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K A M R A T A L - P E R I T I

To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community

THE URBAN CHALLENGE: Small = Tall? *An informed debate on the demand and impact of Tall Buildings*

Le Meridien Hotel, Balluta, Malta , 21st November 2008

The Kamra tal-Periti is currently involved in a campaign for better quality built environments, as part of which it launched a document late last year called The Urban Challenge: Our Quality of Life and the Built Environment. The Urban Challenge argues for a more sustainable approach to the built (and unbuilt) environment, as an essential basis for a better quality of life and highlights the need for a more informed debate on key urban issues in the Maltese Islands.

Malta currently has a draft tall building policy (based on the application of a Floor Area Ratio mechanism), which is currently open to public consultation before final approval by Parliament. Recent years have seen a growing interest in tall building development on the islands and the construction of a number of tall building projects as well as the submission of several planning permission applications for towers, some reaching up to heights of over 30 stories. There is still, however, little knowledge of the specific urban planning, urban design, construction and environmental aspects of tall buildings, giving rise to growing concerns as to the suitability of eventual developments for Malta's urban situation.

The KTP is organising a full-day conference on Tall Buildings which will be held on the 21st of November 2008 at the Le Meridien Hotel in Balluta. The conference is intended to create a knowledge platform to enrich the debate on tall building development in the Maltese Islands.

It will focus on sustainability issues with a specific reference to small island states and to the Mediterranean region and it is hoped that it will serve to create a platform for a more informed approach to tall building development.

Six international speakers will be addressing the conference which will be split up into three main parts dealing with Strategic Issues, Sustainability, and Design Evolution. The final part of the conference will be a Plenary Session, which will be addressed by the Chairman of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.

The conference will be open to the general public and invitations will be extended to members of civil society. Other than the members of the KTP itself, and students from the Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of Malta, the conference is also supported by the Chamber of Engineers and an invitation will also be extended to the local chapter of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Through its international affiliations the KTP will also be extending an invitation to the conference to colleagues in the architectural field in other Mediterranean countries and in territories with a restricted land area.

In conjunction with the conference, the KTP will also be organising a trade exhibition, focussing on products that are of interest to the architectural industry. The exhibition will be located in the lobby adjacent to the conference hall.