

fait de la différence de perspectives entre les sous-régions du bassin méditerranéen. Les agglomérations du Sud et de l'Est disposent de capacités encore très limitées et sont confrontées à une croissance urbaine qui n'est pas accompagnée d'une croissance économique comparable, avec pour conséquence la multiplication de zones d'habitat « informel ».

Dans le domaine rural, les progrès agricoles ne permettront pas une amélioration des taux d'autosuffisance. Le principal risque est celui d'une poursuite ou d'une aggravation de la pauvreté et de la désertification au Sud et à l'Est et de ses impacts directs et indirects : perte irréversible de biodiversité et de capital productif, comblement rapide des retenues des barrages, exode rural vers les villes - qui s'avèrent peu capables d'y faire face et où les risques sociaux risquent de s'accroître. La solution alternative serait la mise en place d'une politique de développement rural pour mettre à niveau les services, diversifier l'économie et assurer une gestion durable des ressources dans le cadre d'approches participatives.

Le littoral présente une saturation problématique de nombreux espaces côtiers avec le bétonnage de près de 50 % des côtes méditerranéennes et des pertes de qualité territoriale. L'alternative doit se reposer sur le renforcement des politiques littorales, lequel pourrait être stimulé par l'adoption d'un protocole méditerranéen pour la gestion durable du littoral dans le cadre de la Convention de Barcelone. Une telle adoption, qui serait une première mondiale, fournirait un signe fort de la volonté de changement. Elle pourrait aussi reposer sur une évolution des politiques touristiques pour limiter les impacts négatifs générés par le tourisme et faire de ce secteur un véritable vecteur de développement littoral, urbain et rural durable, valorisant les spécificités et la diversité méditerranéennes.

Aujourd'hui, les villes de la Méditerranée se trouvent donc dans une période transitoire de recom-

position dans laquelle deux logiques se font concurrence : la logique traditionnelle qui puise ses racines dans l'organisation étatique héritée du passé et qui s'exprime à travers une administration puissante et une logique plus moderne dont les fondements se trouvent dans la séparation des pouvoirs, la transparence et le respect des lois. Cette dualité marque la situation actuelle des systèmes politiques et la marche des États. L'urbanisation des villes de la Méditerranée doit prendre en considération plusieurs enjeux qui lui sont clairement liés : la culture, le patrimoine bâti et naturel, les paysages, les quartiers historiques, etc.

3. Union Internationale des Architectes (UIA)

Créée à Lausanne en 1948, l'UIA regroupe 132 pays répartis sur les 5 continents. Les 132 sections membres forment l'assemblée générale, qui se réunit tous les 3 ans durant le congrès international de l'UIA.

Une partie de ces sections est méditerranéenne, un protocole d'accord gère les relations de l'UIA avec l'UMAR (Union Méditerranéenne des Architectes). Les pays du sud de l'Europe (Région I-UIA), du nord de l'Afrique (Région V-UIA) et l'est de la Méditerranée (Région II-UIA) ont des relations très spécifiques relevant de la culture, du patrimoine et de l'éducation.

Plusieurs événements et conférences se font conjointement. L'UIA, organisation mère des architectes au niveau international (1 500 000 architectes), entretient des relations avec d'autres organisations régionales comme l'ACE (architectes européens), l'Arcasia (architectes de l'Asie), l'OAA (architectes arabes), l'IFLA (architectes paysagistes), le FPAA (architectes d'Amérique), l'AIA (architectes des États-Unis), Docomomo, Icomos et surtout l'UNESCO, dont le fruit est la charte UNESCO-UIA, et le règlements des compétences internationales.

URBAN HARMONY: A VISION ACCOMPLISHED

SAMIR GHARIB

National Organization for Urban Harmony (NOUH), Egypt

A few years ago, urban harmony became the concept that called out for the rebalance of urban development and the preservation of its architectural, historical, and ancient artistic values, which suffer many problems nowadays. This concept also called out for the modelling of the cultural and artistic framework in urbanism, an ingenuity that distinguished Egypt a long time ago. During the last couple of years, the Ministry of

Culture of Egypt had exerted a lot of effort to change this conceptual idea into a concrete fundamental structure, an apparent methodology and its methods of implementation, thus the idea became reality. Therefore the ministry established a big an important organization, which has already begun its work.

The Urban harmony field of work concentrates on the placement o the aesthetical and visual aspects

structures form cities and different areas in addition to the revival of cultural values in urbanism. The aim of establishing this organization is to restore the harmony an aesthetic values in cities, towns, open spaces, squares throughout Egypt in determined and progressive steps. One of the important goals is to call attention to the overall unity and emphasize on homogenous designs guidelines to standardize them such as unity, diversity, hierarchy, architectural composition, harmony, contrast, multiplicity and homogeneity.

The initial procedures for dealing with the urban patterns of different areas are the improvement of the artistic characteristics for urban areas, strengthening the visual sequences and eliminating of the deformities that spoil the visual image. This is achieved through stressing on the suitable architectural and historical identities of different areas, setting down the appropriate urban spaces elements for each area and coordinating them, as well as the preservation of valuable locations and buildings. Priority is given to introducing artistic works in public spaces; for example sculptures and murals. This should be done taking into consideration the different material of these works and their coordination with the designing of the buildings, "the originality" that sometimes give cities their exceptional aesthetical values.

1. Establishment of NOUH

The NOUH was established by a presidential decree in 2001 creating its organization. The basic law of 2006 (law 144 year 2006) gave the NOUH its formal status in protecting heritage by restricting the demolition of buildings of heritage values that are not protected as monuments or historic buildings according to the law of antiquities of 1983.

The NOUH attained its current legislative and implementation powers to protect heritage, monitor urban quality and guide urban aesthetics in 2008 when law 119 year 2008 was released with clearly defined tasks and duties.

Adopts a scientific and technical approach to tackle its assigned tasks and duties. Any decision or recommendation adopted by NOUH is the result of well-informed deliberations of its technical staff and/or out-resourced technical committees of specialized experts and consultants. Topics or concerns that NOUH decides to work on are either based on referral by a ministry, a local community or NOUH's own investigation of current urban issues that impact overall urban quality. Partnership with local, non-governmental and governmental entities is a main work philosophy within NOUH to make sure that its recommendations and decisions implemented.

2. NOUH's Objectives and Works

NOUH's concern for urban form and urban aesthetics is not intended to take priority over other functional aspects of urbanization which make it vivid and attractive.

NOUH audience are all of those interested in a harmonious urbanization that function properly while responding to the cultural, economic and social needs of the local population.

NOUH's guidelines and manuals target urban managers, city administrators, local councils and those who have an interest in our urban areas without necessarily being architects, planners or people with technical expertise.

NOUH has the capacity to deal directly with NGOs and other community based organizations in addition to governmental bodies and international organizations.

According to the decree of establishing the organization, the fields of work include the following:

- Reforming the aesthetical vision throughout the country
- Preparing a comprehensive database for all significant and valuable buildings
- Laying down regulations for existing architectural forms
- Reshaping the standards for dealing with urban spaces, gardens and pavements
- Setting down rules and regulations for advertisements and signage
- Enhancing squares and public spaces with respect to the character of each area

The Ministry of Culture has set down a bill for organizing the works of the organization and provided the legislations necessary for its operation:

- Methods for dealing with urban and architectural forms in cities and villages
- Urban revitalization plans for cities and villages and their regulations
- Methods for conservation of valuable areas and distinguished buildings
- Ways of protection of natural sites, public gardens and historical areas

3. Technical Committees

All NOUH decisions are based on good technical research and survey of the existing conditions. Technical Committees are the scientific and technical core of NOUH. A technical committee is a group of specialized experts and consultants on a specific topic or area of interest as deemed necessary. Each and every committee is responsible for producing and updating man-

uals and guideline documents for all issues related to its scope of work. Number of technical committees might change over time as new issues arise, however NOUH currently has 13 technical committees as per the following list:

- City entrances
- Natural and Urban Conservation Areas
- Villages
- Open areas and parks
- Quality control
- External lighting
- City centers
- Beach and costal areas
- Street signage and advertisement
- Roads and sidewalks
- Heritage areas
- Environmental principles for urban harmony
- Urban Character

NOUH's 12 technical committees assumed a simple typology of urban form that was not meant to be complete or even on the same level of detail and importance. The focus of those technical committees was current urban issues when the technical committees were established. NOUH redefine the structure and research focus of those technical committees periodically. The last created technical committee focused on Urban Character with the objective of developing a manual for understanding existing urban character for areas, which do not have to be historic, of special value, or located at the Nile or at the seashore line.

4. International Relations

One of NOUH's many interactions with international organizations and entities was the proposal of a heritage City Network in the Euro Mediterranean area to

Euro-Med congress held in Barcelona in November 2011.

The idea of this proposal is to create a city network made of a number of cities that are connected together because of cultural reasons. For example: cities that have the best ballet theaters create a network for those who want to see the best performances; Any city can be part of more than one city network if it has more than one attractive criterion and have a capacity to join a network.

NOUH proposal explained that creating heritage city networks around the Mediterranean should respect the widely available cultural heritage resulting from being the birthplace of major world religions and their resulting tangible and intangible heritage. Heritage cities have the most plausible networking capability as they all enjoy a global status and national interest. Creating coordinated yearly or seasonal events in the Mediterranean region can depend on their heritage sources and natural legacies.

Such a network can bring professionals from the south to the north within training and educational programs. Network management will be responsible for promoting city festivities from the south into the north and coordinating city events.

NOUH proposed also that the Egyptian Academy in Rome is an existing institute that can manage the proposed network; we need to open doors for new ideas and good networking possibilities.

NOUH participate in international and regional cultural events that might impact cities and heritage destinations in the region. NOUH has good cooperation with UNESCO. We have a protocol of cooperation with the World Heritage Center to safeguard and preservation of Historic Cairo.

NOUH has another protocol of cooperation with UN-Habitat to solve some urban problems in Egypt especially in public spaces.