

# ICOMOS

## International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage

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September 11, 2015

Mr Michael Müller  
Regierender Bürgermeister von Berlin  
Senatskanzlei  
Jüdenstraße 1  
10178 Berlin  
Germany

Dear Mr Müller,

### **Re: Internationales Congress Centrum (ICC) Berlin**

As president of the International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage (ISC20C), I have been advised by colleagues and through extensive coverage in the media of the present negative situation of the International Congress Center in Berlin (ICC).

The monumental building, opened in April 1979 after only three and a half years of construction, is unique in its futuristic shape and design. The building is outstanding and distinctive in every respect: a historic property of European significance. This is because nothing comparable was built before or after. The building's technology-inspired appearance makes it reminiscent of high-tech architecture, not unlike the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1971-77), the Lloyds building in London (1978-86), or the Clinical Centre in Aachen (1971-85).

The ICC Berlin is an important landmark of former West Berlin. Its relevance has long been accepted by the academic community in Germany. Important institutions (such as the Architectural Association of Berlin, the Bund Heimat und Umwelt in Deutschland, the Berlin State Heritage Council, the Association of Conservationists in Germany) have argued publicly for the listing of the ICC. Based on these regional and national activities, ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites; advisory body to UNESCO) expressed international appreciation by adopting a resolution at its General Assembly in Florence in November 2014 (see attachment to this letter as well as

[http://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2015/GA\\_2014\\_results/GA\\_2014\\_Resolutions\\_EN\\_2015\\_0109\\_finalcirc.pdf](http://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2015/GA_2014_results/GA_2014_Resolutions_EN_2015_0109_finalcirc.pdf)).

ISC20C considers the Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin) to be an exceptional late Modernist building at the Berlin Trade Fair and Congress site (Messegelände), situated close to the Berlin Radio Tower (Funkturn) and to the Broadcasting Centre (Haus des Rundfunks) by Hans Poelzig.

On behalf of ISC20C, I wish to emphasise the integrity of the historic property as a kind of “Gesamtkunstwerk”, between Pop Art and Brutalism, including the largely preserved interior design of the 1970s. ISC20C has been informed that the ICC Berlin was closed in March 2014 and terminated its operation in July 2014 without any concept for restructuring or funding or for an appropriate utilisation plan.

I strongly recommend to the German and the Berlin authorities to list the building and preserve the property, including its 40,000 square metres of interior space, in its full integrity.

Dear Mr Müller, on behalf of ISC20C I am asking you to

- Speak up for the preservation of this building and its original function: the ICC was a very successful congress centre and received several awards as such. To prevent grave alterations to the building the ICC has to continue to be used as a congress centre;
- Advocate for the building to be kept in its current authenticity and integrity;
- Revitalise the internationally popular ICC Berlin as a cultural and convention centre with state-of-the-art technology;
- Secure heritage protection of the ICC by effective heritage listing;
- Reinstall the sculpture by Jean Ipoustéguy in front of the building as a first act of revitalisation, because the building and the sculpture were designed in unison.

For further enquiries Prof. Dr. Kerstin Wittmann-Englert will be at your disposal (kerstin.wittmann-englert@tu-berlin.de).



S. Burke

President ICOMOS ISC20C

Copies to:

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## **Resolution 18GA 2014/22 – Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin)**

### **The 18<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ICOMOS,**

**Recalling** previous initiatives and actions of ICOMOS, DoCoMoMo, UIA and other partners over the last two decades on “Preserving the Recent Past”;

**Considering** that the “Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin)” is an exceptional late modern building at the Berlin trade fair and congress site situated close to the Berlin Radio Tower (Funkturn) and the broadcasting centre (Haus des Rundfunks) by Hans Poelzig;

**Recognizing** that the “Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin)” is acknowledged by Georg Dehio’s “Handbuch der Deutschen Kunstdenkmäler” (Handbook of German Monuments of Art) as a landmark of post-war German architecture and acknowledged by the Berlin State Heritage Council (Landesdenkmalrat) as a historic property of European Significance;

**Considering** that this historic property is an important example of “Gesamtkunstwerk” between Pop Art and Brutalism including the intact interior design of the 1970s;

**Regretting** that the “Internationales Congress Centrum Berlin (ICC Berlin)” has been closed since March 2014;

**Expressing its concern** that plans for adaptation of the structure will result in substantial adverse impact on the significant interior fabric;

**Encourages** the German and Berlin authorities to implement the legal protection as recommended by the Berlin State Heritage Council and to preserve the property including its significant interior spaces;

**Urges** institutions responsible for the maintenance and future uses of the building to address its neglect and develop plans for re-use that are compatible with the significance of the building.