

Santiago de Compostela Manifest

in favor of cooperation for the active conservation and sustainable management of heritage cities of humankind

WE, the signatories, mayors and representatives of the World Heritage Cities, gathered in Santiago de Compostela, cultural city, meeting place and final destination in a long itinerary of cultural memory, on October 23, 1999 as part of the 5th International Symposium and the 4th General Assembly of the World Heritage Cities;

IN THE PRESENCE of delegates from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), ICCROM and the World Tourism Organization;

WE DECLARE that the World Heritage Cities have to meet serious urbanistic, cultural, functional, technological, administrative and environmental challenges while remaining **lively cities** where various functions, whether residential, commercial, religious, craft, administrative, tourism or cultural, harmoniously blend, as the value of their urban life combined with the singularity and diversity of their cultural heritage provide irrefutable evidence of their identity and lead to the creation of alliances between people and cultures;

WE ASSUME our cultural protagonist role and our responsibility in the conservation and responsible and sustainable management of our cities' cultural heritage thus expressing our will to contribute to the urban culture of the 21st century and to affirm ourselves as preferred places for **TOLERANCE, TOGETHERNESS and PEACE** considering our long history;

WE SUPPORT THE COMMITMENT of the Organization of World Heritage Cities to apply, in collaboration with UNESCO and the signatory states, the **Convention on the Protection of the Cultural and Natural World Heritage** and to that end, to acquire the necessary resources and make great efforts in the fields of training, management and cooperation;

WE NEED SUPPORT TO INNOVATE, as demonstrated by the debates during the OWHC symposium, to meet the challenges of the 21st century, because the only way we can pass on our heritage to future generations and turn it into a sustainable development factor for our fellow citizens is by finding **VERY INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT METHODS**. This is how we can advance the **SOCIAL COMMITMENT FOR THE CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE**;

WE MAKE A GENERAL AND OPEN APPEAL to the citizens, states, international organizations and the private sector to encourage solidarity and cooperation for the protection and active conservation of the world heritage sites, and historic cities in particular because of their fragility, so that future generations can benefit from the lessons of history and the beauties of this world, which everyone on earth is entitled to. To that end, we have to **INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION** :

- **between World Heritage Cities** and between cities that have heritage to share so they can exchange ideas, initiatives and experiences to become more efficient and improve the use and responsible management of cultural heritage;
- **with international organizations and cooperation agencies** (UNESCO, European Union, Organization of American States, etc.) by demanding that they make a real commitment to conservation and the search for new ways to cooperate;

- **with banks, development agencies and private foundations** that can provide financial and human resources to encourage active conservation by implementing development programs focussed on cultural heritage;
- **with the tourism industry** (tour operators, hotel chains, travel agencies, air carriers, etc.) and international tourism organizations to get them involved in the protection, salvage and responsible management of cultural heritage, which is a fundamental to their line of business, to ensure sustainable tourism;
- **of states** so that they recognize the singularity of World Heritage Cities and give them the appropriate resources to meet their needs and assume their role in the reinforcement of their collective identity and in social cohesion;
- **of education and research centres** to disseminate the values of cultural heritage and encourage research to find new conservation techniques and new control and management tools;
- **of non-governmental organizations** devoted to cultural heritage that offer many training, international cooperation and development opportunities;
- **to encourage the creation of forums and city networks** that foster the implementation of joint projects.

On the verge of the 21st century, when culture is becoming a development factor and cultural heritage a strategic resource, it is imperative that international institutions involved in the protection and responsible use of cultural heritage of humankind make a firm commitment. These institutions, in collaboration with states, cities, foundations, universities and citizens, can contribute to the search for **INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS** to meet urgent needs related to the daily management of cities for the conservation of historic, architectural, urbanistic and environmental heritage available to all of us on this planet and whose loss would impoverish us.
