

FOREWORD

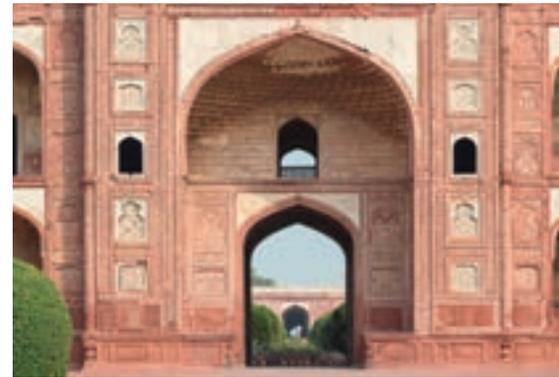
KAMRAN LASHARI, DIRECTOR GENERAL,
WALLED CITY OF LAHORE AUTHORITY

I pen these words with great pleasure on the occasion of the publication of this new volume on Lahore and on the work the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) has carried out in our city over the last twelve years. The Walled City of Lahore Authority, in partnership with AKTC, has meticulously and lovingly attempted to conserve and restore our heritage and past. It is not easy to undo the adverse effects of centuries of negligence, sporadic acts of malicious and deliberate damage and, of course, the inexorable decay of time, in addition to the presence of a vibrant and live city coexisting around and in this heritage.

In the public sector, I have served in positions such as deputy commissioner of Lahore, director general of the Parks and Horticulture Authority, and chief commissioner of Islamabad. My work, which has included creating Gawalmandi Food Street, restoring Mall Road buildings and Tollinton Market, and conserving Saidpur village near Islamabad, among others, reflects my passionate interest in cultural heritage, arts and beautification as a lifelong pursuit of excellence and perfection. I am cognizant of the impact of cultural heritage and art on civic life. Art is a repository of a society's collective memory. Sometimes art preserves historical records and heritage far better than factual historic records, simply because it enshrines the feel, vibe and colours of the moment. It captures the mood of the characters. It adds the vibrancy of a human soul and the depth of its emotion in a visual form that is far more expressive than words. It adds a dimension to history so that we can experience how it must have felt to live in that moment. Art is a bridge that allows people from different times to continue to communicate. It is a bridge that translates experiences and expressions across space and time. While working with AKTC, I have passionately sought to preserve these.

AKTC and its regional affiliate the Aga Khan Cultural Service-Pakistan (AKCS-P) have been working in the Walled City since 2007. In Pakistan, conservation was in its nascent stage and this work has enhanced understanding and appreciation of it. The Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA) is an autonomous body entrusted with the protection and management of historic Lahore. As Director General of the WCLA since 2012, partnership with AKTC/AKCS-P has been a priority. We are grateful to AKTC for having laid the foundations for a strong and long-lasting partnership premised on mutual respect.

The WCLA and AKTC/AKCS-P have achieved many milestones since 2012. In 2013 we initiated the conservation of the Shahi Hammam, the first monument conservation project executed in conformity with international standards, with co-funding from the



Opposite page, Badshahi Mosque. The courtyard seen from the prayer chamber.

Above, Shahdara, the Akbari Serai. Entrance to the Bagh-e-Dilkusha, containing Jahangir's Mausoleum.

Below, Lahore Fort. The Diwan-e-Khaas pavilion.



Left, a pavilion in the Shalimar Garden complex.

Right, Shalimar Garden. The Khwabgah, interior of the *dalaan* overlooking the first terrace.



Royal Norwegian Embassy. Its flawless execution and completion in 2015 were a significant accomplishment that received a UNESCO Award. The conservation of Wazir Khan Chowk was initiated in 2015 with assistance from the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation. Both sites date from the seventeenth-century Mughal era. The Shahi Hammam and Wazir Khan Mosque, with its *chowk* or forecourt, are jewels in the Walled City, and their conservation has been a great source of personal pride and satisfaction. Conserving such buildings is a testament to the indomitable will of those who seek to conserve history and restore the ravages of time. These monuments salute the perseverance and endurance of humanity to eternalize the aesthetic ideal. They have also garnered recognition and awareness. Together with current efforts to complete the conservation of the seventeenth-century Wazir Khan Mosque itself, which has been in dire need of attention for decades, ongoing and future projects include several initiatives in Lahore Fort (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), which forms the most distinguished and significant area of historic Lahore, with interventions proposed in its surrounding Buffer Zone.

Any good, and sustainable, conservation effort cannot take place in isolation. Especially in developing country contexts where financial support and technical expertise for historic preservation is limited, preservation projects benefit greatly from joint efforts in the form of 'Public-Private Partnerships'. In the case of Lahore's historic Walled City, as this book will demonstrate, such partnerships have fostered capacity development, improved socio-economic conditions, resulted in the conservation and protection of several historic properties, generated tourism and promised new avenues for future initiatives.

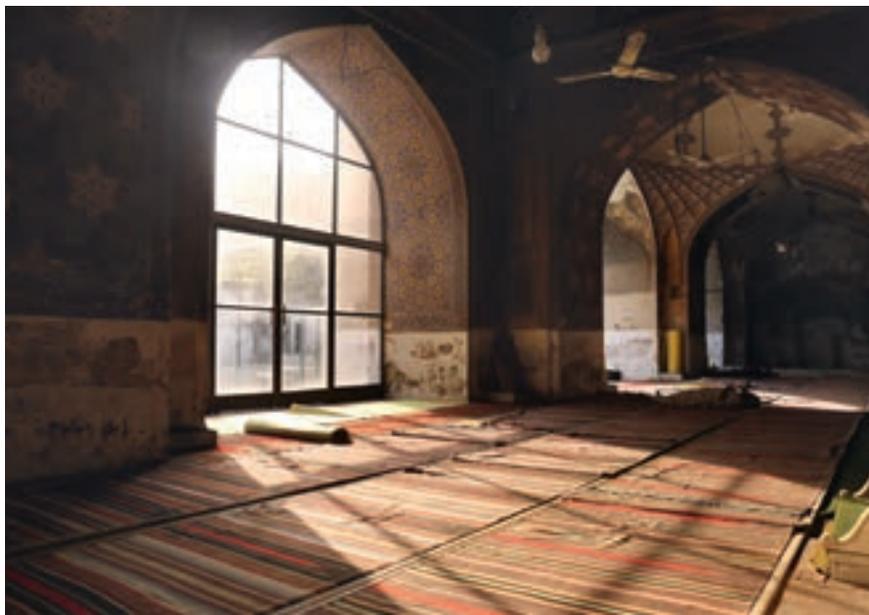
Since 1991 AKTC/AKCS-P's experience in the area of conservation in Pakistan has made available a workforce comprising professional architects, engineers, technicians and social scientists capable of engaging a complex environment such as

the Walled City of Lahore. Their partnership with the WCLA has provided a means to transfer some of these skills and expand the scale of the technical and social resources available. I strongly believe that capacity building – much more than the substantial financial resources brought in by AKTC and contributed by the government of Punjab – has been one of the most significant outcomes of the WCLA-AKTC/AKCS-P partnership, the benefits of which will be experienced for a long time to come. Among the gains we have made from this partnership is the knowledge that there is a profound relationship between the care, protection and enjoyment of our artistic and architectural heritage, on the one hand, and social and economic development, nation-building and the strengthening of collective identity, on the other. This relationship is visible in every instance of the work of AKTC in Lahore, and its work elsewhere in the country.

In Pakistan, where heritage conservation is often misconstrued as being limited to the protection and preservation of individual monuments, the work accomplished in the last few years offers a much-needed new perspective. The Mohalla demonstration project exemplified ways to rehabilitate historic quarters that are located in dense urban centres; the Shahi Guzargah project demonstrated the necessity and impact of urban conservation; the conservation of the Shahi Hammam entailed the adaptive reuse of the Mughal-period bathhouse into a museum; and the conservation of the Wazir Khan Chowk reclaimed a historic public space that had been encroached upon for decades.

For these initiatives in urban and monument conservation carried out in partnership with AKTC, I must express my gratitude to the government of Punjab for its consistent financial support, which has enabled compensating occupants removed from unauthorized buildings, the complete replacement of old infrastructure with modern water supply and sewerage, the introduction of storm-water drainage infrastructure, and, most of all, the removal of unsightly overhead wires and their placing underground. I must also acknowledge the untiring efforts of my colleagues in the Walled City of Lahore Authority for reaching out, working with and mobilizing the communities of the Walled City. In Lahore today we have introduced guided tours of a historic city for the first time in Pakistan. The rehabilitated sites of Delhi Gate and the Shahi Guzargah have become iconic for tourists to the city.

The work that AKTC and the WCLA have accomplished in the Walled City is only a starting point. It is my hope that this will inspire a much larger, more ambitious vision for heritage conservation – not just in the Walled City of Lahore, but all over Pakistan.



Above, the Walled City. Portion of Circular Garden on the southern perimeter (above) and the northern perimeter (below).

Left, Maryam Zamani (or Begum Shahi) Mosque, east of Lahore Fort, interior.