

Warsaw, 14 October 2020

Press Release

International experts will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the inscription of the Historic Centre of Warsaw on the UNESCO World Heritage List

The international webinar “The invincible city. Society in cultural heritage recovery” will take place on 21 October 2020, Wednesday, to mark the 40th anniversary of the entry of the Historic Centre of Warsaw on the UNESCO World Heritage List and the 75th anniversary of the city’s reconstruction. The conference is organized by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland in cooperation with experts from the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the National Institute of Cultural Heritage.

The webinar is addressed to specialists from Poland and from abroad: architects, town planners, historians, archaeologists, conservators, as well as to local government officials for whom participation in the debate may become an inspiration and a source of knowledge stemming from historic experience of cities like Warsaw.

The opening speeches will be given by **prof. Magdalena Gawin** – Deputy Minister of Culture and National Heritage, General Conservator of Monuments and **prof. Jadwiga Łukaszewicz** – President of the Polish National Committee of ICOMOS. Among the speakers there are:

- **Mechtild Rössler** – Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre,
- **Lazare Eloundou Assomo** – Director of Culture and Emergencies UNESCO,
- **Joseph King** – Director of Partnership and Communication, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM),
- **Marie-Laure Lavenir** – Director General of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS),
- **Bogusław Szmygin** – President of International Committee on Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and Restoration of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (THEOPHIL – ICOMOS),
- **Amra Hadžimuhamedović** – Director of the Centre for Cultural Heritage, International Forum Bosnia,
- **Wojciech Kozłowski** – Director of the Witold Pilecki Institute of Solidarity and Valor,
- **Shadia Touqan** – Director of the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH).

The debate will take form of two thematic panels, both held in English:

Panel 1. “Ruins, bricks and dust. International experience of the recovery of historic cities.”

The discussion will focus on the experience acquired over the period of the past 75 years since the reconstruction of war-ravaged cities and on the changing relationship between the historic preservation officer and the society in the reconstruction process. The experts will try to answer the question about a message and a lesson that Polish nation and Warsaw itself learned from the symbolic dimension of the rebirth of society as a result of its determination to restore the destroyed material heritage that bears testimony to its cultural identity.

Panel 2. “Ruins towards future. How to plan a recovery process? Solidarity with Beirut.”

In a gesture of solidarity with Beirut, we will discuss contemporary problems, challenges and possibilities of protecting heritage against destruction. Universal guidelines on the course of action to be taken when heritage sites are destroyed will be presented, as well as visions of the future and a new approach to the heritage restoration process with support of international expert groups.

Participation in the webinar is free of charge, please register for the event at:

<https://app.evenea.pl/event/theinvinciblecity/>.

Link to the webinar will be sent to registered e-mail addresses. The discussion with the speakers will be possible in the form of an online chat.

A detailed programme of the webinar **“The invincible city. Society in cultural heritage recovery”** and biographies of the speakers are available at:

https://nid.pl/pl/Informacje_ogolne/Aktualnosci/news.php?ID=4376

A Facebook event is available at: <https://fb.me/e/1zDmmlVns>

For more information please contact Adamina Modrzejewska from the National Institute of Cultural Heritage (amodrzejewska@nid.pl).