



## SAIA HERITAGE POLICY THE ROBBEN ISLAND HERITAGE VISION

### 1.0 PREAMBLE :

At a meeting of the Regional Heritage Representatives of SAIA held on Robben Island on 9/10 August 2001 it was resolved that :

In recognition of complex cultural landscapes in South Africa and the role of the built environment within those landscapes, the Robben Island Heritage Vision would relate the aims of the Constitution of South Africa, particularly the Bill of Rights dealing with the environment to the management of those complex cultural landscapes.

The spirit of Robben Island should live on through this Heritage Policy Document which would ensure that the contribution of the diverse cultural groups within our country to their environment should be respected and conserved to the best of our collective ability.

### 1.1 Preamble of the Constitution of South Africa

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We, the people of South Africa,  
Recognise the injustices of our past;  
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;  
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and  
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.  
We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.  
God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.  
Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.

### 1.2 From Chapter 2, the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa

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#### Environment

24. Everyone has the right;
- a. to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
  - b. to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that ;
    - i. prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
    - ii. promote conservation; and
    - iii. secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.
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### **1.3 The spirit of this vision**

"While we will not forget the brutality of apartheid, we will not want Robben Island to be a monument of our hardship and suffering. We would want it to be a triumph of the human spirit against the forces of evil. A triumph of wisdom and largeness of spirit against small minds and pettiness; a triumph of courage and determination over human frailty and weakness; a triumph of the new South Africa over the old"

Ahmed Kathrada (Prisoner no. 468/64, imprisoned for 26 years)

## **2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERPRETATION :**

It was agreed to adopt the ICOMOS Burra charter and, possibly, to develop a South African Addendum to the Charter.

(We are mindful of the amount of hours that have gone into developing the Burra Charter and see it as a document that can be adapted to the South African context).

### **2.1 The Burra Charter (Annexure A)**

## **3.0 STRATEGIES FOR SAIA HERITAGE POLICY**

### **Strategy 1 - Networking at all levels**

Action plans :

- Network globally with heritage movements and particularly with those based in Africa.
- Assist government and client groups, at all levels, in the recognition of the social and economic value of cultural heritage conservation.
- Arrange annual meetings of SAIA Regional Heritage Committees and regular report backs on heritage activities, comment on legislation and conservation administration.
- Establish a database of conservation architects.

### **Strategy 2 - Promote cultural heritage**

Action plans :

- Promote cultural heritage particularly with regard to the cultural landscape of the built environment.
- Establish archives, create a database and encourage architects to contribute material to archives.
- Organize peer group reviews to recognize and publicise excellent examples of conservation.
- Assist with initiatives to measure up and record our cultural environment and particularly those that are threatened.
- Raise public and government awareness to attain community backing on conservation issues with a view to develop strategies to manage these resources.

### **Strategy 3 - Provide appropriate training**

Action plan :

- Ensure that appropriate aspects of heritage conservation appreciation are taught at all levels of education and particularly tertiary architectural courses.
- Provide on going continual professional development in architectural conservation.
- Hold workshops and other appropriate events, such as tours or information packages, to ensure that conservation remains on the lifelong agenda of architects.
- Make sure that allied professionals are also made aware of the special needs of architectural conservation.