

Resolutions of the Symposium on the introduction of contemporary architecture into ancient groups of buildings, at the 3rd ICOMOS General Assembly (1972)



The International Symposium on the introduction of contemporary architecture into ancient groups of buildings, meeting in Budapest on 27th and 28th June 1972, at the time of the Third General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, Expresses its heartiest thanks and congratulations to the Hungarian National Committee of ICOMOS and to the Hungarian Government, by whom it has been so warmly and efficiently received, and

After hearing the contents both of the papers presented during its sessions on questions of doctrine and on certain significant achievements, and of the subsequent discussions,

Recognizing that, at the present state of development of civilization, technological and economic questions unduly divert attention from human and social values, that the increasingly rapid growth of towns renders it urgently necessary for systematic provision to be made for the environment of daily life and for the preservation of historic monuments and groups of buildings, and that such preservation, which thus becomes vital, is feasible only if the latter are made to play an active part in contemporary life,

Considering that groups of buildings of historical interest form a fundamental part of the human environment, that architecture is necessarily the expression of its age, that its development is continuous, and that its past, present and future expression must be treated as a whole, the harmony of which must be constantly preserved, and that any historical monument or complex of buildings possesses an intrinsic value independently of its initial role and significance which enables it to adapt itself to a changing cultural, social, economic and political context while fully retaining its structure and character.

Hereby adopts the following conclusions:

1. The introduction of contemporary architecture into ancient groups of buildings is feasible in so far as the town-planning scheme of which it is a part involves acceptance of the existing fabric as the framework for its own future development.
2. Such contemporary architecture, making deliberate use of present-day techniques and materials, will fit itself into an ancient setting without affecting the structural and aesthetic qualities of the latter only in so far as due allowance is made for the appropriate use of mass, scale, rhythm and appearance.
3. The authenticity of historical monuments or groups of buildings must be taken as a basic criterion and there must be avoidance of any imitations which would affect their artistic and historical value.
4. The revitalization of monuments and groups of buildings by the finding of new uses for them is legitimate and recommendable provided such uses affect, whether externally or internally, neither their structure nor their character as complete entities.

And recommends that there be held regular discussion meetings on the harmonious introduction of contemporary architecture into ancient groups of buildings at which codes of procedure and achievements in this field may be examined in the light of the above conclusions.

Budapest, 30th June 1972.