhance its intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.21. Fort San Sebastian, in Shama

This component does not have a formal boundary and buffer zone. Its immediate surroundings are dominated by formal buildings and there is some encroachment (see fig.175), however, it does not threaten the fort. GMMB should delineate the component's core boundary and an effective buffer zone, as a matter of priority, taking into consideration also the rocky areas offshore where a cross has been erected.

There are structural impairment issues that require urgent attention, especially in the buttress and exposed foundations (see fig.174) and in the entrance tower (see fig.177 to 180). The concrete beams that were built in the tower are cracking (figs.178 & 179), as they were not planned to hold the heavy weight from the cement floor above (see fig. 180). As a consequence, the tower façade reveals some worrying structural fissures (see fig.177). It was also noted that a cement roofing was resting on top of a wooden structure, as part of the first-floor ceiling. This brings again extra weight that cannot be held by a wooden structure. A condition assessment should be addressed, as well as an intervention for the structural consolidation of the building. The component is well kept inside and outside, as it is currently used for tourism and offices for the traditional council and for the electoral commission. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors should be considered, when it is still possible to contain.



Figs. 173 to 176 – At Fort St. Sebastian gutters need to be cleaned (fig.173); some fort foundations are exposed (fig.174); there is some encroachment (fig. 175), and there is some wooden unstable pavement in the second floor of the fort (fig.176).



Figs. 177 to 180 – Concrete beams were inserted in the entrance tower which are not strong enough to hold the concrete 2nd floor.

Fort San Sebastian is another example of a component that benefits from better conservation and caretaking/monitoring if the component has a specific purpose. In this case, the fort hosts the offices of the Shama Traditional Council, as well as of the GMMB whose caretaker also offers his services as a guide. Notwithstanding the structural aspects and issues related to maintenance that need to be addressed, the fort offers very favourable conditions for good site interpretation which can be enhanced with the installation of signage, improved visiting conditions and better promotion to attract visitors. Indeed, the facilities of the fort could be rehabilitated to host a museum and even community events, in addition to keeping the administrative use of the GMMB and the Traditional Council. The area surrounding the Fort also appears favourable to receive various services, such as restaurants and shops, thus providing some livelihoods to the local community.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance its intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.22. Fort Orange, in Sekondi

Like with other components, the boundary and the buffer zone for this component should both be delineated in order to prevent future threats from possible high-rise buildings especially facing the front of the building (see fig.33 in 4.2.4 Urban Pressure). The property is currently relatively well maintained, as it is being used by the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), as a lighthouse. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered of concern.



Figs. 181 to 183 – The rising of vegetation that is growing in the façades brought additional problems to the structure.

Throughout the years, several different interventions were addressed in Fort Orange, not just through cement plasters (figs. 182 & 184), but also through concrete beams and floors (figs. 185 & 186). As a result, in different parts of the fort, architectural elements and cement plaster are unstable and cracking (see fig. 185), as it was observed in the northern bastion (see fig. 182) and concrete beams near interior stairs (see fig. 185). Due to lack of maintenance, there is also a lot of vegetation growing in all the north western part of the fort (see figs. 181 & 183). To avoid problems in water drainage or with root penetration in walls or even structural instability, cleaning of the fort walls needs to be addressed in a more consistent and systematic way.



Figs. 184 to 186 – Fort Orange needs to have a better maintenance being regularly addressed (fig.184); especially as there are several problems with concrete beams in the interior of the fort (fig.185); there are new concrete ceiling interventions (fig.186).

Compared to most of the other components, Fort Orange does not benefit from a very picturesque setting as it offers a view on a modern harbour area with a huge power ship dominating the docks. But this does not prevent proper site interpretation. Conservation and maintenance clearly must be addressed, and although it is used as a lighthouse and occupied for residential purposes, the fort's appearance is not that of a site that is granted particular care. Moreover, its use and management are entirely entrusted to the GPHA without any reference as a heritage site (the fort can't receive visitors), and it appears that the GMMB has not established any coordination or mechanism with the GPHA that could allow monitoring of the fort's state of conservation.

As shown by the example of Fort San Sebastian, the use of Fort Orange for specific administrative purposes and at the same time for its promotion as a heritage site that can receive visitors, are not mutually exclusive – both can be done. The GMMB should consider seeking cooperation with the

GPHA to explore how this can be conceptualized, defining clearly which areas should be made accessible to ensure proper interpretation, and which ones must remain inaccessible. The site does not suffer from serious encroachment, the fort and its surroundings provide for an unbiased "reading" of the attributes.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The fort is however not open for visitors and therefore no site presentation and interpretation are provided. GMMB should find ways to present and interpret the site in a way that brings out the attributes that carries the OUV. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.23. Fort Batenstein, in Butre

Compared to most other components, Fort Batenstein has had no encroachment to its immediate surroundings thanks to its location on the top of a hill dominating the town of Butre and a scenic setting. This presents a great opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority. The access to the fort is unstable and difficult (see fig.187) and needs to be arranged.



Figs. 187 to 190 – Access to Fort Batenstein is challenging and unstable (fig.187); the protective wall at the fort entrance is falling (fig.188); vegetation is growing in the fort walls (fig.189); and fort foundations are eroding in the south side (fig.190).

The component has areas that need structural consolidation and repairs (see fig.188, 191 & 192), as parts of the fort corners are falling (figs. 191 to 194), and cracks are rising in the towers (see figs. 193 & 194). The fort has also exposed foundations that are eroding (see fig.190). There is also vegetation growing on the walls of the component causing walls to crack (see fig.189). The northeast corner of the fort has so much vegetation that it is impossible to access it. The vegetation should be removed as a priority, and its removal should be sustained, as part of regular maintenance. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered relevant to address.



Figs. 191 to 194 – Several structural problems are potentially threatening Fort Batenstein stability.

This fort is reminiscent in various ways of Fort Amsterdam, for example because of its location on the hilltop and its degree of integrity despite a relative state of abandonment. The attributes allowing for good site interpretation are generally preserved but could be enhanced, in order to provide visitors to better understand the site's characteristics, its history and the larger context of the African

European encounter and the slave trade. Although the town of Butre is not the easiest location to reach by car, knowledge of the site deserves to be improved and some local initiatives to support a local tourism economy could help create favourable conditions for improved site management and conservation with strong involvement of the local community. Also, developing signage should be coupled with supporting local tour guides through capacity building with regard to the site's World Heritage status.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.24. Fort Metal Cross, in Dixcove

The fort has some encroachment, but its surroundings are dominated by high-rise buildings that are clearly overbearing on the component (see fig. 34 in 4.2.4 Urban Pressure). There are possibilities to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone, which should be prepared by GMMB, as a matter of priority. The component has gone through physical changes that are not sympathetic to the OUV attributes. They were carried out without compliance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. These changes are the construction of swimming pools and of roman style decorative columns (fig.196), the installation of a bath tub (probably for private use, and positioned to offer an ocean view – fig.197), the construction of several small buildings around the fort to be used as storage and car garage (see fig.196), the creation of a large multi-functional hall for multipurpose use (see fig.195). These new constructions had a significant negative impact on the attributes of the component. GMMB should carry out an assessment to determine what physical changes can be reversed.



Figs. 195 to 197 – Restaurant, swimming pool, and roman columns built around Fort Metal Cross (Figs. 195 & 196); a bed, a bathtub, and a water tank were built for the tenant, on the terrace top of the fort, to have the ocean as a view (fig.197).

The Fort also carries out several structural problems that need to be addressed. This is of particular concern in areas that had cement interventions and are now presenting several structural fractures (see figs.198 & 199). There are also severe humidity problems on the slave dungeons (see figs. 200 & 201), presently used as storage which impacts the component OUV attributes.



Figs. 198 to 201 – Structural problems at one of the entrances of Fort Metal Cross and at a new cement restoration (figs. 198 & 199); The slave dungeons are in bad state of conservation and are used nowadays as storage (figs. 200 & 201).

As far as interpretation is concerned, the fort still retains many attributes of OUV. The Mission Team saw with appreciation, during its visit to the Fort, the presence of a school class visiting the site. Interpretation could easily be improved with basic installations and facilities that exist already in part, and with correcting those elements at the site that hamper interpretation. In doing so, it is important to consider also the lighthouse on the small in the bay of Dixcove just below the fort.

However, the constructions of the swimming pools and the decorative faux broken Roman style columns, the various guesthouse bungalows and a huge hall for community purposes have probably caused the loss of archaeological evidence and generally led to a misreading of the site. Although this guesthouse project, conducted by an investor who had signed a leasing agreement with the GMMB in 2001, was to capitalize on the fort's potential as a tourist attraction and to support local economic development, all these interventions in and around the fort have had a very trivializing effect on the entire site that completely contradicts the adequate interpretation of the fort and the property at large.

It is also justified to question whether the lessee of the fort has fully respected the terms of the agreement, and it appears that a full assessment of this partnership is urgently needed. This agreement established that the rent *per year* was only about 50 USD (3,000,000 Old Ghanaian Cedi) and hardly stipulates possible other ways of yielding benefits toward the community. This was certainly to be worked out with the Ahanta West District Assembly and the local Traditional Councils. According to the agreement, in addition to the commitment *"to carry out rehabilitation and renovation works on the Property"*, it is also stipulated that *"the Lessor shall specify the details of all necessary rehabilitation works required to be carried out on the property by the Lessee, and shall also oversee the carrying out of any such works to ensure that they are carried out in accordance with the specifications of the Lessor"*. Furthermore, the investor was permitted to develop the fort *"in the interest of tourism"* and *"to renovate authentically all existing features, fittings and fixtures and to Sympathetically improve and adopt it for use as a Restaurant in part and as accommodation for Visitors and staff in part"*. It is unknown to the Mission Team if, or how, these "improvements" had been planned, verified and approved in consultation with the GMMB, but it is obvious that these works went too far.

It is important to reassess this agreement which still runs until March 2026, and ideally seek to terminate it as soon as possible so that the necessary reversals and rehabilitations can be planned and implemented, while developing new approaches and perspectives for a redefined and sustainable local tourism economy that capitalizes on the fort to sustain local community economy, as an asset with appropriate site interpretation.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: Generally speaking, the fort still has some authenticity and integrity, but it faces threats from unregulated physical changes and adaptive reuse, which must be reversed. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries has been largely impaired. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.25. Fort Dorothea, in Akwida

The component is located in an isolated area that becomes an island, when the tide is up (see fig.202). The fort is in ruins with few walls standing. This component unlike most other ruins has not been encroached by squatters. Today, the site is overgrown with vegetation and large tree roots. Some roots have caused cracks creating a risk of collapse for some walls (see figs. 204 & 205), but others are holding the wall together (see figs. 206 to 209). The local community also uses the site as a shrine and has traditional protocols and taboos in place that have in a way contributed to preventing any form of encroachment on the site. This exemplifies the importance of mobilizing and raising awareness of local Chiefs to regulate use, access and maintenance of sites, as traditional safeguard, as protected the site. This component presents a good opportunity to delineate a proper core and an effective boundary.



Figs. 202 to 205 – Access to Fort Dorothea (fig. 202); and structural problems emerging from root penetration (figs. 203 to 205).

This is also why site interpretation can be developed, including the formulation of a visiting protocol together with the local community and Chiefs that would allow visitors to access the site without infringing uncustomary laws and practises that usually allow access only to the local Chiefs who used the site also for burials. Some of the vegetation could be cleared and the access for visitors further secured, but there needs to be a careful assessment of how much vegetation, and in particular the large tree roots that have grown over some of the ruins, should be removed without weakening their stability and altering the visual integrity as it is today, and which have created a particular atmosphere that could benefit also the site's interpretation.



Figs. 206 to 209 – The remain ruins from Fort Dorothea are surrounded by tree roots.

The small town of Akwida does not offer adequate infrastructure to receive visitors, but this is not detrimental to promoting the site to attract interested visitors whose numbers will probably remain limited. However, improving the road conditions leading from Dixcove to Akwida would first and foremost benefit the community, and could also attract more easily daytime visitors.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain in place. There is a need for enhanced site presentation and interpretation, including localities that would not be in the immediate vicinity of the site, in order to enhance the sense of place as well as the spirit and feeling of the component. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.26. Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Princess Town

Compared to most other components, Fort Groot Fredericksborg has had no encroachment to its immediate surroundings, except a mobile phone mast within the immediate vicinity of the fort, which even the NTDP (p. 81) recognised the "*negative impacts on the cultural and historical character of the site*". Indeed, this mast, located at about 40m north-east of the fort's entrance, has an impact on the visual integrity of the component (see fig.210). But it must also be understood that this mast is located at the most elevated spot of the town and provides important communication technology. Despite this, the situation presents a great opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone, as a matter of priority.



Figs. 210 to 213 – A high antenna lies at the entrance of Fort Groot Fredericksborg (fig.210); Humidity affects cement plaster (fig.211) and 2nd floor ceiling (fig.212); concrete structure was introduced in several parts of the buildings (fig.213).

There are also several structural impairment issues that require urgent attention through, structural consolidation, repairs, and regular maintenance. Due to termites (see fig.217), the soil is loose, which results in the settlement of the fort foundations. Consequently, the southern bastion started to crack and parts are separating from the component, as it can be observed in figs. 214 to 218. The western bastion is also revealing some vertical cracks (see fig. 218). The fort had several cement interventions during the last decades (see fig.211 and fig.44), which resulted in the loosening of the cement plaster, as mentioned in subchapter 4.2.6. Incorrect Interventions. In the main two buildings some parts are not stable and need to be consolidated for safety reasons. Also, ceilings present a lot of mould (see fig.212), which contributes to the deterioration of the structure.



Figs. 214 to 219 – Structural problems are observed in the southern bastion (figs.214 to 216) and western bastion of Fort Groot Fredericksborg (fig.218). Termites are contributing to the soil settlement (fig.217). A shrine was built near the fort wall (fig.219).

The component is well kept, as it is currently operated as a Guesthouse, where photos can be taken to celebrate marriages. The well-kept grass and general cleaning by the resident caretaker, is being used for wedding photos and local festivities by the local community. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered average and possible to contain, if the consolidation of the unstable southern and western bastion corners is acted upon.

Similar to Fort Patience in Apam and Fort Good Hope in Senya Beraku, this fort is mainly run privately and used as a rest house, currently undergoing renovations. The remaining structures that can be used to this end, are especially the western and southern bastions, while the other half are relatively well-

maintained ruins (see fig. 210). In addition to receiving visitors to stay overnight and re-accommodating a restaurant on the terrace of the western bastion, the component could easily enhance interpretation supported by signage and exhibition spaces, for example in the south-east segment that was formerly used as a church, according to the caretaker. Due to the fact that the site is considered a sacred place for locals, even before the construction of the fort, a shrine was built near the fort walls (see fig.219).

There also seems to be a certain level of attachment by the local community to the fort. This assumption is based on a poster of the "Friedrichsburg Football Club" with a photo of the team taken at the fort and aimed to find sponsors and mobilize funds (see photos of Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Annex 8.9).

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and do not face an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.27. Fort St. Anthony, in Axim

The component's surroundings have been largely encroached. There is a small island located about 350m south-west of the fort with structures that are associated with it. A buffer zone for this component should be extended to the small island and should protect the visual panorama between the fort and the island. Unfortunately, this is rendered increasingly difficult due to the construction of the rip rap sea defence and the construction of a fishing harbour area leading with a whole rip rap strip reaching out toward the island, without any heritage impact having been assessed prior to this development project. GMMB should delineate the component's boundaries as a matter of priority. There are physical impairment issues that require attention through regular maintenance, and repairs. The fort has a general lack of maintenance and needs to be regularly kept. Some cement additions were erected and reveal now a high degradation both outside (see fig.221) and inside (see fig.222). Cement needs to be removed, as it is affecting and damaging several parts of the fort.

There is a large paved parking area that has been recently (end of 2019) developed in front of the fort (see fig.46 in p.28), similar to the one constructed at St. George's Castle in Elmina (see fig.45 in p.13), without complying with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines and by ignoring those issues, the State Party had already been alerted to, through the 2019 Advisory Mission report. The development of the parking was carried out without archaeological impact assessment and has probably destroyed much archaeological evidence. Except for the lost archaeological evidence in the component's surroundings, the vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered low but the new harbour infrastructures being built just 30m away from the southern bastion must be monitored carefully.



Figs. 220 to 222 – Lack of maintenance at Fort St. Anthony resulted in degradation of cement interventions and interior walls.

This fort is in quite good condition and retains all the attributes necessary for proper site interpretation. The component is fairly kept inside and outside as it is used for tourism. The fort can be visited, and a tour guide can be contacted. There is a well-conceived museum with an exhibition funded by the Dutch embassy, focusing mainly on the history of African-Dutch interaction and the fort's history as a Dutch fort. This assists in bringing out the understanding of the place and the feeling associated with it, providing for a rather comprehensive interpretation.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain intact and not facing an immediate threat. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.1.28. Fort Apollonia, in Beyin

The encroachment in the surroundings of the fort is comparatively minimal, presenting an opportunity to delineate a proper core boundary and an effective buffer zone, as a matter of priority. The fort is comparatively well maintained with few structural challenges. In 2010, cement plastering was applied throughout the fort (see figs.226 to 228) and particularly, on the dungeons, in order to use them as a museum. Several protective walls also face structural challenges, as it can be observed in the stairs (see fig.226). A high-water storage was built in the outside of the fort (see figs. 224 & 225) presenting challenges regarding the visual integrity of the site. The introduction of concrete in some of the dungeon's, risks interfering with the authenticity and integrity of the component. GMMB should consider whether the interventions could be reversed. The vulnerability of the component from existing factors is considered of concern.



Figs. 223 to 226 – Abandoned cannons at For Apollonia (fig.223); Water storage jeopardises the fort's visual integrity (figs.224 & 225); structural instability of cement stair wall protection (fig.226).

The Mission Team noted that the component is located quite centrally in the village of Beyin, about 80m from the beach. There is a large area on its southside that is used as a festival ground and for community gatherings, which is why the fort serves as an evident landmark. The site generally conserves the attributes of OUV which should be enhanced with signage and information provided by tour guides and the caretaker in order to ensure adequate interpretation. There is a clear awareness and perception among the local community of the fort being a historic monument, and it has arranged for several rooms to be used as a museum. But currently the exhibition has no relationship with the property's OUV attributes but tells the culture and traditions of the local Nzeema community.



Figs. 227 to 229 – Lack of maintenance is observed in several walls (fig. 227 & 228); cement plaster intervention (fig. 228); and several interior exhibitions contribute for the community education and the fort interpretation (fig. 229), at Fort Apollonia.

This approach was clarified by Awulae Annor Adjaye III, Paramount Chief and President of the Western Nzeema Traditional Council at Beyin, who received the Mission Team and who explained that he did not consider it pleasant for the Nzeema community to use the fort to highlight the painful and negative past, but rather focus on the cultural wealth of the present-day community. The idea of receiving visitors who would visit the fort being distressed by the thought of the painful things that happened is perceived as incompatible with the notion of hospitality and with the cultural self-perception of the Nzeema community.

While arguing that site interpretation with a focus on the attributes of OUV for which the property was inscribed was still appropriate and necessary, it is clear that adding a strong presentation and even celebration of the local culture, including language and oral traditions, music and dance, economic activities and resources, culinary traditions, etc. merits a clear support as it is perceived as a matter of dignity and cultural identity that allows to connect the present and the past more positively by showing the resilience of the community. This could also be repeated in other exhibitions that could mobilize a more active involvement of the local communities in the presentation of both, their culture of today and their history.

Assessment of the component's contribution to the property's Outstanding Universal Value: The authenticity and integrity of this component remain largely intact with some dungeons threatened by recently introduced concrete plastering. The physical fabric which is directly associated with the intangible attributes is in place. The sense of place and emotive feeling that the component carries should be brought out through improved site presentation and interpretation in order to enhance the intrinsic attributes that relate to the property's OUV. The values of the property's OUV are supported by this component.

5.2. Assessment of the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint Advisory Mission of 2019 and of Decision 43 COM 7B.106 of the World Heritage Committee (TOR5)

As already mentioned above (see chapter 4.3), the State Party has sought to address, as best as it could, the issues identified, and the recommendations made by the 2019 Advisory Mission, as well as the decision of the World Heritage Committee.

Several of the 14 recommendations of the 2019 mission have been reiterated in the Committee's Decision, in particular those that pertain to the halting of the major development projects in Elmina, Fort Amsterdam, and Ussher Fort (recommendations 1, 4, 5, 6), or to the management plan and capacity building, including general monitoring and risk management (recommendations 8, 10, 12 and 14).

In summary, the Mission Team noted the following developments over the past year:

National level and actions geared towards the entire property:

- As an immediate response to the 2019 WHAM Recommendation #2, which called for an **Emergency inspection** of all 28 components, the GMMB had put together a team of five members (most of whom have accompanied this Mission or have been met at some point) that undertook, between 14 and 29 October 2019, an inspection of each of the components in order to:
 - Assess the condition of the Forts and Castles
 - Identify developments in and around the site
 - Identify and document stakeholders within the local community of the components

According to its terms of reference, the emergency inspection Mission Team further set out to assist in the prioritization of action regarding urgent works to be addressed. The prioritization action was also to look at issues regarding safety requirements and structural consolidation of the forts and castles.

According to the inspection report, the Mission Team's method consisted of visual inspection of all components with photographic documentation of identified problem areas, and GPS location coordinates taken by the team during the inspections are also documented in the GMMB report.

The conduction of this inspection mission is, of course, to be noted as a very positive response since the 2019 World Heritage Advisory Mission (WHAM) and the Committee's decision. It reflects the determination of the State Party to engage in the necessary measures that would allow the safeguarding of the property's OUV. As a result, the GMMB put together inspection reports, including a large number of photographs, that make up a total of about 400 pages. Unfortunately, the Mission Team was not informed of this inspection conducted more than three months earlier (it was stated in the State Party's SOC Report received during the Mission on 4 February 2020), and it is regrettable that the individual component inspection reports have not been shared with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, prior to the Mission (submitted only in March 2020).

In any case, this inspection mission was an important step in the right direction, not only in response to the 2nd Recommendation from 2019 World Heritage Advisory Mission, but also the 3rd Recommendation, which was to assess the integrity and authenticity of all components. While this present Reactive Monitoring Mission Team will hopefully contribute to the densification of information on each component, this work must continue further, allowing the GMMB to take future actions for their conservation, consolidation, management and promotion.

- The **delineation of boundaries and a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes** (Recommendation #7) remains a task that is as urgent as it is complex. The absence of delineation of boundaries of the property has resulted in the outer walls of the different components being treated as the boundaries for those components whose walls are still intact. Other components that are not bounded by outer walls have been vulnerable to total encroachment. All components including those that are bounded by hard outer walls have suffered great incidents of encroachment as structures have been constructed in most cases up to the walls and in certain incidents attached to the walls. The need for buffer zones is not new, as this had been requested by the World Heritage Committee, since 1996.

The immediate surroundings of most components have also been compromised by many structures that have been erected in areas that would have otherwise been demarcated as part of the property core or buffer zone. The settlements in and around most of the structures had

occurred over decades and it will not be practical to move those residents for purposes of establishing buffer zones or the property's core boundaries. However, buffer zones can still be established in order to safeguard the property from potential negative visual impacts that results from high rise buildings that have been observed, near some of the components.

The State Party has indicated that they have now appointed the Surveyor Department to commence with mapping of the property's boundaries (core and buffer zones). The work was supposed to have commenced by the 3rd of February 2020, coinciding with the Reactive Monitoring Mission, which was accompanied by crucial GMMB staff, including the Site Manager, that should also be involved in the boundary delineation process. Unfortunately, the Mission Team was not given the opportunity to meet the persons charged with conducting the work on the boundaries. It is therefore not clear what principles will be applied by the GMMB and the Surveyors in deciding on the boundaries of the property given the encroachment that has taken place in almost all components of the property and the necessity to engage in further local community consultations, in order to obtain a clear picture of possible related constraints that will need to be addressed and taken up with the various District Assemblies.

The issue of the boundaries of the property is very urgent and the Committee should give the State Party a clear deadline by which to conclude and report on the boundary designation. The process of boundary delineation should give particular attention to the current context, where the values of some components seem to be impaired. Given the challenge this task represents, the State Party should request advice from ICOMOS in the boundary delineation process, in particular for Fort Fredericksborg and Fort Augustaborg. In what concerns Fort Vernon, as this component was not mentioned in the original nomination but was referred to in the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, it appears to have been mistakenly included. The State Party should, therefore, request the Committee to correct the RSOUV accordingly.

The combination of delineation of boundaries and buffer zones, inventory, documentation, research and efforts to enhance interpretation will allow to subsequently determine if and how these few components still support the property's OUV.

- The implementation of the **Elaboration of a Management and Conservation Plan for the property** (WHAM Recommendation #10), funded by an International Assistance approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2018, has been particularly delayed, however based on a mutual agreement between the GMMB and the World Heritage Centre in late 2018, as the need for an Advisory Mission to be conducted first had become apparent. At the time of this 2020 Mission, the project was still in the initial planning phases, but the contract had been finally signed with the GMMB. One of the reasons for these additional delays was that the identification of the persons that would form the three teams to conduct the elaboration of the Management Plan took quite some time and depended to some extent on the conduction of 2019 site inspection missions by GMMB.

Implementation of developing the management plan will then be organised with three teams in charge of geographical clusters of property components: with team one covering the Greater Accra and the Volta region, team 2 covering the central region, and team 3 the components located in the western region. The structure and team composition is presented by GMMB as follows:

- The work will be carried out under the supervision of the GMMB Director and the property Site Manager.
- Facilitation, monitoring and coaching will be ensured by an International expert UNESCO consultant, and the national expert.
- Team 1 will be assigned to components located in the Greater Accra and the Volta regions
- Team 2 will be assigned to components located in the Central Region
- Team 3 will be assigned to components located in the Western Region

Each team will be composed of six (6) persons: 1 Architect (Team leader for teams 1 and 3), 1 Archaeologist (Team leader for team 2), 1 Tourism Expert, 1 Local government representative, 1 Community representative, and a Rapporteur. Most of these persons have already been identified.

When in March 2020, like most countries around the globe, Ghana had to take drastic sanitary measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The initial capacity building and training activity needed to be revised in order to ensure that implementation would comply with restrictive measures put in place by the government, including travel restrictions and limitations on gatherings of people. A full-scale online training has now been developed by the international expert and trainer, which may serve as a valuable opportunity to test new approaches based on modern technology for training and capacity building.

The development of the property's Management Plan should also make sure to integrate a Disaster Risk Management Plan (2019 WHAM Recommendation #14). While understanding the several constraints that have caused delays, the State Party should prioritise the implementation of the management planning project, in order to address the ongoing management and conservation issues affecting this property, and ultimately also the Ashanti Traditional Buildings World Heritage property. The State Party should also develop a strategic plan for overall management of the GMMB and the property, as most of the challenges affecting the property cannot be resolved through only a management plan. It is the hope of the Mission Team that the findings and recommendations provided in the present report, as well as the first inspection mission conducted by the GMMB in October 2019, will allow to address more effectively the challenges and opportunities each of the components present.

- As regards measures at the national level in terms of **capacity building for GMMB Staff** (2019 WHAM Recommendation #12), some initiatives are to be pointed out:
 - a) In October 2019, the UNESCO Office in Accra, in partnership with the GMMB and the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, organized a three-day training workshop on the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention for Ghanaian site managers and stakeholders. The workshop was attended by 25 participants and facilitated by an international consultant appointed by UNESCO Accra. The workshop made a number of recommendations towards improving the implementation of the 1972 Convention. These echoed largely the recommendations of the 2019 Advisory Mission, but also addressed stakeholder engagement and involvement, future capacity building areas, partnerships with universities, domestication of the Convention, establishment of a National Committee of ICOMOS, as well as recommendations related to establishing an effective and conducive environment for managing heritage in Ghana, including the need to undertake organisational review supported by a new management approach, developing a Masterplan for Heritage Management, developing a Resource Mobilisation and Implementation strategy, and prioritising documentation and records management as a decision-making tool. It is commendable to note also the awareness of the need to build capacities through bringing on board young practitioners. This workshop came at a good point in time, just before also the property component inspection mission. Nevertheless, there is need to develop more focused capacity building programmes. The GMMB should therefore work with the AWHF and other training organisations to create opportunities for capacity building, specifically for those involved in the management of the property and heritage sites in Ghana.
 - b) The Mission Team noted also with appreciation that the GMMB has formally appointed a Site Manager for the property (on that occasion a Site Manager was also appointed to the Ashanti traditional buildings World Heritage property). This had not yet been the case at the time of the 2019 WHAM.

- c) Moreover, in 2018, the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO had requested and obtained funding of 20,000 USD under UNESCO's Participation Programme for the "Formation of a National Heritage Committee". This foresees to create a pluralistic, inter-ministerial Committee whose composition will bring together about 17 Ministries, government departments or agencies, as well as Universities. The project consists mainly of developing statutes and a general framework for the operationalisation of the Committee, as well as capacity building for its members. This was supposed to take place in mid-March 2020 for which the World Heritage Centre had helped identify an international expert to support Ghana in this endeavour, but unfortunately the mission and the meeting had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the global pandemic of COVID-19.

The Mission Team, while welcoming the initiative to bring as many government agencies together around the purpose of safeguarding Ghanaian heritage, points out the importance to define clearly the mandate of that Committee, in order to avoid unnecessarily inflating the country's administration by creating a new entity with an unclear purpose and actions.

- As to the **review and update of national heritage legislation** geared towards the protection of national and World Heritage (WHAM Recommendation #9), the State Party indicated that a new national heritage legislation has been drafted and submitted to the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2016. Once the Ministry has considered the legislation, it will go to the Justice Ministry and the Attorney General for further consideration before it is tabled to the select committee for parliamentary consideration. The State Party could not commit to timelines for the legislative review process as the draft has now been in one ministry for almost five (5) years. It is regrettable that the State Party is moving very slowly on the issue of updating legislation and thus delaying the provision of adequate legislative protection for the property. The Mission Team recommends that the Committee call on the State Party to conclude without further delays the review and update of national heritage legislation.
- Regarding the development of a proper **database of all the property's components** (Recommendation #11), the idea is to create a platform to be physically and digitally accessed and consulted by GMMB staff. This database is expected to improve monitoring and decision-making regarding conservation and promotion of the property. The Mission Team noted that the State Party still does not have a centralised database for the components making up the World Heritage property. This has clearly impacted information management and decision-making processes within the GMMB. The State Party has indicated that they will start with this process and it is recommended that the State Party indicate to the World Heritage Committee the timeframe of its development and implementation. It is noted that the capacity building workshop organized by UNESCO Accra in October 2019 has shown the GMMB's awareness of the need for such a centralised database, and this should indeed be prioritised by the State Party and should involve Universities and other researchers who have worked in the property's components.
- Finally, the development of a **conservation strategy** and a **manual for the property** (Recommendation #13) have not yet been initiated. This does not come as a surprise insofar as this will be resulting from the ongoing management planning process and should be included in the Action Plan that will be integrated in the new Management and Conservation Plan. Nevertheless, implementation of these activities should be expedited as they will be important tools for GMMB, the management and conservation teams as well as local caretakers and other stakeholders.

Specific developments at components visited in 2019:

With regard to the request to **halt all current development projects** (WHAM Recommendation 1), the Mission Team took note of several developments, inspiring both appreciation and concern:

- The project at **Fort Amsterdam** was halted immediately after the 2019 report was available. This was done, in particular, thanks to the joint understanding of all partners and stakeholders involved that the condition of the component required urgent consolidation measures instead of the reconstruction intervention that was planned inside of the Fort initially. Since then, consultations were undertaken in order to organise a full reassessment and revision of the project that resulted in an inspection and expert mission in December 2019, the full report on which has been finalised in May 2020 with a proposal for consolidation, in particular as reaction to findings by a report of 27 June 2019, on a structural survey of Fort Amsterdam conducted by Dr. Renato Perrucchio, which alerted to the fragility of the Fort's structure². The revised consolidation project was shared with UNESCO and was undergoing technical review at the time of finalisation of the present report.

However, despite the call to halt the project, the developers of Fort Amsterdam went ahead and constructed an access road with the aim of facilitating the rest of the project. GMMB has claimed that this work was carried out under supervision of an archaeologist suggesting that, unlike the work at St George's Castle, the GMMB was aware of the road construction at Fort Amsterdam.

- At **St. George's Castle in Elmina**, where the Elmina Heritage Bay Tourism Development Project is still in the planning stages, the Mission Team did not notice substantial progress or any commencement of major works. However, since the 2019 Mission, a paved parking lot had been constructed in front of the main entrance, despite the attempts by the GMMB to intervene immediately as the news on the bulldozing of that area broke. Indeed, the Mission Team has regrettably noted that the earth moving works at the Castle (which have been extended even beyond the area of the new parking lot), also had potentially destroyed important archaeological evidence associated with the attributes of the property. It is deeply worrying that the GMMB had issued an order to stop the work, but the order was apparently ignored by the Ghana Tourism Authority, which illustrates the lack of coordination.

During the mission, a team of a landscaping firm from Kumasi was working on the embellishment of the larger area the Advisory Mission had pointed to the need for archaeological surveys to be conducted. These developments run contrary to the 2019 WHAM recommendations and the Committee decision, which is regrettable. However, a new signage at the entrance of the Castle informing on the name and its World Heritage status has been installed on 8 February 2020, produced with financial support from the UNESCO Accra Office (another signage was installed at Cape Coast Castle).

Moreover, to date the State Party has not developed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre draft Terms of Reference for conducting an HIA and an SIA, with a view to develop a detailed conceptual document and a new project proposal for the Tourism Development Project (Recommendation #4). Likewise, a topographic survey or a detailed report on the actual state of the Castle and its surroundings (including plans, elevations and sections) are yet to be prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

With regard to Recommendation #6 concerning the **concrete market project** under construction near St. George's Castle in Elmina, no particular development was noticed since 2019, but the

² "A Structural Survey of Fort Amsterdam, Abandze, Central Region, Ghana", Conducted during the 2019 Field School in engineering and archaeology of heritage buildings of West Africa, organised by the University of Rochester and the University of Ghana. Renato Perucchio et al., Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and Director, Program in Archaeology, Technology, and Historical Structures University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627- USA

detailed plans requested from the State Party are yet to be received and reviewed by the Advisory Bodies.

- At **Fort Saint-Jago in Elmina**, the 2019 WHAM noted the presence of wooden housing located on the side of the walkway leading up to the Fort. While this housing was not built too close to the fort, it still represents an encroachment to some level at the foot and on the slope of the hill, where there is also an unidentified ruin and old canons. The KEEA Municipal District³ had decided and instructed their removal already in 2018, which had not been carried out during the 2019 WHAM, and not much seems to have changed since then. Also, information on the specifics of a relocation of the population was not provided, which points to the necessity to clarify any community relocation scheme that may be envisaged at this and at some of the other property components in the future.

Within the fort, conditions had not changed either. As noted in 2019, parts of the ceiling in the building, with measures in the rear section of the fort for securing, are progressively collapsing.

- At **James Fort** (James Town, Accra), the conditions remained unchanged compared to 2019. However, shortly after this mission, the UNESCO Accra Office learned that construction of the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex projected in the immediate vicinity of the component, and which clearly appeared to be maintained and foreseen for 2020, has now been launched. Efforts by GMMB (and ultimately by the World Heritage Centre) to obtain information on the project were left without response. The Mission Team had also discovered the existence of an ancient landing bay that was not identified before, similar to the one at Fort William, which was very probably part of the Fort and its study and conservation is crucial to the integrity of the site.
- A stone's throw away from James Fort is **Ussher Fort**, where the repair of the roof of the Slavery Museum is now underway with funding from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust. However, the project also includes the development of a new exhibition scenario with a virtual tour of other Forts and Castles, but this scenario development has not started yet.

Given the very close proximity of Ussher Fort to James Fort, this component is likely to be affected by the Fishing Harbour Complex as well.

- Finally, at **Fort Christiansborg** in Osu/Accra (also known as Osu Castle), the Mission Team could confirm ongoing decay. The situation inside has worsened, ceilings that had been "intact" in 2019 have collapsed, others in adjacent rooms are likely to collapse soon, as well. Some timid measures have been put in place to prevent visitors to enter these areas, but apart from that there is no interdiction for visitors to enter the Castle, potentially exposing them to certain risks that are yet to be identified and assessed. As to the nearby beach, it was noticed that clean-up was undertaken to remove large amounts of plastic waste, but this initiative appears to be short-lived, as waste (mostly plastic bottles) is likely to reappear, as was noticed by the Mission Team.

5.3. Review of whether the values on the basis of which the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List are being maintained

The physical fabric that carries the values for which the property was inscribed still exist in most of the components despite ongoing gradual deterioration due to the factors described above, as well as poor to no interpretation done at the majority of the sites of the property.

There are components which have been compromised to a point where all integrity and authenticity have been lost. One of those is **Fort Fredericksborg** at Amanful Hill (Cape Coast) where the physical fabric is non-existent to a point where it is not even possible to verify what has been lost, and new

³ The Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (KEEA) Municipal District, of which Elmina is the capital.

unrelated structures have been constructed on site over time. The other one is **Fort Augustaburg** at Teshie where the exact site of the original fort is in doubt with two possible locations. As to **Fort Vernon** at Prampram, minimal traces exist that supposedly were part of the former fort. These few traces are now integrated in the walls of a concrete structure, today entirely deteriorated as well, that was once built to host a modern guesthouse. These traces at the construction's foundations are only visible, as they are built on sandy grounds of the adjacent beach, probably laid bare by the corrosive impacts of the ocean water and winds. Consequently, the component features really no recognizable remains, its physical fabric is therefore void of any authenticity and integrity. However, as stated earlier, this component was not mentioned in the original nomination (neither the name of the fort nor the town of Prampram), but it features in the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (that followed the Retrospective Inventory) as one of four "ruins with visible structures". It is not clear on what grounds Fort Vernon was recognised as a component. If this was done mistakenly, the State Party should consequently inform the World Heritage Centre and request the Committee to correct the RSOUV accordingly.

The other components have a varying degree of physical deterioration but have retained the values of the OUV. This includes the physical fabric and the supporting attributes such as sense of place and emotional feel that some of the spaces in the forts and castles still provide. The progressive deterioration suffered by the forts and castles has not been able to erode the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property but has resulted in a need for a re-assessment of the individual components' contribution to the whole. The size of the property and the nature of each component is such that the values are repeated in individual components and do not necessarily rely on the whole. The Mission Team believes that, in the absence of enhanced interpretation, research and documentation, the components that have been compromised may ultimately be too alienated as they have no contribution to the whole of the OUV of the property, at this point; whilst the other components still carry the values at varying degrees, first individually and then collectively.

Therefore, in order to maintain the attributes of the components which contribute to the OUV of the property, the major challenge will be to pursue the assessments on the physical structures so as to implement a large-scale campaign of structural consolidation where necessary, physical rehabilitation and maintenance and improvement of infrastructures, in and around the components, based on the delineation of core areas and buffer zones. The elaboration, and subsequent implementation of the Management and Conservation Plan, together with its Action Plan, will then have to include objectives for the sustainability of these measures, improved and regular monitoring of the components' state of conservation, effective institutionalised management and a strong focus on substantially enhanced site interpretation, support to a sustainable local tourism economy, and the active and creative involvement of local communities and stakeholders for the betterment of their living conditions.



6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report summarizes the issues that the Mission team was able to observe, assess and discuss with GMMB and various local actors and stakeholders, such as Chiefs, caretakers, opinion leaders, etc. Many of these issues had been anticipated thanks to the findings of the Advisory Mission conducted to seven of the property's components in 2019. Visiting the 28 components in just a few days has its limits and more in-depth evaluations and monitoring of the issues identified in this report must continue. The State Party has shown over the past year its strong commitment to addressing all the issues that are affecting the property, but it must also be recognised that the scope of the challenges is immense, and the stakes very high, which requires that the efforts of the GMMB be stepped up even further so as to bring on board all stakeholders concerned.

Major development projects and major interventions at the forts and castles must be planned on the backdrop of this Mission's findings and must be halted if already in more or less advanced planning or implementation stages, so that no irreversible actions are taken that could affect the property's OUV. It is important also that all such interventions and projects be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review, in conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The findings and the recommendations below should be understood as a continuation and extension of those of the 2019 Advisory Mission which are still largely valid and generally repeated and expanded hereafter so as to provide assistance and orientation for the State Party of Ghana to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value and the highly symbolic legacy of the Forts and Castles of Ghana be preserved for future generations.

6.1. Findings

6.1.1. Components missing Integrity and Authenticity

Some of the components of the property have lost, considerably or entirely, their integrity and their authenticity, now featuring compromised values for which those components were included in the property's inscription, thereby threatening the property's Outstanding Universal Value. These components are Fort Fredericksborg at Amanful Hill (Cape Coast), Fort Augustaborg in Teshie, and Fort Vernon at Prampram. This forcibly bears the question on how to deal with these components and how they could possibly continue to carry and convey the values for which the property's OUV was inscribed. For these, as well as for three other components – Fort Fredensborg at Old Ningo, Fort Nassau at Mouri, and Fort Vredenburg at Dutch Komenda – that have suffered important but not irreversible impacts on their integrity, the State Party should present concepts for improved conservation and enhanced interpretation allowing them to reflect the values for which the property was inscribed. These issues require careful consideration by the State Party and should be based on prior implementation of other recommendations made in this report (delineation of boundaries and buffer zones, documentation, inventory, management, etc.).

6.1.2. Structural Integrity

Several of the forts are facing increasing vulnerable conditions regarding their structural integrity. This was due to abandonment, neglect and lack of conservation and maintenance. As mentioned in subchapter 4.4., this resulted in several components revealing serious structural instability. This caused severe damage to some of the forts, as some of its parts are missing. In other forts, the structure is so unstable that might fall at any moment, or components present serious cracks that reveal structural movement or setting issues that if not consolidated might lead in a near future, to

parts that detach from the component. Then, it is rather complex and highly costly to reattach those parts.

6.1.3. Threats and risks affecting the property

A full and detailed analysis of all the potential threats that are affecting the 28 components should be undertaken, as several components are already impacted and damaged. Subchapter 4.2. outlines the threats that are affecting the property, such as: structural Integrity of the forts and castles, coastal erosion, illegal construction, urban pressure, encroachment, incorrect interventions, neglect and abandonment, lack of sanitation, development projects, and adaptive reuses of the property's components. Of particular concern are the threats from continued increase of coastal erosion, as well as aggressive rains, both contributing to the rise of climate change (see p.20, from the 2019 Advisory Mission Report). When visiting and assessing the state of conservation of the 28 forts and castles that constitute the serial property, it was possible to identify several factors that had evolved to become serious threats to the attributes of the property. If no action is taken, and the property is furthered impacted, it could risk the potential loss of the attributes that hold Outstanding Universal Value.

6.1.4. Lack of maintenance and a regular conservation approach

Due to abandonment and neglect, there is a constant lack of conservation and even maintenance of most of the forts and castles, which results in degradation and ultimately, on the damage of the components. In most of the forts and castles, regular maintenance activities, such as the cleaning of gutters and downpipes, the removal of small plants and roots from holes, the repair of small cracks, the replacement of broken rooftiles, etc. are not being addressed. This results in a small issue becoming a huge problem, and ultimately, even a threat in almost all the components.

6.1.5. Management effectiveness

The Mission Team noted that the management of the property is negatively impacted by lack of properly and effectively coordinated conservation capacity (technical and expertise), lack of research and documentation of sites, poor financing and inadequate and poorly trained human resources as well as a high staff turnover resulting in poor institutional memory and information management.

It was also found that the World Heritage status of the property is not a key consideration in decision making process within and outside GMMB. As already noted by the 2019 Advisory Mission it was found that there is no systematic compliance with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, in particular the OUV based Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, (2011).

The Mission Team also found that the State Party does not have guidelines and procedures to guide the management and conservation of the Forts and Castles, and thus employs varying approaches/methodology over time, resulting in conservation inconsistency, for instance related to the conservation and restoration materials. There are no processes to be followed in making conservation interventions or an accountable structure such as science or conservation committee to guide and take responsibility for conservation decisions. The management planning process that the State Party has initiated through support of the international assistance funding is expected to address some of the management effectiveness short comings.

6.1.6. Increase of development projects

Several development projects are being prepared and planned, if not already implemented, with major economic interests but with hardly any consideration of the sites they are likely to be impacting, or with inadequate approaches to tourism development that don't incorporate or respect site interpretation capable of bringing out the attributes of OUV and the values expressed in criterion (vi). An example for the first observation is the large-scale Jamestown fishing Harbour complex in Accra for which detailed plans have been requested without success by the GMMB from the competent state agency or the international funding partner, in order to share them with the World Heritage Centre; a process which points to lack of governmental coordination. Tourism development projects can also harm the property's components as can be seen at Fort Metal Cross or potentially with the Elmina Heritage Bay tourism project which prompted the 2019 Advisory Mission. Despite the commendable example of Fort Amsterdam where the development project has been put on hold in order to reorient it toward structural consolidation, the State Party did not comply with the precise request of the World Heritage Committee for all development projects to be halted. Indeed, at St. George Castle in Elmina or at Fort St Anthony in Axim, large areas have been paved next to these two components to serve as parking lots or other community use, without archaeological works being firstly addressed.

6.1.7. Poor regulation and management of development approvals and implementation

The Mission Team noted that development authorization is not coordinated and is also loosely implemented. This is evidenced by ad hoc approaches and approval of developments at some sites constituting the Forts and Castles, without following a systematic and well-established procedure to ensure that the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the Forts and Castles is retained.

The Mission Team also noted with concern the lack of cooperation between different State agencies involved in development projects. A clear example of this is Ghana Tourism Authority proceeding with tourism developments at Elmina Castle without the required impact assessments and disregarding a letter issued by the GMMB calling for the halting of development. The Mission Team also found that there is no coordination or synergy between the authorization processes of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and those of the GMMB. Developers can obtain an environmental authorization from the EPA and proceed with developments without getting required heritage impact assessments from the GMMB.

6.1.8. Lack of Boundaries and Buffer zones

The Mission Team confirmed that the boundaries of the property's core areas have not been clearly defined. This is a necessary starting point of any understanding of the property and the protection of its OUV. Stakeholders also do not know what constitutes the property boundaries, as the lack of clear boundaries also means that there cannot be signage indicating the limits of the property and its buffer zone. Furthermore, as already observed by the Advisory Mission, none of the components of the property has a buffer zone.

The Mission Team also discovered that the components listed in the original nomination differ from the components mentioned in the Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV). The case in point being that of Fort Vernon which appears in the RSOUV but is not part of the original nomination.

6.1.9. Lack of Capacity Building

The Mission Team noted that the GMMB has a very thin human resource capacity resulting in overstretched officials who are unable to keep up with the requirements of managing such a complex establishment hence the poor management of the property. It was also found that the officials working for GMMB have to a large extent not been properly trained in the technicalities of managing a World Heritage property and most officials are not familiar with the 1972 World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines. A significant number of the property's components were found not to have caretakers. Where there are caretakers, they are required to have multiple roles including security, interpretation, cleaning, education, cashiers and sometimes conservation. The caretakers also do not receive regular training to be able to meet the requirements and expectations of their portfolios.

It was also found that the few conservators and artisans working for GMMB are familiar with conservation requirements for World Heritage properties such as maintaining authenticity and integrity. The Mission Team also confirmed, as noted by the 2019 Advisory Mission, that there is a serious lack of expertise and skills gap in GMMB, in areas such as archaeology, architectural conservation, tourism management among many others.

The Mission Team noted that 62 new positions for the GMMB have been approved by the country's Public Service Commission. This presents an opportunity for GMMB to instigate a clear needs identification and prioritization prior to the recruitment process in order to ensure that the new recruitments address the glaring skills gap that is currently faced by the organisation before they start recruiting new staff.

6.1.10. Lack of strategic vision for the entire property

The Mission Team observed that the State Party is facing many challenges and pressures due to decades of poor management of the property and therefore trying to address the problems without a well thought and coordinated process. It was also noted that, the GMMB is placing too much reliance on the upcoming management planning process funded by the World Heritage Committee International Assistance allocation. The Mission Team concluded that, the GMMB risks making further mistakes unless a structured method such as a strategic planning process is engaged in with the view to address the challenges in a more coordinated manner with measurable targets and milestones.

6.1.11. Lack of adequate site interpretation

The issue of site interpretation is addressed in length in the present report. Being inscribed exclusively on the basis of criterion (vi) recognizing that the property is "*a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora*", interpretation is crucial as the components of the inscribed property need to convey this "emotive symbol". To this end, preserving, maintaining and promoting the physical integrity of the components is not only a necessity and a major responsibility, but it is also important to maintain a significant asset of Ghana, as the Forts and Castles are some of the best-preserved material testimonies of this part of human history and can play an important part in the recognition of the way the history and the legacy of the slave trade continue to act in the contemporary world. In light of the current efforts to develop new strategies for strengthening and revitalizing UNESCO's Slave Route Project, Ghana can become a primary actor in giving new relevance to the project's "*positioning and broaden its impact in terms of history education, capacity-building, particularly for managers of memorial sites or museums, and the production and dissemination of new knowledge on this theme*"¹. An additional new approach of the

¹ See Document 209 EX/5.I.F presented to, and discussed by the 209th session of UNESCO's Executive Board (Paris, 29 June – 10 July 2020), see https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372741_eng

Slave Route Project also aims at "*broadening the scope of action, in particular on issues relating to human rights, social inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-racism in contemporary societies and modern slavery*", an issue that, during this first half of 2020, has regained critical actuality on a global scale.

Yet, the Mission Team's visit to the 28 components and the general observations that can be made on the property at large, reveal a lack of coordinated interpretation and presentation among the entire property, which itself is not well perceived in its entirety, leaving each component mostly on its own. There are exhibitions and explanations, as well as initiatives carried by caretakers, to address the interpretation of some of the components. But it has become evident that the full potential of this World Heritage property is far from being explored. On the contrary, this degree of misperception and insufficient interpretation keeps the door open for unregulated development projects that can irreversibly affect the OUV of the property.

Enhancing interpretation must also come with some basic logistical and infrastructural measures that would include installing signs, improving the reception of visitors by providing specific services and developing various facilities, among others. It is important to be able to experience the visit to a site in safe and convenient conditions, so sanitation issues relating to waste management and sewerage systems must be addressed, having regard to the necessary visiting conditions, notwithstanding the primary objective which is to improve the living conditions of the local communities.

6.1.12. Lack of database, documentation and research

The fact that there are no archives, no records, drawings or historical inventories from each one of the 28 components is a major problem. As there is no property database that can be accessed by GMMB staff, making their work twice as hard, as the national heritage organisation is not able to respond in an efficient, procedural, and comprehensive way, to the rising threats and challenges faced by the property. All the information that has been passed by universities to GMMB or has been created throughout the years by GMMB staff is not accountable and has unknown location. So, a reliable database system should be created and well protected.



Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – REASSESS THE SERIAL PROPERTY IN ITS ENTIRETY BY CONSIDERING THE INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF EACH COMPONENT

Considering the fact that there are questions as to the contribution to OUV (including authenticity and integrity) of several components of the property, the State Party should foresee, in the short term, reassessing the entire property, with particular regard to the contribution of each component to the overall OUV (including its authenticity and integrity) of the Property as a whole. This reassessment should verify whether the attributes can still contribute to the property's OUV. This process requires the prior definition of the boundaries of the serial property as inscribed. It also presupposes the creation of a database, together with a full inventory and research being conducted, and the conceptualisation for adequate and enhanced site interpretation. Once this reassessment has been completed and the results submitted to the World Heritage Committee it will be possible to determine the appropriate next steps, including whether or not the State Party should revise the list of components, as contained in the RSOUV, and/or consult with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, on a possible boundary modification.

Recommendation 2 – DEFINITION OF PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AND BUFFER ZONE

The lack of defined property boundaries and buffer zones is a major threat to the protection of the property. The property currently has no system of protection against development pressures in the immediate surroundings of its components. The State Party should immediately embark on a process of delineating boundaries of the property as inscribed, as well as creating adequate buffer zones for each component, as previously recommended in the Advisory Mission Report (p.14), and requested by the World Heritage Committee, in conformity with paragraph 14 from the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO-WHC, 2017, paragraph 104). The cartography showing the boundaries of the serial property as inscribed, and meeting all technical requirements established by the Operational Guidelines, should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in the framework of the Boundary Clarification process, for further noting by the World Heritage Committee. As to the buffer zones, these should be prepared considering relevant values around the components and should be submitted under the Minor Boundary modification process.

In the course of this exercise, distinct attention should be given to Fort Vernon at Prampram, which was not mentioned in the original nomination neither by the name of the fort, nor by the indication of the town of Prampram, but included in the RSOUV adopted by the Committee at its 36th session (Decision 36 COM 8E, 2012, St. Petersburg). Considering that this component completely lacks any authenticity and integrity and does not contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, it is recommended that the State Party first clarify whether it should not have been included in the RSOUV.

Recommendation 3 – CONDUCT A STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY EVALUATION

It is fundamental to set out urgent and immediate structural measures on all the forts and castles that are at risk of having detached elements in danger of falling. It is also imperative to undertake a full physical condition assessment for each component of the property. The physical condition assessment will provide the opportunity to evaluate the actual structural integrity condition and a detailed state of conservation analysis of each fort and castle. This will help establish, for both short- and medium-terms, a thoughtful intervention proposal, as well as a comprehensive stabilisation intervention for the long-term, if needed.

Recommendation 4 – DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The Mission Team recommends that a Disaster Risk Management Plan which includes attention to impacts of Climate Change be prepared for the entire property, as well as for each component. Identification of potential hazards and threats, as well as the assessment of risks, should be part of the plan in order to establish procedures on how to face, prepare and adapt to the risks identified, including climate change impact. If the State Party has already developed a National Disaster Risk Management Plan to respond to emergency preparedness dealing with Disaster Management arrangements and Disaster Risk reduction, the Disaster Risk Management Plan for the World Heritage property should be integrated within the overall National Disaster Risk Management Plan.

Recommendation 5 – NEED FOR A CONSERVATION PLAN

The State Party should develop a Conservation Plan addressing conservation and maintenance for the entire property. A Conservation Plan will clearly address the guidelines and the procedures on how to conserve and maintain each component (e.g. how to develop a lime plaster/mortar/etc.; which materials and measurements are needed; how to clean the wall; how to apply the plaster/mortar on the wall, etc.). This will help guide fort managers/caretakers to address the most adequate conservation requirements, and to avoid possible wrongdoings and/or incorrect interpretations and/or interventions regarding what is expected of them. The Conservation Plan should be included in the Management Plan under development.

Recommendation 6 – ALLOCATION OF A PERMANENT FUND FOR EACH FORT & CASTLE

A permanent fund should be allocated to each fort and castle and should be directed solely to maintenance activities. This will help to avoid further degradation of the components and will ensure that fort managers/caretakers have the financial means to address preventive and regular activities of maintenance, such as cleaning gutters, repairing, lime-washing, etc. (avoiding for instance, to address only partial limewash of a component, as happened in St. George Castle in Elmina and at Cape Coast Castle).

Recommendation 7 – CREATION OF A SCIENTIFIC & TECHNICAL COUNCIL

GMMB should have a structured process for making conservation-decisions. A Scientific & Technical Council should be established to deal with the overall approach to the conservation and interpretation of the property. This Scientific & Technical Council should be composed of architects, archaeologists, historical engineers, experts in conservation, etc. This Council should establish the procedures to be addressed (following the results of the physical condition assessment); it should prioritise conservation interventions; define the type of limewash and the colour to apply in a fort that has not been painted for centuries or has never been limewashed before; it should propose ways to proceed; it should give technical advice; etc. This Technical Conservation Council would support the relevant work being carried out by the GMMB Conservation Chief Architect and the GMMB Caretakers at each component. It will also assure that the Conservation Plan will be applied.

Recommendation 8 – NEED FOR LONG-TERM STABILISATION AND RESTORATION

Long-term stabilisation and restoration approaches are needed in several forts and castles, following the identification of different threats that affect the property. Before the removal of cement plasters, cements pavements, the distinct concrete block additions, etc. which have a very negative impact in the property, it is fundamental to first prepare the stabilisation and the restoration projects of the forts and the castles that were negatively impacted.

Recommendation 9 – IMPROVING MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Management effectiveness has been found to be very weak. Urgent interventions aimed at strengthening and improving processes and activities need to be addressed. GMMB should urgently address capacity building by providing adequate finances, improving staff competence through targeted training, and strengthening research collaboration with institutions such as universities.

GMMB should also strengthen management effectiveness by working closely with local chiefs and other state role players such as the District Assemblies who can assist with issues such as sanitation and buffer zone management through development and enforcement of bylaws. GMMB should ensure that the management plan under development addresses the shortcomings of management effectiveness.

Recommendation 10 – HALT ALL CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, INCLUDING PROJECTS, AT AND AROUND ANY COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY

The Mission Team reiterates and supports the recommendation of the 2019 Advisory Mission (Recommendation 1), urging the State Party at any level to halt entirely all development projects currently being planned or even implemented until a full examination of their potential impact on the property can be undertaken. The State Party should further ensure, including with national and international technical and financial partners, that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA) and, where appropriate, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) be systematically included in the planning stages (work plans and budgets) and shared with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Heritage impact assessment should follow the process of the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011).

Recommendation 11 – DEVELOPMENT AUTHORISATIONS

There is urgent need to streamline development processes by various levels and agencies of the State Party, to address the current situation where one agency can authorise or carry out development without regard for the responsibilities of another State Agency. The State Party should introduce legislation that synchronises the authorisation processes of the GMMB, the Environmental Protection Agency and the other players, such as the District Assemblies, to ensure that their roles complement each other. Clear procedures need to be considered for development projects, including the need for Heritage Impact Assessments, and/or Social Impact assessments, as well as Environment Impact assessments, when necessary. Also, these procedures should ensure that major development projects cannot be implemented without referral to and approval of the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies, in conformity with paragraph 172 from the Operational Guidelines.

Recommendation 12 – NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

To address Capacity Building among GMMB human resources will help create a more effective team, with a more strategic and pro-active approach, in order to respond to the needs of the property. GMMB, as part of filling the 60 approved new positions, should conduct a skills analysis with the purpose of recruiting skilled and competent professionals dedicated to the 28 components of the World Heritage property. The GMMB should develop a focused World Heritage training programme for officials responsible for the property with prioritisation of caretakers, conservators and inspectors. This specific training on World Heritage should be also considered under the support of AWHF and the Advisory Bodies. This will allow the workers to be more skilled and knowledgeable on World Heritage matters, which would help create a team dedicated to long-term results.

Recommendation 13 – NEED FOR A STRATEGIC VISION

GMMB should develop a strategic vision for the entire World Heritage property, with a defined desired state of conservation and measurable milestones. The vision should clearly identify the conservation and management needs for all the components and outline the actions to be implemented, as well as the resources to be made available for the short-, medium- and long-term management of the property.

Recommendation 14 – INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF EACH COMPONENT

The State Party should address site interpretation and the presentation of each fort and castle, as well as of the property as a whole, in addition to the physical and structural conservation and the definition of boundaries and buffer zones. This is crucial for maintaining the OUV of the property, which is inscribed on criterion (vi) recognising that the forts and castles are "*a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora.*" This engages a large array of actors and stakeholders, from the levels of the local communities to the District and the national authorities. The contribution of local communities and GMMB caretakers becomes particularly essential when valuing the attributes of OUV of each component. The GMMB should develop an interpretation strategy to be implemented across all components in order to enhance the attributes of the property's OUV.

Recommendation 15 – ENGAGE IN STRENGTHENED INVOLVEMENT IN UNESCO'S SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT

It must be noted that Ghana has taken the full measure of the importance of actively engaging in UNESCO's Slave Route Project, currently in the process of developing new strategies. In addition to and as part of the development of a site interpretation strategy, the State Party is encouraged to participate critically in the development and implementation of activities and programmes aiming at history education, capacity-building (in particular for managers of memorial sites or museums), and the production and dissemination of new knowledge on the issues surrounding the issue of slavery and its consequences on contemporary societies.

Recommendation 16 – NEED TO CREATE A DATABASE, DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH

GMMB needs to create a centralized database of all the data, regarding the 28 components that constitute the property. There is a need to develop a more systematic and consistent approach for the creation of a database, with clear procedures for identification, data collection and data protection of all the documentation regarding the property. This database should be both physical and digital, and should have means of high protection, to avoid being easily hacked by outsiders, or removed by staff. It is therefore recommended to address a more consistent research regarding archaeology, history and interpretation of the property, as well as site survey to create updated drawings and documentation collection for each one of the 28 components. To develop this database, it is fundamental to locate and to gather existing reports, documentation, maps, surveys, and any data that can contribute to a comprehensive and rich database.

Recommendation 17 – NEED TO EXPEDITE THE REVIEW OF THE EXISTING LEGISLATION

The State Party indicated that a new national heritage legislation has been drafted and submitted to the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2016. This process has dragged on for too long and should be expedited with commitment to timelines. It is recommended that the State Party conclude the review and the update of National Heritage legislation without further delay.

Recommendation 18 – REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION IN 2022

It is also recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to invite another Reactive Monitoring mission in 2022, to assess the property's state of conservation, to consider progress made on the Management Plan for the property and the delineation of boundaries a buffer zone and protection regimes for each component, and to assess progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission of 2019 and the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission of 2020.



FORT GROOT FREDERICKSBORG (PRINCESS TOWN)

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FORT WILLIAM, LIGHTHOUSE (CAPE COAST)

8. ANNEXES

1. Retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session (2012, St. Petersburg) – Decision 36 COM 8E
2. Terms of reference.
3. Mission team (with bios).
4. Itinerary and programme.
5. Mission participants and persons met during the mission
6. Recommendations from the 2019 Advisory Mission Report.
7. State of Conservation reports on the property examined and Decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee in 1996, 1998 and 2019
8. Google-earth maps and overviews
9. Photographs of all the property components

ANNEX 1. – Retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session (2012, St. Petersburg) – Decision: 36 COM 8E

Brief synthesis

These fortified trading posts, founded between 1482 and 1786, and spanning a distance of approximately 500 km along the coast of Ghana between Keta in the east and Beyin in the west, were links in the trading routes established by the Portuguese in many areas of the world during their era of great maritime exploration. The castles and forts were built and occupied at different times by traders from Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Germany and Britain. They served the gold trade of European chartered companies. Latterly they played a significant part in the developing slave trade, and therefore in the history of the Americas, and, subsequently, in the 19th century, in the suppression of that trade.

The property consists of three Castles (Cape Coast, St. George's d'Elmina and Christiansborg at Osu, Accra), 15 Forts (Good Hope at Senya Beraku; Patience at Apam; Amsterdam at Abandzi; St. Jago at Elmina; San Sebastian at Shama; Metal Cross at Dixcove; St. Anthony at Axim; Orange at Sekondi; Groot Fredericksborg at Princesstown; William (Lighthouse) at Cape Coast; William at Anomabu; Victoria at Cape Coast; Ussher at Ussherstown, Accra; James at Jamestown, Accra and Apollonia at Beyin), four Forts partially in ruins (Amsterdam at Abandzi; English Fort at British Komenda; Batenstein at Butre; Prinzensten at Keta), four ruins with visible structures (Nassau at Mouri; Fredensborg at Old Ningo; Vredenburg at Dutch Komenda; Vernon at Prampram and Dorothea at Akwida) and two sites with traces of former fortifications (Frederiksborg at Amanful, Cape Coast and Augustaborg at Teshie, Accra).

The basic architectural design of the Forts was in the form of a large square or rectangle. The outer components consisted of four bastions/batteries or towers located at the corners, while the inner components consisted of buildings of two or three storeys with or without towers, in addition to an enclosure, courtyard or a spur. Many have been altered, during their use by successive European powers, and some survive only as ruins.

St. George's d'Elmina Castle, built in 1482, is one of the oldest European buildings outside Europe, and the historic town of Elmina is believed to be the location of the first point of contact between Europeans and sub-Saharan Africans.

The castles and forts constituted for more than four centuries a kind of 'shopping street' of West Africa to which traders of Europe's most important maritime nations came to exchange their goods for those of African traders, some of whom came from very far in the interior.

They can be seen as a unique "collective historical monument": a monument not only to the evils of the slave trade, but also to nearly four centuries of pre-colonial Afro-European commerce on the basis of equality rather than on that of the colonial basis of inequality. They represent, significantly and emotively, the continuing history of European-African encounter over five centuries and the starting point of the African Diaspora.

Criterion (vi): The Castles and Forts of Ghana shaped not only Ghana's history but that of the world over four centuries as the focus of first the gold trade and then the slave trade. They are a significant and emotive symbol of European-African encounters and of the starting point of the African Diaspora.

Integrity

The property contains all the significant remains of forts and castles along the coast.

Some of the ruins are susceptible to wave action. The sea has attacked a major part of Fort Prinzenstein but its protection has been enhanced by the construction of a sea defence wall, and efforts are being made to stabilise the remaining parts.

The sites overall remains vulnerable to environmental pressures, development pressure including localized quarrying, and lack of adequate funding for the regular maintenance and conservation of the sites. There are also no buffer zones.

Authenticity

The forts and castles were periodically altered, extended and modified to suit changing circumstances and new needs. In their present conditions, they demonstrate that history of change. As symbols of trade, and particularly the slave trade, they need to continue to reflect the way they were used.

Protection and management requirements

The Castles and Forts have been respectively established and protected as National Monuments under the National Liberation Council Decree (N.L.C.D) 387 of 1969 and Executive Instrument (E.I.) 29 of 1973. All sites are in the custody of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB). Also James Fort, Accra, and Fort William, Anomabu, are no longer in use as prisons and have been handed over to the GMMB.

The Monuments Division of the GMMB provides technical advice and management. Regular state-of-conservation inspections are undertaken. Priority programmes are established to help ensure that appropriate interventions are carried out

The existing legislative framework is to be reviewed, and it is expected that a new legal framework will enhance the existence of the heritage resources, the socio-economic developments and improve the quality of life of the local inhabitants.

A management plan still needs to be prepared. There is an on-going need to ensure adequate resources and training for staff, and to demarcate the boundaries of the sites and establish buffer zones.

ANNEX 2. – Terms of Reference for the Joint WHC-ICCROM-ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions World Heritage property (Ghana), 1 – 10 February 2020

At its 43rd session in Baku (Azerbaijan, 2019), the World Heritage Committee, in its Decision 43COM 7B.106, requested the State Party of Ghana to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission for early 2020 to the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions World Heritage property in order to ‘assess the state of conservation of all the components of the property and the potential threats they are facing, the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory mission [of 2019], and progress in the delineation and protection of buffer zones and preparation of the Management Plan’.

In response to the Committee's request, the State Party, in its letter dated 14 November 2019, invited a joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.

This mission is a follow-up to the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission to the property that was conducted from 28 April to 2 May 2019. That mission, which was initially requested by the State Party for the assessment of a Tourism Development project at St. George Castle in Elmina, visited in total seven (7) property components, i.e. 3 Castles and 4 Forts and, in its report, made a total of 14 recommendations.

These terms of reference of the joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission was requested by the World Heritage Committee to assess the state of conservation of all of the 28 components referenced in the original nomination proposal. With a view to providing to the World Heritage Committee a full account of the state of conservation, the mission shall undertake the following tasks:

1. Evaluate the overall state of conservation of each of the property's components, giving particular attention to the conditions of authenticity and integrity that make up its Outstanding Universal Value;
2. Assess all possible factors that are affecting the components that face or could face potential loss of the Outstanding Universal Value, and if preventive measures have been taken such as an action plan and time frame; in that regard, to the extent possible, the mission shall seek to ascertain which attributes and components of the property have been compromised, including confirming which ones still exist (and in what state) or those that may have been lost overtime;
3. Give particular attention to threats stemming from implemented, ongoing or planned developmental projects and adaptive reuses at the components of the property that were, are or would be implemented without advice from the World Heritage Committee and Advisory Bodies, in terms of the Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
4. As regards the need to clearly define the boundaries of the property's components and the respective buffer zones, examine the extent of the vulnerability this causes or may cause to the individual components and the property as a whole, such as lack of protection and urgent intervention, abandonment and neglect, incorrect interventions, encroachment, illegal developments, urban pressure, large scale investments surrounding the forts and castles, etc. which may threaten the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the property;
5. Assess the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission of 2019 as well as of Decision 43 COM 7B.106 of the World Heritage Committee, in particular:

- a. the request to halt all restoration works and development projects, notably at St. George's Castle at Elmina and Fort Amsterdam at Abandze and the measures taken to address the various concerns, including;
- b. the delineation of boundaries and a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes
- c. the review and update the national heritage legislation that protects heritage, including World Heritage properties in Ghana so as to align it to good practices and approaches in heritage management.
- d. the progress made in the development and implementation of the Management Plan for the property, notably through the implementation of the International Assistance;
- e. the creation of a centralised database covering the 28 components as a platform to be physically and digitally accessed and consulted by GMMB staff. This database is expected to improve monitoring and decision making regarding conservation of the property
- f. the development and implementation of capacity building for the GMMB staff and designated site managers

In order to ensure efficient preparation of the Reactive Monitoring Mission, The State Party shall provide all documents to the World Heritage Centre that are relevant for the mission, such as:

- The tourism development project for Elmina (latest version);
- The report on the revised project at Fort Amsterdam;
- The concrete market project being built near St. George Castle in Elmina;
- Any available documentation for property boundaries of components.

The State Party should also provide a proposal of a mission programme and is requested to facilitate and take the necessary measures allowing for the mission to be carried out in the best possible conditions, including arrangements for on-site visits, as well as official meetings and consultations with national and local stakeholders.

The mission will prepare a report on the findings and recommendations following the World Heritage Centre Reactive Monitoring Mission report format.

ANNEX 3. – THE MISSION TEAM

Ms Mariana CORREIA (ICOMOS):

President and professor at Escola Superior Gallaecia (Architecture School in Portugal), and World Heritage Advisor for ICOMOS, Ms Correia did several Reactive Monitoring Missions, Technical Evaluation Missions and Advisory Missions in Africa, Asia, Middle East and Europe. She co-organized World Heritage courses, and taught in World Heritage courses for ICCROM, IUCN, ICOMOS and ARC-WH, in UAE, Norway and Bahrain. She also participated in the Evaluation of World Heritage nominations for ICOMOS World Heritage Evaluation Unit. She holds a PhD on Conservation of World Heritage from OBU, Oxford, UK; and a Masters on Earthen Architecture from CRATerre-ENSAG, in France. As project- leader, she won 2 European Union projects and 1 National research project. She is the President of ICOMOS-ISCEAH (earthen heritage) and a Board member of ICOMOS- Portugal.

Mr Thabo KGOMOMMU (ICCROM):

General Manager for Cultural Heritage at South African National Parks. Thabo holds a Bachelors Degree in Archaeology, a Post Graduate Diploma in Museums and Heritage Management and a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Management. He has 23 years' experience in heritage management attained in various positions with different institutions. He has worked in the exhibitions department of Robben Island Museum, as Curator and Heritage Manager for Mogale City Museums, as Provincial Manager for the South African Heritage Resources Agency, and as Deputy Director for world heritage at the South African Department of Environment. Has experience in museums, heritage sites, world heritage, community and stakeholder management, evaluation of heritage impact assessments, heritage management planning, heritage policy development and heritage tourism and education. He also has 6 years experience as a part time lecturer for heritage and museums management at the University of Pretoria.

Mr David STEHL (UNESCO, World Heritage Centre, Africa Unit):

Specialist of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Mr Stehl holds a degree in Ethnomusicology on popular traditional music of Ghana where he has spent several months for field research (1999/2000). He joined UNESCO in 2001 (Intangible Heritage Section) and was appointed as Culture Programme Specialist in the UNESCO Offices in Bamako/Mali (2010-2013) and Dakar/Senegal (2013-2016) before integrating the World Heritage Centre.

ANNEX 4. – Itinerary and programme

The mission managed to visit all 28 components within 7 days, travelling nearly 1600 km.

1 February 2020

- Arrival in Accra

2 February 2020

- Meeting with GMMB, GTA and NatCom at the UNESCO Accra office
- Visit of four (4) components: James Fort, Ussher Fort, Christiansborg (Osu Castle), and Fort Augustaborg

3 February 2020

- Visit of three (3) components: Fort Prinzenstein, Fort Vernon and Fort Fredensborg

4 February 2020

- Visit of five (5) components. Fort Good Hope, Fort Patience, Fort Amsterdam, Fort William and Fort Nassau

5 February 2020

- Visit of eight (8) components: Cape Coast Castle, Fort William (Lighthouse), Fort Victoria, Fort Fredericksborg, English Fort, Fort Vrendenburg, St. George Castle (Elmina), and Fort St Jago

6 February 2020

- Visit of three (3) components: Fort St Sebastian, Fort Orange and Fort Groot Fredericksborg

7 February 2020

- Visit of two (2) components: Fort Apollonia and Fort St. Anthony

8 February 2020

- Visit of three (3) components: Fort Dorothea, Fort Metal Cross and Fort Batenstein

9 February 2020

- Debriefing meeting with the GMMB
- Return flight to Paris

10 February 2020

- Debriefing meeting of the mission team and the Head of the Accra Office with the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, the Acting Director of the GMMB, the Chairperson of the Board (GMMB) and the Head of the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA)

ANNEX 5. – Mission participants and persons met during the mission

a) Participation throughout the mission

In addition to the three Mission Team members of ICOMOS, ICCROM and the World Heritage Centre, the mission was accompanied by Mr Carl Ampah (c.ampah@unesco.org), National Culture Officer of the UNESCO in Accra and by a Ghanaian Delegation composed of the following persons:

- Ms Natalyn Oye ADDO,
GMMB, Site Manager, Tel. 277401714 oyeaddo@yahoo.com
- Christopher Wetcher
Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, Tel. 244790387, c.wetcher@unescoghana.org
- William Gmayi Nsuiban
GMMB, Public Relations Tel. 243459659, gmayinsuiban@gmail.com
- Bernard Agyiri Sackey
GMMB, Head of Monuments, Tel. 244692686, b.agyirisackey@gmail.com



b) Persons met during the mission (the above-mentioned persons were present during these meetings)

Name	Title	Contact	Email
Abdourahamane Diallo	UNESCO, Head of the UNESCO Accra Office and Representative of UNESCO to Ghana		a.diallo@unesco.org
Kingsley Oforu Ntiamoah	Ag. Executive Director (GMMB)		reviveghana@yahoo.com
Ivor Agyeman-Duah	Board Member (GMMB)		IvorAgyemanDuah66@gmail.com
Ekow Sampson	GTA	0244573353/0208159580	ekowsampson79@gmail.com

2ND FEBRUARY, 2020

SITE VISITS

FORT PRINZENSTEIN

Name	Title	Contact	Email
Togbi James- Ocloo	Dufia of Keta	0240449585	jamesocloov@gmail.com
James- Ocloo Aicorli	Caretaker KETA Fort		
Ibrahim Bollah	GMMB		
Joseph Grandle	Unit Comm. Member	0568000000	
Emmanuel G. Dovia	Reporter	0242023440	
Afealetey John	Carpenter	0242653807	
Danx			

FORT VENON

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Francis Essandoh	Dev. Planning Officer (Ningo-Prampram, District Assembly)	0209355695	Priifyessandoh@yahoo.com
2	Joyce Guddako	Tourism Culture (Ningo Prampram, District T/C Officer)	0543992534	Joycegudd31@gmail.com

FORT OF GOOD HOPE

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Sebastian Kporyi	Cook for Rest House (Fort Good Hope Rest House)	0243184766	
2	Kojo Boni Nkwanta	Caretaker (GMMB)	0245763919	

FORT FREDENSBURG (No evidence)**FORT PATIENCE**

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Johnson Boateng	Chief GMMB (Cape Coast Castle Inspector of Monuments)	0244445738	
2	Benjamin Afagbegee	Conservator	0243351563	

FORT WILLIAM

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Emmanuel Kobby	Caretaker		Fort William Anomabo Facebook page

FORT AMSTERDAM

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Mr. Joseph		0107212992/0542949493	

FORT VICTORIA

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Mr. Frempong	Owner of small guest house accessing the Fort	0244932691	

FORT NASSAU (n/a)**DUTCH KOMENDA FORT**

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Mary Mensah Anfarm	(Opinion leader not GMMB Staff)	0545208284	

ENGLISH FORT IN KOMENDA

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Nana Kwesi Ankomah II		0249202016	
2	Mr. Robert Ayemin		0243539461	
3	Mr. Stephen Donkor		0245693126	
4	Nana Kodwo Kru II		0244877128	

SEBASTAIN FORT

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Charles Mensah	GMMB Shama (Caretaker)	0246222294	

2	Bernice Kwofie	Dependent of a resident Benard Kwofie	0559982475	
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GROOT FRIEDERICHBURG

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	John Baptist Quarm	GMMB	0247785243	

FORT APOLLONIA

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Thomas Arhi	Linguist		
2	Kwesi Atumo	Linguist II		
3	John Mensa	Elder		
4	Gabriel	Sarfohene		
5	Abusadiq Yakubu	Registrar		
6	Awulae Annor Adjaye III	President Western Nzema, Traditional Council- Beyin		
7	Godfrey Yaw Aubyn	Care Taker	024476425	P.O Box 281, Cape Coast

FORT SAINT ANTONIO, AXIM

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Seth Otoo		0241598411	

FORT BATENSTEIN

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	John Tandoh	Caretaker – King's nephew	0547329325	

Meeting with the Hon. Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Hon. Barbara Oteng-Gyasi	Minister		cog-112@hotmail.com
2	Alhaji Abdulai Yakubu	Chief Director		
3	Kwame Sowu-Jr	Board Chair, GMMB		sowujunior@yahoo.com, ks@energysynergiesgh.com
4	Kingsley Ntiamoah	Acting Director, GMMB		reviveghana@yahoo.com
5	Mr. Sackey	Head of Monuments, GMMB		b.agyirisackey@gmail.com
6	William Gmayi Nsuiban	Public Relations officer, GMMB		gmayinsuiban@gmail.com
7	Natalyn Oye Addo	Site Manager, Forts & Castles, GMMB		oyeaddo@yahoo.com
8	Mariana Correia	Architect/ICOMOS		marianacorreia@esg.pt
9	Thabo Kgomommu	Cultural Heritage Specialist/ICCROM		thabok.tk@gmail.com
10	Abdourahamane Diallo	Head of Office & UNESCO Representative		a.diallo@unesco.org
11	Carl Ampah	NPO/CLT		c.ampah@unesco.org

FORT AUGUSTABOURG

No	Name	Title	Contact	Email
1	Hon. Lawyer Boye		0208130657	
2	Nathaniel Adjetey Adjei		0243908701	

ANNEX 6. – Recommendations of the 2019 Advisory Mission Report

The full report of the 2019 Advisory Mission is available on the dedicated World Heritage Centre Website at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>

Recommendation 1 – HALT ALL CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, INCLUDING PROJECTS, AT AND AROUND ANY COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY

Given the various development projects being addressed at, within and around the components of the serial property, as well as the need to define buffer zones for each component, the State Party is urged to halt all such development projects entirely, as it is in the case of St. George Castle in Elmina, Fort Amsterdam in Abandzi, around St James Fort in Jamestown, Fort Groot Fredericksborg at Princetown, and Fort Metal Cross in Dixcove, until a full examination of their potential impact on the property can be undertaken. This is regardless of whether or not these projects aim at using and promoting the components, or if the components would simply be affected by independent infrastructural projects. The State Party should further ensure that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA) and, where appropriate, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) be systematically included in the planning stages (work plans and budgets) and shared with the WHC. The State Party is further reminded of the importance of paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention which *"invites the States Parties to the Convention to inform the Committee, through the Secretariat, of their intention to undertake or to authorize in an area protected under the Convention major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. Notice should be given as soon as possible (for instance, before drafting basic documents for specific projects) and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved."*

Recommendation 2 – UNDERTAKE EMERGENCY INSPECTION OF ALL THE COMPONENTS (FORTS AND CASTLES) OF THE PROPERTY

An emergency inspection of all the 28 components that constitutes the World Heritage property of the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions in Ghana needs to be undertaken urgently. This emergency inspection evolves from the observations of the mission team, such as the instability of some roofs and ceilings, as well as lack of security of historical walls and structures. This was observed during the Advisory Mission in some of the forts, such as Ussher Fort in Usshertown (see fig.14), where due to the heavy rains the roof collapsed in April 2018; and Fort St. Jago in Elmina (see figs. 15 and 16), on which roof trusses and ceilings are on the verge of falling, due to lack of intervention. This emergency inspection will assist in the prioritisation of action regarding urgent works to be addressed, in case of very deteriorated and instable forts and castles, to at least be able to structurally consolidate instable structures at specific components of the property, such as at Fort St. Jago and Ussher Fort. This is of high importance, as lack of maintenance and of conservation resulted in a dire state of some of the forts and castles, which even threatens the safety of the caretakers, and of the visitors and tourists. Following inspection, the State Party should address a prioritisation of action regarding safety requirements first, followed by addressing structural consolidation of the forts and castles, to assure their proper reinforcement.

Recommendation 3 – ASSESS THE INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF ALL THE COMPONENTS (FORTS AND CASTLES) OF THE PROPERTY

An evaluation of the state of conservation to assess the integrity and authenticity of all the 28 components needs to be done immediately. This assessment will help identify which of the forts and

castles are in good, medium, bad and dangerous state. Such profiling will assist in prioritising action regarding which ones can be restored, conserved and maintained. It will also help assess, which components of the property have been damaged and what are the next steps if the OUV is clearly not being maintained. Such steps should consider all possible options available in terms of the *Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of the Convention*.

Recommendation 4 – SUBMIT THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR ELMINA TO THE WHC

Under paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the State Party should submit to the World Heritage Committee, under its Secretariat, the World Heritage Centre, “*major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value*” of the World Heritage property. In the framework of the Tourism Development Project for Elmina, new constructions and infrastructures are being planned for the area surrounding the World Heritage property of St. George Castle. The State Party should submit a detailed conceptual document and a new project proposal for the Tourism development project (including detailed architectural drawings). In addition, the State Party should also submit a topographic survey and a detailed report on the actual state of the Castle and its surroundings (including plans, elevations and sections). The whole project should be submitted to the WHC, “*so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved*”. This would avoid “*making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse*” (WHC, 2017, paragraph 172). The State Party should await feedback from the WHC before implementing any physical aspects of the project.

Recommendation 5 – SUBMIT THE RESTORATION PROJECT OF FORT AMSTERDAM TO THE WHC

Under paragraph 172, (as explained in recommendation 2), the State Party should submit to the WHC projects addressing “*major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property*”. In the framework of Fort Amsterdam Project for Abandzi, a reconstruction intervention is being planned inside Fort Amsterdam, under approved funding from the European Union. The State Party should submit a detailed conceptual document regarding the different intervention degrees in the Fort (e.g. where reconstruction, restoration, conservation should be addressed on each detailed plan, elevation and section; justifying each intervention). An accurate Restoration project, including detailed architectural drawings should be also considered. In addition, the State Party should submit a topographic survey and a detailed report on the actual current state of Fort Amsterdam. The entire project should be submitted to the WHC for comment before implementation, “*so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved*”. This would avoid “*making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse*” (WHC, 2017, paragraph 172). The State Party should await feedback from the WHC, before implementing any physical aspects of the project.

Recommendation 6 – SUBMIT THE CONCRETE MARKET PROJECT BEING BUILT NEAR ST. GEORGE CASTLE IN ELMINA, TO THE WHC

A concrete market is under construction, at the entrance of St. George Castle, in Elmina. The Elmina Municipal Assembly is building a new concrete multi-layered market space, without the knowledge of GMMB. The height of the building, if uncontrolled, may result in visual impact on the skyline of the property, and may also affect the visual integrity of the World Heritage component. The project to be submitted to the WHC, as soon as possible should include the topographic survey of the area, the current state of the open market place and the new project. Any project surrounding any of the World Heritage components, including the construction of the concrete market at St George Castle, should be halted “*so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the*

Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved” (paragraph 172, of the Operational Guidelines). Following the project’s submission, the State Party should await feedback from the WHC, before continuing with the new market project construction.

Recommendation 7 – DEFINE AND SUBMIT TO THE WHC THE PROPERTY BOUNDARIES OF ALL THE COMPONENTS AND THEIR BUFFER ZONE PROPOSAL

The State Party should define and submit as soon as possible, to the World Heritage Centre, the property boundaries, establishing in detail the limits of each component, along with a careful justification of the boundaries for each component. Accurate maps specifying the coordinates of the property boundaries (C1, C2, C3, etc.) should be submitted to the WHC, including the GPS coordinates of each boundary limit. Following and under the Minor Boundary Modification (MGM) procedure, the State Party should submit to the World Heritage Centre before 1 February 2020, a proposal of buffer zone for all the components that constitute the World Heritage property of the Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions, in Ghana. A careful justification of compliance regarding the buffer zones should be prepared and submitted to the WHC, taking into consideration paragraphs 103 to 107, from the *Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

Recommendation 8 – IDENTIFY, PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF FACTORS AFFECTING OR THAT CAN VERY SOON AFFECT THE OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE OF THE PROPERTY

Noting that factors as lack of protection, urban pressure, encroachment, large scale investments surrounding the forts and castles, lack of urgent intervention, abandonment, incorrect interventions, etc., are increasingly mounting and are not being controlled (see sub-chapter 3.3), having continuous impact on the property, the State Party has to take urgent action to address them. If there is a continuous lack of action from GMMB, this may irremediably affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in a very near future. This will require major action from the State Party, as it will contribute to avoiding illegal constructions inside or around the forts and castles, as well as curbing intrusive interventions and any encroachments.

Recommendation 9 – REVIEW AND UPDATE NATIONAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

There is an urgent need to review and update the national heritage legislation that protects heritage, including World Heritage properties in Ghana so as to align it to good practices and approaches in heritage management. It was observed during the Advisory mission, that there is no legal mechanism within the current heritage laws to align ownership of private property, and to support the conservation of World Heritage properties in Ghana. Protective legislation is a requirement to assure the effective management of the property.

Recommendation 10 – DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

The State Party should prioritise the development and implementation of the Management Plan for the property as advised by the WHC. Noting that an International Assistance requested by the State Party was already approved for developing this plan, a detailed project strategy and a revised implementation plan needs to be urgently developed and submitted to the WHC to trigger the release of the first tranche of the funding. This plan should include an overall management framework for the property as a whole, as well as specific management plans at each of the components.

Recommendation 11 – DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A PROPER DATABASE OF ALL THE COMPONENTS OF THE PROPERTY

The State Party is encouraged to urgently create a centralised database covering the 28 components as a platform to be physically and digitally accessed and consulted by GMMB staff. This database is expected to improve monitoring and decision making regarding conservation of the property. The database should systematically collect, document and integrate the scientific, historical and architectural documentation of each one of the 28 components that constitute the property. The database development process should also gather existent data, scattered in individual computers of staff, as well as accessing databases in the hands of academics (i.e. Ghana University) and other national and international institutions. However, the accessing academic database is dependent on the good will of each professional to share his/her documentation. GMMB should gather information in a platform, regarding: historical data about the castles and forts interconnection; the intangible knowledge existent in the past and nowadays in local communities; the archaeological tangible data and its interpretation; information about World Heritage Convention and procedures; Management systems and Management Plans; the Monitoring process; Conservation Plans; and construction technology and the maintenance requirements of the physical fabric, etc.

Recommendation 12 – DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING FOR GMMB STAFF

The State Party is encouraged to urgently develop and implement capacity building, as there is need for expertise among GMMB staff. This would help respond to the currently lack of different technical capacities, as well as address the conservation priorities at the 28 components of the property. There is a need for investment by the State Party in addressing capacity building of GMMB, as well as partnering with Advisory Bodies as ICOMOS and ICCROM, the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and the WHC, before it is too late, and the lack of capacity affects the OUV of the property.

Recommendation 13 – DEVELOP A CONSERVATION STRATEGY AND MANUAL FOR THE PROPERTY

The State Party is encouraged to develop a conservation strategy and manual, which should include: (i) conservation procedures in line with good practices; (ii) the definition of conservation and maintenance roles and staff responsibilities at each fort and castle; (iii) the identification of the building materials and of the traditional maintenance to be followed; (iv) procedures for emergency conservation; and (v) conservation monitoring framework for the property. The recommended conservation strategy and conservation manual will thus address both the preventive action and the conservation interventions at the property. Even if there could be staff changes due to either retirement or dismissal, the Conservation Manual would assist GMMB to retain institutional capacity in, as far as conservation is concerned. The manual would assist new personnel to continue with the conservation work at site using the outlined procedures and approaches, while linked to an integrated database of the property. Trying to reinvent the wheel, each time that a new person joins the staff work should be avoided.

Recommendation 14 – DEVELOP A DISASTER RISK PLAN

The Mission recommends that the State Party considers developing a disaster risk plan for the property. The Disaster Risk Management Plan should also integrate the procedure to be addressed in cultural heritage risk preparedness. Besides weather and human risks that can affect the World Heritage property, the disaster risk plan should also consider the challenges of rapid transformation of the urban fabric, as a source of vulnerability. This will allow the State Party to be more vigilant, and pro-active, and be better prepared for urban pressure.

ANNEX 7. – State of Conservation reports on the property examined and Decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee in 1996, 1998 and 2019.

All documents pertaining to the property are accessible on the dedicated World Heritage Centre Website at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>

1996

Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions (Ghana) (C 34)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1995-1995)

Total amount approved: USD 20,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/>

Information presented to the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee in 1996

Description and present state of conservation :The castles and forts of Ghana represent the continuing history of the European-African encounter over five centuries, and the starting point of the African Diaspora. The major problems facing the Ghanaian properties are: the depredations of the tropical marine climate, the conflicting effects of under-developed and/or impoverished local economies. The property, as inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979, consists of three castles and 15 forts in reasonably good condition, and 10 ruined forts, in various degrees of deterioration. Seven other formerly fortified sites were also included. All sites are in the custodianship of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) and are periodically inspected and, when necessary, emergency repairs are carried out (though, during the prolonged period of economic depression in Ghana from the mid-1970's to the late 1980's, very little regular maintenance has been carried out). In general, the habitable forts and castles, and the partially restored ruins, are in a reasonably sound condition, with the exception of Fort Prinzenstein at Keta, which is threatened with devastation by the sea, and which received \$20,000 from the World Heritage Fund in December 1995.

Sources and levels of finance: Over the period 1990-1997, UNDP, USAID and Shell (Ghana) Ltd., have made a total of some 4-5 million US Dollars available for architectural conservation works and associated consultancy services and training provision. Under the Historic Preservation and Natural Resource Conservation Project, provision is made for the establishment of a Castles Maintenance Trust Fund. Apart from this international assistance, virtually all finance for the conservation and maintenance of the properties is provided by the Government of Ghana through its annual recurrent budgets.

The state of conservation report identifies several factors that affect the property such as:

Development Pressures: Development pressures vary considerably along the coast of Ghana, they are most intense in the capital, and significant in the larger urban settlements, slight or nonexistent in the remote and less accessible locations. Population pressure is the most pervasive factor, as well as the pressures of economic development.

Environmental Pressures: The only severe environmental pressures that adversely affect these properties are those arising from the coastal location of the forts and castles, and are inevitable; namely the tropical maritime climate and the threat of encroachment by the sea which are most apparent at those sites that are low lying, close to the sea, and lack underlying rock strata. Fort Prinzensten is threatened with encroachment by the sea.

Site Buffer Zones: Buffer zones had not been identified for the thirty plus sites of this World Heritage Property. Site boundaries have not yet been fully defined, nor given legal status.

Action Required

The Bureau thanked the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) for having provided accurate information on the state of conservation of this site and congratulated the Government of Ghana for the efforts in mobilizing international assistance for the establishment of a Castles Maintenance Trust Fund. It commended the current major conservation programme in Elmina and Cape Coast which should serve as a model for the conservation of the Castle, Osu, Accra. The Bureau recommended that protective action be taken urgently at other coastal forts most at risk (e.g. Fort Prinzensten, Keta) and that special attention be paid to the project financed by the World Heritage Fund.

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 1996

N/A

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

N/A

Decision Adopted: 20 BUR IV.7

The Bureau thanked the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) for having provided accurate information on the state of conservation of this site and congratulated the Government of Ghana for their efforts in mobilizing international assistance for the establishment of a Castles Maintenance Trust Fund. It commended the current major conservation programme in Elmina and Cape Coast which should serve as a model for the conservation of the Castle of Osu, Accra. The Bureau recommended that protective action be taken to identify the buffer zones and protect the other coastal forts most at risk and that special attention be paid to the project financed by World Heritage Fund: Fort Prinzensten at Keta.

1998

Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions (Ghana) (C 34)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1995-1998)

Total amount approved: USD 60,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Erosion
- Housing
- Management systems/ management plan
- Heavy rain
- Wind
- Salt-laden atmosphere

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/>

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 1998

The Forts and Castles of Ghana, as inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979, consist of three castles, 15 forts in a relatively good condition, 10 forts in ruins and seven sites with traces of former fortifications. All sites are protected monuments in the custody of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), with the exception of James Fort, Accra and Fort William, Anomabu, which are still being used as prisons. The sites are periodically inspected, however, their regular maintenance and conservation is severely affected by the limited financial resources of the GMMB.

During the period 1992-1997 major conservation works were carried out on Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast, St. George's Castle and Fort St. Jago in Elmina within the scope of the Historic Preservation component of the "Central Region Integrated Development Programme" funded by UNDP and USAID.

The main threats to the sites can be confined to three principal areas:

1. Environmental pressures. The maritime tropical climate with its strong winds, heavy rainfalls and corrosive salt-laden atmosphere is a primary cause of the deterioration of the physical fabric of the buildings. In addition, some of the sites are affected by the encroachment of the sea and the erosion of the ground on which the structures are located.
2. Lack of buffer zones and development. None of the sites included in the World Heritage property have a buffer zone or fully defined boundaries. The encroachment of human settlements and activities on the areas in the direct vicinity of the World Heritage sites, and the subsequent erosion and pollution of the surroundings, create a serious threat to the safeguarding of the properties. The most serious issue is the on-going illegal quarrying of sand and soil around the forts, which can eventually undermine the

stability of the structures. The waste dumping and contamination of the beaches around the forts are another disturbing practice.

3. Lack of adequate funding for the regular maintenance and conservation of the sites Apart from the above-mentioned assistance provided by UNDP and USAID, practically all finance for the sites is provided by the Government of Ghana through its annual budget. However, the level of funding is far too inadequate to meet the basic needs of maintenance and conservation. As a result, some of the structures have deteriorated so badly that an urgent intervention is needed to prevent them collapsing.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

N/A

Decision Adopted: 22 EXT.BUR V.3

TRAINING

[...]

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

Ghana (Documentation research for Forts and Castles of Ghana) - US\$ 40,000

The outgoing Bureau recommended approval of **US\$ 40,000** by the Committee, considering the importance of documenting historical data and iconographic material for enhanced management and conservation of the Forts and Castles of Ghana.

However, the Bureau recommended approval of this grant, subject to the :

- (i) Terms of Reference for the international consultant explicitly including a preliminary mission to Ghana to develop proper policies for compilation, storage, handling and conservation of the collection, and;
- (ii) World Heritage Centre ascertaining that there are trained staff members at GMMB who would be assigned to the Documentation Centre.

[...]

Decision Adopted: 22 COM VII.35

VII.35 Forts and Castles of Ghana (Ghana)

The Forts and Castles of Ghana, as inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979, consist of three castles, 15 forts in a relatively good condition, ten forts in ruins and seven sites with traces of former fortifications. All sites are protected monuments in the custody of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), with the exception of James Fort, Accra and Fort William, Anomabu, which are still being used as prisons. The sites are periodically inspected, however, their regular maintenance and conservation is severely affected by the limited financial resources of the GMMB.

During the period 1992-1997 major conservation works were carried out on Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast, St. George's Castle and Fort St. Jago in Elmina within the scope of the Historic Preservation component of the "Central Region Integrated Development Programme" funded by UNDP and USAID.

The main threats to the sites can be confined to three principal areas: environmental pressures; lack of buffer zones and development pressure and lack of adequate funding for the regular maintenance and conservation of the sites.

The Committee:

- thanked the national authorities in Ghana for their efforts in preservation of the World Heritage sites in Ghana and congratulated them on the recent conservation works carried out in Cape Coast and Elmina;
- urged the national authorities to ensure that all the Forts listed as World Heritage are not used for unrelated purposes such as prisons and that their World Heritage values are preserved;
- recommended priority be given to sustainable conservation and not to the rehabilitation of buildings for tourism purposes;

- recommended that action be taken urgently to define buffer zones around the properties, as well as other protective measures to stop further environmental degradation of the areas in the direct vicinity of the World Heritage sites;
- recommended that the national authorities in Ghana submit an Emergency Assistance request with regard to the urgent conservation works on some of the Forts;
- encouraged the authorities to implement awareness building activities among the population.

Decision Adopted: 22 COM XII

Cultural Heritage: Requests examined by the Committee

Paragraph No. as presented in 98/CONF.203/14Rev.	Requesting State Party	Type of Assistance	Description	Amount Approved(US\$)	Comments/ Observations/ Conditions
B.2.2.4	Ghana	Technical Co-operation	Documentation research for Forts and Castles of Ghana	40,000	<p>The Committee approved the request, considering the importance of documenting historical data and iconographic material for enhanced management and conservation of the Forts and Castles of Ghana. However, the Committee approved the grant, subject to the following conditions :</p> <p>(a) Terms of Reference for the international consultant explicitly including a preliminary mission to Ghana to develop proper policies for compilation, storage, handling and conservation of the collection, and;</p> <p>(b) The World Heritage Centre ascertaining that there are trained staff members at Ghana Monuments and Museums Board who would be assigned to the Documentation Centre.</p>

2019

Forts and Castles, Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions (Ghana) (C 34)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1995-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 145,086

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 26,770 provided in 2007 by the Australia Trust Fund for the project "Cleaning Ussher Fort ; USD 49,261 received in 2007 by the European Commission for the project "External Works for the Restoration and Redevelopment of Parts of Ussher Fort"

Previous monitoring missions

April/May 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Erosion (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)
- Housing (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)
- Management systems/ management plan (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)
- Heavy rain (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)
- Wind (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)
- Salt-laden atmosphere (issue resolved in 1998 but significant again in 2019)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/>

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2019

On 15 March 2019, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/>, and reports the following:

- The property's protection status and management authority, the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), have been confirmed;
- Progress in addressing previous recommendations of the World Heritage Committee adopted in 1998 (**CONF 203 VII.35**) is indicated, as follows:
 - Two components previously used as prisons have been decommissioned and transferred to GMMB,
 - Cadastral surveys for some components will be undertaken, including the identification of property boundaries and buffer zones, as well as the preparation of title deeds,
 - The State Party intends to delineate buffer zones of 0.2 ha, but this depends on the availability of the surrounding land,

- Activities to sensitize local communities and create awareness about the need to preserve heritage sites has been included in the 2019 work plan for GMMB,
- Discussions on the sustainable use of the property are to include local communities;
- Some of the concerns raised by the Committee in 1998 about threats to the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) still persist and are now more significant, including environmental degradation, lack of buffer zones, development pressure and lack of funding for regular maintenance and conservation works. The GMMB has not yet prepared an Emergency Request for urgent conservation works, as requested by the Committee in 1998. Other concerns are inadequate training and the lack of disaster risk management plans, though the State Party reports that the latter are to be prepared next year;
- A summary of the condition of most components in 2018 is presented, which notes no change since 1998;
- The preparation of the property Management Plan, supported with International Assistance funding, will commence soon. The Plan is scheduled to be completed by April 2020;
- A project for the restoration, reconstruction and adaptive re-use of Fort Amsterdam is to commence in March or early April 2019. The preliminary assessment and architectural documentation have been prepared, and European Union funding has been secured;
- Information is included about a proposed "Elmina Heritage Bay" tourism development project at St. George's Castle in Elmina, noting that preliminary documentation has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- A 2015 survey was undertaken at James Fort in advance of restoration work, and a further structural investigation is to be undertaken subject to funding being obtained.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party is aware of the threats to the property and is making some progress on a range of issues to improve its state of conservation. This includes development of the Management Plan, identification of boundaries and buffer zones, community awareness and disaster risk management plans.

However, with regard to threats, many have existed since at least 1998, and their increasing significance is a matter of concern. Recent heavy rains in Accra underscore the environmental pressures on the property. There are indications that some components are impacted by abandonment, the accelerated degradation of structures and the potential or actual disappearance of ruins. Several of the components comprising partial structures and traces of former fortifications might no longer exist.

The anticipated progress with the development of a Management Plan is a positive step. This should consider the current lack of effective site management for most components, as well as identified threats. At present, some level of protection and management is only available for the three large forts. The other forts are mostly abandoned, with accelerated degradation due to rising salts and humidity, lack of effective management, and the possibility of climate change impacts.

The steps taken to establish buffer zones for the property are welcome. However, the persisting absence of buffer zones may represent a particular threat as possible future large scale projects in and around the property's components, such as in Elmina and at Fort Amsterdam (see below), cannot take into account the necessary measures that would respect the protective provisions provided by these buffer zones. The delineation of a buffer zone of an adequate size for each component and the development of effective protection regimes is therefore of utmost urgency.

With regard to the "Elmina Heritage Bay" tourism development project at St. George's Castle in Elmina, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party in October 2018, in line with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*, requesting further information on this project. On the basis of the material then submitted to the World Heritage Centre by the State Party in December 2018, a preliminary assessment was carried out, indicating potential negative impact on the property.

The works at Fort Amsterdam will involve the restoration and reconstruction of damaged areas of the fort and its subsequent adaptive re-use. The State Party reports that discussions regarding the project have been underway since 2003, but as already for the "Elmina Heritage Bay", it is regrettable that no

prior information was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, before notification in the State Party's report.

The State Party invited a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to visit the property from 28 April to 2 May 2019 to assess restoration and development projects at the two components of Fort Amsterdam and St. George's Castle (Elmina) in addition to the arrangements made to commence the preparation of the Management Plan. The mission report will be available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/34/documents/> before the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee and its results shared in advance with the Committee.

Given the range, longevity and significance of issues facing the property, it is recommended that a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission be carried out in early 2020 to consider the state of conservation of all the components of the property and the potential threats they are facing, the implementation of the recommendations from the Advisory mission, potential projects proposed, and progress with the delineation of buffer zones and the development of the Management Plan.

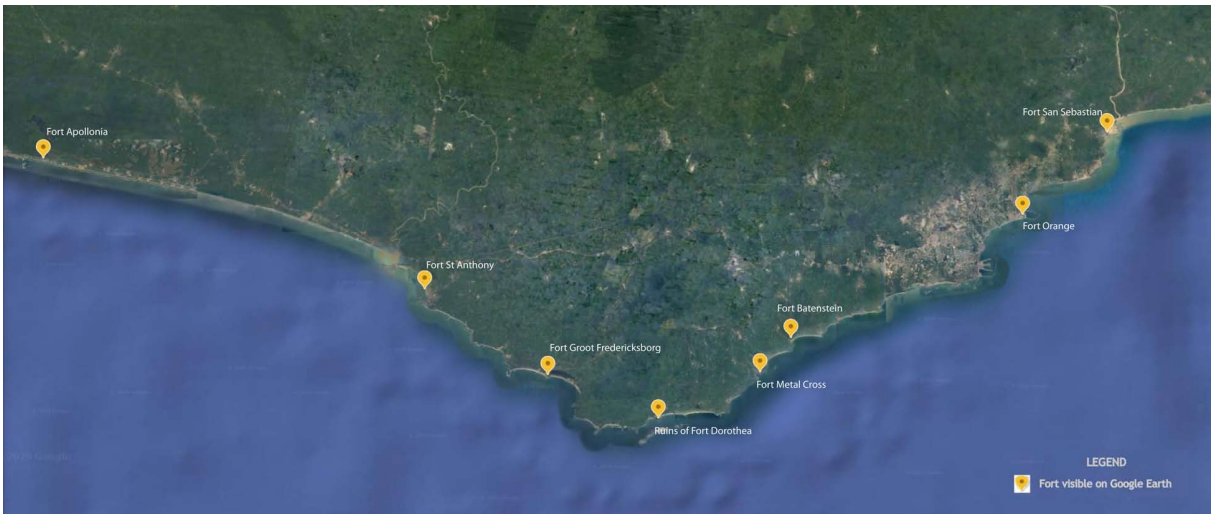
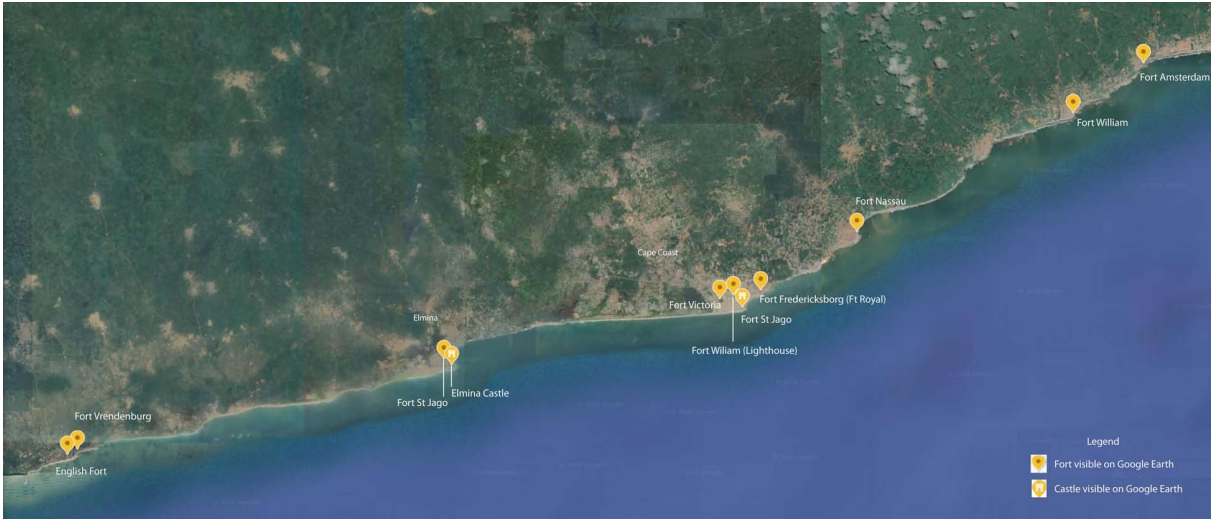
Decision Adopted: 43 COM 7B.106

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document [WHC/19/43.COM/7B.Add](#),
2. Recalling Decision [CONF 203 VII.35](#), adopted its 22nd session (Kyoto, 1998),
3. Requests the State Party to ensure that the proposed Management Plan considers the current lack of effective site management for the majority of the property's components, as well as identified threats;
4. Reiterates its request to the State Party to progress, as a matter of urgency, with the delineation of a buffer zone for each component and protection regimes;
5. Welcomes the State Party's invitation of a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to assess restoration works and development projects at St. George's Castle at Elmina and Fort Amsterdam, and also requests the State Party to halt all projects until the recommendations of the mission have been addressed;
6. Takes note of the recommendations of the 2019 Advisory mission and invites the State Party to start implementing them with no delay;
7. Further requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in early 2020 to assess the state of conservation of all the components of the property and the potential threats they are facing, the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory mission, and progress in the delineation and protection of buffer zones and preparation of the Management Plan;
8. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 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 44th session in 2020.

ANNEX 8. – Google-earth maps and overviews

Maps of all components, respectively in Volta Region (east) and Greater Accra, Central Region and Western Region of Ghana.

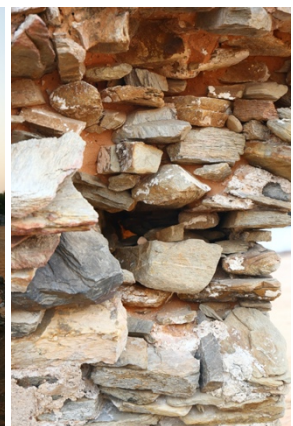


ANNEX 9 – PHOTOGRAPHS OF ALL THE PROPERTY COMPONENTS

1. Fort Prinzenstein, in Keta



2. Fort Fredensborg



3. Fort Vernon, in Prampram



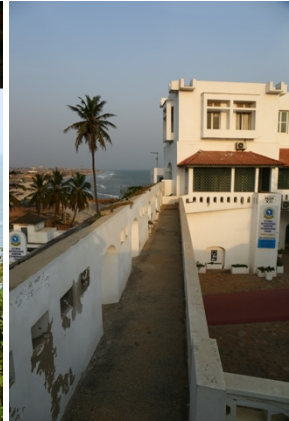


4. Fort Augustaborg, in Teshie



5. Christiansborg Castle, Osu (Accra)





6. Ussher Fort, Ussher Town (Accra)





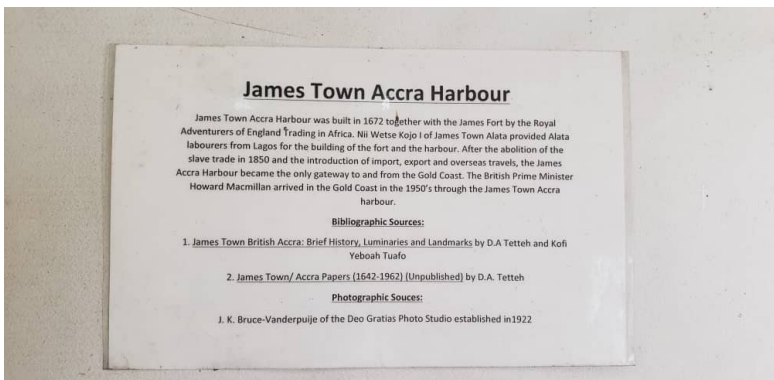
7. Fort James, James Town (Accra)











8. Fort Good Hope, in Senya Beraku





9. Fort Patience, in Apam





10. Fort Amsterdam, in Abandze







11. Fort William, in Anomabu













12. Fort Nassau, in Mouri





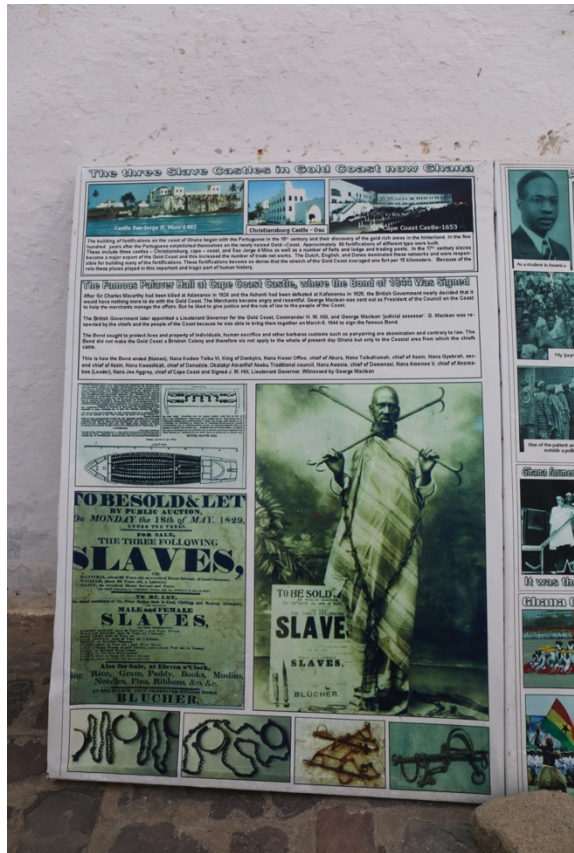


13. Fort Fredericksburg, in Amanful





14. Cape Coast Castle, in Cape Coast









15. Fort William (Lighthouse) in Cape Coast





16. Fort Victoria, in Cape Coast







17. St. George's Castle, in Elmina







18. Fort St. Jago, at Elmina





19. Fort Vredenburg (Dutch Komenda)





20. Fort English (British Komenda)







21. Fort San Sebastian, in Shama







22. Fort Orange, in Sekondi









23. Fort Batenstein, in Butre





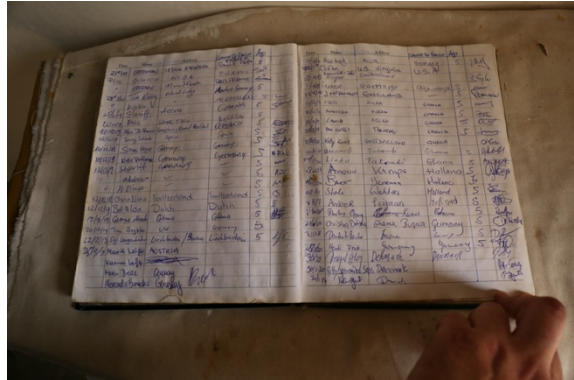
24. Fort Metal Cross, in Dixcove











25. Fort Dorothea, in Akwinda





26. Fort Groot Fredericksborg, in Princess Town









27. Fort St. Anthony, in Axim







TRADE

Trade dynamics underwent extensive changes over three centuries of Dutch-African interaction in the Western Gold Coast.

The Dutch, like the Portuguese before them and just like African rulers, put in place attempts to exercise reforms of effective control over trade around their bases in accord with African communities such as Axim. Commercial competition was always rife and served as a major cause of conflict and shifting alliances.

The main objective of the European station in Axim was to access gold produced in the Ankobra basin even though great importance was attached to trade in other goods from the coast of Aboades or Quaqua Coast (present day Côte d'Ivoire) such as ivory, slaves, crocodile skins and especially local textiles, the famous Quaqua cloth. Salt production and trade also grew into an important sector in the seventeenth century with salt merchants from Axim establishing themselves in the interior along the Ankobra especially in the town of Abaqua (Awudua Dada).

By the end of the seventeenth century, the Slave Trade underwent phenomenal growth and traffic in firearms spread all over the region. The Dutch became heavily involved in the trade in human chattel although their interest in Western Gold Coast remained focused on gold. In the eighteenth century trade in the imported alcohol and tobacco also acquired great importance.

Following the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1814, attempts were made by the Dutch to produce cash crops like cotton in Elmina and indigo in Axim. Dutch commercial interests kept operating even after the end of formal Dutch presence in 1872.

Throughout the history of Dutch presence in the Gold Coast, a crucial role in trade was played by individuals and families of mixed African-Dutch ancestry. In summary, Dutch trade was by and large a function of a more general history of human relations linking the Dutch with the communities they interacted with.

KAKU AKA

He was a young chief of Beve who warned all the coastal chiefs about the gravity of settler activity regarding slavery. He independently galvanised local chiefs of Beve to end slavery. He was captured by the British and taken to the Cape Coast castle where he died in 1851.

AFRICAN-DUTCH INTERACTION

The African-Dutch over three centuries deeply influenced life, economy, culture, habits and beliefs in many communities.

The number of Europeans residing in Axim at each given time was small: 9-10 people all male and this was the average rule. These few Dutch over a total population of a few thousands for the Axim area, however, had a crucial importance due to their role in trade; their strategic positioning in the fortress; and a wide network of relations they were able to establish. Dutch men married African women, thus forming lasting alliances with their families and having children who fully belonged to the local (matrilineal) society.

Axim was at the core of a loose association of African polities named Axiema (Nzema). The town was an important market and had a composite society. The high echelons included chiefs, military leaders, important elders and the Dutch officers based in the Fort. Resident merchants were European, African and Eurofrican.

African rulers were also commercial intermediaries (Makelaars) for the Dutch West Indian Company. Fishermen, farmers, dependents, slaves and retinues of Chiefs populated the town and surrounding settlements.

The Fort hosted a military garrison and was surrounded by the houses of the Dutch Company's slaves, and the temporary lodgings of those destined to be transported to plantations and orchards. The houses of chiefs and merchants were often substantially built in swish, stone, masonry and wood.

The religious landscape was articulate: local beliefs and Christianity influenced each other in the practice of Africans, Eurofricans and Europeans.

Shama and Butre hosted Dutch Forts as well. Fort Appollonia in Bevein was founded by the British (1765) but became a Dutch Fort in 1867-1872.

In spite of the brevity of formal Dutch presence in the area, the Western part of the Nzema region shared with Axim and the Dutch a long history of close neighbourhood and daily interactions: reciprocal influences were substantially in spite of commercial competitions, rivalries and open conflicts.



28. Fort Apollonia, in Beyin





