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KUALA LUMPUR : DEVELOPING CITY RESILIENCE AND WAY FORWARD

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Although the problems facing many of our townships today are serious and complex, they are not altogether new or insurmountable. Throughout history, townships have been threatened by environmental and political catastrophes, and some, indeed have met with cataclysmic endings. Township decay, in one form or another, has always been a concern. The townships that have survived have done so because they were able to respond effectively to crises that are not dissimilar to those we are presently experiencing. The differences today are those of scale, consequences, and speed of change. Townships, as the word itself implies, are the centres of world civilisation; they cannot be allowed to die. Our most urgent township problems have been identified; it rests with us to find inventive solutions, and to guide our townships in the direction we want them to go. Basically, we share the same urban dream. We yearn for townships that are healthy, safe, and economically sound; townships that provide essential public and social services; sufficient open spaces, recreational and cultural facilities; natural, historical, and scenic resources; and appropriate and pleasing architecture; townships that not only reflect the vitality, but meet the diverse needs of their inhabitants regardless of age, background, and lifestyles.

In spite of immense social and technological progress, the quality of township life is still far from what it should be. While some townships are flourishing, others are undergoing serious economic and social decline. Presently, almost all townships in the world have flooded with shrines of property investments. This has arisen through a lack of clear understanding and interpretation of the complexities of popular behaviour and preferences. Instead, there has been a preoccupation with other distracting short term goals.

We as township dwellers have failed to keep our awareness of what makes a pleasant friendly township. Much of the townships, unfortunately, have given way to imitated images of foreign origins. Some see this as incompatible with local ways. With this sort of practice spreading, the needs of the township dwellers' have been neglected, disproportionately. In planning terms, townships are made of neighbourhoods, precincts, blocks, squares and streets. These are the invented ingredients that are involved in the structure of any townships. The very fact about townships is their vitality or vibrancy as a result of the presence of dwellers. It is for the above reasons that this paper was born in order to offer an alternative unique selling point for urban architect planners in meeting the challenges of continuing the process of designing and planning of new urban centres and urban renewal in the next millennium.

This presentation evolves the placement of Kuala Lumpur as a city and its challenges into the future into a resilient one that covers the field of disaster, housing, employment as well as the relevance of the genius loci. The paper extends the need for Kuala Lumpur to be wary its limited resources like land, funds and also connectivity in terms of transportation and recreation spaces with the advent of increased density.