



Press Release

**Statement Condemning Destruction of Ziarat Residency**

On June 15, 2013, the news of a militant attack on Quaid-e Azam Residency in Ziarat, Balochistan, shocked the nation. With extreme sadness and distress, ICOMOS Pakistan condemns this dastardly act destroying an important historic landmark associated to the founder of our nation, who spent his last days here. The Ziarat Residency being a national asset and primary heritage site housed in its museum priceless archives, photos and objects belonging to the Quaid; much of which has been lost as this beautiful piece of timber and stone architecture built in 1892, adorning our hundred rupee note as a national monument, burnt down and reduced to rubble. A landmark having symbolic historic association for our nation state and the memories of our beloved Quaid-i-Azam, now stands tarnished.

The fact that a group of terrorists easily found their way to the site and blew it with grenades, as adequate security was not provided to safeguard it, is an indication to the significance given by the custodians and security agencies of our heritage for protection of our national treasures. The initiative of Balochistan provincial government, as announced in its recent assembly session, to tighten security in and around the Ziarat Residency is alas an act too late.

The statement of interior minister to initiate and complete the reconstruction within three months is yet again a callous approach. The monument can be restored however, extreme caution must be taken. ICOMOS Pakistan as a body of heritage professionals draws attention of authorities for the need to undertake reconstruction interventions based on sound archival research, keeping in consideration the authentic materials and techniques used in the original building. This is a time consuming exercise and must be undertaken with care and attention to detail. It is hoped that adequate documentation of the original structure and other archival sources are available, based on which a true reconstruct of the Residency can be undertaken. Professionals knowledgeable in the field should be entrusted with this task and only experienced contractors should be authorized to execute the implementation of works under close supervision of experts.

An alternate approach suggested for consideration is to retain the site in its present state, creating an open air visual display of images and model replica of the original structure. Whether re-built or not a detailed photographic documentation should be undertaken for record and memory of our future generations, about this most condemnable incident that symbolically is an attack to our nation state and its integrity.

**ICOMOS Pakistan Secretariat**  
**June 2013.**