

Report on the Sub-Regional Group Meeting held in Sarajevo 26 September 2016

ICOMOS NC in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In collaboration with the NCs of Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia

On Monday, 26 September 2016, NC in Bosnia and Herzegovina convened the presidents and representatives of seven NCs from the region. Following the *Dubrovnik – Valletta Principles for the ICOMOS National Committees* (2009) and *Ljubljana Statement of Cooperation* (2011), the Sub-Regional Group held a conference on Reconstruction.

In accordance with the plans of ICOMOS to prepare an international document on the subject of reconstructions, representatives from six NCs held papers on reconstructions in their countries. Here are the names of the speakers and titles of the presentations:

Marko Stokin, *Reconstructed Cultural Heritage in Slovenia*

Marko Špikić, *Reconstruction problems in contemporary Croatia*

Branka Šekarić, *Reconstruction in the context of heritage preservation in Serbia*

Snježana Simović *Cable Car in Kotor – Heritage Impact Assessment Process*

Lazar Šumanov, *Some debatable cases of the architectural heritage reconstruction in Macedonia*

Vjekoslava Sanković Simčić, *Reconstruction / Rehabilitation in Federal Legislation*

The hosting NC on 27 and 28 September organized a trip to Mostar and Počitelj, enabling the participants to deepen the discussions initiated on Sarajevo meeting.

Presentations in Sarajevo on 26 September were followed by a discussion on the practical experiences and problems of reconstructions in the region. Affirming that:

1 Reconstructions became increasingly present in the region, not only as a result of the destructions of war or natural disasters;

2 Reconstructions are very often carried out without previously ensured criteria, sometimes against the best practices of ICOMOS, and that the misunderstanding and abuse of professional terminology often lead to arbitrariness and hypothetical interventions;

3 Contrary to best ICOMOS practices, decisions on performing of reconstructions on damaged monuments and sites are frequently made without the knowledge of conservation community and the public, or they are made by the conservation professionals and public servants without transparent dialogue with the general public;

4 Reconstructions in the region are often carried out by the representatives of political and religious groups in pursuit of their missing identity and, bypassing the international charters and standards, these groups tend to employ the unprofessional restorers;

The participants of the Sub-Regional Conference conclude that:

1 Reconstructions should be a part of the public discourse (collective commemoration, dealing with trauma and memory), but conservation professionals should have an important, if not the key, role in the process;

2 Reconstructions should be discussed and prepared by a quality, thorough, and efficient formation of the relevant interdisciplinary professionals, of general public and all the implied stakeholders. The involved authorities should continually engage in inventorying of the documentation on architectural heritage as part of the preventive conservation;

3 All segments of the concerned society should be informed that there are alternatives to reconstructions. Conservation standards and methodologies should not be used as a tool in political evocation of the past, especially if it implies discriminatory acts;

4 Transparency, sharing of knowledge and interdisciplinary professional education on the regional level can contribute to better cooperation and acceptable results.

In Sarajevo, 26 September 2016

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