

The Hague, 15 December 2015

Dr. Eng. Yannis Maniatis
Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change
17 Amaliados str.
GR - 115 23 Athens

Re: Appeal for the safeguard of the current land-use regulation for the Plaka historic district in Athens

Dear Mr Minister,

I write to you to draw your attention to the fact that Europa Nostra, the pan-European federation of NGOs committed to the safeguard of cultural and natural heritage in Europe, has for forty years now considered the conservation and proper land use regulation of the historic district of Plaka in Athens, which harmoniously unites the monuments of the Acropolis with the modern city, an issue of great significance for the cultural history of Europe. It is for this reason that Europa Nostra welcomed the effective conservation programme and new land use regulations introduced at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, honouring both Plaka and the Greek Government by one of our European awards - a Medal for Conservation in 1983. The award giving ceremony was held in the presence of the then Minister of Culture, Melina Merkouri, who was delighted with this European recognition of a major administrative and cultural achievement of successive Greek governments, an achievement that has been maintained from her time until today.

Europa Nostra considers not just the Acropolis but the area of Plaka below it, an area of great heritage value not just for Greece but for all Europe. We therefore strongly urge the Greek government to withdraw the currently proposed legislation which would alter the land use regulations limiting tavernas, restaurants and bars to the ground floor. We are of the opinion that it was precisely this measure which has proven the most effective in saving Plaka forty years ago from the total domination of an unhealthy night life, and ensuring a healthy balanced mix of activities that made the area more attractive to visitors not just from Europe but from every country in the world.



**The Voice of
Cultural Heritage
in Europe**

**La Voix du
patrimoine culturel
en Europe**

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We remain confident that Europa Nostra and our country representation in Greece, Elliniki Etairia, as well as many concerned citizens in Greece and the rest of Europe, can count on your personal support on this serious matter and we thank you in advance for your personal commitment to the on-going safeguard and sustainable development of the Plaka historic district,

Yours sincerely,



Sneška Quaedvlieg Mihailović
Secretary General

Copy: Dr Costas Stamatopoulos, President of Elliniki Etairia

