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ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΤΜΗΜΑ

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΤΜΗΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΙΕΘΝΟΥΣ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΜΝΗΜΕΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΠΟΘΕΣΙΩΝ
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Athens, 13 February 2012
Prot. Number 1197

re: The vandalism bestowed upon the historic buildings in the city of Athens.

The Hellenic chapter of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) condemns the recent vandalism that has occurred to the historic buildings in the city of Athens. The buildings of particular artistic value, loaded with historic memories suffered barbarian attacks, similarly during times of foreign invasions. Fortunately, these barbarian attacks were not accompanied by loss of life.

The two storey building located on 19-21 Stadiou Street (at the intersection of Chrsitou Lada Street), is one of finest neo classical buildings in Athens, which is the result of successive building phases that the city has undergone. The building was built between 1870-1881 and was designed by the architect Ernst Ziller. It's a characteristic example of an eclectic style. The years between 1914 through 1920, it underwent a significant intervention with elements of neo-baroque, when in a section of the building the cinema/theater "Attikon" was designed and added by the architect Alexandro Nikoloudis. It is considered the oldest theatrical hall of Athens. When it began to be used as a movie theater in 1916, it was consider the most beautiful of all in Europe. During the period of occupation under the Germans, it was used to entertain the German soldiers (Soldaten Kino Victoria). The last form of the building was the result of the maintenance and renovation that the building had undergone in 1982. Its form, today, is the result of neo-barbarism.

The barbaric behavior was also reserved for the historic cinema “Asti ”, located at Korai Square. The cinema is housed in a building that was built during 1934-1938.

In addition to the multi number of demolished buildings, which already made up the congested image of the historic center, the congested image will now include many more neoclassical and historic buildings. These buildings include the three storey building on Athinas Street where the Bank of Cyprus is housed (the roof has caved in) and the stoa Nikoloudis located at Panepistimiou Street where Alphabank is housed (the original design was in 1897 by the architect Alexandros Nikoloudis).

The above mentioned vandalism doesn't have any relation with the protests of the Greek people whom are constantly bombard relentlessly with the great weight of unprecedented measures of cruelty. In these difficult times, the real enemy needs to be calibrated, which obviously are **not** the historic buildings and monuments, even if symptomatically, some of these buildings house the services that are thought of by some as repugnant. The monuments can't be excluded from the historic ark which will lead us to the new age, nor can burning them down lighten the future without any blemishes. A people without any monuments are a people without any future.

The Hellenic chapter of ICOMOS is asking from the responsible civic services to handle the situation directly and quickly. We are asking for the restoration of the buildings, to revert them back to their previous states and not be abandoned and leave them to their own fate. We emphasis, that all restorations be handled with the outmost respect for the historic and architectural character of the buildings, as well as, in cooperation with the established principles and conventions. Simultaneously, we request that initiatives for measures be taken on a national and international level, alike, for the prevention of similar catastrophic acts and for the treatment of damages resulting from such acts.

For the Hellenic chapter of ICOMOS

the Vice-President



Basilis Palantzas



the General Secretary



Athanasios Nakasis