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PRESS RELEASE

## The historic Procuratie Vecchie building renovation project kicks off in Venice's Piazza San Marco

- The project by David Chipperfield Architects has been approved
- The intervention is part of Generali's larger plan for the Marciana area, which also includes the Giardini Reali

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Venice - The project for the renovation of the Procuratie Vecchie in Piazza San Marco in Venice was contracted to David Chipperfield Architects Milan by Generali in 2017, after obtaining authorization in January 2019 from the Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the Municipality of Venice and Laguna, the project has now received permission to build from the Municipality.

For the first time in 500 years, a large part of the Procuratie Vecchie will be made accessible to the public. The historic building will host the activities of The Human Safety Net, the initiative set up by Generali to support the most vulnerable communities in those countries where the Group is present.

The project is not defined by a single concept or architectural gesture, but through a series of interventions that address the complexity of the work. These include the restoration of the first and second floors, the reorganization of accessibility and usability of the building through the inclusion of new staircases, the renewed central entrance on the third floor with access to the raised courtyards.

The intervention promoted by Generali will also enhance the third floor to include exhibition spaces open to the public and linked to The Human Safety Net Foundation, work spaces and an auditorium.

The Procuratie Vecchie, which develop along the entire north side of Piazza San Marco, were designed by the architect Bartolomeo Bon and later by Jacopo Sansovino in the first half of the Sixteenth century, under the *renovatio urbis* program achieved by the Doge Andrea Gritti.

The project by David Chipperfield Architects Milan will not only facilitate the influx of the public thanks to an enhancement of the internal circulation, but will also restore integrity to the structure throughout the restoration of the architectural work as a whole as well as particular elements that have deteriorated or been compromised. The project will reunify the interior spaces of the Procuratie Vecchie and introduce clarity into the building.

The restoration work will recuperate original venetian materials and traditional workmanship involving specialist companies and local artisans throughout. The floors, for example, will be in venetian terrazzo and pastellone.

These works are integrated with those of the 2009 project by the architect Gretchen Harnischfeger Alexander, still in progress, which includes the renovation of the main façade on Piazza San Marco, as well as some internal façades, with some structural interventions and a new fire protection system.



The complex of the Procuratie Vecchie owned by Generali includes about 12,400 square metres of total gross area which occupy approximately 85% of the total area of the portion of the building that closes the north side of Piazza San Marco, extending over 43 of the 50 external arches for a length of 152 metres.

The **Chairman of Generali, Gabriele Galateri di Genola**, and the **GCEO, Philippe Donnet**, explain: *"The restoration and renovation of the Procuratie Vecchie will bring back to its original splendour one of the most beautiful places in Venice, known throughout the world. A place closely linked to the history of Generali, which shares the St Mark's Lion as a symbol, and which for the first time in 500 years will be open to the public through our The Human Safety Net initiative. The Project we are announcing today is part of the broader vision for the restoration of the entire Marciana area which we have promoted with pride and passion, and will foster new development opportunities for the city. A special thanks goes to all the authorities with whom we have had discussions in recent months, in particular the Superintendency and the Municipality of Venice, for having supported the launch of this project."*

**Luigi Brugnaro, Mayor of Venice**, points out: *"I really want to express my gratefulness to the Assicurazioni Generali and David Chipperfield Architects for having contributed to this extremely prestigious project, a perfect fit for the heart of the city of Venice, creating a working environment with professionals from all over the world. A fine example of public private partnership, conducted according to the principle of subsidiarity. This synergy has two fundamental aspects: it develops employment in the heart of the historic city and it is an investment of high social value. Venice is a symbol for Italy and, if we manage to demonstrate that we can offer young people a future in our city of Venice, we are sending a strong signal to the whole country."*

**David Chipperfield** says: *"Working on this remarkable building with a Client so committed to Venice continues to be a great privilege. Over the last two years we have come to better understand and respect the complexities of the building hidden behind its grand public façade. In adapting the building to accommodate a more public programme for The Human Safety Net, we have sought to balance the infrastructural requirements with restoration and refurbishment of the historic fabric. We are driven by the ambition to both re-unify the architectural work, as well as the identity of the building as a place of work, meeting and discussion for the city."*

The intervention also includes the restoration of the adjacent Giardini Reali carried out by the Venice Gardens Foundation in partnership with Generali, to give back to the city's inhabitants and to visitors an important element of the history and art of the Piazza San Marco area, directly connected to the Giardini through the historic drawbridge. The inauguration of the renovated Giardini Reali is scheduled for autumn 2019.

The Human Safety Net is an initiative that combines the potential of the social sector with the one of Generali. It establishes partnerships and invests in social enterprises and NGOs in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Together with Generali, the Foundation has built up three programs - for families, for refugees startups and for newborns - that can have a long-term impact on the lives of the most vulnerable people and enable them to their talents. Launched in October 2017, The Human Safety net is now active in 19 countries with a net of over 25 partners.



#### **THE GENERALI GROUP**

Generali is one of the largest global insurance and asset management providers. Established in 1831, it is present in 50 countries in the world, with a total premium income of more than € 66 billion in 2018. With nearly 71,000 employees serving 61 million customers, the Group has a leading position in Europe and a growing presence in Asia and Latin America. Generali's ambition is to be the life-time partner to its customers, offering innovative and personalized solutions thanks to an unmatched distribution network.

#### **DAVID CHIPPERFIELD ARCHITECTS**

David Chipperfield Architects was founded in London by David Chipperfield in 1985. The practice has since won numerous international competitions and built over 100 projects. Its diverse international body of work includes cultural, residential, commercial and educational buildings and spaces for both the private and public sectors, as well as civic projects and urban masterplans.

Offices in London, Berlin, Milan and Shanghai, contribute to the wide range of projects and typologies. Together, the four offices drive common architectural ambitions and share a commitment to the collaborative aspect of creating architecture.

Among the practice's major completed works are the rebuilding of Neues Museum in Berlin; a laboratory building on the Novartis campus in Basel; the Turner Contemporary gallery in the UK; an MBA building for the HEC Paris School of Management in France; Saint Louis Art Museum in USA; Museo Jumex in Mexico City; the events space Cavea Arcari in Zovencedo, in Italy; the new Amorepacific headquarters in Seoul; and the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

Ongoing current projects include; a new building for the Kunsthau Zürich in Switzerland; the refurbishment of Mies van der Rohe's Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin; a mixed-use tower overlooking Bryant Park in New York; the James Simon Galerie a new entrance building to Berlin's Museum Island; Dunard Centre music venue in Edinburgh, Scotland; and the University Campus in Padua, Italy.