



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO Office in New Delhi

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Subject: **Letter of Transmission with regard to the Bhopal Gas Tragedy**

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you with the request to look in to the matter of the preservation and restoration of the Union Carbide pesticide factory as a memorial for the major gas tragedy of 1984. The experience of UNESCO shows that the sites of major tragic events, such as Hiroshima or Masada (both on the List of World Heritage Sites), can play an important role in healing the psychological effects of affected groups and of society at large and in raising awareness at national and international level to prevent the causes leading to large scale manmade disasters.

Six Bhopal based Civil Society organizations representing the victims of the Bhopal Gas tragedy visited my office on 25 February 2009, to bring to my notice the impending destruction of the Union Carbide Factory and their wish to preserve this building as a memorial place. They also stressed the fact that chemical waste is still stocked on site and that swift and thorough action is needed to end the continued impact of these chemicals on the local drinking water and the health of the local residents. They finally informed me of their initiative to prepare a nomination for World Heritage Status of the site of the Bhopal Gas tragedy.

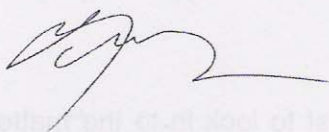
I have explained to the representatives of these organizations about the World Heritage nomination process having to be officially submitted by the Government of India as a State Party to the 1972 World Heritage Convention and that UNESCO is not in a position to either encourage or discourage such nominations for global recognition as a World Heritage Site. However, I am herewith transmitting to you for your perusal, the official plead of the organizations representing the Bhopal Gas tragedy victims for support in the protection and restoration of the Union Carbide pesticide factory as a memorial for the major tragedy of 1984, and to pursue the decontamination of the site of the gas tragedy.

The organizations visiting my office were the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila, the Stationery Karmchhari Sangh, the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangarsh Morcha, the Bhopal Group for Information and Action, the Chingari Trust, the Sambhavna Trust and the International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal, accompanied by the architects Ms Moulshri Joshi, Ms Amritha Ballal, who have earlier been selected by the Madhya Pradesh Government to work on an architectural solution for the Memorial.

We would be grateful if your ministry would look into the matter and find ways to improve the situation of the local inhabitants, and to preserve for future generations the built heritage of the Bhopal Gas tragedy.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your continued interest and support in the preservation of India's heritage including places of history memories.

Yours sincerely,



Minja Yang
Director and UNESCO Representative to Bhutan,
India, Maldives and Sri Lanka