

## **Statement of the Workshop on New Approaches to Urban Conservation held in Jerusalem (4-6 June 2006)**

The participants, coming from 14 countries around the world, to the Jerusalem international workshop on New Approaches to Urban Conservation, held from 4 to 6 June 2006 at Brigham Young University in Jerusalem, the Center for Near Eastern Studies, sponsored by the Government of The Netherlands and organized as an academic networking event proposed by UNESCO to the representatives of the Al Quds University and the Bezalel Academy of Arts & Design in a quest to maintain a dialogue between the communities,

**Appreciating** the opportunity to visit the Old City of Jerusalem and expressing the wish that the principles of the Vienna Memorandum be applied to this important World Heritage site;

**Celebrating** UNESCO's 60 years of contribution to the dialogue among nations;

**Recalling** that the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science, culture and communication;

**Appreciating** the multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary character of the group of professionals gathered in a location of outstanding universal value;

**Keeping in mind**, as embodied in the 1972 *World Heritage Convention*, that the peoples of the present hold an obligation to transmit heritage and their values to future generations;

**Noting** the usefulness of the 2005 Vienna Memorandum as a basis and work-in-progress to improve existing tools for the preservation of historic cities and their urban and natural landscapes;

**Concerned** by examples around the world of the accelerating deterioration of historic urban landscapes, as well as the ongoing erosion of values;

**Further concerned** by the impact of global phenomena such as inappropriate urban growth and tourism development, as well as by the market exploitation of heritage that threatens the values of heritage assets;

**Confronted** by global processes and challenges that require communities around the world to translate and adapt them to their local context and traditions;

**Recognizing** that while there are global problems, solutions have to be found locally with the active participation of resident communities;

**Emphasizing** that conservation is foremost an ethic and an on-going cultural process, paying tribute to the notion of *genius loci*, to be seen as part of development processes, instead of opposing or hampering;

**Recommend that as part of the preparatory work for a UNESCO Recommendation, as requested by the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2005) and endorsed by the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (October 2005), the following actions be undertaken:**

- 1) Building on the concepts of authenticity and integrity, refine the definition of Historic Urban Landscape as found in the Vienna Memorandum including *inter alia* natural elements, intangible dimensions, and cultural diversity that manifest themselves at different scales and over time;
- 2) Ensure comprehensive identification, knowledge, understanding, and management of Historic Urban Landscapes by development of existing tools and creation of new ones such as cultural mapping to:
  - a. Characterize and describe historic urban landscapes and their components to ensure their identification and understanding acknowledging subjectivity of perception, interpretation and representation of landscape as a cultural construct;
  - b. Strengthen cultural, historical, and socio-economic studies aimed at understanding values, traditions and attitudes of the communities associated with Historic Urban Landscapes, so that they are thoroughly described to inform policies and define strategies;
  - c. Document changes to historic urban landscapes when significant aspects, in particular vernacular, are in danger of disappearing;
  - d. Evaluate and assess the proposals for change through techniques such as environmental, visual, social and economic impact assessments, and value-led management plans so that conservation and sustainable development may work together;
- 3) Identify ways of protecting the wider setting and context of Historic Urban Landscapes through examining the function of “buffer zones” and other possible tools;
- 4) Facilitate public understanding and involvement in the decision making processes, in conservation planning and implementation, and to improve their efficiency;
- 5) Encourage academic networking and research on Historic Urban Landscapes, their meaning, identification, criteria for their evaluation and management methodologies and to make these the subject of future workshops by analyzing the different world-regional contexts;
- 6) Share results of such research with decision makers, professionals, cultural and educational institutions, and local communities, and support corresponding capacity building at all levels.