



#ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul

Revive the Spirit of Mosul Conference, 10 September 2018



Conference for the recovery and Rehabilitation of the City of Mosul UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France Room II

Concept Note

Mosul is the living symbol of Iraqi's pluralistic identity. For centuries, it has been a crossroad of culture in the Middle East, a melting pot of people and ideas. Between 2014 and 2017, this story of peace – the true spirit of Mosul – has been overshadowed by another story of hatred and violence. The occupation of Mosul by Daesh left the City destroyed. The archeological site of Nimrud, the Museum of Mosul, the Nabi Younnis Shrine, the Al Hadba Minaret and many other landmarks lie in ruins. Thousands of homes are heaps of rubble while many residents are slowly returning. The entire education sector from pre-primary to higher education is devastated while students and teachers are struggling with the physical as well as the physiological sequels of the war.

In February 2018, the International Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq (Kuwait City) focused on the importance of the human dimension at the heart of sustainable recovery and reconstruction. This is why the Director-General of UNESCO launched a flagship initiative “Revive the Spirit of Mosul”. With the full support of the Prime Minister of Iraq and of the UN Secretary-General, UNESCO will take the lead in three areas in Mosul - reconstructing heritage sites, reviving cultural life and educational institutions. The initiative is in line with the Plan for “Reconstruction and Development in Iraq” of the Iraqi Government and the Program for Recovery and Resilience in Iraq (RRP) initiated by the UN Secretary-General.

On the 10th of September, seven months after the Conference of Kuwait, and as the first major projects in the areas of education and culture in Mosul are funded, developed or in advanced discussions with partners, the Government of Iraq and UNESCO wish to gather the main partners and supporters of the “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” initiative for an International Conference at the UNESCO HQ in Paris.

UNESCO has a longstanding cooperation with Iraq. It has been present in Iraq since early 2003 and has successfully accomplished a number of major projects in the areas of education and culture. In 2017, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Iraqi Ministry of Culture, launched the Response Plan for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in the Liberated Areas of Iraq (2017-2019).

“Revive the Spirit of Mosul” is the UNESCO priority for the next years. It is the most important reconstruction campaign undertaken by UNESCO in recent times. Since February, UNESCO is fully mobilized for the Mosul initiative, at its Headquarters and in its Field Offices in Bagdad and in the region.

Conference objectives

- To take stock of the current situation in Mosul, and convene a panel of ministers and representatives of the United Nations and national and international partners who will: i) share their vision on the challenges faced in Iraq; and ii) discuss a roadmap for the reconstruction of Mosul in its human dimension, in which culture and education are leveraged to overcome the tragedies of the past and shape a future of stability and peace for the country and its people.
- To present a list of major projects that will contribute to the rehabilitation of Mosul’s heritage sites, reviving its cultural life and its educational institutions. Some of these projects are already funded and ready for implementation but others still require funding.
- To raise awareness among the public and the Member States about the situation in Mosul, and Iraq in general, and about the rationale for the initiative “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” spearheaded by UNESCO. The conference will also demonstrate the solidarity of the International Community with the Government of Iraq, its understanding of the economic, social, humanitarian and legal issues it faces, and its full support in the search for sustainable responses to the most urgent needs of the City.

Organization

The conference is co-organized by the Government of Iraq and UNESCO.

It will take place on the 10th of September at UNESCO from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Representatives from the Iraqi Government and representatives of Member States, are invited, as well as leaders of relevant regional organizations, development finance institutions, UN organizations, and representatives of relevant humanitarian non-governmental organizations.