

# “silk road to peace”

a new transcontinental Marco Polo trail from Istanbul to Beijing, to build peace, by rejuvenating the ancient Silk Road, one heritage building at a time

by Jorg Ostrowski\*

This project is a +100 year long project, that can only be started to set a new standard and paradigm. This project goal is to bring sustainable economic development to the grassroots level, in contrast to huge mega projects planned by government. Its objectives are to initiate and promote, plan and design, reconfig (ecological retrofit), demonstrate and perpetuate, the regeneration and rejuvenation of the ancient Silk Road between Istanbul and Beijing by preserving valuable heritage buildings and outstanding natural landscapes for future generations, while building a new path to peace.

4 key complementary components are:

- transcontinental Marco Polo Heritage Trail through 15 countries,
- international Peace Parks, 13 planned on borders of 15 countries,
- 3 local reconfig of heritage sites, as demonstration projects, centers of appropriate technology & sustainable communities
- local opportunities (events & celebrations) such as tree planting ceremonies, ecotourism development, hot air balloons, release of peace doves, construction of amenities, micro credit for new cottage industries & a new Silk Road Caravan (International Relay vs *Amazing Grace*), to build international peace through opportunities and communities, to exchange and share, gain respect and understanding, learn and teach, and cooperate and collaborate, through joint ventures and partnerships, research and study, ecotourism and economic diversification, green buildings and sustainable redevelopment. The next 10 years will be used to set the benchmark in performance, - environmental & energy, cultural and social, historical and natural.

We are focusing on the preservation and renewal of the architectural heritage of buildings, and with it, the historical, social and cultural dimensions and potential of the Silk Road by reconfig (ecological retrofitting) old under-utilized but restored heritage buildings (caravanserai, Persian Gardens, Merchant houses and public baths) to provide international meeting places to cultivate respect and understanding, cooperation and collaboration, joint ventures and partnerships amongst people from different nations?

Each reconfig project is to act as:

- a resource centre for needs and economic diversification of local villages
- a cultural & traditional expression of the local rural people
- a regional Centre of Appropriate Technology
- a international field office for research institutes and universities, and
- an international sustainable community.

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Silk Road to Peace

- reconfigting caravanserai & Persian Gardens
- building the Marco Polo Heritage Trail from Istanbul to Beijing

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