

# ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES  
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

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Miyakonojo City Council Chairperson  
Miyakonojo City Assembly  
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Dear Sirs,

It has been brought to the attention of ICOMOS, through our International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage (ISC20C), that the Miyakonojo Civic Hall is under threat of demolition.

The Miyakonojo Civic Hall in Miyakonojo, Japan, was built in 1966 to the plans of one of the country's most eminent architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kiyonori Kikutake (1928–2011). With an impressive form and powerful presence like no other, this architectural icon of Miyakonojo is a valuable building that conveys the optimistic and ambitious spirit of the 1960s, when Japan was in the midst of its rapid ascent to becoming an economic and technological power. It is also a rare and particularly exemplary specimen of a building realized true to the principles of the movement known as Metabolism, whose proponents sought to create structures that could be flexibly adapted to new demands and circumstances through continual modification.

Metabolism architecture is recognized by architectural historians as one of the most important contributions of Japan to post World War II architecture with deep meanings of progression and regeneration. It is characteristic, international in style and at the same time specifically Japanese in concept and realization. The Miyakonojo Civic Hall lucidly expresses the ideas of Metabolism. The bold form reflects the benevolent spirit of Japan's booming years, when architectural experimentation was welcomed by society.

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It is necessary to actively pursue all options for adaptive reuse, to avoid destruction, promote sustainability and Japanese best practices in heritage conservation and management.

Though in need of repair, the Miyakonojo Civic Hall continues to retain its architectural value today. Its destruction would not only be a loss for Japanese architectural heritage, but for the cultural heritage of Asia and indeed globally. A demolition would be an injustice to a forward-looking, creative and sustainable spirit of post war Japan. Saving and renewing this inspired, innovative work will have greater meaning more than ever in this age of sustainability.

ICOMOS and the ISC20C urge the pertinent Japanese authorities to halt any plans of demolishing the Miyakonojo Civic Hall and to proactively seek dialogue and advice on options for sustaining the building. International expert heritage bodies such as Docomomo and ICOMOS Japan should be approached to assist in finding the way forward, and we urge you to undertake such dialogue.

We look forward to hearing that such discourse is underway to find a solution. If this is not forthcoming, ICOMOS and ISC20C will prepare a full-scale international ICOMOS Heritage Alert and media campaign. Conserving the Miyakonojo Civic Hall is not only a Japanese issue, but of global interest due to its internationally recognized cultural heritage significance.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Toshiyuki Kono', with a checkmark to the left.

Toshiyuki Kono  
President of ICOMOS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Thomas Gunny Harboe'.

Thomas Gunny Harboe  
President of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage (ISC20C)

cc ICOMOS Japan