Resolution 20GA/19

People-Centred Approaches to Cultural Heritage

Submitted by ICOMOS Our Common Dignity Rights-Based Approaches Working Group, ICOMOS Sustainable Development Goals Working Group, ICOMOS Climate Change and Heritage Working Group, ICOMOS Emerging Professionals Working Group, ICOMOS Iraq/ Syria Working Group, with the support of the ICOMOS Advisory Committee, of ICOMOS Canada, ICOMOS Turkey, ICOMOS Ireland, ICOMOS Norway, ICOMOS New Zealand, ICOMOS Estonia, ICOMOS South Africa, ICOMOS Hellenic, ICOMOS USA and ICOMOS Spain National Committees, ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Vernacular Architecture (CIAV), ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and Restoration (Theophilos), and 88 members

The 20th General Assembly of ICOMOS,

Considering the United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights;

Considering the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the global plan of action for People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships, which acknowledges that resilient and sustainable communities depend on the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage;

Considering the UN Framework and Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, which stresses the need for ambitious and early action to mitigate the causes of climate change and to adapt to its impacts, which are already affecting communities, cultures, and rights globally, threatening the survival of future generations;

Considering the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the ‘World Heritage Convention’), which in its implementation celebrates the interactions between culture and nature of Outstanding Universal Value, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between cultural and natural heritage;

Recognizing the necessity of ICOMOS’ leadership in addressing today’s social, economic, cultural, and environmental challenges through the contribution of its members to sustainable development strategies; climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions; safeguarding cultural diversity; the rights of past, current and future generations; Indigenous Peoples and local communities;

Recalling ICOMOS’ founding principles expressed in the Venice Charter, calling for the safeguarding of cultural heritage for future generations, and the ICOMOS doctrine developed to date to address the above issues including the Paris Declaration on Heritage as a Driver of Development, the Buenos Aires Declaration on Rights-Based Approaches, and the respective General Assembly Resolutions on Our Common Dignity, Sustainable Development, Emerging Professionals, Climate Change and Heritage, and Indigenous Heritage;

Acknowledging the essential nature of cultural expressions to help humankind sustainably adapt to challenges particularly in times of uncertainty such as the global crisis of COVID-19 which has impacted human interactions and highlighted the vulnerability of human connections and access to places;
Resolves to:

— Support and seek to expand continuing cooperation of international scientific committees, working groups, and national committees in relation to the shared objectives of sustainable development; climate change action; cultural diversity; human rights based approaches; and the diverse forms of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.

— Further, to integrate the 'focus of that work into ICOMOS' theoretical and conceptual frameworks, as well as in its institutional operations, and best practices in a coordinated, collaborative, intergenerational, and transversal manner;

— Promote people-centered approaches, the connections of people with heritage and places; intercultural dialogue and understanding, sustainability and well-being when addressing local, national, and international heritage policies and practice. This will better realise the full potential of cultural heritage to deliver climate-resilient pathways to strengthen sustainable development, while promoting a just transition to low-carbon futures;

— Honour heritage communities and individuals' rights, taking into consideration past and future generations, acknowledge their role in developing and implementing resilience strategies in a rapidly changing world, and assist authorities to empower citizens to maintain and develop their values and livelihoods in a dignified, responsible, and sustainable manner;

— Work to sustainably synergize cultural heritage conservation and management with the diverse cultural, environmental, and socio-economic concerns of people and communities, through building partnerships with relevant sectors, such as social and health services; cultural and creative industries; nature and biodiversity conservation; tourism; urban and territorial planning and development; and infrastructure and energy provision.
Submission by:
ICOMOS Our Common Dignity Rights-Based Approaches Working Group
ICOMOS Sustainable Development Goals Working Group
ICOMOS Climate Change and Heritage Working Group
ICOMOS Emerging Professionals Working Group
ICOMOS Iraq/Syria Working Group

Submission contributors:
Bente Mathisen (ICOMOS Norway)
Christophe Rivet (ICOMOS Canada)
Ave Paulus (ICOMOS Estonia)
Benedicte Selfslagh (ICOMOS Belgium)
Ege Yildirim (ICOMOS Türkiye)
Stacy Vallis (ICOMOS New Zealand)
Andrew Potts (ICOMOS US)
Diane Archibald (ICOMOS Canada)
Maya Ishizawa (ICOMOS Perú)
Paloma Guzman (ICOMOS México)
Grainne Shaffrey (ICOMOS Ireland)
Deirdre McDermott (ICOMOS Ireland)
Sheridan Burke (ICOMOS Australia)
Ilaria Rosetti (ICOMOS Nederland)
Laure Marique (ICOMOS Belgium)

Supporters:
ICOMOS Canada National Committee
ICOMOS Turkey National Committee
ICOMOS Ireland National Committee
ICOMOS Norway National Committee
ICOMOS New Zealand National Committee
ICOMOS Estonia National Committee
ICOMOS South Africa National Committee
ICOMOS Hellenic National Committee
ICOMOS USA National Committee
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Vernacular Architecture
ICOMOS International committee on Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and Restoration

Individual supporters:
Fergus Maclaren, ICOMOS Canada
Paolo Motta, ICOMOS Italy
Jurate Markevičienė, ICOMOS Lithuania
Elena Dimitrova, ICOMOS Bulgaria
Gabriel Caballero, ICOMOS Philippines
Khalid El Harrouni, ICOMOS Morocco
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Francesca Giliberto, ICOMOS Italy
Dainius Labeckis, ICOMOS Lithuania
Mariana Correia, ICOMOS Portugal
Smriti Pant, ICOMOS India
Dainius Elertas, ICOMOS Lithuania
Pasquale De Toro, ICOMOS Italy
Fatiha Polin, ICOMOS Bangladesh
Sofia Avgerinou Kolonias, ICOMOS Hellenic
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Özgün Özçakır, ICOMOS Turkey
Cécile Smith-Christensen, ICOMOS Norway
Claudine Houbart, ICOMOS Belgique
Archer St. Clair Harvey, US/ICOMOS
Juan Antonio Mira Rico, ICOMOS Spain
Bartomeu Deya-Canals, ICOMOS Spain
Ana Pereira Roders, ICOMOS Nederland
Aurelija Stanciukiene, ICOMOS Lithuania
Åse Tveitnes, ICOMOS Norway
Neel Kamal Chapagain, ICOMOS Nepal
Yiğit Ozar, ICOMOS Turkey
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Robert Treufeldt, ICOMOS Estonia
Kristof Fatsar, ICOMOS UK
Angela Rolfe, ICOMOS Ireland
Mona O'Rourke, ICOMOS Ireland
Ivor McElveen, ICOMOS Ireland
Eduardo Romero de Oliveira, ICOMOS Brazil
Graciela A. Mota, ICOMOS Mexico
Margaret Comer, US/ICOMOS
Douglas C. Comer, US/ICOMOS
Tina Wik, ICOMOS Sweden
Stuart Read, ICOMOS Australia
Flavia Kiperman, ICOMOS Australia
Monalisa Maharjan, ICOMOS Nepal
Guillermo Ruben Garcia, ICOMOS Argentina
Samir Abdulac, ICOMOS France
Grellan D. Rourke, ICOMOS Ireland
Gregory De Vries, US/ICOMOS
Graham Edds, ICOMOS Australia