

RECOMMANDATIONS

Those attending the Symposium organized by the International Council of Monuments and Sites on the Special Problems Relating to the Reclamation, Restoration and Development of the Potentialities of the North-African and Asiatic Cities of the Mediterranean Basin, and held in Tunis from June 9 to June 16, 1968, at the invitation of the Tunisian Government, wish to express to their host country their congratulations on the excellent way in which the meeting was organized and their sincere thanks for the warm welcome extended to them and the many kindnesses shown them.

The recommend that the Executive Committee adopt the following resolutions :

Considering the fact that the previous meetings of international experts organized by the International Council of Monuments and Sites, notably at Cacerès in Spain in 1967, have revealed the urgency of the preservation and optimum development of historical sites in order to allow of their smooth incorporation into contemporary life and future society, be it resolved :

That these historical sites are, in effect, a fundamental and irreplaceable part of the cultural heritage of humanity; That for each nation they are of vital interest, both preventing it from being severed from its cultural roots at a time when it is subjected to the brutal pressures of modern civilization and offering its ever more numerous visitors the means of gaining a better understanding of its authentic character;

That they are an exceptionally valuable investment, both financial and social, and should thus contribute in a major way to the economic equilibrium as well as to the economic expansion of the nation;

That in such a context the ancient North-African and Asiatic cities of the Mediterranean bear living testimony to the

great civilisations which played and continue to play a decisive role in the formation of the world of to-day and in its cultural expression;

That unless suitably adapted, these cities, so remarkably well preserved up to now, both structurally and visually, will deteriorate progressively under the more harmful effects of our industrial civilisation and thus lose their authenticity, their historical significance, and their economic and social function;

That this situation is more serious for the cities of the Islamic world than for European towns, where the ancient city is almost always the geographical hub and centre of urban expansion; in the Islamic world the old city is usually surrounded by fortifications and is separate from the modern town, which develops independently outside it. This attracts the residential and economic life essential to their existence away from the medinas and reduces them to living on a sometimes artificial activity in hand-made goods and on the tourist trade;

That these profound economic and social changes are liable to bring on the irreparable deterioration of urban structures, and of architecture which, though of the highest quality, is fragile and complex, and that the greatest care must thus be taken to preserve the fabric and internal and external structure of such works;

That it is thus visibly necessary to ensure interpenetration between life in the medina and life in the modern town, bringing the two together in harmony so as to ensure their economic and social future and lay the foundations for preservation of the ancient city as a living thing;

That such a project must not be carried out to the detriment of the artistic and cultural heritage, and that revival can take place only if traditional forms and appearances are preserved, with a view to retaining as far as possible the atmosphere and harmony of the medinas and leaving unspoiled the testimony of the various historical periods;

That the medinas should henceforward be considered not only as the settings for the important monuments they contain, but as coherent and homogeneous units, most vividly alive and perfectly suited to life on the human level, in addition to being of tremendous historical, aesthetic and cultural interest;

That their integration into the development of the town and area must be the result of a collective effort coordinating the work of the numerous disciplines concerned (i. e. of specialists in the preservation of monuments and sites, town-planners,

economists, sociologists, historians, geographers, etc.) through institutions and committees commanding the necessary credits and qualified personnel;

That in the interval before the implementation of such a policy - which is the only valid solution for the future of the medinas - it is urgent to take the strictest measures to prevent their being altered, so as to avoid final destruction of their fabric and appearance;

That in consequence there must be immediate improvement of the scientific, technical and financial resources of the departments responsible for the preservation of monuments and sites;

That, lastly, the governments who are the trustees of the heritage of towns and monuments have a permanent responsibility to future generations for its maintenance, for its development, and for the protection of its fundamental values;

For all the foregoing reasons, those taking part in this Symposium voice the hope that the governments concerned will take the following measures without delay :-

I. Reinforcement of the structures and resources of the departments responsible for the maintenance of monuments by the allocation of funds or the increase in existing budgets for the work of preservation of historical sites and the granting of appropriate means of implementing their decisions;

2. The creation of bodies of technicians responsible for the preservation of the medinas as living things, composed of representatives of the various disciplines which must be called upon in connection with the implementation of the schemes adopted, including architects, town-planners, historians, sociologists, economists and legal advisers, as well as the appropriate technicians. Such teams will be in a position to put into effect the policy of adapting the medinas to the requirements of modern urban life, whether in the residential, cultural, or commercial sphere, or in that of handicrafts.

3. The adaptation of the legislation and regulations regarding the protection of sites to the requirements of the policy of preserving such historical sites as living things, and the institution of laws coordinating the preservation of monuments and sites with economic and social development.

4. The organization of permanent conferences to provide liaison between public authorities at all levels (national, regional and local), and the relevant scientific and technical

departments, in order to implement the proposed measures and supervise the manner in which this is done.

5. The drawing-up and operation of plans for the protection and enhancement of the medinas by the introduction of modern conditions of hygiene (sewage systems, water mains, etc.) without changing the structure, access or appearance of the ancient buildings, and with the aim of creating a satisfactory equilibrium on both the economic and the social level between all parts of the town.

6. The introduction of measures to ensure that public opinion becomes rapidly aware of the importance of safeguarding and enhancing the cultural heritage, and the due provision of information to the local populations directly concerned.

7. The granting of fiscal and financial concessions to the public bodies and private persons owning buildings in the medinas, to ensure that the latter are renovated and preserved under the responsibility and supervision of the appropriate authorities.

In pursuance of the same general purposes, those attending the Symposium voice the wish that the Tunisian government examine the possibility of carrying out one or two experiments in the revival of a whole medina or part of it, the sites in question to be chosen from among the most outstanding medinas in the country.

They suggest that international organizations such as UNESCO agree to put at the disposal of the Tunisian government the scientific and technical assistance essential for such a project, which - as they wish to stress - would be an example for all the countries of the Mediterranean Basin.

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In connection with the programme of studies to be undertaken by the International Council of Monuments and Sites, those attending the Symposium wish to call attention to the fact that the subjects suggested by the Cacerès meeting continue to be relevant in the case of the various problems connected with the medinas. They suggest, however, that the following subject be added to the list :-

"Study of the possibilities of adapting the roads and ancient buildings constituting the normal fabric of the historic sites, to the requirements of housing, trade and the other activities of contemporary life, without needing to demolish them".