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BAKU DECLARATION OVER-TOURISM AND HERITAGE SITES

Architecture, Planning and Design: Keys to Protecting Heritage in the Age of Mass Tourism

To help counter threats to the world's cultural and natural assets, UNESCO adopted in 1972 the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*. Today, more than one thousand sites around the world enjoy at least some protections afforded by their designation as World Heritage sites.

However, as tourism grows in both scale and reach all over the globe, pressures mount on these sites, and on many other places of cultural and historical significance. The effects of over-tourism endanger not just World Heritage sites, but many historic neighbourhoods and villages—and even entire cities.

The very nature of the challenges to historic settings has shifted, directly because of the sheer number of visitors. Appropriate planning and design measures—for new visitor centres, special accommodations for large groups, and the expansion of interest zones—offer great promise, *provided* such interventions benefit from careful study, remain compatible with the character of the historic site, and respect heritage considerations.

We call upon UNESCO and others responsible for heritage protection, as well as upon the global tourism industry itself, to support the development of *architectural design and planning standards* for use in implementing new steps to protect and enhance heritage sites of all types, in all parts of the world.

We urge development of standards that define desired outcomes, rather than lay out prescriptive measures, that are flexible and useful in a wide variety of contexts, amenable to adaptation and adjustment. We underscore the powerful role that architecture, planning and design can play to protect heritage, ameliorate the effects of mass tourism, improve visitor experiences, and enhance the value of historic assets.

As conveners of the *2019 UIA Baku Forum on Mass Tourism in Historic Cities*, we urge participants and stakeholders in the tourism and heritage sectors to join in our resolve to develop these important new standards, as well as guidelines for their effective implementation.

[Signed]

Conveners of the *2019 UIA Baku Forum on Mass Tourism in Historic Cities*,
Baku, Azerbaijan, 10 June 2019

BAKU: THE 2019 UIA ARCHITECTURE FORUM CITY

