Preamble

Within the framework of reflection which is underway on an international level, on urban conservation, by the organizations charged with the conservation and enhancement of heritage, and in a period of great changes in the political (governance, decentralization), economic (globalization of markets and production modes), cultural (reinforcement of identities facing the globalization) and social field (migration towards big cities, movements of populations etc.), CIVVIH (ICOMOS - International Committee on Historical Towns and Villages) wishes to update the approaches and considerations developed in the Washington Charter (1987) and the Nairobi Recommendation (1976), based on the corpus of reference documents, so as to define the new challenges and take into consideration the significant evolutions in the definitions and the methodologies in the matter of safeguard and management of historical towns and urban areas.

Humanity faces today a number of changes, concerning particularly the habitat in general, and the towns and urban areas in particular.

The main modifications consist in a greater awareness of intangible values, socioeconomic factors, environmental factors as well as the issue of historical heritage on a territorial level and not only on an urban ensemble scale.

In this sense, the understanding of heritage as an essential resource, part of the urban ecosystem, is fundamental. This understanding must be respected in order to ensure a harmonious development of the town and its territory.

The notion of sustainable development has gained such importance that many directives on architectural planning and intervention are based on no demolition policy and rather, on preservation of the urban heritage limited resources.

The main objective of this document is to propose principles and strategies applicable to all interventions in historical towns and areas, These must safeguard the values of historical towns and their setting, as well as their integration in the social, cultural and economic life of our times.

This is important in order to guarantee the respect towards the historical tangible and intangible values of the heritage, and towards the environment as well as the quality of life of their inhabitants.

The present document for the safeguard of historical towns and urban areas and their setting, is divided, into four parts:

A. Definitions
B. Aspects of change (Challenges)
C. Intervention criteria
D. Proposals and strategies
### A. Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>a) Historical towns and urban areas</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Historical towns and urban areas are the spatial structures which express the evolution of a society and its cultural identity. They are part of a broader natural or man-made context that must be considered as an inseparable part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical towns and urban areas are living evidence of a past which formed them.</td>
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<td>Historical or traditional areas are part of the every-day environment of human beings. Their protection and integration into contemporary society should be a basic factor in town-planning and land development.</td>
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<td>Historical towns and urban areas are formed by tangible and intangible elements. The tangible elements include, in addition to the urban structure, architectural elements, landscape inside and outside the town, archaeological elements, panoramas, view-lines, townscapes and landmark sites. Intangible elements include activities, image, historical functions, cultural practices, traditions, memories, and cultural references which constitute the substance of their historical value.</td>
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<th><strong>b) Setting</strong></th>
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<td>Setting means the natural or man-made context in which the historic urban heritage is located and which influences the static or dynamic way these areas are perceived experienced and/or enjoyed or which is directly linked to them in the social, economic or cultural context.</td>
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<th><strong>c) Safeguarding</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The safeguarding of historical towns and urban areas, and their setting, includes the necessary procedures for their protection, enhancement and management as well as for their coherent development and their harmonious adaptation to contemporary life.</td>
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<th><strong>d) Protected area</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>A protected area is defined as the urban ensemble included in a perimeter which contains the historical core of a town, including the most noteworthy monuments, the most authentic part of the fabric, in which one finds the majority of the buildings presenting a certain degree of homogeneity, and which carry the cultural values for which the place is protected.</td>
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<td>This area also includes the historical development of the town and maintains its emblematic civil, religious and social functions.</td>
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<th><strong>e) Buffer zone</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Buffer zone is a well-defined zone outside the protected area. Its role is to contribute to the protection of the cultural values of the protected zone, from the impact of the risks coming from the activities produced in its environment. This impact can be physical, visual or social.</td>
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### f) Management plan

This consists of a document specifying the process in detailed steps, all the strategies and tools to be used for the protection of values and which at the same time respond to the needs of contemporary life. It contains legislative, financial, administrative and conservation documents, as well as other plans such as Conservation and Monitoring.

### g) Spirit of place

The spirit of place can be defined as the ensemble of material and immaterial, physical and spiritual elements, which give to the area its a specific identity, feeling and emotion. The spirit creates space and at the same time, the space invests and structures this spirit (Quebec Declaration, 2008).

### B. Aspects of Change

Historical towns and urban areas as living organisms are subject to continual change.

These changes concern all the elements (natural, human, tangible and intangible) of the town.

Changes, propriately managed, can be an opportunity to improve quality in historical towns and urban areas.

#### a) Change and Natural environment

The attention reserved to the problems connected with the modifications in the natural environment has already been present in the Washington Charter: “Historic towns (and their setting) should be protected against natural disasters and nuisances such as pollution and vibrations in order to safeguard the heritage and for the security and well-being of the residents”. (Washington Charter).

In historic towns and urban areas, change should be based on the respect of natural balances avoiding the wasting of natural resources, energy dissipation and the interruption of natural cycles.

Change should be used to improve the environment in historic towns and urban areas: to increase the quality of air, water and soil; to increase the diffusion and the accessibility of green areas; to avoid overcharge on natural resources.

Historic towns and urban areas should be protected against climate change effects and natural risks.

Climate change can have devastating consequences for historic towns and areas, not only due to the fragility of the urban fabric. There is also need for upgrading of buildings which have become obsolescent due to problems emanating from climate change.

The aim should be for historic towns and areas to benefit from strategies arising from the growing awareness of climate change and the strategies that can be applied to deal with.
b) Change and Built Environment

On the matter of new architecture, the Washington Charter expressed the following: "The introduction of contemporary elements in harmony with the surroundings should not be discouraged since such features can contribute to the enrichment of an area".

Urban continuity contributes to the value of the historical towns and historical areas.

The introduction of contemporary architecture must respect the values of the site and its surrounding. It could contribute to the enrichment of the town and urban area, making urban continuity an ever living factor.

Respect for the historical values, patterns and layers must be the basis of appropriate architectural interventions, its spatial, visual, non tangible and functional factors.

The new architecture must be consistent with the historical ensemble. Formal imitation, contrasting design, the negative effects of opposition architecture, fragmentations, excessive contrasts, continuity interruptions, and so on will thus be prevented in the case of new additions and development.

Priority must be given to continuity of composition, which does not disrupt the existing architecture of the place but does not exclude new styles, which embrace the spirit of the place.

A deep knowledge and understanding of the area’s history is essential.

c) Change of Use and Social Environment

The loss and/or substitution of traditional uses and functions such as traditional residential use of an area by the local community can have major impacts on historical towns and urban areas. Without the recognition of the nature of these changes and the opportunities which could arise this could lead to displacement of communities and loss of cultural practices, leading to loss of identity and character of places. It can result in the transformation of historical towns and urban areas into mono-functional and mono-cultural areas oriented to satisfy leisure or tourism needs and not suitable for living.

It is also important to attenuate the gentrification process due to the increase of urban ground rent, to the loss of the quality of habitation and the communal space of the historic town or urban area.

It is important to recognise that the process of gentrification can affect communities and lead to the loss of the place’s liveability and ultimately its character

The retention of cultural diversity is important, if it is traditional element of the place.

Historical towns and urban areas run the risk of becoming a mass tourism consumers' product, which as a consequence might result in loss of authenticity and heritage values.

New activities must be carefully managed to avoid negative effects such as transport conflicts and traffic congestion.
### C. INTERVENTION CRITERIA

#### a) Values

Any intervention in historical towns and urban areas must respect and refer to the tangible and intangible values.

#### b) Quality

Every intervention in historical towns and urban areas must aim to improve the quality of life of the local residents and the quality of the environment.

#### c) Quantity

An accumulation of changes could have a negative effect on historical town and theirs values. Major changes should be avoided, unless they will clearly result in the enhancement of the cultural values and improvement of the urban environment.

Incremental changes must be reduced and carefully managed to minimise physical and visual effects on the townscape and architectural fabric.

#### d) Coherence

On the matter of ‘coherence’ one has to quote article 3 of the Nairobi Recommendation: "Every historical area and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the buildings, the spatial organization and the surroundings. All valid elements, including human activities, however modest, thus have significance in relation to the whole which must not be disregarded".

Historical towns and urban areas as well as their surroundings should be considered in their totality.

Their balance and nature depend on their constituting parts.

However, the safeguard of historical towns and other historical urban areas should be an integral part of a general territorial understanding, which can not be separated from the overall urban structure. It requires coherent policies of economic and social development and should be considered in the Regional and Urban Plans at any level, so as to respect the social tissue in its cultural diversity.

#### e) Balance and Compatibility
The conservation of the fundamental environmental, social, cultural and economic balances is a basic requirement to guarantee the safeguard of historical town and urban area heritage. This implicates actions which will guarantee keeping the original inhabitants as well as satisfying the needs of those who arrive (either to reside or to use the historical town), as well as the activities, the traffic generated and the congestion produced.

f) Time

The speed of change is a parameter to be controlled. Excessive speed of change can adversely affect the integrity of all the values of the historical town and, particularly, both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

The extent and frequency of intervention should be controlled and compatible, with proper documentation and studies as well as with transparent and regulated intervention procedures.

g) Method and scientific discipline

"Knowledge of the history of a historical town or urban area should be expanded through archaeological investigation and appropriate preservation of archaeological findings". (Washington Charter)

The safeguard and management of a historical town or urban area demand prudence, systematic approach and discipline, according to the principles of sustainable development.

The safeguard and management should be based on multidisciplinary studies so as to define the elements composing the place and the values to preserve within the urban heritage. It is necessary to establish a direct report and to have a deep knowledge of the site and its surroundings for any safeguard action.

Continuous monitoring and maintenance is essential to safeguard a historical town or urban area.

A precise documentation and recording (context analysis, study at different scales, inventory of goods and of impact, history of the town and its phases of evolution etc.) is necessary to allow proper planning and programming.

Direct reports and continuous dialogue with the inhabitants and other stakeholders are indispensable because the safeguard of historical towns concerns them first and foremost.

h) Governance

A good governance allows to maintain communication and consultation between all participating bodies: elected authorities, municipal services, experts, professional organizations, local associations, universities, inhabitants, etc) This is necessary for the successful safeguarding, the rehabilitation and sustainable development of historical towns and urban areas.

Participation of the inhabitants is facilitated by information and education. The systems of traditional urban governance should examine all aspects connected to the multiculturality and to the social diversity, so as to establish new democratic institutions to face this new reality.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i) Multidisciplinarity and Cooperation</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Planning for the safeguard of historical towns and urban areas should be preceded by multidisciplinary studies.&quot; (Washington Charter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The safeguard of historic towns should be based, from the beginning of initial studies, on an effective collaboration between the specialists of different disciplines and with the cooperation of researchers, public services, private enterprises the broader public and relevant stakeholders)</td>
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<tr>
<td>These studies should lead to concrete proposals which could be accepted by the political decision makers, by social and economic agents and by the inhabitants.</td>
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<th>j. Multiculturality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Within the context of urban conservation planning, one should respect the traditions and appreciate cultural diversity of different communities which have inhabited the historical towns during the course of time</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is essential to establish a delicate and shared balance in order to maintain the multicultural and historical heritage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The procedures of spatial planning, of safeguarding historical towns and of the development connected to diversity should include sufficient information and time for their inhabitants to react in full awareness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention in historical urban areas should always embrace tangible and intangible values of the place, and must equally try to strengthen multiculturality.</td>
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<th>D. PROPOSALS AND STRATEGIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>a) Elements to be preserved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elements to be preserved are:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. The authenticity and integrity of historical towns are part of the character and coherence among all tangible and intangible elements that form their particular character, namely:</td>
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<td>&quot;a) Urban patterns as defined by lots, streets, green spaces and relationships between buildings and open spaces;</td>
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<td>b) The appearance, interior and exterior, of buildings as defined by scale, size, style, construction, materials, colour and decoration;</td>
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<tr>
<td>c) The relationship between the town or the urban area and its setting, both natural and man-made;&quot; (Washington Charter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>d) The various functions that the town or the urban area has acquired over time</td>
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<tr>
<td>e) cultural tradition, spirit of places and everything that contributes to the identity of a place.</td>
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</table>
2. The relations which exist among the site in its totality, its constituting parts, the site’s context and the parts forming its context.

3. The social tissue, the cultural diversity.

4. The non-renewable resources minimising their consumption and stimulating their reutilisation and recycling.

b) New functions

“New functions and activities should be compatible with the character of the historical towns or urban area.” (Washington Charter)

The introduction of new activities should not compromise the survival of traditional activities and activities useful for every-day life of inhabitants. This could help to preserve historical diversity and cultural plurality, which are the real essence of these contexts.

Before introducing a new activity, it is necessary to consider the number of users attracted, time of utilization, compatibility with other existing activities and impacts on traditional land uses.

Such new functions must also satisfy the needs for sustainable development, according to the concept of the historical town as a unique and irreplaceable ecosystem.

c) New architectures

When it is necessary to construct new buildings or adapt existing ones, the new architecture must be coherent with the existing spatial layout and the historical town and the urban area setting. The new architecture should respect the scale of the site, keeping proper relation with the existing architecture and development pattern of its context.

"Analysis of the urban context should precede any new construction not only so as to define the general character of the group of buildings but also to analyse its dominant features, e.g. the harmony of heights, colours, materials and forms, constants in the way the façades and roofs are built, the relationship between the volume of buildings and the spatial volume, as well as their average proportions and their position. Particular attention should be given to the size of the lots since there is a danger that any reorganization of the lots may cause a change of mass which could be deleterious to the harmony of the whole " (Nairobi Recommendation art. 28).

Perspectives, views, focal points, visual corridors are integral parts of historical spaces perception. They should be respected in case of new interventions. Before any intervention, existing conditions in the area should be thoroughly analysed and documented. Visual corridors, to and from new constructions, should be studied and established.

The introduction of a new building in an historical context must be evaluated from a formal and functional point of view, especially when it is assigned to new activities.

d) Public space
Public space is not just an essential resource for circulation in historical towns, but essential also for the quality of life. A place where one can contemplate, learn and rejoice in his town. Its tissues, its urban structure, including urban furniture, as well as its management, must preserve its character and beauty and promote its use as a public place favourable to social communication.

The balance between public spaces and the compact constructed tissue must be analyzed thoroughly in case of new interventions.

e) Equipments

As an integral part of the planning of the historical town, one must take into consideration the needs of equipment for the inhabitants.

The integration of equipment in the public spaces and inside historic buildings is a challenge which should not be underestimated.

f) Mobility

“Traffic inside a historical town or urban area must be strictly controlled by regulations.” (Washington Charter)

“When urban or regional planning provides for the construction of major motorways, they must not penetrate a historical town or urban area, but they should improve access to them.” (Washington Charter)

Most old historical towns and urban areas have been conceived for pedestrians. Gradually these places have been invaded by the car causing their degradation. At the same time, the architectural typology and quality of life in the towns have also been damaged by this phenomenon.

Mobility infrastructures (parking, underground stations) must be planned so that they do not damage the historical fabric, its integrity or its environment. A historical town should promote the creation of streets for light mobility.

It is important to favour pedestrian circulation. To achieve this, traffic and parking should be drastically reduced. At the same time, sustainable public transport systems that don’t cause pollution should be introduced and all the light traffic modes promoted.

The roadways should be designed to give priority to pedestrians. Parking areas should be located preferably outside the protected zones and if possible outside the zone of protection.

Underground infrastructure for mobility, like the subway for example, must not damage the historical fabric and archaeological heritage and its environment.

Highway networks must avoid the protected zones and the buffer zones.

g) Tourism

Tourism might play a positive role in the development and vitality of historical towns and urban areas. The development of tourism in historical towns and urban areas should be based on the exploitation of monuments and spaces, on the respect and support of the
identity of the local community and its culture and traditional activities.

Great fluxes of tourists might become dangerous for the safeguard of monuments and historical sites.

The safeguard and management plans should take into consideration the predictable impact of tourism and regulate this process for the benefit and promotion of urban heritage and of the local inhabitants.

h) Risks

"Whatever the nature of a disaster affecting a historical town or urban area, preventative and repair measures must be adapted to the specific character of the properties concerned." (Washington Charter)

Safeguard Plans are an opportunity to improve risk preparedness and risk reduction planning and to promote environmental management and the application of the principles of sustainability.

i) Saving energy

Intervention in historical centers, respecting historical heritage characteristics, should aim to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Use of renewable energy resources should be enhanced.

Any new building in historical areas should be energy efficient. Urban green space diffusion and other measures could be adopted to avoid urban heat islands.

j) Participation

"The participation and the involvement of the residents and all local interest group are essential for the success of the safeguard programme and should be encouraged. They must therefore be encouraged in all circumstances and be favoured by the necessary awareness of all generations." (Washington Charter, art 3).

In order to encourage their participation and involvement, a general information programme should be set up for all residents, beginning with children of school age. The action of safeguard associations should be favoured and financial measures should be taken in order to facilitate the conservation and restoration of constructions (Washington Charter art 15).

Mutual understanding, based on public awareness, on the common purposes between local communities and professionals, is the pledge of the successful conservation, revitalization or development of historical towns.

Information and communication technologies allow for direct and immediate communication. This will allow for a more active and responsible participation of the local groups. Planning in historic urban areas must be a participatory process, involving all stakeholders.

The interest of authorities for the safeguarding of historical towns and urban areas must be
promoted. They are responsible for the establishment of the adequate financial and bureaucratic measures for the success of the management.

k) Safeguard Plan

“The Safeguard Plan should aim at ensuring a harmonious relationship between the historical urban areas and...” (Washington Charter) its setting.

It concerns both tangible and intangible elements in order to protect identity of places without impeding their evolution.

The principal objectives of the Safeguard Plan “should be clearly stated as should the legal, administrative and financial measures necessary to attain them.” (Washington Charter)

Safeguard Plans must be based on the territorial urban analysis of values and planning concept of the area and address all relevant factors including archaeology, history, architecture, techniques, sociology and economics. It must be combined with a Management Plan and followed by a permanent monitoring.

“The Safeguard Plan should determine which buildings and spaces must be preserved, which should be preserved under certain circumstances and which, “under quite exceptional circumstances, might be expendable.” (Washington Charter).

Before any intervention, an in-depth analysis of places should be carried out.

The plan must identify and protect the components contributing and/or carrying the values of the historical town, as well as the components which contribute and/or demonstrate the character of the historical town and urban area.

The proposals of the Safeguard Plan should be established in view of a feasible intervention from the point of view of the pertinence of the norms and restrictions imposed, not only from the legislative and financial point of view.

“The Safeguard Plan should be supported by the residents of the historical area.” (Washington Charter art.5).

In order to become a valid instrument, the plan must be accepted by the inhabitants.

When there is not a Safeguard Plan, necessary safeguard activity should be carried out in accordance with principles and objectives for the safeguard and enhancement of tangible and intangible resources and their cultural values.

I) Management Plan

An effective management system should be conceived according to the type and characteristics of historical cities and historical urban areas and respecting their cultural and natural context. It should integrate traditional practices, existing urban and regional planning
Management plan is based on knowledge, safeguard and exploitation of tangible and intangible resources. Therefore it must:
- identify the cultural values;
- identify stakeholders and their values.
- identify potential conflicts
- identify safeguarding targets;
- identify legal, financial, administrative and technical methods and tools;
- understand strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- identify adequate strategies and specific actions.

The elaboration of such a management plan should follow a participatory procedure.

In addition to the information coming from the administration of the town, research, detailed documentation the Plan should consider the conclusions from the debate with the implicated bodies, by analysing the conflict resulting from the interaction of contradictory values.