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**PRESS NOTE & INVITATION**

**Europa Nostra and European Investment Bank Institute mission visits**

**Patarei Sea Fortress**

**Tallinn, 15 September 2016** - Experts from **Europa Nostra**, the leading heritage organisation in Europe, and the **European Investment Bank Institute** will arrive tomorrow in Estonia for a four-day mission related to Patarei Sea Fortress, listed among The 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe in 2016, following a nomination by the **Estonian Heritage Society**. The European delegation of heritage and financial specialists will meet with national authorities – including the Estonian Minister of Public Administration **Arto Aas** and the Minister of Culture **Indrek Saar** –, non-governmental civil society organisations and other stakeholders, with the aim of mobilising efforts towards saving this gem of Europe’s cultural heritage.

Patarei Sea Fortress is the largest and most impressive classicist style intact building in Estonia remarkable for its architectural value, being one of the biggest military/defence ensemble that has survived as a whole unit and much to its initial layout in the Baltic Sea Region. From the historical and cultural aspects, the site represents a complex overview of Estonia’s recent history in the 19th and 20th century and serves as a living memory for the tens of thousands of political prisoners detained therein during the Soviet and Nazi occupations.

Despite its rare historic and heritage value, the monument is in an advanced state of decay due to lack of funds from the owner, the Estonian State, to cover the extensive and costly rehabilitation project. National and European technical and financial support is therefore needed to implement the 100-million-euro rehabilitation project that will fully restore and modernise this gem of Europe’s heritage and act as a further catalyst for the social and economic revitalisation of Tallinn seashore area.

**Piet Jaspaert**, Vice-President of Europa Nostra, **Peter Bond**, Technical Consultant provided by the European Investment Bank Institute, and **Patrizia Valle**, Architect Conservator and Member of the Scientific Council of Europa Nostra, will participate in this mission. Estonian Heritage Society Board Members **Helle Solnask** and **Peep Pillak** and its honorary chairman **Trivimi Velliste** will represent the Estonian NGO partner.

**On 16 September**, the Vice-President of Europa Nostra and the Technical Consultant provided by the European Investment Bank Institute will take part in the international conference Ökomäss. The experts will speak about ‘The 7 Most Endangered’ programme and their participation in missions to other endangered sites listed in previous years, and highlight the value of heritage and its positive impact on Europe’s economy, culture, society, and the environment.

**On 17-18 September**, the delegates will visit Patarei Sea Fortress and other outstanding heritage sites in Estonia, such as Tallinn Seaplane Harbour, a Grand Prix winner of the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award in 2013, and held discussions with stakeholders involved in the preservation and renovation of the site.

**On 19 September**, the delegation will meet with representatives from national authorities in Tallinn, including the Estonian Minister of Public Administration Arto Aas and the Minister of Culture Indrek Saar.

On the same day, at **17:30**, the experts will give a **press conference** about the mission at the premises of the Estonian Heritage Society (Pikk 46, Tallinn).

During the press conference, **Tarmo Elvisto** from the Estonian Heritage Society will speak about the work that has been carried out to save Patarei Sea Fortress. Piet Jaspaert, Vice-President of Europa Nostra, will speak about ‘The 7 Most Endangered programme’ and the intentions of Europa Nostra with this programme and specifically about Patarei Sea Fortress. Peter Bond, Technical Consultant provided by the European Investment Bank Institute, will explain the role played by the Bank in the programme and particularly in the mission to Patarei. **Andrus Villem** from the Foundation Kalaranna Patarei will present the foundation established for the rehabilitation of Patarei as well as the future plans and international support.

For more information about the programme of the mission, please contact Helle Solnask.

**Background information**

[**‘The 7 Most Endangered’**](http://7mostendangered.eu/) programme identifies endangered monuments and sites in Europe and mobilizes public and private partners on a local, national and European level to find a viable future for those sites. The programme was launched in January 2013 by **Europa Nostra** with the **European Investment Bank Institute** as founding partner and the Council of Europe Development Bank as associated partner. ‘The 7 Most Endangered’ has the support of the **Creative Europe** programme of the European Union, as part of Europa Nostra’s networking project ‘Mainstreaming Heritage’.

‘The 7 Most Endangered’ is not a funding programme. Its aim is to serve as a catalyst for action and to promote “the power of example”.

Heritage and financial experts from Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute undertake “rescue missions” to the 7 sites, together with the nominators. The multidisciplinary teams assess the sites and help formulate a feasible action plan for each of them, in close cooperation with national and local public and private stakeholders. The results and recommendations of these missions are summarised in reports that are presented during a public event and made available online.

[**Europa Nostra**](http://www.europanostra.org/) is the pan-European federation of heritage NGO’s which is also supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals. Covering 40 countries in Europe, the organisation is the voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting Europe’s cultural and natural heritage. Founded in 1963, it is today recognised as the most representative heritage network in Europe. **Plácido Domingo**, the world-renowned opera singer and conductor, is the President of the organisation. Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through ‘The 7 Most Endangered’ programme. It celebrates excellence through the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards. It also contributes to the formulation and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a structured dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

The [**European Investment Bank Institute**](http://institute.eib.org/) promotes European initiatives for the common good. It was created as part of the European Investment Bank Group in January 2012 to act as a catalyst for social, cultural, educational and research activities directed towards economic and social development in Europe. Detailed information on the activities of the Institute can be obtained from its website: <http://institute.eib.org/>

[**Creative Europe**](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/index_en.htm) is the new EU programme to support the cultural and creative sectors, enabling them to increase their contribution to jobs and growth. With a budget of €1.46 billion for 2014-2020, it supports organisations in the fields of heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music, and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals. The funding will allow them to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills required in the digital age.

[**Estonian Heritage Society**](http://www.muinsuskaitse.ee)acts for the preservation of national heritage in Estonia through involving all interested organisations and individuals into its activities and through supporting civic participation in safeguarding cultural and historic heritage.

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