

## Welcome by Galina Stoyanova, Mayor of Kazanlak The Buzludzha Monument is not a Political or Ideological Question but a Point of Departure to its Future

The mayor of Kazanlak greeted the participants of this international conference on the Monument House on Buzludzha Peak and dissonant heritage “In Restauro: Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe – Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites”. The Host of the Scientific Forum is Kazanlak, and the patron is the mayor – Ms Galina Stoyanova. In the hall of the Museum of History Iskra, she greeted the organizers, the national committees of ICOMOS Bulgaria and Germany, the Buzludzha Project Foundation and the partners of approved academic and professional organizations in the cultural heritage field as well as the over 30 international experts from eight participating countries.

“I am glad to welcome you in the territory of the Kazanlak Municipality in the magnificent Valley of Roses and the Thracian Kings! On the eve of the conference, the decision of the Specialized Expert Council for the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Values (SECPICV) to submit an intangible cultural value statute for the Monument House on Buzludzha Peak brought a ground for hope. For all of us citizens of the beautiful valley, this is another step towards the protection of this already so widely known monument. A step, which gives us hope, that it will receive the well-deserved care and preservation for you and for the coming generations”, the mayor of Kazanlak declared. “Indeed, from now on we wait for the moment to take the next administrative steps and for the final statement of the Minister of Culture. The evaluation of the expert council is an encouraging sign for us, that the monument on the Buzludzha Peak will soon receive justice after years of vandalism and forgetfulness”, Ms Galina Stoyanova pointed out.

The mayor of the Kazanlak Municipality mentioned that the Buzludzha Monument had been listed among the most threatened objects in Europe in 2018, according to the classification of Europe’s leading organization for the preservation of cultural heritage Europa Nostra and the Institute of the European Investment Bank. Ms Galina Stoyanova declared her support to the efforts by the Buzludzha Project Foundation led by the young architect Ms Dora Ivanova and her team, by Prof. Jörg Haspel, president of ICOMOS

Germany and Ms Gabriela Semova-Koleva, ICOMOS Bulgaria. She also emphasized the co-operation of the former and current regional governors of the Stara Zagora district, Ms Gergana Mikova and Mr Ivan Cholakov to revive and enhance the cultural heritage of Buzludzha.

“Buzludzha is not only a technical or financial question”, the mayor of Kazanlak declared, “it is a point of departure, an object, which will never be used again as once intended”, Ms Galina Stoyanova said. “That’s why, I welcome once again the organizers and the participants of the conference. Please be assured that you find in us, the Kazanlak Municipality and in me personally, like-minded people and partners! I also hope to gain many new friends through our common cause. It is neither political nor ideological. It is a chance for the development of tourism in the region, which we must seize. I have been saying this ever since I had the opportunity to meet Dora and her idea to resurrect this monument so that we can preserve it as a Monument of Time”, the mayor of Kazanlak said.

Ms Galina Stoyanova wished success to the conference participants and thanked architect Ivanova for her merits in promoting and preserving the Buzludzha Monument.

Within two days, scientists from all over the world and the organizers would exchange ideas for the future of the Buzludzha Monument, an impressive representative of the 20th century’s modernism.

Kazanlak is the fourth Bulgarian municipality that became a partner of the Urban Agenda for the European Union two years ago and it is the only Bulgarian municipality figuring as a representative in the field of cultural heritage. The Urban Agenda is a key tool of the European Union for the future development of European cities as major motors of growth in all fields of life. In 2020, the Urban Agenda focused on dissonant heritage as misunderstood cultural-historical heritage, an example of which is the Buzludzha Monument. Experts define this new category as an important instrument to deal with cultural heritage, which does not fall into the field of problem-free inheritance, but rather into a field of public disagreements, conflicts, oppositions and discussions.