

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE ROUND TABLE ON 60 YEARS OF THE VENICE CHARTER

The first impression one gets when reading carefully the document "The Venice Charter" is that almost everything has been said about conservation. It is still an extraordinary text, of great timeliness and which has had a great impact on our professional activity.

The second issue that concerns us is, that as CIVVIH, the best way to pay homage to that publication is to see the correspondences that exist between that Charter and the Charter of Washington for the Conservation of Historic Cities adopted by ICOMOS in 1987.

As president of the Spanish committee of ICOMOS, and of the meeting that in 1986 in Toledo drafted this Charter, I would like to recall that this Charter was the result of previous years of drafting attempts by members of CIVVIH, which finally concluded with a meeting in Toledo, with the presence of several of the most renowned urban planners of the time, and of the president of ICOMOS himself. It was drafted at that meeting in four languages and subsequently sent to ICOMOS for approval.

In a way, it was already intended as a tribute to the Venice Charter, constructed with the same number of articles, with an explicit reference to it, with the desire to have universal value and to serve to extend the principles of conservation to the historic city. The drafting "in situ" in four languages was not of minor importance. It avoided the semantic discussions following a translation.

Just as the Venice Charter recalls and refers to the Athens Charter of 1931, the Washington Charter refers to the Warsaw-Nairobi "Recommendation" of 1976, while claiming to be complementary to the Venice Charter. This indicated the evolution of thinking on conservation and in a way opened the way to successive documents, while preserving their exceptional historical value.

The simplification, in Article 1 of the Venice Charter of the notion of an urban or rural ensemble bearing witness to a civilisation, an evolution or a historic event, by calling it a historic monument, allows the reference and use of all the other articles to intervention in historic centres. This, in my opinion, is the link between the two Charters.

Other interesting elements in the Venice Charter which are applicable in our case are: the consideration of multidisciplinary intervention (art 2), constancy in maintenance (art 4), the theme of functionality (art 5), the theme of scale (art 6), intervention with modern techniques (art 10), the theme of the false historic (art 12) and finally the explicit reference in art 14 to historic-artistic ensembles which completely links one Charter to the other.

Going back to an in-depth reading of the Washington Charter, I think it was very important that the CIVVIH was able to draft and approve the "Valletta Principles" document, and that it has undertaken the drafting of a new document, which is still in its final stages. Why do I say this? Because we must be determined to have a complementary doctrinal document that reflects well, the situation of evolution and change of our historic cities, providing criteria for their better conservation and development.

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ROUND TABLE

We propose four themes related to the development of the principles of the Venice Charter in relation to our Historic Towns Committee:

- 1) What do we mean today by multidisciplinary intervention? Role of historical study. Current methodology and techniques. Relationship between design, economics and legal aspects. etc.
- 2) How can we reconcile the conservation and development of historic complexes with their new functions?
- 3) What governance and how to share?
- 4) What authenticity and how to avoid historical falsification?

PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

Introduction by the moderators (10 minutes).

The group is divided into two FR and EN. There will be one moderator and one reporter per group. The discussion lasts 1h30.

Participation is open, with speaking time limited to 5 minutes per speaker.

The reporter will report the important points to the other group (20 minutes).