

## **Historic Preservation as Economic and Development Tools: how U.S. can assist Indonesia**

By : Ir. Soehardi Hartono, MSc.

(Member of Indonesia ICOMOS and member of the Executive Committee of Sumatra Heritage Trust)

NGOs and community groups throughout Indonesia have been actively promoting the significance of historic preservation in the last two decades. As the result, more professionals and academicians of related fields as well as the elite groups of society have understood the values of conservation and showed their appreciation through various activities and programs. However, the negligence and demolition of historic and culturally significant properties still prevail and even escalate at an alarming rate. Whereas the social and cultural importance of preservation have been widely introduced to general public and governmental agencies, the lack of comprehension about the significant contribution of economic dimensions of preservation is believed to be one of the major factors behind this unfavorable situation.

It is believed that if preservation is to become understood as one of the important development tools in Indonesia, its economic and investment aspects have to be more rigorously promoted and strategically advocated. At regional level, a small step leading to the process had been taken since 2005, when an American consultant , Donovan Rypkema of Heritage Strategies International, was invited to share his insights and expertise in a workshop entitled "Capacity Building in Heritage Conservation" held in Palembang (2005) and Medan (2006) whose participants were representatives of heritage groups and NGOs of the Pan Sumatra Network for Heritage Conservation.

This paper will share how Mr. Rypkema had contributed to the workshops which were funded by the Dutch Government, and organized by Sumatra Heritage Trust and its partner Urban Solutions of The Netherlands. More importantly, inspired by the perspectives of Mr. Rpkema and the writer's visit to U.S. through International Visitors Program, this paper will propose some approaches and conceptual frameworks on how U.S. participations through both private and public sectors can play more active role in demonstrating how preservation can be an effective tool in economic developments and in eradicating poverty in both Indonesian cities and rural areas.

### Contact Information:

Ir. Soehardi Hartono, MSc.  
Jl. Gatot Subroto no. 162 A- B  
Medan – 20118  
Indonesia  
Phone: +62-61-4525845

Fax : +62-61-4525852

Mobile: +62-081 2655 8927

Email: [soehardihartono@yahoo.com](mailto:soehardihartono@yahoo.com)  
[soehardi@indosat.net.id](mailto:soehardi@indosat.net.id)