Statement of
International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

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at the

Habitat III Informal Hearings with Stakeholders
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I am pleased to speak today on behalf of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).   ICOMOS is an international non-governmental organization that promotes the safeguarding of cultural heritage.

As a threshold matter, it is important to understand what is meant by cultural heritage. Over time, the meaning of cultural heritage has expanded from single monuments identified as objects of art to cultural landscapes, historic cities, and serial properties. Moreover, contemporary practice (ratified by ICOMOS at its Madrid General Assembly more than a decade ago) extends the concept of heritage beyond "tangible heritage," to the intangible dimensions of heritage as well. This means the entirety of the capital of knowledge derived from the development and experience of human practices, and from the spatial, social and cultural constructions linked to it that may be encapsulated in the word, "memory."

The unique power of World Heritage sites and other exceptional, iconic properties cannot be doubted. Even so, in order to fully understand the relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable development, including the promotion of social cohesion, inclusion and equity, the idea of "heritage" must thus be understood in its broader, and more expanded sense particularly in urban areas. Physical conservation of selected artifacts alone will not help preserve a community's cultural heritage but neither can the promotion of development and creative livelihood-related activities be removed from the conservation of these properties. So conservation and development must be approached in a more complex and multidisciplinary/ transdisciplinary way to embrace planning and management that resolves the competing goals of conserving heritage value while integrating with inclusive social and economic development.

Unlike their predecessors, the MDGs, the SDGs speak boldly about heritage. Of the 7 targets making up the groundbreaking new Urban Goal, Target 11.4 calls for "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage."   The adoption of the SDGs has been accompanied by several parallel Post-2015 agenda settings processes. Because of the work of ICOMOS and partners, these also include groundbreaking references to Heritage, most notably the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Habitat 3 conference will mark the culmination of now five years of intensive global advocacy by culture and heritage constituencies including ICOMOS on the Post-2015 Agenda. The New Urban Agenda is the first major step in this process and for operationalizing

sustainable development in an integrated and coordinated way at global, regional, national, sub-national and local levels. By creating an action-oriented roadmap for implementation, the New Urban Agenda will drive the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDG Goal 11, of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Because the heritage target, 11.4, is located within Goal 11, the elaboration of the role of heritage in Agenda 2030 is necessarily closely linked to the Habitat 3 New Urban Agenda process as well. This session will explore the process of implementing and localizing SDG 11.4, also making reference to the broader 2030 Agenda context in which it exists.

Cultural Heritage is multi-disciplinary, multi-sector concern. For example, the principles concerns of ICOMOS with respect to the New Urban Agenda include:

Cultural Heritage and Creativity as a Driver for Inclusive Economic Development
[Habitat 3 Issue Areas: Social Cohesion and Equity, Livable Cities (including youth and gender, migration and refugees, and safety) and Urban Economy]
- Historic towns, districts, and the historic parts of cities incubate creativity and are valuable for their uniqueness, identity, and sense of place.
- Heritage and culture constitute the "cultural capital" of cities; culture-led redevelopment of urban areas; museums, art galleries, performance theaters, and a variety of cultural festivals make creative cities.
- Development through promotion of intangible heritage for generating livelihoods.
- Sustainable tourism managed and regulated by local communities can provide jobs and employment to local communities and imposes minimally on local culture.

Cultural Heritage as an Enabler for Social Cohesion, Inclusion and Equity
[Habitat 3 Issue Areas: Social Cohesion and Equity, Livable Cities (including youth and gender, migration and refugees, and safety); Urban Frameworks; and Urban Housing and Basic Services]

- Heritage has the power to strengthen communities where citizens associate the historic Environment with a shared identity, attachment to place and everyday life, including people those who are minorities, disadvantaged or socially excluded.
- Traditional settlements, with their lasting cultural identity and socio---economic traditions, raise the awareness and pride of citizens in local history and culture no matter where they originate or how they may be adapted.
- The mix of public and private spaces found in traditional settlements engenders social cohesiveness and interaction by providing common spaces for diverse groups to interact.
- Historic cities are by nature functionally and socially mixed, supporting a wide range of complementary activities, and embody multiple cultural values.
- People are at the heart of heritage conservation policies and projects. Emphasizing that ownership of heritage strengthens the social fabric and enhances social well-being.

- Public spaces that may be historic parks or plazas in historic parts of towns, or adjacent to historic monuments provide opportunities for continuity of use and significance while supporting new ones.
- In many cities, the dense, old neighborhoods with their barely adequate infrastructure provide affordable options for housing where the community networks often helps to bridge the inadequacies. Rehabilitating older housing stock can be a much more viable option than tearing them down and building anew, thus contributing to the circular local economy, that mimics economic processes of nature.
- Occupations related to cultural heritage, cultural practices, and creativity have the potential for small and micro---entrepreneurship that empowers local communities and can contribute substantially to poverty alleviation.
- Cultural knowledge related cultural heritage offers a diversity of solutions to a wide range of problems and recognizes diversity as a positive dimension of the urban environment.

Cultural Heritage and Historic quarters of cities can improve livability and sustainability of both older and new urban areas
[Habitat 3 Issue Areas: Urban Frameworks; Spatial Development (including Public Spaces, planning and Rural-Urban linkages); Urban Ecology and Environment (including Resilience, DRR and Climate Change)]
- Walkability and compactness of urban areas are enhanced in dense historic cities.
- Adaptive re-use of existing built fabric, including buildings, historic urban districts, and towns, can be resource efficient and ecological.
- Traditional building technologies and materials offer low---energy, regional appropriate examples of human adaptability.
- Mixed-use and multi-use structures and spaces are an integral aspect of historic towns and districts.
- Indigenous science and local traditional knowledge and practices for ecosystem management including those for disaster risk reduction and response have contributed to environmental sustainability and are important well springs of modern resilience.
- Reuse of historic areas takes pressure off of peri-urban development while at the same time historic territories are models for new urban settlements

The multi-faceted manner in which heritage and culture contributing to these objectives does not fit exclusively in any one Major Group or sector. For this reason, we encourage GAP and UN Habitat to continue to view these issues in a holistic fashion, and one the represents the role of culture and heritage in the New Urban Agenda.