



Himeji

WORLD HISTORICAL CITIES



Kazan

123 Member Cities

AFRICA

Alexandria / Algiers / Fez / Giza / Luxor / Tunis

ASIA

Andong / Buyeo / Chengdu / Chiang Mai / Dujiangyan / Gonju / Gyeongju / Hanoi / Himeji / Hue / Kaesong / Kamakura / Kanazawa / Kathmandu / Kurunegala / Kyoto / Lahore / Matsue / Naha / Nanjing / Nara / Suwon / Taichung / Tainan / Ulaanbaatar / Varanasi / Vigan / Wuxi / Xian / Yangon / Yangzhou / Yogyakarta / Zhengzhou

EUROPE

Alba Iulia / Amsterdam / Athens / Bad Ischl / Barcelona / Bordeaux / Bratislava / Brussels / Budapest / Chernivtsi / Cologne / Constanta / Cordoba / Cracow / Dublin / Edinburgh / Florence / Geneva / The Hague / Helsingborg / Iasi / Izhevsk / Kazan / Kiev / Klaipeda / Kutaisi / Lisbon / Ljubljana / Lutsk / Lviv / Minsk / Montpellier / Mtskheta / Nicosia / Nis / Norwich / Odessa / Paris / Prague / Riga / Rome / Santiago de Compostela / Sarajevo / Sheki / South East Region of Malta / Strasbourg / Syzran / Tashkent / Termez / Veliko Tarnovo / Venice / Vienna / Vladimir / Zagreb

LATIN AMERICA

Cartagena / Cuenca / Cusco / Guadalajara / Mexico City

MIDDLE EAST

Ankara / Ardabil / Baghdad / Bursa / Hebron / Isfahan / Istanbul / Jerusalem / Kashan / Kong / Konya / Nayshabur / Osmangazi / Sanliurfa / Semnan / Shiraz / Tabriz / Yazd

NORTH AMERICA

Boston / Montreal / Quebec City

PACIFIC

Ballarat / Melbourne / Norwood Payneham and St. Peters / Whanganui

Contents

- *Report of the 17th World Conference of Historical Cities - Kazan*
- *Introduction of a New Member City - Himeji*
- *Host City of the 18th World Conference - Andong*

June 24-26, 2021



The 17th World Conference of Historical Cities in Kazan

We are pleased to report that the 17th World Conference of Historical Cities was successfully held in Kazan, Russia. It was the first hybrid-format conference in the League's history under the theme "Historical and Cultural Heritage as the Basis of National and Regional Identity." According to the report from the City of Kazan, 65 cities of 20 countries and regions participated in the conference and 500 audiences watched the livestreaming.

The conference started with the welcome speech by the Mayor of Kazan, then the performance of the conference's theme song was staged by the artists in Kazan accompanied with the beautiful scenery of the city projected on a big screen. It was truly a moving opening of the conference.

During the conference, a message from the Chairperson Kadokawa was given online and some representatives of the cities in attendance made speeches onsite in Kazan as well as online. In addition, presentations were made at four sessions. I believe that all participants shared a very meaningful time and opportunity together.

We would like to express my sincere gratitude to the conference organizers for their excellent hospitality in welcoming onsite participants and for their tremendous efforts in making the conference available online. Congratulations on the success of the conference, and we thank all the people involved in Kazan and all the participants of the conference.

The LHC Secretariat



The conference recordings are available at <http://lhc2021.kzn.ru/>

Kazan Declaration

We, the Mayors, political leaders and experts in the field of preserving the heritage of cities all over the world, have gathered at the 17th World Conference of Historical Cities in June 2021 in the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan - the city of Kazan - and endorse the following:

1. Historical and cultural heritage is a basis for the successful development of civilization, the intellectual potential of countries and a key instrument for strengthening dialogue between multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities. The preservation, protection, promotion and effective use of historical heritage and the protection of global environment as their prerequisites remain a priority in the era of globalization. Today, we are faced with the common challenge of accelerating the development of the global information society, the economy, the means of transportation, and the integration of nations into the world system. The worldwide process of globalization has made it possible to expand cultural ties among peoples, whereas it has threatened to undermine cultural identity. Our aim is to ensure the preservation of historical heritage sites, the identity of peoples, the accessibility of cultural heritage sites to everyone, and the dissemination of cultural (material and spiritual) values to the younger generation.
2. Every individual is linked to the past, present and future, and rooted in the history, traditions of the family and its people. The participation of every citizen in the flourishing of the cultural environment and respect for traditions and culture shape the life orientations of the individual. We commit ourselves to preserving and restoring historical and cultural monuments that are cherished memory of the people.
3. It is very important for us to carry out renovation works and to preserve the historical appearance of the cities and tourist sites. It is the historical and cultural potential of settlements and small towns that can serve as a special resource for economic and social development, help to create cultural and tourist programs, increase employment, support education, and enhance patriotism.
4. The diversity of languages is one of the main aspects of cultural diversity, since language is a reflection of the consciousness of people, a means of transmitting cultural experiences and self-expression. The challenge of preserving cultural and linguistic diversity is being discussed worldwide. Our mission is to prevent the decline of the languages of small ethnic groups and the extinction of the languages in general.
5. The other most important task for us is the preservation of cultural identity, which can be achieved by preserving the ethnic characteristics of different peoples and creating a single cultural space. Cultural identity can be expressed through the preservation of ethnic languages, and through the identification of an individual with an appropriate set of traditions, values, customs and many others. Over the course of a lifetime, a person manages to learn about only a small part of the cultural heritage. Therefore, we are committed not only to introducing the established cultural values to the current generation, but also to passing on the national heritage to the next generations and to mutually enriching different cultures with this heritage.
6. Given the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, we should best ensure that the population has access to culture through the use of online technologies and digital platforms.
7. We consider it our duty to preserve the continuity and connection of generations, historical memory as a support of consciousness, the formation of humanistic attitudes and universal values among students based on cultural heritage. It is easier for a person who has these ideas to get closer to other people, to sympathize with them, and to take part in a dialogue with representatives of different cultures.

Therefore, we are committed to developing the culture, preserving the languages, histories and traditions of the peoples of the world, promoting the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups within the cities and passing on cultural values to future generations as a national treasure, and achieving the SDGs by these efforts.

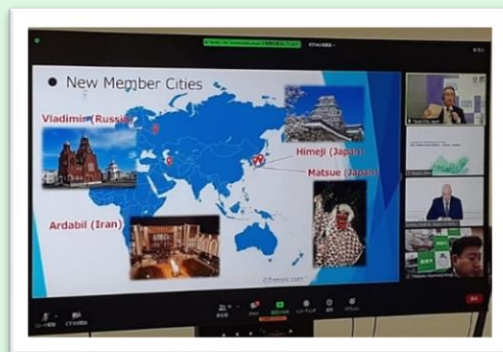
Outline of the Board Meeting & General Assembly for FY2021

Prior to the World Conference, the FY2021 Board of Directors' Meeting was held online on June 16, 2021. All the Board of Director Cities attended the meeting and approved the following agenda:

- ◆ New Member Cities
- ◆ FY2020 Activity and Financial Report
- ◆ FY2021 Activities and Budget Plan

The candidate host cities for the 18th World Conference gave presentations online, and the Board of Director Cities decided the host by vote.

At the FY2021 General Assembly on June 25, 2021, the aforementioned deliberation results were reported. Also, each representative of the new member cities such as **Ardabil (Iran)**, **Himeji (Japan)**, **Matsue (Japan)** and **Vladimir (Russia)** gave greetings either online, by video messages or at the conference venue in Kazan. At the end of the General Assembly, a video message was presented from **the Mayor of Andong**, the next host city (see p.6), and the meeting was closed.



In Harmony with World Heritage

Himeji City is located at the heart of the vast Harima Plain in the southwestern region of Hyogo Prefecture. With the Harima-nada portion of the Seto Inland Sea to the south, where approximately 40 islands of various sizes make up the Ieshima Archipelago, as well as the towering Chūgoku Mountains to the north, Himeji is blessed with a rich natural environment and thriving agricultural and fishing industries. Given its advantageous geographic position, the city developed over hundreds of years into an important connecting point for travel from east to west and north to south.

It is impossible to discuss Himeji without mentioning Himeji Castle. The history of the castle dates back over 400 years when, in 1581, Oda Nobunaga's prominent military retainer, Hashiba (Toyotomi) Hideyoshi, had the castle fortress constructed in order to strengthen their defenses against the opposing Mōri clan. The area developed into an enormous castle town following the extensive eight-year-long reconstruction of the castle ordered by Tokugawa Ieyasu's son-in-law, Ikeda Terumasa, in 1601, in addition to the construction of three large moats surrounding the fortress which remain to this day. Honda Tadamasa, a loyal retainer of the Tokugawa Shogunate, became the lord of Himeji Castle in 1617 and completed the construction of the castle after ordering the erection of a series of palaces in the San-no-maru Bailey. From this point onward and throughout the Edo period, Himeji Castle remained a stable stronghold that, under the rule of prominent retainers close to the shogunate, managed to avoid destruction.

Himeji City



JAPAN



At the dawn of the Meiji Restoration in 1867, many fortresses across the country lay abandoned and their main keeps, watch towers and other defensive structures were demolished one by one. Fortunately, Himeji Castle's main keep and watch towers managed to escape this crisis intact. However, almost all the buildings emblematic of the Edo period were demolished, including the palaces and samurai residences. Soldiers from the Imperial Japanese Army were stationed on the former site of the palaces and Himeji became a city that served an important military function. At the end of World War II, the city was dealt a devastating blow and the prosperous area surrounding the castle was reduced to ashes as a result of fierce air-raids launched by the U.S. Army in 1945, yet Himeji Castle miraculously escaped the destruction unscathed.

As the city lay in ruins, displaced victims were temporarily housed on the former military grounds surrounding the castle and, despite the difficulties they faced, were able to get some respite and encouragement on the quiet grounds of the castle. The city was reborn following its reconstruction in which the 50m wide street Otemae-dori was constructed to form a straight line from Himeji Station to Himeji Castle, the symbol of the city.

The extensive restoration project of Himeji Castle, which had been an important Cultural Property since before World War II, was finally finished in 1964 with the completion of the main keep. Around this time, the city began to focus on developing the area around the castle which had been thrown into chaos during the restoration. Gradually, various facilities were constructed on the grounds surrounding the castle. A traditional Japanese garden named Kokoen was constructed to the west of the castle on the former site of the samurai residence. Underground electric lines were installed in the area beneath the castle, and the Himeji Center for Research into Castles and Fortification was built as a base for research into fortresses, as well as other facilities such as the Hyogo Prefectural History Museum. A red-brick building which had previously been used as a warehouse by the Japanese army was renovated, registered as a Tangible Cultural Property and then converted into the Himeji City Museum of Art. Through these developments, the area has evolved from a new perspective, reflective of Himeji Castle's unique and multilayered history.

Having overcome countless threats and challenges throughout its history, Himeji Castle was designated Japan's very first World Heritage Site in 1993 and became a treasure of the world. As a member of the League of Historical Cities, Himeji City remains committed to playing a leading role in Japanese cultural heritage and to creating a historic city that is worthy of Japan's first World Heritage Site.

2022 Host City of the 18th World Conference



Hahoe Village – UNESCO World Heritage

Andong is located in the Northern part of North Gyeongsang province in South Korea. Andong has 5,000 years of history and tradition, including well-preserved ancient Buddhist, Confucian, and Christian cultures, which uniquely exist together.

Andong, the Capital of Korean Spirit, is known as a center of culture of folk traditions of Korea.

In April 1999, the Queen Elizabeth II of England visited Andong, the major landmark of Korea to see the traditional cultural life and breadth of Korea's long history, during her official visit to Korea.



Hahoe byeolsingut talnori Mask Dance Drama



Andong, Republic of Korea



Notice from the Secretariat



We kindly ask all members for paying annual membership fee for FY2021 as soon as possible. In principle, the membership fee should be paid by remittance to the designated bank account; however, if you wish to use PayPal, contact the Secretariat.



The call for candidate cities to host the 19th World Conference will be issued soon. The application procedures will be posted on the official website. If any city is interested in applying, contact the Secretariat.