

## Jared Kushner: Terminate this deal now

Open letter to Jared Kushner from the Union of Architects of Serbia regarding the proposed Trump Hotel Belgrade

Belgrade, November 18th, 2025

Dear Mr. Kushner,

We are addressing you on behalf of the Union of Architects of Serbia (UAS), which is the main body of professionals, experts, and scientists in the field of architecture in our country. We have been closely following the development of the investment project by the Atlantic Incubation Partners LLC<sup>1</sup> in the very center of Belgrade, planned at the location of the cultural monument of the General Staff Building Complex.

We have been perplexed from the outset by what appeared to us as major misconceptions about the project's feasibility. Now that the press has released details<sup>2</sup> of the contracts that your company signed with the current Serbian authorities, and in particular the "Investment contract" prepared in February 2024, it is clear to us that you and your business partners may have received incomplete or inaccurate information.

This has led you into a misleading and high-risk business arrangement. We take it as our professional duty to make sure you are properly informed of what is legally and constitutionally possible at the location of the General Staff Building Complex, and that you

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As an LLC registered in Delaware, the full list of owners of the company is not publicly available. We are addressing you directly for the following three reasons: (i) Documents <u>revealed</u> by lawmakers show that Atlantic Incubation Partners LLC was represented by Kushner Realty, LLS, linked to your family members, in early agreements with the Serbian authorities; (ii) Your companies, Global Affinity Development and Affinity Partners are listed in "investment contract" prepared in February 2024 that was revealed last week, and Global Affinity Development has officially and publicly signed a contract with the Serbian authorities in <u>May 2024</u>; (iii) You have been the public face of the project: you have shared visuals of what you named "our project" on your personal <u>Instagram</u> (following an earlier post on X), you spoke to the <u>media</u> about the project, and the logo of your company, of your UAE partner Eagle Hills, of The Trump Corporation, appears on the project's <u>website</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See in English and links therein: "<u>Serbia secretly agreed deal with Jared Kushner firm to develop protected Belgrade</u>", *The Guardian*, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. See in Serbian: "<u>Kushner will not pay a single euro for the 99-year lease</u>", *Radar*, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025. We are aware that a series of documents exist and are gradually being released by the media. We are here focusing only on the "Investment contract", but we note that a series and comments and warnings related to the other contracts could be made as well.

have an accurate picture of the situation on the ground. In the annex to this letter, you will find an assessment of your project's situation prepared by UAS members.

The assessment first provides an up-to-date overview of the situation on the ground in Serbia, in relation to the provisions of the investment contract, so far as we are aware of.

Three key elements emerge for us, that we believe are crucial for you to know:

- The General Staff Building Complex is still protected by law: the unsuccessful attempt by the government to unlawfully remove the site from the Central Heritage Registry is now being investigated by Serbia's top corruption and organised crime prosecutors. The site is still listed in the Central Heritage Registry and our assessment is that a series of powerful factors converge to make it unlikely to be removed from the registry in the foreseeable future. It is still illegal to intervene on General Staff Building Complex in any way, and the November 7<sup>th</sup> Lex specialis has not changed the situation, nor will its implementation.
- Multiple breaches of the law, through and through: The signature of the
  investment contract, the commitments made therein by the government, and the
  ways the government has undertaken their implementation so far, all constitute
  unambiguous breaches to the Serbian constitution, to at least four national laws,
  and a series of international commitments made by the country. We evaluate the risk
  of liability as extremely high for this project.
- Increasing hostility and resistance to the project from all spectrum of society:

  The multi-actor coalition resisting the project is ever-growing, and now gathers the whole student movement in Serbia; virtually all public and private professionals from the fields of architecture, urban planning, and conservation; citizen councils (a constitutional provision in Serbia); war veterans; Members of the Parliament from across the "left and right" political spectrum; and civil society organizations, some of which having already announced a physical occupation of the site.

Then, our assessment addresses what we estimate are **two fundamental misconceptions about the General Staff Building Complex** that, had they been avoided at the very beginning of your discussions with the government, would have made it clear that the project was impossible to implement at this location. These two misconceptions are:

• The value and significance of the General Staff Building Complex is about way more than the 1999 NATO bombing: There is a predominantly one-dimensional anti-NATO narrative around the General Staff Building Complex that is obscuring the site's true importance, which lies much much deeper in Serbia's historical and institutional memory. This covers post-Ottoman statehood formation in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century wars (Balkan Wars and WWI), the anti-fascist Yugoslav legacy of WWII, the tragedy of the 1990s and early 2000s events. These

different layers also explain the multi-faceted nature of the coalition fighting against your project, as well as its determination.

• The building is not a "ruin" but is structurally healthy and requires a mix of restoration and reconstruction: There is a widespread misunderstanding, sometimes due to purposeful disinformation, about the actual General Staff Building Complex's actual shape. Far from being a ruined shell, the General Staff complex is technically and economically entirely restorable: only a small portion (around 5%) of the building is damaged, and the structural integrity of the majority of the complex allows for a fully feasible restoration. This consensus represents the general position of the profession. From a heritage and cultural perspective, existing restoration projects insist on the site's importance for national, regional, and international reconciliation work.

Mr Kushner, we are convinced that these facts must have been omitted from the background information and legal counseling that you have received so far, because we cannot explain how the project could have been able to move forward otherwise.

In light of this assessment, we estimate that the contractual conditions have been met for you to **issue the cancellation letter specified in article 4 of the investment contract**. The annex provides formal arguments for the unambiguous and swift removal of your interests from this project: it is without a doubt destined to become a liability and a reputational burden to its investors, and is already investigated by prosecutors.

Were you to claim any financial compensation from the Government of Serbia, as you are entitled to, this would risk permanently deteriorating your brand in the country. We advise either renouncing compensation altogether or donating the funds to organizations working on the conservation of Serbian cultural heritage and on Serbian children's care: two sectors that are dramatically underfunded despite being central to preserving and nurturing the past and future of Serbian society.

We remain available for any complementary legal or technical information and references you may need to terminate this contract properly, or for a list of organizations working on cultural heritage and children's care in Serbia, should you decide to collect your compensation.

Sincerely,

The Union of Architects of Serbia

# To Jared Kushner: Annex to the open letter from the Union of Architects of Serbia

Dear Mr Kushner,

This short report was written by members of the Union of Architects of Serbia (UAS), on their own time and on a *pro bono* basis. Its content explains why the overarching assessment of the UAS is that **you should terminate all aspects of this deal as soon as you can.** 

Sincerely,

The Union of Architects of Serbia

#### Content:

Key messages from the assessment:	5
1. Key information from the ground	7
1.1. The General Staff Building Complex is still protected by law	7
1.2. Multiple breaches of the law, through and through	. 8
1.3. There is an increasing hostility and resistance to the project from all spectrum of	
society	10
2. Correcting two key misconceptions	11
2.1. The value and significance of the General Staff Building Complex is about way mo	
than the 1999 NATO bombing	11
2.2. The building is structurally healthy: it requires a mix of restoration and	
reconstruction	14
3. The way out	15
o. The way out	
Addendum: List of organizations supporting the Declaration on the Future of the Belgrade	<del>)</del>
Fair and the General Staff Building Complex	

### Key messages from the assessment:

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- Multiple breaches of the law, through and through: The signature of the contract, the
  commitments made therein by the government, and the ways the government has
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  Serbian constitution, to at least four national laws, and a series of international
  commitments made by the country. We evaluate the risk of liability as extremely high for
  this project.
- Increasing hostility and resistance to the project from all spectrum of society: The multi-actor coalition resisting the project is ever-growing, and now gathers the whole student movement in Serbia; virtually all public and private professionals from the fields of architecture, urban planning, and conservation; citizen councils (a constitutional provision in Serbia); war veterans; Members of the Parliament from across the "left and right" political spectrum; and civil society organizations, some of which having already announced a physical occupation of the site.
- The value and significance of the General Staff Building Complex is about way more than the 1999 NATO bombing: There is a predominantly one-dimensional anti-NATO narrative around the General Staff Building Complex that is obscuring the site's true importance, which lies much much deeper in Serbia's historical and institutional memory. This covers post-Ottoman statehood formation in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century wars (Balkan Wars and WWI), the anti-fascist Yugoslav legacy of WWII, the tragedy of the 1990s and early 2000s events. These different layers also explain the multi-faceted nature of the coalition fighting against your project, as well as its determination.
- The building is not a "ruin" but is structurally healthy and requires a mix of restoration and reconstruction: There is a widespread misunderstanding, sometimes due to purposeful disinformation, about the actual General Staff Building Complex's actual shape. Far from being a ruined shell, the General Staff complex is technically and economically entirely restorable: only a small portion (around 5%) of the building is damaged, and the structural integrity of the majority of the complex allows for a fully feasible restoration. This consensus represents the general position of the profession. From a heritage and cultural perspective, existing restoration projects insist on the site's importance for national, regional, and international reconciliation work.

### 1. Key information from the ground

#### 1.1. The General Staff Building Complex is still protected by law

According to the investment contract your company signed with the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Section 3.1.1 of the Conditions states that the government pledges to remove the status of a protected cultural monument. Many inaccurate accounts can be heard on the current status of the General Staff Building Complex, from the proponents of the project, from its opponents, and in the media. The fact is that the General Staff Building Complex is *still* listed as a protected cultural property.

In Serbia, it is only the **State Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage** which has the competent public authority, and the actual legal standing, to initiate this procedure: the responsibility for doing the valorisation study needed for the Ministry of Culture and the Government of Serbia to follow the procedure of delisting the site, lies exclusively within legally prescribed mandate of this Institute.

To remove the status of protection from a given site or building, it must be removed from the **Central Heritage Registry**, managed by the staff of the State Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. Since there is a full consensus on the architectural, historical, cultural, and memorial values the General Staff Building Complex possesses, and that none of those have been decreased or ceased to exist, no professional from the Institute can provide a study that states the contrary and leads to the deleting of the site from the Central Heritage Registry.

In May 2024, two directors of the State Institute and the City Institute for Cultural Heritage Protection publicly resigned from their positions after pressure to produce this study. In November 2024, the Government tried to bypass the Institute, and thus the law, by deciding that the General Staff Building Complex should be removed from the registry, based on the falsified documents.

Since May 2025, the new directors, appointed after the resignations, are both facing charges by the Prosecutors Office for Organised Crime, for creating the false documents required by the Government of Serbia to make a decision that would permit terminating the site's status of cultural property.

**Key information for you to know:** Since there is a full professional consensus on the value and significance of the General staff Building Complex, the Institute's staff, as is their professional duty, has been forced to resist political pressure – including interrogations from secret services. Thus, the site remains listed in the Central Heritage Registry. The staff's resolve to protect the public interest, uphold legal structures, and defend the intergenerational right to cultural heritage grows stronger every day, despite renewed

attempts by Parliament and the Government to use semi-legal and illegal measures to remove the site from the Central Heritage Registry.

#### 1.2. Multiple breaches of the law, through and through

In our experience, the details of the protection that the General Staff Building Complex enjoys are often not well understood outside of the profession.

A reading of the contract between your company and the Serbian government suggests a lack of heritage and urbanistic expertise in the legal counsel responsible for drafting the contract.

#### The site actually has three layers of legal protection:

- Protection of the historical area around the Kneza Milosa street;
- Protection of two specific protected cultural monuments from the 19th century located on the same plot;
- Protection of the General Staff buildings A and B from the 1960s.

The commitments made by the Government of Serbia in the contract are thus breaking the Constitution and at least three different national laws:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia: in article 89, the country's constitution states that everyone is responsible for the preservation of cultural heritage, and especially the State authorities.
- The Law on Culture: the special law bypasses the procedures that are mandatory to decide upon any change of status or use of a protected cultural site.
- The Law on Immovable Cultural Heritage: the special law bypasses mandatory protection procedures and the institutional autonomy of public heritage protection bodies.
- The Law on Planning and Construction: the special law bypasses the legal procedures that are necessary for the delivery of destruction and construction permits.

The commitments made by the government (and the very signature of the contract itself) by-pass obligatory procedures. This was clearly explained by Serbian chapter of Transparency International in a July 2024 report<sup>3</sup>: "The land was not advertised for sale, no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Studija slučaja: Generalštab", Transparency International Serbia, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

international tender was announced for the restoration/reconstruction of the General Staff Building Complex, no urban plan was adopted that envisages some other buildings on the site of the existing ones in Nemanjina street, nor was there an urban-architecture competition for the future appearance of the location."

This explains why the government has resorted to implementation means now under investigation by prosecutors. Because the contract itself anticipates a series of direct breaches of the country's Constitution and laws, the current authorities of Serbia have been executing a series of pressures, acts of corruption, falsifications, and further legal and constitutional violations to meet the obligations of the contract.

As mentioned in the previous section, under the Serbian *Law on the Protection of Cultural Monuments*, only the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, as the competent public authority, has the active legal standing to initiate the procedure of delisting the General Staff from the Central Heritage Registry, since this responsibility lies exclusively within its legally prescribed mandate.

The pledge to remove the status of a protected cultural monument, as made by the government in Section 3.1.1 of your contract, is thus also in **direct conflict with Article 89 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia**. This article establishes both the individual duty of every citizen and the special responsibility of the State to preserve cultural and historical heritage as assets of public interest. Any attempt to remove the protected status outside the legally defined procedure would constitute a violation of statutory law and of the Constitution itself.

Since the contract between your company and the government is now public, and in light of the ongoing corruption investigation, there is substantial legal uncertainty surrounding the entire arrangement.

It is increasingly likely that all decisions adopted through unlawful or unconstitutional procedures may be annulled by the competent authorities and courts. This follows directly from the *Law on Obligations* (*Zakon o obligacionim odnosima*), which establishes the grounds for nullity of contracts and other legal acts. *Article 103* provides that a contract that violates mandatory provisions, public order, or good customs is annulled and void unless the law prescribes a different sanction. *Article 109* confirms that courts must take notice of *nullity ex officio*, and any interested party, including the public prosecutor, has the right to request a declaration of nullity.

These provisions clearly support the position that any agreements or decisions undertaken in violation of statutory or constitutional law can be legally challenged and annulled, reinforcing the significant legal uncertainty surrounding the contract and related obligations. There is significant governmental pressure on judges and prosecutors, which explains the relative paralysis of the legal branch, but this is currently changing fast thanks to the

mobilization of Serbian students against corruption, which has been ongoing for more than a year now.

**Key information for you to know:** The Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime has already opened an investigation, and the scope of this investigation is now expanding to include senior officials within the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Construction. At the same time, a serious institutional confrontation has emerged between the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, and the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime, after the President publicly accused prosecutors on television of being an "organized crime group," an accusation the Prosecutor's Office firmly rejected in an official public statement.

# 1.3. There is an increasing hostility and resistance to the project from all spectrum of society

While a year and a half ago the opposition to the project was led primarily by professional associations, state institutions, and legal bodies, today the resistance front continues to grow. The student movement, now coordinating with professional associations as well as citizens groups, are united in leading the mobilization against your project. Additionally, numerous key international organisations<sup>4</sup> in the fields of heritage and architecture have also joined.

A multi-actor coalition from across the political spectrum has formed and is very determined to protect the General Staff Building Complex and its renewal. You are likely aware of the protests that took place in the last years, and of the protest on 11 November. UAS can attest from our experiences on the ground: the public energy in opposition to your project will not fade away any time soon. Indeed, new actions are being discussed and planned daily to ensure the project does not move forward.

This is not the first controversial urban project in Belgrade, but for many, this is simply a step too far. This is due to the historical, architectural, cultural and memorial value, as well as symbolic importance of the General Staff, this is a red line that cannot be crossed for many citizens of Serbia.

The willingness from the citizens of Serbia to resist projects that are not following due legal processes (including participatory processes) is visible in an increasing number of cases. Most recently, the Rio Tinto lithium mining project, despite strong political support including from the European Union, has come to a halt because of the sustained opposition from citizens in Serbia, from the Jadar Valley to marches in Belgrade.

9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Europa Nostra, ICOMOS, DOCOMOMO International, and The Architects' Council of Europe: Joint Statement: <u>Calling for the withdrawal of the proposed "Lex Specialis" Law related to the Generalštab Modernist Complex in Belgrade, Serbia, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025.</u>

Rio Tinto declared yesterday that they were putting this multi-billion dollar project on pause<sup>5</sup>. We are expecting that this will further embolden the opposition to your project, since the public sees a similar opacity and lack of due diligence in the way that these partnerships were made with foreign investors.

**Key information for you to know:** Following the release of the investment contract in the media, civil society organizations from Belgrade are now calling for the physical protection of the site for (at least) six months, until the May deadline expires. Lawmakers and civil society organizations have also taken additional steps in just the last few days.

### 2. Correcting two key misconceptions

# 2.1. The value and significance of the General Staff Building Complex is about way more than the 1999 NATO bombing

In recent international media coverage, a predominantly one-dimensional anti-NATO narrative has emerged around the General Staff Building Complex. While it is true that the site carries the painful memory of civilian victims from the 1999 NATO bombing, this represents only the most visible layer of its significance. The building's true importance lies much deeper in Serbia's historical and institutional memory (see figure below).



Figure: 3D view of the General Staff Complex Building and the surrounding historical zone.

Credits: UAS

10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Miner Rio Tinto Mothballs \$3 Billion Serbian Lithium Project", Bloomberg, November 13th, 2025.

The General Staff Building Complex is situated on the junction of Kneza Miloša Street and Nemanjina streets, one of the most symbolically and administratively significant crossroads in Belgrade. For more than two centuries, this place has been at the heart of Serbian statehood, hosting key governmental institutions, and forming part of a legally protected spatial, cultural, and historical ensemble.

Within this protected zone, the General Staff's premises include two particular architecturally and historically critical monuments. The older building, known as the Baumgarten Palace (Old General Staff Building), designed by Vasily Wilhelm Baumgarten between 1924 and 1928, is inscribed as a cultural monument. Adjacent to it stands the barracks of the 7th Regiment (Kasarna VII Puka), dating from the late 19th century, also protected under heritage status.

Architect Nikola Dobrović, one of the most famous and respected Yugoslav and Serbian architects, conceived the new General Staff building (construction 1955-1965) not merely as a functional military edifice, but as a profound expression of Modernist architectural thought. In his design he employed the theory of the "activated space," influenced by French philosopher Henri Bergson, while also drawing symbolic parallels to the Sutjeska Canyon, evoking the wartime struggle and anti-fascist bravery of Yugoslav forces.

## Box. More bad surprises to come? The underground of the parcel is very poorly known.

As it served as the headquarters of two very sensitive government branches – the headquarters of the Yugoslav Army and Defense Ministry – the building's underground is highly complex and poorly known, since the details are classified military information. The site is located directly across the street from the Headquarters of the Government of Serbia, and surrounded by other key institutions, and it is known that a network of tunnels, telecommunication infrastructure, and most likely war shelters and headquarters, runs underground.

As per your contract, the government is obligated to hand over the parcel after first clearing the underground. There is at least a dual uncertainty here in our view. First, we believe that unforeseen technical complications could emerge, since the underground of the parcel, and its multiple connections with surrounding parcels, are not properly mapped out to our knowledge. Second, disrupting the security infrastructure networks could create significant political friction and hostility towards the project, especially if future administrations decide to rehabilitate this underground infrastructure in the increasingly volatile security environment that Europe faces.

This dual interpretation situates the complex firmly within the European Modernist tradition. While designed by Nikola Dobrović as a masterpiece of Modernism, it simultaneously embeds the building in the narrative of socialist Yugoslavia's anti-fascist struggle and symbolizes the country's belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement, linking architectural innovation with broader historical and political legacies.

Preserving the General Staff Building Complex is therefore not just a matter of architectural heritage, nor a nationalistic sentiment for memorialising the NATO bombing campaign. It is to safeguard a living monument to Serbia's belonging to a pan-European legacy of progressivism, resistance, and collective memory.

For these reasons, the General Staff Building Complex was selected for inclusion by Europa Nostra and the EIB Institute as one of the "Seven most endangered heritage sites in Europe for 2025". It was also part of the exhibition "Toward a concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia between 1948-1980" at the MOMA museum in New York<sup>7</sup>.

Its value, thus, extends far beyond national borders, and far beyond the memory of the NATO bombing. The site embodies the principles of European modernism, the legacy of the anti-fascist struggle, and Serbia's contribution to a shared European cultural heritage.

Destroying this site would not only erase layers of architectural heritage—from classical academic forms to interwar public state architecture—but also undermine a living symbol of Serbia's modern political and institutional identity, gradually built since it started gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Beyond its recent wartime scars, the General Staff Building Complex stands as a monument to continuity, resilience and statehood—and cannot be reduced merely to a memory of conflict.

It cannot, either, be reduced to the past. The way Serbia will deal with the site is of tremendous importance for the reconciliation work that is still necessary, in Serbia and the Balkans, after the tragic 1990s. Because of its many layers of history, and the scars it still carries, the site is central to this pending collective work of memory and renewal. This is also why youth is mobilizing for the site's restoration.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Europa Nostra and EIB Institute announce Europe's 7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites for 2025", March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> MoMA Exhibition, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018–January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> In September 2025, a student initiative received the EU "Heritage Heroes" for their work to preerve the General Staff Building Complex. See: <a href="https://europa.rs/ansambl-generalstab-heritage-heroes-for-2025/">https://europa.rs/ansambl-generalstab-heritage-heroes-for-2025/</a>

# 2.2. The building is structurally healthy: it requires a mix of restoration and reconstruction

In recent years, the architectural and academic community in Serbia has united behind a strong and well-articulated defense of the General Staff Building Complex. More than 70 professional organizations and academic institutions, and 6500 individual experts, including architects, conservators, urban planners, historians, and legal scholars, have signed the *Declaration on the Fate of the Belgrade Fair and the General Staff*. Their appeal rejects demolition and demands "restoration and conservation in accordance with strict heritage protection standards".<sup>9</sup>

Far from being a ruined shell, the General Staff complex is **technically and economically entirely restorable**. Conservators and engineering experts from the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Civil Engineering have confirmed that only a small portion (around 5%) of the building is damaged and that the structural integrity of the majority of the complex allows for a fully feasible restoration. This consensus represents the general position of the profession and directly refutes the dismissive political narrative portraying the General Staff as a "worthless ruin".

There are numerous available options for restoration and partial reconstruction of the General Staff Building Complex. The points above explain why virtually all expert organizations are calling for the restoration of the site, with possible adaptive reuse in terms of the buildings' public or administrative function.

Experts have been unanimous about the structural health of the building complex and its safety for the public after rehabilitation works. All the original documentation of the project is available, which guarantees that the restoration works will follow high professional standards and the original design. Multiple ideas, visions, and even draft plans are available, ranging from a museum to administrative use, or a mix of such uses.

Students have been involved in that part of the work too: in 2022, the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Belgrade organized a competition about the future of the General Staff, precisely to explore renovation options<sup>10</sup>.

Given all of the above, we estimate that the project you are leading, Mr. Kushner, will not benefit the general interest of the citizens of Serbia. Your project aims to "revitalize" the site by stripping away its historic layers and replacing them with a new 280,000 m² complex of residential, commercial, and tourist buildings. This would, in reality, only benefit a very small fraction of the wealthier categories of Serbian and global individuals, at the expense of the inhabitants of Belgrade and Serbia.

13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Declaration in English and in Serbian, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See results of the competition at this address.

The "memorial museum" to the NATO bombing, as per the documents revealed by the press, is supposed to occupy 1% of the constructed area. This number is shocking to many of our citizens. As outlined in the previous section, it is also a severe reduction of the site's heritage significance.

Had due process been followed, with the obligatory extensive participation of experts and of the public, your project would have been rejected. This is likely why the current authorities steered you in this direction. And that direction, Mr. Kushner, leads to an impasse.

### 3. The way out

Mr. Kushner, all of the above indicate that this operation can only proceed further through major and continuous breaches of Serbian and international law. We saw how, when the forgery of documents was revealed last May, your company treaded lightly and declared that the project's fate was uncertain<sup>11</sup>. We saw how the current President of Serbia, on the contrary, is insisting that there would be no halt to the project<sup>12</sup>.

We are thus questioning the information you and your partners are receiving, and take it as our professional duty to be crystal clear on the state of affairs at this stage:

- In order to proceed further, this project will require a set of multiple, continuous, and blatant breaches of the law.
- Prosecutors are already investigating and are closing in on the executive branch.
- Public outrage against the project is increasing by the day. The anger we see around
  us about the investment contract is worse than for other controversial real estate
  projects, and even worse than for the Rio Tinto lithium project.

Our professional advice is that you should disengage, and quickly.

This is an unnecessary business risk, both financial and reputational. Belgrade and Serbia are full of prime locations where projects can be developed safely, with due process and to answer the needs of the population. It is unfortunate that there was such an utter misunderstanding about this particular location.

Per the contract you've signed (article 4), we strongly recommend that you send a letter to cancel it. We understand that, with all the information above, you could reasonably

<sup>11 &</sup>quot;Trump-Kushner Hotel Project in Serbia Hits a Snag: Alleged Forgery", The New York Times, May 14th, 2025.

<sup>12 &</sup>quot;<u>Vučić Says No Halt To Kushner's Trump Hotel Project In Belgrade Despite Forged Document</u>", Radio Free Europe, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

conclude that you were intentionally misinformed and seek the compensation you are contractually entitled to claim.

Given the hostility towards the project in Serbia, we however, believe that collecting the financial compensation would cause irreparable reputational damage to your brand.

#### We advise two courses of action:

- Renouncing compensation altogether.
- Donating the funds to organizations working on the conservation of Serbian cultural heritage and on Serbian children's care: two sectors that are dramatically underfunded despite being central to preserving and nurturing the past and future of Serbian society.

## Addendum: List of organizations supporting the Declaration on the Future of the Belgrade Fair and the General Staff Building Complex

Support for the <u>Declaration on the Future of the Belgrade Fair and the General Staff Building</u> has been expressed by the following professional, academic, and civil society organizations:

- Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) / Department of Arts and Department of Technical Sciences
- 2. Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade
- 3. Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Belgrade
- 4. Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade / Department of Spatial Planning
- 5. Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade / Department of Art History
- 6. Academy of Architecture of Serbia (AAS)
- 7. Academy of Engineering Sciences of Serbia (AINS)
- 8. Association of Architects of Serbia (UAS)
- 9. Belgrade Architects Society (DAB)
- 10. Novi Sad Architects Society (DaNS)
- 11. Niš Architects Society (DAN)
- 12. Valievo Architects Society (DAV)
- 13. Zrenjanin Architects Society (DAZ)
- 14. Vranje Architects Society (DVA)
- 15. Union of Civil Engineers of Serbia (SGIS)
- 16. SFERA Media Platform for Dialogue and Promotion of Architecture
- 17. Society of Conservators of Serbia (DKS)
- 18. Institute of Architecture and Urbanism of Serbia (IAUS)
- 19. Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade / Laboratory for Theory, Creation, and Politics of Space (PerspectLab)

- 20. Do.co.mo.mo. Serbia (National Section of the International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement)
- 21. Europa Nostra Serbia
- 22. ICOMOS Serbia (International Council on Monuments and Sites National Committee of Serbia)
- 23. Association of Urban Planners of Serbia (UUS)
- 24. Association of Landscape Architects of Serbia (UPAS)
- 25. Association of Spatial Planners of Serbia (APPS)
- 26. Women's Architectural Society (ŽAD)
- 27. Renewables and Environmental Regulatory Institute (RERI)
- 28. Centre for Experiments and Urban Studies (CEUS)
- 29. Ministry of Space (MP)
- 30. New Planning Practice (NPP)
- 31. Belgrade International Architecture Week (BINA)
- 32. Club of Admirals and Generals of Serbia (KAGS)
- 33. Serbian Association for Demolition, Decontamination and Recycling (SDA)
- 34. Cultural Station "Baštinar" Perlez Mill
- 35. International Association of Art Critics AICA Serbia
- 36. Association of Fine Artists of Serbia (ULUS)
- 37. Association of Applied Artists and Designers of Serbia (ULUPUDS)
- 38. Association of the Independent Cultural Scene of Serbia (NKSS)
- 39. National Committee of ICOM Serbia
- 40. Museum Society of Serbia (MDS)
- 41. Engineers Chamber of Serbia (IKS) Executive Board of the Niš Section of Architects
- 42. Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, University of Niš (GAF)
- 43. Faculty of Technical Sciences, University of Novi Sad Department of Architecture and Urbanism (FTN)
- 44. Serbian Archaeological Society (SAD)
- 45. Faculty of Applied Arts, University of Belgrade Department of Conservation and Restoration
- 46. Student Creative Research Center of Architecture (SKICA)
- 47. Student Collective "General Staff Ensemble"
- 48. Employees of the National Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments
- 49. Employees of the Belgrade City Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments
- 50. Employees of the Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, Petrovaradin
- 51. UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management, University of Arts Belgrade
- 52. Association of Dramatic Artists of Serbia (UDUS)
- 53. Serbian Architectural Society (SAD)
- 54. Association of Applied Artists and Designers of Vojvodina
- 55. Association of Fine Artists of Vojvodina

#### International supporters:

- 56. Architectural Forum of Montenegro (AFCG)
- 57. Chamber of Architects, Engineers Chamber of Montenegro
- 58. Association of Architects of Slovenia
- 59. Union of Architects of Montenegro
- 60. Faculty of Architecture, University of Montenegro

- 61. Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana
- 62. Faculty of Civil Engineering, Transportation and Architecture, University of Maribor
- 63. Architects Society of Maribor (DAM)
- 64. Chamber for Architecture and Spatial Planning of Slovenia (ZAPS)
- 65. Engineers Chamber of Slovenia (IKS)
- 66. Architects Society of Ljubljana (DAL)
- 67. Museum of Architecture and Design of Slovenia (MAO)
- 68. Society of Slovenian Conservators and Restorers
- 69. ICOMOS International International Council on Monuments and Sites
- 70. DOCOMOMO International International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement
- 71. Europa Nostra Pan-European Federation for Cultural Heritage
- 72. Architects Society of Skopje, North Macedonia
- 73. ACE Architects' Council of Europe
- 74. International Union of Architects (UIA) General Secretariat
- 75. Union of Architects of Bulgaria (UAB)
- 76. Society of Czech Architects

To date, the Declaration has been signed by 6,772 professionals in the fields of architecture, civil engineering, cultural heritage protection, art, culture, history, and law.