



Paris, November 23, 2020.

Madam Director-General,

I regret to bring to your attention the dangerous Israeli settlers practices in the world heritage site of the Old Town of Al-Khalil/Hebron, inscribed in 2017 on the UNESCO World Heritage List in danger.

On Wednesday, November 18, 2020, the Israeli settlers in Hebron have installed a Menorah on the top of the Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi/Tomb of the Patriarchs situated in the core of the inscribed property. This act is repeated each year during the Hanukah celebration.

This action is a clear violation of *The Hague Convention of 1954 for the protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict and its tow protocols* and *The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage*. The provisions of The 1954 Convention forbids any action that may affect a cultural property under occupation. As for the 1972 Convention, this act constitutes a breach of integrity of the site with a harmful visual impact.

Moreover, such action may increase the tension on the ground and lead to a new cycle of violence. Since January 2019 where Israel dismissed the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), the situation is continuously deteriorating and the tension is tangible. The State of Palestine highly appreciates the valuable contribution of UNESCO to conflict prevention and the protection of World Heritage sites and Cultural Property in Palestine.

In consideration of the above-mentioned facts, I urge you, Madam Director-General, to remind Israel, the occupying Power, of its obligations under international law and in particular under the above-mentioned UNESCO conventions. Please note that Israel, the occupying Power, is still a state party to the above-mentioned UNESCO conventions and does not comply with their provisions.

Madam Director-General, I kindly ask you to annex this letter to the appropriate working document of the executive board at its 211th session and the appropriate work documents of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Please accept, Madam Director-General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ambassador Mounir Anastas
Alternate Permanent Delegate

Ms. Audrey Azoulay
Director General of UNESCO
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Cc : President of the General Conference
Chairperson of the Executif Board
Assistant Director-General for Culture
President of the World Heritage Committee