



## 5<sup>th</sup> ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum

### Investing in Heritage Cities: Stimulus for Sustainable Tourism and Livelihoods

24-25 June 2013

Yangon, Myanmar

## MEETING REPORT

### CONTENTS

#### Executive Summary

#### Meeting Report

- Section I: Findings and Recommendations of the Experts' Meeting
- Section II: Findings and Recommendations of the Public Forum
- Outcomes
- Participants of the Meeting
- Representatives of Organisers, Partners and Supporters
- About the Organisers, Partners and Supporters

### Executive Summary

**A heritage-led development** of cities in Asia and Europe can ensure an attractive environment for people, tourists and business, if based on the specific needs and requirements of local communities. To this end, heritage revitalisation should not only be limited to historic buildings, but also consider the social dimension implied in traditional uses of public spaces, lifestyles and practices, including local craft and creative industries. This message was at the core of the findings that emerged from the Asia-Europe Foundation's (ASEF) Experts' Meeting and Public Forum on [\*Investing in Heritage Cities: Stimulus for Sustainable Tourism and Livelihoods\*](#) held on 24-25 June 2013 in Yangon, Myanmar. The meeting was organised by ASEF in partnership with the Yangon Heritage Trust and the Hanns Seidel Foundation and with the support of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Italy and France.

**Cities, home to more than 50%** of the world's population, are facing the growing challenge of building synergies between economic development and heritage conservation. On one hand, it is widely accepted that the conservation and use of heritage resources can provide much needed continuity for urban development. On the other hand, a dichotomy still seems to exist between the twin needs of preserving the past for its inherent value and facilitating development in response to changing economic trends and social environments.

Investing in heritage cities goes beyond the economic dimension, which attracts capital, tourists and talent. It also includes a social dimension that may encourage community empowerment and



human capital development. Such a holistic approach is the need of the hour in cities across Asia and Europe, which currently face the predicament of reconciling urban heritage and development policies.

In light of these ongoing debates on the future of cities, policies and practices of urban heritage conservation gain greater significance and call for a deeper analysis of existing issues and challenges.

Yangon, the former capital of Myanmar, offered itself as the perfect backdrop for this meeting, considering that the protection and promotion of its urban heritage remains an important challenge as the country undergoes unprecedented transformation.

**Twenty nine experts** from over 25 Asian and European countries gathered in Yangon for this bi-regional dialogue and exchange. The participants included architects and urban planners, representatives of governmental bodies, civil organisations and international organisations, such as UNESCO and the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Over 100 government officials, heritage experts and tourism professionals from Myanmar attended the event.

**The following issues were discussed** at the ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum, with specific focus on Asia and Europe: (i) nature of investments – economic *and* social - needed to ensure the sustainable development of heritage cities; (ii) benefits of heritage-led revitalisation of local economies and societies; (iii) challenges of promoting responsible and sustainable heritage-based tourism in cities; (iv) good practices in sustainable urban heritage management; (v) role of different stakeholders (policymakers, communities and other civil society actors) in heritage-related activities; (vi) maintaining the right balance between preservation and modernisation in urban contexts; (vii) conservation strategies for Yangon's heritage; and, (viii) inputs on heritage and tourism for the 6<sup>th</sup> Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting, organised in the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)<sup>1</sup>, scheduled to be held in October 2014 in the Netherlands.

During the course of discussions, participants stressed the opportunities for and challenges of sustainable development in heritage cities that aim to maintain a right balance between the intrinsic values of conservation and the necessity to accommodate contemporary needs. Among others, it was noted that good governance of heritage cities should ensure a blend of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to create useful synergies among different stakeholders.

The importance of balancing economic development and the preservation of cultural heritage was particularly emphasised by H.E. Sanda Khin, Deputy Minister of Culture and H.E. Tin Shwe, Deputy Minister of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar, during the opening ceremony on 24 June. The vital role of urban heritage in the management of thriving cities was confirmed by the Mayor of Yangon, H.E. U Hla Myint, at the Public Forum on *Conservation Strategies for Yangon's Heritage: Next Steps and Challenges* on 25 June.

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<sup>1</sup> ASEM brings together 49 member states (Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lao PDR, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, Viet Nam) plus ASEAN and the European Union. [www.aseminfoboard.org](http://www.aseminfoboard.org)



The agenda of the Experts' Meeting and Public Forum reflected the political priorities outlined at the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (18-19 September 2013, Yogyakarta, Indonesia), which had focused on the theme, *Managing Heritage Cities for a Sustainable Future*. In particular, the organisation of the meeting responded to a call by the Ministers to support the exchange of knowledge and experiences related to the good governance of heritage cities in the ASEM region. Recognising heritage cities as generators of creative economy, the Ministers also recommended the establishment of a network in the ASEM region on revitalisation of urban heritage areas to generate creative economy.

Cultural heritage management has featured high on the agenda of Asian and European Ministers of Culture since 2010. The 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (9-10 September 2010, Poznan, Poland) focused on the theme, *Heritage and the Challenges of the Present*. In 2014, Culture Ministers from both continents will meet in the Netherlands to discuss the benefits and challenges of the creative industries. In this context, they will address the role of heritage in urban revitalisation.

Among the key outcomes of the Yangon meeting are:

- The establishment of the network, **Asia-Europe Network of Urban Heritage for Sustainable Creative Economies** to promote knowledge sharing and capacity building in urban heritage management between relevant organisations and networks in Asia and Europe; the network is promoted by Europa Nostra, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), International Institute for the Inclusive Museum (Denmark), International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) and the Yangon Heritage Trust (Myanmar). Civil society organisations, Europa Nostra, INTACH and INTO actively participated in the proceedings of the Yangon meeting and fully endorsed the findings and recommended actions.
- The publication, ***Managing Heritage Cities: The Role of Public-Private Partnerships - Good Practices from Asia and Europe*** (ASEF, 2014), which documents innovative models of collaboration among policy makers, urban planners, city developers, architects, conservationists, businesses, non profits, property owners and citizens; the publication – featuring 36 case studies from 33 cities in 23 countries in Asia and Europe - is a collaboration with Europa Nostra and INTO.
- A follow up workshop on ***Responsible Urban Heritage Tourism in Yangon*** (28 May 2014, Yangon, Myanmar) was organised by the Hanns Seidel Foundation in co-operation with the City of Yangon; Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development of the Ministry of Construction, Myanmar; Myanmar Tourism Federation; University of Cologne; and, University of Yangon.

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## Meeting Report

### Section I: Findings and Recommendations of the Experts' Meeting

The principal findings of the Experts' Meeting are:

- i. A heritage-led development of cities in Asia and Europe can ensure an attractive environment for citizens, tourists and businesses, if the needs and requirements of local communities are integrated into the development plan. It is possible to preserve urban heritage while also ensuring the development of thriving, liveable cities responsive to contemporary needs. To achieve this end, it is, however, critical to find the right balance within the triangle of local community needs; economic interests and profitability; and, the intrinsic values of cultural transmission. Heritage cities are living entities. Therefore, it is crucial that the lives and aspirations of the inhabitants of heritage cities are prioritised in the planning process.
- ii. Protecting, managing and conserving tangible and intangible urban heritage assets depend on awareness and good governance provided by place-based awareness policy, appropriate regulations and legal frameworks. In particular, the role of real estate developers and of land rights in urban heritage conservation must be explored further and their systems/approaches clarified.
- iii. The provision of an adequate information base as well as affordable and sustainable urban services and related infrastructure have been shown to be an essential prerequisite for urban heritage conservation, and orderly city management and development.
- iv. Heritage awareness and restoration should start in targeted urban areas. Adaptive reuse offers a second lease of life to historic buildings and related heritage assets such as open public space and education centres. To ensure the long-term sustainability of restored buildings, viable functions responsive to contemporary needs for different stakeholders should be found for them.
- v. It is important to ensure high-quality restoration of heritage buildings, wherein modern interventions and infills are in harmony with the original workmanship, and of excellent place-based design, ensuring the ensemble remains the 'heritage of the future'. Heritage restoration can contribute to preserving and/or reviving traditional ways of building and design by creating apprenticeship and training opportunities for a new generation of artisans and heritage professionals.
- vi. The understanding of 'heritage' should be expanded beyond historic buildings, monuments and sites to also include the social dimension implied in the traditional uses of public spaces, lifestyles, art forms, businesses and everyday practices. In this regard, participants particularly emphasised the need for greater awareness on and documentation of multi-faith and multi-ethnic traditions in heritage cities in order to preserve the harmonious co-existence of different communities therein.
- vii. Particular attention should be given to the scoping and design of building services, when planning for the adaptive reuse of historic assets, in order to ensure effective and sustained utilisation.



- viii. There is an urgent need to integrate heritage awareness, knowledge and revitalisation in the daily life of local communities through, for instance, the organisation of local festivals/cultural activities, place-based excursion activities and the revival of traditional arts, crafts, practices and interaction.

Further, raising awareness and understanding about cultural heritage and its relation to the city's and country's history and narrative, should be considered a long-term commitment by multi-stakeholder groups requiring the provision of lifelong learning opportunities. Early heritage education for children and youth requires particular attention.

There is an urgent need to tap into the knowledge of older generations and share their oral histories with the community through documentation and archiving. Involving those with experience as guides and story tellers at local museums and institutions can help (re)connect older people as well as the revitalised heritage places to their communities. Institutional frameworks need to be established for long-term knowledge exchange and co-operation between Asia and Europe.

- ix. Cities are *not* open air museums for tourists. They are, first and foremost, for citizens. Local communities should have full ownership of the urban spaces they live in. As a result, an authentic environment is created which is appreciated and valued by tourists as well. The opportunities and challenges facing a heritage building or site, are unique and specific to that building or site. Flexibility must exist in policies and regulations regarding heritage buildings and sites, and their protection, regeneration and management. However, heritage management in cities goes well beyond the conservation of monuments and must address social cohesion. It must be understood that rules applicable to monuments cannot be applied to whole cities. Cities are dynamic, living entities, which call for more holistic approaches.
- x. There is an urgent need to embed sustainable and responsible tourism policies in the early stages of strategy and urban planning, particularly for cities seeking UNESCO World Heritage Listing. Sustainable tourism is "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."<sup>2</sup> Responsible tourism is an approach to managing tourism, aimed at maximising economic, social and environmental benefits and minimising costs to destinations. Simply put, responsible tourism is tourism "that creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit".<sup>3</sup> The responsible tourism approach aims to achieve the three principal outcomes of sustainable development – economic growth, environmental sustainability and social justice. The distinguishing characteristic of the approach is the focus on the responsibility of role-players in the tourism sector and destinations and on taking action to achieve sustainable tourism development.
- xi. When determining (new) functions of revitalised heritage buildings and sites as potential tourist infrastructure, the question of for whom the building or site is destined is important. The distinction between the needs and effects of international tourism and domestic tourism can be complex. All tourists can come to view objects and places showing the story of a country, city, religion or enterprise – if these exceed capacities or gain World Heritage status, the visitor numbers can be overwhelming and can threaten

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<sup>2</sup> Excerpt from Sustainable Development of Tourism, World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) <http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>

<sup>3</sup> Excerpt from the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Policy published by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar, 2012



the sites in question. Domestic tourists, who can make up three-quarters of visitors, also benefit from a deeper understanding of a site, and the possibility of continuing and furthering the intangible heritage practices and traditions which belong to it. Cultural heritage should be allowed to evolve and develop through time.

- xii. Heritage-based tourism should assess its management and carrying capacities, define targets and engage the whole tourism supply chain. Management of tourist flows need not necessarily translate into reduced tourist numbers. Innovation in tourism management by, for instance, the effective use of information and communication technologies, development of ticketing price scales and active engagement of tourists in authentic local cultural activities, is critical to achieve this.
- xiii. Visitor arrivals need not necessarily be the main indicator of successful tourism strategies. Improved quality of life and increased employment opportunities for local communities can prove to be more convincing measures.

While tourism can be a resource for the local community and contribute substantially to conservation, cities should seek for economic diversification and should rely on a wider web of economic activities.

- xiv. Reducing visitor numbers can, however, be an effective tool for increasing the value attributed to, and the quality of the visitor's experience at a heritage site.

The participants present the following recommendations for the consideration of ASEM Member States:

- i. To acknowledge and integrate heritage as a vital part of the urban planning process through the establishment of appropriate forms of governance. In particular, to introduce heritage impact assessment for proposed projects; to improve co-ordination between various government planning bodies and implementing agencies on heritage management; to provision training on the value and benefit of cultural heritage for government officials at all levels (local, regional and national); and, to ensure a blend of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to create useful synergies among various public and private stakeholders;
- ii. To promote and sustain tourism - in particular, cultural and community-oriented tourism - as an integral part of the heritage regeneration process, through policies and regulations favouring sustainable and responsible tourism;
- iii. To recognise, explore and support the linkages of tangible and intangible heritage with the local creative economy, including traditional arts and crafts industries, and reinforce knowledge sharing in this area by promoting networks between cities in Asia and Europe; and,
- iv. To encourage and support research and documentation of good practices and case studies on integrated urban planning and development in cities and urban centres in Asia and Europe.



## Section II: Findings and Recommendations of the Public Forum

The principal findings of the Public Forum on *Conservation Strategies for Yangon's Heritage: Next Steps and Challenges* on 25 June 2013 are as follows:

- i. Asian cities are under enormous pressure to modernise faster. However, change should proceed considering their institutional capacity to manage change, and include strengthening of urban services without which modernisation would not be sustainable. However, there is a sense of urgency, specifically in Yangon, regarding the need to protect the city's historical centre. As Myanmar opens to development, Yangon needs support in order to receive global knowledge, which will enable authorities and residents to decide the city's development based on good practices in heritage protection and sustainable development from other world regions.
- ii. Time should be allowed for awareness raising among the different stakeholders and residents as well as for developing regulations (such as building codes) and strengthening institutional capacity. Heritage protection and promotion requires time, as it deals with the lives and aspirations of people in heritage cities. People should be prioritised and be acknowledged first.
- iii. Several parts of Yangon city have not yet come to be perceived as 'heritage' by stakeholders and inhabitants, owing to different reasons. First, awareness about modern concepts of 'heritage' is not yet widespread. Second, pre-colonial and colonial buildings sometimes belong to contested times and backgrounds of historic events. Third, some buildings and areas are not older than 50 years and are, therefore, *not* yet recognised as heritage buildings by many stakeholders (for example, buildings from the post-independence period or transformation period).
- iv. The voices of the people living in Yangon should be heard in the planning and conservation processes. The authorities concerned (Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction; Yangon City Development Committee etc.), the Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) and researchers (e.g. University of Cologne, Germany and University of Yangon) are making progress in creating a proper inventory of heritage buildings in the city's historic centre. YHT notes that some buildings slated for demolition are still structurally sound, and perhaps deserve a review to make possible a reprieve for the sake of the historic streetscape.

Recommendations for the consideration of the Ministry of Culture, Myanmar; Ministry of Construction, Myanmar; Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar; Yangon Regional Government; and, the Mayor of Yangon:

- i. The Strategic Urban Development Plan for Greater Yangon, prepared by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to assist the Yangon City Development Committee, emphasises the improvement of infrastructure and institutional capacity in the field of urban planning. This development vision for 2040 should be led by urban heritage conservation in Yangon in order to make it a great liveable city with unique urban characteristics; and, this can be achieved through integrated support from the regional government and ministries at the Union level.
- ii. Support for the update of building regulations and code in Yangon must be strengthened. The effective functioning of an Architecture and Planning Review Board must be ensured.



to enable high quality in restoration and adaptation of old buildings as well as in new building projects in Yangon.

- iii. Government investments in the city's infrastructure (utilities, transport and services) and public spaces will encourage private investments in responsible development, including regeneration of heritage buildings. The development of Yangon's historic waterfront as an accessible public park and recreation space will greatly enhance the attractiveness and, thus, the value of the city's historic centre.
- iv. Government support for creative and flexible public-private partnership financing and management models can encourage and enable the regeneration of the heritage buildings and spaces in the historic heart of Yangon (such as through revolving bank loans, heritage lotteries, tax breaks and subsidies etc).
- v. YHT can widen its mandate to the national level. Similar community-based organisations in different towns and cities must be set up and supported to safeguard and manage local urban and cultural heritage.
- vi. The role of research institutions and universities within Myanmar and their international partners should be further acknowledged and supported. Urban heritage issues should be included in the curriculum in higher education institutions.
- vii. People's awareness about their locations' historic and heritage potential should be much enhanced, for example by public exhibitions, leaflets, publications, lectures, campaigns and other activities within the neighbourhoods, schools, universities and civil society forums.
- viii. Yangon could serve as a model for other cities. International planning/heritage experts' workshops as well as scientific and public-oriented publications could encourage the sharing of good practices and the forming of partnerships among different stakeholders in and beyond Yangon, in order to learn and share various experiences.
- ix. As Myanmar meets the future, national policy can encourage the development and growth of regional cities in order to relieve the growth pressure on Yangon and to bring development progress evenly to the whole country.

### Outcomes

- i. The establishment of the network **Asia-Europe Network of Urban Heritage for Sustainable Creative Economies** to promote knowledge sharing and capacity building in urban heritage management between relevant organisations and networks in Asia and Europe.

Ministers of Culture from Asia and Europe have called for sustainable knowledge exchange on heritage cities and creative economies through the establishment of a network<sup>4</sup>. This call was also echoed by civil experts at the Yangon meeting. Responding to these calls from policy makers and heritage organisations, a new bi-regional network is being established to connect Asian and European networks and organisations working in heritage management.

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<sup>4</sup> Chair's Statement, 5<sup>th</sup> ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (18-19 September 2014, Yogyakarta, Indonesia) <http://www.aseminfoboard.org/upcoming-events/download-doc.html?id=2450>



Launched in December 2013, this new network is being promoted by Europa Nostra, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), International Institute for the Inclusive Museum (Denmark), International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) and the Yangon Heritage Trust (Myanmar). Representatives of all above-mentioned organisations attended the meeting in Yangon.

The network will address issues of livelihood, cohesion, social welfare, local economy, sustainable management and traditional craft skills, and design creative ways to generate economic opportunities linked to cultural assets in historic towns and areas. It will particularly facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices among ASEM countries.

Among the first activities of the network is a seminar on *Urban Heritage and Sustainable Creative Economies: Exploring New Approaches to Revitalisation of Historic Cities* (25-27 October 2014, New Delhi, India). An e-publication of good practices in urban heritage management from Asia and Europe will follow.

The network is expected to eventually open its membership to organisations and networks working in the planning, conservation, development and management of historic cities including non-profits, government agencies and craft guilds.

The Secretariat of this network is currently located at INTACH, New Delhi. For more information on the network, contact the Secretariat at [prdr.iha\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:prdr.iha(at)gmail.com)

ASEF is supporting this process in its first year (i.e. 2014) through *ASEF Creative Networks* (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 2014), its new initiative to incubate and nurture cultural networks in Asia and Europe.

- ii. A follow up workshop on ***Responsible Urban Heritage Tourism in Yangon*** (28 May 2014, Yangon, Myanmar) was organised by the Hanns Seidel Foundation in co-operation with the City of Yangon; Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development of the Ministry of Construction, Myanmar; Myanmar Tourism Federation; University of Cologne, Germany; and, and University of Yangon.
- iii. The publication, ***Managing Heritage Cities: The Role of Public-Private Partnerships - Good Practices from Asia and Europe*** (ASEF, 2014) featuring innovative models of collaboration among policy makers, urban planners, city developers, architects, conservationists, businesses, non profits, property owners and citizens. This report is also included in the *Managing Heritage Cities* publication.

Recent decades have seen a marked increase in co-operation between the public and private sectors in protecting the built and living heritage of our cities. The increasing move towards values-based urban conservation management, with its emphasis on participatory planning and a multi-sectoral approach, has necessitated such public-private collaboration. How public and private sectors are working together to conserve heritage cities and historic urban landscapes is the subject of this book. Thirty six case studies from 33 cities in 23 countries across Asia and Europe are included.

This publication has been prepared in collaboration with Europa Nostra and the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO).



The publication will be presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting (19-21 October 2014, Rotterdam, Netherlands). Sustainable urban planning issues - including the adaptive reuse of heritage in creative cities - will be addressed at this Ministerial meeting, within the broader framework of the creative industries.

### **Participants of the Meeting**

This report is based on presentations by and discussions among the following experts.

Kelvin ANG, Director, Conservation Management, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Singapore

Saleem BEG, Convener, Jammu & Kashmir Chapter, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), India

Luigi CABRINI, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Global Sustainable Tourism Council ([www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)) & Advisor on sustainability to the UN Secretary General (former Director, Director, Sustainable Development, World Tourism Organization/UNWTO)

Etienne CLEMENT, Director, UNESCO Office for the Pacific States, Apia, Samoa (former Deputy Director, UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, Thailand)

Cornelius DIJKGRAAF, Director, Assistance in Implementation and Management, Housing Heritage and Climate Change for Urban Development, the Netherlands

Amareswar GALLA, Executive Director, International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark

Joachim GRANIT, Creative Director, Kunsthalle Färgfabriken Center for Art, Architecture and Urbanism, Stockholm, Sweden

Sora KIM, International Relations Officer, Cheongju Cultural Industry Foundation, South Korea

Frauke KRAAS, Head, Institute of Geography, University of Cologne, Germany

Le Thi Minh LY, Director, Center for Research and Promotion of Cultural Heritage, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Takahiko MAKINO, Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO Yangon, Myanmar

Jean-François MILOU, Founder, studioMilou Architecture, Paris, France

Gaetano MOLLURA, Project Manager, Urban Planning Council Department of Naples, Italy

Achim MUNZ, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), Myanmar

Laurie NEALE, Council Member, Europa Nostra, The Hague, the Netherlands

Jan NORDLANDER, Senior Advisor, Färgfabriken Center for Art, Architecture and Urbanism, Stockholm, Sweden



Carsten PALUDAN-MÜLLER, General Director, Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU), Oslo, Norway

Karine PEYRONNIE, Researcher, Institute of Research for Development (IRD-Paris), France

Navin PIPLANI, Principal Director, Centre for Conservation Training and Capacity Building, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), New Delhi, India & co-ordinator, Secretariat, Asia-Europe Network of Urban Heritage for Sustainable Creative Economies

Geoffrey READ, Director, Special Projects, International National Trusts Organisation (INTO), London, United Kingdom

Erminia SCIACCHITANO, General Secretary, Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Cultural Activities, Italy

Alvin TAN, Group Director (Policy), National Heritage Board (NHB), Singapore (former Director, Heritage Institutions, NHB)

Tanaka TOSHINORI, Project Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Frontier Sciences, University of Tokyo, Japan

Jurjen VAN DER TAS, Deputy Director, Historic Cities Programme, Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva, Switzerland

Augusto VILLALÓN, President, International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the Philippines

Hlaing Maw Oo HOCK, Deputy Chief Architect, Department of Public Works, Ministry of Construction, Myanmar

Moe Moe LWIN, Director, Yangon Heritage Trust, Myanmar

U Phyo Wai Yar ZAR, Secretary, Myanmar Tourism Federation

U Toe AUNG, Director, Urban Planning Division, Yangon City Development Committee, Myanmar

### **Representatives of Organisers, Partners and Supporters**

#### **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)**

Karsten WARNECKE, Deputy Executive Director

Sabina SANTAROSSA, former Director, Culture Department

Anupama SEKHAR, Acting/Deputy Director, Culture Department

Preeti GAONKAR, Project Executive, Culture Department

#### **Yangon Heritage Trust**

Moe Moe LWIN, Director

May Thway Ko, Special Assistant to Chairman and Director

Laetitia MILLOIS, Researcher

Khine Zar Maw, Researcher

Thet Hnin Kyi Phyu, Researcher



Hay Mar Lwin, Architectural Assistant  
Khin Myat Thu, Architectural Assistant  
Zaw Lin Myat, Intern  
Khine Zin Thant, Intern

**Hanns Seidal Foundation**

Achim MUNZ, Resident Representative, Myanmar Office  
Nora PISTOR, Program Manager, Myanmar Office  
Chit Su Wai (Kathy), Project Officer, Myanmar Office

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy**

H.E. Paolo BARTORELLI, Ambassador of Italy to Myanmar  
Chiara MAURI, First Secretary/Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Italy in Myanmar

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France**

Andre de BUSSY, Regional Councillor for Development in ASEAN  
Olivier LACROIX, Conseiller de Cooperation et d'Action Culturelle, Embassy of France in Myanmar  
Quentin DEROO, Attache de Cooperation, Embassy of France in Myanmar  
Camille LU-DAC, Program Co-ordinator, Regional Cooperation in South-east Asia, Embassy of France in Indonesia

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Complete details of this *5<sup>th</sup> ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum* are available at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/heritagecities>

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The 5<sup>th</sup> ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum was organised as part of the [ASEF Cultural Policy Dialogue Series](#), a long-running series on policy issues of mutual interest and common interest for Asia and Europe. The next [ASEF Public Forum on Creative Industries in Asia & Europe: Enabling Crossovers](#) will take place on 18 October 2014 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Previous Experts' Meetings and Public Forums have taken place in [Hanoi, Viet Nam](#) (2013), [Yogyakarta, Indonesia](#) (2012), [Melbourne, Australia](#) (2011), [Seoul, Korea](#) (2011) and [Amsterdam, Netherlands](#) (2010).

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For more information, contact: Preeti GAONKAR (Ms), Project Executive, Culture Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) E: [preeti.gaonkar@asef.org](mailto:preeti.gaonkar@asef.org)

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#### About the organiser:



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people and institutions of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of governance, economy, sustainable development, public health, culture, and education. Founded in 1997, ASEF is a not-for-profit, intergovernmental organisation located in Singapore. It is the only permanently established institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Together with about 700 partner organisations ASEF has run more than 600 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. Over 17,000 Asians and Europeans have actively participated in its activities and it has reached much wider audiences through its networks, web-portals, publications, exhibitions and lectures.

[www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

#### About the partners:



Since its establishment on April 11, 1967, the **Hanns Seidel Foundation** has been practicing political education work with the aim of supporting "the democratic and civic education of the German people with a Christian basis" – as the foundation's statutes say. Hence, the political education work of the Hanns Seidel Foundation is based on a human ideal that includes free personality development and autonomy as well as social responsibility and solidarity. Today, this mission is more important than ever, since requirements for more autonomy, a new "culture of independence" and an "active society of citizens" are increasingly evolving.

<http://www.hss.de/southeastasia/en/myanmar.html>



The Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Myanmar. The YHT was founded in January 2012 by a group of like-minded historians, architects and businesses passionate about the protection and promotion of Yangon's urban heritage. The mission of the YHT is to promote and protect Yangon's built heritage as part of a comprehensive urban planning process. As part of its mission, the YHT will advocate for heritage protection, develop policy options, advise the government, present ideas to the public, undertake specific conservation projects, facilitate training, and organise studies and conferences.

<http://yangonheritagetrust.org/>

#### With the support of:



*Ministero degli Affari Esteri*

