

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT,  
EXECUTIVE BOARD,  
AND GENERAL DIRECTOR OF ICOM

from the Board of COMCOL, 23 June 2020

To our surprise we learned last Sunday, through social media, about the resignation of the elected by the members of ICOM president Suay Aksoy and the appointment by the Executive Board of Alberto Garlandini.

We are astounded by the chosen route of making this information public, without been offered the courtesy, as an International Committee to be informed of such important decisions before a public announcement of this kind.

Your communication strategy in this issue created a cloud of hearsay and rumours which is damaging seriously not just the reputation of the International Council of Museums, but also museum professionals around the world. And this is happening at a time of exceptional circumstances for museums and museum professionals, when strong leadership is more important than ever.

As the resignation of Suay Aksoy is not the only troubling news that reached us since Kyoto, and a number of other members of the governance of ICOM has also resigned, in order to maintain transparency and trust to our leadership, we strongly request full disclosure of everything that has taken place the months after the General Conference in Kyoto. More specifically, we request full disclosure of the following documents:

1. The original resignation letter from Suay Aksoy.
2. The minutes from the meeting handling the voting which led to the appointment of the new president.
3. The minutes from the Executive Board meetings for 2019 and 2020
4. The recordings of meetings from the same period of time which are not signed by all board members.

It is imperative to have an open dialogue about the events that led to such an unfortunate situation we are currently experiencing. It is imperative for our community and for our public role to be able to counter rumours that undermine what ICOM represents. It is imperative to keep our members informed, our communities involved. We represent our communities and we are responsible towards them. Holding an office in an international organisation is primarily a responsibility - to serve those who honoured us with their votes; to honour the museums we work for and with; to honour our professional integrity and values.

We should all practice what we preach.

In the name of the Board Members of COMCOL,  
Danielle Kuijten  
Chair of COMCOL