

Declaration of Katowice

on the future of Working Industrial and Mobile Heritage

Modern Europe as we know it today, has its origins in the development of science and technology. Technological achievements have driven industrialisation, transforming societies and driving political and socio-economic change. Evolving industries have, ultimately, improved living conditions and led to a doubling of average life expectancy, enhancing the material world around us. This has, however, occurred at a cost, the most obvious manifestation of which is intensifying Climate Change.

Mindful of our changing climate, it is no surprise that Europeans are taking action to mitigate the negative impacts of industrialisation. As a result, older technologies are being replaced by more environmentally friendly, sustainable and efficient alternatives, and the intention is that in the coming years, fossil fuels will cease to be used as a source of energy. This is, of course, to be welcomed, but there is a strong argument for exceptions to be made to accommodate the preservation of Europe's hugely important working and mobile industrial heritage.

We, the participants of the Conference on the European Heritage of Coal and Steel, therefore wish to take action that will help preserve the working and mobile industrial heritage of Europe. A major priority will be to maintain a modest supply of fossil fuels to power this heritage and maintain it in an operational condition. This is vital to the successful conservation of this heritage, and greatly enhances the value of many much of this heritage as educational and tourism assets. It is also essential if this heritage is to be kept alive for the benefit of future generations.

On a European scale, actions have already been taken to enhance the efficiency of movable monuments which consume fossil fuels, such as steam locomotives, steam engines, steam-powered ships, and vehicles powered by combustion engines.

We are exploring the possibility of preserving hard-coal mine in Silesia, Poland. The vision is that the mine remains in production as a not-for-profit working Museum with the specific purpose of supplying coal for the needs of working and mobile industrial heritage, and for other specialist heritage sector activities (such as historic metallurgy and ceramics). The intention is that, in addition to securing heritage fuel supplies for the future, the mine will also play a leading role as an educational, training and centre for the local mining community and the region.

In order to achieve this goal, the signatories of this agreement plan to take the following actions:

1. At a European Scale: Political Support

To conduct activities aimed at obtaining the consent of the European Parliament for the continued but limited use of fossil fuels specifically to fuel historic technical engines, machines and vehicles across Europe. This includes working and moving heritage owned by European museums as well as collectors and organisations of collectors of vehicles and devices that consume fossil fuels.

2. At a Regional Scale: Nurturing the Mining Heritage of Silesia:

To organise collaborative initiatives aimed at preserving one of the historic Upper Silesian coal mines that is currently in operation with the specific purpose of supplying Europe's technical monuments with the coal that they need to stay alive. The signatories of the agreement are therefore committed to conducting

further work aimed at preserving the selected mine. This involves ensuring the basis of its future operation, and incorporating a working museum into its operations which demonstrates historical coal extraction and its associated processes on a safe and sustainable basis.

3. Traditional Skills and Knowledge: Intangible Technical Heritage

This declaration is being made in the knowledge that our working and mobile industrial heritage is of enormous cultural and educational value, and that this will be significantly diminished if it can no longer function because the fuel it requires to operate becomes unavailable. We know that communities across Europe will be served very badly if the technical knowledge, expertise and skills associated with this live heritage is not passed on to future generations and is allowed to die.

The signatories of this agreement hereby declare their intention to conduct further work aimed at achieving these goals within the established international platform of 'WIMH' - Working Industrial and Mobile Heritage.