Press Release

Press Conference Held

PRESENTATION OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN BELGRADE

Belgrade, March 06, 2015 – A press conference presenting the newly established Foundation of the National Museum in Belgrade has been organised at the National Museum in Belgrade today at 12 noon.

Media representatives gathered in the National Museum Hall have been addressed by:

- Bojana Boric Breskovic, MA, Director, National Museum in Belgrade
- Ivo Lozica, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Foundation of the National Museum in Belgrade
- Zeljka Ciric-Jakovljevic, Corporate Communications Manager, Eurobank

The National Museum has organised the press conference to inform media representatives and thus the general public on activities of the Foundation of the National Museum in Belgrade. We believe that it is particularly important at the time when, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, the long-awaited works on the reconstruction of the main building at Trg Republike square have commenced, when this large-scale and important project has been launched, after which the conditions will be created for the oldest, largest and central national museum of Serbia to be
opened and accessible as a whole. In the reconstructed building, the National Museum experts can develop programs and activities of the Museum without restrictions, operating under optimal conditions and at a satisfaction of visitors.

Bojana Boric Breskovic, MA, has noted that in addition to the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia and media support, assistance and support of interested institutions and individuals are exceptionally important for several reasons. Financial assistance which will be raised in an organised manner through volunteer engagement of members of the National Museum Foundation is vital for increasing capacities and strengthening of the reconstructed National Museum. Furthermore, the very act of helping develops awareness of belonging, right to culture and personal influence on shaping the museum we need. In addition, the National Museum Director has invited media representatives to systematically cover dynamics of construction works on the building and thus regularly inform the public of the works that are important for our entire community and lead to the complete opening of the National Museum main building.

Ivo Lozica, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Museum Foundation, has pointed out his satisfaction and determination to, together with other members of the Foundation, contribute to the engagement of as many participants as possible who are willing to support the reconstruction of the building at Trg Republike square. He has presented a plan of activities of the Foundation, highlighting that for now the Foundation is mainly focused on cooperation with banks and the business sector, aiming to include as many private persons as possible in the future. The Chairman has presented three boards of the Foundation – Foreign Activities Board, Finance Board and Information Board. The Foundation is there to be a link between the public and the National Museum, not only now, during the reconstruction of the building, but in the future as well, namely it will serve the National Museum by supporting and assisting its activities, developing social responsibility and expanding the number of those who consider the National Museum as their own.

Zeljka Ciric-Jakovljevic, Corporate Communications Manager in Eurobank, has stated the following: “It is exceptionally important for us to be part of this project - reconstruction of the National Museum, one of the pillars of Serbia’s cultural heritage, aimed at preserving and developing tradition and promoting our culture and art in the world. For many years now, Eurobank has been supporting the promotion of the Serbian culture through various CSR initiatives, striving to promote institutions, private initiatives, artists and artwork they create via such events. Culture is one of the foundations of our CSR activities, which have naturally been continued by participation in this project.” Zeljka Ciric-Jakovljevic has also pointed out that this is only the beginning of cooperation, as Eurobank continues to support the National Museum Foundation and its activities, inviting other companies, socially responsible firms and individuals to join in and be part of the project of utmost significance for the Serbian culture.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Museum Foundation, Mr Ivo Lozica then granted books from the series of the National Museum’s publications to the first
among those who deserved credits and who have supported the National Museum in Belgrade by establishing cooperation with the Foundation.

The press conference moderator has been Lidija Ham – Milovanovic, PR Manager of the National Museum.

About the National Museum in Belgrade

Today, after 170 years of growth and development, the National Museum in Belgrade, a museum of a complex type and the oldest and central museum of Serbia, has more than 400,000 items which make a unique collection of the cultural heritage of Serbia, Central Balkans and Europe.

With the main building situated in Belgrade downtown, at Trg Republike square, the National Museum keeps the most representative cultural goods presenting the development and civilisation changes at the territory of modern Serbia and its nearest surroundings, from the pre-historic times to the late Middle Ages, as well as representative artworks of key artistic styles and movements, supreme art accomplishments in the national and European art from the Middle Ages to the modern times. They include Lepenski Vir (7th millennium B.C.), Vinca statues (6-5th millennium B.C.), Dupljaja Chariots (16-13th century B.C.), golden masks from Trebeniste (6th century B.C.), household sets from Jabucje (1st century A.D.), Belgrade Cameo (4th century), the Miroslav’s Gospel (12th century), coins of King Radoslav (13th century), medieval icons and frescos, pot from Vracevsnica (17th century), paintings of Paja Jovanovic (19th century) or of Nadezda Petrovic and Sava Sumanovic (20th century), artworks of the old Italian masters Di Credi, Canaletto, Guardi), Dutch art (works of the studios of Bosch, Brueghel, van Goyen and Rubens, and individual artworks of Thorpe, van Gogh and Mondrian). The national Museum also keeps the works of the French art from the end of the 19th and early 20th century (Corot, Daumier, Pissarro, Renoir, Degas, Sisley, Gauguin), and the story about modern art is completed by the works of Picasso, Kandinsky, Archipenko and Chagall. These outstanding museum items reached the National Museum mainly through explorations, purchases or gifts of donors, most of whom in the long and rich history of this institution have been common people. They have all contributed to the National Museum’s position of a true symbol of Serbia’s culture.

The National Museum also grows owing to the museums in its system: in 1973, it was joined by the Gallery of Frescos – a specific museum of copies of wall painting and decorative plastics of Serbian medieval monasteries, in 1975 the Museum of Vuk and Dositej – the museum of the great Serbian ’s language reformers, initiated in a wing of the National Museum as Vuk’s Room, and the Memorial Museum of Nadezda and Rastko Petrovic – the museum about two exceptional artists, in 1978 the Museum of Lepenski Vir in Donji Milanovac – situated at the most relevant Mesolithic location in Europe, and in 1996 the Archaeological Museum of Djerdap in Kladovo, which exhibits the archaeological treasure of the Danube region.

Due to a lack of conditions for a permanent exhibition in recent years, numerous exhibition and publishing activities and diverse programs for the public have confirmed that the National Museum is an important centre of communication and a source of knowledge which is open, dynamic and accessible.
About the building of the National Museum in Belgrade

The building of the National Museum is located in Belgrade downtown, at the central city square, Trg Republike. It was built in 1903 for the Fund Administration, upon a project of architects Andra Stevanovic and Nikola Nestorovic. The building represents an example of monumental public palaces from the end of the 19th and early 20th century. Its concept is based on academic eclectics, with neo-renaissance elements as dominant. Facade and interior decorations were made by Franja Valdman. Today’s Hall (former Hall with Teller Stands) and part of the building towards Laza Pacu Street were added in 1930. In World War II, the building suffered serious damages and was reconstructed after the war, but without the central dome.

The National Museum in Belgrade received this building for use in 1950, when it finally accommodated its collections, which had been relocated eleven times since the Museum establishment in 1844. The official opening ceremony was organised on May 23, 1952.

In the 1960s, owing to efforts of the Museum Manager, Lazar Trifunovic, comprehensive conservation and restoration work was done to return the original design of the building with the dome. The interior was adapted for the National Museum’s needs and partly satisfied the then requirements of this institution. The renovation work was executed upon the blueprints of architects Aleksandar Deroko, Petar Anagnosti and Zoran Petrovic.

Today the main building of the National Museum is in a very poor general condition, which is why the permanent exhibition was closed down in 2003. The building is in the process of reconstruction.

The building of the National Museum in Belgrade is protected as a cultural good of great importance for the Republic of Serbia.

Media contacts:

Foundation of the National Museum in Belgrade
Ivo Lozica, Chairman of BoD of the Foundation
fondacija@narodnimuzej.rs, 0638498821

National Museum in Belgrade
Lidija Ham – Milovanovic, PR Manager
pr@narodnimuzej.rs, 0608075104

Eurobank
Uros Mihailovic, Account Executive
uros.mihailovic@represent.rs 063384089