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URGENT MAIL

1. Mechtild Rössler
Director of the World Heritage Centre

2. Members of the
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via E-Mail

Wien, 6th of July 2016
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**World Heritage property “Historic Centre of Vienna” (Austria) (C1033);
Draft Decision: 40 COM 7B.49;
40th session of the Committee, Istanbul, 10 – 20 July 2016**

Dear Madam or Sir.

acting on behalf of the **Initiative Denkmalschutz, a self-supporting association for protection of endangered cultural properties in Austria**, with its seat in Fuchsthallergasse 11/5, 1090 Wien, Austria (“our Client”), under the power of attorney attached to this letter, in regard especially to the Mission Report of ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage property from 16-19 November 2015 (“Mission Report”), the State of Conservation Report from 31st of March 2016 (“State of Conservation Report”), the letter of the State Party from 19th of May 2016 informing about the decision not to pursue the land use planning procedure regarding the **Vienna Ice Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus development project and the Draft Decision: 40 COM 7B.49** we hereby

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the Members of the World Heritage Committee, that:

- i. The new **High-rise Concept 2014** is already **since December 2014** the official legal guide of the City of Vienna according to all new high-building conceptions.
- ii. There is a **clear conclusion** of ICOMOS on page 10 in its Mission Report, that if the current suite of planning principles, particularly including the **High-rise Concept 2014**, are applied, the World Heritage property would be faced to a serious deterioration of its architectural and town-planning coherence, a serious loss of morphological integrity, and a substantial loss of cultural significance, and that the essential attributes of morphological integrity and cultural significance testifying to the Outstanding Universal Value of the "Historic Centre of Vienna" would be **irreversibly damaged**. The **same** applies to the so-called "**Masterplan Glacis**" (put into force in November 2014). See:
<https://www.wien.gv.at/stadtentwicklung/projekte/glacis/pdf/masterplan-glacis.pdf>).
- iii. The City of Vienna considered in its **State of Conservation Report** from 31st of March 2016, that the development project will not negatively impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. **The City Council of Vienna also doesn't see any necessity to review the High-rise Concept 2014.**
- iv. On behalf of our Client our Law Office addressed on 10th of May 2016 a public letter to the City Council of Vienna (<http://www.ralist.at/de/news/item/offener-brief-an-die-stadt-wien-zur-aenderung-der-desastroesen-hochhauspolitik> - link in German) informing about all the dangers according the implementation of the Vienna Ice

Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus development project. On the same day our Law Office also organised a press conference informing the Austrian general public about the legal irregularities according to the new High-rise Concept 2014 of the City Council of Vienna.

- v. Already on **13rd of May 2016** the City Council of Vienna informed the Austrian press, that the implementation of the Vienna Ice Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus development project should be suspended. According to the vice-mayor of Vienna, who is responsible for all the questions about the World Heritage property, there is a need of setting a **“pause for reflection” about the Vienna Ice Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus development project.**
- vi. By e-mail of 6th of June 2016 the **City Council of Vienna** informed our Law Office, that it maintains its previous opinion, that **the new High-rise Concept 2014** does not negatively impact the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property “Historic Centre of Vienna” so it **won’t be reviewed.**

Due to these facts, we allow us to

c o n c l u d e,

that according to **Article 177 Operational Guidelines:**

- a. The property “Historic Centre of Vienna” (Austria) (C1033)” is on the World Heritage List;
- b. According to the clear conclusion of ICOMOS, that the new High-rise Concept 2014 would irreversibly damage the Outstanding Universal Value of the "Historic Centre of Vienna" and due to the **explicit rejection** of the

City of Vienna to review the High-rise Concept 2014 **the property is threatened by serious and specific danger. The so-called “pause for reflection” announced by the Vienna City Council is a pretext only in order to adhere both to the High-rise Concept of 2014 and to the Masterplan Glacis as official guidelines for all high-rise projects and to avoid severe criticism and complaints by the World Heritage Committee during the Congress of Istanbul. Indeed the City Council is suspected to continue planning of a perhaps slightly modified, but nevertheless OUV damaging project immediately after the end of UNESCO's Congress.** See: Press release 1st July 2016: “Areal Heumarkt [= Ice Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus area]: Development and adaptations until autumn this year.” (http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20160701_OTS0140).

- c. Major operations are necessary for the conservation of the property, because the Vienna City Council still rejects the fact, that the new High-rise Concept 2014 constitutes a irreversible dangerous for the property. Moreover, it allows the City Council to change the area zoning plan anytime, without respecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the "Historic Centre of Vienna". **The new High-rise Concept 2014 and the Masterplan Glacis must be changed in compliance with the clear conclusions of the Mission Report of ICOMOS.**
- d. **The inscription of the objective property on the List of World Heritage in Danger would effectively influence the Vienna City Council to review the new High-rise Concept 2014 and the Masterplan Glacis in compliance with the clear conclusions of the Mission Report of ICOMOS.**

Moreover – according the clear conclusion of ICOMOS in its Mission Report – and in accordance with **Article 179 Operational Guidelines** there is a ascertained or at least a potential danger, **that the objective property is faced with specific and proven imminent danger**, such as a serious deterioration of its architectural and

town-planning coherence, a serious loss of morphological integrity, and a substantial loss of cultural significance, and that the essential attributes of morphological integrity and cultural significance.

With reference of this circumstances we

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all the Members of the World Heritage Committee to

revise the Draft Decision 40 COM 7B.49

by **immediately inscription of the property “Historic Centre of Vienna” (Austria) (C1033) on the List of World Heritage in Danger** in accordance with **Article 177 – 182 Operational Guidelines** and in consequence of confirmation of the ascertained or potential danger to Outstanding Universal Value of this property.

On behalf of Initiative Denkmalschutz– Proxy

List Rechtsanwalts GmbH

Attachments:

.1/ Power of attorney