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## UNESCO celebrates Syrian cultural heritage in Brussels



On the 4th July 2018, UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels jointly with UNESCO Beirut Office organised an evening ‘Syrian Living Heritage’, at BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts. The evening began with opening remarks from BOZAR, the European Commission (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations) and UNESCO representatives who gave an overview of the project and underlined the value of cultural heritage, and the importance of preserving it for future generations.

It was then followed by the launch of the book 'Syrian Traditional Music' by Hassan Abbas, researcher at the American University of Beirut, highlighting the large variety of musical traditions in the country and their continued transmission in times of crisis.

After that, a concert was held with the Ensemble Fawaz Baker, consisting of musicians Fawaz Baker, Samir Homsy and Khalil Jerro who performed contemporary Syrian music based on historic cultural and religious traditions, reflecting the rich heritage of Syria and the Middle East.

The third component of the evening was the exhibition ‘Syrian Living Heritage’ by photographer and ethnologist Houda Kassatly from the Saint-Joseph University and the University of Balamand, showcasing how heritage can be preserved by image in times of war and conflict.

This event was organized within the wider framework of the “[Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage](#)” project, launched in March 2014 and funded by the European Union and supported by the Government of Flanders and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The principal objective of the initiative is to contribute to the restoration of social cohesion, stability, and sustainable development through the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

The project led to the development of the [Observatory of Syrian Cultural Heritage](#), through which UNESCO monitors and assesses the situation of cultural heritage in Syria. During the project, capacity-building, training and technical assistance was provided for the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, touching more than 700 professionals and 130 participating institutions.

Finally, awareness-raising efforts sought to mitigate the destruction of Syrian cultural heritage, and ensured the continued transmission of cultural heritage, especially in the circumstances of displacement. Intangible cultural heritage in particular is a central part of the identity and memory of an individual and a society and its transmission from generation to generation is essential for its safeguarding.

The event also took place in the context of the [2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage](#), for which UNESCO is acting as one of the implementing partners. The international dimension of the Year aims to celebrate and reinforce cooperation on cultural heritage in Europe and the rest of the world.

Find the videos of the event on our [Facebook page here](#) and the pictures in the [Flickr Gallery here](#).

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brussels/about-this-office/single-view/news/unesco\\_celebrates\\_syrian\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_in\\_brussels/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brussels/about-this-office/single-view/news/unesco_celebrates_syrian_cultural_heritage_in_brussels/)