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Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility



K A M R A T A L - P E R I T I

To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community

The 18th April marks the International Day for Monuments and Sites. The theme chosen for this year's celebration is **"Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility"**, recognising that heritage – whether places, landscapes, practices, or collections – are frequently connected with and valued by multiple and diverse groups and communities. This year, as the world goes through the current crisis caused by COVID-19, we are called to celebrate and think about the relationships between cultures or cultural groups and their collective responsibility for the care and safeguarding of the significant attributes, meanings, and values of heritage.

It was, in fact, exactly two years ago that 22 organisations active in the field of cultural heritage came together to express their shared concern for the manner in which the indiscriminate demolition of our built and other cultural assets was resulting in a general impoverishment of our urban areas.

These entities jointly signed a Declaration titled **"Our Legacy – Wirtna"**, which had one fundamental message: that the way we treat our heritage is the legacy we leave for future generations.

Two years ago we reminded Government of the Declaration of Principles of the Constitution of Malta which stipulates that *"the State shall safeguard the landscape and the historical and artistic patrimony of the Nation"*, and put forward 11 demands for Government to implement. To date, none of these demands have been met.

Last September, hundreds of people crowded the streets of Valletta chanting *"Enough is Enough!"* Enough to planning policies that do not respect citizens. Enough to authorities that do not plan properly and do not respect the environment. Enough to large-scale construction projects, road construction works and lack of transportation planning. Enough to low air quality and lack of preservation of biodiversity. Enough to a construction industry which is allowed to operate in an unregulated manner.

These calls were not dissimilar to those made by the 22 organisations two years ago. The concern is, in fact, a shared concern - that our culture and our heritage are being disregarded, and that economic interests are far too often given the upper hand.

We have a shared responsibility to safeguard our culture and our heritage. The *Kamra tal-Periti* and its fellow signatories of *"Our Legacy – Wirtna"* are fully committed to make sure this happens. Is Government equally committed?

Further information:

<https://kamratalperiti.org/pr-03-18-our-legacy-wirtna/>

https://kamratalperiti.org/wp-content/uploads/Declaration_EN-print-format.pdf

https://kamratalperiti.org/wp-content/uploads/Declaration_MT-print-format.pdf