

**World Heritage
Patrimoine mondial**

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Paris, 4 July / 4 juillet 2006
Original: English / anglais

Distribution limited / distribution limitée

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE / COMITE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Thirtieth session / Trentième session

Vilnius, Lithuania / Vilnius, Lituanie
08-16 July 2006 / 08-16 juillet 2006

Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire: Etat de conservation de biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

**ICOMOS EXPERT MISSION REPORT /
RAPPORT DE MISSION DES EXPERTS DE
L'ICOMOS**

21 – 24 June 2006/ 21 – 24 juin 2006

Old Bridge Area of the Old City of Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (946rev) /
Quartier du Vieux pont de la vieille ville de Mostar (Bosnie-Herzégovine) (946rev)

REPORT

On ICOMOS mission to Mostar 21 - 24 June 2006
By Mr. Werner Desimpelaere and Mr. Adam Arnoth

I. Introduction

Mostar and its nomination on 15th July 2005 to the list of the UNESCO - World Heritage, belongs today to one of the best known cities by the whole world due to its emblematic history of the Old Bridge, which in the war had to be destroyed as a physical symbol of relation between people.

The today's responsibility of the decision makers in this symbolic place belongs therefore not only to the city itself (monument and site), but to the whole civilized world. All decision made in and around the protected zone should be proposed, based on the highest environmental and architectural quality, and inspired by the statement that the "bonum commune" should be predominant in favor of all beings as part of "res publica".

Next to the bridge and its surrounding historic buildings, a contemporary monument of the famous Bosnia and Herzegovina architect Prof. Zlatko Ugljen was part of the destruction of the war.

As the bridge was reconstructed, and the surrounding buildings have been restored, Ugljen's hotel Ruza had to make part of the "same" decision to restore the valuable buildings in the center. Ruza hotel belonged without any doubt to the example of eminent contemporary architecture from the seventies.

We formally deplore the complete destruction of it by the investor of the new hotel, who, following the prescriptions, was obliged to restore it.

II. Observations

During our visit in Mostar on 21/22/23 June 2006 we visited the building site of the new hotel Ruza, and tried to observe its impact from different points of view in and around the historic centre. Whatever the investor pretends: there is almost no place in the city, where the shocking confrontation with the aggressive volume is not existing.

One can pretend today that a monumental reversion of values is going on: the original hotel Ruza of architect Ugljen was an integral part of the morphology and "townscape" of Mostar. The new hotel is setting the whole centre of Mostar in its shadow, and is putting itself forward as the new focusing point. In the publication of architect Ugljen's architectural work, we found the following ideas and objectives which translate perfectly his attitude to contemporary architecture in relation with the historic town:

"Site

Set of the juncture of the old urban nucleus formed when the town first arose, in the sixteenth to eighteen centuries, and the river Neretva in the immediate vicinity of the Old Bridge.

Concept

The neighborhood of this important historical and architectural deposit imposed an approach of contextual transposition. The problem was to discern the genius loci, which led to the question of how to read the old in recognition of its time-transcending value, and have then to interpret the time-transcending attributes with a contemporary architectural lexicon from which synthesis of the regional and the universal must be derived.

From the basic concept there arose:

Precepts

- *to avoid and enclose compact corpus the volume of which would intrusively and pretentiously dominate on site*
- *to attempt to insinuate the new in down to earth , relaxed, calm and unobtrusive manner into the existing architectural heritage*
- *to avoid all forms of rigid predetermination of the spatial organization in which the common parts would be strictly separated from the established hospitality area*
- *to highlight the spatial organization of **wholly** open spaces, a united space of flowing continuity, permeated by open enclosed gardens and rills but also continuous with the areas of piazzetta, atrium, pedestrian promenade and the river Radobolja with its channels The space thus synthesized is an open stage and promenade for both internal and external visitors.*

Designer's hallmark

Respecting these attributes through a reading of the iconography present, the basic axiom of the semantic of this uniform stone sculpture - the heart of the town - discovered and applied; the synthesis of the oriental and Mediterranean, the principle of exuberance of the composition of fragmented volumes of the cube,

prism and cylinder tending to the horizontal, spontaneity in the emergence of texture, richness of visual effect, diffusiveness and - as exclusive imminence - the phenomenon of light and shadows, which emphasizes the visual richness. It was from this that there emanated the basic guidelines and potentials in the construction of Hotel Ruza, in the interest of co-option (accommodation) of the new and the old. "

We consider the today's situation as a real threat for the city of Mostar not only because of its already existing impact, but for its previewed impact as well.

After considering all plans , introduced by the Investor to the city, we can only express our astonishment concerning its definitive height, its exceptional scale and volume, not to speak about its banal, low - qualitative architecture, well known by international investors.

We can only state today that during a discussion between the investor, (accompanied by three lawyers), the Federal Ministry of Town Planning, the lord mayor of Mostar and the Commission to preserve national monuments of B&H., the investor tried to blackmail the authorities with the approval to build the new hotel and that all costs of changing the project - design should be taken over by the authorities.

During this confrontation it become even clear for us that the investor did not have any concrete proposal to improve the building. On the contrary, he only tried to minimalize the real impact of it on the town.

Next to the observations of the impact of the hotel Ruza and to the lecture of the approved plans, we also made an analysis of the conditions set up in the Master Plan of 2001 and the management plan of 2004-5, which are integral parts of the nomination file of Mostar.

III. Contradictions between the Master plan of 2001, Management plan of 2004-2005 and the present situation of the site:

- a) Conditions set up in the Master Plan of 2001 and the Management plan of 2004 - 2005 (both documents are integral part of the nomination file), focused on the reconstruction of the hotels structure design by prof. Zlatko Ugljen.

10.3.6 RUZA (Z-6)¹

Objectives

Overall the aim is to develop tourism through improvements to facilities and vehicular and pedestrian access. Specific objectives include:

- the reconstruction of the Ruza Hotel. This is to be followed by a second phase with the construction of a covered swimming pool and retail shops along the street frontages, in the location of the former printing house.
- improvement of circulation and the introduction of a one-way route following Onescukova and H. Repca streets. The infrastructure of these streets is to be upgraded, and a pedestrian pathway created along the Radobolja river channel.
- extension of parking facilities with the construction of a semi-open parking garage.

Design pre-conditions

The builder of the hotel and its grounds will be required to follow the original design developed by the Sarajevo architect Zlatko Ugljen. All further architectural work is to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Authority.

Technical requirements

The Planning Authority must approve all designs according to the following requirements:

- in restoring and reconstructing the Hotel Ruza the addition of one floor will be permitted;
- during the second phase, the construction of additional hotel facilities is foreseen, including a covered pool, retail shops and a parking garage in the basement level. The permitted maximum building height is five stores, including a basement, a ground floor and three upper floors. The construction coefficient (total constructed m²/plot area m²) is 2.5 (8300m²/3430 m²);
- the capacity of the planned parking garage is 140 cars on two levels: an open lot at street level and a covered underground level. Access is from the north;

¹ The original text, concerning hotel Ruza, of the Master plan adopted in 2001

- the surrounding streets are to be covered in asphalt, sidewalks to be of regular cut stone. Area street furniture and similar exterior elements of the hotel complex (street lighting, etc.) should be complementary.

Those documents are focused on the reconstruction of the original hotel, designed by Prof. Zlatko Ugljen, with the facility to add one level in order to satisfy the present program requirements. (increase of tourism).

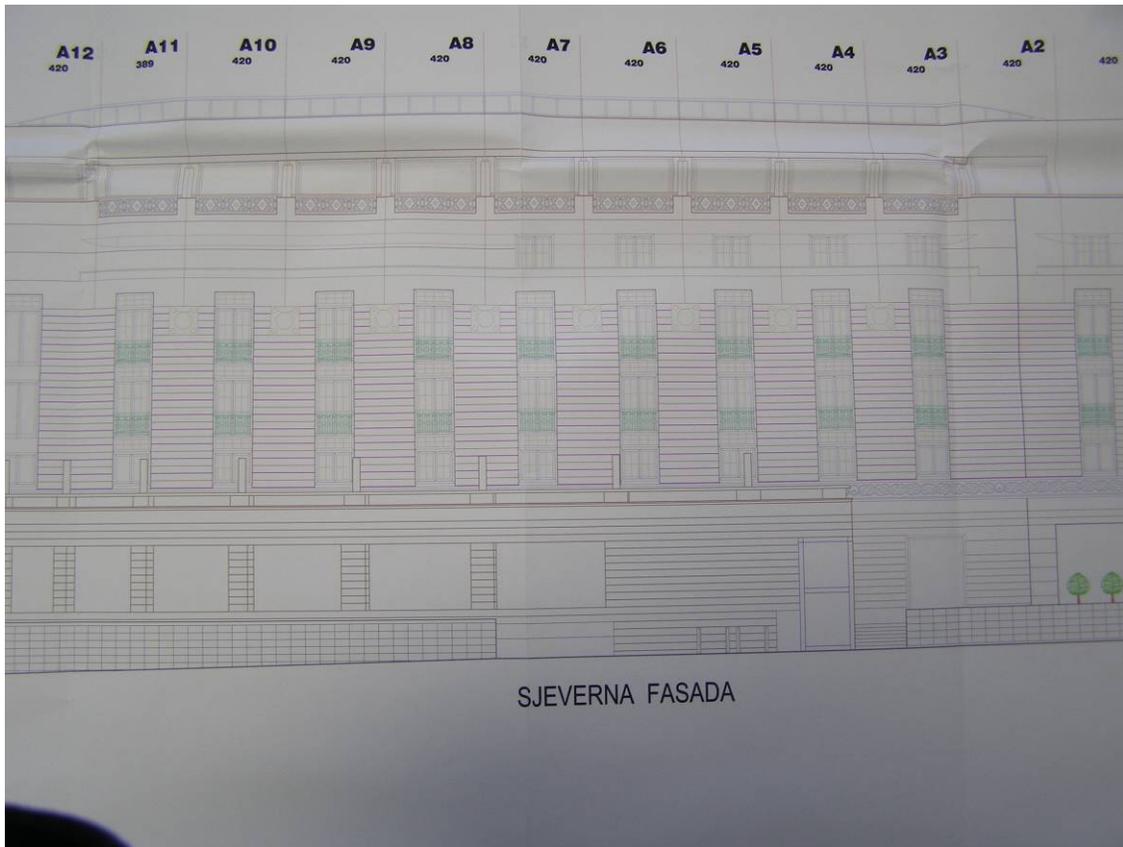
Photographs,



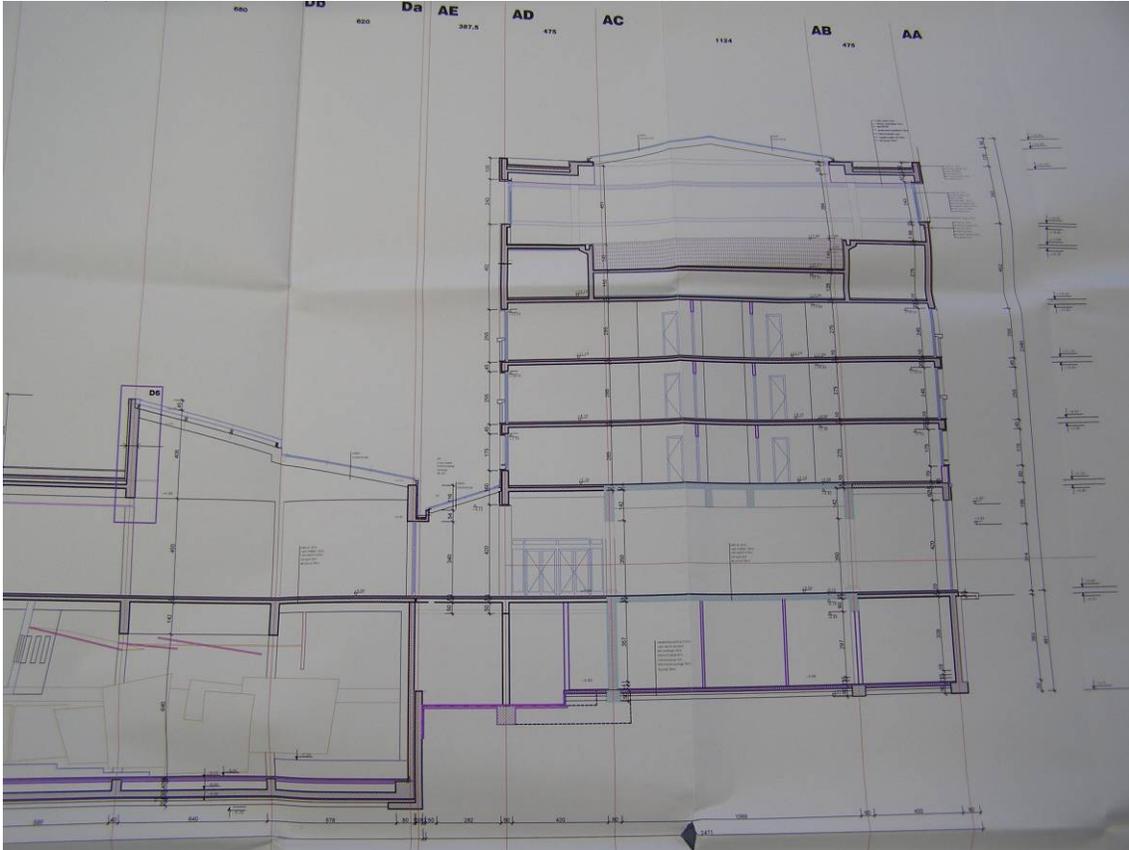
1. Photo of Mr. Ugljen hotel from UNESCO 's publication
" Urban Heritage Map of Mostar" - 1997



2. Photo of the present concrete structure, 2006



3.a. Photo of the façade as per original design for the new hotel, 2006



3.b. Photo of the section as per original design for the new hotel, 2006

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

Although the expert mission wanted to be prepared to propose some concrete alternatives and reasonable solutions to the current problem of the hotel construction, the mission was concerned that at present no other advice can be given than to reconsider the new project and design taking into account the already constructed volume while fully respecting the management plan of the World Heritage property.

The mission concludes:

- (1) that the current hotel construction project is not in compliance with the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage property;
- (2) to encourage the Federal Minister of Physical Planning and the Mayor of Mostar to find a feasible solution for this complex situation, in particular to (a) halt the current project, (b) review the plans and (c) find alternative solutions in line with the principles indicated by Prof. Zlatko Ugljen.
- (3) To fully respect the Master Plan and the Management plan, adopted for the World Heritage property of the Old Bridge area of the Old City of Mostar

The mission specifically recommends:

- 1. to the State Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully respect its obligations under the World Heritage Convention of 1972;
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- 2. to the State Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its national and local authorities to find appropriate solutions in order to reduce the unacceptable visual impact of the new structure of the hotel Ruza;
- 3. to ensure additional expertise to find the best appropriate solution for the protection and the visual cohesion of the entire World Heritage core area and its buffer zone.
- 4. to immediately stop any further construction activities until a new project of high qualitative integration in the morphology of the city is

approved, respecting the obligations under the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines;

- 5. to take into account in the re-adaptation the principles already mentioned in the monograph of Prof. Zlatko Ugljen by using international standards (e.g. high - qualitative independent architect or town planner;) and reinterpreting the still existing original structure;
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- 6. to fully discuss and elaborate such an alternative project within a consultation process, supported by UNESCO-experts;
- 7. UNESCO and its World Heritage Centre are advised to continue with assistance to ensure additional expertise to the State Party if required;

Sarajevo, 24 June 2006

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