

ICOMOS Media Note—For Immediate Release

**Habitat 3 Side Event Examines Role of Cultural Heritage, Creativity in Improving Urban Life**

**Event Time, Date and Location:** Monday, 17 October; 11h to 12h; Habitat 3 Venue -

CCE Room R5, Quito, Ecuador.

Both the draft Habitat 3 New Urban Agenda and the UN Sustainable Developments Goals adopted in 2015 assign important roles to cultural heritage in helping cities and human settlements improve urban social cohesion, inclusive economic development and equity. But how can these targets be achieved and what best practices already exist that can help cities and town get meet them? These questions are the focus of a Habitat 3 side event being sponsored by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) entitled “*Cultural Heritage and Creativity as a Driver for Urban Social Cohesion, Inclusion and Equity*.” The event is co-sponsored with EUROPA NOSTRA, the voice of cultural heritage in Europe.

The role of cultural heritage in these matters is a focus of draft outcome document for Habitat 3 – the New Urban Agenda:

* Draft Section 38 highlights the role tangible and intangible heritage play strengthening “social participation and the exercise of citizenship.”
* Similarly, Section 125 calls upon the parties to: “support leveraging cultural heritage for sustainable urban development, and recognize its role in stimulating participation and responsibility.”
* Section 45 provides for “vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive urban economies, building on endogenous potentials, competitive advantages, cultural heritage and local resources.
* Section 60 calls for sustaining and supporting urban economies through promoting cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism, performing arts, and heritage conservation activities, among others.

By highlighting the close correlation between heritage, creativity industries, conservation and tourism, these provisions reflect emerging best practices across the globe. They also align with the new UN Sustainable Development Goals. SDG Target 11.4 calls for making cities and human settlements more safe, inclusive, sustainable and resilient through heritage safeguarding. Target 8.9 calls for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work through “policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products.”

Said Andrew Potts, ICOMOS Focal Point for the UN SDG Process: “*The Habitat 3 New Urban Agenda envisions an important role for cultural heritage. As Habitat 3 concludes, the work of implementing these provisions must now fall to governments, civil society, trade unions and craft organizations and other stakeholders. Helping them do it will be a key responsibility of the cultural heritage sector in every country.*”

The Habitat 3 Side Event will include presentations on the EU-funded 'Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe' (CHCFE) project and on the connection between heritage and creative industries. The session will also features case studies on the use of cultural heritage as a tool for achieving social cohesion and urban equity drawn from two World Heritage cities – Quito, Ecuador and San Antonio, USA.

Speakers include Andrew Potts (ICOMOS); Claus-Peter Echter (EUROPA NOSTRA; ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Towns and Villages (CIVVIH)); Donovan Rypkema (Heritage Strategies International; International Committee on the Economics of Conservation (ISCEC)); Shanon Miller, AICP (City of San Antonio, Texas (USA)) and Angélica Arias (Instituto Metropolitano de Patrimonio de Quito (Ecuador)).

For further information, please contact Andrew Potts, ICOMOS Focal Point for the UN SDG Process, andrew.potts@icomos.org.

Learn more at about cultural heritage at Habitat 3 here: <http://www.alameda.com.ec/>.

Learn more about ICOMOS’s work on the New Urban Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals here: http://www.usicomos.org/knowledgeexchange/heritage-as-pillar-of-sustainable-development/.

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