

**TO: Mrs. IRINA BOKOVA  
DIRECTOR - GENERAL OF UNESCO  
(The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)**

**FROM: THE INITIATIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE CREATIVE- ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX  
“SANTO KIRIKO”, SUPPORTED BY THE UNION OF ARCHITECTS IN BULGARIA  
(UAB), INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF ARCHITECTURE (IAA) AND THE CHAMBER  
OF ARCHITECTS IN BULGARIA (CAB) - BULGARIA**

RE: Support against appropriation of the Creative - Architectural Complex "Santo Kiriko" - Bulgaria

Dear Director – General of UNESCO,

Dear Mrs. Irina Bokova

We address you on behalf of the Initiative Committee that represents the demands of all Bulgarian architects and whose actions are supported and coordinated with the Union of Architects in Bulgaria (UAB), the International Academy of Architecture (IAA) and the Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria (CAB).

We hope that you will embrace our cause and take a stand on an issue related to the preservation of the cultural values, stimulation of architectural creativity, training and professional development of young architects, international exchange and cooperation as well as preservation of the intellectual property of architects and the bequeath of generation of architects from all over the world.

It is about the Creative Complex of the Union of Architects in Bulgaria „Santo Kiriko“ (as it is famous in Bulgaria) or „St.St. Kirik and Yulita“, built with the resources of two generations of architects, designers, urban planners and engineers, and situated in Bulgaria, above the village of Gorni Voden, Asenovgrad Municipality. Long ago this place held a Bulgarian orthodox monastery, that later became a political prison, mental hospital that was set on fire by its inhabitants and finally was ruined by a landslide.

Since 1936 there are no nuns or monks in the Monastery and Plovdiv Bishopric showed no interest in the place and deserted it completely.

The Union of Architects in Bulgaria signed a contract dated 14.01.1982 for construction of a secular complex for the needs of UAB and IAA with a total build up area of approx. 8400,00 sq.m over the land of the former monastery (that has been demolished and for which the Bishopric has no deed of ownership!). Thus, the creative complex „Santo Kiriko“ appeared and it became a unique center for professional development of architects, designers, urban planners, engineers from all over the world. On the place of the ruins the architects built an Academy for creative exchange; establishing studios for professional work, conference halls, exhibition areas and all service and utility premises necessary for the functioning and development of Bulgarian architecture and for setting up a place where architects from different countries and ages can meet and share experiences, communicate and discuss issues common to the architectural work and international cooperation. The Complex hosted many meetings with leading architects from USA, Mexico, Japan, France, Russia, Spain, UK and etc. The place was visited a number of times by the founder of UIA, the Honorary president of UIA architect Pierre Vago, other presidents of UIA, General Secretaries and UIA Bureau members. Its enough to say, that the Complex has been established by architect Georgi Stoilov who at that time was a President of UAB, President of IAA and later - President of UIA. The Complex is a meeting place for world famous architects such as Santiago Calatrava, Mario Botta, Manfredi Nicoletti, Tadao Ando, Richard England, Fumihiko Maki and many others who had shared their expertise in number of creative workshops. Last but not the least – „Santo Kiriko“ Complex (evaluated to 6 -7 million EUR) has been built from scratch entirely with the finances of the Union of Architects in Bulgaria, without any participation or help from the government or other organizations.

30 years after UAB built and managed the Creative Complex „Santo Kiriko“, Plovdiv Bishopric raised demands for ownership and insisted on its expropriation. A series of lawsuits began between the Union of Architects in Bulgaria and Plovdiv Bishopric. The decision issued by the court of second instance in Plovdiv was in favor of the Bishopric and allowed its access into the complex. The most shameful was the fact that

the Bishopric immediately and demonstratively invaded and destroyed the UAB and IAA 's archive from various international events, architectural workshops, forums and conferences. Priceless intellectual property was destroyed belonging to the Bulgarian architects and the whole archive containing projects of our awarded colleagues and projects of global significance. This was their token of "gratitude" for the charitable donations of the Bulgarian architects to the Orthodox church - more than 300 architectural projects for churches, chapels and monasteries!

The legal dispute is now scheduled to be considered by a third court of last instance whereby the Supreme Court of Cassation should take a decision on 11.02.2015 whether the case shall be referred for reconsideration and if the present court decision shall be altered.

**We, the Bulgarian architects, represented by the Initiative Committee, UAB, IAA and CAB truly hope that UNESCO shall support our efforts to preserve the Creative complex "Santo Kiriko" for the future use of the architectural society and shall declare in writing the need of keeping the complex into existence and its important role as a center for professional exchange and development not only for the Bulgarian architects but also for architects over the world.**

We would like to inform you that we are in possession of letters from UAB, IAA, CAB, The International Union of Architects (UIA), The Participants in the Presidential meeting of member-state organizations from Region II of UIA – Zagreb, 24.01.2015, also The World Federation of Young Architects (FMJA – Fédération Mondiale des Jeunes Architectes) and the Union of Bulgarian Artists (UBA) as evidences of the support for the actions of the Initiative committee, from architect Georgi Stoilov, President of IAA, Honorary President of UAB and former President of UIA - also a member of the Initiative committee for saving of the Creative complex „Santo Kiriko”. Many Bulgarian Architects declared their support and also signed the petition of the Initiative committee against the appropriation of the Creative - Architectural Complex "Santo Kiriko".

We attach only some of the letters – from the International Union of Architects (UIA), from the Participants in the Presidential meeting of member-state organizations from Region II of UIA – Zagreb, 24.01.2015, the letter from the World Federation of Young Architects (FMJA) and from the Union of Architects in Bulgaria.

Dear Mrs. Bokova,

We remain in anticipation of your quick response and believe in the strength of the international solidarity as well as into the leading role of UNESCO and the authority it has in creating the conditions for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based upon respect for commonly shared values.

Sincerely yours,  
Initiative committee as signed below:

Architect Georgi Stoilov  
President of IAA, Honorary President of UAB

Architect Nikolay Tonev

Architect Zdravets Haitov:

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Architect Lyubomir Shinkov  
Chief Designer of "Santo Kiriko"

Architect Spiridon Ganev  
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Architect Hristo Genchev

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Architect Mihail Petkov

Architect Vladimir Milkov

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