AGREEMENT ON STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Concerning the Implementation of UNESCO’s

RECOMMENDATION on the HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE (HUL)

Between

THE ILLUSTRIOUS MUNICIPALITY OF CUENCA,

The

WORLD HERITAGE INSTITUTE of TRAINING and RESEARCH
for ASIA and the PACIFIC (WHITRAP) in SHANGHAI

And the

UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA

Recalling that the General Conference of UNESCO, at the adoption of the new Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape on November 10, 2011 in Paris, has asked for a comprehensive report on the countries and city governments that have been working with this new instrument, its usefulness and the first results, which in China and the Asia-Pacific region will be coordinated and facilitated by WHITRAP in Shanghai;

Aiming to develop collaborative partnerships between city and municipal governments, heritage conservation bodies, and academic institutions and research centres in the Asia-Pacific region in order to connect cultural heritage conservation and urban development initiatives and create synergies;

Deciding, upon consultation between the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for Asia and the Pacific (WHITRAP) in Shanghai, University of Cuenca and the City of Cuenca, Azuay, Ecuador, to establish a longstanding and strategic
cooperation to jointly organize and execute activities in the context of the implementation of UNESCO’s Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. The main concepts are:

The Concept of Historic Urban Landscape. The Historic Urban Landscape as promoted by UNESCO, is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and their attributes, extending beyond the notion of "historic centre" or "ensemble" to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting. It is a way of seeing and interpreting the city as a continuum in time and space, where countless population groups have left their marks and continue to do so today. This recognition and understanding should underpin the city's management, including the conservation of its historic monuments and spaces, which should be integrated into processes of urban and spatial planning.

The Objective of the Historic Urban Landscape Approach. The application of the concept of the Historic Urban Landscape aims to identify values and meaning, for citizens and visitors alike, embedded in the city environment in order to guide conservation action and to critically inform the urban development process. The Historic Urban Landscape approach, in other words, aims to promote and strengthen a values-based, all-inclusive conservation process and subsequently to utilize heritage assets and local culture to direct planning and design of the contemporary city.

1. Background

1.1. Municipality of Cuenca.

The Municipality of Cuenca is the entity in charge of protecting the cultural heritage of the city. According to the Ordenanza para la Gestión y Conservación de las Áreas Históricas y Patrimoniales (Ordinance for the Management and Conservation of Historic & Heritage Areas) the functions of the Department of Historic and Heritage Areas are the promotion of interventions on the cultural heritage with a comprehensive approach in order to preserve the tangible, intangible and natural heritage linked to the property; the development of management plans and conservation of Historic and Heritage Areas; and the promotion of the participation whether, public or private, national or foreign to finance programs and projects of conservation and enhancement of Historic Areas and such other activities.

1.2. WHITRAP.

World Heritage Institute of Training and research for Asia and the Pacific (WHITRAP) under the auspices of the UNESCO in Shanghai. The WHITRAP is a nonprofit organization specializing in the field of heritage conservation. Moreover, as a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO, it is the first to be established in developing countries. It is an autonomous institution serving the State and Associate Members of the UNESCO.

The Institute's mission is to strengthen the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Asia-Pacific Region by means building the capacity of all those professionals and bodies involved with World Heritage site inscription, protection, conservation and management in the Asia and the Pacific region, through training, research, the dissemination of information and network building.
1.3. Faculty of Architecture of the University of Cuenca.

The vlirCPM Project "City Preservation Management" of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Cuenca has been studying the management of the Historic Center of Cuenca since 2007. The project comes from a partnership between the University of Cuenca in Ecuador and VLIR (Vlaamse Raad Interuniversitaire) in Flanders (Belgium), being the specific counterparty the Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation (RLICC) at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven). Among the investigation developed at the vlirCPM project, there is one specialized on the study of the Historic Urban Landscape in Cuenca.

During the past November 2014, a project entitled "Revaluation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of the city of Cuenca departing from sustainable development strategies supported by the figure of Historic Urban Landscape" was financed by the Research Division of the University of Cuenca. This research is inserted within the above-mentioned research line of the vlirCPM project and is being developed within the research group "Cultural Heritage Built Conservation" from the Architecture Research Centre (CINA). The main objective of the mentioned research project is the implementation of the Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes in the city of Cuenca.

2. Objective

The main objective is to create an agreement to allow a joint research in Historic Urban Landscape. The purpose of the document is mentioned below:

2.1 Research
To develop joint research activities using the Historic Urban Landscape approach to investigate, analyze, interpret and evaluate the characteristics and values of Cuenca's heritage assets, both tangible and intangible. The area of study and survey will be the city in its natural setting to identify and understand meaning and linkages at different scales, from the natural landscape to the broader city, to the historical core of the city, to cultural-historical ensembles of monumental buildings and open spaces, to individual monuments and historic houses, as well as the evolution and development through history of the different landscape, urban and architectural elements. Understanding this continuum in time and space will facilitate the decision-making process concerning conservation and development and enhance management effectiveness. By University and the I. Municipality of Cuenca.

2.2 Visioning Conference
To organize a visioning conference on Cuenca's Historic Urban Landscape to present research outcomes and to consult Cuenca's citizens on issues of heritage conservation and future planning and design of the contemporary city. The event will consist on one day visioning conference preceded by international symposium on HUL application in other Pilot Cities around the world. By WHITRAP, I. Municipality of Cuenca and Cuenca University jointly.

2.3 Publication
To publish the results and outcomes of the research and symposium in international peer-reviewed journals, as well as in reports to UNESCO's Executive Board and General Conference, and thereby to expand knowledge, understanding, visibility and
international influence of Cuenca’s natural and historical-cultural heritage. By WHITRAP, I. Municipality of Cuenca and Cuenca University jointly.

3. Responsibilities of the parties

WHITRAP:
1. Provides the international network and platform for Cuenca regarding the Historic Urban Landscape research, training, conservation and development.
2. Provides comprehensive interpretation of UNESCO’s Historic Urban Landscape, its characteristics, meaning and potential.
3. Suggests international experts to Cuenca to support, coordinate, or lead Historic Urban Landscape research projects.

Municipality of Cuenca:
1. Support the research group according to the University of Cuenca with information and expertise to form links with the Municipality officials to generate a coordinated effort. For this purpose the Municipality will designate a coordinator.
2. Perform actions tending to allocate own resources and self-government efforts for the development of the activities identified in this Agreement.
3. Provides opportunities to apply Historic Urban Landscape knowledge and research results into urban-rural planning and development strategies as pilot implementation of Historic Urban Landscape.

University of Cuenca:
2. Organize the Visioning Conference and International Symposium.

4. Deadlines

This Agreement shall enter into effect upon signature of the parties and can be, from the time of signature, applied and developed. This Agreement have a duration of one year which may be extended automatically for equal periods, unless an institution notifies the others, in writing thirty days before the date the institution wish to terminate it.

5. Administration of the Agreement

The nomination of the staff of each participating party that will track and monitor the implementation of the Agreement is indicated below:

By the WHITRAP, Juliana Forero, PhD, researcher at the WHITRAP

By the Municipality of Cuenca, Marla Tömmerbakk, MSc, Official of the I. Municipality of Cuenca.

By the University of Cuenca, Sebastian Astudillo, MSc, Director of the University School of Architecture.
6. Termination of the Agreement

The parties can terminate this Agreement and / or suspend its execution upon written notice to the parties involved in the following cases notification:

a) On completion of the term of the Agreement,
b) Noncompliance of the object of the agreement, which incur any of the parties involved,
c) By mutual agreement between the parties, among them prior notification at least thirty days in advance

In the event of premature termination of the Agreement shall be recorded in a report, which shall be signed by at least the administrators of the Agreement with permission from subscribers.

7. Nonexistence of the labor relationship

The parties expressly declare that the signing of this agreement and for the activities it generates, do not get any labor relationship between them or with their counterparts or the delegates represent it.

8. Settlement of disputes

If differences and disputes between the subscribing parties may arise, they will seek to agree between them. In the absence of understanding, the parties may submit the matter in dispute to mediation proceedings to the Centro de Mediación de la Procuraduría General del Estado (Mediation Center of the Attorney General of the State of Ecuador) following the rules of the center.

9. Authorizing documents

There should be attaching of the documents proving the authorization of the undersigned parties.

The signatory parties declare to know the contents of this document and proceed to subscribe in the city of Cuenca to the 7th day of May 2015.
Signatories

For WHITRAP:
Zhou Jian, Director WHITRAP-Shanghai

For I. Municipality of Cuenca:
Engineer Marcelo Cabrera P., Mayor of the city of Cuenca

For University of Cuenca:
Engineer Fabian Carrasco C., University Rector

Architect Fernando Pauta C., Dean of the Faculty of Architecture

Signed on May 7, 2015