



THE 5th ASEM CULTURE MINISTERS MEETING
Yogyakarta, Indonesia
18-19 September 2012

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

The Fifth ASEM Culture Ministers Meeting hosted by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia was held in Yogyakarta on 18-19 September 2012 under the theme “*Managing Heritage Cities for a Sustainable Future*”.

The meeting was attended by delegations from 36 ASEM Partners, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and a representative of UNESCO (list of participants appears as Annex 1).

The Ministers’ proceedings came as a follow up to:

- the Fourth Meeting of ASEM Culture Ministers in Poznan in September 2010 with the theme: “*Heritage and the Challenges of the Present*”;
- the Eighth ASEM Summit in Brussels in October 2010 during which Heads of States and Government of ASEM Partners encouraged intensification of cooperation among governments and civil societies towards the protection of cultural heritage;
- the Tenth Foreign Ministers Meeting in Gödöllő in June 2011 under the theme “*Working Together on Non-traditional Security Challenges*” which provided the opportunity for the Ministers to address relevant issues of common interest among others in maintaining cultural diversity, protecting cultural heritage and advocating mutual understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence among pluralistic societies, development paths, and cultures.

Facing the threat of rapid deterioration of physical legacy and disappearance of heritage structures due to climate change, inappropriate development efforts, illicit trade and trafficking, lack of cultural understanding or forces of globalization, Asia and Europe should work together to promote the protection and conservation of significant cultural heritage within its territory.

The Ministers underlined that conservation of heritage cities should be an integral part of policies and programs aimed at increasing the quality of life of the local community. Furthermore, sustainable management of historic cities should also keep up with the response to disasters.

To develop concrete steps in the implementation of the principles of sustainable management of historic urban landscapes and its surroundings, ASEM Culture Ministers encouraged all member countries to develop international cooperation following the discussions in the four workshops, as follows:

1. Strengthening Good Governance of Historic Cities

Workshop I was co-chaired by India, Mr. Pramod Jain and Poland Dr. Piotr Majewski. Six co-sponsors, France, Myanmar, Sweden, Republic of Korea, Brunei Darussalam, and Italy delivered their presentations during the workshop. A compilation of good practices on managing heritage cities and the views of civil societies in Asia and Europe were also presented by ASEF.

The workshop reiterated that preservation and conservation of historic cities can be comprehensively and better addressed if based on good governance and through a coordinated and balanced policy involving governmental sector, private sector, experts, community, inhabitants and other actors and stakeholders so as to strengthen values of historic cities. The workshop discussed best practices, emblematic cooperation projects and policies for good governance also discussed the need of capacity building for elected representatives, planners, conservationists and government officials.

In addressing the challenges of financial support, the participants highlighted the importance of public-private partnership, cooperation with UN bodies and bilateral/regional frameworks, capacity building, and community-based initiatives as necessary to ensure the sustainable management of historic cities.

The presenters further suggested enhanced cooperation in the preservation and conservation of historic cities and their heritage values and proposed joint study tours, workshops, seminars and conference to be held regularly in Asia and Europe so as to introduce new perspectives and to initiate the establishment of an experts' network in sustainable city management.

2. Historic Urban Landscapes in Response to the Challenges and Disasters

Workshop II was co-chaired by The Netherlands, Mr. Sander Bersee and Brunei Darussalam, Mr. Haji Mohd Rozan Haji Yunos. Seven co-sponsors, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Japan, Poland, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Estonia, and China, delivered their presentations during the workshop.

Preservation and conservation of historic urban landscapes should take into account tangible and intangible values as well as its authenticity and integrity. An integrated policy and planning is indispensable for historic urban landscapes in facing new challenges, including human induced or natural disasters. The historic urban landscape should not be seen as a victim of present challenges and threats, but instead be understood as an asset in response to these issues.

The workshop addressed some crucial issues concerning these pressures to the historic urban landscape. The presentations gave an overview of the questions at stake, as well as examined particular problems and ways to deal with them. The workshop shared experiences in the identification of challenges and disaster risks and discusses strategies for sustainable management of heritage cities. The discussions during this workshop focused attention on the question how to counter these challenges and at the same time seize them as an opportunity to meet present-day needs. The discussants in this workshop looked for innovative conservation strategies that recognize the dynamic nature of living cities and integrate urban heritage values into a wider framework of social and spatial development.

The workshop concluded the following:

- In facing the different threats to cities all over the world, it is important to define the potentials of historic urban landscapes for solving the problems of present-day society.
- Climate change is not only a serious threat to urban heritage. It can also be a trigger for innovative solutions and integrated revitalization of endangered cities.
- There is need of guidelines for disaster risk management to minimize the impact of environmental threats to urban heritage. We should share experiences in heritage emergency response.
- Architectural and urban conservation is the best advocate for sustainable urban development. It should be community-based, respect the local heritage and use the possibilities of public-private-partnerships.

- ASEM Partners should continuously update and enact national laws and programs for urban and territorial heritage protection.
- UNESCO's Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes offers usable guidelines for reconciling urban heritage and new developments. This recommendation should be published widely.

3. Heritage Cities as Generators of Creative Economy

Workshop III was co-chaired by the Minister of Culture of Estonia, H.E Rein Lang and the Vice Minister of Culture of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Wiendu Nuryanti. Six co-sponsors, Indonesia, Poland, Thailand, Sweden, Denmark and Spain, delivered their presentations during the workshop.

The workshop introduced heritage as a resource and a potential basis for creative economy in the context of national, regional and local development planning. The workshop noted that culture and heritage was often considered valuable assets for development and underlined the need to open up opportunities in establishing networks to generate creative economy, as part of the strategies to revitalize heritage cities.

The workshop noted the concern on the tendency that the strong connection between heritage and business was often underestimated by economic statistic. It was however noted that the average heritage based company in the tourism sector is generally more profitable than the average tourism sector company.

In relation to creative economy, the workshop highlighted the impact of high mobility, connectivity, and accessibility in the management of sustainable heritage city. The workshop further reiterated the importance to develop ways to involve the citizens in spatial planning processes in order to get a better understanding of the role of heritage in creating attractive cities for people as well as business.

Creativity needs not only about having ideas, but also the capacity to implement them, which includes hardware and software infrastructures, such as buildings, roads and sewage systems, as well as skilled and flexible labour force and support from city government officials. In this context, the workshop welcomed the Asian and European experiences in the development of creative cities and its impact on the economy.

The workshop further recommended the following possible cooperation:

- The establishment of a network on revitalization of heritage urban areas to generate creative economy such as Asia Europe creative city network as part of the ASEM framework.

- Mapping of creative small and medium culture enterprises (SMCE's) in art, design, and lifestyles, as well as development of an urban planning strategy and guidelines on the improvement in the quality of life in heritage urban areas.

4. Heritage Cities for Building Cross Cultural Understandings

The workshop IV was co-chaired by Cyprus, H.E Nicos Panayi and the Philippines, Prof. Felipe M. de Leon, Jr and was aimed at exchanging views on cross-cultural understanding within heritage cities in a bi-regional context.

During the workshop, the speakers from Malaysia, the Philippines, ASEF and UNESCO delivered their presentations and underlined the importance of understanding local cultural and religious characteristics of a heritage city. In addition, they emphasised that trade can be an important facilitator of cultural understanding. Equally important is foreign exposure to local cultural characteristics.

A way to promote cross cultural understanding is through the creative process by encouraging people's participation in artistic creativity and promoting art in public spaces. Most importantly, the workshop recognized commonalities as binding factors of local communities with different religions and cultures.

It was also recognized that heritage cities could be the laboratory for youth training on heritage issues. There was likewise a brief reference to the restoration of Borobudur Temple and the perspective to utilize and revitalize the local creative industries and integrate them as part of the Borobudur tourist attraction.

In general, the workshop agreed on ways to promote tolerance, among which are:

- a. self understanding as prerequisite for understanding and respect for others;
- b. institutionalising different culture identities for continuing dialogue;
- c. empowerment of city officials to institutionalise dialogue with all stakeholders mindful of the historical background of the heritage cities;
- d. media responsibility; and
- e. specialisation should go hand in hand with a broader education in culture and society.

At the plenary session, the Ministers noted with appreciation the exchange of views among Asian and European countries in strengthening and expanding cooperation in the management of heritage cities related to sustainable development which highlighted the following matters:

- a. The relationship between heritage governance and sustainable development needs to be further recognized and reinforced. As recommended by the Rio+20 meeting and to share a common vision of the “*Future We Want*”, the Ministers acknowledged the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels and to consider economic, social, and environmental aspects in the management of heritage cities.
- b. The UNESCO Conventions and programmes concerning cultural heritage serves as a guideline in the planning, development, management, and conservation of the cities. The ASEM countries should promote exchange and cooperation in bilateral, regional and international level in accordance with these conventions.
- c. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community platform represents the region’s concrete and productive cooperation in socio-cultural issues, including in improving human lives and in ensuring quality of lives and human development in ASEAN cities and urban areas. The Ministers welcomed the many initiatives and programmes conducted in ASEM aimed to preserve and promote cultural heritage and living traditions, and to better understand the link between culture and development as a source of inspiration for future endeavours.
- d. The framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society is an important tool given by the Council of Europe to 50 European Countries. ASEM countries could learn from the experimentation led by the Council of Europe particularly through its European Heritage Network.
- e. To safeguard the heritage cities against contemporary threats, it is underlined the importance to increase the awareness among the youth and to develop an intercultural dialogue. The Ministers commended any concrete actions by member countries to foster closer cultural relationship between Asia and Europe and supported any initiatives to fulfil that scope.
- f. The decisions and recommendations of current and previous ASEM-CMM should be realized through joint programmes and activities. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to continue stepping up cultural exchanges and cooperation in all cultural fields between Asia and Europe as identified in the Matrix of Evaluations and Decisions of ASEM-CMMs appears as Annex 2.

The Ministers acknowledged the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) as the only permanent institution of ASEM and recognised the potential of ASEF in translating some of the recommendations of the 5th ASEM Culture Ministers Meeting into concrete activities such as setting up experts' meetings, heritage awareness programmes for youth, heritage networks and mapping of good practices. The culture360.org portal, effectively managed by ASEF, is a concrete deliverable of the ASEM process, to facilitate the visibility of the cultural heritage activities of member countries. In view of the added value brought by ASEF, ASEM Partners are encouraged to jointly work with ASEF to support the exchange of knowledge and experiences related to good governance of heritage cities.

The Ministers wished that the conclusion of this meeting be taken into account at the 9th ASEM Summit to be held in Vientiane, Laos, in 5-6 November 2012, and welcomed the Netherlands' offer to host the Sixth ASEM Culture Ministers Meeting in 2014.

Yogyakarta, 19 September 2012