

Press Statement

6 January 2021

## **George Town World Heritage Incorporated Wins Exemplary Practice Award for Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage from UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management**

GEORGE TOWN: George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI) General Manager Dr Ang Ming Chee has won the Exemplary Practice Award in Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage. She was among 152 heritage professionals worldwide vying for the award, which was presented by the Institute of Disaster Mitigation for Urban Cultural Heritage, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto (R-DMUCH), and International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM).

Dr Ang received the Exemplary Practice Award for the practice entitled ‘Disaster Risk Management for George Town World Heritage City, Malaysia’ during the UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management’s Workshop on Good Practices for Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage organised by R-DMUCH and ICCROM from 8 to 10 October 2020. The workshop aimed to showcase good practices on disaster risk management of cultural heritage and discuss the future directions based on the lessons learnt.

The Exemplary Practice Award recognises GTWHI’s efforts in enhancing the resilience of George Town UNESCO World Heritage Site through the implementation of community-based programmes in the Disaster Risk Management Action Plan. The programmes include legislation enhancement efforts in the George Town Special Area Plan, implementation of seven pilot projects from the Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction Capacity Training Series since 2018, establishment of emergency response teams, firefighting training for the local community to educate them on fire risks and improve mitigation strategies through disaster risk management, public awareness campaigns and first aid and automated external defibrillator (AED) training, the promotion of emergency to-go bags through multilingual Disaster Risk Management posters, the establishment of the First Aid for Cultural Heritage Emergency Team, and the distribution of free fire extinguishers and smoke detectors, among others.

“The Exemplary Practice Award is the result of the collective work of the George Town community who have supported GTWHI all these years. We thank UNESCO, ICCROM, R-DMUCH, and in particular the GTWHI Board of Directors and GTWHI team who have put their trust and support in making George Town World Heritage Site to be more resilient against disasters. The GTWHI team and I will continue to do our best in the George Town World Heritage Site management,” Dr Ang reported this to YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow, Chief Minister of Penang on 4 December 2020, after receiving the plaque and certificate from Japan.

During the workshop, Best Practice Awards were also presented to Elena Mamani of Albania and Dulce María Grimaldi of Mexico. The other finalists included Abdelhamid Salah Abdelhamid Sayed of Egypt, Junko Mukai and Dechen Tshering of Japan and Bhutan, Vanessa Anne Tanner of New Zealand, and Marcela Hurtado of Chile.

Dr Ang and the other award recipients were invited to Japan as resource persons for the International Training Course (ITC) on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage 2021.

The projects presented during the workshop will also be showcased on the websites of R-DMUCH and ICCROM.

A total of 152 participants from 62 countries have participated in the UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management, organised as part of the International Training Course (ITC) on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage since its establishment in 2006. The participants contribute to the field of disaster risk management with the knowledge and skills which they have learnt from the course.

For more details on the UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management, please visit <https://bit.ly/348R839>.

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**Photo Captions (photos attached to email):**

GTWHI Exemplary Practice\_1: Presentations by the finalists during the UNESCO Chair Programme on Cultural Heritage and Risk Management's Workshop on Good Practices for Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage organised by R-DMUCH and ICCROM from 8 to 10 October 2020.

GTWHI Exemplary Practice\_2: YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow, Chief Minister of Penang and Dr Ang Ming Chee with the Exemplary Practice Award in Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage plaque and certificate on 4 December 2020.

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