

European Museum Academy

Resolutions adopted at the Bursa conference

1. On the Micheletti Award Conferences

The participants at the 2013 Micheletti Award Conference, organised by the European Museum Academy in Bursa on 26-27 April 2013, thank the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and the Museums of Bursa for hosting the conference and welcome the invitation from Glasgow to host the next Micheletti Award Conference in the Riverside Museum in April 2014.

2. On the destruction of the minaret of the Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo

The participants are dismayed by the destruction of the minaret of the Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo – a precious religious monument of the Islamic civilisation and part of the World Heritage Site of Aleppo. This is one of the six World Heritage Sites in Syria, five of which have been damaged in the undeclared war that is has been ravaging this ancient country for the last two years. The members of the European Museum Academy and the conference participants from 23 countries in Europe, Asia and Africa, are deeply concerned at this systematic destruction of the cultural heritage of the country and its effect on the cultural memory of humankind. They call on Unesco to insist that belligerents respect the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, to which Syria is a signatory. They also assure the world museum community that the experts and specialists of the European Museum Academy and its affiliates and partners are ready to help contribute to the rebuilding of museums and cultural sites in Syria as soon as this should prove possible.

3. On the destruction by arson of the City of Science in Naples

The participants express their sympathy with the science and museum community of Naples for the disastrous fire that destroyed the City of Science on 4 March 2013. The City of Science was a major Italian interactive science museum and a winner of the Micheletti Award. Both the Science Centre and areas related to training, development and events were completely destroyed. This deliberate act is a crime against European culture. We consider that it is the duty of the whole European museum community to help rebuild the Centre as there are many people, from all over the continent, who visited it and benefited from the valuable exhibits and educational programmes it carried out. The European Museum Academy offers its expertise, together with that of its partners and associates, in the coordination of the several public and private initiatives that are already being taken towards the rebuilding of the centre and in the dissemination of relevant information.

4. On the closure of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo

The participants express their concern that the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, one of the oldest national museums in Europe, was closed down in October 2012 and is still closed up to this moment. We have been

informed that the reason for this is the problem of official responsibility for the museum. During the last decades, cultural heritage specialists, all over the world, have witnessed many cases where authorities have failed to provide resources for cultural institutions; the reasons have usually been linked to poverty, war or other emergency problems. This is not the case here. The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which reopened after the civil war as a result of the efforts made by Unesco, Icom and many international and national institutions and organisations, was closed down last year for political reasons, because the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were not able or willing to find an economic solution to this problem. We participants express our full support and solidarity with the specialists, curators and other staff of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the personal sacrifices they are making in order to save the cultural heritage of their country. The fact that the museum and its artefacts are not physically destroyed (even if they may already be endangered by the lack of conservation measures) is no consolation, because heritage which is not accessible may as well not exist. We specialists gathered in Bursa, of different faiths and nationalities, from 23 countries of three continents, express the hope that the governments which played a role in ending the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina will, together with such organisations as Unesco and the Council of Europe, help restore the cultural heritage to that country.

(CG Strasbourg 5 May 2013)