

September 05, 2015

To:

International Scientific Committee on Analysis and Restoration of Structures of Architectural Heritage (ISCARSAH), is extremely distressed to learn of the threat to the famous Palazzo del Lavoro in Turin (1959-1961), designed and constructed by Pier Luigi Nervi with Antonio Nervi and Gino Covre.

The International Scientific Committee on the Analysis and Restoration of Structures of Architectural Heritage (ISCARSAH) was founded by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1996 as a forum and network for engineers involved in the restoration and care of building heritage. Members of the ISCARSAH are composed of internationally renowned engineers, scientists, architects, specialists, and educators with representation from Europe, Asia, Australia and North and South America.

As we have followed from the international media and information given by Cristiana Chiorino, Scientific advisor to Pier Luigi Nervi Knowledge and Management Project Association (PLN Project), of the fire threat on August 20th night and of the negative situation now facing the future of the famous Palazzo del Lavoro.

We are familiar with the constructivist architectural works of the great Italian engineer, Pier Luigi Nervi. Palazzo del Lavoro in Turin, constructed for celebration for the centennial of Italy's unification is a globally famous masterpiece of 20th Century showing the Italian engineering skills and architecture.

The 158x158m square space of the gigantic Palazzo del Lavoro is subdivided into 16 square steel umbrellas separated by continuous strip skylights and fixed to 16 central reinforced concrete columns. The columns have a stable cruciform base and circular top resulting with a geometrical pattern formed by straight but twisting lines that reinforce the curving surfaces while adding a visual linearity to each column. International heritage authorities recognise the Palazzo del Lavoro as a pioneer reinforced concrete and steel construction- an Italian concept which influenced structural engineering and architectural creativity over century globally and one of the modernist icons of our time.

Though a new use of the structure was provided by the approval of the City Council in December 2008 in a variant of the Master Plan, and the building was listed by the National Heritage in 2011, the Palazzo del Lavoro in Turin still suffers from a lack of appreciation and proper care as does many other examples of 20th Century architectural heritage in the world.

It would be beneficial for Italian and World Heritage if the administrators understand that the conservation and enhancement of the architectural heritage offers a platform to observe the continued development of novel technologies and has to be our commitment to maintain the social, economic and environmental traditions.

The ISCARSAH stands ready to assist in any manner that you might deem beneficial to this critically important cause.

Best regards,
Prof. Dr. Görün Arun,
President - ISCARSAH