

Bergen Protocol

on communications and relations among cities of the Organization of World Heritage Cities

Adopted on June 30, 1995, during the Second General Assembly of the OWHC

WHEREAS at the conclusion of the First International Symposium of World Heritage Cities held in Québec City in 1991, the participants involved adopted the **Québec Declaration** stressing the desire to create a network of World Heritage Cities devoted to promoting implementation of the World Heritage Convention and encouraging cooperation and the circulation of information among historic cities;

WHEREAS the Statutes and the Fez Charter adopted at the Founding General Assembly of the Organization in 1993 reaffirm the importance of communication among World Heritage Cities as well as the importance of communication between these cities and organizations with goals similar to the OWHC;

WHEREAS at the conclusion of the Third International Symposium of World Heritage Cities held in Bergen from June 28 to June 30, 1995, World Heritage Cities and their major partners wish to strengthen the ties of solidarity and co-operation that unite them by adopting a protocol on communication among World Heritage Cities;

We the undersigned mayors and mayors' representatives present at the second General Assembly of the Organization of World Heritage Cities held in Bergen on June 30, 1995 undertake to:

STRESS our common will to develop, within our respective organizations and communities, suitable tools for responsible management of urban UNESCO World Heritage Sites respecting, on one hand the vital links between these sites and their environment and on the other hand the symbolic value of each of these sites for their region, country and for the world;

COMMUNICATE to member cities in our region and to the General Secretariat of the OWHC any expertise developed locally dealing with urban management of heritage sites, especially advances in management plans involving local populations, techniques for fighting pollution, monitoring the effects of mass tourism and preventing damage caused by natural disasters, terrorist attacks or armed conflicts;

SUPPORT actions initiated by the OWHC aimed at encouraging the exchange of know-how and information among historic cities especially through exchange programs involving specialists in urban heritage management and the OWHC Newsletter as well as implementation by the OWHC of a network for electronic communications among and between World Heritage Cities;

The Board of Directors and the General Secretariat of the OWHC undertake for their part to:

INITIATE AND ENDORSE projects which support local administrations in the development of responsible heritage management of historic cities;

INVITE UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ICCROM and international non-governmental and private organizations such as ICOMOS and the Getty Conservation Institute to co-operate in OWHC projects;

CONTINUE to publish, at least three times a year, the OWHC Newsletter;

UNESCO undertakes for its part to:

CO-OPERATE closely with the Organization of World Heritage Cities in relevant activities including the building up of an effective modern information and communication system, which will be shared and become part of an overall communication network for World Heritage co-ordinated by UNESCO World Heritage Centre;

The Council of Europe undertakes for its part to:

DEVELOP with the OWHC a specific partnership on cultural heritage issues, notably through the Co-operation and Technical Assistance Program, the Documentation and Inventory Program and the Professional Training Program, these activities being implemented within the framework of the Cultural Heritage Committee of this European institution;

The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Properties (ICCROM) undertakes for its part, jointly with the OWHC and other partners, to:

DEVELOP, OFFER AND PROMOTE training programs focused on the management of historic urban centres and aimed at professionals, managers and elected officials of World Heritage Cities;

SEEK the necessary funding; and

SPECIFY the details of this collaboration in an agreement that is binding on the parties;

For its part, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) undertakes to:

SUPPORT the OWHC in its efforts to obtain all information which it will need to establish its database ;

USE its network of professionals, on the one hand, to gather and update this information when necessary and, on the other hand, to assist the cities in developing appropriate management tools for the conservation of their heritage;

SERVE as an intermediate between international experts in conservation, the partner organizations of the OWHC and the OWHC itself in order that the scientific knowledge necessary for the conservation of World Heritage Sites be easily accessible to the cities;

INVOLVE the OWHC in the reflections that its committees and members could lead in order to develop conservation doctrine as well as knowledge and techniques relevant to the conservation of historic urban centers;

SHARE with the OWHC and its member cities the results, benefits and opportunities associated with the current said Blue Shield disaster preparedness initiative led by **ICOMOS**, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), ICCROM and .
