

Update 2: Government was warned about Valletta situation years ago



Icomos Malta had been warning the government about the possibility that Valletta may lose its World Heritage status for years, Icomos Malta president Ray Bondin said.

The Times this morning reported that Valletta's world heritage status may be threatened by the luxury apartment blocks at Tigne and by the city's newly built penthouses.

Dr Bondin said in a statement that Icomos Malta had also warned that Valletta could be placed on the Unesco World Heritage List in Danger if Malta persisted in ignoring its obligations under the World Heritage Convention of which it was signatory.

Icomos Malta said that the country had an obligation to:

- * declare clear boundaries for the city of Valletta, something it had not done;
- * declare a clear buffer zone for the city of Valletta, which it had also not done;
- * give explanations as to the high rise policies around Valletta and how the views towards Valletta were being protected; and

* ensure that the streetscape and the skyscape of the city were protected. It could not continue to give permission for additional floors, pools on roofs and other incompatible changes.

Icomos Malta said the government did not take up its offer of assistance for submitting the appropriate replies to Unesco in line with policies and principles that were universal. Its offer, it said, was still valid.

PL STATEMENT

The Labour Party's spokesman on Youth and Culture, Owen Bonnici, in a statement said the Prime Minister also needed to issue a statement on the status of Valletta.

He said the government needed to explain how the situation had evolved since 2007, when the Unesco committee first voiced its concerns.

He also needed to do all he could to ensure that Valletta's status was safeguarded.

DIN I-ART HELWA REACTION

Din I-Art Helwa said that it had objected to the high rise building in the Tigne project when it was first proposed, as it would detract from the Valletta skyline.

"This is yet another example of the over-development which has been going on with the blessing of the government and Mepa, ignoring the impact on our natural and built heritage. It would be a terrible blow if Valletta lost its world heritage status, and it would be a black mark of gross irresponsibility against both government and Mepa if this were to happen," the NGO said.

See also

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090811/local/concerns-on-heritage-status-of-valletta>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090811/local/government-committed-to-preserve-valletta-status>

Comments

Martin Spiteri (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

@ Ludwig Flask

A new government who backs the piano project !!!! what a joke!!!!

Ludwig Flask (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

We need a new government which tackles social values, respects our culture and heritage, be creative, will bring down to earth investment to help our dire economy, BUT most whom listens to NGOs!

marco meli (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

ara vera dalwaqt immissu l qieh!!!!!!!!!!!! din jonqosna, x ma jonqsux it turisti!!!!!!

C, Farrugia (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Looking at the photo literally makes me want to throw up. Arrogance prevails. Really wonder how Piano's modern embellishment to City Gate and Royal Opera House will help us keep the World Heritage Status??? It could well be the absolute *final straw*!!!!!!!!!!!! Well done GonziPn!!

T. Pulis (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Joe Fenech

Naqbel miegħek mija fil-mija pero nsemmi l-gzejjer kroati ta' Hvar u Korčula. Tnejn kwazi daqs Malta iżda l-popolazzjoni ma taqbiżx is-16-il elf ruħ. Hawn wisq nies għal Malta. U biex inkompli miegħek, il-kwalitajiet ta' ħafna Maltin huma dawk li semmejt int! U naqbel ħafna miegħek li nistħi ngħid li jiena Malti!. Malta saret pajjiż ikrah! U Malta vera qerduha l-partiti! U hawn anke l-poplu jaħti għax qatt ma fada lill-ħaddieħor. Nemmen li l-Indipendenza xejn ma użajnieha tajjeb!

Alexander Morana (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Prosit Sur Magri... Mur u ara il-proget ta' Piano dik il-kruwa ta Parliament go nofs il-Belt?

K. Vella (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Well, anything more than a sarcastic "Keep it up!" is superfluous here.

Darren Cassar (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

I give a face lift to a house facade when the house is in a decent state otherwise i have to make the house habitable first by providing comfort and repair any damages which may pose dangers.

Likewise Piano's entrance is not a priority at this stage with all the costs it incurs when the inside of valletta is falling and much restoration is needed on palaces and fort st elmo. This is simply stupid and mismanagement of resources.

Joe Fenech (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

T. Pulis

Din mhx kwistjoni biss ta' overpopulation imma kwistjoni ta' nuqqas ta' pjanar, rghiba u korruzzjoni sploduta!

Mal-gzejjer li semmejt int inqid Sqallija, is-Sardenja u l-gojjell uniku li huwa Korsika! Morru araw xi gmiel nies: kollox priservat kollox huwa organiku!!!! Tisthi tghid li Malta pajjizek illum il-gurnata. Haga li ta' l-isikantament ma kontx nisthi nghid fiz-zminijiet ta' Mintoff. Jghidu x'jghidu hawn - KIEN STMAT! Jekk klaxxa ma' l-Inglizi, dak kien ghax ir-regina holqot il-Commonwealth - pajjizi li l-Ingilterra ma kelliex aktar flus biex tiffinanzja imma li xorta riedet pussess fuqhom - u dan Mintoff ma ridux.

Issa jien ZGUR MHUX Laburist (u lanqas PN jew AD!) !!!!

Aghmlu elezzjoni u gibu partit patrijottiku ta' veru.

Joe Fenech (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

I said it many times: this country is finished COMPLETELY. Forget attracting people here - only Maltese people, working class Brits (and even these are diminishing rapidly) and foreign businessmen who need a second address for tax purposes will buy property here!!! Who wants to live in an absolute dump!!! Our greed and corruption have smashed this country to bits.

Denis Catania (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

X-tra X-tra read all about it, GonziPN put's Malta and the Maltese on the endangered list.

Franco Farrugia (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

In a way, this is a vindication of all those lonely voices in the desert who were claiming continually that there was far too much 'development' being carried out in the country. NOW let us cry over spilt milk or embark on a damage-control exercise.

T. Pulis (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Qridnieh pajjiz! Tara gzejjer erba' passi 'l bogħod minnha, tgħir għan-nies li jgħixu fihom. Insemmi l-gzejjer griegi u kroati. Mediterranji bħalna! Beżgħu għalihom u ħarsuhom! Aħna le. Tlifna l-identita' tagħna f'kollox! Soffejna kull nifs li kellha gżiritna u issa rridu nippruvaw nidħku bin-nies u nibzġu għall-ambjent. Ambjent urban biss baqagħlha Malta!!!!!! Grazzi lill-mexxejja li kellu dal-pajjiż. Il-P.N., il-P.L. u l-Knisja (tal-erbgħinijiet u ħamsinijiet) li b'insistenza tagħha Malta saret overpopulated

Anthony Magri (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

And what about the ultramodern buildings being suggested by Architect Renzo Piano at the entrance to Valletta to house Parliament.

Jimmy Magro (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

One would have thought that with all these advisors, and the claim to have the best people around, the Government would not have gone into this cultural and environment alley. Where is MEPA in all this? MEPA will continue to be a club for the property owners since putting up a penthouse in Valletta would sell for more half a million euros.

The same can be said for swimming pools on the roofs.
With all this money going round the corners and corridors of power, people have all the good reasons to believe that the country is corrupt from top to bottom.
We have another example of good advice being thrown in the drainage sump; if it is not blocked too.

Ian Bugeja (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Although being a World Heritage City is important for Valletta, our city must continue to evolve with the current times. If it does not it will end up a dead city.
Valletta is our capital city and hence it has to evolve; but also respecting the past and heritage it possesses.

Joe Fenech (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

No surprise!!!! Our greed does not match with culture. SHAME ON YOU, LOUSY POLITICIANS!!!

Bring in a new party: Lowell, Bezzina, AN - team up!!!!!!!

Frans H Said (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

The death knell is now in the offing. This crazy idea of needing a Renzo Paino design has alienated the people from the real facts behind this stupid idea and plans. How can a world heritage site be "modernised"? The Barry theatre was not the ideal design, but what about the ORIGINAL theatre, the one that was burnt down some 150 years ago? Governments, of whatever colour, are mesmerised by the so called advisors but what is the hidden agenda.

Goodbye Valletta, your days are numbered. Without easy access and with the bus terminus losing its importance, within a decade or so it will become another Mdina, but while Mdina is the silent city, Valletta will be the dead city, and all thanks to short sighted or myopic ideas built on spite and not good reasoning. What about the many grand buildings lying derelict?

A.J. Anastasi (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Will this "title" for Valletta as a World Heritage Status, be a hindrance and an obstacle for the city of Valletta to enjoy its normal modern life as a capital city in the twenty-first century?

Can "Icomos Malta" kindly enlighten us what benefits are derived from this "title" for the Maltese nation, apart from being an acknowledgement of the beauty and historical value of Valletta, in this modern age?

AJA.

Muscat. Pat (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

So the Tgne buildings are ugly, and I am not the only one who thinks so even I was censored several times by this newspaper whenever I said that Tgne buildings are ugly!

Pawlu Agius (2 weeks, 5 days ago)

I wonder how did ever Valletta become World Heritage site with the bell memorial on modern style (at lower barracca) and the ugly apartments at the Mandraggio, near Baviera / StElmo and at Freedom square. With Piano's plan it will be even worse,

especially with the ultra modern buildings to replace Freedom square.
As a last thing, I would suggest the Mandraggio be turned into an underground car park, the idea being to clear it from all the debris (terrapien) thrown in it after WW2. In this way, one would be able to at least appreciate the lowest level up to which the knights gave up the digging and never finalized it into a shelter for their vessels.
