

DAMASCUS 2020: THE VISION FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION-continued

proposals late in the process and by accident when discussing another matter with Syrian authorities; they report that they do not consider that they have adequate details of the proposals. The UNESCO World Heritage Centre will report about the state of conservation in Damascus regarding the development of the King Faisal project during the annual meeting of the World Heritage Committee next June. Should the proposed project be implemented, the World Heritage Committee could consider listing the Ancient City of Damascus on the World Heritage List in Danger.

G. It would also appear in the case of King Faisal Street proposals that there has been a weakness in terms of transparency and consistency in presenting information to stakeholders in particular the

local residents. Some distress, confusion and antagonism could be avoided with future similar proposals if there was greater effective involvement from the start. It would also seem that the views of academic institutions and NGOs have not been adequately sought or responded to.

H. In preparing the King Faisal Street proposals it would appear that the impact of the scheme in terms of broader policy issues involved in urban structural decisions has not been considered adequately.

I. It is clear that the King Faisal area proposals are controversial and subject to much technical disagreement on a number of points including urban structural issues, heritage protection, traffic management, the environment, economic



development, great social impact and urban design. Full opportunity should be taken of all the available relevant expertise both local and international and the implementation of a preliminary impact assessment study is a crucial requirement for any proposed project.

From the above observations arise a number of proposed action points:

1. An independent review mechanism should be established to consider the various visions on urban development in Syria and a clear statement of direction together with implementation guidelines should be identified so that they can be followed by all Governmental agencies whilst planning for urban development and transportation in Syrian cities and villages.

