

FINAL REPORT

(January, 2014 through May, 2015)

MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART AND THE MANUSCRIPT MUSEUM OF DAR AL KUTTUB
Cooperative Agreement No. AID-263-G-14-00001
awarded to
THE AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT (ARCE)

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by the
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1. Introduction

This report presents a timeline for what has been achieved with regard to the **Simplified Grant No. AID-263-G-14-00001** (hereinafter ‘Grant’) awarded to the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) in the response to the damage caused by a bomb to the Museum of Islamic Art (hereinafter ‘Museum’) and the Manuscript Museum of Dar al-Kuttub (hereinafter ‘Dar al-Kuttub’) on the morning of January 25, 2014.

This Grant is intended to provide urgent and necessary assistance, material and expertise to both Ministries to move forward with the restoration efforts, based on the identified needs through the assessments conducted by UNESCO and any other detailed assessment identified by ARCE to the building (hereinafter ‘Bab al-Khalq’) that contains both the Museum and Dar al-Kuttub.

The work plan was a result of consultations with both the Ministry of Antiquities (MOA) and the Ministry of Culture (MOC). Without the full commitment of both Ministries this project will not obtain the permissions to proceed through its various steps.



Photo: Courtesy of Dar al-Kuttub

2. Review of the Project

January - 2014

Bomb blast occurs in the early morning on January 24, 2014, in the neighborhood known locally as Bab al-Khalq. The bomb was targeted at the Police Security Directorate on Port Said Street; however, extensive collateral damage was done to the building occupied by the Museum and Dar al-Kuttub located only a few meters away on the opposite side of the street.



View of the chaos from the window of Dar al-Kuttub, January 25, 2014. Photo courtesy of Dar al-Kuttub

Visit by a number of selected experts representing UNESCO, ICOM and the Blue Shield Mission took place on January 31 to February 2, 2014; on the invitation of the Egyptian Government to assess damage to the Bab al-Khalq building and collections within **(Attachment No. 1a-c)**.

February - 2014

First correspondence between USAID and ARCE took place on February 3, 2014; with regard to a small grant to provide assistance to restore the Bab al-Khalq building.

First visit to Bab al-Khalq took place on February 5, 2014. The purpose of this visit was to initiate a dialogue between USAID/ARCE and the Ministries of Antiquities and Culture on how to respond to the destruction of the bomb blast. Present at this visit were Dr. Gerry Scott, Jane Smythe, Janie Abdelaziz, Djodi Deutsch (ARCE); Sylvia Atalla Ishak (USAID); William Kopycki (Library of Congress); Dr. Moustafa Khaled (Museum); Dr. Shadia Mahmoud (Director General of International Associations Affairs MOA); Dr. Iman Ezzeldin (Dar al-Kuttub)



ARCE / USAID visit to the Museum of Islamic Art February 5, 2014. Photos courtesy of ARCE



ARCE / USAID visit to Dar al-Kuttub February 5, 2014. Photos courtesy of ARCE

Simplified Grant No. AID-263-G-14-00001 between USAID and ARCE to assist the Museum of Islamic Art and the Manuscript Museum of Dar al-Kuttub was signed on February 6, 2014.

U.S. *Chargé d’Affairs* Marc Sievers visited Bab al-Khalq where he toured the destruction that occurred in both Dar al-Kuttub and the Museum on February 10, 2014. The event was covered by the Egyptian media and Dr. Sievers delivered a statement to the press in Arabic where he announced the Grant to assist with the salvage and repair of the damaged site and expressed the commitment to the long term partnership between the United States and the Egyptian people.



U.S. Chargé d’Affairs’
Marc Sievers visit to the
Museum of Islamic Art
February 10, 2014.
Photo courtesy of ARCE

A meeting was held on February 18, 2014 at the Zamalek office between Prof. Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Ali Sayed (Minister for Antiquities) and Dr. Gerry Scott & Jane Smythe (representing ARCE). It was suggested by the Minister that the façade of the Bab al-Khalq building would be the best use of the Grant money. The Minister instructed ARCE to meet with the chairman of the MOA Projects Sector, Dr. General Mohamed El-Shekha, in order to start the process of repair to the façade.

March 2014

A number of meetings were undertaken at Bab Al-Khalq between Jane Smythe and Dina Bakhoum (representing ARCE) and General El-Shekha with a number of his engineers (representing the MOA Projects Sector) to discuss façade repair throughout March, 2014. The focus predominantly focused on refining and setting down the scope of work for the repair of the façade.

By the end of March additional specifications request by the MOA Projects Sector received by ARCE (**Attachment No. 2**). An official letter sent by ARCE to both Ministers of Culture and Antiquities with information with regard to current stage of project development and request for approval to move to the next stage (**Attachment No. 3**).

April 2014

By the first week of April 2014, ARCE received notification from Mr. Ahmed Sharaf; Director of the MOA Museums Sector approving the scope of work and Dr. Abd El Nasser; Chairman of the National Library & Archives on behalf of the Minister of Culture approving the scope of work (**Attachment No. 4a & b**).

May 2014

Much of May was spent trying to obtain architectural drawings of the façade from the MOA and MOC in order to finalise the official scope of work.

A request by ARCE was sent to the Minister of Antiquities Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim (May 21, 2014) requesting that the scope of work be approved in order to publically

announce a request for construction companies to submit their bids to conduct the work. This approval also included a request to the Museum and National Library to hand over existing copies of architectural drawings of the façade of the building in order to include them in the bid package (**Attachment No. 5**).

June 2014

The Minister's reply with approval was received June 3, 2014 (**Attachment No. 6**).

Specialized consultant Dr. Sherif Mourad's office NileConsult was contracted to assist with the contractor bidding process as well as selection of a contractor and supervision of works. NileConsult had earlier experience with the MOA in several heritage conservation projects. A meeting between ARCE representatives, NileConsult and General El-Shekha was organised to agree on the specific scope of work prior to proceeding with the final tender documents.

Preparation of the tender package begun by mid June 2014. This included compiling the architectural drawings and photographs of the façade, which included the tender items and estimated quantities, as well as the general work specifications.

July 2014

The final draft of the public tender package was sent to General El-Shekha on July 8, 2014 for approval before releasing it to the public.

By the middle of July 2014, the tender packages were finalized and approved by the Project's Sector of the MOA. On July 13, 2014 the tender package was available for interested contractors to collect and prepare their bids (**Attachment No. 7a - e**).

On July 15 & 16, 2014, all interested contractors are permitted to view the façade in situ.

August 2014

Deadline for submission of tenders at 12:00 o'clock, noon on August 10, 2014.

The packages were to be delivered in one envelope containing two separate sealed envelopes: one for the technical proposal and one for the financial quotation. Three tender packages were submitted (**Attachment 8**):

1. Sumizura Designs (by Mohamed Raouf)
2. AL General Contracting & Supplying (by Eng. Soliman Abd Al Hamed)
3. El Mallah Engineering & Contracting (by Eng. Amr El Mallah)

On August 11, 2014, all Technical Proposals were sent to Dr. Sherif Mourad of NileConsult for the committee, comprising of (**Attachment 9 page 2**):

1. Eng. Mohmoud El-Sherif – Projects Sector Ministry of Antiquities
2. Dr. Sherif A. Mourad – NileConsult
3. Eng. Yomn Abd El-Latif – NileConsult

All Financial Quotations were kept in the ARCE office safe.

By August 23, 2014 AL General Contracting & Supplying were eliminated due to concerns over lack of experience with similar projects.

September 2014

The first extension on the **Simplified Grant No. AID-263-G-14-00001** was obtained by ARCE on September 1, 2014.

On September 2, 2014 the Financial Quotations were opened and the decision was made to proceed with El-Mallah. (**Attachment 9 page 1**)

Because the price was beyond the available grant from USAID, meetings and communications took place between the ARCE representatives, NileConsult, and the selected contractor (El-Mallah) to discuss the possible reduction of the financial offer of

the contractor. After a number of discussions the contractor reduced his offer. Documents were reviewed by all parties and a meeting took place with the contractor at ARCE to finalize the contract document.

The United Arab Emirates announced the availability of funds for the reconstruction of the Bab Al-Khalq building. Despite all of the work that had been done to this point the Chairman of the MOA Project Sector suggested that we change our project. A meeting was held with the authorities to reinforce the importance of continuing with the original plan. The Minister of Antiquities announced that ARCE, funded by USAID should complete the façade of the building and that funding from the UAE be confined to the Museum of Islamic Art interior.

October 2014

By October 23, 2014, the MOA Permanent Committee approved the project. ARCE received the final approval letter on October 26, 2014 (**Attachment No. 10**).

November 2014

During the month of November meetings were held with the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult in order to officially receive the site and follow up on permits and mobilization works.

The Site was transferred to ARCE and El-Mallah on November 2, 2014 (**Attachment No. 11**).

El-Mallah signed a contract with ARCE on November 2, 2014.

The initial schedule was submitted by El-Mallah, and reviewed by ARCE representatives and NileConsult. It was agreed that the main and detailed schedule will be submitted by El-Mallah once the scaffolding is erected in order to have a better *in situ* understanding of the extent of the damage and the related scope of work.

El-Mallah commenced work on the site mobilization by preparing in conjunction with the MOA a place to store the scaffolding, and obtain the permissions from the district to take part of the pavement to erect scaffolding. A delay in this process occurred because the district refused to issue a permit. During a meeting held on November 23, 2014, the MOA agreed to issue a letter for the district, while the contractor in coordination with NileConsult continued with the procedures in order to obtain the official permit required from the district in case they insist on it and in order to prevent any further delays.

The design of the signage for the project was agreed upon. (**Attachment No. 12**).

December – January 2015

During the month of December 2014 and January 2015 meetings were held with the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult in order to officially receive the site and receive permits to occupy part of the street's pavement and follow up on the technical and physical activities (documentation, condition survey, reports, erection of scaffolding).

The second extension on the **Simplified Grant No. AID-263-G-14-00001** was obtained by ARCE on January 5, 2015.

After a number of meetings and coordination work during the month of December 2014, the contractor El-Mallah received the permit to occupy part of the street's pavement in order to erect the scaffolding. Due to bad weather conditions during the last week of December and first week of January 2015, and for safety reasons, the erection of the scaffolding on the first section of the façade was delayed.

By the end of January 2015 the contractor finalized the first part of the scaffolding.

Through the month of January 2015 documentation was conducted on preparing the work of the façade (architectural photographs), condition surveys, proposed methodology for the work, technical specifications of the material, an updated schedule, technical reports, as well as the final signage.

The first report outlining the expected work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah at the start of February 2015. (Attachment No. 13).

The report was reviewed and discussed between ARCE, NileConsult and El-Mallah. Conclusions were communicated with ARCE and finally, copies of the report were submitted to the representatives of the Ministry of Antiquities (Projects Sector, Local Inspectorate, the Museum and the National Library).

February 2015

The real physical work on the façade started in February and fortnightly meetings were held between all involved parties, the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult at Bab Al-Khalq on February 1 and 15, 2015 in order to follow up on the technical and physical activities such as documentation, condition survey, reports,

erection of scaffolding, and stone installation.

The contractor started to provide stone samples to be approved by NileConsult and the representatives of the MOA Projects Sector, the local MOA Inspectorate, and the Museum of Islamic Art.

After providing numerous samples of the type of red hashma stone, a sample was approved; however, final approval from the MOA Committee did not occur until much later in April 2015 (See below).



Bab al-Khalq façade February 15, 2015.
Photo courtesy of ARCE

The second report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period February 1, to March 1, 2015 (Attachment No. 14).

All El-Mallah reports were reviewed by NileConsult and ARCE before they were released. Copies of the report were submitted to the representatives of the Ministry of Antiquities (Projects Sector, Local Inspectorate, the Museum and the National Library).

By the end of February 2015, the approved signage was installed onto the façade.



Signage at the Museum of Islamic Art February 22, 2015.
Photo courtesy of ARCE

March 2015

Fortnightly meetings were held with the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult at Bab Al Khalq on March 1, 15 and 29, 2015.

The third report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period February 1, to March 15, 2015 (Attachment No. 15).

During the work on the lower part of the façade and while removing the granite part a rusted high pressure water fighting pipe was discovered. Initially, the MOA's representatives wanted the contractor to work ignoring this pipe. Due to the high risk of this pipe breaking and causing damage to the façade and also to lives of the people working there, it was stressed by ARCE, NileConsult and El-Mallah, that the pressure in the pipe be reduced to zero and that the MOA inform ARCE what they are planning to do with this pipe.

The contractor provided a sample for fastening of the stone cladding on the lower parts of the balconies, which was approved by the consultant.

The fourth report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period March 15, to April 1, 2015 (Attachment No. 16).

Unfortunately, there were delays in the work and it became clear that the work wouldn't be completed by the end of April 2015 (as initially planned). El-Mallah provided a detailed report with the reasons for the delay in the work and prepared an updated schedule that was reviewed by ARCE in collaboration and discussion with NileConsult (**See attachment No. 17**). It was agreed that most of the works be completed in May 2015 in order to respect the requirements of the USAID grant.

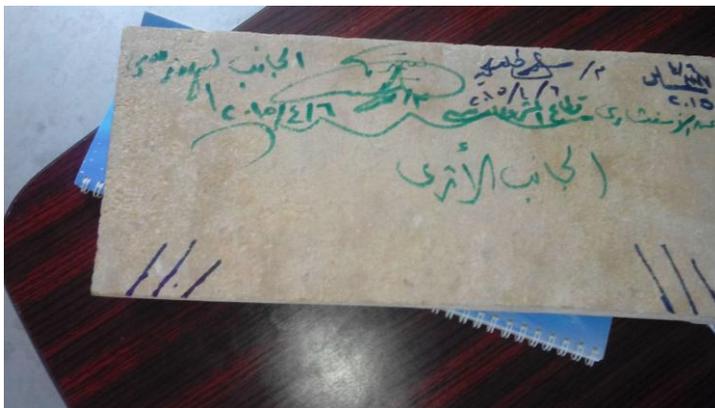
The reasons for the delay mentioned by the contractor were:

- Weather conditions throughout January and February - the specific location of the building and the security situation around January 25, 2015.
- The discovery of a high pressure water fighting pipe that needs to be replaced by the other contractor working in the interior restoration of the building.
- The ongoing delays with the Ministry's committee for approval for each step in the process; what caused most of the delays (of almost 30 days) is the rejection of one stone sample by some representatives of the MOA although it is approved by the consultant
- The MOA didn't provide a source of electricity as they had initially promised
- Difficulty in sourcing certain tiles due to the closing of most of the quarries

April - 2015

Fortnightly meetings were held with the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult at Bab al-Khalq on April 6 and 19, 2015.

During the month of April, the contractor supplied the portions of the detailed carved pieces and commenced installation.



After providing numerous samples of the type of red hashma stone for the detailed carved pieces, a sample was approved; however, final approval did not occur until April 6, 2015.
Photo courtesy of ARCE

The fifth report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period April 1, to April 15, 2015 (Attachment No. 17).

Work on the left side of the façade commences and it was acknowledged that very few pieces of stone were actually damaged by the explosion and hence the work on the left elevation of the façade is mainly cleaning and replacing very few stones.

The third and final extension on the **Simplified Grant No. AID-263-G-14-00001** was obtained by ARCE on April 29, 2014. This last extension brought the end date for the project to May 30, 2015, which represented the maximum date by which the grant could exist.

The sixth report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period April 15, to May 1, 2015 (Attachment No. 18).

May 2015

Weekly meetings were held with the MOA, MOC, ARCE, the contractor El-Mallah and NileConsult at Bab al-Khalq on May 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, 2015.



Museum of Islamic Art June 14, 2015. Photo courtesy of ARCE

The seventh report outlining the actual work on the façade of the building was submitted by El-Mallah. This report covered the period May 15, to May 30, 2015 (Attachment No. 19).

By the end of May 2015 the following work had been completed:

- All undecorated and plain cladding (100%) that had been damaged by the blast had been replaced.
- Approximately 80% of the detailed decorative panels that run along the edges of the windows, balconies and entrance had been replaced. The delay in completing this task was for two issues; Firstly, the MOA committee took a very long time to approve the samples that the contractor El-Mallah provided. Secondly, there were problems with the quarry from which the *Hashamy* stone was sourced.
- The completed works amount to approximately 82% of the total project activities.

Activities still pending (Attachment 20):

- The protective painting of the new cladding should be carried out after all activities are completed and prior to the removal of the scaffolding.
- The granite plinth at the base of the façade had not been replaced due to corrosion issues with the fire sprinkler pipe that runs along the interior of the plinth cladding. Furthermore the replacement of the granite plinth needs to take place once the scaffolding is removed.