

# ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

Recommendations  
of the

## Dissonant Heritage Conference

22-23 July 2021, Kazanlak, Bulgaria

The participants of the ICOMOS conference „In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites”:

- Bear in mind the relevance of the principles and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) still valid today for the development of democratic societies, as well as the relevance of the ICOMOS Declaration on Human Rights and Cultural Heritage, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration (Stockholm, 1998);
- Are convinced of the importance of the balance between everyone's rights and responsibilities with regard to heritage as defined in the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005);
- Recall the recommendations in the outcome document of the Conference on Human Rights and Cultural Heritage held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Sofia, 2009);
- Refer to the Declaration of ICOMOS Bulgaria about the dismantling of the 1300 years Bulgaria monument in Sofia, 2017;
- Reflect the ICOMOS discussion paper on the “Evaluations of World Heritage Nominations related to Sites Associated with Memories of Recent Conflicts” (2018);
- Refer to the „European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with potential impact on Cultural Heritage“ and with strategic cultural heritage protection policies, adopted by the ICOMOS General Assembly in 2020;
- Share the plea of the Socialist Heritage Initiative within the ICOMOS Scientific Committee for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Heritage conservation (ISC 20C) for the recognition and protection of works of architecture and art from socialist times as cultural landmarks and historical monuments, collecting and providing information on locations and sites, current conditions of conservation, about the planning and building history of the socialist legacy.

As a result of the discussions held, the conference participants agreed on the following:

- They realize that the preservation of cultural heritage is an integral part of the process of societal development and a prerequisite for its sustainability;
- They agree that heritage is indivisible and that different communities attribute contradictory values to dissonant heritage, arising from their collective memory and their right to heritage;

- They appreciate positively the contribution of the conference as stimulating international partnership in exploring and preserving dissonant heritage as an integral part of cultural heritage;
- They support the preservation of the Buzludzha monument as a necessary case study and a good example of interdisciplinary teamwork towards the preservation of dissonant heritage.;
- And they make the following **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

#### **To national systems for the protection of cultural heritage**

- To establish reconciliation procedures for the equitable management of dissonant heritage and ensure preventive conservation of dissonant heritage;
- To widely apply a public debate to identify differences and to define aspects of dissonance in disputed sites;
- To adopt principles of equal treatment of dissonant and other heritage sites on their identification, legal protection, conservation and management as cultural heritage.

#### **To the professional communities working in research, design practice and education**

- Architectural interpretation applied to dissonant sites should not erase, decrease or diminish dissonance, but on the contrary should preserve, express and interpret it and thus contribute to a better understanding and sustainable preservation of dissonant heritage sites;
- Designs should respect the authenticity of historical evidence that reflects the diverse history of the cultural property;
- A synthesis of architecture with other arts, cultural activities, sciences and technologies should be encouraged;
- People-centred approach should be broadly applied as a basic principle and a key factor for the success of any professional effort in the field of cultural heritage conservation, especially with regard to dissonant heritage.

#### **To societies in general**

- To assert people's cultural heritage rights, accepting their responsibilities to respect the cultural heritage of others;
- To recognize dissonant sites as a stimulus for civic debate and public dialogue, e.g. by linking with the New European Bauhaus initiative and its broad dialogue on how we build our cities and live in them;
- To stimulate the knowledge and sensitization of children and young people, through adapted educational programmes, towards a deeper understanding of the cultural value of the diversity of heritage layers and the preservation of dissonant heritage.
- To bear in mind that wise and concerted action at all professional and policy levels is urgently needed in order to prevent the irreversible loss of post-WW2 dissonant heritage monuments in Central and Eastern Europe.

Prepared and reviewed on behalf of the conference participants by the conference organisers represented by Radoslav Iliev (Buzludzha Project Foundation), Emilia Kaleva with Mariela Malamatenova (ICOMOS Bulgaria), and John Ziesemer (ICOMOS Germany).

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