

**The Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a Special relationship in the field of The Convention of Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection in 1972, Prepared by:**

Dr. Nidal Hasan (Secretary General of the Syrian National Commission for Education, Science and Culture), and Al Mothana Khadour (Director of Curriculum and Guidance in the Ministry of Education)

UNESCO is a leading organization in the area of protecting the cultural and natural heritage around the world. It highly considers the particular importance of humanity. Here we recall the constitution of UNESCO, which declares that: "UNESCO maintains the survival, development and dissemination of knowledge by preserving and protecting World Heritage". The organization recommends all concerned states to adopt the international conventions for this purpose. And due to the fact that all conventions, recommendations, and international resolutions related to natural and cultural property, show their significance for people all over the world. That's why it is important to protect and save them as irreplaceable unique properties, regardless their ownership by any country or people.

The international community is facing a breadth and intensification of new risks. All Member States have to adopt a collective approach to protect the cultural and natural heritage for its outstanding universal value. For this purpose, UNESCO has to issue new provisions in the form of a convention to establish permanent and effective protection systems based on the modern scientific methods, after the decision made by the World Heritage Committee, in its sixteenth session, to regulate this issue under an international convention; the decision has been transformed into an international convention called "Convention of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage Protection, and has been adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

The convention has identified the conditions that must be met by the natural and cultural sites in order to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, and set up the rights and obligations of State Members in this regard in addition to their responsibilities to follow up the implementation of the Convention as vested in the World Heritage Committee, which will meet once a year and is consisted of 21<sup>st</sup> countries who adopted this convention.

The article 29<sup>th</sup> confirms the need that States Parties prepare periodic reports to be submitted to the General Conference of the United Nations of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), according to standardized formulas that include information about the legislative and regulatory provisions related to protection of the cultural heritage, and other measures taken to implement the Convention, and the reports have to refer to the detailed experience in this regard

These reports are effective tools that stress the importance of preserving the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List on the long term, in addition to enhancing the credibility of the convention implementation.

UNESCO, during the long years of this mutual relationship, has sent experts to support Syria to examine a group of the Syrian archaeological sites that are inscribed on the World Heritage List, such as:

- Damascus old city / 1979 /
- Busra Al- Sham / 1980 /
- Archaeological Palmyra site / 1980 /
- Aleppo old city / 1986 /
- Al-Haesen Citadel in Homs / 2006 /
- Citadel of Saladin in Lattakia / 2006 /
- The ancient villages northern Syria (the dead cities) / 2011 /

The contracted country chooses an efficient officer from its cadres and assigns him as a focal point to follow up the preparation of the reports and the coordination between the directors of the archaeological sites, and to update data and filling up all questionnaires related to the archaeological sites and report on the technical situation and risks. The focal point is responsible to follow up the implementation of the protection methods and updated legislation and laws, in addition to maintain the proper coordination between the institution he represents and UNESCO.

In this regard, the Ministry of Education in the Syrian Arab Republic has developed its educational curricula and textbooks based on educational national standards. The overall objective of these standards focused on preparation of the Syrian Arabic citizens and equippe them with specific characteristics and skills such as: citizenship, loyalty to their homeland, self- learning skills, morals and values. The standards try to

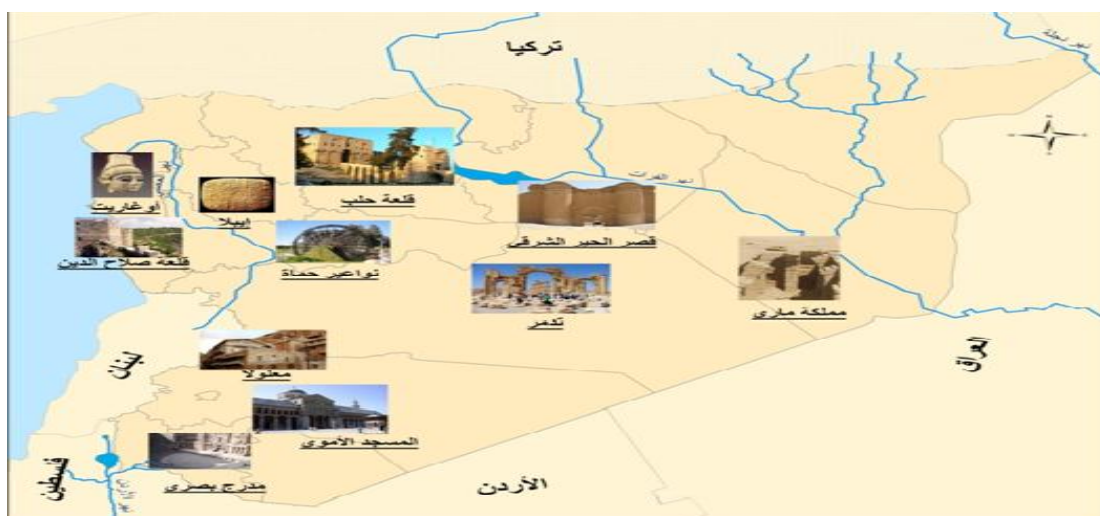
enhance the student's self-development skills, productivity, scientific thinking, decision-making and problem resolving, and promote for practicing democracy in their life; while the sub-objectives of the curriculum were on the following issue:

- Develop learner's ability to communicate with other cultures and benefit from them.
- Enable learners to appreciate the positive role of cultural and civilization diversity in the development of human society.
- Acquaint learner with values and supportive behaviors patterns to respect public and private properties and preserve the infrastructure and national wealth, as well as rationalizing the consumption of resources in all forms, and protect the local and global environment.

### **The Cultural Heritage in the New Syrian Educational Curriculum:**



### **The most important heritage sites in the Syrian Arab Republic:**



The social textbooks, in particular, focused on topics related to World Cultural Heritage that help the learner to understand himself, his society, the environment and the world around.

The document of national standards for public pre-university education in the Syrian Arab Republic, adopted complementarily approach among social textbooks such as: History - Geography - National Education – Economics - Culture and Society - Science and Technology - Social Values and Skills of Social Studies. The standards dealt with topics of cultural heritage, especially in the areas of history, culture and society. We list below some examples of the overall standards of social textbooks, in order to have better understanding of the significance of this heritage in formulating the Syrian civilization and realizing its important role in enriching human and global civilization.

**Examples of general standards in the field of history are:**

<b>Standards for all grades</b>	<b>Standards for grades 1 - 4</b>	<b>Standards for grades 5 – 9</b>	<b>Standards for grades 10 – 12</b>
The learner understands the role of the ancient Arab civilization and in particular the Arab-Islamic civilization, And the role of other human civilizations, generally, in formulating the events of history	The learner is aware of the importance of Syrian ancient and modern history, (Syria is the cradle of civilization).	The learner realizes the role of all civilizations in terms of connection and communication, especially the ancient Arab civilization, and Arab-Islamic and its impact on the world (civilizations dialogue)	- The learner realizes the concept of civilization and its different aspects.  -The learner is aware of civilizations role among each other, and their impact on the world, and the most important social, political, economic and cultural changes, especially those related to the Arab

			world.
The learner is aware of the civilized role of Syria in the history of the world.	The learner understands the importance of festivals, events and historical monuments	The learner is aware of the importance of Syria and its civilized role throughout history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learner is aware of prominent achievements of the Arabic and the world civilization throughout history</li> </ul>

**Examples of the general standards in the field of culture and society:**

<b>Standards for all grades</b>	<b>Standards for grades 1 - 4</b>	<b>Standards for grades 5 - 9</b>	<b>Standards for grades 10 – 12</b>
The learner is aware of the importance of preserving the cultural heritage of every society , and the seek to enrich ,develop and disseminate it	The learner is aware of the importance of preserving the cultural heritage	The learner is aware of the importance of preserving the cultural heritage	The learner is aware of the importance of preserving the National Cultural Heritage and disseminating it
-The learner understands the importance of diversity and cultural richness for human civilization  - The learner recognizes the creative habitats of the Arabic civilization	The learner recognizes the habitat of creative civilization in Syria	The learner recognizes the habitat of creative civilization in Syria, the Arab world and the world .	The learner understands the components of his Arabic cultural identity with its humanitarian civilized content

**In reference to the main aspects of the Social Studies textbooks that embody the implication of national standards in all stages of pre-university education, we note:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Title of textbook</b>	<b>Themes:</b> concentration on cognitive implication, and essential skills for Social Studies through:
<b>First Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	Individual and society - homeland - work - national symbols - rights - duties - time and sequence - basic needs - values
<b>Second Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	Site-natural phenomena - national symbols – events - work - time and sequence - good citizenship
<b>Third Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	National Heritage - government services - national symbols work and professions - natural phenomena – human activity
<b>Fourth Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies: Syrian Arab Republic</b>	Applying cognitive contents , and basic skills in the study of the Syrian Arab Republic through: natural and economic geography - regimes- democratic institutions – the cultural role of Syria in history
<b>Fifth Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies : Arab world (1)</b>	Applying the cognitive implications ,and basic skills in the Arab world (Asian Section) through: natural and economic geography- regimes - democratic institutions - Arab societies in Asia and its civilization before Islam - the emergence and spread of Islam - Arab societies in Asia after Islam
<b>Sixth Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies: Arab World (2)</b>	Applying the cognitive implications ,and basic skills in the Arab World (African Section) through: natural and economic geography - regimes - democratic institutions  the Arab civilization in Africa before Islam - the

		spread of Islam and the Arab Islamic civilization in Africa
<b>Seventh Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies: Syria and world(1)</b>	Applying the cognitive implications, and basic skills in Syria and the world through: natural and economic geography - regimes - democratic institutions - the most prominent historical developments in the world and world civilizations
<b>Eighth Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies: Syria and world(2)</b>	
<b>Ninth Grade</b>	<b>Social Studies: Arab World</b>	Applying the cognitive implications ,and basic skills in the Arab world through: natural and economic geography - regimes-democratic institutions - modern and contemporary history in the Arab World
<b>10<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>The history of civilization</b>	To know the history of civilization concept, and the importance of dialogue among civilizations , the global communication and openness to human societies; while preserving the privacy of Arabic personality through: a systematic historical research- ancient Arab civilizations and their global impact - the history of Arab Islamic civilization and its global impact- east and west civilizations and its global impact
<b>11<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>The history of modern and contemporary world</b>	The beginning and the end of modern history - the Arab World and the Ottoman Empire - the most prominent economic ,political and social changes before the First World War - the most prominent political , economic , and social changes in the twentieth century after the First World War
<b>12<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>History of the Arab world and</b>	The development of the Arab world since the colonial occupation up to the present time - the

	<b>the modern world</b>	Arab World and the world order and globalization and Syria's national role-Alliances and conglomerates
--	-------------------------	--

**The developed educational curriculums were designed to enhance the students self-learning skills throughout the following steps:**

- Using simple and accurate language and scientific manner to explain knowledge and new concepts.
- Acquainting students with update knowledge. We use reference of reliable Arab and foreign resources.
- Enriching textbooks with pictures, illustration charts, drawings, maps and enrichment materials as tools for obtaining information.
- Developing the skills of research and investigation in order to apprehend the scientific knowledge.
- Stimulating thinking, and encourage the students for in-depth research.
- Including Extra- curriculum activities such as conducting field visits to museums and archaeological places, and virtual knowledge tours through global network in addition to raising awareness about national, regional and international heritage monuments.

#### **References:**

- 1 - The Constitution of UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1946.
- 2 –The Document of National Standards of the curriculum in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2007.
- 3 - The Convention of the Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection in 1972.