**Excelentísimo Señor**

**D. Iñigo Urkullu**

**Lehendakari**

**Gobierno Vasco**

Navarra, 2

01007 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Álava

**Chicago, 30Th March, 2019**

**Dear Sir**

I am writing to you to inform you that the International Council on Monuments and Sites, International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage (ICOMOS ISC20C) in association with ICOMOS National Committee for Spain, have prepared a Heritage Alert for the Palacio Bellas Artes located in San Sebastian, Spain. The Palacio Bellas Artes was built in 1914 in San Sebastian and is one of the earliest extant examples of a purpose built movie palace left in the Basque Country and in all of Spain. It’s rich architectural, cultural and social history are a vital part of the history of San Sebastian which was acknowledged by its being recognized as Grade I cultural heritage in the Master Plan of San Sebastian in 1995. Unfortunately both the physical and political conditions surrounding this landmark have changed in recent years and the building is now severely threatened.

In 2014 the International Council of Monuments and Sites International Scientific Committee of 20th Century Heritage (ICOMOS ISC20C) prepared a Heritage Alert to call attention to the impending treat to the building. Rather than issue the full Heritage Alert, letters were written by then President of the ICOMOS ISC20C, Sheridan Burke, and then President of all of ICOMOS, Gustavo Araoz, requesting the assurances for the protection of the building by the Spanish authorities. The importance of the building was acknowledged and the Basque government agreed to protect the site with the highest level in Spain as, “BIC-Bien de Interés Cultural”. It appeared that the building had been saved. Unfortunately, the building owner, Sociedad Anónima de Deportes y Espectáculos (SADE), has since requested permission from the City Council of San Sebastian to demolish the dome at the top of the building. Not only is this one of the building’s most important character defining features, but it is feared that this is only the beginning of the total demolition of the building. Therefore the ICOMOS ISC20C and ICOMOS Spain are now issuing this Heritage Alert and requesting the authorities protect and conserve this invaluable landmark of Spain.

ICOMOS Spain and the ICOMOS ISC20C are requesting that the authorities of San Sebastian and the Basque Country honor their previous acknowledgement of the importance of the Palacio Bellas Artes building and work to protect it and redevelop it in an appropriate manner that does not adversely affect the architectural, historic and cultural values of the building and surrounding site.

Sincerely,



**T. Gunny Harboe, FAIA, F. US/ICOMOS**

**President, ICOMOS ISC20C**