

What future for urban heritage?

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The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), Hanns Seidel Foundation and the Yangon Heritage Trust will organise an Experts' Meeting on 'Investing in Heritage Cities: Stimulus for Sustainable Tourism and Livelihoods', 24-25 June 2013 in Yangon, Myanmar.

A group of 30 government and civil experts will gather in Yangon, Myanmar to exchange good practices on urban heritage conservation and sustainable tourism. The experts will also prepare policy recommendations for the 6th Culture Ministers' Meeting of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) to be held in 2014.

ASEF Executive Director, Ambassador ZHANG Yan, says, "Investment is often measured only in terms of capital, employment and revenue. Yet, investing in cultural heritage can also have additional benefits for the civil societies of Asia and Europe. This dialogue opportunity in Myanmar will encourage the sharing of innovative approaches and experiences, which could in turn inspire stronger bi-regional collaboration in this field."

While discussing the challenges and opportunities of heritage-led revitalisation of local economies and societies, a specific focus will rest on the nature of investments needed to ensure the sustainable development of heritage cities in Asia and Europe.

Organised by ASEF in partnership with the Hanns Seidel Foundation and the Yangon Heritage Trust, the ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum on 'Investing in Heritage Cities: Stimulus for Sustainable Tourism and Livelihoods' will also include a special panel on conservation strategies for Yangon's heritage. The meeting is supported by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Italy and France.

Participants to the meeting will include representatives of governmental bodies, civil society organisations and international organisations such as UNESCO and the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). The opening ceremony on Monday, 24 June, will be attended by high-level representatives of the Government of Myanmar, including the Union Minister for Culture, Aye Myint Kyu and Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism, U Htay Aung. The Public Forum on Yangon on Tuesday, 25 June, will be opened by the Mayor of Yangon City, U Hla Myint.

The entire proceedings will be open to the media and other interested parties, on a pre-registration basis. There will be a media interaction on Monday, 24 June 2013, at 11.15 am and a press conference on Tuesday, 25 June 2013, at 5.15 pm. Both events will take place at the Ballroom, Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon.

For more information, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/urbanheritage>

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS



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.

For more information, please visit www.asef.org



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.

For more information, please visit <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.

For more information, please visit <http://yangonheritagetrust.org/>

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