

Final Communiqué

Outcomes of the 18th ICOMOS General Assembly Florence, 9 to 14 November 2014

ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, held its 18th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium in Florence from 9 to 14 November 2014.

Held under the high patronage of Mr Giorgio Napolitano, President of the Italian Republic and of Ms Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, this event gathered over **1650 participants and guests from 94 countries, and saw 73 ICOMOS National Committees represented.** This encourages us to consider that this important moment in the life of ICOMOS is also the foremost gathering of heritage professionals world-wide.

A generous grant from the Getty Foundation and the ICOMOS Victoria Falls Fund supported 56 professionals from 42 countries to attend this General Assembly.

The General Assembly **amended the ICOMOS Statutes**, dating from 1978, in order to improve the organisation's governance and **revised the 2002 ICOMOS Ethical Principles**. It also adopted **the Florence Declaration** on "Heritage and Landscapes as Human Values" resulting from the discussions during the Scientific Symposium, as well as **49 resolutions**, concerning organisational ICOMOS matters such as the move of the ICOMOS headquarters, but particularly on topical issues, for example in connection with how the current economic crisis impacts on heritage conservation and the inclusion of culture and cultural heritage in the post-2014 United National Development Agenda, and situations affecting specific monuments and sites, in particular in countries facing armed conflict such as Syria, Iraq and Ukraine.

The Piero Gazzola Prize was awarded to Professor Henry Cleere, member of ICOMOS UK since 1975 and Member of the ICOMOS Executive Committee from 1981-1990, for his outstanding contribution to ICOMOS' role in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, in particular during his time as ICOMOS World Heritage Coordinator from 1992 to 2002, and for his work in the field of archaeological heritage management. In addition, 12 members were conferred Honorary Membership.

The General Assembly also elected **a new leadership**, comprising Mr Gustavo Araoz (USA) who was re-elected as President, Ms Kirsti Kovanen (Finland) re-elected as Secretary General, Ms Laura Robinson (South Africa) re-elected as Treasurer General; 5 Vice-Presidents and 12 members for the Executive Committee. The composition of the new international leadership team thus includes representatives from: Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, China, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates and the USA.

On the occasion of the General Assembly, ICOMOS and TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage - <http://ticcih.org/>) signed a **new partnership agreement** updating the earlier cooperation agreement signed in 2000 so as to put on record the growing number of areas in which our two organizations have been cooperating on and

building on the joint ICOMOS /TICCIH Principles for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage Sites, Structures, Areas and Landscapes adopted in 2011.

The complete report by the Rapporteurs of the General Assembly will be available on the ICOMOS website in due course.

The central theme of the **Scientific Symposium was:** "Heritage and Landscapes as Human Values ". The discussions showed, in the words of Professor Salvatore Settis, President of the Scientific Committee, that "*The Symposium proposes to consider the task of evaluating a site – be it cultural or natural – and intangible values, in the World Heritage context, as a “humanist task” aiming at the safeguarding and enhancement of those human “values” that guarantee the spirit of place, people’s identity and, hopefully, will improve the quality of life of those who live in it*". In this sense the Symposium wanted to promote a broad discussion able to provide insights for improving the intercultural dialogue and placing the human being at the centre of the cultural debate, where heritage and landscape values represent a shared synthesis.

Selected from among the almost **1300 abstracts received, 170 speakers** came to present their papers. Of good scientific merit, these provided fuel for discussions during the various Symposium sessions. The papers that were presented in Florence will soon be published by ICOMOS Italy in both hard and electronic format on the ICOMOS web site (ebooks with ISBN). All remaining accepted posters and contributions of registered participants will be made available electronically on the ICOMOS website.

The 18th General Assembly was again accompanied by an event for students and young professionals, the **Florence Youth & Heritage Festival**, promoted and organized by the Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco with its International Institute Life Beyond Tourism, **Over 250 international students from over 20 countries** were involved – click here for the [report](#). The event was a first occasion bringing the students in the Foundation’s network in contact with ICOMOS.

Young professionals were also involved in the Scientific Symposium through the appointment of Junior Rapporteurs, working in tandem with Senior Rapporteurs. A significant number of students in conservation from Universities in Florence were able to attend the Symposium free of charge.

Also with the aim of promoting exchanges and better mutual understanding, a **Forum of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committees** was organized during the General Assembly. The International Scientific Committees were given the opportunity to present their activities, an offer which was met with great success. **25 ICOMOS International Scientific Committees and Working Groups** also held their annual or scientific meetings during the duration of the General Assembly.

In addition **over 60 evening and side events** were held during the General Assembly programme – the most important being the celebrations of the **50th anniversary of the Venice Charter and the 20th anniversary of the Nara Document** on Authenticity.

Taking into account the record number of abstracts submitted to the Scientific Symposium and the exceptionally rich programme of side-events and visits associated with the General Assembly, Mr Maurizio di Stefano, President of the 18th General Assembly and Chairman of the Organizing Committee, expressed his particular satisfaction at the success of the 2014 Florence event.

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About ICOMOS

ICOMOS – the International Council for Monuments and Sites - is an international, non-governmental organization of professionals, dedicated to the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places and to the creation, dissemination and application of theory, methodology, and scientific techniques for heritage conservation.

ICOMOS was created in 1965 in Warsaw following the adoption the year before of the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, also known as the Venice Charter.

Headquartered in Charenton-le-Pont, in greater Paris, France, ICOMOS is the only global non-government organization of this kind. Its over 10 000 members represent all disciplines of heritage conservation: architects, historians, archaeologists, construction materials conservators, art historians, lawyers, geographers, anthropologists, engineers, town planners...

The National Committees in more than 110 countries all over the world and the 28 International Scientific Committees form a unique inter-disciplinary and multi-cultural network of co-operation. Every 3 years, the ICOMOS General Assembly is combined with a major Scientific Symposium by invitation of one of its National Committees.

ICOMOS has associate relations with UNESCO and has been designated official adviser on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The newly elected Executive Committee (2015-2017)

President: Mr Gustavo Araoz, United States of America

Secretary General: Ms Kirsti Kovanen, Finland

Treasurer General: Ms Laura Robinson, South Africa

Vice Presidents:

Mr Alfredo Conti, Argentina

Mr Toshiyuki Kono, Japan

Mr Gideon Koren, Israel

Mr Peter Phillips, Australia

Mr Grellan Rourke, Ireland

Members of the Executive Committee:

Mr Nils Ahlberg, Sweden

Ms Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonias, Greece

Mr Stefan Belishki, Bulgaria

Ms Amel Chabbi, United Arab Emirates

Mr Victor Fernandez Salinas, Spain

Mr Pierre-Antoine Gatier, France

Ms Pamela Jerome, United States of America

Mr Rohit Jigyasu, India

Ms Lu Qiong, China

Mr Christoph Machat, Germany

Ms Olga Orive, Mexico

Mr Mario Santana Quintero

Ex-officio:

Honorary Presidents:

Mr Michael Petzet, Germany

Mr Roland Silva, Sri Lanka

President of the Advisory Committee: Mr John Hurd, United Kingdom

Officer of the Scientific Council: Mr James Reap, United States of America

A few words about.....

The Florence Declaration on “Heritage and Landscapes as Human Values” regarding the values of Cultural Heritage in building a peaceful and democratic society

This Declaration encourages an in depth reflection on the ethics and processes of heritage management, and a shared concern regarding the challenges that current and future generations will have to deal with.

ICOMOS aims to address this through a holistic vision towards harmonious development centred on the potential of heritage as a testimony of peace and socio-cultural cohesion. The main goal was to facilitate the inclusion and participation of perspectives from varied cultural backgrounds in the debate on how to develop a new approach to safeguard and protect human rights and cultural heritage.

The document is based on ICOMOS’ ethical commitment towards safeguarding or enhancing of those human values that protect the “spirit of place”, a community’s identity while hopefully improving their quality of life. The Florence Declaration promotes a broad discussion that will enable to provide insights for encouraging sustainable, harmonious and intercultural development, placing humankind in the centrality of cultural debate, where heritage and landscape values represent the expression of cultural diversity, enhancing *the quality of human life*.

Landscape is recognized as an integral part of heritage, as the living memory of the past generations providing a tangible and intangible link with future generations. It is an essential reference point in communities’ identities, very frequently preserved thanks to traditional techniques and knowledge that also guarantee the safeguarding of biodiversity.

Currently, the landscape is facing unexpected threats that must be faced with new concepts bridging the gap between culture and nature, through sharing experiences, a rights-based approach and empowering knowledge (innovative and traditional), as well as local governance.

The Scientific Symposium themes took into consideration different aspects such as : sharing and experiencing the identity of communities through tourism and interpretation; landscape as cultural habitat; sustainability through traditional knowledge; community –driven conservation and local empowerment and emerging tools for conservation practice.

The Florence Declaration is currently being edited and translated – and will shortly be available in full on the ICOMOS website.

The Piero Gazzola Prize

The Piero Gazzola Prize was established in 1979 in memory of one of the greatest defenders of the conservation and restoration of historic monuments and sites, and a founder of ICOMOS and its first President.

The prize is awarded every three years at the General Assembly of ICOMOS to an individual or a group of people who have worked together and contributed with distinction to the aims and objectives of ICOMOS. The beneficiary must be a member of ICOMOS and is chosen by a Selection Committee.

At the 18th General Assembly the prize has been awarded to Professor Henry Cleere: Director of the Council for British Archaeology from 1974 to 1991; ICOMOS World Heritage Coordinator, from 1992 to 2002; Editor of major works on archaeological heritage management: *"Approaches to the Archaeological Heritage"* (London 1984); *"Archaeological Heritage Management in the Modern World"* (London 1989); Recipient of the European Heritage Award, in 2002, and the annual Conservation and Management Award of the Archaeological Institute of America, in 2010; Officer of the British Empire; Fellow or Honorary Member of several international scientific organisations; Honorary Member of ICOMOS since 2003.

The Prize is a commemorative medal and diploma, and has been previously awarded to:

Mr Jean Trouvelot (1981)
Mr Stanislas Lorentz (1984)
Mr Masaru Sekino (1987)
Ms Gertrude Tripp (1990)
Sir Bernard Feilden (1993)
Mr Ernest Allen Connally (1996)
Mr Roland Silva (1999)
Mr Cevat Erder (2003)
Ms Ann Webster Smith (2005)
Ms Carmen Añón Feliú (2008)
Mr Nobuo Ito (2011)

On the occasion of the 18th General Assembly, 12 members were made **honorary members** of ICOMOS for their distinguished service in favour of the preservation of monuments and sites:

Ms Kristal Buckley, Australia
Mr Jukka Jokilehto, Finland
Mr William J. Murtagh, United States of America
Mr Eugenio Pérez Montás, Dominican Republic
Ms Angela Rojas, Cuba
Mr Carlos Scheltema, The Netherlands
Mr Giora Solar, Israel
Mr Augusto Villalon, Philippines
Mr Zsolt Visy, Hungary
Mr Dionysis Zivas, Greece
Mr Roberto Di Stefano, Italy (posthumously)
Mr Herb Stovel, Canada (posthumously)