



**The Non-governmental organization Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe
EC MA NDARYSHE**

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REACTION

The Authorities must supervise every construction activity in the Historic Center

The practice of damaging old valuable buildings in the Historic Center of Prizren is continuing. The last case happened on Monday on the "Hysen Rexhepi" street in Prizren, where a wall of the Red Cross building collapsed. Initial information indicates that there was no intentional demolition in this case, and that this has occurred because of the lack of protective measures used by the nearby building.

Unlike in the past, the response of the police in this case was immediate. The Regional Police Directorate in Prizren through media stated that: "On October 16, around 16:05 minutes, the Police in Prizren received some information that on the "Hysen Rexhepi" street, a wall of the Red Cross building was destroyed which is under protection as a monument of cultural heritage ". "At the crime scene, police investigators and crime scene technicians have been conducting the procedural investigations in the presence of municipal officials. The collapse of the wall is suspected to have occurred since a suspect, while digging a foundation with an excavator, has not taken the appropriate measures to protect the wall. At the order of the state prosecutor, the suspect is under the police arrest ", police informed.

While municipal authorities have announced that the side wall of the Red Cross building has collapsed during the demolition process of another building in the neighboring parcel, possibly due to the carelessness of the operator and the unsupported base of the old building. According to them, DUSP has issued a demolition permit for the building near the Red Cross building, but that protective measures should have been taken for the neighboring building. After the incident, the local authorities ordered to secure the damaged building from the three sides, while the collapsed side to be restored into its previous condition.

EC Ma Ndryshe considers that the Red Cross building has identity, artistic, historic, economic, and functional value. The fact that it is located in the Historic Center of Prizren, automatically gives the status of a legally protected building.

Provisions of the Law on Historic Center of Prizren define that a natural and legal person who destroys or performs any other activity, must beforehand take all the necessary measures to protect the cultural heritage building from causing any possible damage during the performance of these activities. These measures should be undertaken in coordination with DUSP and RCCH. This law also states that "a natural and legal person who demolishes or performs any other prohibited activity,

must pay all necessary costs of recovering the damaged building of the cultural and religious heritage into its pre-damage state".

Taking into account earlier cases, as well as this one, EC recommends that representatives of the municipality and cultural heritage authorities to be present and supervise every construction activity in the Historic Center of Prizren in order to prevent cases of damage and destruction of valuable buildings in this protected area.