

WORK MEETING OF CIVVIH-ICOMOS FOR THE CHARTER OF HISTORIC TOWNS

ATHENS, 8 - 9 MAY 2009

On the 8th and 9th of May 2009 the Work Meeting of the International Scientific Committee for Historic Towns (CIVVIH-ICOMOS) was held in Athens, aiming to update the Charter of Historic Towns on the basis of the new evidence having risen 22 years after its voting and the formulation of guidelines for the specialists in the field of protection of Historic Towns.

This meeting was jointly organised by the CIVVIH and the Technical Chamber of Greece, ICOMOS-Greece and the Faculty of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens. The event was greeted by the representative of the Administrative Board of the Technical Chamber of Greece Stathis Tsegos, the president of ICOMOS-Greece Nikos Agriantonis, the former president of the UIA Vassilis Sgoutas, the representative of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre Marie-Noel Tournaux, as well as by the Secretary-General of the International Organization of Historic Towns (Historic Town of Rhodes) Lee Minaidis by means of a sent letter.

During the opening session of the work meeting Vassilis Sgoutas noted that now there is a close relationship developed between UIA and ICOMOS, and that social segregation of space should be taken into consideration. It was stated by M.-N. Tournaux that the States Parties have accepted the effort to draft a new regulatory text. Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonias added that the workshop aspires to the adoption of a document with dynamic and renewable character. There is need to agree on methodology which will inspire a specific model of behavior to all parties involved in historic towns' management. R. Bondin mentioned that although all existing documents are valid, historic cities have undergone changes and there are modern requests demanding clear rules and principles.

- During the first day of the meeting, which was open to the public, members of the Committee critically presented international Charters and Guidelines drafted in the past, as well as matters pertaining to the protection and development of Historic Towns. Namely, Angela Rojas presented the Norm of Quito (1967), Michel Van Der Meerschen presented the Nairobi Recommendation (1976), Alvaro Gomez-Ferrer presented the Athens Charter (2003) and a Comparative analysis of the annex of the

UNESCO document on the HUL, ameliorated by the Athens Charter of the European Council of Urban Planners, and the principle elements emerging from the 'Guidelines' document.

Michel Bonnette presented the Vienna Memorandum (2005), Michal Firestone offered a discussion on the HUL and Samir Abdulac offered a preview of the Bordeaux Discussion which will be held in the coming month of June 2009.

Moreover, Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonia presented the directions of the Scientific Council for the triennium 2009-11, Danuta Klosek presented the Washington Charter (1987) and finally Elvira Petroncelli presented the text to be finalized – “Guidelines for the safeguarding of historic towns and urban areas in a changing world”.

Following the discussion after these presentations:

A. It was unanimously decided to maintain the Charter of Historic Towns in its initial form, as it constitutes a «historic text» as well as to draft a guidelines text completing and taking into consideration all the precedent relative theoretic texts and which will be addressed not only to professionals, but also to the regional bodies, the decision-making centers of the political and state bodies.

B. The guidelines text will include definitions, aspects of change, principles, as well as proposed policies and strategies. Moreover, it will include elements which either have not been mentioned in previous texts, or have not been adequately analyzed (for example, tangible and intangible values, environmental assessment, sustainable development, the meaning of urban landscape, the understanding of the historic town within the ensemble of the town and its territory, the need for buffer zones that contribute to the protection, the need for drawing up management plans etc).

The guidelines text will begin with general principles and will conclude in proposals and management strategies for the inevitable changes taking place during the course of development of historic towns (new environmental technologies, new infrastructure, new developments, etc). General remarks and considerations posed were: the matter of economic power; poverty and ways for these phenomena's confrontation; as well as the matter of social involvement and how to achieve social consciousness of heritage.

This first day of the Work Meeting ended with a cultural itinerary through the streets of downtown Athens and the contemplation of some of the most important

neoclassic buildings of the Greek state, dating mainly from the beginning of the 19th through the beginning of the 20th century.

During the second day of the Work Meeting, the structure of the guidelines text, drafted by E. Petroncelli and Alvaro Gómez-Ferrer, was reformed, mainly following the directives included in the comparative table of the major Charters concerning Historic Towns, proposed by Alvaro Gómez-Ferrer. Following the restructuring of the guidelines text, and through an open discussion coordinated by Alvaro Gómez-Ferrer with the assistance of Eleni Maïstrou and Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonia, the majority of participants expressed their opinion on the newly formed text, on matters of structure, content and vocabulary; their observations and additions were transcribed and incorporated in the text, which will presently be available in English and French, that is, the two languages in which the original guidelines were originally drafted. In particular, we must mention the contribution of (in alphabetical order:) Samir Abdulac, Teresa Colletta, Michel Van Der Meerschen, Giora Solar and Marie-Noël Tournoux. Victor Salinas offered to translate the texte in Spanish

These guidelines will then circulate via e-mail among the members of the CIVVIH-ICOMOS Committee for further elaboration, discussion and analysis, so as to conclude to a final guidelines text and to achieve the goal set by the Athens meeting. The guidelines text on Historic Towns will be submitted by the CIVVIH before the international bodies of ICOMOS so that it can be approved and adopted. The deadline for sending the text will take into consideration the calendar of meetings of the Consultative and Executive Committees of ICOMOS. It will also be sent as soon as possible to the competent bodies and particularly to the Scientific Committee so as to be more adapted to the decisions and recommendations emerging from the General Assembly of Québec. Moreover, it will be subject to periodic revision by the CIVVIH.

A committee was charged with drafting the final text, composed by the following members (in alphabetical order): S. Avgerinou-Kolonia, R. Bondin, M. Bonnette, A. Gomez-Ferrer, M. Firestone, E. Maïstrou, E. Petroncelli and M. Van Der Meerschen. It was agreed that the text would be drafted according to the decided points by Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonia and Eleni Maïstrou.

The Athens Work Meeting of CIVVIH-ICOMOS for the Charter of Historic Towns was concluded with an itinerary through the Plaka neighborhood, in the heart of the historic city of Athens and the contemplation of historic buildings, whose protection and conservation fall under the scope of the efforts of the CIVVIH-ICOMOS.

The meeting was attended by:

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| Ray Bondin | Malta | President of CIVVIH |
| Sofia Avgerinou Kolonias | Greece | Vice-President CIVVIH |
| Michel Bonnette | Canada | Vice-President of CIVVIH |
| Michal Firestone | Israel | General Secretary of CIVVIH |
| Angela Rojas | Cuba | Member of the Executive Committee and CIVVIH of ICOMOS |
| Giora Solar | Israel | Member of the CIVVIH and Former treasurer of ICOMOS |
| Athina Papadopoulou | Cyprus | Member of the CIVVIH and President of ICOMOS-Cyprus |
| The members of the CIVVIH bureau | | |
| Joao Campos | Portugal | |
| Alvaro Gomez-Ferrer | Spain | |
| Elvira Petroncelli | Italy | |
| Michel Van Der Meerschen | Belgium | |

**The members of
CIVVIH:**

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| Samir Abdulac | France | |
| Teressa Colletta | Italy | |
| Maria Daniil | Greece | |
| Claus-Peter Echter | Germany | |
| Danuta Klosek- Kozlowska | Poland | |
| Marianne Lehtimaki | Finland | |
| Eleni Maistrou | Greece | |
| Bruno Maldoner | Austria | |
| Deniz Mazlum | Turkey | |
| Victor Fernandez Salinas | Spain | |

And :

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| Shadi Ghadban | Palestine | Representative of the National Committee |
| Valter Shtylla | Albania | President of the National Committee |

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| Marianna Savrami | Greece | Treasurer of ICOMOS-Hellenic |
| Marie Noel Tournaux | | Observer from the UNESCO World Heritage Center |

The organization of the Athens meeting was realized by Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonias, and by Eleni Maistrou, with the assistance of the Hellenic ICOMOS members Maria Danniil, Dimitra Andrikou and Marioanna Louka.

MOTIONS – RESOLUTIONS

1. During the Athens Meeting, the following resolution was presented by Victor Salinas (Spain) and approved: “The CIVVIH Members attending the meeting in Athens, May 2009, to discuss the Washington Charter, express their preoccupation about the project for a skyscraper known as Torre Cajasol, because of its future and irreversible impact on the valious and harmonizing landscape of Seville”.

2. Deniz Mazlum, Secretary-General (ICOMOS-Turkey), announced the letter sent on the 2nd of April 2009 by Hamdi Sedefçi, Mayor of Edirne, to Professor Dr. Nur Akin, President of ICOMOS-Turkey. Following this announcement, the Members of the CIVVIH Committee attending the Athens meeting renewed the decision taken in Corfu in April 2008 to host the next Meeting of the Mediterranean Sub-Committee of CIVVIH in Edirne, Turkey, in this upcoming autumn.