

STATEMENT
of the Ukrainian National Committee
of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
on the destruction of the historical environment of the World Heritage site
‘The Historic Centre of Odesa’

Noting the irreparable damage that the Russian armed forces are inflicting every day of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Ukrainian cultural heritage sites, in particular those included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, and recognising that Ukrainian cultural heritage is an integral part of the cultural heritage of all humanity, The Ukrainian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) declares:

On the night of 24 July 2025, another attack took place on the historic centre of Odesa, which has been protected by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention since January 2023. A massive drone attack caused damage to historic buildings within the World Heritage Site ‘The Historic Centre of Odesa’. In particular, as a result of a drone strike on the territory of Prymorsky Boulevard, architectural and urban planning monuments of national importance that form the ‘maritime’ facade of Odesa were damaged to varying degrees by the blast wave: the Vorontsov Palace, the Londonskyi Hotel, the Rodokonaki House, the Zontag House, and others.

In addition, the historic building of the Odesa-Port railway station at 8 Prymorsky Boulevard, located on the northern border of the World Heritage Site and its buffer zone, was directly hit by the drones. The fire destroyed the floors, roof and interiors of this modernist landmark. Another loss to the city's historical and cultural heritage was the destruction of the Fruit Passage, an architectural highlight of the famous Pryvoz market, which still serves as a historical centre of social and commercial life in Odesa.

This latest act of vandalism, aimed at destroying the material symbols of Ukraine's cultural heritage and erasing the cultural identity of the Ukrainian people, is

evidence of Russia's systematic disregard for international legal norms in the field of preserving world cultural heritage in the context of armed conflict.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, as of 21 July, 1,528 cultural heritage sites have been destroyed or damaged in Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression, 147 of which have the highest national status, and this list has grown even longer since today. The Odesa region ranks third in terms of the number of monuments destroyed in this sad list.

Taking into account the significant increase in attacks by drones and missile strikes on Ukraine in recent times and the provisions of the Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the Ukrainian National Committee of ICOMOS once again appeals to the international community and the International Council on Monuments and Sites with a renewed call for stronger action to preserve and protect Ukraine's cultural heritage, to prepare a relevant resolution and to take appropriate measures to stop the terror against the civilian population and the destruction of cultural heritage.

**Bureau of the Ukrainian National Committee
of the International Council on Monuments and Sites**

24 July 2025