



# City of Kyoto

International Relations Office  
Teramachi Oike, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto 604-8571 Japan  
Tel 075-222-3072 Fax 075-222-3055  
e-mail: kokusai@city.kyoto.jp

September 07, 2012

Ms Sheridan Burke  
President  
ICOMOS  
International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage  
78 George Street  
Redfern NSW 2016  
AUSTRALIA

Dear Ms Burke

Kyoto City appreciates the concerns of the International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage regarding Kyoto Kaikan. To put matters into clearer perspective, I will explain the thinking behind the reconstruction and renovation of Kyoto Kaikan, now being undertaken by Kyoto City.

Built in 1960, Kyoto Kaikan has been a familiar and popular public facility for city residents and visitors for over 50 years. The current reconstruction / renovation work is being undertaken to ensure Kyoto Kaikan can continue to be safely used as a public facility for the next 50 years and beyond. Kyoto City places great value on history, tradition and urban scenery. Therefore, reconstruction and renovation are planned with particular emphasis upon harmony with surroundings and maintaining the cultural value of existing buildings.

Kyoto City believes the present plan is the optimal solution currently conceivable for restoring the functions of Kyoto Kaikan as a public facility. Our objective is the continued use of all functions of Kyoto Kaikan, based on careful consideration of the facility's architectural value. However, while acknowledging the value of the buildings, we also regard how the buildings are used by people as a crucial point. Simply put, we believe a public facility cannot fulfill its purpose unless people gathering there are in harmony with their surroundings, and

are assured of their safety. If the reconstruction / renovation work is not undertaken as planned, then Kyoto Kaikan will no longer be able to serve as a public facility, and ultimately we will lose the means for safeguarding the complex.

The City heard a broad range of views on reconstruction and renovation. Many people were of the opinion that the buildings should not be modified through renovation. Other people felt that for Kyoto Kaikan to serve as a public facility, full-scale expansion of functions and therefore complete reconstruction were necessary. In view of the diversity of opinions, since 2002 Kyoto City has engaged in a wide variety of measures including inspection for anti-seismic retrofitting, studies by committees of Kyoto Kaikan users, representatives of city residents and others, and questionnaire surveys of city residents. Additionally, preparation of the basic plan was open to public comment, with city residents in general presenting opinions. Following the proceedings outlined above, the Kyoto City Assembly approved a budget for reconstruction / renovation.

In the basic plan, public halls will undergo anti-seismic reinforcement and removal of barriers to people with disabilities. Stage and acoustic functions will be enhanced. The basic plan sustains the value of Kyoto Kaikan as an acclaimed work of architecture. Accordingly, No. 1 Hall, which requires radical improvement of functions, will be rebuilt as a structure that retains original architectural value. External design of No. 2 Hall, the Conference Annex and the highly acclaimed spatial structure from pillars to courtyard will be carefully preserved. Overall, the buildings will undergo general reinforcement to withstand a major earthquake. The aim is to apply updated thinking to conservation of Modern Movement architecture.

The basic plan has been entrusted to Mr. Hisao Koyama, one of Japan's leading architects. Like Kunio Mayekawa, Mr. Koyama has been awarded an AIJ Prize by the Architectural Institute of Japan. Furthermore, to ensure maximum possible consideration is given to the architectural value of Kyoto Kaikan, the basic plan was drawn with the collaboration of Mayekawa Associates, Architects & Engineers, founded by Kunio Mayekawa, the Architectural Institute of Japan, as well as input from newly established advisory committees composed of architects, specialists in stage technology, and others. The

greatest care was thus taken to prepare a basic plan that sustains the architectural value of Kyoto Kaikan.

Kyoto Kaikan is deteriorating and declining in functionality, including safety. The current reconstruction / renovation work aims to ensure the continuation of Kyoto Kaikan as a public facility. A new page is to be added to the history of Kyoto Kaikan, and we are confident current and future generations will assess the new complex favorably for its enhanced architectural value.

I have outlined the thinking and processes behind plans for Kyoto Kaikan, and I hope this allays the concerns of the ISC20C at least to some extent.

Sincerely yours,

門川 大作

Daisaku Kadokawa

Mayor of Kyoto City