Conference Recommendations

Drawing from the components of the conference, including site visits, discussion of papers, presentations, workshops and monitoring of Egyptian Heritage and Landscapes in Luxor and Aswan, the conference would find it imperative to recommend the following:

- It is important to indicate that the recommendations cover not only the urban, vernacular and ancient heritage but also the Egyptian landscape in general and extends to the different types of Egyptian cultural and natural landscapes that Egypt with its rich palimpsest of civilizations.

- Immediate attention is needed for the rapidly degrading and changing landscape of the Nile, its panorama and horizons. Uncontrolled construction and industrial activities are aggressively changing the landscape in escalating manner. We recommend a quick set of detailed transparent guidelines and legislations to be applied through a dominant coordinating authority. The negative effects of present deterioration are seriously threatening touristic activities on both land and the Nile with their great contribution to the touristic income of the country.

- It is understood that the new Egyptian constitution (Articles 45-59) provides several obligations towards the preservation of natural and cultural assets of all forms. This needs new laws and amendments of existing legislation. Such laws in turn will need technical detailed and transparent guidelines, rules and regulations that would be prepared by experts and technical teams. The state is obliged to start this immediate act and provide applicable means of enforcement.
- One example of the landscapes that are changing in an alarming negative manner threatening their authenticity is the western bank of Luxor with its historic panorama and profound nature. Unfortunately, some of such negative activities are practiced by - or by the approval or reluctance- of the concerned authorities. We call for an immediate action as this is threatening the authenticity of the whole site.

- The sense of place is a major asset that should be preserved; conserved and continually monitored. This needs serious attention by both authorities and designers. All endeavors, legislations and guidelines should be aiming at preserving the sense of place as a sensitive asset of the natural, cultural and built environments.

- In order to achieve a well based deep study with effective results, an inventory of the visual, ecological, socioeconomic and cultural resource is needed in order to diagnose problems and create sustainable solutions. This is also needed not only on the design level but also on the legislative level.

- Strict transparent enforcement of both existing and newly suggested guidelines and laws are imperative for both quick and long-term solutions.

- Local communities need technical support and pilot projects to create success stories for conservation and adaptive reuse. The same also applies for their new buildings in sensitive landscapes or historical areas.

- Any alternatives or solutions should achieve executable attractive dimensions with economic cultural and social viability to the local community to encourage the activation and success of such solutions.

- It is essential to create and protect open urban spaces and landscapes within the urban mass that serves multiple functions and may be a tool for sustainable interactive lifestyle achieving the needed connectivity.

- Local communities need support and aid to relay and express their cultural assets and social economical needs. This also applies to their hidden cultural and social needs and aspirations needing exposure and rediscovery. This will be an important element in developing the economic base needed to create sustainable communities within the context of conservation.
The conference calls for the help, aid and support of the international community in the needed endeavors to preserve the landscapes and historic areas of Egypt. This can take many forms, however support to a national-international campaign to preserve the rapidly changing Egyptian landscape and the rapidly deteriorating heritage comes as a priority.

We must preserve the still existing examples of vernacular architecture through legislation and guidelines, and relate them to touristic and community activities. The invigoration of national pride and improving the education system is essential. This may extend to implementing and correcting the ongoing distorted activities in the field by local population with the support of governmental and non-governmental bodies. The guidelines mentioned previously would assure transparent, sustainable practice.

Preserving historic areas within the urban mass must be performed through the perspective of the local population, taking note of economic, social and cultural aspects in order to maintain a good quality of life for the citizens. Providing areas for revitalization through recycling degraded non-historic buildings and areas is one way that this can be done. On the national level the authorities should provide new communities with equivalent cultural and socio-economic fabric and amenities.

The conference calls for adopting a new policy towards the copyright of the accumulative historic products of Egypt, thus ensuring a strong tool for achieving needed finance and implementation of preservation projects.

In the occasion of the 50th anniversary for the relocation of Abu Simbel temple, the conference calls for renewed national attention that would be marketed internationally, celebrating through this event an early example of cooperation and support for the conservation of Egyptian heritage.