

Abstract for 11-th US/ICOMOS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

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The title: **The Reconstruction of Serbian Orthodox Site in Kosovo**

During the conflict in Kosovo 1998 and 1999, significant damage was caused to religious and cultural sites, and a large number of heritage sites were damaged or destroyed. The situation had stabilised until, in March 2004, riots broke out, during which time 34 Serbian Orthodox religious sites were damaged.

United Nations Mission In Kosovo (UNMIK) invited UNESCO, European Commission and Council of Europe (CoE) to perform the damage assessments. In response, the CoE set up an "Emergency Action Plan for the Cultural Heritage in Kosovo"

Three joint technical assessment missions were organised by the (CoE) and the European Commission (EC) including experts from CoE, EC, the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), Belgrade-affiliated experts and representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). These missions resulted in the publication of an overall technical assessment report.

Negotiations mediated by UNMIK between the SOC and the PISG resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in March 2005 by the Church and the PISG, establishing an Reconstruction Implementation Commission (RIC), as an decision-making body responsible for the implementation process.

In recognition of the necessity to comply with European and International standards, an International Expert Board was established to monitor the quality of the reconstruction works.

The project of reconstruction has positively impacted on the economic growth and sustainability of regions in Kosovo as well as encouraging a multi-ethnic and diverse approach to its work, providing the opportunity to establish institutional capacity building, trust and confidence between Kosovo and Serbian institutions.