

BAKU DECLARATION: TOURISM AND HERITAGE

Architecture, Planning and Design: Keys to Safeguarding Heritage in the Age of Mass Tourism

To help counter threats to our greatest assets, UNESCO adopted in 1972 the *Convention Concerning the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage*. Today, more than 1,000 places around the world enjoy at least some protections afforded by their designation as World Heritage.

However, as tourism has grown in both scale and reach all over the globe, pressures mount on many places of cultural, natural and historical significance. The effects of unregulated tourism endanger not only World Heritage, but many significant neighbourhoods and villages—even entire cities and natural ecosystems. Climate change compounds these threats, along with deliberate heritage destruction in zones of conflict, including the Republic of Azerbaijan.

This assembly marks the important beginning of a new programme to change the paradigm of tourism, embracing sustainable design measures, education, innovation, communication, and the involvement of local communities.

Appropriate planning and architectural design measures—new visitor centres, special accommodations for large groups, and expanded interest zones—offer promise, *provided* they benefit from careful study, achieve a symbiosis with the social environment, and respect heritage.

We call upon UNESCO and others responsible for heritage protection, as well as upon the global tourism industry itself, to support development of *architectural design and planning quality principles* to enhance and safeguard heritage in all parts of the world. We must begin with educating all citizens, and especially young people.

We call for the development of architectural design guidelines for heritage properties, useful in a wide variety of contexts and amenable to adaptation. We underscore the powerful role that architecture, planning and design can have to ameliorate the effects of mass tourism, improve visitor experiences, and enhance the value of historic assets.

We call for new investments in culture that recognize the diversity of heritage, sharing its many rewards, and maintain historic urban centres as organic elements of larger communities and cities.

As conveners of the *2019 UIA Baku Forum on Mass Tourism in Historic Cities*, held under UNESCO Patronage, we urge stakeholders in the tourism and heritage sectors to join in our resolve to ensure that tourism is sustainable and equitable.

The President of
International Union of Architects

Thomas Vanier

Chairman of the Board
The Union of Architects of the Republic of
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Elbay Gasimzade

Conveners of the *2019 UIA Baku Forum on Mass Tourism in Historic Cities*, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, 9 June 2019, under the Patronage of UNESCO