



Extended 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee

Oral statement on 7A.18 (Ancient City of Aleppo)

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the floor. I am making this statement on behalf of Mr. Louay Dakhel, a conservation architect from Aleppo.

"I am Louay Dakhel, a conservation architect from Aleppo, my city that I did not leave during the last war period. After the war I witnessed restoration and reconstruction works that are not free from small and big mistakes, due to the lack of knowledge and the scarcity of funds, which often leads to resorting to the least expensive methods of restoration, which are generally in violation of international conventions of restoration. As a result, some of Aleppo's reconstructed buildings have become fake copies of themselves which do not embody the values of the property inscribed in the World Heritage List.

I believe that the best ways for the international community to contribute to stopping the distortion of this beautiful and ancient city and to proceed with its reconstruction in a manner consistent with science, logic, the city's history and international conventions is the following:

- 1) Finance and conduct training programs on restoration science for all actors working in this field.
- 2) Provide the necessary funding for restoration work, and stipulate that it be allocated in sequential stages in accordance with the sequence of implementation works on the ground in conformity with international covenants, to ensure that the distortion of ancient Aleppo landmarks does not continue.

Under prevailing stakeholder constellations we call upon UNESCO and other UN bodies to find ways to work with civil society in Syria. We can offer a proposal for a mechanism for implementing the above-mentioned conditions guaranteeing donors that their funds are actually allocated for completing the restoration of ancient Aleppo in accordance with international conventions."