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Peking historic museum

AREP

The city and large-scale investments

Major facilities alone do not make a city. But by default, many city suburbs in both the north and the south are demonstrating the role of these public or private investments that structure human settlements, strengthen their identities and form the basis of their urbanity!

The management logics of these major facilities (whether station or shopping centre, theatre or stadium) tend not to facilitate good integration into the city. But in fact project developers, aware of the long-term importance of urban environmental quality, have adapted to planning rules and programmes that have enhanced the city and rewarded their investments in the long run.

The economic weight of major investments in urban economies is fairly stable. However, shorter financial cycles and the resulting pressure on decision times have made it more difficult to integrate major projects into the city. Planning schemes have been called into question, and now the very idea of mainstreaming initiatives into a development strategy conducted by public authorities is under debate.

But contributions to the one-day seminar on 6 September underlined the importance for investors, cities and communities alike, of the qualitative issues at stake in these strategies which aim to make all the partners pull together. Realistic solutions

still have to be invented which, as Georges Mercadal concluded, will help us learn to “get big elephants moving alongside small elephants”.

The importance of the strategic guidance function was stressed. This enables timeframes of investors, procedures and the city itself to be properly managed. Elected representatives can legitimately lay claim to this function, as demonstrated by Henri Chabert and Oumar Santara. The different configurations encountered in Siem Reap or in Peking highlight other essential sources of legitimacy.

A number of ideas were put forward: using “events” to mobilize investors and sustainably improve the operation of services; imagining and defending an image, or a city atmosphere right to the end; and associating all the stakeholders and inhabitants in the success of a project.

The commitment to more lasting exchanges of experience based on a frank assessment of not only the successes but also the limitations and difficulties, could probably help to strengthen “urban territories” in their dialogue with project developers, whose methods are rationalized on a global scale. ■

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President,

Association de Professionnels Développement Urbain et Coopération (AdP)

Cities of South-East Asia and large-scale projects

Charles Goldblum, Professeur des Universités

Chairman of the PRUD Scientific Committee (Urban Development Research Programme)

The changes being wrought in cities of South-East Asia¹ may be less spectacular in their effects than urban transformations of large Chinese cities, but they are nonetheless of special interest for work and discussion on new ways of producing cities in contexts of accelerating metropolization.

One of the major characteristics of urban production in these contexts is the interaction between mega-urbanization and mega-projects. In other words, the transformation of urban areas, in terms of fringe growth and core area verticalization or the replanning of urban functions, is now due not so much to demographic processes as to the implementation of major urban projects.

The major residential and industrial development programmes conducted on the outskirts of Bangkok and Jakarta, following in the wake of major road infrastructure projects, were brought to a halt because of the 1997-1998 "Asian crisis" – which was not only a stockmarket and financial crisis but also a real estate and urban crisis. Yet this did not call project logics into question but seemed rather to result in the selection of viable or core projects (completion of two overhead railway lines and a new river bridge in Bangkok, continuation of the Japanese-controlled "Kota Bukit Indah" industrial development area project on the Jakarta-Bandung route) or the regaining of public authority control of contracted development operations in countries with a formerly administered economy (such as the "Hanoi New Town" multi-partner development project on both banks of the Red River).

The idea is thus taking hold that major projects will be a sustainable driving force in the

urban development of South-East Asia. The new cities are emblematic figures of this type of development, as shown by key projects such as Lunule 21 in Singapore or Lutra Jaya for the "Multimedia Super-Corridor" in Kuala Lumpur. These active agents in the development of metropolitan regions and in the somewhat agitated land conversion occurring there, are becoming the key to membership of the major metropolises "club" for political and/or economic capitals of countries in transition towards a market economy. Yet the close interaction between these projects and transport infrastructure planning, their linkages with programmes for technology parks and service or leisure facilities, take on a broader dimension in the typology of megaprojects that produce urban fringe transformations and new attributes of urban centrality, and in the complexity of partnerships with their contracts and financial packages.

The fact that urban production – or even sector-based management – in the fields of housing, infrastructure and sectoral cities is increasingly being transferred towards new contractual frameworks – joint ventures, operating concessions, BOT (Build-Operating-Transfer) contracts etc. – is multiplying cases of "urban franchise", particularly for new cities, and for the industrial zones with which they are often involved.

This interplay in the

metropolization process, between change in scale and complexification of projects, is one of internationalization, whether of operators and the purpose of their operations or of the citymaking methods themselves. This is also the case for smaller capitals such as Phnom Penh and Vientiane (about a million inhabitants for the former and 300,000 inhabitants for the latter), which are outside the large networks concerned by metropolization, but whose economic opening to the outside world accentuates the urban primacy. Their urban planning and housing activities are part of more complex processes marked by new requirements for environmental or heritage issues, often put forward by international donors (UNDP, World Bank, Asian Development Bank).

The context of this internationalization of urban production, which partly ties in with industrial relocation strategies, requires some thought to be given to the effects, or even the risks, of a segmental urban development method working through projects or contractual delegations. As there is increasing pressure for urban projects to be undertaken in the land, water, energy and transport sectors, and as "urban quality" is now a criterion for the location of international investments, these basic components of urban operation are becoming discriminating factors of access to citizenship. But except for Singapore, there

are few situations in which urban development is organized on a package basis, because partial logics of often-compartmentalized projects and supranational decision centres are tending to replace urban policies (or to dismiss the prospect).

Structurally, it is the control, coordination and regulation that the public authorities are supposed to implement towards development that is at stake. This concerns control over space and conflict of usage, which demonstrate the requirements of external investors and operators, but also control over time insofar as the nature and scope of projects incur heavy medium and long term investment. That is another way of introducing the sustainable development issue.

In this respect, South-East Asian metropolization throws light not only on the new urban situation but also, through the question of partnerships and forms of contracts used in urban projects, on the intervention logics that are redefining cooperation frameworks and rules in the urban planning field. ■

1. See Villes en Développement, No. 55 "South-East Asia", March 2002

The City and major investments:

The Great National Theatre Project in China

Felipe Starling, Deputy General Manager, ADP International Engineering

The Great National Theatre, situated in Chang'An Avenue opposite the Forbidden City, flanked by the Great Hall of the People and just a stone's throw from Tien An Men Square, is at the symbolic heartland of Chinese power and authority. It is one of the flagship projects of a changing Beijing at the dawn of the 21st century. Designed by the Architect Paul Andreu in association with ADP Group Ingenierie, its characteristics make it a rich testimony to today's society in China and the transformations being wrought there.

The Great National Theatre of China has had its place in Beijing's urban programmes since the early 1960s, when Tien An Men Square and the area around it was being planned.

40 years and 13 architecture competitions later (12 national and one recent international competition), the protected site on Chang'An Avenue, opposite the Hall of the People (National Assembly) is at last in a frenzied agitation of work in the groundbreaking context of immense change in this city.

This belated impetus to action on the sensitive subject of culture is undoubtedly the expression of modern Chinese history and its political transformations. At all events, it leaves behind it a whole generation of Ministry of Culture architects and programmers who have dedicated their entire professional lives to this project and who now see the object of their desire in the hands of a foreign architect.

It is as much the nature of this investment (a first-class cultural complex including an opera hall, theatre and concert hall), as its economic and physical dimension (400 million euros for 150,000 m² of construction) and its geographic location that readily give it national and political importance.

The building is huge. A concrete socle descending 25

metres below ground level contains all the technical activities of the complex:

theatrical space and scenery storage, scenery workshops, dressing rooms, rehearsal rooms, sound and video recording studios, video production studios, etc. Three entertainment halls emerge from this socle, each of which is superb as regards size and quality

ambition: 2,500 seats for the opera, 1,050 seats for the theatre and 2,000 seats for the concert hall. This is covered by a titanium elliptical dome which encompasses the three entertainment halls making up the "theatre hub", where vast interior living spaces will be centres of activity. The 45 metre high dome (a few centimetres lower than the Hall of the People, a symbolic must!), with a wider span of 210 metres and a

narrower span of 150 metres, is clad with external titanium panels and an inner wooden



lining. It is divided into two by broad glass lights in the centre. The technical feat of completing this project is matched by the skill demonstrated by the Chinese builders in charge of the project.

The project management framework now extends beyond the City of Beijing. The Proprietor Committee of the Great National Theatre, with a membership of representatives

of the City of Beijing, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Construction, and chaired by a representative of the City of Beijing, was initially the steering body, with some degree of decisional autonomy regarding the life of the project. When criticism grew more heated – with a storm of protests against the building's Western architecture, its technical viability, its cost, or

even the necessity for such a facility in Beijing, not to mention its contribution to the destruction of the traditional city – the Planning Commission firmly took control of the project and reported back directly to the group of four leaders. Most of the decisions on the life of the project were thus taken at the highest level: approval of feasibility studies and the preliminary design, issuing of site and building

permits. To silence the critics – which is doubtless the archetypal method of government in China – the leaders decided to revert *stricto sensu* to the project execution rules resulting from the competition: programme, surface area and costs.

The theatre project is in fact merely one of the thousands of projects setting Beijing astir. The city, which is already frantically preparing for the Olympic Games in 2008, is undergoing profound change,

the dynamics of which are doubtless as much political as economic and speculative: “If you can’t change the system, change the setting”¹

It may be a regrettable fact that this change indiscriminately sacrifices countless ancient districts, with all the social consequences that implies, but at all events it is a breath of fresh air for architecture, which is bound to affect the cultural world as a whole.

On the one hand, the authorities call on the services of

recognized foreign architects to set the seal on architectural renewal in China for certain flagship projects, and on the other hand, young Chinese architects are entrusted with sites measuring hundreds of thousands of square metres – in a context of plastic expression liberated by bold foreign innovations.

The controversy over the architectural quality of the Great National Theatre is thus already fading into the past and is being

replaced by a desire in intellectual circles for these facilities to be operational in the near future, to show the new face of the Beijing of the 21st century and thus give concrete expression to the establishment of cultural modernity in China. ■

1. Eric Meyer : Sois riche et tais-toi! Portrait de la Chine moderne. Robert Laffont.

A city, temples and an airport

Vincent Piron, Director of Strategy and Development, Vinci Concessions

Siem Reap is a perfect example of the absolute necessity to achieve symbiosis between the development of urban quality, interurban transport services (road, river, airport) and efficient management of the archaeological heritage.

How can the economy of the archaeological site of Angkor, the City of Siem Reap and the Airport be optimized for the benefit of Cambodia as a whole.

Siem Reap is a perfect example of the absolute necessity to achieve symbiosis between the development of urban quality in its broadest sense, interurban transport services (road, river, airport) and efficient management of the archaeological heritage.

No efficient management of the archaeological heritage means no tourists, hence no city and no transport. No transport means no tourists, hence no city. No welcoming city means a deterioration in the quality of the archaeological visit, hence no tourists.

Beginning to get organized

The Cambodian authorities addressed the overall problem

by order of priority: first the archaeology, then the airport and then the city. For the archaeology, an administrative structure was set up with France’s help: APSARA. This authority is in charge of organizing visits, supervising the monuments, and commercial development and urban planning of the archaeological site and its surroundings. For Siem Reap Airport, a concession contract was signed with the only possible company – the one that already handled the takings of the airport of Phnom Penh, the capital, and which was therefore relatively unconcerned by the distribution of traffic between the two airports. For the city, the subject was more complex. A plan and regulations were drawn up in 1995, but the dynamics of the political resources and the economic reality sometimes conflicted with urbanistic regulations...

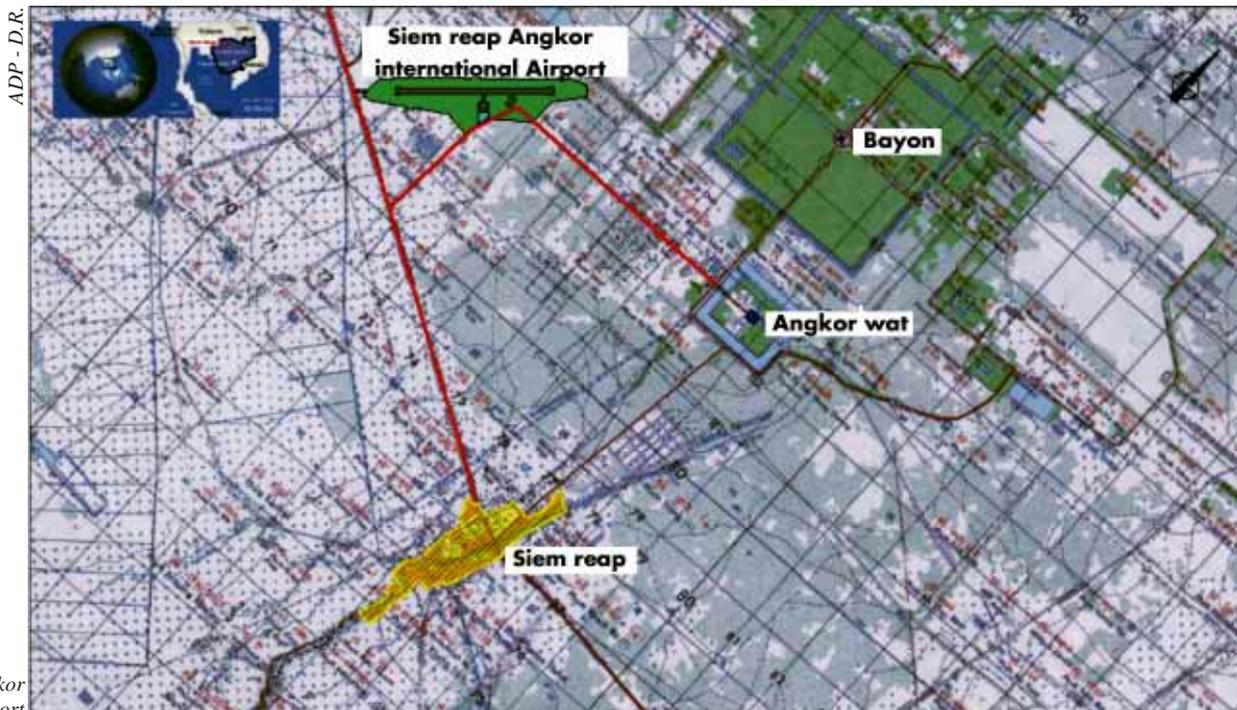
An airport is merely a gateway, not a tourist destination

An airport is not a place to be visited but to be used. It is a necessary, but not sufficient condition of development of a region’s activity, and its own economic equilibrium depends on the region’s development. For the present airport, the problem was complicated by the fact that its location is in the protected archaeological area. The first step was therefore to remove the stumbling block of its service life. The construction of a new site would take at least ten years and cost 400 million US\$, which is the State budget for one year. Impossible. As for making a grant for this project, is that really a priority for Cambodia? Luckily, we were able to show that the airport could handle 2.5 million passengers per year without the flight paths passing over the temples or Angkor Thom,

hence without any technical risks or any disturbance for the visitors, who would not look kindly on an Airbus in the same field of view as Angkor Vat.

The Buddhist temples are still active, and more and more devotees will come and mix tourism with religious fervour. Although tourism is growing fast in Siem Reap, in ten years’ time, it will not amount to more than three million visitors per year. Moreover, if the growth of tourist activity were to go further or faster, this would have a damaging effect. Less than half of these tourists would fly (1.2 million), which corresponds precisely to the 2.5 million passengers scheduled (arrival + departure + transit). The economic system is therefore coherent.

When airport investments are decided, good implementation of the business plan is necessary if they are to be profitable, which means good management of tourism in its broadest sense: visits, accommodation, food, sanitary conditions, entertainments and activities that are not strictly archaeological, etc.



Siem Reap - Angkor International Airport

The need for an overall equation

Once it was understood that the airport could not be considered separately from the city and the temples, our group went into action.

First idea: What do tourists do when they fly in to Siem Reap and are services available to meet their requirements?

They have a drink, go to the hotel, take a room, book a guide and go and have a look round. They have meals, expect to see clearly at night, not be too hot, enjoy themselves (archaeology is austere) and buy souvenirs. The idea was to reconstruct the economic life of tourists (foreigners and their facilities) to see whether or not the money flows would enable the required infrastructure to be built. We thus worked with an urban planning specialist (Michel Gérard) to reconstruct the economic equations of each of the stakeholders (APSARA, hotels, guest houses, restaurants, guides, urban transport, golf courses, water and electricity suppliers, museums, artisans, banks). Each line of

this economic equations contains the funding sources (through taxes or customers, with a likely pricing policy assumption), operating costs and investment levels.

This study shows that the overall economic equation works well, provided that central government does not take back the entire resources from the admission tickets to the temples, but leaves part of it to them.

The second idea was to suggest to countries and to the Cambodian government that there should be a coordination of grants. Rather than waiting for the grants proposed by donor countries and taking what comes (six countries have each proposed to donate a museum), each benefactor must be asked to provide a grant that is consistent with the others. In short, an overall investment plan must be drawn up.

Practical implementation by the Vinci Group

Firstly, the decision-makers in the group had to be made to realise that the concession

activity does not merely consist in collecting takings from good honest tourists who only come if they want to, but whose wants must be anticipated. This anticipation exercise is not often performed because usually the concessionaire has little control over customers: In the water and roads sector, which is the group's basic culture, end customer choices do not greatly depend on the daily commercial management of the infrastructure.

Then the national authorities had to be persuaded that a global vision of the city-temple-airport question was necessary and that the weakest link of the chain is the one that determines the turnover of the other two. In Cambodia, a country lacking even the minimum social facilities, excessive infrastructure investment would be a crime. Supply must therefore be coordinated with demand as closely as possible.

Lastly, the international authorities must be persuaded that a private group can be a valid partner, even when the interests of an entire country are at stake. In fact, people who talk

about "public-private partnership" day in day out, find it difficult to acknowledge a private company as a "real partner". In this respect, UNESCO was a model of speed and efficiency, going so far as to organize a presentation of the overall economic rationale and the method of applying it, at the meeting of the international commission that helps with the management of temples.

We are at present validating economic estimations with the various partners and we will quickly be passing on to the practical implementation. At the signing of our additional concession contract last year, a certain sum was scheduled to help in the structuring of tourism. As soon as the government has given us its formal agreement to the overall plan, we will know how best to use it. ■

The impact of the African Nations Cup (ANC) in Ségou

Oumar Santara, Mayor of Ségou (Mali)

Not only major facilities but also an event on an international scale can act as a lever for local authorities to affirm their legitimacy versus the central authorities and mobilise their people around public interest projects.

In a city such as Ségou, the organization of the ANC was an opportunity to sharpen awareness of decentralization challenges, demonstrate the accountability of the elected representatives and mobilize the people in favour of shared urban management. When Mali decided to opt for decentralization in 1992, we did not know which tools we would need and we were unable to gauge the authorities' financial capacity. It was at that time that the President agreed to organize the ANC, with the idea that it was to be an engine for development. It was up to the host cities to give substance to this idea.

How were we to prove equal to the challenge in Ségou? It was naturally impossible for the

officials to stay in our mud houses. Private operators could only offer small hotels quite unable to cater for an influx of 15 to 20,000 people as announced. The Ségou municipality did not have the means to invest billions. We were mobilizing all our energies. But would we be able to think in terms of planning strategies and development of our city while requiring the private sector – and not only that of Ségou – to make the investments?

With the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Mali and private operators, we set up a programme of villages, to be financed by the operators, with the municipality providing the land and handling roads, sanitation and drainage. I

signed a real contract with these operators and the relevant public departments, the Department of Urban Planning and Housing, and the Department of Sanitation and Public Works, to find planning solutions for a space that we did not impose on operators who agreed to invest two billion CFAF. In this respect, the challenge was met and sixty-three villas were built to receive the official delegations in the most comfortable conditions.

Mali was losing several billion CFAF per year because it was unable to implement projects funded by donors. For that reason, during a visit of the Prime Minister to Ségou, I requested that all funds granted under national and international development aid should be

directly allocated to local authorities.... Thus began a two-year saga, at a rate of one meeting per month with the highest State authorities and all the ministerial departments concerned.

Everyone is aware of the problem of African cities, with their open dumps and their insalubrious markets... We had to mobilize the entire population towards a change in behaviour as regards sanitation. In the various neighbourhoods, with all the partners – technical departments, neighbourhood chiefs, private operators, associations and economic groups – I set up neighbourhood committees in charge of a hygiene policy. We provided shovels, wheelbarrows, donkeys and carts. The people

Publications



Sustainable partnerships for city development: report of the annual public policy forum of the Cities Alliance: 9-12 December 2001, Kolkata, India.- Washington: Cities Alliance, 2002.- 28p., col. phot.

This report is a follow-up to the annual forum of the "Cities Alliance" programme that took place from 9 to 12 December 2001 in Kolkata. This forum was an opportunity for leading urban development stakeholders to hold discussions and share experiences on the subject of development strategies, the participation of civil society, evictions and the case of Kolkata. It emphasized the need for partnerships between governments and civil society.

La Fragmentation en question: des villes entre fragmentation spatiale et fragmentation sociale, directed by Françoise Navez-Bouchanine.- Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002.- 411 p., notes, maps, bibliogr.

This publication deals with socio-spatial differentiations of the city, and more particularly the fragmentation concept. The contributions concern three themes: analysis and inventory of places of fragmentation and expressions used, an insight into the empirical realities of cities in the North and in the South, and a demonstration of the social effects of urban policies based on or made legitimate by the prevention of fragmentation.

Price: 33.50 Eur

La Médina de Marrakech. Formation des espaces urbains d'une ancienne capitale du Maroc, by Quentin Wilbaux.- Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001.- 381p., maps, plans, phot., bibliogr.

This publication analyses and describes the spatial, social and cultural logics that shaped the Marrakech Medina. It also contains a history of the city and themes that can help us to understand traditional Arab Muslim cities: the importance of water and gardens, privatization and sacralization of spaces by walls, enclosures and the marking of the centre, the orientation towards the Mecca.

Price: 30 Eur.

understood and accepted a supervisory support and advice system, merely expecting the municipality to provide training. We benefited from decentralized cooperation, under which Ségou is working with the city of Angoulême and benefiting from the expertise of its technicians (waterworks, CONAGA, Quality Control, etc...).

To create a Civil Safety service, the Angoulême fire brigade provided us with an ambulance and firefighting vehicles. We needed a proper medical platform. We negotiated the construction of a hospital with the Order of Malta but in the end, they were unable to supply their share in time and we set up an emergency platform and obtained the training of Mali doctors.

Ségou, with its fringe areas, has nearly 200,000 habitants. We made the most of the ANC to promote intercommunality, to initiate partnerships with neighbouring communes for management of safety, road traffic and people movements. This led us to create a new police station to the east of the city in order to handle a city-wide police cordon.

The ANC is also a cultural event; it was an opportunity to forge links with and between those in charge of local artistic

activities in order to produce new programmes, redynamise sectors inactive since the 1970s and induce all the inhabitants to “conceive their city” still further. In this respect, this event was also a federating factor, not only for the local public authorities but also for the people themselves, who were placed in a position of responsibility for the occasion.

We also sought to tackle the problem of pollution generated by the many outdated vehicles that come from Europe and have high mileage... but on that score sadly, we failed in the negotiations because the government refused our request to exempt taxis less than five years old from tax. The proposal aimed not only to renew local vehicle ownership but also to improve safety.

We thus used the ANC to begin making provision for comprehensive, consistent development including health, hygiene and sanitation as well as safety, public lighting and urban facilities, through a strong partnership between private operators, local authorities and the State. In a country in the process of decentralization, it was unrealistic to think that partnership between the State, public services, local authorities and the private

sector would be enough to promote development at the local level. But the ANC was a major event, and health, safety and protection issues were of prime importance. The preparation of the ANC led to a certain euphoria and the acceptance of the people as a whole. The people paid – the ordinary small garage hand paid 20/25,000 CFAF, which is a lot – whereas the affluent did not pay a centime and we could do nothing about it.

We definitely had problems: partially unoccupied ANC villages, two expensive training stadiums, a large 20,000 seat stadium that we do not know what to do with now. I have suggested to those who invested in lodgings, that they set up a housing organization structure to manage them as hotel accommodation and I would like to think that the recouped capital could be used as a productive investment...but Africa is not a land of business people but of “small timers”. The stadiums enabled us to satisfy student demands and the Ségou grammar school now has decent sports facilities. But as Mayor, I am not taking on the grand stadium because its maintenance would prevent me from carrying out the education programme. I cannot see to the upkeep of the turf when I have

no classroom benches, no beds or mattresses in the health centres... Choices just have to be made.

In the past two years Ségou has made up for forty years of inactivity, through the ANC, meetings with partners and general debate by urban stakeholders. And the organization of the ANC has given rise to a great economic and social momentum. The ANC has enabled us to think of our city in different terms. The structures were set up to manage this event with long-term interests in mind. I hope that the future will confirm this rebirth of Ségou which, thanks to the ANC, has been able to promote to a vast public its image as an ancient capital of the Kingdom of Andara. ■

<p style="transform: rotate(-30deg); font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Conferences Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Mobility for All • Children and the City • Society in Transition: Rebuilding partnerships 	<p>Urban Mobility for All</p>	<p>Children and the City</p>	<p>Society in Transition: Rebuilding partnerships</p>
	<p>The 10th World conference of CODATU (Cooperation for the Continuing Development of Urban and Suburban Transportation) has been held in Lomé, Togo, from 12 to 15 November. Its main theme was “Urban mobility for all. Different solutions according to the size of the cities”. The city of Lomé includes around one million inhabitants and sums up well the problem of mobility of all the people who live in the city, through the search for a balance between the various forms of transport, notably between moto-taxis and public transport. → Contact: http://www.codatu.org</p>	<p>This conference “Children and the City” is organized by the World Bank, Unesco, Unicef and AUDI and will be held in Amman, Jordan, from December 11 to 13, 2002. In a context of unprecedented urban growth of cities in the Middle East and North Africa, this conference will aim to encourage the combined initiatives of local governments, the private sector and civil society towards improving the living conditions of children in urban areas. A discussion forum will be provided for mayors and other policy-makers in the region. → Contact: http://www.araburban.org</p>	<p>This conference on governance and public-private partnerships, organized by the OECD and the Czech Ministry of Regional Development, will be held from 12 to 13 December 2002 in Cesky Krumlov. The themes of governance and partnership between the private sector and civil society will be at the centre of the meetings. Discussions will assess recent local governance experiences in the Czech Republic and the participation of civil society in this country only recently subject to the rules of representative democracy. → Contact: http://www.oecd.org</p>

News on cooperation

ISTED "Cities" Department

After three years at the head of the Isted "Cities" Department, François Croville, Public Works Divisional Engineer, has been appointed Head of the French Cooperation and Cultural Action Department in Angola. During his mission with Isted, he structured the "Cities" Department by integrating the different Isted activities in this sector, the "Villes en Développement" Documentation Centre and the Urban Development Research Programme, and he launched the programme on crisis prevention and recovery. He also broadened Isted's activities towards the new geographical areas of Latin America and South-East Asia, while strengthening the involvement of French actors in countries of the Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Anne Charreyron-Perchet, an Urban Planning specialist, has taken over from him since 1 October 2002.

She previously held the position of Deputy Director of Regional and International Action at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie de La Villette. Her mission is to build up international links with the main donors such as the World Bank, the European Union and the French Development Agency, through initiatives and facilities in urban fields, and to continue to develop the associated programmes (access to essential services) while strengthening leadership and information of international networks and partners in the sectors of business, expertise, education and research".

Xizhimen Station in Beijing

The Xizhimen project centres on the future international hub which groups together the main-line train (northwards), the regional train (Beijing north suburbs), the metro (line 3) and a bus station (18 lines).

The site is situated north-west of Beijing, on the edge of the 2nd ring road on the Xizhimen-Neidajie route. This site belongs to a private investment company "Beijing Huarong Investment Co. Ltd". It covers an area of 6 hectares, excluding the station, 0.4 ha of which is for a public square and 5.6 ha for the development of office activities, hotels and shops.

1.2 ha is reserved for the future Northern Beijing Railway Station.

Total surface area 75,000 m² including:

- shop space: 10,000m²
- office space: 10,000m²
- waiting and other areas: 5,700m²
- green spaces: 10,000m²
- bus station: 15,000m²
- car park: 12,000m²
- bicycle shed: 4,800m²
- hotel, shopping malls and others: 7,500m²

The height of the buildings (except high-rise) is limited to 30-45m.

All these activities are organized around the intermodal hub with a strong architectural expression that reflects the expansion of a new business district.

Historic Museum of Beijing

This is one of the major public buildings in Beijing, with a total surface area of 60,000 m², consisting of three volumes protected by a large rectangular horizontal roof covering, which sets off the building. It hosts cultural and festive events. In this big quadrangle, the project takes the form of three significant, characteristic architectural objects:

- The first of these objects, the "Treasure Room" (7,000 m²), in bronze, holds a large part of the collection of precious artefacts (jade, coinage, etching stamps, Beijing Opera, paintings).
- the second building volume, with wood-cladded internal walls, forms a "box" and holds temporary exhibitions (8,000 m²) on the ground floor, a permanent exhibition (10,000 m²) retracing the history of Beijing, and part of the collections (china, bronze, furniture, clothing, religious artefacts).
- The third component is a brickwork strip building that closes off the building on the south side and contains the media library.

The socle, the last part of the building on which this three-volume complex rests, groups together the areas adjoining the museum (shops, restaurants, conference room), temporary exhibition areas, the car park and technical rooms in the basement.

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Annual Meeting of the Consultative Group of the Cities Alliance Programme in Brussels on 8-9 October 2002

The meeting, which brought together donor countries, the World Bank and UN Habitat, mainly concerned an initial evaluation of the programme at the end of three years of operation, and the future course for 2003 in terms of both projects and action priorities. The projects financed up until now have focused on the financial aspects of housing and slum clearance, together with legal mechanisms to protect land

rights. In terms of development strategies for cities, emphasis is placed on the introduction of institutional mechanisms in favour of local economic development that will protect investments, and on local capacity building.

One of the main tasks of Cities Alliance is to disseminate knowledge, particularly in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, which is not a major target of projects at

present. The Cities Alliance Secretariat seeks to build on existing networks – networks of cities and networks of professionals such as Isted – to inform and develop discussions between professionals and urban policy-makers, particularly in French-speaking countries.

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