

**KYOTO-KATHMANDU RECOMMENDATION**  
**ON SUSTAINABLE PROTECTION OF WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE**  
**IN EARTHQUAKE ZONES**

**KYOTO, 30 AUGUST 2009 & KATHMANDU, 12 SEPTEMBER 2009**

On 30 August 2009, an International Expert Meeting on “Sustainable Protection of World Heritage Cultural properties in Earthquake Zones” took place in Kyoto, Japan, organized by the Research Center for Disaster Mitigation of Urban Cultural Heritage, Ritsumeikan University (Rits-DMUCH), Kyoto and Japan ICOMOS and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto Prefectural Education Board, Kyoto City.

On 12 September 2009, an International Forum was organized in Kathmandu on “Bridging Conservation and Development for Sustainable Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage” organized by the Research Center for Disaster Mitigation of Urban Cultural Heritage, Ritsumeikan University (Rits-DMUCH), Kyoto in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan in Nepal, UNESCO Kathmandu and Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University

The Kyoto meeting and Kathmandu forum, part of the UNESCO Chair capacity-building programme on disaster risk management for cultural heritage organized by Ritsumeikan University, targeted experts and managers of World Heritage properties from all regions of the world, and included a field component in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Participants in the Kyoto Expert Meeting and Kathmandu Forum;

- Recognizing that many World Heritage cultural properties, such as the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto, in Japan and the Monument Zones of Kathmandu, in Nepal, are located in earthquake zones;
- Noting that earthquake vulnerability of World Cultural Heritage properties, especially those located in urban areas, is increasing due to their growing exposure to disaster risks;
- Having considered earlier policy documents and recommendations on this subject, including the *Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties*, adopted during the thirty first World Heritage Committee Session in Christchurch, New Zealand (2007), the *Olympia Protocol for International Cooperation for Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction at World Heritage Properties* (Olympia, 2008), the *Tokyo Declaration for Protecting World Cultural Heritage Properties from Seismic Disasters*, adopted during the International Symposium on How to Promote Risk Management of World Cultural Heritage in Earthquake Zones, held at the United Nations University in Tokyo (2008), and the

*Recommendations on Protecting World Heritage Properties and their historic Urban Environment from Earthquakes*, adopted at the International Symposium in Kathmandu (2009);

Recommend that:

1. Regular maintenance programmes be included as a basic component of any disaster reduction policy and plan for cultural heritage properties;
2. Scientific studies and documentation to assess the vulnerabilities and capacities of various types of historical and traditional structures in World Heritage Properties be carried out through collaborative research among seismic engineers, heritage professionals and the bearers of traditional knowledge or their source of information;
3. Studies on the performance of heritage structures after major seismic events be conducted as an indispensable base to inform the most effective approaches for their conservation, restoration or retrofitting and, when appropriate, to guide the development of construction guidelines for new buildings so as to reduce risks from earthquakes, especially in developing regions of the world;
4. Multi-disciplinary research and collaboration between universities and professionals be developed for the effective implementation of earthquake risk mitigation techniques and recovery strategies for World Heritage properties;
5. Technical guidelines be developed for professionals and artisans as a support for the repairing and retrofitting of historic structures of various typologies such as stone, brick and composite masonry as well as wooden structures located in various regions of the world. These guidelines should ensure adequate balance between safety requirements and the conservation of heritage values and authenticity, while being adapted to the local social and economic context;
6. Planning strategies for World Heritage cities and historic urban areas in their buffer zones be developed for reducing their earthquake vulnerability through provision of emergency escape routes and access to emergency services such as fire tenders while keeping their morphological character and other heritage values to the greatest extent possible. These strategies should integrate a concern for maintaining the continuity of traditional resident populations, historic land uses and other intangible attributes related to the values of the place;
7. Training programmes, including workshops, be organized to build the technical capacity of the professionals and site managers in techniques and strategies for the reduction of disaster risks to heritage properties;

8. Pilot projects to demonstrate earthquake risk reduction strategies, including mitigation techniques, be developed for World Heritage Properties through close cooperation among development and conservation agencies, stakeholders and local communities;
9. Local communities be empowered to take an active role in preparing for disaster beforehand as well as in the response and recovery phases. In this regard, local knowledge systems such as traditional construction technology and other intangible heritage aspects should be valorized in the disaster risk management process.
10. Local governments should take an active role in all phases of disaster risk management process in particular working with local communities.
11. Experiences related to disasters at World Heritage Cultural Properties, and lessons learnt relevant to the application of sustainable strategies for the seismic protection of cultural heritage, be widely disseminated among professionals and administrators throughout the world;
12. Further recommend, in the specific case of the World Heritage Monument Zones in the Kathmandu Valley, that national and local institutions, international heritage organizations, international and bilateral development agencies, and universities, work to implement the Kathmandu Symposium Recommendations on Protecting World Heritage Properties and Their Historic Urban Environment from Earthquakes as adopted in February of 2009 (see Annex 1), with particular attention to the need to integrate concern for disaster risk reduction into the sustainable development process.