

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, and distinguished participants,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the CIVVIH Annual Meeting and the 3rd Conference of the Central and Eastern Europe Subcommittee, held here in the beautiful town of Kuldīga in Latvia.

On behalf of CIVVIH, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to our hosts—the Municipality of Kuldīga, ICOMOS Latvia and CIVVIH colleagues from Latvia (Jana Jakobsone and colleagues)—for their dedication, effort, and warm hospitality in making this event possible in such an exceptional setting.

We are delighted to gather in a city renowned for its outstanding wooden architecture and unique urban fabric—an ideal backdrop for our discussions on living heritage and resilience.

This year's conference focuses on a pressing and increasingly urgent theme: the impact of global climate change on cultural heritage and the environment.

In line with the ICOMOS Triennial Scientific Plan 2024–2027, *Disaster and Conflict Resilient Heritage: Preparedness, Response, and Recovery*, CIVVIH is reflecting on a series of critical questions:

- How can ICOMOS members and committees better prepare for disasters?
- What role can we play collectively, and what resources will we require to further improve our effectiveness?
- How can we assist site managers, communities, and everyday custodians of heritage—our residents—in this attempt?
- And importantly, what practical steps should be taken to protect cultural heritage from unforeseen disasters, particularly at the local level?

Our discussions will explore how historic urban landscapes and buildings can respond with resilience, adaptability, and innovation.

Our overarching theme, Living Heritage, invites us to delve into several key topics, including:

- Reviving traditional craftsmanship in wooden heritage
- Enhancing resilience through local strategies
- Managing risks and disasters
- Balancing development with preservation.

We aim to foster a vibrant exchange of ideas, best practices, and collaborative solutions to help navigate these complex challenges.

As we begin this conference, I encourage everyone to engage openly, share your insights, and learn from one another's experiences. CIVVIH is committed to fostering creative and constructive dialogue on building disaster- and conflict-resilient approaches in heritage management.

We look forward to your valuable contributions.

Once again, thank you to our hosts—the Municipality of Kuldīga; to our organizers, ICOMOS Latvia and our CIVVIH colleagues from Latvia; and to each of you for being part of this important gathering. And last but not least, thank you to Central and Eastern Europe Subcommittee (Danuta Klosek-Kozłowska) for your collaboration in organizing the scientific symposium.

I look forward to the fruitful discussions ahead and to working together towards a resilient and sustainable future for our historic cities and towns.

Thank you.

Paula Cordeiro  
CIVVIH President