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The Prime Minister
H.E. Dr. Bisher Al Khasawneh
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Kerpen-Loogh, Oct. 7th, 2021

Copper mining in the Dana Biosphere Reserve, #SaveDana

Your Excellency,
Dear Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Bisher Al Khasawneh

We are anxiously and with great concern observing the current discussions, which are taking place in Jordan regarding the dissolving and shifting of the boundaries of the UNESCO biosphere reserve of Dana, which would allow to carve out an area of more than 60 square kilometres, for the purpose of copper mining.

"We", the very concerned institutions are (a) the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), which is the most important governmental-run institution for international and national archaeology in Germany (www.dainst.org), (b) the German Mining Museum Bochum (DBM), which is a German research institute and which, alongside with the DAI, has been carrying out and is still carrying out, very intensively and since a very long time, archaeological research projects in Jordan and in the Dana region (www.bergbaumuseum.de), (c) and the German Society for Prehistory and Early History (DGUF), which is the German NGO for archaeology (www.dguf.de).

The plans of decreasing the size of the Dana Reserve alongside with active copper mining would

- cause great damage to the environment and to the protected nature,
- significantly affect local communities whose economy relies heavily on ecological self-subsistence and on eco-tourism in the biosphere reserve,
- irreparably destroy the abundant and globally significant archaeological sites, especially in Feynan and its surroundings,
- certainly affect and gravely contaminate the groundwater in Wadi Araba, which is extremely important for the whole population in the region.

In anticipation of suggested alternative solutions, like providing other areas as a replacement: this would anyway fragment the protected area and have a great negative impact on biodiversity and the entire landscape including cultural heritage and livelihood of the local inhabitants. Copper mining needs water in huge quantities; Jordan has to protect its water resources from overexploitation and pollution, as it is one of the poorest countries of the world in terms of per capita availability of fresh water.

The Biosphere Reserve Dana has been included by UNESCO as part of its settings of "protected environmental surroundings of UNESCO World Heritage sites", which in this case is the UNESCO World Heritage site Petra. Any improper changes to the Dana Reserve will most probably affect Petra's status as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Your urgent attention also regarding this matter is highly recommended.

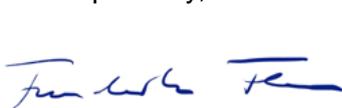
We therefore vigorously support:

- the statement of RSCN Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature from 23.8.2021 ([https://mailchi.mp/rscn/test-i5j3cw9uyo?e=\[UNIQID\]](https://mailchi.mp/rscn/test-i5j3cw9uyo?e=[UNIQID])),
- the statement of ICOMOS Jordan from 19.8.2021 (<https://icomosjordan.org/dana-biosphere-reserve-an-international-call-for-protection/>),
- the letter concerning this matter sent to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities on 31.08.2021 by a group of Jordanian and international archaeologists who work in the Dana / Feynan area (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m-T36Uhrnzqy6c2cQOPJ5Xx-7TDzPsFH/view>)
- and the statement of JBW Jordan Bird Watch from 19.8.2021 (<http://www.jordanbirdwatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/bayan-dana-jbw-statement.pdf>).

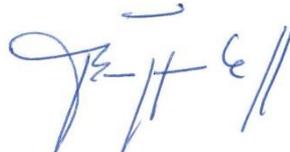
Copper mining would at best bring short-term profit, its economic success depends heavily on the extremely fluctuating copper prices. On the other hand, its devastating and irreversible damage, its severe destruction of nature and environment, its toxic impact on the health of the inhabitants, and its ruinous obliteration of cultural heritage, altogether, the severity of this damage will be far-reaching and permanent.

We therefore kindly urge you to consider the matter and to stop the current plans and to leave the Dana Biosphere Reserve untouched, and instead to permanently support the institutions that are concerned with the protection of nature, of environment, of cultural heritage and to continue maintaining sustainability strategies at Dana Reserve.

Most respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Friederike Fless'.

Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Friederike Fless
President of DAI

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stefan Brüggerhoff'.

Prof. Dr. Stefan Brüggerhoff
Director of DBM

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Diane Scherzler'.

Diane Scherzler M.A.
President of DGUF