



*Nis ~ Nis Fortress, Hidden Treasure
Behind the Walls ~*

Cover Photo: Nis City Fortress - uninterrupted urban history site

*Detailed Program of the 12th
World Conference of Historical Cities*

12 - 15 Oct., 2010 in Nara Japan

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Accra | Katmandu |
| Alexandria | Kazan |
| Algiers | Kiev |
| Amsterdam | Konya |
| Andong | Kyoto |
| Athens | Lahore |
| Bad Ischl | Lisbon |
| Baghdad | Lutsk |
| Ballarat | Lviv |
| Barcelona | Melbourne |
| Bordeaux | Mexico City |
| Boston | Minsk |
| Bratislava | Montpellier |
| Brussels | Montreal |
| Budapest | Nanjing |
| Bursa | Nara |
| Buyeo | Nicosia |
| Chengdu | Nis |
| Chiang Mai | Norwich |
| Cologne | Norwood Payneham & St Peters |
| Constanta | Odessa |
| Cordoba | Osmangazi |
| Cracow | Paris |
| Cusco | Prague |
| Dijon | Quebec |
| Dublin | Riga |
| Edinburgh | Rome |
| Fez | Santiago de Compostela |
| Florence | Sarajevo |
| Geneva | Sheki |
| Gongju | Tashkent |
| Guadalajara | Tunis |
| Gyeongju | Ulan Bator |
| The Hague | Varanasi |
| Hanoi | Veliko Turnovo |
| Helsingborg | Vienna |
| Hue | Xian |
| Iasi | Yangon |
| Isfahan | Yangzhou |
| Istanbul | Yogyakarta |
| Jerusalem | Zagreb |
| Kaesong | Zhengzhou |
| Kanazawa | Zurich |



WORLD HISTORICAL CITIES

The League of Historical Cities Bulletin
No.56: September 2010

Nis Fortress, Hidden Treasure Behind the Walls

Mayor's Office, International Cooperation Affairs of Nis, Serbia

In the very center of Nis, on the right bank of the River Nisava, there is a Fortress, city fortification, with continuity of existence 2000 years long. With its current look it represents an extraordinary historical monument.

History of Nis with Fortress

Settlement of the area where Fortress is located started in the period of Roman Empire, at the beginning of the 1st century A.D. when Roman legions founded a camp in this place. Antique Naissus developed fast thanks to its great position on the main military road, Via Militaris, towards Constantinople. However, such a position of the city contributed to its frequent destruction during the whole history of its existence.

Already in the II Century A.D. on the location of the camp, there was a town fortified with strong ramparts, rich and populated. In the middle of 5th Century A.D. Naissus was attacked and totally destroyed by the Hun tribes. The attacks continued. In 6th Century those were Avars and Slavs, in 7th Century Bulgarians and in 9th and 10th Ugric people.

In 11th and 12th Century, on their way to Asia Minor, numerous disorganized groups of crusade soldiers went through Nis, robbing and devastating everything in front of them. After that, during the rule of Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, in 12th century, Nis was renovated and fortified. After the death of Komnenos, Great Serbian Zhupan Stefan Nemanja conquered Nis and in 1330 the town finally became a part of the Serbian state. No longer after that, Ottoman Turks conquered the town and they completely destroyed the Fortress and used it as building material for their houses.

Reconstruction of the Fortress

The fortress gained its contemporary look at the end of 17th and at the beginning of 18th Century. Political situation in this period was worse for Ottoman Turks than at the beginning of their rule and one of the strongest European forces was Austria.



Hamam - turkish bath, located at the fortress entrance, on the left side of Stambol Gate. Built in XV century

After the Austrian attacked Belgrade in 1717, Turks moved the seat of Pashaluk to Nis. Wishing to prevent invasion of Austrians to south and east, Ottoman Turks started the construction of contemporary fortress with reconstruction of the old medieval fortress.

It was built after the design made by brothers Mehmed-aga and Mustafa-aga, and probably modeled based on the designs of fortresses done by French architect Sebastian Vauban. The works were extensive and the deadline was short. 40 stonecutters from Constantinople were engaged, the rampart was built by 400 master masons and the total number of workers engaged on the works on fortress was estimated to 16.000.

The fortress belongs to artillery type of fortification and it is of a unique type in the mid-Balkans. The Fortress has a polygonal shape, with 7 unequal sides and ramparts 8 m high and 3 m thick on the average. The building stone, brought from the nearby quarries, was hewn into rather evenly-shaped blocks while the inner part of the walls was filled in with raw stone, headstones, sarcophagus, parts of pillars and other material which was available from the nearby Roman and Byzantium necropolis.

As a solder they used lime putty mixed with sand and poured between stones. The



Panorama view of Nis



Hamam - turkish bath, today got a new function of the exclusive restaurant



fortress had four main gates and two side gates. In the internal part of the Fortress there was a luxurious Turkish settlement with harems, hamams and other impressive buildings while some of them are preserved until nowadays.

Nis Fortress, from its establishment till 1949, was used exclusively for military purposes. In 1949 the army left the Fortress and gave it over for civilian purposes. In that period awareness about the necessity of cultural heritage preserving was awaken and Nis Fortress was protected by law in 1948.

Fortress Revitalization

The program of Nis Fortress revitalization started to get its shape with forming of Institute for the Protection of Monuments in 1966. With new revalorization, the fortress was entitled a cultural wealth of great importance in April 1969, together with its immediate surroundings.

Because of the visual and historical value of the rampart and construction heritage located within it, and because of huge potential of this City space, the Fortress became a hot spot of interest. When deciding about the future life of such an historical core, a question whether it is necessary to exclude any serious intervention at the reconstruction arose because such an intervention would harm authentic historical character of the ambience and would turn it into dead archeological site. Since historical cores represent a very influential element of general city urban development, it is necessary to organise numerous different cultural and historical events to breathe life into its ancient stones.

In the following period the rampart of the Fortress and facilities within it were restored and conserved.

Right behind the rampart, on the left side of Stambol Gate, there was a Hamam-Turkish bath. Hamam was of a closed type, intended for Turkish women exclusively, with non-typical arrangement of rooms due to its function but as well because of the position of the facility right to the rampart. In 1970' the Hamam was conserved and then reconstructed. Today, the facility is adapted to suit contemporary needs.

On the right to the Hamam, there is arsenal - a warehouse for weapon and military equipment, of a very massive construction and strong walls, with small windows and quadrilateral roof made of s-tiles. On the front part of the facility there is a porch with massive arch. With building revitalization and harmonization of functions, the arsenal is turned into exhibition space while the porch is

glassed and the premises are used as handmade souvenir shop.

Another interesting facility is a mosque with quadruplet base with half-calotte and centrally placed minaret, turned towards Mecca which now represents one of the nicest exhibition spaces in Nis.

Inside the Fortress, by the northern rampart, there are several gun powder mills- buildings for weapon and gun powder keeping. The inner part of the gun powder mills has a very interesting concept, with central circle room around it and an arched roof.

Opposite to arsenal, on the left and right side of Belgrade gate, there are 12 niches in the rampart and they were used as warehouses for food and weapon as well as horse stalls.

After researches and conservation niches were adapted in line with protection needs, turned into city cafes and pastry shops. Originally, niches were less high but with the project design of re-arrangement and revitalization their height was extended for more than 2 meters. With additional construction of niches the rooms became bigger, more functional and attractive and they got necessary heat, sound and hydro isolation as well as ventilation.

Today's Life with Fortress

Today, in the Fortress, there are numerous contents-ateliers, exhibition galleries, monuments, cafes as well as a summer stage where numerous cultural manifestations take place: choir festival, film festival, jazz festival and other.

What cannot be measured is the value of the Fortress for it preserved the area of 22ha. in the age of urbanization and Nis is among the small number of world cities which can boast with a real oasis in the very center of the town.



Summer Stage, located in the east part of the entrance plato as the exceptionally resolved open scene space



Arsenal - a warehouse for weapon and military equipment is a ground building with a big central arch entrance



Bali Beg mosque is located in the central part of the Fortress. It is the only one preserved of the ten built in the Fortress



Dzebane-barutane gun powder mills were Turkish military objects for weapon and gun powder keeping. There are four of them preserved in the Nis Fortress



Entrance plato is located between the Belgrade gate, Stambol gate and the Summer Stage

For further information

City of Nis
Mayor's Office
International Cooperation
Affairs
Nis City Hall
7. juli 2, 18000 Nis
Tel.+381 18 50 44 08, 50 44 10
Fax.+381 18 50 45 45
international@ni.rs
www.ni.rs

The 12th World Conference of Historical Cities is only one month away. Please note that Host City of Nara will close the registration on 25 September (extended from 15 Sept.). For those who have not make a registration, please visit official website of the 12th conference at <http://wchc2010-nara.jp/> and register for the conference as soon as possible. The followings are the detailed time table for the conference. City of Nara and City of Kyoto are ready to welcome you in October.

Day 0 (11 Oct.)

Pre-conference tour to Todai-ji Temple and Kasuga-Taisha Shrine (13:00~18:00)

***Todai-ji**

Todai-ji Temple is a temple of grand proportions which houses a large statue of Buddha dedicated in the year 752. The extensive temple grounds include the Daibutsuden (Great Buddha Hall), one of the largest wooden buildings in the world, and historical architectures. Todai-ji is one of the "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" which are registered as World Heritage Sites.

***Kasuga-Taisha Shrine**

The layout of the shrine remains practically unchanged since ancient times. The building harmonizes beautifully with the natural surroundings, conveying the state of shrines in ancient Japan. Kasuga-Taisha Shrine is one of the "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" which are registered as World Heritage Sites. This visit is scheduled to include a tour of the periodic reconstruction site of Kasuga-Taisha Shrine, into which it is normally forbidden to enter.

Day 1 (12 Oct.)

Opening Ceremony, Youth Forum, Workshop, Welcome Dinner Party

Time	Event	Venue	Remarks
08:40	Registration		
09:30	Opening Ceremony		
09:50	Keynote Lecture	Nara Prefectural New Public Hall	by Mr.Koichiro Matsuura, former Director-General of UNESCO
11:00	NOH Performance		
11:30	Lunch		
12:30	Travel to Nara Centennial Hall by bus		
13:00	Youth Forum	Nara Centennial Hall	Theme: Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization
15:15	Workshop Topic 1		Topic: Technical Succession
17:40	Break		
19:30	Welcome Dinner Party	Hotel Nikko Nara	

***Keynote Speaker Mr. Koichiro Matsuura**

He is from Yamaguchi Prefecture, born in 1937. He was educated at the Law Faculty of the University of Tokyo and at the Faculty of Economics of Haverford College (graduated in 1961) and began his career at the Foreign Ministry in 1959. He served as Chairperson of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee from 1998 to 1999. In November 1999, he was elected as the 8th Director-General of UNESCO, the first to be elected from Asian countries. Re-elected in 2005 and retired in 2009. During his service, he made great efforts to strengthen international cooperation in the field of cultural heritage preservation.

***NOH**

NOH is a major form of traditional entertainment in Japan, designated as an example of National Important Intangible Cultural Assets and UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage. Today, NOH is highly regarded as a performing art, both at home and abroad. NOH, which is a musical masked drama with Utai (song) and Mai (dance), is a traditional Japanese composite art. The repertoire is normally limited to drama plays based on history and classical literature.

Day 2 (13 Oct.)

Workshop, Round Table, Appreciation of Kasuga Bugaku(a court dance and music),Dinner Party

Time	Event	Venue	Remarks
09:00	Workshop Topic 2	Nara Centennial Hall	Topic: Disaster Prevention in Historical Cities
12:00	Lunch	Hotel Nikko Nara	
13:30	Round Table Theme 1	Nara Centennial Hall	Theme: Unique City Planning Utilizing Its Historical Characteristics - Establishment of Identity
15:30	Break		
15:45	Round Table Theme 2		Theme: City Maintaining Its History - Harmonious Coexistence
17:45	Break		
19:30	Appreciation of Kasuga Bugaku	Kasuga-Taisha Shrine	
20:00	Dinner Party		

***Kasuga Bugaku**

Bugaku, established in the 6th or 7th century by combining performing arts from different places on the Chinese continent with Japanese culture, is one of the traditional Japanese court music (Gagaku) accompanied by dancing. Kasuga Bugaku, performed as dedicatory entertainments at the Wakamiya Festival, were designated as national important intangible cultural assets in 1979.

Time Table for the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities
 to be held in Nara Japan, from 12 Oct. to 15 Oct.



Heijo-kyo Palace Site which is main venue of the Commemorative Events for the 1300th Anniversary of Nara Heijo-kyo Capital

The photo is provided by Nara City Tourist Association

Day 3 (14 Oct.)

Excursion to Nara Palace Site, Summary of the sessions, General Assembly of the LHC, Closing Ceremony, Farewell Party

Time	Event	Venue	Remarks
08:50	Excursion to Nara Palace Site	Nara Palace Site	Board Meeting will be held at Nara Centennial Hall
11:30	Lunch	Hotel Nikko Nara	
13:00	Summary of the sessions	Nara Centennial Hall	Moderator: Hisakazu Takagi, Secretary General of LHC
14:00	General Assembly of the LHC		Agenda: Report from the Board Meeting, Election of New Principal Officers, Adoption of Nara Declaration
15:00	Closing Ceremony		
15:15	Break		
19:00	Farewell Party	Nara Prefectural New Public Hall	

***Nara Palace Site**

The remains were once Nara Palace, which was the center of politics and culture when Japan's capital was relocated to Nara 1300 years ago. Nara Palace Site is the main venue of the commemorative events and stage performances for the 1300 anniversary of Nara Heijo-kyo Capital. Nara Palace Site is one of "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara".

Day 4 (15 Oct.)

Post conference tour to Kyoto (Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Sanjusangen-do Temple and Nijo-jo Castle) with luncheon party hosted by President of the League / Mayor of Kyoto

Time	Event	Remarks
08:30	Leave the hotels in Nara by bus	
10:00	visit Kiyomizu-dera Temple	Participants will be able to see the area which is not open to the public usually.
11:40	visit Sanjusangen-do Temple	
12:30	Luncheon Party	Hosted by the President of the League of Historical Cities / Mayor of Kyoto.
15:00	visit Nijo-jo Castle	Participants will enjoy Matcha green tea with traditional sweets in the garden.
16:30	Leave Kyoto	

*Kiyomizu-dera Temple and Nijo-jo Castle are registered as World Heritage Site.

*At luncheon party, participants will enjoy "Kyomai", a classical Japanese dance by Geiko and Maiko as well as "Rokusai Nenbutsu", a traditional folk dance to the tune of a Buddhist chant, drums and flutes, which is designated as one of the National Intangible Cultural Assets.



Ukimido Pavilion in the Cherry Blossom Season

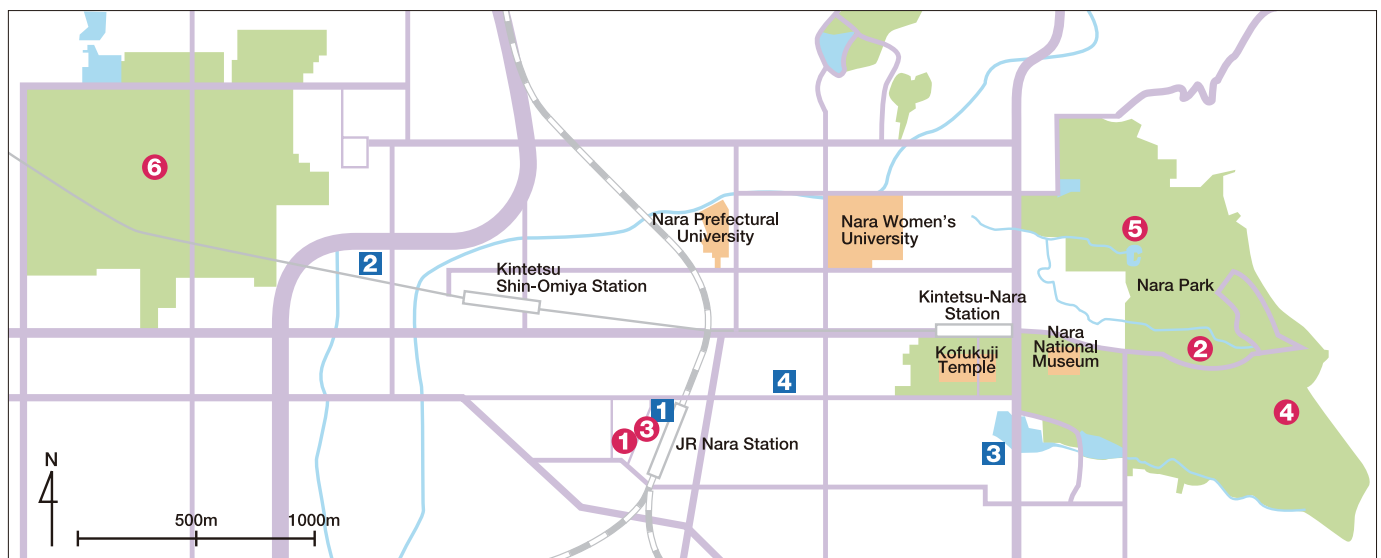


Bugaku Performance on Culture Day (November)



On-Matsuri Festival

NARA MAP



- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 Hotel Nikko Nara | : | 1 Nara Centennial Hall | : | 4 Kasuga-Taisha Shrine |
| 2 Nara Royal Hotel | : | 2 Nara Prefectural New Public Hall | : | 5 Todai-ji Temple |
| 3 Nara Hotel | : | 3 Asunara, gender equality center | : | 6 Nara Palace Site |
| 4 Hotel Fujita Nara | : | | | |

■ = Hotel ● = Convention Venue

Secretariat is pleased to announce that presenters and their orders for Youth Forum, Workshop and Round Table have been fixed as follows. We will have seven youth forum presenters, 19 workshop presenters and 14 round table presenters.

<Youth Forum> 12 Oct. 13:00 - 15:00

Theme: Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization

Name	City and Country	Presentation Title
Ms. Chinami Saito Ms. Nozomi Murata	Nara, Japan	Tourism network utilizing bicycles
Ms. Sydney Sykes	Boston, the U.S.A.	Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization- Boston - "Bikes, Boats & Broadway"
Ms. Kaho Mugita Ms. Maki Nakagawa	Kanazawa, Japan	Approach of Architectural course in Kanazawa Municipal Technical High School, in the historical city of Kanazawa
Ms. Gao Yixuan, Ms. You Zhou, Mr. Yuan Gao, Mr. Hongxing Lei	Xian, China	How to guide the development of the ancient city of Xian with the innovative concept of rejuvenation
To Be Decided	Nara Prefecture, Japan	To Be Decided
Ms. Seong Gyu In, Ms. Kim Yoo Sun, Ms. Park Gwi Young	Gyeongju, Korea	Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization
Mr. Yuta Kamei, Mr. Takayuki Harada, Ms. Mika Matsumoto	Kyoto, Japan	Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization

<Workshop> 12 Oct. 15:15 - 17:40

Theme: System Designing to Pass On Culture of Historical Cities

Topic 1: Technical Succession

Name	Title	Presentation Title
To Be Decided	To Be Decided (from Himeji, Japan)	Repair work of castle tower of Himeji Castle
Mr. Hiroshi Mimura, Mr. Takahiko Otani	Head Director of Kyoto Center for Community Collaboration, Professor of Mukogawa Women's University	Conservation of historical townscape and revitalization program of Kyomachiya, traditional houses in Kyoto
Mr. Koki Miida	Professor of Kio University, Architect, Japan	Historical city Naramachi and its lifestyle
Ms. Yoko Morimoto	Project General Manager of Education committee, Uda, Japan	Inheritance of lifestyle -Revaluation of traditional events and new approach
Ms. Aya Kubota	Associate Professor of University of Tokyo, Japan	Integration of cultural heritage and urban landscape around the outer moat of Edo Castle
Mr. Koichi Nagashima	AUR Consultants, Architect, Urban Designer, Japan	Creating local identity of Asian small and medium cities through recovering proto-landscape
Mrs. Sri Astuti	Researcher of Research Institute for Human Settlements, Indonesia	Bandung Historical city
Mr. Fahmi Prihantoro	Instructor of Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia	Historical City as a Living Museum
Mr. Tai Yaqin	Deputy Director of Cultural Heritage Bureau of Xian Municipality, China	Safeguard Cultural Relics and Foster the Cultural Vein

<Workshop> 13 Oct. 9:00 - 12:00

Theme: System Designing to Pass On Culture of Historical Cities

Topic 2: Disaster Prevention in Historical Cities

Name	Title	Presentation Title
Mr. Masahiro Yoshida	Ritsumeikan University, Graduate school of Science and Engineering, Japan	Evacuation planning and problems in Patan the World Heritage Site Kathmandu Valley at great earthquakes -focusing on the Newari community and evacuation area
Mr. Takeyoshi Tanaka	Professor of Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, Japan	Historical city Kyoto and its risk of earthquake and fire
Ms. Promsaka Sarunwit	Research Assistant of Ritsumeikan Global Innovation Research Organization	Market upgrading for fire prevention in Sam chook, 100 years historical market
Ms. Hirunsalee Siyanee	Research Assistant of Thammasat University, Thailand	Ayutthaya and Associated Historic Towns
Ms. Minja Yang	President of Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation, France	Historic Urban Landscapes in Times of Change: how to avoid human induced disasters by better planning
Ms. Yumi Isabelle Akieda	Research Fellow of Japan Center for International Cooperation in Conservation, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, Japan	Conservation Management of Cultural Heritage as a Tool for Disaster Prevention in Historic Cities
Ms. Saw Ohnmar Han	Research assistant of Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, Japan	Knowledge distribution of disaster prevention educated for reduction process into maintenance of Historical culture cities in Myanmar
Mr. Wiendu Nuryanti	Executive Director of Yogyakarta Tourism Development Board, Indonesia	Community-based disaster management for historic heritage cities - Case Study: Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Mr. Hidehiko Kanegae	Professor of Ritsumeikan University, College of Policy Science, Japan	Continuity hexalemma of historical cities under community planning age
Mr. Stuart B. Smith	Secretary of The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage, UK	Historical Cities and their Infrastructure

Presenters in the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities
 to be held in Nara Japan, from 12 Oct. to 15 Oct.



Exterior of Nara Centennial Hall

<Round Table> 13 Oct. 13:30 - 15:30

Theme 1: Unique City Planning Utilizing Its Historical Characteristics -Establishment of Identity

Name	Title	Presentation Title
Mr. Yang Sik Choi	Mayor of Gyeongju, Korea	Developing historical city program
Mr. Suk Chong Lee	Director of Account and Legal Dept. Buyeo, Korea	Harmonious coexistence - Historical city urban planning -
Mr. Zhang Guang Jiang	Human Resources Director of Planning Bureau, Xi'an, China	Inheritance of Historical Cultures and Construction of Innovation-driven Cities
Mr. Genji Mori	Deputy mayor of Kanazawa, Japan	Kanazawa as a responsible city of history
Mr. Gen Nakagawa	Mayor of Nara, Japan	Taking pride in our hometowns through "world heritage learning"
Mr. Kirk Sykes	Commissioner, City of Boston Civic Design Commission, Boston, USA	Unique City Planning Utilizing Its Historical Characteristics -Establishment of Identity -The City of Boston as a Living Museum of Cultural Evolution
Mr. Michael Loveday	Chief Executive of Heritage Economic & Regeneration Trust, Norwich, UK	Norwich 12 - a model of English urban development over the last millennium'



The historic townscape area called 'Naramachi'

<Round Table> 13 Oct. 15:45 - 17:45

Theme 2: City Maintaining Its History - Harmonious Coexistence

Name	Title	Presentation Title
Mr. Daisaku Kadokawa	Mayor of Kyoto, Japan	Development of historical city Kyoto by harmonious coexistence with the environment
Mr. Saghaeiannnejad Esgahani	Mayor of Isfahan, Iran	Rediscovery of the old Isfahan
Mr. Hannes Heide	Mayor of Bad Ischl, Austria	Creating a city center and initialize a growing consciousness (awareness of history) of Bad Ischl's historic heritage
Ms. Mariela Tsoneva	Funds and Programming Director of Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria	The cultural and historical heritage of Veliko Turnovo
Mr. Roland Ries	Mayor of Strasbourg, France	Maintaining History and Heritage of the city without being a Museum -City, a nice environment to live in, adapted to the modern way of life
Ms. Gulnaz Salamova	Deputy Mayor of Sheki, Azerbaijan	City Maintaining Its History - Harmonious Coexistence
Ms. Svitlana Boieva	Deputy Director of Foreign Dept. Odessa, Ukraine	Odessa - a modern city maintaining its cultural heritage



Yakushi-ji Temple and Wakakusayama Hill



Exterior of Nara Prefectural New Public Hall

*** About the Venues for the Conference**

<Nara Prefectural New Public Hall>

The Opening Ceremony and the NOH Performance will both take place at Nara Prefectural New Public Hall, which is equipped with a NOH theater, a rare facility even in Japan and, with Nara being the birthplace of NOH, highly appropriate. This beautiful building with its impressive traditional Japanese-style tiled roof is reminiscent of the buildings and hipped roofs of the Tempyo era (710-794). It is located in Nara Park, where it exhibits a calm appearance in total harmony with the surrounding scenery. After the Opening Ceremony, one of Japan's representative NOH performers Komparu Yasuyuki of the Komparu School will perform the NOH play "Mutsura".

Also, the Japanese garden, with its view of nearby Mount Wakakusa and its surrounding scenery, is a superb place to enjoy nature and the changing seasons. The Farewell Party of this conference will be held in this garden.

<Nara Centennial Hall>

The main venue for the Conference, Nara Centennial Hall is a civic property built by Nara City in 1999 as one of the major projects commemorating the 100th anniversary of the city's incorporation as a municipality. It was designed by the architect Arata Isozaki, who is famous the world over as an exponent of post-modern architecture. The concept behind the building is that of a cultural ship sailing eternally onwards through history while the land of Nara/Heijokyo is likened to an ocean. As you can see from the photograph, it has an impressive exterior appearance.

The Conference will take place in the Main Hall, which has seating capacity for 1,692 people. In principle, the Main Conference will be open to the public. Accordingly, the stage will be made as wide as possible and participants will sit in a conference area set up on the stage level, while members of the public can observe the proceedings from the audience seats.

In addition, the Meeting Hall will be prepared for use as a Press Room. PCs, printers, fax machines, etc., will be installed in this hall which conference participants will be able to use freely.



NOH theater located in Nara Prefectural New Public Hall



Main hall of Nara Centennial Hall

Minja Yang

President, Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation, Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)
President a.i., Indian Heritage Cities Network Foundation (IHCN-F), Former-Director, UNESCO Sub-regional Office in New Delhi



The League of Historical Cities (LHC) has an important mission to fulfill in our world of rapid urbanization and change. Cities which have always been the centre of "civility", where inhabitants from various parts of the country or even the world have converged to leave behind testimonies of their creative genius and cultural accumulation. But the city cannot assume its role, neither in the past nor in the future without developing harmony with the countryside - the rural or semi-urban areas that surround the city. Just like historic centres cannot exist without the larger city, the city cannot exist without the territory in which it is situated. With more than half of the world population now living in sprawling urban settlements especially in the developing countries, much more must be done to "humanize the city", as UNESCO has been promoting for decades. The faceless "city", is not a city in the true sense of the word, as human settlements only become cities when the specificity of its inhabitants, both of the past and present are valorized thus "humanizing" the urban communities.

Conserving the so-called "historic centres" or "monumental zones" as a sort of "oases of culture" in an otherwise sprawling faceless urban agglomeration cannot be the objective. UNESCO as an intergovernmental organization has been promoting culture as a vector for sustainable development through its cultural conventions and international standard-setting recommendations. Today, with the success of the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the prestige that inscription on the World Heritage List brings, many countries and cities are vying to obtain this "label". But UNESCO has been adamant that this is not a "tourism label" but a label signifying quality of excellence in terms of heritage-based development. The World Heritage Convention clearly states that the States Parties which are signatories must improve the general national legal and management framework to improve the protection, conservation and valorization of ALL heritage, and not only those on the WH List. It is

in this that I see the growing role of the League of Historical Cities (LHC), which can, and MUST, become UNESCO's privileged partner in promoting the newly emerging concept of the Historical Urban Landscape (HUL). Under a new international recommendation which will hopefully soon be adopted by the Member States of UNESCO, "HUL" needs to become a buzz word in promoting urban development that would focus on enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of each city, and for the historic centre to serve as the "heart" in pumping the blood of cultural creativity throughout the rest of the city, and its surrounding territory. "Culture" as defined by UNESCO is a "way of life", that by definition is people-focused. To be sure, the concept of HUL is not aimed to obstruct development but to accompany it by addressing legitimate concerns, such as how to expand cities, how to meet housing needs, what can be done to improve urban mobility through different transport modes, how to improve energy-efficiency to reduce carbon imprint, how to deal with solid waste, how can educational and social welfare facilities be improved and become more equitable, etc, and above all, what is the role of historic centres in the larger territory in addressing these needs.

I therefore propose that on the occasion of this forthcoming LHC Congress, thematic working groups be established within the LHC. In addition to the General Assembly conferences, I would like to see the member cities of the LHC taking initiatives in organizing thematic study tours to various cities. For example, the Indian Heritage Cities Network (IHCN) established in 2006, is today composed of some 25 city members; a modest number in the face of India's over 5,000 cities, but it is in active partnership with the French National Association of Cities and Regions of Art and History (ANVPAH) which federates some 130 historical cities in France. This IHCN-ANVPAH partnership has resulted in two study tours by Indian city representatives to several world famous cities in France, and over ten technical missions by experts of French cities to jointly address crucial questions in specific cities with tangible follow-up actions.

Membership of the LHC can be greatly expanded and its existence can be all the more important if it can better respond to the interests of city managers in strategic planning and programming for urban development that would enhance the natural and cultural heritage of cities. The LHC should have the ambition to become a strong force and a "lobby" within the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG)-the world federation of local authorities, in promoting adherence to the emerging concept of the Historic Urban Landscape within the global quest for sustainable cities.

The LHC in a World of Rapid Urbanisation and Change

President, Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation

Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) : Minja Yang

The League of Historical Cities Secretariat

International Relations Office,
City of Kyoto
Teramachi Oike, Nakagyo-ku,
Kyoto 604-8571, Japan
Phone: +81-75-222-3072
Fax: +81-75-222-3055
E-mail: lhcs@city.kyoto.jp
URL: <http://www.city.kyoto.jp/somu/kokusai/lhcs/>

The 12th World Conference of Historical Cities in 2010 in Nara, Japan

Period: 12 - 15 Oct., 2010

Theme: Succession of Historical City with Creative Revitalization

Contact: Mr. Kiyohide Nishite

Director, International Section,

Tourism & Economy dept. of Nara Municipal Office

1-1-1, Nijooji-Minami, Nara City, 630-8580, Japan

Phone and Fax: +81-742-34-1965

E-mail: info@wchc2010-nara.jp

<http://www.city.nara.nara.jp> ***Please make your registration by 25 Sep.!**

