



**To the local and national governments of:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo/a, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

## **PUBLIC APPEAL**

### **Stop the indifference towards the devastation of SEE heritage**

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The SEE Heritage Network launches an urgent appeal to the authorities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to preserve the cultural and natural patrimony in this region which is in a severe danger.

During a meeting held in Kotor (Montenegro) the non governmental organizations forming this network, identified some of the main problems which the cultural and natural heritage is facing now in the South Eastern Europe.

The transition process in this region brings **uncontrolled development in urban and rural areas**, specially through **inadequate spatial planning**, such as in Kotor, (Montenegro), Petrolifera, Bay of Vlore (Albania), historical core of Split with the Diocletian Palace (Croatia), Ksamil (Albania), Ohrid (Macedonia), old town of Belgrade (Serbia); **mass tourism** (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro), **industrial expansion in historic areas** as in Trogir (Croatia), Radimlja (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

**Lack of and inadequate maintenance** as in Old Skopje Bazaar (Macedonia), Petrovaradin Fortress in Novi Sad (Serbia), Old city of Prizren (Kosovo/a), Durrës (Albania), medieval fortresses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and **inappropriate management mechanism of cultural sites** - old Dubrovnik (Croatia), Perast, (Montenegro) Bas carsija-Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) are strongly jeopardizing our heritage.

As a consequence, the nature and cultural landscapes are also endangered - like Ohrid Lake (Macedonia), Boka Kotorska Bay (Montenegro), vernacular architecture of Stolac (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

SEE Heritage Network, aiming to promote and preserve the heritage as a common value of the region, expresses its deepest concern about these crucial problems that are devastating the common movable, immovable and intangible heritage, especially: archival, industrial, rural, architectural and cultural landscapes.

It hereby urges the authorities in these countries to stop the indifferent attitude towards the devastation of the common heritage and requests for:

- Strengthen the integration of cultural heritage conservation principles in the development and planning processes
- Increase adequate engagement of experts in these processes
- More active involvement of local communities and enabling public participation in the decision-making.

The SEE Heritage Network considers the cultural, ethnic and religious diversities to be a valuable resource of the region. It believes that this region cannot build its Future by devastating its own Past.

*In Kotor, Montenegro, 10.02.2008*

The South East European Heritage Network - SEE Heritage Network