

## **UCLG and ICOMOS sign an MoU to promote the role of culture and heritage in sustainable development.**

**Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of UCLG, and **Zeynep Güл Ünal**, Vice President of ICOMOS have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 9th September, on behalf of President of UCLG **Mohamed Boudra** and President of ICOMOS **Teresa Patricio** in the framework of the fourth [UCLG Culture Summit](#) which has taken place in the city of Izmir, in Turkey, after the session "Local Governments and Cultural Heritage".

UCLG and ICOMOS have been collaborating historically on several initiatives, including the [#culture2030goal campaign](#), on the place of culture in the achievement and localization of the UN Agenda 2030, allowing both organizations to develop a joint understanding of the need to acknowledge the transformative potential of cultural development for the future of cities and the world. The time has come to build on this cooperation, to combine efforts and advance the global conversation on culture, heritage, and sustainable development.

UCLG advocates to strengthen the voices of local governments with regards to the global conversations around culture and sustainable development, as well as to bring to the table the unique value of cities and regions in preserving and fostering culture and heritage, which can, in turn, help secure a seat at the table.

In this regard, the MOU aims to establish a general framework of cooperation to advance the development of the global conversation on the place of culture and heritage in sustainable development, as well as to develop a common global voice and an innovative platform for joint actions among the two associations. As **Gabriel Caballero**, focal point for the SDGs of ICOMOS highlighted, the collaboration strengthens the connection between heritage practitioners and local governments and showcases that local heritage can be a driver for sustainable development.

The MoU is built on the mutual desire to coordinate actions in the field of culture, sustainable cities, and regional development; a recognition of the strong friendship and cooperation between both entities; and a mutual interest in the exchange of information around culture, heritage, and urban and rural development.

This renewed collaboration will enable both organizations, among other initiatives, to implement joint events on topics that benefit culture and heritage in cities and regions; to establish mechanisms of coordination and implementation to enable the development of joint projects; to strengthen joint communications and awareness of culture and heritage as a driver of the SDGs, and to cooperate in building capacity around culture in cities and regions.

*"As local and regional governments, we see, we live, and we breathe cultural heritage. Preserving, understanding, and fostering our heritage is a prerequisite for the wellbeing of our communities, an integral part of achieving the universal development agendas, and a critical pillar of sustainable development. The partnership between UCLG and ICOMOS builds on years of collaboration among local and regional governments and heritage practitioners to ensure that we preserve our heritage, hand it to the next generations, and develop creative societies."*

**Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General**

*Heritage and culture are a vital element of a dynamic society, bringing valuable social and economic benefits and expressed in the way we remember the past, and project our future. In order to succeed, and to face today's and tomorrow's crises, we have to preserve the historic areas of our cities, the places which generate essential social links and we have to embrace the cultural and heritage co-benefits of rehabilitation, boosting a circular economy in combination with sustainable innovations, creativity and integrated approaches. The partnership between ICOMOS and UCLG proves that we are all mobilized to assist heritage practitioners and local governments in developing a contemporary, resilient, participative and sustainable development of historic areas*

**Teresa Patrício, ICOMOS President**

**United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** is the world organization of local and regional governments and their associations, representing and defending their interests on the world stage. UCLG's network of members represents 70% of the world's total population and is present in all world regions. This network includes over 250,000 towns, cities, regions and metropolises, and over 175 associations of local and regional governments in 140 countries.

**The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)**

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a unique non-governmental, not-for-profit international organisation committed to furthering the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of the world's cultural heritage. It has over 10,500 members in 131 countries and works through 29 International Scientific Committees.

ICOMOS is dedicated to the development of common doctrines, the evolution and dissemination of knowledge, the creation of improved conservation techniques, and the promotion of cultural heritage significance. It has built a solid philosophical, doctrinal and managerial framework for the sustainable conservation of heritage around the world. As an official advisory body to the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, ICOMOS evaluates nominations and advises on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

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