

INTERNATIONAL URBAN CONSERVATION CHARTERS: CATALYTIC OR PASSIVE TOOLS OF URBAN CONSERVATION PRACTICES AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

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Abstract

Among developing countries, it has become factual that International urban conservation charters are not imposing significant influence in urban conservation practices. Information about these documents remains difficult to find and often unavailable to urban conservation experts. Also, the cost of obtaining requisite information remains prohibitive. Additionally, several developing countries are not complying with international urban conservation and management practices as the charters prescribe due to laxity for compliance. Consequently, inaccessibility to the charters is constraining implementation of sustainable urban heritage conservation actions. As well, conservation managers, individuals, local and central governments are not collaborating, or networking effectively that is causing ineffectiveness of these instruments.

As such, this Paper discusses the types of obstacles impeding access to relevant information and knowledge among developing countries. It also discusses best means of confronting those impediments. The discussion further spans the character of reluctance of governments in question, which are overlooking adoption of international urban heritage conservation charters. It concludes with the sort of measures that need to be in place in respect of such governments, which measures would be of sufficient gravity to ensure compliance.

Key words: Urban Conservation, Charters, 'Least Developed Countries'.

Introduction

Aware of benefits that all nations enjoy by preserving heritage fabric, several fora today applaud numerous international urban conservation charters. These instruments contain international guidelines and policies that convey practical gains of promoting and supporting sustainable urban heritage conservation and development.

Modernist evolution of these instruments is attributed to captivating developments that unfolded among the Western group of nations from as early as the 15th Century¹. From this period onwards, Renaissance Europe bolstered formal urban heritage conservation management practices which afterwards spread to other regions, (Heyde, 2002). However, much as many writers assume that modern practices of urban conservation are rooted in Europe, it is challengeable on the basis of preceding or

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¹ 'Western' denotes Western European culture and economic development in contrast to the oriental or Eastern counterpart. Western has been taken as preferable to the term 'developed' and 'underdeveloped'.

congruent historical urban landscapes of other lands such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, etc., (Jokilehto, 2002). For instance, it is ascertained that Western civilization can be tracked back to Africa, which premised the emergence of certain sciences as evident in the Egyptian civilization around 3000 BC, (Odeyale, Undated; Martin and O'Meara, 1995). Additionally, historical accounts about the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) illuminate this progression that eventually reinforced Europe to formally polish current urban conservation practices. Schmidt (1996, p.1) observes:

Most of our ideas originally came from the Middle East (Mesopotamia and Palestine) and Egypt, which were decidedly *non*-European cultures. Then they were influenced by everything from Mongol invasions to the long Arabic stewardship of culture to the unprecedented contact with the New World.

Attendant relics (dating back to more than 11,000 yrs ago) obtained informal conservationist agenda in Egypt's pyramid era, Mesopotamia's city-states, and gradually spread to Greece, Rome, and the rest of Europe, (World Bank, 1994; Jokilehto, 2002).

Despite of having contributed to the proliferation of this noble conservation agenda, however, Africa today hosts 62% of the least developed counties, to which the thesis of this Paper is drawn: to appraise whether or not international urban conservation charters are catalytic or passive tools of their urban conservation practices. From onset, therefore the term 'developing countries' in this Paper has a twofold representation. First, it is specifically in the context of 'least developed countries' (LDCs) the way UNCTAD Secretariat (2006, p.i) defines that category:

The least developed countries (LDCs) are a group of 50 countries which have been identified as "least developed" in terms of their low GDP per capita, their weak human assets and their high degree of economic vulnerability.

Secondly, it is geographically case-specific spanning Africa (though Asian and some Island LDCs also exist). This Africa-case-specificity is because of its highest concentration of LDCs than elsewhere globally², (UNCTAD Secretariat, 2006).

Preliminarily, these countries are not enjoying significant impact of the existing body of these charters. Prior to exploration of this thesis, however, it is prudent for the distinct emergence of these charters to be grasped.

Emergence of international urban conservation charters

As the informal undertones of the conservationist agenda spread across Europe, Rome is particularly reputed to have had powerful Popes who regarded urban heritage conservation with divine zeal, (Hager and Petrioli-Tofani, 1992). The Papal government created the post of 'Overseer over Protection of all Antiquities' which marked the entry into formal configurations of urban conservation endeavors. By 1666 Sweden had also launched its Antiquities Ordinance, which spanned historic urban ensembles too, (Heyde, 2002). Furthermore, by 1770s defunct Prussian monarchy had created 'Ober-Bau-Departement' to protect historic urban fabric, (Jokilehto, 2002). Likewise, the French Revolution passed a pro-heritage protection Decree in 1789, (Division of Rare & Manuscript Collections, 1998). Brandt-Grau (2002) asserts that this Decree eventually underpinned the formation of UNESCO later in 20th Century. According to Pendlebury

² Out of those 50 nations, 31 are in Africa. These are: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Rep. of Tanzania, and Zambia.

(2002), the above backdrop was consolidated by moralistic and didactic writings of John Ruskin and William Morris, which birthed the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877. Efforts of SPAB did spread across Europe and remained the back-borne for urban heritage conservation into the 20th Century.

Hence, by 1900s Europe had already evolved conservationist policies, (Kovács, 1999). However, as the 20th Century approached, the need for some global and professional management of urban conservation matters manifested, (Kovács, 1999). This was also the era in which Europe progressed from medieval era to times of Renaissance and industrialization, propped by engagement in colonialism, the brutal slave trade, international domination, and concurrent development of urban conservation measures. Consequently, pioneering conservationist theory and practitioner writings on the subject by men such as Auguste (1873), Magni (1913), Riegl (1903), Brown (1905) and Conwentz (1909) triggered international conservation conferences that re-shaped past knowledge from which more comprehensive guidelines and charters emerged.

First was the Sixth International Congress of Architects, Madrid, of 1904, which in a way prescribed unified principles of urban heritage conservation, (Locke, 1904). This was followed by the Hague Convention of 1907, which introduced principles of protecting such heritage by an occupying State in the event of armed conflict. However, World War I (WWI) broke out in 1914, the aftermath of which produced the League of Nations in 1919 in Geneva.

The alarming WWI destruction energized the urban conservation movement and most affected nations worked closely to reconstruct historic urban heritage ensembles, which culminated in opening the International Museums Office in Paris in 1926. This was followed by Rome hosting the first International Conference on the Study of Scientific Methods for the Examination and Preservation of Works of Art in 1930, (Levin, 1991). Thereafter, Greece hosted the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, which culminated in the historic Athens Charter of 1931. This charter proliferated principles for preservation and restoration of ancient buildings. A profile of other key charters that followed to the present millennium is indicted below in Table A.

Table A: Charters

Year	Charter/Instrument	Author(s)	Key Features
1935	The Roerich Pact	OAS	In protecting cultural heritage specifically in time of war.
1946	International Council of Museums (ICOM)	UNESCO	To protect cultural heritage.
1954	Hague Convention	UN	Safeguard such heritage during war, natural calamities, and of recent, in terrorist attacks.
1954	European Cultural Convention	EU	Safeguard/develop European common cultural heritage.
1956	Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations	UNESCO	Preservation of monuments and works of the past; Create strong legislative, punitive, collaborative, admin., financial, and educ. actions for protecting all heritages
1956	Recommendation Concerning International Competitions in Architecture and Town Planning	UNESCO	Promote innovative design of new architecture and "...to improve the knowledge base for planning practice ...", (Ryser, 2001, p.17).
1967	Norms of Quito	OAS	Correlation of heritage, urban planning, econ. Dev. and conservation in a sustainable context to promote econ. Dev.
1968	Recommendation Concerning the Preservation of Cultural Property	UNESCO	Harmonization of social and econ. Dev. with preservation of cultural heritage with

Year	Charter/Instrument	Author(s)	Key Features
	Endangered by Public or Private Works.		reference to approp. planning and exploration of built heritage-led urban regeneration ventures
1972	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	UNESCO	Promotion of conservation of both cultural and natural heritage.
1972	Resolutions of the Symposium on the Introd. of Contemporary Architecture into Ancient Groups of Buildings.	ICOMOS	For harmonizing ancient and new architectural fabric.
1975	Declaration of Amsterdam	Congress of EU Arch. Heritage	Conservation of the arch. heritage became part of urban & regional planning, than marginalization
1975	Resolutions of the International Symposium on the Conservation of Smaller Historic Towns	ICOMO	Advocates for heritage-led urban regeneration initiatives
1976	Charter of Cultural Tourism	ICOMOS	Urges built heritage to be properly preserved & plough back tourism money into heritage preservation
1976	Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas	UNESCO	Highlights multi-disciplinary collaboration in protecting and enhancing historic areas
1981 Revised 1999	Burra Charter	ICOMOS	Defines core heritage terminology. Justifies conservation planning and originality of the heritage
1983	Appleton Charter	ICOMOS	Sound manag. of the built heritage and conservation as essential management elements.
1987	Washington Charter.	ICOMOS	Emphasizes conservation of historic towns as an integral of economic development and urban and regional planning.
1993	Fez Charter	OVP	Champions strategies for management of the urban heritage through intercity cooperation
1994	Nara Document on Authenticity	ICOMOS	Emphasizes authenticity in conservation by recognizing cultural diversity
1995	Charter for Cultural Tourism	ICOMOS	Development. of tourism towards manag. of resources for their viability.

In summary, Image - 1 shows growth of these instruments from 1900. It is visible that the post-WWII era produced most conventions and new interests in sustainable cultural, and natural resource conservation, management, community involvement, and the need to respect limits of growth and expansion.

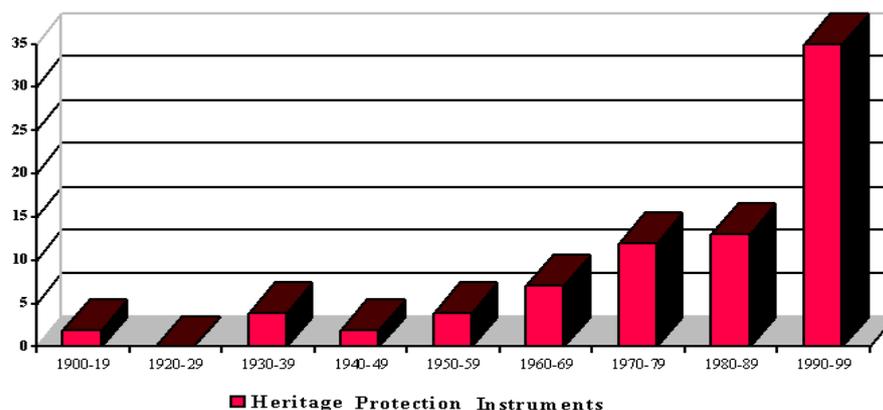


Image - 1: Growth of Heritage Protection Instruments (1900 to 1999). Source: Birabi (2006, p.31).

Secondly, in the transition from the 19th to the 20th centuries, progression from consumption of urban heritage resources merely as historicist novelty trophies to the more powerful notion of resources for socio-cultural and economic development commenced. Subsequently, there was the drive from ad-hoc maintenance of the urban heritage to its sustainable conservation and management. Thirdly, the notion of urban heritage conservation shifted from a despised periphery to the centrality of local, regional and even national development planning schemes, which also guarantee its conservation. As a result, mostly from 1970s urban heritage conservation has won the validation of being a non-pollutant marvel of a cultural, social, and economic enhancement. This validation is a recent brainchild of Ecotrust, an American NGO championing a new concept of the 'conservation economy', (seen in Image - 2). Under the 'Conservation Economy' concept, urban heritage resources assert their significance in economic development through urban heritage-led regeneration initiatives, (Bray, 1994; Brković, 1997; Hague, 2000; Gospodini, 2002).

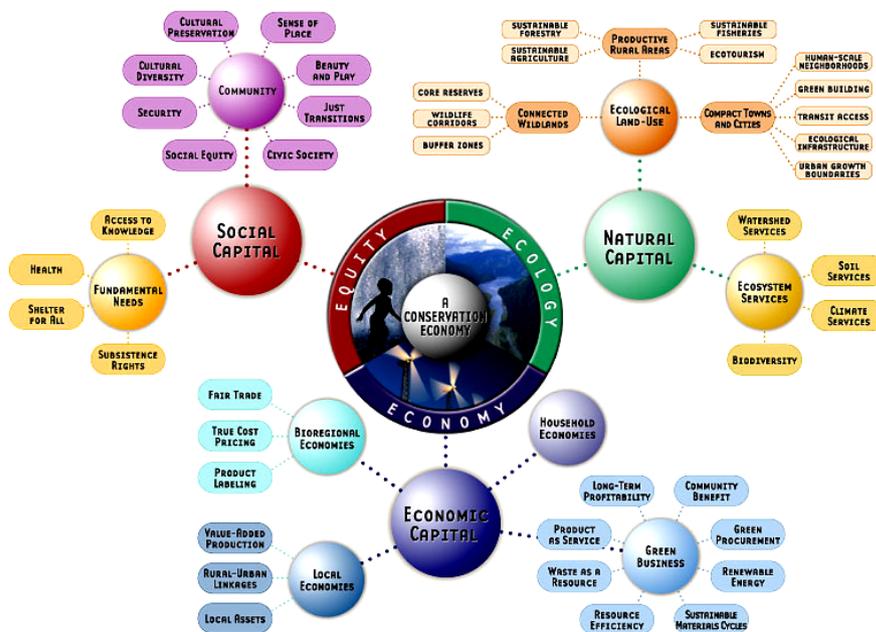


Image - 2: Framework for a Conservation Economy. Source: Ecotrust, (2003). In Newman and Jennings (2003, p.37).

It is now appropriate to re-pick the discussion on whether or not LDCs are not enjoying significant impact of the international urban conservation charters.

Catalytic or passive charters in developing countries?

In appraising whether or not the international urban conservation charters are effective it is necessary to consider compliance and legal effectiveness, behavioral, and political effectiveness and problem-solving stance so as to determine levels of meeting charter objectives among those countries. In reflecting on a number of aspects, however, it is instantly visible that most international conservation charters are not imposing significant influence among LDCs. This seems so since incidents of natural and cultural urban environmental mismanagement are highest in these countries, (Image - 3 to Image - 6).



Image - 3: Demolition of a Historic Urban Quarters in Kampala City, is frequent in the City's Historic Urban Quarter



Image - 4: One among Kampala's first roads



Image - 5: One of Kampala's first stored buildings now severely neglected



Image - 6: Irregular Garbage collection a chronically erodes Kampala's ambience.

Their urban ecosystems are severely stressed amidst regimes of poor pro-conservation policies and awareness initiatives, feeble political will, missing expertise, minimal funding, and weak conservation-centered laws and enforcement mechanisms, poor governance standards, and high corruption levels. This is due to varied factors.

First, the historic perspective in that commenced this Paper, shows how the developed countries became apparent 'laboratories' for formal development of those instruments. Africa was also submerged by global cultural metamorphosis with crippling acts such as slave trade and colonialism which resulted in loss in the modernist contribution towards current urban conservation practices. The scramble for Africa by European powers to fuel Western capitalism incapacitated African countries to play a part they could have played. Their development therefore trailed behind former colonial masters to date. Consequently, in current times there appears to be a general malaise of most LDCs facing complex global setbacks of unfair trade practices, stiff competition, falling prices of their exports, etc. This is in combination with several other factors associated with the fast-paced change that tends to confuse LDCs such as:

- Economic and institutional restructuring;
- Political tensions;
- Untuned growth, development and transformation; and
- Discordant demographic transpositions.

This makes them perennial failures in propagating their capital budgets in education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, etc in the fight against poverty. As a result,

these conditions collectively constitute a vehement risk factor against material urban and cultural heritage preservation, (Avrami *et al*, 2000). Cultural matters are chronically at the bottom of national priorities. Whereas LDCs are signatories to most conservation charters, they mirror themselves merely as honorary signatories. Consequently, they rarely enforce attendant charters. Furthermore, much as Article 5 of the World Heritage Convention binds signatories 'to pursue pro-heritage conservation policies and interweave them with far-sighted legislative or statutory actions and essential scientific, technical, administrative and financial means, LDCs are in no position to enforce requisite long-term objectives. A debilitating effect is that information acquisition, information management and utilization, and institutional coordination central to those charter objectives are arrested. According to Ngozi Nwalo (2000), information is presently regarded as the 5th factor of production which is by no means substandard to land, labor, capital and the entrepreneurship. In fact, Brandin and Harrison (1987) asserts that information is an emerging type of capital termed 'knowledge capital'. Also, Drucker (1969) alerts us that systematic and purposeful information acquisition commingled with science and technology is emerging as the new global springboard for work, productivity, and effort. In what confirms Drucker's conjecture, Berghahl (1989) supposes that information is such a dear resource that the destiny of modern nations is holistically connected with their propensity to develop and consume it. He further projects that in future, nations that undevelop this capacity will trail behind in socio-cultural, technological and economic development. Alongside, becoming dependant, such nations will neither be partners in the global information propagation nor will they constructively contribute to the welfare of their future generations. In this connection, the reality on the ground is that information knowledge concerning the charters remains difficult to find and unavailable to planning and implementation processes of urban conservation, training and dissemination in LDCs.

In the educational aspects, despite some LDCs making commendable efforts, formal training is still dominated by Western nations due to the historical factor explained from onset. Jokilehto (1998, p.19) substantiates:

At the same time most specialized training programs are still concentrated in Europe (57%) and North America (25%), with some courses in Latin-American (9%) and Asian countries (8%), while Africa (2%) has very few.

Taking the example of countries such as Eritrea, Burundi, Angola, and Uganda, and mapping Jokilehto's statistics on the ground, hardly any academic institutions address formal sustainable conservation and management of the urban cultural heritage. This is aggravated by lack of political will to apportion or mobilize finances for Urban Heritage Conservation matters. This is a serious matter because international charters or local conservation statutes alone cannot ensure conservation. Rather, it is the local political will. In turn, this deficiency has caused critical urban conservation and management-centered human resource deficiency.

Lack of political will is aggravated by lack of public-private sector awareness about the value of urban heritage conservation right from upper political echelons to grass-root village levels, and both local and central governments. This deficiency is driven by spontaneous political, socio-cultural and economic changes, particularly changing State responsibilities and fluid patronage of cultural and urban heritage resources. Since LDCs often pursue developmental objectives attractive to industrialization, cultural matters rarely cross their minds. They attend to culture only when external monies are included and so they view international urban conservation charters as 'dry bones with without meat'.

As such, most African countries disregard matters of ‘heritage conservation’ and attendant agendas. More precisely, government heritage ministers are often ignorant and uncertain about ratification procedures. These officials exhibit low thresholds of awareness towards heritage conservation. Concerned ministers are also often unqualified in heritage conservation matters! Even in aspects of planning or policy documents, they remain merely as declarations of good intent that are never followed through or supported with either political will or resource allocation as mentioned earlier. As a result, heritage conservation institutions are often the weakest governmental agencies.

Hence a lot of tensions prevail between African governments and the few local heritage conservation experts capable of tapping benefits of international charters. Apparently most governments in Africa are infested with corrupt “...officials who work with prestigious profit-driven Europeans and American individuals and institutions such as Sotheby’s, Christie’s Auction Houses and even the Smithsonian, who reap the most lucrative financial gains”, (Schmidt and McIntosh, 1997, p.747). Thus, international conventions also find a lot of resistance in Africa. As already noted, this resistance is partly powered by forces from some developed countries, which emasculates the few local experts. Frustrated, they are compelled to immigrate to the developed countries. Hence, the phenomenal ‘brain drain’.

The other problem is attitudinal. As several charters highlight cultural property *in Situ* and yet most LDCs interpret the fabric in terms of movable artifacts, they tend to distance themselves from instruments obliging them to gazette immovable heritage. Consequently, a number of LDCs are either non-parties to some instruments or they have only recently ratified them. For example, among Africa’s LDCs only Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mali, and Senegal are State parties to the 1954 Hague Convention. Also, it was not until 1987 that Uganda ratified the 1972 UNESCO Convention.

As such the post-WWII rapid growth in the instruments as shown in Image - 1 has not necessarily invigorated LDCs. This is empirically demonstrated by statistics in Table B on the current composition of the World Heritage List, which indicate that the majority are sites from Europe, though Latin America, China, and India are also emerging competitors, (Saouma-Forero, 2006).

Table B: Breakdown of World Heritage Sites by Zones

Zone	Natural	Cultural	Mixed	Total
<u>Africa</u>	32	36	2	70
Arab States	4	57	1	62
<u>Asia-Pacific</u>	43	121	11	175
<u>Europe & North America</u>	49	351	7	407
<u>Latin America & Caribbean</u>	34	79	3	116

Source: World Heritage Site Answers Com (2007).

Although slightly surpassing the Arab States, Africa does not measure well in these statistics. This can also be attributed to the culture of conservation, an essential prerequisite for assembling World Heritage nomination files. Retrospectively, this culture again has inelastic in Nineteenth Century European conservation drive. In a controversial setting however, while the Western group of nations would be expected to encourage patronage of international conservation charters in LDCs it is evident that some undermine some of those very international protocols. An example is the Hague

Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which deters illicit export, removal or transfer of ownership of cultural property³. Instead, some of the developed countries are evidently fueling pillaging of Africa's heritage sites, theft, forgery, fraud, and illicit trade in respective cultural patrimony by creating illegal markets of stolen cultural items and complicating the matter with bureaucracy of law enforcement. For instance Germany, the US, and Japan are popular destinations of such items due to attitude to laws and legality in those countries, which are unsatisfactory. Also, action in the US may be taken only in response to a petition from another country seeking import restriction of its archeological or ethnological material, the pillage of which places its cultural heritage fabric in jeopardy (Kouroupas, 2000).

In fact some museums and related bodies of the developed countries also purchase and display heritage illegally obtained from LDCs, (Gerstenblith, 1999). According to Schmidt and McIntosh (1997, p.746) "...the huge profits that accrue to these powerful controlling interests make them very effective in opposing implementing antiquities accords..." and to 'leave sleeping dogs to lie' in Africa. The trickle-down effect is more than can be imagined. A case in point is the absence of strong policy initiatives and laws among LDCs. In the case of Uganda, for instance, while a provisional draft of the first ever cultural policy has been arrived at, "...Uganda has not had a comprehensive, bold and well documented policy guiding the organization and management of culture", (Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, 2003, p.3). There are weak enforcement measures and formal monitoring mechanisms. The trend is similar in other African LDCs. It is a vertical weakness right from the constitutional level, (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, Article 245). This problem is also partly due to neglect of the repertoire of international conventions in national cultural policy and Legislation. Those international conventions are neither referred to in the national cultural policy nor national Legislation of Uganda, (Kamuhangire, 2002). Yet it is common knowledge that for any given country, any international treaty that is not effectively incorporated into domestic law ceases to be effective. The few laws that exist have emerged by means of either offhand arrangements or stereotyped legislative instruments, systems or practices pressurized by the few experts available. Consequently, they are either ignored or abandoned.

In some instances, some of the laws are either left without necessary regulations or selectively enforced. In frequent instances, they are relegated into 'soft law', a "...law in the process of making. It is nascent, incipient, or potential law. It may be in the form of a declaration, a resolution, a statement of principles - which is morally if not legally binding," (Boon, 1992, p.350). Apparently, LDCs tend to substitute the charters with the soft laws with much enthusiasm as a means of distancing themselves from main 'hard' rules and principles of the international legal regime. Hence it can be noted that instead, the charters have also become prime catalysts for the emergence of 'soft law' and subsequently passive to compliance with actual international legal regime they represent. This passiveness is further aggravated by soft law's generality, amorphousness, vagueness in standards, and non-binding nature.

Meanwhile, in developed countries, strategies are realized through constitutional and institutional provisions such as planning policy guidelines, archive centers, heritage associations, galleries, museums and libraries, and information systems, monuments, and

³ Others include UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970; and UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, 1995.

institutions that carry out associated training and research, etc. Britain's '*Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment*' is a vivid example with operational strategies, (English Heritage, 2000).

Other deficiencies among LDCs include:

- i. Lack of appropriate cross-referential conservation-led legislation at both national and local government levels;
- ii. Lack of conservation standards causing loss of integrated conservation measures as development opportunities;
- iii. Lack of viable urban heritage conservation stakeholder partnerships and coordination;
- iv. Economic pressures for social and urban growth and development combined with rural - urban migration, ill-planned response to urban improvement programs and poor traffic flow solutions;
- v. Lack of appreciation of conservation management planning by bureaucrats and society. Within the current planning paradigms, importance of historic environments in urban economic regeneration is absent due to missing sustainable conservation management planning regimes. Thus, uncoordinated or deficient sectoral national and local urban planning programs prevail.

It is also apparent that actual implementation and compliance in States bound by the precepts of international urban conservation in such instruments is too feeble. This renders ineffectiveness of most conventions in LDCs. A number of factors are directly associated with this shortcoming, which, according to Weiss (1993), also include the following:

- Economic and social culture of a particular state;
- Interaction among local bureaucracies;
- Availability of technical and financial capabilities;
- Ability of non-state actors to operate within a country;
- Ready access to information;
- Functions and powers of the specific secretariat established to supervise the particular charter in question; and incentives in the charter to promote implementation and compliance.

The World Bank Africa Database (2005) empirically appraises that the performance of most African countries in the context of the above factors is very poor. However, the problem is also compounded by lack of strict international enforcement standards stemming from inadequate enforcement measures on the part of the responsible world bodies for State parties to comply with the conventions. Aware that any international agreement becomes law in any given country when it is enacted into law by national legislation, no penalties for the infringement of international charters have been significantly instituted on culprit State parties.

However, the foregoing account should not imply that urban conservation charters are doomed among LDCs.

What needs to be done

The power of information cannot be underrated in the fight against passiveness of international urban conservation charters in Africa. Therefore, doing anything must be preceded with governments and the people being knowledgeable. Without awareness of existence of conservation charters, the heritage resources in question, their value, current conditions and what would be best for them, no thoughtful actions about their sustainable utilization and conservation can occur. Mixed short and long-term activities need to be integrated. In all this, however, the local political will is the requisite power factor and concerned stakeholders are the propelling force for political devotion.

There is need for information-rich Western nations who, (as history informs us may have contributed to some conditions in LDCs today), to share these resources with information-poor LDCs for mutual benefit. An enhanced capacity to utilize information on international charters could lead to significant gains in their adoption and enforcement in LDCs. Taking advantage of the new technologies of the information revolution would lead to better deployment of these information resources. Only then would we be sure of improved performance and better quality of urban heritage conservation. In this regard, there is need on the part of LDCs to energize their political will to establish and strengthen cooperation and networks with developed countries and themselves for better sharing of information on international charters and transforming them into local policies. Governments of LDCs also need to accommodate culture at a national level on state priority agendas to integrate the sector into action lines with development partners. This way, the LDCs would fulfill the documentation requirements of their laws. In this connection, it was noted that concerned bureaucrats in LDCs are non-performers due to ignorance and uncertainty. As such, as a powerful tool of information campaign, a handbook that can guide governments in LDCs on how to implement conventions should be created. Such a handbook could also advise on the necessity to sign and ratify charters they are not yet associated with.

The matter of non-compliance among individual State parties regarding precepts of international charters that bind them requires urgent attention at appropriate world fora to cause culprit governments to comply. For instance international treaties would demand national implementation plans to be drawn up and success of is likely to be significantly enhanced if signatories are obliged to submit reports on their current and future activities. Whereas sovereignty mandates individual States to exert their own political and juridical power within their territories, blind adherence to national sovereignty as a defense mechanism for justifying national indifference towards global responsibilities, can only undermine efforts of international charters. This must not be given space to reign. There is therefore the urgency to persuade developing nations to forego the preoccupation with sovereignty in order to provide for more sustainable territories of urban heritage.

Mechanisms can be introduced within international charters to induce compliance so as to achieve improved surveillance and monitoring systems associated with particular conservation charters. This would be with respect to individual State sovereignty but also in the broader context and jurisdiction of international agreements. Once it is well established that a given State is not fulfilling its obligations, international pressure would be exerted. However, attendant compliance can only emerge when concerned governments are well informed about those instruments. Media campaigns and lobbying, conferences, regional workshops, etc can be effective to encourage State parties in question. Such gatherings would urge concerned States to develop, adopt, or modify relevant national legislation, (Sands, 1994). This would make enforcing national compliance a cornerstone for their public authorities.

The Mexican government has developed a multi-faceted approach that juxtaposes a number of imperatives like the following:

- i. Programs of public awareness education and action;
- ii. Utilization of urban heritage conservation professionals;
- iii. Broaden scope of relevant legislation;
- iv. Training of cultural patrimony personnel, including police, customs, security and tourism agencies, and municipal governments.

This type of comprehensive approach has been applauded due to significant advantages and improvement of local conservation management regimes, (Gerstenblith, 1999).

In conclusion, institutions such as NGOs, universities, museums, etc., also need to come aboard. Most of them in LDCs are idle on this obligation, a position they must abandon. Apparently, governments need to engage public-private-partnerships' (PPPs) with such institutions so as to mount outreach programs. In this regard, modern multi-media and information technology is now available and if well utilized, it can increase public awareness. Numerous TV and radio stations now in LDCs can contribute well-designed urban heritage preservation programs if articulately mobilized. Furthermore, pamphlets, posters, the media, etc, can reach the wider public. Museums can also liaise with national cultural centers and theatrical groups to innovate, for instance, traveling puppet shows and humorous urban heritage conservation programs and productions in the schools and the communities.

Finally, museums, universities and libraries can lobby governments in LDCs and donors to run case-specific conferences and workshops/seminars to adequately sensitize political masters, legislators/policy makers, decision makers, planners, etc, about international conservation charters and the place of the historic environments in national development. This would in turn unlock community capacity and participatory power, utmost involvement, innovation and sense of ownership of conservation activities.

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