



Instituto Panamano de Patrimonio Histórico
Panama, P.O. Box 10000, Panama, C.R.

November 28, 2012

Mr. Ban Ki Moon
Secretary General
United Nations

Dear Mr. Ban:

Attached please find a letter to Mrs. Irina Bokova, Director General of **UNESCO**, dated September 24, 2012, which is self-explanatory.

We wish to bring to your attention the imminent threat to the Archaeological Site of Panama Viejo and Historic District of Panama, and invoke the fundamental human right of peoples to prevent irreversible damage to their cultural heritage. We recall this past June in St. Petersburg the World Heritage Committee's unanimous condemnation of the destruction of World Heritage property of Timbuktu, which, sadly but quite understandably, was beyond the ability of the World Heritage Convention framework to prevent.

This case, on the other hand, could have been prevented by UNESCO's simple use of its "World Heritage in Danger" mechanism, but now requires urgent and immediate action. We ask whether you would consider the possibility of convoking an extraordinary session of the Security Council in order to examine new crimes against mankind via the deliberate destruction of historical and cultural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The organizations listed below, representing more than 35,000 Panamanians, have brought legal actions, demonstrated and suffered threats to our safety and property, but the forces behind the project are as strong as our legal systems are weak. The contractor, Constructora Norberto Odebrecht, S.A, alone has revenues greater than our country's gross domestic product, and wields enormous influence with our current elected officials. We firmly believe that this company and its allies in the Panamanian government have created a blueprint for evading the World Heritage Convention safeguards which, without immediate attention from the United Nations, will have consequences for heritage sites around the world, as well as the reputation and relevance of UNESCO itself.

Sincerely yours,

Hildegard Vasquez
President, Fundacion Calicanto

Patricia Pippon
President, Association of Friends and
Neighbors of Casco Antiguo

Fernando Diaz Jaramillo
Alianza Pro-Ciudad

Felix Wing
Director, Centro de Incidencia Ambiental



Argullo Panamá
Panamá Por Patrimonio Histórico

On Behalf of the following organizations:

Asociación de Vecinos Y	Almanaque Azul	Centro de Estudio Y
Amigos del Casco Antiguo	Fundación Panamá Sostenible	Capacitación Familiar
Fundación Calicanto	Fundación Belisario Porras	Asociación Panameña de
Alianza Pro Ciudad	Fundación para el Desarrollo	Derecho Constitucional
El Colectivo	de la Libertad Ciudadana	Federación de Comunidades
		Revertidas.

cc: Mrs. Irina Bokova, Director General, UNESCO

Mrs. Allissandra Cummins, Chairperson, UNESCO Executive Board