

Biella, the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2009

Right Honourable Minister President of the Flemish Government,  
Dear Mister Peeters,

On Thursday, 30 April I paid a visit to the village of Doel at the invitation of KunstDoel vzw, an organization that is twinned to Cittadellarte's Love Difference movement.

Minister President, I was deeply struck by the esthetical power of this place. Watching over the surrounding landscape from the riverbank, I felt as if I was standing on a metaphysical axis where different time ages intersect: Right before me, the quiet village with the picturesque dock; behind me the river and the bustling port of Antwerp; to the right, the ancient windmill overshadowed by the two colossal cooling towers of the nuclear power plant; and to the right the gigantic cranes of the Deurganck Dock.

Minister President, I have visited many places throughout the world, but this spot is really unique. My KunstDoel hosts told me that existing plans for a second container terminal may not materialize in the near future due to the changed economic context. If this is indeed true, I would urgently appeal on you to conserve this place for future generations to enjoy, as an authentic remnant that links the present and the past, nature and culture, agriculture and industry, water and land...

The value of this immemorial place is immeasurable and I am sure it could become a prestigious artistic and tourist venue with international fame, and also a pleasant, tranquil place for businessmen and port people to stay and relax...

Its closeness to the city of Antwerp and accessibility via the river would make it a perfect and easily reachable destination for day trippers, possibly in combination with the rustic village of Lillo at the right bank and the Liefkenshoek Citadel located beyond the Deurganckdock.

With some relatively small investments, the village could become an ideal and highly original venue to stage fabulous open-air productions and international art exhibits, which would generate employment opportunities for remaining locals and people from surrounding villages. Granting Doel a new, cultural destiny within a huge port would also generate much goodwill among the people toward the Antwerp Port Authority. It could become an example of a successful and novel reconciliation of industrial, social, cultural and political interests, a prefiguration of a new and warmer society....

Right Honourable Minister President, the case of Doel offers an unprecedented opportunity to implement new economic values - warm and reconciliatory values that the people are longing for in these harsh economic times. I am sure the entire socio-cultural community would be enormously grateful if this place were granted a new and inspiring future...

Fully trusting that your government will elaborate the best possible solution for the village of Doel, I remain,

Yours truly,



Michelangelo Pistoletto