

HANGZHOU OUTCOMES

Hangzhou, People's Republic of China
10-12 December 2015

We, the participants gathered in Hangzhou on the occasion of the International Conference on “Culture for Sustainable Cities” (10-12 December 2015), wish to express our gratitude to the Hangzhou Municipal People's Government for generously providing an excellent platform to formulate recommendations for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development regarding the role of culture in sustainable development and the elaboration of an effective “New Urban Agenda” to be adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, Quito, Ecuador, 17-20 October 2016).

We recall that, in September 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This landmark document constitutes a road map for all countries and development stakeholders to fight poverty and inequality in all their forms and to advance our collective prospects and potential. We recognize that bold and transformative steps are required to steer the world onto a more sustainable and resilient path.

We recall that the international development agenda includes culture as an enabler and a driver for sustainable development. We underline that sustainability is a cultural concept, which stems from the relation between a community and its cultural and natural environment. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reflects the role of culture across its goals and targets, recognizing the need to “strengthen the efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage” as a dedicated target of Sustainable Development Goal 11 to “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. We as participants also emphasize the need to acknowledge contemporary, creative and forward-looking manifestations.

We realize that urban patterns are diverse and that the dynamic of change in cities is continuous, in an increasingly digital era. Therefore, we advocate a need to avoid standardized, prescriptive models in favour of an integrated, place-based and innovative approach. In this perspective, the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Historic Urban Landscape promotes a global approach to urban settings, from an economic, social, human, environmental and spatial perspective. We stress the importance of cities' networks, including UNESCO's Creative Cities Network and the International Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination, in promoting and disseminating good practices in making better cities.

In light of today's critical environmental, social and economic challenges, working towards inclusive, people-centred and culturally sensitive urban development paradigms is of utmost importance. We therefore recommend that the “New Urban Agenda” fully integrate cultural heritage, cultural and creative industries and an understanding of the innate imagination and collective intelligence of people. These are pre-conditions for safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities.

We therefore call on governments and policy-makers, as part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to integrate culture in the New Urban Agenda in the following ways:

- 1. PEOPLE-CENTRED CITIES: Humanizing cities through culture to enhance their liveability and empower people to connect with their communities and shape their urban environments**
- 2. SUSTAINABLE URBAN ECONOMIES: Addressing poverty alleviation and managing economic transitions by enhancing the cultural assets and human potential of cities**
- 3. HUMAN SCALE, COMPACT AND MIXED-USE CITIES: Promoting culture and creativity in urban development, regeneration and adaptive reuse**
- 4. INCLUSIVE MULTICULTURAL CITIES: Recognizing cultural diversity by promoting collaborative partnerships to encourage community participation and reduce inequalities**
- 5. PEACEFUL AND TOLERANT SOCIETIES: Building on the diversity of culture and heritage to foster peace and intercultural dialogue, and counter urban violence**
- 6. SUSTAINABLE, GREEN AND RESILIENT CITIES: Integrating heritage and traditional knowledge into innovative and culture-based solutions to environmental concerns**
- 7. INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACES: Leveraging heritage and cultural and creative activities to foster social cohesion and ensure access to well-designed quality public spaces**
- 8. ENHANCED RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES: Fostering respect for the cultural value of small settlements and landscapes, and strengthening their relationship with cities**
- 9. IMPROVED URBAN GOVERNANCE: Strengthening participatory mechanisms, capacity-building, and developing indicators to assess the role and impact of culture on urban development**