

Lisbon, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018

**Subject: Heritage in Danger – Support Request  
Ikarus Building, 1938, Franjo Jenc, Belgrade, Serbia**

Dear Mr. Siniša Mali,  
Mayor of Belgrade City Council

Docomomo International – the International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement – and Docomomo chapter in Serbia wish to draw your attention for the threatened future of the Ikarus Building, a flagrant case of endangering cultural property in the capital town of Serbia, Belgrade.

Ikarus building, designed by the architect Franjo Jenc a year before Second War burst all over Europe, is one of the earliest objects at the New Belgrade municipality, generally seen as a renowned global masterpiece of the modern urbanism and architecture after that War. The object itself - Headquarters of the plane and later bus factory “Ikarus” - was built in the dawn of marking New Belgrade a modern pearl. However, this building is now lonely, solemn witness of the industrial development of Serbia between two world wars, which never, even during the war and under communist regime afterwards, stopped its production, until the final dissolution of the Yugoslav state, late in the 20th century.

New Belgrade before Second World War only existed in the minds and plans of then visionary architects. As largely influenced by the flows of two huge, overwhelming rivers surrounding it (Danube and Sava), the soil of New Belgrade was largely filled and levelled after 1945, marking existing Ikarus’ ground level actually the only surviving representative of the original state, around three to four meters lower than today. Its architectural design was conceived with a clear concept of being a building with industrial purpose and value, adorned with art deco elements and remarkable relief of first human flyer in the history - Icarus, as a clear symbol of its representation and meaning. Icarus is still suspended in the air behind the elegant entrance into the building. For how long - we can’t be certain.

Docomomo Serbia foremost concerns rely on the new plans for “serious adaptation” and the recent owners real intentions, which as feared, may put in risk the original integrity of the building. The property is now completely fenced and few heavy machines appeared in the yard, which recently inspired new campaign against the demolition in January 2018.

We address this letter to the Belgrade City Council, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the City of Belgrade, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia, the “Neimar V” Company and all other relevant individuals and institutions that may help, appealing to utmost efforts and collaboration upon the protection of this modernist landmark.

Alongside with Docomomo International, Docomomo Serbia urges all relevant institutions, to take this issue very seriously and halt any irreversible works done on the monument.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Docomomo International or its Chapter in Serbia in case you need any guidance.

Looking forward for your best attention to this case.

Yours sincerely,



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**Ana Tostões**  
**Docomomo International Chair**

International committee for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

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Ikarus Building in its current state



The Proposed design