



Press Release

Onsite visit and press conference July 13, 2009, 17:00

EMERGENCY STABILIZATION OF THE NIKOZI EPISCOPAL PALACE (9TH 10TH C) AT THE NIKOZI MONASTERY COMPLEX (5TH-18TH C), GEORGIA

Project duration: May 1 – August 31, 2009

Implementing organization: Georgian Arts & Culture Center (GACC)

Sponsor: Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development through its Cultural Emergency Response

The Georgian Arts and Culture Center (GACC) under its programme “Save Georgian Cultural Heritage is implementing the emergency relief project for the Nikozi Episcopal Palace. The Nikozi monastery complex, located in the Laikhvi River gorge, 1.2 miles (2 km) from Tskhinvali suffered badly during the conflict of August 2008. In particular the Episcopal Palace (9th-10th c.) was directly bombed on the 10th August and damaged in the resulting fire.

The Project aims stabilization of the situation, prevention of further deterioration and emergency repair works, in particular: consolidation of the architectural structure and the erecting of a temporary roofing to prevent further water damage. These emergency measures will prevent the building from collapsing before funds have been secured for the full rehabilitation of the site.

The project is funded by Netherlands-based Prince Claus Fund for Culture for Development through its Cultural Emergency Response (CER) programme. CER provides first aid for cultural heritage damaged or destroyed in conflict or natural disasters. By providing financial support within six months of the disaster, CER aims to stabilize the situation, prevent further damage and implement basic repairs.

For the July 10th the following activities had been accomplished: Constructed the scaffolding on the North facade of the structure; The walls has been cleaned from the remains of burnt wooden constructions and prepared for further works; The mortises of balconies have been cleaned out from residues of burnt wood; The temporary upper partition between 2nd floor and attic has been constructed; The wooden framework for the roofing had been prepared and constructed; The wooden framework has been planked; The tin plate gutters for carrying over the rainwater have been installed on the roofing; The wooden construction had been treated by antiseptic solution. The end of the works is scheduled for the end of August.

It also should be noted that Nikozi project was drawn up in conformity with the wider project “Rehabilitation Project for Nikozi Monastery and Village”, which is a part of the programme “Post Conflict immediate Actions for the Social and Economic Revitalization of Communities and Cultural Environment in the Municipality of Gori” funded by the Council of Europe and implemented by the National Agency of Cultural Heritage Protection, and serves as an essential of prelude for it.

The onsite visit in Nikozi on July 13th will be attended by the following delegation:

Delegation from Georgia:

Isaia, Metropolitan of Nikozi and Tskinali Eparchy

Nikoloz Vacheishvili, Director General of National Agency of Cultural Heritage Protection of Georgia, CE program executor.

Maka Dvalishvili, President of Georgian Arts and Culture Center, Prince Claus Fund's program executor

Kakha Trapaidze, Head of the CE program "Immediate Actions for the Social and Economic Revitalization of Communities and Cultural Environment in the Municipality of Gori"

Tengo Gabunia, Architect,-Restorer, Team member

Gia Khurtsilava, Engineer, Team member

Heino van Houwelingen, Chargé d'Affaires

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

The CE delegation members are:

Mr Mikhaël DE THYSE ,(France),

Regional Co-operation Division, Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage, Directorate General IV Council of Europe

Mr David A.JOHNSON , Consultant Architect, Dannatt Johnson Architects (UK)

Mme Anne PISOT, Expert, (France),

***Georgian Arts & Culture Center (GACC)**, the Georgian Non Governmental Organization was founded in 1995. Its mission is preservation, development and promotion of Georgian cultural heritage; development, promotion and marketing of Georgian national crafts; strengthening the economic viability and self-sustainability of cultural institutions, culture based small and medium businesses, and individuals working in culture and the arts sector; enhancement of the development of contemporary Georgian art and exhibition activities; establishment of international art relations and cultural exchanges; educational activities; stimulation of the academic studies in the field of art history, cultural heritage preservation and cultural tourism development. GACC together with Conservation Beni Culturali (CBC), Roma Italy, is the Europa Nostra 2006 Award (medal) winner.*

***Cultural Emergency Response (CER)** provides global "first aid" for cultural heritages that have been damaged or destroyed by man-made or natural disasters. CER is a Prince Claus Fund programme. CER was launched in 2003 in reaction to the looting of the National Museum of Baghdad that shocked the world. Since then it has provided aid to cultural heritage in emergency situations in over twenty countries throughout the world.*

***The Prince Claus Fund** is a platform for intercultural exchange. It works jointly with individuals and organisations that are mainly located in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean on the realisation of activities and publications that contribute to a positive exchange between culture and development. The Prince Claus Fund is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Postal Code Lottery.*

Contacts:

GACC

Maka Dvalishvili/ Tamuna Kiknadze

gacc@gaccgeorgia.org

Tel: 995 32 93 1335

Prince Claus Fund

Eléonore de Merode / Deborah Stolk

cer@princeclausfund.nl

Tel. + 31 20 344 9160