

DECLARATION OF SUPPORT by the EUROPA NOSTRA COUNCIL



EUROPA
NOSTRA

The Hague, 12 February 2010

RE: EUROPA NOSTRA ENDORSES ITALIA NOSTRA'S APPEAL to the ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, REQUESTING LEGAL PROTECTION for the HISTORIC TOWN CENTRE of L'AQUILA and its SURROUNDINGS

The Council of Europa Nostra unanimously decided during its bi-annual meeting in The Hague (The Netherlands) on 12 February 2010, **to endorse the following appeal** to the Italian Government by its founding Member Organisation Italia Nostra:

Italia Nostra urgently calls for a coherent, consistent and legally binding conservation plan for the Historic Town Centre of L' Aquila and its surrounding small historic villages in the Abruzzo Region of Italy, as they are rebuilt after the devastating earthquake of 6 April 2009. Italia Nostra emphasises the need for the entire area to be declared a historic monument and cultural landscape of extraordinary significance, and insist that its protection be guaranteed by the State.

Italia Nostra reiterates its standpoint that planned restorations in the area should not be limited to the monumental churches and to those few buildings which are already classified protected monuments. It is vital that the conservation plan extend to cover the historic settlements as a whole, including their full network of streets, squares and buildings, with due safeguard of their corresponding social functions.

The Historic Town Centre of L' Aquila and its surrounding small historic villages in the Region, should be rebuilt **"as it was - where it was"**. The historic settlement as a whole must be considered as a holistic complex, as a unique cultural landscape and object of heritage value. It is vital that this concept be made official through proper and legally enforceable Decree. Only with such protection can the restoration of the intricate web of heritage buildings and urban spaces which make up the historic environment of L'Aquila and its surroundings, take place as an integrated project. The restorations must be based on a complex historical analysis of the typology of the different elements that comprise this cultural landscape, along with a serious allocation of adequate resources.

Europa Nostra expresses its support for the above appeal to the Italian Government, urgently calling for the adoption of necessary legal measures to ensure the protection of the integrity and authenticity of the historic town and village centres in and around L'Aquila in the Abruzzo Region of Italy.

Europa Nostra also calls attention to its 'Taormina Declaration: Saving Europe's Memory and Identity' (in Annex), adopted at the Europa Nostra Forum: 'Safeguarding Europe's Historic Small Towns and Villages and their Surrounding Landscapes' on 4 June 2009 during its Annual Congress in Taormina (Italy). **This document sets out the considerations necessary for the proper safeguard of the historic towns and villages centres such as those in L'Aquila and its surroundings.**