

UNESCO WORLD BANK

**China-Cultural Heritage Management and Urban Development:
Challenge and Opportunity**

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THE BEIJING CONSENSUS

UNESCO, The World Bank, The State Administration of Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Construction of the People's Republic of China convened an international conference on "Cultural Heritage Management and Urban Development: Challenge and Opportunity" in Beijing from July 5 to July 7, 2000.

In light of the great significance of historical cultural heritage in modern urban development;

In light of how the protection of the world's cultural heritage promotes mutual understanding between the people's of the world, and is conducive to the cause of world peace;

In light of how at present the protection of cultural heritage is impacted by urban development;

And in light of how the fundamental interests of both protecting cultural heritage and of urban development are converging and becoming basic goals in urban development planning;

The conference delegates from all over the world have reached a consensus on the following issues:

The preservation of urban cultural heritage is not only the vehicle and proof of the spiritual achievements of different traditions; it also epitomizes the basic traits of the peoples of the world, and is a basic component of the appearance and features of cities. It epitomizes the industrious labor and infinite wisdom of the human race over several millennia, embodies precious spiritual resources and material wealth handed down from generation to generation of human civilization, and acts as a spiritual force which bolsters the confidence and thinking of urban residents as they build their dream homes in the 21st century.

For a long time, the efforts made by countries around the world to protect their urban historical culture has not only effectively perpetuated the culture heritage of these cities, it has at the same time greatly promoted the development of local tourism and even the overall economy. Today, as the human race enters into the 21st century, we recognize ever more clearly the importance of protecting the cultural heritage of cities. Also, with the constant elevation of the cultural level of the general population and their pressing demands for spiritual and cultural life, future prospects for protecting cultural heritage during the course of urbanization are bright indeed.

Amid the rapid economic growth of the 21st century, the cultural heritage of many historic cities is being impacted, and may even be threatened with destruction. the increase in urban population, the tendency of cities to grow ever larger, more modern and more economically oriented encroaches every day on the environment required for the survival of their cultural heritage. The authenticity of many historically significant neighborhoods of traditional culture is vanishing.

To properly preserve the cultural heritage of cities and face up to challenges from various directions, appropriate protective measures must be taken. First, a complete set of laws and regulations on protection must be drawn up. Regardless of whether we are talking about international organizations, individual countries or even localities, the establishment of a more complete, full and specific set of laws and regulations is a prerequisite for the protection of cultural heritage. Secondly, there must be a master plan for the protection of cultural heritage which meshes with urban development and which is grounded in reality, and urban development projects must be implemented strictly in accordance with this plan. Thirdly, urban mayors and relevant government agencies must have the long-term perspective and boldness to take seriously the protection of cultural heritage, and the general populace, particularly urban residents, must fully recognize that they should have a sense of mission and responsibility to protect their cities' cultural heritage, so that such protection becomes the responsibility and duty of every citizen. For a long time, the news media has been a positive force for the protection of cultural heritage. We hope that more social forces join in the work of such protection and generate ever stronger public opinion.

Through our common efforts, may the historical and cultural heritage of more and more and more sites be preserved amid the constant development of modernized cities and handed down for generations to come.

Opening Speech
Vice Minister of Construction
Zhao Baojiang

“China -- Cultural Heritage Management and Urban Development: Challenge and Opportunity” international conference opens today. On behalf of the Ministry of Construction of the People’s Republic of China, I’d like to express our heartfelt welcome to all representatives and our sincere congratulations on the opening of the conference.

This conference takes place at the beginning of the new century, which is called “the Century of the City” (the UN conference in Tokyo in 1993). With the rapid development of science and technology, more and more people will move into cities, making the city “the key to overall development.” It is said that “the urban is a cultural form.” We believe that from the day of birth, the city has a cultural function besides its economic one. The city is also the production of culture, which embodies the cultural chase of the establishers, and exerts an edifying influence on the residents and the nonnative. The process of citifying is not only the transfer of agricultural population to the city, but also the spread of modern culture and living style.

During the development and construction of the city in new century, the cultural function includes not only the creation of new culture, and new city image, but also the inheritance of the legacy of history. The legacy records the developing process of the civilization of different nations and regions. It also records the wisdom and creation of the ancestors, which forms the memory of the city, and embodies the city’s character and personality. The protection of the legacy of history is the essential content of the city’s modernization, and is the inevitable outcome of the development of modern civilization. Besides, with the development of the social civilization level, the protection of legacy will become more important. As the advanced information technology, “the Tendency of the Civilization” should arouse the vigilance of people. The protection of the legacy of history and culture is the foundation for the reservation of the character of regions and nationalities, and the variety of the world.

We have noticed the experiences of many countries in the past century. In the early period of economic development, people attach great attention to the improvement of material conditions, while neglect to reserve legacy of history. When economy reaches certain level, people turn to spiritual life, only to find with regret that many legacies of history no longer exist. China is in the early period of the accelerated development of citifying. To study the relationship between city’s development and the protection of heritage has great realistic meaning.

There are three levels to protect the legacy of history, including protecting historical relics, protecting places of typical historical style, and protecting famous places of interest of history and culture. The content and point of levels are different. At present in China there are 99 famous cities of history and culture on the state level. To award these cities such title and honor is to make clear about the responsibility of protection. The country requires these cities, during developing construction, to emphasize on protecting the historical relics, the historical places, and the style and the scenic sites of the ancient

city. The good historical and culture tradition should also be preserved. Of course, the city is an organism whose economy needs developing, facility needs improving, and life needs promoting. We should handle the relationship between protection and development, and take both aspects into consideration, making traditional and modern civilizations harmonize in these historical cities.

We are facing many difficulties and problems on the developing level, economic strength, especially acknowledgment and method. We'd like to take this opportunity to exchange experiences with other countries, and promote widespread cooperation in the future.

Finally, I specially thank The World Bank and the UNESCO for their support, thank the Historical Relics Bureau of the country for their cooperation in organizing this conference. Thanks for the coming of internal experts, especially overseas friends, and the leaders of the relevant departments.

**Minister Sun's Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of
The International Conference on Heritage Preservation
July 5, 2000**

Sun Jia Zheng

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese Government, I extend our warm welcome to UNESCO officials, representatives from World Bank and the scholars from different countries. We hereby offer you our most sincere congratulations to the opening of the conference on Cultural Relics Preservation and City Development.

China, one of the world's four great civilizations, is proud of her ancient constructions and underground treasure of relics. Many of those are now on the list of the world heritage. The recognition of such historic value, as well as public concern over its preservation has long been worldwide. The Chinese government and its people have enacted a whole set of laws and regulations governing the heritage preservation along with series of protective measures. Today in this country, as many as 750 sites of cultural heritage are under well preservation listed as national key units of preservation priority. China is a member of all the international treaties related to the preservation of cultural heritage. This has made China's effort in safeguarding its cultural relics part of that international network of heritage preservation. China is a developing country, where heritage preservation didn't become a public and official engagement until the 1970s. China's ongoing economic boom has laid a solid material base for the social development in this country as well as for the improvement of people's living standard. Meanwhile, this will, to a great extent, facilitate the preservation of cultural heritage in China.

On the other hand, however, this fast-growing economy has resulted in many new problems to our current work in safeguarding our cultural relics. The explosion of population and the quick expansion of urban areas are deteriorating the environment on which our cultural relics rely to survive. The damage and danger that today's large-scale infrastructure construction has caused is vital to the safety of our national heritage. The Chinese government gives great priority to the settlement of these problems and has been making unswerving efforts in that direction. And it is right in accordance with the will and determination of this government to preserve the cultural relics that today we hold this conference here in Beijing. One point we should be aware of is that the issue of heritage preservation is simply not something unique to China. Rather than that, it's a problem that we are now facing around the world. Some developed countries also came across similar problems and already paid prices for that. The warning and experience taken from such process now become our precious assets to share. I sincerely hope that each and every participating expert will exchange your views and share the achievements made in years of field work and theoretical study so as to make your contribution to the preservation of human heritage. The new century is just around the corner. We look forward to more splendid achievement in modern civilizations, while we also wish from the bottom of our hearts the invaluable human heritage longevity under the common preservation we jointly maintain.

I wish this conference a complete success.
Thank you.

**Introductory Statement by Jean Louis LUXEN,
Secretary General of the International Council of
Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)**

China draws the attention of the entire world. First of all, this giant country has the biggest population and is experiencing exceptional and continuous economic growth. Secondly, it has a cultural heritage of great wealth and diversity, dating back to several millennia. This impressive heritage has marked the minds of its inhabitants and has exerted an influence beyond the country's borders.

**A. From the notion of “Gross National Product”
to the evaluation of “Human Development”**

An important question is how to ensure that growth is compatible with this precious heritage. Put in different words, it is a question of evaluating development. Everyone is now convinced that the level of the “Gross National product”, and its growth rate, are unsatisfactory measurements. Admittedly, these are important parameters for an overall assessment of the economic activity of a country that is anxious to achieve a better standard of living for its people. But the GNP is a purely quantitative measurement that does not take into account negative effects on the natural environment, social equilibrium, or cultural life and heritage.

The concept of “Sustainable Development” makes it easier to assess the progress of an economy, for it takes the duration into account, and incorporates the long-term repercussions of decisions taken today. By asking the question, “What earth, what living conditions, will we pass on to our children?”, we share the preoccupations of those who are responsible for cultural heritage. It is our duty to transmit the heritage we have received from our forefathers to future generations “in all the wealth of its authenticity”, as recommended in the “Venice Charter”.

An even more fertile concept is that of “Human Development”, proposed by the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), and backed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). In this particular method, evaluation factors are more comprehensive because they also take into consideration life expectancy, standards of health and education, working conditions, the role of women in society and, in general, the reduction of social inequalities and opportunities for cultural development and the expression of ideas. These indicators quite rightly give a more accurate picture of the real level of development in a society, and they therefore significantly modify the classification of countries.

This more sophisticated human development approach leads us to encourage policies in which the qualitative aspects, immaterial dimensions, and values of a community occupy the place they deserve. Culture, national heritage, social life, human dignity serve to measure development, at the core of project evaluation and action.

We must be grateful to the Chinese authorities for having taken the initiative of this Conference, together with the World Bank and UNESCO, the organisers (together with Italy) of the Florence meeting of 1999. We are eager to listen to our Chinese hosts and to share their experiences and their debates. It is always very useful to learn from the lessons, positive or negative, of other regions of the world that are confronted with similar problems. For instance Western Europe in the post-war years, or Spain and Portugal after they joined the European Union, as well as Central and Eastern European countries that are moving towards a market economy.

From these experiences, we believe strongly that cultural heritage is not only an intangible, essential dimension of social life, but also that it is a true economic resource that can contribute to the “human development” of a community. But, at the same time, a fragile resource, that requires special attention.

1. The quality of the living environment

The environment in general and the living environment in particular have a strong impact on social equilibrium and personal progress. More specifically, the quality of life in urban areas is an important value increasingly threatened by rapid economic growth and strong pressure from the real-estate sector.

The problem is widespread. Towns, all over the world, are turning into mega-cities, fed by a rural exodus that is difficult to plan and manage. It is unquestionably vital - but so difficult - to promote the kind of urban planning that respects and makes allowances for the ways of life and physical landmarks of a human community, as well as the positive lessons of architectural and town planning traditions.

The problem is even more delicate if it is a town with a cultural heritage value. The precious and fragile values affecting the very identity of the town must be preserved. In many cases, the protection and embellishment of historic edifices or architectural complexes cannot be limited to the buildings alone but should incorporate the upkeep of accompanying values in the surrounding areas. Quite often, it is the town itself, and especially its historic centre, which represents its cultural heritage value, even in the absence of exceptional buildings. Living conditions and collective amenities (water supply, drainage, garbage collection, road maintenance, electricity, and telecommunications) should always be promoted by adopting a gentle approach to protect heritage not only for its cultural values but also for its potential contribution to the quality of life of the inhabitants.

2. Cultural heritage and education, sources of personal improvement and community development

On the whole, it is widely accepted that education and culture are major factors in personal and community development. In fact, today one refers to the “Society of Knowledge” because human resources are the main capital of a community.

Special attention should be paid to the importance of cultural identity and the feeling of social belonging as determining factors for initiative, corporate spirit and mobilising a

community's energies. In general, the strength of a rich cultural heritage is the pride of a community, giving it confidence and faith in its potential and contributing to its development and influence.

A town is, par excellence, a place of culture. For this very reason, urban promotion policies should concentrate on protecting human relations not only to transmit the culture of the past but also to develop a living culture, based on artistic expressions as well as on popular culture in all its different forms and open to everyone.

3. Cultural heritage as an economic resource, and the historical town as an asset for the future

From a strictly economic perspective, cultural heritage is a resource, an asset. The preservation of cultural heritage is too often perceived as a “public expenditure”, and it is therefore excluded from economic calculations and cost/benefit analysis in the planning process for other types of works. As a growing number of countries have realised, encouraged by the positive attitude of leading financial institutions such as the World Bank, the new and prevailing approach is to look upon preservation and restoration works as real investments, which often have a significantly high yield. This requires a gradual but profound change in methodology, programming and management of national heritage sites to reconcile the tasks of the public service with modern management models.

Without going into technical details, we can mention the various ways, inspired by the economics of outdoor recreation, that have been explored in order to estimate, in monetary terms, the intangible value of cultural heritage : methods based on “travel costs”, “hedonistic prices”, or “contingent valuation”. Several publications are available on these methods.

On the other hand, in a more operational approach, methods of project appraisal are being used in order to include investments in cultural heritage conservation : “cost-benefit analysis”, “multi-criteria analysis”, “community impact evaluation”, etc... The gains and losses receive a quantitative estimation, in the short and in the long term, for each stakeholder : producers and consumers, public sector (at different levels) and private sector (owners, firms). These planning methodologies are currently used for the implementation of the regional development programmes of the European Union including several examples of funding for cultural heritage and urban rehabilitation projects.

A specific feature of investments for preservation and restoration is that they are more intensive in terms of labour, calling for local manpower and the use of materials from areas nearby. This is why they contribute directly to urban economic activity. This type of project often requires specialised professionals whose services have a high added value.

Broadly speaking, a rich and well-managed cultural heritage is a powerful tourist attraction, both for national as well as foreign visitors. All over the world, towns in their own right attract many tourists, and their visits sustain the local economy, sometimes in a decisive way. Tourism, especially cultural tourism, is a rapidly and constantly expanding

sector of activity. Forecasts by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) indicate that in the year 2020, China will be the leading destination, with 130 million tourists!

However, it is necessary to judiciously anticipate such prospects so that they stimulate “human development” for both the Chinese and their visitors, instead of generating harmful disruptions. The solution is to methodically plan local amenities and services, promote a high standard of handicrafts (a source of activity and income for the local population), protect the authentic nature of the cultural heritage and the integrity of historic cities, and respect the ways of life of the communities visited. All these are precious but fragile values. In short, it is imperative to pursue a policy of “responsible and sustainable tourism”, a pressing need that is becoming increasingly recognised.

Furthermore, many examples can be studied of towns that have banked on their cultural heritage and quality of urban life to attract advanced technology investments or the central offices of major companies and institutions.

4. The preservation of cultural heritage and urban rehabilitation, factors of social integration

Preservation works are usually projects with a restricted scope, which resort to local resources. Due to their scale, they can be easily controlled and lend themselves to a flexible management that allows for modifications while the work is in progress, as is recommended for work on inhabited sites. They therefore have the advantage of responding more effectively to the demands and expectations of the urban community, while giving equal consideration to the various social and cultural groups.

Urban rehabilitation offers more than the advantage of direct material improvement in the living conditions of citizens. It also maintains and reinforces community life and social solidarity.

B. The practice of urban preservation and restoration

If cultural heritage is an economic resource, it also is a fragile resource, requiring very special attention. In the course of the last few decades, cultural heritage conservation has become a specialised field of research and action, applying established general principles of intervention commonly accepted by the international community, in particular the 1964 Venice Charter of ICOMOS. The adaptation of these principles to the social realities of one particular region is recommended, a current model being the Burra Charter of our Australian colleagues. Mention should also be made to the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention. China has played an active role in the implementation of this Convention and is currently still a member of the World Heritage Committee.

1. A general framework to support action

Preliminary inventories and studies are the foundation for all projects. First of all, it is essential to identify the cultural heritage features of the territory under consideration,

not so much for their age or historic value but for the deep significance they have in the eyes of the community. When buildings or complexes are concerned, detailed inventories should be compiled. In the case of an urban environment, ground occupancy lists should be drawn, and studies undertaken on the various functions (commercial or manufacturing activities, accommodation, transport, social and cultural life, etc).

Legal protective measures make it possible to implement preservation policies. Protecting buildings is a priority measure and China is certainly well equipped in this regard. The protection of neighbouring zones, and more generally, of the entire urban fabric, is a much more complex statutory step, requiring adjustments to local situations and to the changes they are undergoing.

The involvement of the population in preservation policy is fundamental for the success of urban rehabilitation operations for this is what gives them full meaning. It supposes an awareness of the heritage values of the environment and the existence of different forms of dialogue with citizens.

2. A management plan

A land use map is helpful for managing a property development policy while economic and social planning can guide urban development. Such management plans make it possible to take protected archaeological and architectural heritage into consideration. At the social level, their aim is to programme the re-housing, preferably on a temporary basis, of families whose living quarters are being restored.

The purpose of regular evaluation is to verify that the projects conform to planning and financial arrangements. It goes hand in hand with forms of community involvement.

3. The urban image, transportation.

A historic town must, above all, preserve its character, composed of a set of specific features accumulated over time, which form the townscape. What makes the “spirit of a place” is the scale, the skyline created by the roofs, and the choice of materials and colours, in other words, a “townscape”, a set of arrangements which should be recommended, while at the same time adapting them to the needs of modern life.

The urban fabric, and the human relations it supports, is very vulnerable to the development of traffic. I remember the difficulty I once experienced in trying to cross a street in Suzhou, through a continuous flow of bicycles in both directions : I was wondering what it would be like if the use of a private car was to become generalised one day. Not only is car traffic a source of pollution but, above all, it leads to road building programmes that are frequently invasive and can seriously disturb social life. A priority measure should therefore be to adopt a specific transport policy to deal with both public transport and private vehicles, with special facilities to encourage cyclists and protect pedestrians.

4. Training

For preservation and restoration measures to meet the required needs, they should be entrusted to experts in the different disciplines concerned. Last January, I had the privilege to evaluate the nomination to the World Heritage List of the Xian Ming Tomb, in the Province of Hubei, and the Western and Eastern Qing Tombs, in the Province of Hebei. I was able to appreciate the high level expertise of the Chinese professionals, at the state level as well as in the provinces and the major towns.

Training efforts should be permanent in order to take into account changes in ideas and techniques, as well as to increase the number of specialists, especially in the expanding field of urban rehabilitation. This involving major restoration projects, it is important to involve these experts in the different preparatory and implementation phases.

But towns should also have municipal personal capable of transposing the decisions of the political authorities into operational plans, and stimulating an enlightened and constructive debate with preservation and urban rehabilitation experts. In several countries, seminars on town planning techniques and preservation help such officials cope more effectively with the complex and new problems they are faced with.

C. The fundamental role of local authorities

The most appropriate level for successfully undertaking operations of urban rehabilitation and the preservation of cultural heritage is clearly at local and municipal level. The needs of a population can be more clearly perceived at this level, taking better into account the concrete realities and the changes in progress. It is also at this decentralised level that a synthesis between the different complementary sections of an urban development project can be viable while keeping in contact with the field.

Projects for urban rehabilitation and the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage are unifying projects, in which the initiatives and financing of public authorities create a multiplier effect by mobilising the resources of the owners and the private sector. The various financing mechanisms applied in other countries can inspire the leadership of the responsible public authorities.

Last but not least, the involvement of civil society, so crucial for boosting individual and collective dynamism, is based on accessible information and regular consultation that is best provided at local level. The combination between the launching of well-balanced projects to improve living conditions, in which social and cultural aspects receive particular attention, and a permanent dialogue with groups of concerned citizens, can place municipal authorities in a privileged position at the service of urban democracy.

As an NGO, ICOMOS belongs to the “civil society”. I wish to express my gratitude to the Chinese authorities, UNESCO and the World Bank for having invited a representative of ICOMOS to make this presentation. Many ICOMOS members are amongst the experts taking part in this Conference. Some have come from abroad, proposing their experiences and their services. Some are from China, led by the President of the Chinese National Committee, Mr Zhang Bai. We have the common

project of preparing a General Assembly in Beijing. In the meantime, we expect more experts and some municipalities to become members. All this, in view of contributing to the “human development” in the Chinese heritage towns.

Archeological Studies of Urban Relics

Su Bai

The proper handling of the relationship between cultural heritage preservation and urban development requires the knowledge of the city's historical development. The most important and practicable means is to identify archaeological relics. Quite a few cities of historic reputation in our country have been inhabited for dynasties and are under constant reconstruction even today. Cities of historic reputation here refer to those dating from the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Most of the ancient cities, with high lands as their centers and dating from the warring states period and the Han Dynasty, had been ruined in war before the Sui Dynasty. After the Sui and Tang Dynasties reunited the country, many dilapidated cities were abandoned as new towns were built in plains. We have to pay attention to the preservation of the cultural relics of those cities which were built during the Sui and Tang Dynasties and are still inhabited today. According to our experience in the past scores of years, the foremost questions we should ask include: has there been any change to the city's bounds since it was built? Any change to the layout, especially to positions of the gates and main streets? And what about the positions of the major governments and religious buildings? These primary questions answered, the importance of the city's cultural relics and the proper disposition of the old districts shall be clear. Now I would like to present my own experience and ideas on this subject and also a brief introduction to the identification of the relics. Criticisms and suggestions are welcome.

The systematic investigation of ancient cities' bounds and layouts began with the publication of The Groundwork Map of Chao'an City (the Tang Dynasty) Based on On-the-spot Measurement by Shannxi provincial committee of relics conservancy at the beginning of 1958. It drew the remnant of Chang'an groundwork on a modern chart on the scale of 10,000: 1, with a quite clear figure of Xi'an's circumvallation of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (Diagram one). A large section of the south and west walls of the two dynasties, according to historical records, are based on the south and west walls of the capital of Sui and Tang Dynasties. And this has been repeatedly confirmed by recent archeological studies (Diagram two). According to the names of places in Map of Chang'an-Mao of Fengyuan City by Li Haowen of the Yuan Dynasty (diagram three), we know that today's Xi'an's South avenue is where the "Old Anshang Street" of the map was. The section from "Tianshuijing" ("Sweet Water Well") to Qiaoshenkou is where "the Old Hanguang Street" was. And the west section of the East Avenue is "Old Jingfeng Street". From the stone-carved map of Chang'an City by Lu Dafang of the North Song Dynasty (Diagram four), we know that the above mentioned places used to be the main streets of the royal town of the Tang Dynasty. So the locations and bounds of such major ancient governmental departments as Shangshusheng, Jiangzuojian, Shaofujian, Shaofujian and Honglusi can be roughly identified, which are all on the map by Lu. Shangshusheng of the Tang Dynasty was the "state department" of that time. The positions and distributions of its main hall and subordinate six Boards and twenty-four offices were clearly recorded by the Song people. Since the Tang Dynasty till the founding of the new China, it is where the Shannxi local government office had been located. Inside not seriously damaged and only with 1.2-1.3 metres of later sediment, it is of high archeological value. (West to the north avenue, north to the west avenue, east to the Guangji street. Take the drum-tower as the center (a little to the south) and east to the

central line were the departments of Libu, Hubu and Lilbu (three of the six boards), which were inherited by later local governments. West to the central line was where the other three boards were: Bingbu, Xingbu and Gongbu, which later local military branches continued to use and today is where the Xi'an municipal public security bureau is located.) Besides the Tang's royal town, based on Lu's map and other maps of the ancient town, locations of some districts can be roughly identified on the The Groundwork Map of Chang'an City (the Tana Dynasty) Based on On-the-spot Measurement by Shaanxi provincial committee of relic conservancy. On the studied-out map, vestiges of some streets of the outer town of Chang'an and even some in-district streets (cross streets) are found scattered in the plowlands outside Xi'an during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Through collating the above findings with the few relics of the Tang Dynasty and those unearthed in recent years, most of the relics we are studying were confirmed. Then, by the same means, Luoyang and Talyuan -the east and the north capitals of the Tang Dynasty were restoratively mapped. Of course, the work is far from good enough for the reconstruction of the ancient metropolis, even though many problems have been solved.

Archeological studies of the city site began after the "Cultural Revolution". Historic investigation of city sites started from Datong, Shanxi. Records have it that the brick wall around Datong built at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty was an addition to the old earth wall around Xijing (the West Capital) of the Liao, Jin and Yuan Dynasties. And the walls of Xijing of the Liao was those of Yunzhou City built in the eighteenth year of Kalyuan of the Tang Dynasty (730 DC.). Relics found in the multi-layered tempered Datong walls dismantled have confirmed the above record (ceramic fragment archaeological relics. Quite a few cities of historic reputation in our country have been inhabited for dynasties and are under constant reconstruction even today. Cities of historic reputation here refer to those of the ancient cities, with high lands as their centers and dating from the warring states period and the Han Dynasty, had been ruined in war before the Sui Dynasty. After the Sui and Tang Dynasties reunited the country, many dilapidated cities were abandoned as new towns were built in plains. We have to pay attention to the preservation of the cultural relics of those cities which were built during the Sui and Tang Dynasties and are still inhabited today. According to our experience in the past scores owing the Tang style. An example of the former is Shou County of Anhui Province – Shouzhou of the Tang Dynasty – 6.5 kilometers in perimeter. A smaller one is Yexian, Shandong – Laizhou of the Tang Dynasty – 4.5 kilometers in perimeter. Still smaller is Shunyi County of Beijing – Shunzhou City of the Tang Dynasty – two km in perimeter. There used to be a stone pillar inscribed with Buddhist scripture standing on the cross street going between the main gates – it was a common practice to stand such pillars at some lanes of Chang'an in the Tang years. As for the examples of the latter, which followed the Tang style, there were Zizhou City, which is today's old city of Liaocheng County; Shandong Province (over seven Li in perimeter); Tongxu County built in the Jin Dynasty, which is the old town of today's Tongxu County (four li in perimeter); Huozhou City built in the Yuan Dynasty, which is now the old town of Huo County, Shanxi Province (nine li and thirteen steps in perimeter); and Guantao County built in the Ming Dynasty, which is the old town of today's Guantao county, southwest to Linzi, Shandong Province.

The years of the late Tang, the following five dynasties, and Liao, Song, Jin Dynasties are a long period of troubles and breakups. Apart from imitating the

Tang-style, the new cities cropping up during this period also adopted some disciplinary new measures. Due to the insufficiency of our investigation, we can only offer several distinctive cases for reference.

- 1) Because of frequent wars, a new defensive type of layout of streets of a city T-shaped streets became popular. During the early years of North Song Dynasty, T-shaped streets were built at Taiyuan City, which was newly established in Sanjiao Town. In the later built Pingyao City the north-south avenue didn't run through the town either.
- 2) Some altars and temples began to have fixed positions in the city. The Confucian temples of Pingyao and Xian County were both built in the southeast of the city during the Dading years. The Dacheng Hall of the former, built in the third year of Dading (1163), remains in good condition. On the north wall of Puzhou was built a Xuanwu Hall, rebuilt in the sixth year of Zhengda (1229) according to records on some stele. There used to be Beiji pavilions on the north walls of several counties in the north, which were built in the Ming Dynasty, probably originating from the Song and Jin Dynasties.
- 3) There were long and broad highways before important departments and temples. The Yongle Palace Highway, built in the Mongolian period, is the one of the earliest relics that has survived. Examples in the south are the government department of Pingjiang and Guangxiao Temple of Guangzhou.
- 4) The "H"-shape and "E"-shape are popular with the plane layout of the main buildings of important departments and temples. For instance, the "H"-shape plain layout of the halls in the picture of the Zhisisimo mansion recorded in Book five in Records of Jiankang during the Jinoding years, with a roofed corridor connecting the main hall and the rear room and the "E"-shape in the "Fuxie Picture," with a corridor connecting the front, middle and rear halls.

What changes have taken place to those many cities that continued to be inhabited since the Tang and Song Dynasties? Is there any rule to be found? We think yes but it depends. Roughly there are three trends: reduced, expanded and reconstructed.

- 1) Reduced, mainly reduced to the part better preserved after the city was damaged and abandoned in war and new and smaller city would be built. The most representative example is that the building of the new city new the royal city of Chang'an after Luoyang had become the new capital. And the new town continued to be used as Jingzhaofu during the Song and Jin Dynasties. Another example is Yangzhou City resumed during the Song Dynasty. The Song's Yangzhou only kept southeast part of the Tang version.
- 2) Expanded, mainly because of population flow to cities with the urban economic developments. This was most obvious in the south since the Tang and Song Dynasties. The scope of expansion are different depending on the natural conditions and transportation. Located on the east bank of the Xiangjiang River, Changsha City had no choice but expanded to the north, east and south. Ganzhou of Jiangxi used was located on the west bank of Zhangshui River and east bank of Gongshui River, that is

where the two rivers meet, so the only direction of its expansion is south. Such instances are fewer in the north. There were some cities expanded for military needs. For example, Xiongcheng City built in the eighth century, was Wuzhou City of the late Tang Dynasty, whose vestiges are found within a rectangular about 4.5 km in perimeter in the southeast of today's Xuanhua City, Hebei Province. Afterwards, the Tang Wuzhou City was expanded to the north and west during the Jin and Ming Dynasties to reinforce defense.

Reduction and expansion made no great changes to the old city sites. The old streets could remain though the city was reduced. The abandoned part mostly became plowlands and the vestiges were buried under the ground, just like the outer city of Chang'an. Expansion made still less change to the former layout of streets. What alters or damages most is to rebuild some large areas of the old city. Such large-scale reconstruction involving many cities.

The proper handling of the relationship between cultural heritage preservation and urban development requires the knowledge of the city's historical development. The most important and practicable means is to identify archaeological relics. Quite a few cities of historic in our country have been inhabited for dynasties and are under constant reconstruction even today. Cities of historic reputation here refer to those dating from the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Most of the ancient cities, with high lands as their centers and dating from the warring states period and the Han Dynasty, had been ruined in war before the Sui Dynasty. After the Sui and Tang Dynasties reunited the country, many dilapidated cities were abandoned as new towns were built in plains. We have to pay attention to the preservation of the cultural relics of those cities which were built during the Sui and Tang Dynasties and are still inhabited today. According to our experience in the past scores of Xi'an's city walls. The south and west sides were added to the east of today's north street and south of east street. Thus the east gate of Xi'an became the special gate of the Manchuria city.

The city reconstruction in the Ming and Qing Dynasties on a large scale changed the long followed layout of the cities and their streets. Next we will consider the "shells" when we are recovering ancient city sites within today's cities. We should not only pay attention to the relics before the Ming and Qing Dynasties, but also to how the streets and lanes dating from the Ming and Qing Dynasties were linked to the those before them.

The studies of vestiges of ancient cities within modern towns are an important subject of urban relics archeology. For it is difficult to uncover such relics in large scales, which is indispensable part of a city's history. Meanwhile, modern city construction needs studies in this field for important referential materials for preserving the old city districts. Therefore, I hope officials of all levels actively supervise and urge archeologists to act quicker and work more on this. Otherwise, within a period of fast modern city construction, many of the present important ancient cultural relics will probably be destroyed and abandoned.

The 6 Secrets of a Happy Marriage -- Between the Old and the New

Every other year since 1987, I have spent summers in Beijing with urban design students of MIT and Tsinghua University. Over the years, we have studied and planned many different sites in Beijing and I have come to know and to love this great city. On my visits I often return to places that we have designed in the past - many, I must admit, with great sadness, as I witness historic buildings and streets of worldwide significance being demolished for ever wider roads and even more high rise buildings. Baishiqiao Lu outside the Friendship Hotel, for example was considered to be one of the world's Great Streets in Alan Jacob's 1994 book [1]. It isn't any more [2].

At the same time, as Director of the Design and Development group at MIT, a teacher of Real Estate, and an architect, I understand the need for growth and development. Particularly here in China, where there is a demand to modernize outdated infrastructure, to accommodate new businesses, and to make urban symbols of a new society. In an information age, much of our world is now driven by visual images and symbols, and the need for new and progressive urban images [3] - such as here in Shanghai, is extremely important to the economic growth of China.

How do we reconcile these two forces: A rich cultural heritage, and the need to modernize and develop? [4] This issue is being faced not only at this conference, but worldwide.

This question also deeply concerns us at MIT, where we are researching the future of cities, and how technology can be harnessed to manage urban change. Our work in many cities often involves marrying the forces of heritage preservation and economic development to achieve high quality urban design [5]. And while I don't pretend to be a therapist - or a marriage counselor -- I would like to pass on to you a few secrets I have learned from cities that have successfully brought these two together. So here are: [6]

The 6 secrets of a happy marriage - between the Old and the New: [7]

#6: Don't widen old roads

Streets and the places along them are the public face of a city, expressing its personality [8]. When old streets are widened, the personality of a city is lost along with the trees and the buildings [9]. I know we must accommodate the car - but the secret is that you can never make streets wide enough to satisfy the demand. In the US [10] we are now spending billions of dollars to repair the destruction wrought by urban highways built in the 1950's, such as in Boston where we are now [11] burying the Central Artery.

Barcelona is an inspiration in this regard [12] - a city experiencing tremendous growth and development, where there is a policy of deliberately narrowing streets, and reducing the impact of the car. Here is the Ramblas [13], another of the world's great streets - imagine what would happen if it were widened? Which leads us to Secret #5: [14]

#5 You can't save everything -

OK, OK, sometimes, it really is worth it to rip out that old stuff and put in something different [15]. If someone offers to build a project like the new Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain-run for the bulldozers. This project, designed by Frank Gehry has transformed the image and economics of its city. The secret is to be sure that when you demolish older structures they'll be replaced with something of greater value to the city. To make sure this happens, just remember Secret #4: [16]

#4 You Don't Have to Give Them What They Want --

[17] It's amazing how many times I have heard that real estate developers must be allowed to clear lots, provide poor landscape, and build faceless buildings, or they will go somewhere else! Well, the secret is that most developers don't have easy options and if they insist on these things-maybe you don't want them. The long-term costs to a city of a poor image can be exceedingly high. And once the unique character of a place is lost, it's almost impossible to get it back. A better strategy may be to tell them what you want-up front. Most reputable developers are willing to work with a city if its design vision is clear. I have noticed that the cities that are good at telling developers what they can't do are typically the places where developers most want to be. In creating your city's vision, be guided by Secret #3: [18]

#3 The Old Can Inspire the New --

When you look at the traditional streets and buildings of your community, don't think of them as bricks and mortar [19]. Think of them as stories-that together make up the unique character and narrative of your town. In an information economy good narratives can be valuable properties, so think twice before you tear anything down. And when you build new, ask: How can this project contribute to the story of my city?

The story of Beijing, for example, is about the courtyard - from the humblest house to this great Imperial Palace [20]. A decade ago the Juer Hutong project illustrated a new model of higher density courtyard housing that received international acclaim [21]. But the model has not been repeated, and there are precious few other innovations in design. In fact there are basically only two types of housing now being built in Beijing as well as in many cities of the world: the high rise point tower and the slab [22] as we see built here in Shanghai and as [23] envisioned for the city's future. Must these be the only prototypes for urban development?

Better to follow the model of the Humble Administrator in Suzhou, who understood Secret #2: [24]

#2. The City is a Garden

The Humble Administrator [25] built his garden with many different forms, carefully adding one at a time so that each piece related to the next and there was a harmonious whole. Every piece is equally important. This is the great Chinese contribution to the art of Urban Design.

For this reason, I personally don't like the practice of outlining conservation zones [26], because they give the impression that everything inside is special and should be restored and that everything outside doesn't matter and may be demolished. This can lead to islands of historic resources - disconnected from each other and the life of the city by wide streets and anonymous buildings.

I would argue for a finer grain mix of the old and the new[27], where development is guided by basic principles of design aimed at reinforcing the uniqueness of a city. This can best be achieved when planning is seen as a continuous, incremental process -- like tending a garden -- rather than a one-time effort to make sweeping changes. In truth, we just can't predict the long-term impact of big changes on the form of the city. And that form, evolved over many generations, is the greatest asset that any city has -- particularly in a world that values uniqueness. So it's best to be humble.

Which leads me to the last secret, Secret #1 of a Happy Marriage Between the Old and the New is: [28]

#1. There are no Secrets to a Happy Marriage --

[29] There are a lot of people out there who will tell you they have the formula to mesh the old with the new. When you hear someone hawking a universal approach to urban design, beware-that is what got us a lot of standardized development that just doesn't fit any city well. It's great to learn from others' experience, but don't copy them. Your city is unique [30] and the people who live, and work, and build there are the experts. I urge you to get them involved in bringing the pieces together into a vision that everyone can support. And do this again and again and again. [31]

Because like a real marriage, a garden, or any living thing, the city needs to be constantly renewed -- but can only grow from its past.

Draft Slide List:

1. Old View of Baishiqiao Lu
2. Present view of Baishiqiao Lu
3. Shanghai Pudong Skyline
4. Jin Mao Tower and Temple
5. Cartoon
6. Title: The Six Secrets of a Happy Marriage
7. Title: Secret #6
8. Beijing Shopfront
9. Cutting Trees
10. Boston Central Artery present
11. Boston Central Artery future
12. Barcelona overview
13. Ramblas
14. Title: Secret #5
15. Bilbao
16. Title: Secret #4
17. Poor development

18. Title: Secret #3
19. Old House Courtyard
20. Imperial Palace Courtyard
21. Juer Hutong
22. View from Jin Mao Tower of housing
23. Shanghai Model
24. Title: Secret #2
25. Humble Administrator Garden
26. Conservation Zone in Gloucester
27. Lowell, MA or Rhur Germany
28. Wedding
29. Title: Secret #1
30. Community Meeting
31. Overview of Beijing

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Richard Engelhardt UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific

Mr. Chairman, Friends and Colleagues,

I have the honourable – and challenging – task of attempting to sum up what we have learned over the past three days and where these lessons may take us in the future.

One thing is certainly clear: the modern city is today – as it was in the past -- a vast marketplace, where not only goods and services, but also ideas are exchanged, combined, and built upon to produce what we have come to call “civilization” – a happy state of sustained prosperity and peace.

Archaeology teaches us that China is a cradle of urban civilization, with deep historical roots in virtually all parts of this great nation.

China has more than 600 officially-designated historic cities, but virtually every city, town and village in China has a long heritage of human settlement.

Today, cities throughout China are experiencing an unprecedented growth of both population and productivity. It is no exaggeration to say that China is at the forefront of a global urban revolution which is rapidly transforming our planet. From farmers we have evolved into city dwellers, almost as it seems overnight.

To adapt to and thrive in this new urban form of civilization, it is imperative that we quickly find ways to manage the economic and social changes engulfing us, without losing the sense of where we came from, who we are.

If a nation, a city, a community, or even a family is so unfortunate as to lose touch with its past – if we forget where we have come from, if we lose the map through time which history has drawn – if we lose our heritage, it will be impossible for us to chart where we are headed in the future.

It is therefore timely and most important that we have begun this new millennium with a meeting of minds, here in China, to consider how we can develop our cities and towns into places of prosperity and peace, without sacrificing their unique character built up through time and handed down to us by our ancestors as inter-generational capital upon which we can build our future.

UNESCO, as the world’s guardian of heritage, together with the World Bank, as the world’s premier engine of development, are proud to have had the opportunity over the past three days to confer with so many great minds from all corners of China and the world, on issues of cultural heritage management and urban development.

I would like to put on record our appreciation and thanks to China's State Administration of Cultural Heritage and to the Ministry of Construction for their foresight in organizing this conference, as well as to all the mayors, administrators, professors and planners who have taken part in the discussions.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the Government of Denmark, ICOMOS and our team of eminent international experts from the fields of archaeology, architecture, urban planning, tourism and economics. Our forum, too, has been an international marketplace where we have exchanged ideas and built up our cross-cultural stock of intellectual capital.

Minister Sun Jia Zheng in his opening remarks two days ago challenged us to use this forum not only to exchange ideas, but to come up with workable strategies to ensure the "longevity of humankind's heritage" in the face of the dangers to that heritage posed by the rapid deterioration of the earth's environment and by unregulated urban expansion.

Vice Minister Zhao Bao Jiang reminded us that in our cities, we are in the process of creating new cultures, and that the true purpose of heritage conservation is as an inspiration for the cultures of the future.

Director-General Zhang Wen Bin in his keynote address urged us to find ways to integrate the conservation of the heritage into the on-going and never-ending process of renewing the urban fabric and built environments of our cities. He also reminded us of a truth that we too often forget: it is that we must *all* – politicians, planners, bankers and heritage professionals – we must all make a serious and firm commitment to cooperate with one another – *and with our local communities* – in order that our actions, whether for heritage conservation or for urban development, do not cancel out, but reinforce one another. The cities of the 21st century will survive on the strength of their constituent parts to communicate effectively with one another; and for this purpose new mechanisms for integrating heritage into urban and territorial planning are urgently required.

Professor Su Bai, in his keynote speech, explained to us that the essential starting point of this process is through a comprehensive documentation of the heritage resources of each place coupled with a constant monitoring of their state of conservation, as a pre-requisite to their sustained preservation.

Vice Mayor Wang Guang Tao gave an eloquent example of how this process is being given operational reality in our host city, Beijing, whose past and present position as China's pre-eminent city continues to define and influence urban forms throughout the nation, and indeed throughout the surrounding region.

The Beijing Consensus emanating from this conference provides a valuable framework upon which strategies and actions for the conservation of our cities' unique character can be developed.

Indeed, already the strategies which have been developed in the four clinic sessions are full of brave, new, and practical ideas for protecting our cultural assets and for using these assets in a sustainable way as the foundation for prosperity in our communities.

In an era of globalization and rapid transformation of cities, the identity of the city itself and of its inhabitants remains enshrined in historic districts and the cultures of the people living therein. Therefore, the continued existence of a city's historic identity is wholly dependent upon the success of efforts to preserve these cultural assets.

Our deliberations over the past three days have made it clear that success in this endeavor will depend upon an effective conservation policy which stresses the adoption and implementation of authenticity at the local as well as national level.

From our discussions it has become clear that zoning for heritage protection will have to be imbedded in both regional development planning as well as in environmental conservation efforts. To ensure that this principle is given operational reality, it will be necessary to undertake comprehensive inventories of heritage resources and to adopt cultural impact assessments as a standard feature of development project planning.

Participants have repeatedly stressed that where they do not already exist, legal safeguards to protect the heritage will need to be adopted, and where such safeguards do exist, increased vigilance is needed to ensure they are enforced to ensure the long-term protection of heritage resources against short-term, ill-planned development threats.

Participants have also stressed that the heritage must not only be preserved, it must also be given a new and more prominent life in the community. For this, participants have encouraged that heritage resources *should* be used for development purposes, for example, by generating revenue through tourism, through adaptive reuse of historic structures, and as sources of employment.

But heritage resources cannot be simply exploited for their profit value, as if they were renewable, consumable commodities. Indeed, the important point to understand about heritage resources is that they are both limited and non-renewable. That is why, in the development equation, it is so important to conserve the heritage *as an asset*, to be invested in, valorized and given added value through development efforts.

For this purpose, additional investments must be made in the conservation of both the tangible and the intangible heritage. Substantial new and creative sources of funding for this purpose must be found, possibly – as suggested by several of our experts -- through various local taxes on the tourism industry and other users of heritage resources. Heritage-based business enterprises can also be encouraged with mechanisms such as revolving funds and small business incubators.

A strategic framework for preserving cultural heritage resources while modernizing urban infrastructure has been outlined in the Suzhou Declaration adopted by the International Conference for Mayors of Historic Cities in China and the European Union, which took place in April 1998 under the auspices of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and China's Ministry of Construction. Our present conference builds upon this framework.

The increasing importance of heritage conservation to urban development implies that we must pay attention to strengthening culture resource management capacity at both the individual and institutional level. UNESCO has recently introduced a programme to establish at prominent universities in the region UNESCO Chairs in Culture Resource Management. The first of these UNESCO Chairs has been established here in China at Southeast University and we anticipate establishing additional UNESCO Chairs in Culture Resource Management at other universities in China in the near future.

And finally, one common thread running through the rich and varied ideas emerging from our conference is that we must substantially enhance our efforts to build awareness of the value of our heritage as a resource for development among political leaders, developers and the public at large. This can be accomplished through educational efforts and with the help of the mass media. But even more importantly, it is essential to engage every inhabitant of our cities and towns, every member of our local communities in the process of heritage conservation and management.

The preservation of the heritage is such a vast undertaking that, in the long run, it can only be successful if there is active participation by local communities everywhere. Heritage preservation is one development activity that brings socio-economic benefits to the *entire* community through a wide range of employment and income-generating activities. By focusing on local ownership of heritage and local control over its preservation and future use, we not only ensure the survival of that heritage, but also place heritage where it rightfully belongs – at the very centre of human development.

Over the past three days, we have succeeded in establishing a guiding framework for integrating heritage conservation into urban development; and we have drawn up a menu of strategic action. But the true success of this conference will not be measured in what we have said here in Beijing, but in how well we are able to put these principles and strategies into practice in our cities.

UNESCO and the World Bank will continue to be your partners in this endeavor and we pledge to renew and redouble our efforts to assist you to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities to use culture and heritage as a tool for the sustainable development of cities and communities throughout China.

Moderator's comments at the Closing Session of the conference

Gerald Dix

There has been a lot of serious discussion over the last three days, since Minister Sun Jia Zheng described how China's continuing economic boom had laid a solid material base for social development and the increase in living standards; when Jean-Louis Luxen reminded us that towns are, *par excellence*, places of culture and when Professor Frenchman pointed out that, like successful marriages, towns require constant loving attention.

Now, as we approach the end of the Conference, we have not only the opportunity to agree the broad principles included within the Beijing Consensus but to demonstrate that in the work of the four clinics the task of defining and establishing some of the operational objectives that will be essential to make those principles realisable has already begun. It is a beginning, but only a beginning, in the fulfillment of the requirements.

Clinic 1, whose topic was Cultural Heritage Inventories: Identification and Documentation was itself following an established tradition, for a book of building standards, *Ying-tso-fa-shih*, was first published in 1103 during the Northern Sung dynasty and one on structural regulations, *Kung-ch'eng tso-fa tse-li*, in the Ching dynasty. But members of Clinic 1 can focus our attention on more than the corresponding problems of today.

The definition of boundaries for conservation is important. Those who are excluded from an area may feel, or indeed actually be, disadvantaged in relation to near but not excluded neighbours. By consideration of case studies Clinic 2, concerned with Historic Conservation Zones and urban upgrading, could guide us on this important aspect.

Clinic 3 examined and sometimes argued about the often vexed question of local involvement and financial planning in deciding on the appropriate use of historic buildings, of which China has so many. Should they be kept or not, and how would a decision be reached? And should a building that is in ruins be raised from the dead and rebuilt from its foundations up or left in peace? Where does conservation end and restoration begin?

Cultural tourism is a mayor growth industry, notably in the Pacific Rim, most notably in China. If it is successful it can yield almost untold benefits – cultural, social, financial and political. But there are also risks of self destruction from too great success, or greed. The biggest industry can be, should be, perhaps must be, the engine of conservation. The members of Clinic 4 examined this area of major concern.

Members of the Conference should be grateful for the care and attention given to these four topics in the Clinics. In some case the subjects or the experience and views of the clinic participants overlapped and it was difficult (but essential) to restrict almost ten hours of discussion to the principal purpose of the topic. But that is of course a problem in all aspects of development. The rapporteurs have had a difficult task for which they have the thanks of the Conference.

We are coming to the end of the conference but before we conclude this session I would like to intersperse some personal comments prompted by discussions at the Clinics (each of which I attended for at least part of a session) and on the basis of professional practice with Chinese colleagues over the past fourteen years.

As an aside I might mention that during that time I was invited to act as a member of the Chinese delegation to confirm the inclusion of the Imperial Gardens and the surrounding palaces at Chengde on the World Heritage List. In the end I didn't go to the meeting in Thailand because so strong was their case that their inclusion became a formality.

First I want to reiterate Minister Sun's reminder that the challenge of heritage protection and conservation is by no means unique to China. It is a matter of universal concern and we have a lot to learn from each other. However, apparently unlike some of my fellow professionals, I do not regard it as an end in itself but as an essential part of development at all levels. We must always remember that day by day cities have to accommodate new uses and will have to do so in the future, with their new requirements of buildings, just as they did in the nineteenth century with the advent of the railway, in the twentieth century with arrival of the motor car and of air travel and more recently of computerisation.

There can hardly be a town anywhere where there is not evidence of past mistakes and wrong development and whilst we can learn from that we should also bear in mind the circumstances and attitudes, social and political, of their times. And we must appreciate that because a particular policy is right – or wrong – at one place or time or culture it does not follow that it will be appropriate – or inappropriate – in different circumstances, at another place, at a different time or in a different culture. We must always consider the conditions and the priorities of our development requirements.

Our cities and towns, and indeed our rural areas, represent an immense physical, cultural, social and economic investment. It is a resource that must be used wisely and (generally) with the long term interest in mind. But there will be changes and those in one aspect will be reflected in all the others. Change is a process of life in which all aspects are related and interdependent. A town's character is different in every era and arises from its uses and the occupations of its inhabitants. We must beware lest conservation prevents or overly inhibits beneficial change and leads to a town or a part of one becoming a museum or a human zoo.

Areas that are conserved must remain integral parts of the urban structure and society. Demands will be great, not only in the 750 sites mentioned by Mr. Sun. It must be accepted that major conservation and restoration decisions about buildings and places imply a continuing commitment of effort and money to safeguard its future. If there is not that commitment to continuity conservation would represent a waste of resources and effort that might better be devoted to a more deserving cause and the building should be allowed to die a natural death. This implies decisions about priorities. They will not be popular and will be hard to make but they are part of the job.

Of course you will need information on which to base a valid decision. But make sure that it is relevant information. A constant search for information can be a dangerous excuse for a lack of action. So can prolonged unfocussed consultation. It is often an unnecessary digression which diverts attention from important aspects that are then missed. The search for the ideal is the enemy of the possible. Delay may mean an opportunity lost. Let us follow the advice of Sir Bernard Feilden, the former Director of ICCROM, and adopt the least bad solution.

Above all do decide on a policy! Don't drift. Why conserve? Why preserve? Why is a building or garden to be kept? They cannot all be kept and it may well be best from all points of view to replace old with new. If this is the case, do it.

Consider if a building is a great piece of architecture, or of social or historic interest. But remember that the character of most towns or districts depends more on the ordinary buildings than the special ones. And the conservation of ordinariness is the most difficult of all. In this regard consider if we are concerned with the idea or the artifact. In Ju'er Hutong, a hutong that we unfortunately didn't visit, there are new courtyard dwellings the design of which has been slowly developed over a decade or so. The result is a completely new design but one soundly based on traditional principles. This surely is evolutionary change – true conservation on a human scale – and one that retains the city texture and scale in a way that suits the new century.

Many ideas have been expressed in our formal meetings and in discussion over meals and on our travels. But the success of this conference will not be only, even mainly, related to what was said here over three days in July, it will depend, like any other investment in conservation, on maintaining the impetus in devising the regulations and the professional practices that will give flesh to the structure outlined in the Beijing Consensus that will be the subject of the concluding part of today's proceedings.