

# **ICOMOS EGM Budapest and Balatonfüred June 1st – 5th 2011**

## **STATEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS**

At the ICOMOS Europe Group Meeting (EGM) in Budapest and Balatonfüred, six main points were discussed:

- the situation of heritage legislation in Europe,
- ICOMOS in relation to the European Union and the Council of Europe,
- the heritage values discussion,
- a common thinking for the World Heritage tentative list of the European State Parties,
- urban development and Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), as well as
- urgent matters and special cases presented by the National Committees.

### **I.) Guidelines for the European Heritage Legislation**

Considering that cultural heritage with its material and immaterial witnesses is one of the main pillars of European identity, the Europe Group of ICOMOS stated that it is desirable to draft guidelines for heritage legislation for countries with an insufficient legal basis, and to draw up appropriate standard recommendations.

In this regard it is of high importance to ensure that legal initiatives not only focus on the monuments themselves but embrace all types of manmade structures (including archaeological sites, ensembles, cultural and urban landscapes, historic cities, towns and urban areas), and their relation to their natural setting. This is of special importance in periods of tremendous change, in order to counteract the threatening developments of verticalisation, and urban sprawl, as well as the loss of life, character and/or diversity in urban and rural landscapes. Relevant national laws and regulations, as for example planning and building laws, as well as zoning plans and land-use plans should contain clauses obliging the consideration of the cultural heritage and the cultural heritage values in general, and the World Heritage in particular.

In order to establish a decent legal status everywhere, initiatives aimed at the inclusion of the international and European conventions and recommendations into national legislation are essential.

Nowadays, there are several developments which marginalise our field of activity (i.e. energy saving policies forgetting the particularities of traditional materials, structures, details and layouts); it is desirable to draft exemptions and road maps for the conservation and preservation of monuments and sites and to take into consideration their special material and immaterial value to our societies.

## **II.) Relation to the Council of Europe, European Commission and other European bodies**

In order to reach adequate standards for conservation and preservation in Europe, it is necessary to cooperate better with the relevant institutions, as, most importantly, the Council of Europe and the European Union, which act as the link to the member states. They both prepare directives and implement programs dealing with large fields of heritage interest (e.g. landscape and agriculture, research and energy).

As a first step, the setting-up of a working group was agreed upon. This working group can be created under the umbrella of ICOMOS International as a legal entity, should focus on heritage policies in Europe, and make use of the Culture 2007-13 program as a funding possibility. It should be made up of no more than five persons, ideally representatives of National Committees (NCs) of the different regions. The ICOMOS Secretary General was to launch and co-ordinate this group. This is a highly important initiative and ICOMOS is very honoured to have been requested to set up such a group which will also make much more effective the communication with the Council of Europe.

For immediate and improved cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Europe Group strongly recommends continuing the important activities of the Council of Europe and its CDPATEP (Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape) in particular. Further, the Europe Group is interested in offering a platform and participating through the above-mentioned working group in the monitoring of the Faro, Granada and Valletta conventions.

## **III.) Heritage Values and Paradigm Shift Discussion**

ICOMOS is an international organisation according to its statutes „concerned with furthering the conservation, protection, rehabilitation and enhancement of monuments, groups of buildings and sites, on the international level“.

The Europe Group of ICOMOS stated a necessity for

- a clear recognition and acknowledgement of the long European traditions of conservation and preservation in theory and practice, with focus on both the materially bound values and the immaterial values.

Simultaneously it

- reminds that the consideration of the intangible and immaterial aspects of cultural heritage – including the spirit of the place, locus amoenus, the sentiment, and genius loci – is deeply rooted in the European traditions, reaching back to even before the intangible became an umbrella term for these phenomena;
- reminds further that the meaning of the recently created motto of „tolerance for change“ was already faced and tackled in Europe in the late 19th century. This European tradition represents the idea of living heritage based on conservation principles, and not mere musealisation: Many present European

laws on conservation and preservation include paragraphs which define the frame of possible changes. According to the European traditions it is generally understood that interventions of monument conservation need to be as humble as possible;

- reminds also that especially during periods of accelerated change, it is necessary to find – in addition to the basic conservationists' knowledge – the appropriate skills and tools in the various disciplines involved in order to handle the change of cities, towns, villages and landscape in view of saving the heritage values and strengthen the people's awareness for and participation at them.

#### **IV.) World Heritage Tentative Lists and Europe – a task for cooperation**

A broad discussion about the World Heritage Tentative Lists (WHTL), and cooperation of the European National Committees of ICOMOS in this regard, would be an essential step on the way towards establishing a stronger European heritage profile and a possibility for coordination with and between the State Parties. Priority has to be given to the OUVs at the earliest possible stage, and a balanced distribution and regional specifications also need to be respected.

In order to create coordination with the competing national Tentative Lists, the Tentative List nomination process and potential properties should be synchronised, applying common rules and goals.

In this sense, ICOMOS should draft guidelines for the World Heritage Tentative List nomination process as a resource manual book. In this way ICOMOS could improve future World Heritage-related developments and be an actively involved partner of the State Parties, without giving up its role as an advisory body.

On the initiative of ICOMOS Moldova, the Europe Group asks the ICOMOS Executive Committee, as a relevant UNESCO advisory body for the State Parties, to strengthen and ensure the involvement of ICOMOS National Committees in the preparation of World Heritage nominations in their respective countries and to consider if this can be done in the upstream process. This should be reinforced for the preparation of both, the Tentative Lists and the World Heritage nominations.

The final choice of selected dossiers to be submitted to the World Heritage Committee for World Heritage List would of course remain a national responsibility.

#### **V.) Historic Urban Landscapes**

The ICOMOS Europe Group awaits the UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes open-mindedly. Nevertheless, critical examination of its use for everyday practice will be necessary, not only for the World Heritage sites, but especially in the context of the dynamics of European urban development. The National Committees of ICOMOS should report their experiences with the HUL recommendation and historic urban and rural development in general at least once a year on occasion of the EGM.

## **VI.) National Committees' Special Cases**

National Committees with urgent matters and problems concerning their relevance for the heritage-related decision making processes are able to present their cases to other European National Committees and the ICOMOS Vice-President for Europe. When decided as relevant, a joint letter of the Europe Group, signed by the VP, will be sent to the State Party concerned. This procedure has already proved to be successful in several cases.

The current issue of the Royal Domain of Drottningholm in Sweden was considered as an urgent matter. The Vice-President, on behalf of the Europe Group, is going to intervene by sending a letter to the responsible bodies, reminding them of the importance of the Drottningholm site and requesting a revision of the construction plans.

Also, the problem of paving material on the Grand-Place of Brussels, in the buffer zone of a WH property, was presented to the group.

The Europe Group of ICOMOS has noticed that in some cases the information flow between the NCs, the State Parties, the World Heritage Unit of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Center has neither been fluent nor transparent. A clarification is required.

The Europe Group recommends to ICOMOS International that the publishing of the State of Conservation (SOC) reports prepared by the National Committees and presented as an ICOMOS report to the World Heritage Committee, would bring the gathered information to the attention of a large group of State Parties and improve the awareness and maintenance of the World Heritage properties. The Europe Group also asks the ICOMOS World Heritage Working Group (WHWG) to provide the National Committees with advice on reporting and monitoring issues.

### **Further Issues and Remarks**

Some other issues were recorded during the meeting:

#### **European Heritage Label**

The Europe Group of ICOMOS favours the idea of the European Heritage Label (EHL). It is a vital component for creating a stronger European identity and a means to strengthen the European people's awareness of the importance of their heritage. Nevertheless, the program needs to further emphasize the protection and preservation of the EHL-listed sites, including monitoring, management plans, SOC reports, etc.