



УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ КОМІТЕТ МІЖНАРОДНОЇ РАДИ З ПИТАНЬ ПАМ'ЯТОК І ВИЗНАЧНИХ МІСЦЬ
UKRAINIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
COMITÉ NATIONAL UKRAINIEN DU CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES

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STATEMENT
by the Ukrainian National Committee
of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
on the threat of destruction of the
"Derzhprom (House of State Industry)" in Kharkiv,
on the Ukrainian World Heritage Tentative List

The Ukrainian cultural heritage belongs to the entire humanity and is a treasury of the world civilization. The cultural heritage of the city of Kharkiv is an integral part of the cultural heritage of Ukraine and the world. Awareness of the significance of the national cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people, understanding the scale of the problem of its destruction during the Russian-Ukrainian war for world civilization, prompted the Ukrainian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) to make this Statement.

Today, the historic center of Kharkiv, its historical core and administrative and business center - an ensemble of buildings dating back to the 1920s and 1950s with a unique architectural and spatial structure - is under great threat. As a result of almost daily shelling, Kharkiv, perhaps more than any other Ukrainian city, suffers from repeated interference into the public infrastructure of the historic city. Individual monuments, parts of monuments, and the traditional building of city blocks are being destroyed, which has led to serious violations of the architectural and urban planning integrity of the historic part of Kharkiv.

Special worries are being raised about the House of State Industry (Derzhprom), which is in the UNESCO Tentative List of World Cultural Heritage.

The monument is located at the south-western side of the circular part of Svobody Square, which at the time of its existence was one of the largest in Europe. The existing development of the round part of the square with monuments of architectural constructivism and Art Deco is an example of the ensemble of Kharkiv as the first capital of Ukraine.

Derzhprom is the world's first state-level administrative building designed in modernist forms. The world's largest building in the style of architectural constructivism was built at the beginning of the development of this style and had a significant impact on the further development of not only Ukrainian but also global architecture.

The monument expresses in avant-garde language the unity of monumentality, officialness and representation of the state level. The example of Derzhprom embodies

the most advanced construction technologies of the time in monolithic reinforced concrete. The transparency of the plane of the showcase windows and the monolithic mass of the reinforced concrete structure become an essential feature of the style of the State Industry Building.

Derzhprom occupies a worthy place among the manifestos of the avant-garde of the 20s: Church of Notre Dame of Raincy by A. Perret (1924, France) - a new type of sacred building; Pavillon de L'Esprit Nouveau by Le Corbusier (1925, France) - a new type of housing; The Weissenhof Estate in Stuttgart (1926, Germany) - a new type of residential village; Bauhaus School Complex in Dessau by W. Gropius (1926, Germany) - a new type of educational complex; buildings, a number of workers' clubs on the territory of the former Soviet Union (1925-1930s) by architects K.S. Melnikov, Vesnin brothers, I.O. Golosov, O.I. Dmitriev, etc. Among these objects, the Building of State Industry in Kharkiv became the first reinforced concrete "skyscraper" in the former USSR, presenting the possibilities and means of the new avant-garde architecture.

Among the objects representing the modernist architecture of the first half of the 20th century, which are already on the World Heritage List or on the Tentative List, Derzhprom will take its rightful place as a unique phenomenon of world architecture.

As a result, Derzhprom has also become a significant event in world architecture. Disseminated through exhibitions and the press around the world, the building inspired many world architects to create their own projects. In the former Soviet Union, the realisation of Derzhprom made modernism the main architectural style of the state for several years.

As a result of the Russian missile attacks of 29 December 2023, residential buildings on the western side of Derzhprom, which are part of the residential development ensemble and are part of its buffer zone, were damaged. The residential blocks of Zaderzhprom's territory continue the ensemble of Svobody Square, bend around Derzhprom from the north, northwest and west, have a radial-ring layout and stylistic and functional authenticity in accordance with the time of creation, from the late 1920s to the mid-1930s. The west-facing part of the facades of the Building of State Industry and the former House of Projects (now the main building of V.N. Karazin State University) were damaged by shelling, with windows and stained-glass windows deformed and smashed. These damage affects the condition of the building, because temperature fluctuations can lead to damage to interior decoration. A large part of the affected residential buildings is unusable due to the significant destruction of the engineering infrastructure, fragments of facades, lost decoration, window and door openings.

On 29.12.2023, in the northern part of Svobody Square, the building of the Kharkiv Palace Hotel was heavily damaged (direct hit by an S-300 missile), as well as

nearby monuments of local significance dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, such as the Kharkiv Hotel (formerly International) and the educational building of V. N. Karazin University (formerly the House of Cooperation). Thus, these events constitute an emergency situation that can lead to significant loss of authenticity of the House of State Industry, a building on the Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, as well as individual monuments of local significance, and in general, to the destruction of the Svobody Square building ensemble as a significant monument of urban planning of the 1920s and 1930s in Ukraine and in the world.

Such actions on the part of the aggressor country once again demonstrate Russia's violation of international legal acts governing relations in the field of preserving the world's cultural heritage, both in peacetime and in times of armed conflict.

Given the above, in particular the intensification of hostilities in eastern Ukraine and the provisions of the Second Protocol of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the Ukrainian National Committee of ICOMOS appeals to the international community to unite all efforts to protect the cultural heritage of Ukraine, considering that damage to this heritage will affect the humanistic spirit of mankind and its cultural diversity.

**Bureau of the Ukrainian National Committee of the
International Council on Monuments and Sites**

Mykola Hayda
President
ICOMOS Ukraine

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mykola Hayda', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.