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CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

Designing for the Future: The Market and Quality of Life



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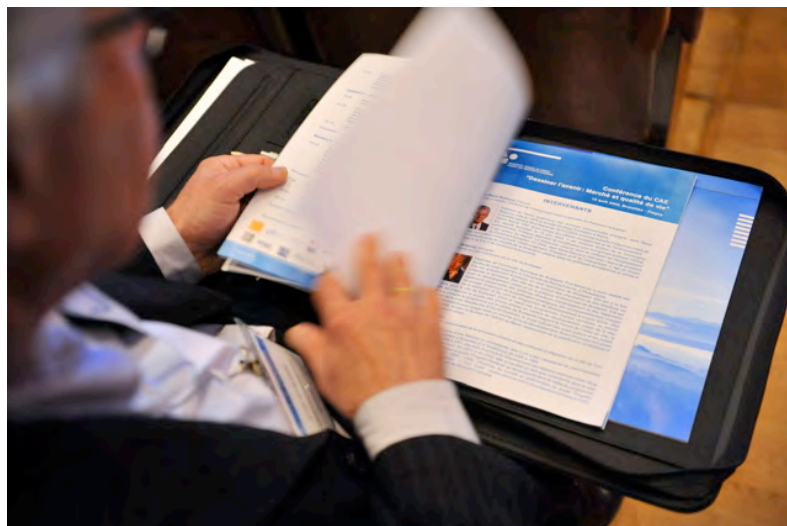
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Executive Summary

During the opening session, participants heard a call for the “architect to be a prophet” in designing Europe’s cities and learnt about plans to redevelop the European quarter in Brussels. There was a call for people, not profit, to be at the centre of the city and for “public goods” to be brought back into public hands to save the planet.

During Session A on the social aspect, and architecture’s role in ensuring social cohesion, speakers said that urban policies needed an integrated, horizontal approach. All those involved in, or affected by, urban policy-making: architects, politicians, private developers and citizens must be involved in decision-making. Cities need to learn from each others’ examples of regeneration, while politicians – and citizens - should appreciate the dynamism and diversity that migrants bring to a world that is both “flat and spiky”.

During Session B on the economy, the market and quality in the built environment, it was said that using the city as a wealth-creating machine has left it ugly and environmentally dangerous. Saving the environment always comes second to economic interest, unless a new form of cost accounting is introduced that acknowledges long-term effects. Some speakers argued that private finance can be a positive force in urban renewal, while others regretted the loss of public interest in the political process.

In a Special Session on the follow up to the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (2007) the audience learnt that it is a tool to integrate urban development, contribute to sustainable cities and return life to the inner cities. Speakers argued for an integrated, holistic approach to spatial and urban development policies, and as a ‘holistic’ profession architects were urged to contribute. The Slovenian government outlined the measures it was taking to push forward the Charter.

In Session C on the environment, and using an integrated approach, it was argued that the environmental situation is so serious that one must use every possible tool to change attitudes. Speakers described the challenges of scrapping traditional thinking to carry out an integrated approach to the built environment, both at national and European Union level. The audience heard of measures taken in Budapest and Gothenburg to regenerate the cities, based on public-private partnerships or led by the local authorities.

In Session D on culture, architecture was described as the art that combines all the aspects of today’s world. Speakers spoke of the importance of culture in Europe, and how the European Union was beginning to accept this as it knows that can also be good for the economy. The French government described the measures it will take during the EU Presidency to push the cultural agenda forward.

During the Closing Session, the Conference themes were summarised: the importance of involving all parties in urban regeneration, taking an integrated, holistic approach, using public procurement to promote sustainability and quality, and how architecture is a positive tool in this process.



Opening session

During the opening session, participants heard a call for the “architect to be a prophet” in designing Europe’s cities and learnt about plans to redevelop the European quarter in Brussels. A rousing speech called for people, not profit, to be made the centre of the city and for the “public goods” to be brought back into public hands to stop the planet from “being in tatters”.

Jean-François Susini: “Making Europe more sensitive, committed and generous”



In his Opening Speech, **Jean-François Susini, Past-President of the Architects’ Council of Europe (ACE)**, explained that the Conference was designed to advance the dialogue on one of the major “objectives of our time” - the future of our cities.

The global cost of cities must not be based on their economic value alone, but on the principle of sustainable development, he said. Sadly, many new city plans are based on public-private partnerships, particularly in relation to the built environment, and this could jeopardise the principle of quality. We need to consider what sort of environment we will leave to our children, he said, and while we need to bring in some regulations, we also need “the space to breathe”.

The Conference will provide the opportunity for participants to exchange ideas on the social, economic, environmental and cultural aspects of Europe’s built environment and study how to make Europe a more “sensitive, committed and generous place”.

Commissioner Kallas: “The architect must be a prophet”



Siim Kallas, Vice-President of the European Commission for Administrative Affairs, Audit and Anti-Fraud, believed ACE’s reflections on sustainable development had several elements in common with the European Commission’s own buildings’ policy, which was endorsed in September 2007. In particular, he welcomed ACE’s stress on the importance of the quality of life.

In the past Belgian architects like Victor Horta or Paul Hankar, had made Brussels the envy of the world with its Art Nouveau style, which had combined quality with design and sustainability. Regrettably the European quarter in Brussels is now composed of too many, “relatively insignificant grey buildings”.

Fortunately there are now plans to change this, said Mr Kallas, as there is a “new vision” for a major project to develop the entire European quarter around the Rue le la Loi. This joint proposal by the European institutions, the Brussels-Capital Region and the City of Brussels is designed to integrate office space with residential buildings and shops.

A major competition for this has just been launched, and Mr Kallas called on the architects in the audience to submit their proposals, saying that the Commission wanted the best professionals to submit their ideas. It is looking for plans which integrate all aspects of the urban environment to produce a mix of offices, residential and commercial property; provide a comfortable, safe and healthy work environment; give better access for disabled people; provide social structures, including nurseries and after-school facilities; and reduce the Commission’s Carbon Footprint by providing better access to public transport networks and using sustainable, energy-efficient materials. The ultimate goal is “to obtain fewer, more efficient buildings and save tax-payers’ money”, he said.

The Commission's overall strategy for the future has three main elements, said Commissioner Kallas: social challenge, sustainable development and the integration of culture. It hopes to work with architects, who combine the environment, development and the quality of life. As Frank Lloyd Wright said: "The architect must be a prophet... and if he can't see at least ten years' ahead, he cannot be called an architect."

Designing the future of cities – putting the citizen at the heart of policy - Riccardo Petrella, Professor of Human Ecology, Accademia di Architettura dell'Università Svizzera-Italiana

Riccardo Petrella: "Today's cities are like hurricanes"



Professor Petrella, stressed that all those who live in cities should have a say in their development, but current urban policies are decided by an oligarchy of the cultural, religious, political and economic elite – the "happy few" - who both influence, and benefit from decisions about how resources are allocated.

"Today's cities are like hurricanes", he said, which are uncomfortable, fragmented places, full of poverty, anxiety and fear, where people feel excluded. Cities need to

be rebuilt in a way that abolishes violence and exclusion and reduces the gap between rich and poor.

Today, profit, not people, is at heart of policies to decide the future of our cities, said Professor Petrella. Rather than being constructed with people in mind, they are designed to maximise profit and investment opportunities. Cities have become collections of competitive, territorial, economic goods and services, based on financial investment opportunities, and they fail to manage their scarce resources.

The current economy has nothing to do with *res publica* – the idea of public goods, he said, citing the example of Florence which has taken the "shameful" step of forcing the poor and the beggars out of the city centre, where they are an eyesore for tourists, into the slums at the edge of the city.

Instead, we must redefine the "rules of the house", giving everyone the right to live in cities, which will rejuvenate urban life, said Professor Petrella. He called on architects "not to betray their function", but to construct cities for citizens, using their work to declare poverty illegal, and through their designs to reduce the causes of poverty.

Future design should be based on *res publica*, and politicians should revisit the idea of land ownership and the privatisation of the city. He called for public spaces and other public goods like air, water, health, transport, energy, education and housing to be brought back into public ownership. The audience applauded when he launched a scathing attack on public-private partnerships (PPP), which, he said, are based on maximising profits.

Professor Petrella criticised politicians for pandering to the elite, and allowing city design to become less and less of a public process and he called for PPPs to become public partnerships between cities and those working for "the public good". "Our planet is in tatters", he said. In the future cities must be built to adapt to climate change, and designed to control the causes of climate change, but this can only be achieved by bringing public goods back into public ownership.

Global cities must not become "islands on an ocean surrounded by the poor and beggars", he told the audience. Architects, must play their role in eradicating global poverty and in putting human beings at the centre of their designs.



The Conference Venue

Session A – Social: Architecture and its role in ensuring social cohesion

During this session speakers said that urban policies needed an integrated, horizontal approach, and that all those involved in or affected by urban policy: – architects, politicians, private developers and citizens must be involved in decision-making. Cities need to learn from each others' examples of regeneration, and citizens should appreciate the dynamism and diversity incomers bring, and understand that the world is now both "flat and spiky".

Jan Olbrycht: "Space is not a luxury, but a basic need for everyone in Europe"



Jan Olbrycht, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President, Committee on Regional Development, and First Vice-President, Inter-Group Urban-Logement, explained that the European Parliament has agreed that urban policy is a pan-European issue and urban problems need to be tackled at the local, regional and EU levels. It is only in this way that our cities can become the engines of growth, as envisaged in the Lisbon Strategy.

A key element to raising the quality of life in cities is to improve a city's spatial elements, said Mr Olbrycht. "Space is not a luxury, but a basic need for everyone in Europe", and architects must play a major role in submitting concrete proposals on how to improve urban spaces.

Urban policies at the European level should be based on an integrated, horizontal approach, cutting across the sectorisation of today's policy-making. The European Commission's Green

Paper 'Towards a new culture on urban mobility' stresses that mobility is based on transportation, environmental and social aspects.

The new Lisbon Treaty stresses the importance of "territorial cohesion", Mr Olbrycht explained, so architects must help define how Europe thinks about its land and its spaces. Because urban spaces play such an important role in creating local and regional identities, we need to think about how to use European money to create urban spaces.

Round table 1: How can architects and leaders work better together?

Ilda Curti: "Architects can act like wizards"

Ilda Curti, Deputy Major on Urban Regeneration and Integration Policies at the City of Turin, Italy, explained that while Turin's urban regeneration project had required huge economic investment - realigning the transport infrastructures, and rehabilitating the city's brownland - the city's urban spaces have been rehabilitated, and its new buildings are accessible to all.

She believed that Turin's urban regeneration had succeeded, firstly, because the local communities had been brought into the decision-making process; secondly, because new commercial buildings were constructed on the city's rehabilitated brownland, rather than built on the edge of town; and thirdly, because it had prioritised the city as a scene of culture, rather than as a factory for making money.

Ms Curti said that Turin was typical of many European cities in industrial decline in the 1990s. However, one city in particular: Bilbao in Spain, had shown the way forward by commissioning the Guggenheim Museum, which had changed the city's identity overnight into a global city.

Other cities want to copy this "Bilbao effect", as it shows that architecture can be a symbol of the bold and the beautiful, with architects acting like "wizards", with the "philosophers' stone in their hands".

Given the important role that architecture can play in "adding value" to urban regeneration, politicians should invite them to help create the sustainable cities of the future, said Ms Curti. City

regeneration needs a multi-faceted approach, bringing in all the relevant partners to work on the physical, political, social and economic aspects.

Françoise Favarel: “Urban regeneration can be stimulated by flagship projects”

Françoise Favarel, architect and planner, from Toulouse, France, agreed, saying that politicians, citizens and private developers must be included in the decision-making process about rebuilding their cities, while architects must help to interpret their wishes.

Ms Favarel believed that urban regeneration can be stimulated by ‘flagship’ projects, such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao or the work of Bernard Reichen in the SCOT project in Montpellier, and that designing an eco-quarter can serve as a “laboratory” to demonstrate what is possible.

Politicians have to be assertive and articulate to push through change, working with architects to show what can be achieved. An urban culture is needed that takes in the views of all the different actors – from the private sector to the individual citizen, and architects must be ready to innovate and to establish a dialogue with all those responsible for rebuilding the city.

Mark Kleinman: “The world is both flat and spiky”

Mark Kleinman, Director of Migration and Chief Social Researcher, Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) United Kingdom, said the British government views cities as drivers for the economy, provided that all the challenges of social exclusion and justice, climate change and sustainability can be solved. Each city must have its own identity, as it is a dismal experience to live in a city that looks like all the others, so urban design must take into account how towns and cities look and feel to their residents.

Cities are now part of the global economy, and whereas it was once assumed that globalisation would iron out any differences, producing identical neighbourhoods, the reverse is happening, and globalisation, with its emphasis on mobility is creating more diverse city areas. So while Thomas Friedman argued that under globalisation the world would become flat, it could more accurately be described as both “flat and spiky”.

Migration is one of the key drivers of a city’s growth and development, said Professor Kleinman. For example, London’s openness fuels its competitiveness and ability to attract young people, while in the British cities of Gateshead and Newcastle migration – and architecture - are driving economic regeneration.

Given the unsettling demographic upheavals cities are going through, these developments cannot be left to the free market, argued Professor Kleinman, as the government must ensure that these transitions benefit everyone. Urban design plays a crucial role in assimilating migrants, and promoting an “inclusive” city, that helps to integrate migrants thus deflecting all the media-driven misconceptions about the negative effects of immigration.

A city’s social aspects are important in its makeup, and cities must be “cohesive”. Surveys indicate that up to 80% of residents find their communities cohesive, and where this is not the case, architects must help by using design to promote stronger cohesion, encouraging a local community identity, and overcoming “bland unanimity”.

The UK supports action at the EU level, such as the Bristol Accord on Sustainable Communities (2005) and the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European cities (2007), and these must be followed through at national, urban and community level as “creative city making is not an accident”.



Open discussion

Ourania Kloutsinioti, architect-planner from Athens, argued for an integrated approach for urban policy, pointing out that the European Commission still pursues a sector-based approach in transport, the environment, and industry, despite proposals for a “horizontal” Directorate-General on urban policies.

Asked whether cities should copy each other’s initiatives, as in Bilbao, **Ms Curti** responded that cities learn by exchanging good practice and adapting it to local realities. She added that a common problem in cities is that those who plan and build them do not live in them.

Commenting on the other panelists’ presentations, **Professor Petrella** said the city should become a space where there is a shared responsibility on knowledge, water, energy, health and education, and urged politicians to be open to new ideas.

Ms Favarel shared Professor Petrella’s analysis of the damages of the PPP approach and the way that the cities’ public spaces are becoming privatised, preventing citizens using the public parks and open spaces.



Session B – The Economy: the market and the quality of the built environment

During this session it was said that the emphasis on the city as simply a machine for creating wealth, had left it both ugly and environmentally dangerous, and saving the environment always comes second to economic interest. However, it was argued, one has to accept the realities of today's world, and private finance can be a positive force for change in urban renewal. A new "inconvenient truth" is that the public have lost interest in supporting politicians to work for more "citizen-based" cities.

The economic frame, the externalities crisis, the failure of imagination and the future of Europe's built environment – Richard Parker, Professor of Public Policy, Harvard University, USA

Richard Parker: "The ability to create beauty is incompatible with the market"



Richard Parker opened his talk saying that the central paradox of modern architecture – and of our time – is that the ability to create real beauty can be “profoundly incompatible with the markets and democracy”. Neither the market economy nor political leadership has created the mix of shareholder interests that can solve this problem.

With public regulation discredited, and capital seen as the arbiter of values, aesthetic values are now just based on market values, and in their work architects now have to decide between public or private values, with little idea of how to develop ideas that serve the common good. This has resulted in a world which is “ugly, environmentally dangerous and has potential geocidal consequences”, he warned.

Professor Parker said it was ironic that while three-quarters of the world's population say that protecting the environment is a top global priority, this has not changed the way the world operates. For example African-Americans who lost their homes after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans were re-housed in building whose walls leaked the carcinogen formaldehyde.

It had been hoped that building a modern industrial world would raise civilisation to new heights, with greater opportunities for leisure and creativity. Instead our way of life is threatening the environment, with far greater costs (or ‘externalities’) than envisaged.

This has been exacerbated by globalisation and rising living standards which have created greater consumer demands, he said. Ironically, this increasing consumerism has not made the human race more contented, as when questioned, most people say that increasing wealth has not brought greater happiness.

Rather than measure progress by a market-based price system, we should use the modern “full cost accounting” model, which takes hidden externalities into account and uses a product-based life cycle to measure costs, said Professor Parker

Unfortunately, although some organisations and even governments have adopted this system, they are not prepared to act on it when it threatens economic growth, so the problem is no longer one of technical knowledge, but the lack of political will or collective purpose, he said.

This lack of public interest or willingness to press politicians to tackle the issues, has resulted in a “democratic deficit”, which is limiting our ability to face the challenges. Developers will not use “full cost accounting” when it threatens profits if they know they will not be held to account for what they do. Neither will local governments build beautiful, but more expensive, buildings if the public does not force them to do so.

Professor Parker finished by issuing a challenge to architects and urban planners, saying that it is the duty of all professionals - including architects – to express duties and values that transcend the claims of the immediate or the mundane.

Round table 2: Assuring equilibrium between competitiveness and sustainable development



Olgierd Dziekonski: “Architects must discern what is in the best common interest”

Olgierd Dziekonski, Under-Secretary of State at the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure, believed that creating an equilibrium between competitiveness and sustainable development depended on who is responsible for building the cities – the national or local government, the developers, or the citizens themselves. In most cases he believed that it was actually the citizens who were responsible, as they – indirectly - provided the finance, either as small-scale investors, by allocating funds to larger companies, or through taxes, which fund public building programmes.

While cities are in a constant process of flux, with old buildings replaced by new ones, the spirit of the city remains, lingering in the public spaces and in the public domain. This creates a city’s long-term quality, and should be included in any “full cost accounting” system, for measuring cities.

Mr Dziekonski believed that the public authorities’ role in urban development or regeneration should be focused on enforcing the regulations, allocating funding, ensuring that the public is given information about developments, and coordinating activities in order to push through the developments.

He stressed that public and individual interests must interact, and architects must be able to discern what is in the best common interest, so they can produce urban designs, which are both of the highest quality and are sustainable.

Jaroslav Szanajca: “The fundamental issue is costs”

Jaroslav Szanajca, President of the European Union of Developers and House Builders presented the views of “the individuals who execute the financial aspect of sustainable development” - the private sector and the developers. “The fundamental issue is costs”, he said, as despite differing national approaches to sustainable development, the private sector still has to apply traditional financial models when finding investors.

Collaboration between the architect and the developer is important at every stage of the project, he said, as they both need to satisfy the client to ensure that s/he will buy the finished building.

Developers and architects must not avoid discussing costs, although it may be a tense issue, as keeping costs down is one way to win jobs.

Legal regulations and the way that they are put into practice is important, said **Mr Szanajca**, and while future regulations are key to setting standards for sustainable development, environmental protection regulations for housing can hinder construction. For example developers in the United Kingdom find the upcoming regulations on building zero-carbon housing so tough that it is difficult to operate within them.

One must not forget the important role clients play in the built environment, as any new standards on quality and sustainable development will increase costs. In Europe 100 million people lack housing, and if regulations prevent big house building programmes going ahead, this will deprive them of the right to their own homes.

Mateu Turro Calvet: “PPPs are about how the real world operates”

Mateu Turro Calvet, Associate Director, Project Directorate, from the European Investment Bank, said the EIB’s mandate is determined by European Union policies, but it is developing new concepts, such as social cohesion, to support urban regeneration.

Mr Turro explained that a project’s eligibility for funding is determined by whether it takes an integrated approach to aspects such as water, transport, the environment and social aspects. Other criteria included economic and financial sustainability, having socially responsible governance, and, the effect on the environment.

Mr Turro disagreed with criticisms about PPPs, which he felt showed a lack of understanding about how the “real world operates”. One must accept that some people will always take decisions for others, so PPPs are a mechanism which builds the public good into a public-private partnership.

One of the new elements in determining the distribution of structural funds will be supporting urban development funds which will both work with, and help to control, private developers, thus finding a method that gets the best out of both worlds, which has been very successful in the UK and the Netherlands.

Mr Turro described the JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) project, which creates funds for urban development by mobilising private money for PPPs.

Round table discussion

In response to a question about full cost accounting, **Mr Parker** said that normal accounting often fails to anticipate the full future cost of buildings. One also has to ensure that the public does not shoulder the brunt of a new built environment, by being forced to live in unattractive, low-quality buildings.

Europe has the tools to combine regulation and innovation, but needs to overcome the crisis of “followership” – i.e. the public has lost interest in how it is governed.

Mr Dziekonski believed that we lack the foresight to know whether the goods being produced today will be economically sustainable in thirty years’ time.

In answer to a remark about needing to consider the value, as well as the cost of a building, **Mr Szanajca** retorted that one had to be realistic about what people will pay for.

Mr Turro remarked that architects often consider themselves as artists, oblivious of the costs, which frequently leads to high cost overruns on projects. Because many projects begin with democratic decision-making, costs presented to the public are often unrealistically low, so projects are approved, and then costs rise. The EIB tries to avoid this by carefully scrutinising all projects.

As an institution which lends over 20 to 35-year time scales, it searches for innovative ways of taking risks, for example using pay-back lending schemes to improve the energy efficiency of public buildings.



Debate

John Wright, Member of the Executive Board of the ACE, said he believed that the EU's new liberal economic focus on improving markets has been disastrous, as procurement initiatives are based on saving money, not on improving quality. He called for a balanced economic viewpoint that is more cohesive and capable of addressing the real issues.

Mr Dziekonski believed that one reason why cost was the main benchmark for new buildings was because the public had not been educated to understand the importance of quality. **Mr Calvet** added that procurement is not just about costs, and can be adapted, but the EIB always had to work within EU regulations.

Luciano Lazzari hoped that the focus of the European Union might change. While architects are being asked to go on a mission, the truth is that good architecture can only happen if the client is prepared to pay for it – one could describe architects as prostitutes and developers as their pimps!

Mr Parker said that the market plays a fundamental role in allocating goods and services, but there needed to be a rebalancing between public and private sectors to set standards across nations and industries.

Sunand Prasad, President of the RIBA remarked that the UK Stern Review Report described climate change as the biggest market failure in history, with dire financial consequences. He regretted that the public lacked interest in current democracy, as while society now has the technology and the imagination, political will to set new standards is lacking.

Mr Parker responded, saying that the public has always welcomed and embraced standard-setting, even though it might initially have complained. He believed that in the West scarcity is not a serious issue, but people and professional bodies need to offer assistance in deciding how to distribute resources.

According to **Jan Maarten de Vet, Ecotec, and the Conference facilitator**, the new "inconvenient truth" is that governments and politicians can only act if citizens support them, but public interest in democracy is declining.

Special Session: The European Political Agenda – The Leipzig Charter and the quality of the built environment

In this Special Session on the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities the audience learnt that it is a tool to integrate urban development, contribute to sustainable cities and return life to the inner cities. Speakers argued for an integrated, holistic approach to spatial and urban development policies, and as a 'holistic' profession architects were urged to contribute. The Slovenian government outlined the measures it was taking on the Charter.

Ulrich Kasparick; “One of Europe’s great strengths is its diversity”



Ulrich Kasparick, Member of the Bundestag – Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, Germany, explained that the Leipzig Charter was drawn up during the German EU Presidency as the German contribution to urban policy. The Charter is a tool to integrate urban development, setting out the contribution that cities and regions can make to sustainable growth in Europe.

Diversity is one of Europe’s greatest strengths, and Ministers have made a commitment to use cities’ territorial and cultural diversity as the engine for European development.

Cities must not just be environmentally, but also socially and economically sustainable, said Mr Kasparick. The Leipzig Charter suggests that achieving this means countering urban sprawl, and returning life to the inner cities. With state support for inter-city urban regeneration, cities can become engines for growth *from within*.

As cities are very high energy consumers, reducing urban energy consumption and CO2 emissions could significantly reduce climate change, and this could be achieved by fitting existing building with energy saving measures. Here national governments could take the lead by improving their own buildings, and exchanging best practice with other countries and regions.

It is important to develop a ‘building culture’, or *Baukultur*, that encompasses all aspects of the built environment, said Mr Kasparick. This ‘building culture’ can be formed by laws and good political planning, together with informed debate. Germany has taken the lead by setting up a Foundation for *Baukultur*. Other EU member states are developing national policies on sustainable cities, in the spirit of the Leipzig Charter.

Janez Podobnik: “The most sustainable cities are also the most competitive”



Janez Podobnik, Slovenian Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning, and President-in-Office of the EU Council of Ministers responsible for Environment Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion said that both the Leipzig Charter and the ‘Territorial Agenda of the EU’ and its accompanying Action Programme strengthen the spatial and urban dimensions of European policy, and encourage better collaboration between national and regional governments and cities.

This integrated, holistic approach to spatial and urban development policies is well positioned to solve today’s challenges, such as the use of natural resources, rising food prices and climate change, he said.

As architecture also takes a holistic approach it can play a crucial role in creating a quality living environment, and building cities that are both cultural centres and drivers for business and innovation. It should be remembered, he emphasised, that the most sustainable cities are also the most competitive.

The idea of sustainable development is not a new one for Slovenia, said Mr Podobnik, as it has been applying this type of approach for many years, and is now updating it for a market economy.

The country is also using the approaches outlined in the Leipzig Charter to prepare and adopt a national Architectural Policy, which will boost those involved in planning, designing and constructing the built environment.

In its capacity as EU President, the Slovenia government is:

- organising a conference of the European Forum for Architectural Policies this June;
- continuing the dialogue among Member States, EU institutions and other stakeholders on examples of good practice;
- opening a dialogue on the role of urban planning in tackling climate change;
- pushing forward the EU's Territorial Agenda;
- activities for implementing the Leipzig Charter have been discussed at the EU Working level meeting on urban development, and will be presented to the relevant Directors General, responsible for urban development in the Member States, this May.

Round table discussion



Mr Kasparick said that an integrated development approach will only work if it is “bottom up”, and includes civil society, and while the German Foundation on *Baukultur* was trying to get an interdisciplinary, integrated approach, the incumbent culture of divided responsibilities is still very powerful.

Looking at the barriers to an integrated approach, **Mr Podobnik** said that it was important to get coherence and multi-level governance, with links between the horizontal and vertical sectors. For example, much better coordination is needed between architects, engineers and workers on local authority construction projects.

Responding to a question by **Mr Jan Maarten de Vet** on whether voluntary charters work in the long term, **Mr Kasparick** said that one needed a mix of voluntary and legally-binding instruments, with national legally-binding objectives supported by local measures. **Mr Podobnik** added that architects should do more to promote energy-friendly buildings, and ensure their designs minimise Europe's ecological footprint.



Session C – Environment

In this session, it was argued that the environmental situation is so serious that one must use every possible tool to change people's attitudes. Speakers described the challenges of scrapping traditional thinking to carry out an integrated approach to the built environment, both at national and European Union level. Two workers 'in the field' described measures being taken in Budapest and Gothenburg to regenerate the cities, one based on public-private partnerships, the other led by the local authorities.

Assuring the sustainability of the Built Environment, Gary Lawrence, Principal, Global Leader for Sustainable Urban Development, Arup, USA

Gary Lawrence: "Our cities are in a state of chaotic urbanisation"



Gary Lawrence believed that while we talk about building sustainable communities, we are hampered by a lack of knowledge about what exactly this means. Creating a sustainable city is an iterative process, that must develop, as today's solutions will not fit the future.

Currently our cities are in a state of "chaotic urbanisation", he said, as we have designed them to reap huge profits for the government and the private sectors, but have neglected to think about their environmental quality. We now have to face up to the consequences of this on water, climate, and energy, he said, and while he feared that first-world systems would not be adequate to address the problems of sustainability, he believed that the developing world might be more capable of producing an ecological paradigm for the future.

Mr Lawrence said that cities had begun as instruments of power, trade or security, and the urban structures grew up to service them. He believed that some cities like Mexico continue to exist but with little economic or social purpose, having become the repositories of people flocking from the countryside in search of a better life. These cities are more conducive to misery than happiness, so we need to "retrofit" them to become more sustainable, using energy-saving measures, which would also cut greenhouse gases.

However, while environmental concerns are important, the environment is an abstraction for communities under economic stress, warned Mr Lawrence. In order to transmit the urgency of climate change, we have to use descriptions that connect to people's immediate needs such as health, or concrete economic or security risks.

We have to use every tool we possess to get a change in attitudes, harnessing greed or avarice in the public interest. For example, focusing on the competitive advantages that sustainable cities have over non-sustainable cities.

The business argument for sustainability is quite clear. Only 1% of the lifecycle costs of a building goes on construction, while 60% of costs go in salaries, so if just a small additional amount is spent on creating a better working environment, people will be more productive, thus giving the company that uses the building a competitive advantage. "We must accept that clients get the idea in the way that they do", said Mr Lawrence, and must not try and convince them any other way.

Mr Lawrence believed it was very important to carry the community with you in drawing up city plans, and agreed with previous speakers about the need to rekindle the relationship between leadership and followership, for, without a constituency which is willing to back the planners, plans will not work.

He believed that the best possible form of decision-making was informed consent – trying to reach a decision through consensus rarely worked, so it was more effective to listen to people's opinions and then take a decision.

Round table 3: The integrated approach – the challenge



Charles Picqué: “We must not forget the importance of a decent quality of life”

Charles Picqué, Minister-President, Brussels Capital Region, Belgium, said that the integrated approach was becoming more popular and urban governance becoming more complex and we are going through an “urban revolution”. He admitted he was from the “old school”, which used the territorial approach and took a social viewpoint, rather than today’s sustainable viewpoint, which emphasises the environment and the quality of public space.

Applying an integrated approach means taking into account the institutional and administrative aspects of the city, as well as decentralising policies like education, jobs and housing, to ensure they are integrated at the local level.

As this integrated approach must also fit into a global strategy, Brussels has launched an international development plan, based on new large infrastructure development and city-marketing campaigns, in cooperation with the European Commission and the City of Brussels. However, making cities competitive must not make us forget the importance of a decent quality of life, he said.

Mr Picqué said that the economy was not the only force driving city development, and he wanted to launch a call to reintroduce democracy and the social aspect of cities, and create friendly spaces to encourage social links and make citizens proud of their cities.

Turning to details of the competition to redesign the area bordering on Rue de la Loi, Mr Picqué said that they had invited the private sector to redesign a European quarter that would merit being the capital of Europe. As one of the biggest office areas in Europe, it needs to be given life and good architectural coherence.

Jean-Marie Beaupuy: “We must bring actors together in an integrated approach”

Jean-Marie Beaupuy MEP, President of the European Parliament Inter-Group Urban.Logement, believed an important element in the “urban revolution” mentioned by Minister-President Picqué is to improve the citizens’ quality of life. We need to study how to integrate all the different aspects of the city, and bring together all the actors involved together in this integrated approach, he said, as it is only by becoming more coherent in our approach that we can ensure that our citizens’ needs are met.

At present there is no coherent approach to governance, and members of the Parliamentary Inter-Group will be presenting a text on more integrated governance to the European Parliament this October, said Mr Beaupuy. At the same time “we should clean up outside our own front door”, and set up a commission to encourage the European institutions to adopt a more integrated approach.

Thanks to the Leipzig Charter, different departments in national governments are learning to be more integrated, which is particularly important given increasing mobility across Europe. He used the example of a multinational company which sets up an office on the periphery of a city, creating 750 jobs. While this generates incomes and employment, the local authority must plan all the services needed in an integrated way – ensuring that there are schools, nurseries, housing, a transport infrastructure and a road network.

Society has passed through a revolution in recent years, with the growth of ICT and the use of the World Wide Web, so all these changes demand a more integrated approach to urban planning, he finished.

Eva Belezny, “Europe needs cities and regions which are strong and good places to live”,

Eva Belezny, Chief Architect, Budapest, Hungary said that while we may have policy statements on reorienting national and local policies, how can we make this happen? she asked. From her experience, environmental action programmes are hampered by an implementation gap and by the lack of integration.

A synergy has to be created between action on all levels, and between the private sector and local government, as she believed that the latter should play a role in formulating national policies and creating frameworks for local action.

Ms Belezny said that “Europe needs cities and regions which are strong, and good places to live”. All cities are struggling to integrate activities, and while they have developed policies on the economy and sustainability, it is important to get the right mix between targets and tools so that these can operate successfully.

She described how the city authorities were making Budapest more sustainable:

- inner urban development is in the hands of private ownership, with support from public-private partnerships and the use of public funds;
- the riverside sites along the Danube are being developed for mixed use;
- work is going ahead to regenerate the city’s ‘brownfield’ zone;
- a number of different sub-centres are being created, based on mixed land use, including traditional village/district centres;
- work is being undertaken to make the city more homogenous;
- there is a project to integrate public transport with urban and suburban transport systems, to encourage people back onto public transport.

Finally, the government has introduced a green procurement code for cities to use on their own projects. This includes environmentally-friendly design, the use of energy-conservation materials, and limiting noise pollution.

Anneli Hulthén: “Cities work in pillars, when they should be using bridges”

Anneli Hulthén, Deputy Mayor of Gothenburg, Sweden, felt that progress on integration was too slow “We are not moving fast enough”, she said, as while cities may adopt an integrated approach, they are still organised in old-fashioned ways – “working in pillars, when they should be using bridges”.

She believed that all urban design should be horizontal, covering all aspects, and be supported by political leadership. She described how Gothenburg was a very mixed city, with a large number of refugees, which has started to plan its budget from a sustainable development perspective. The city can pursue an integrated approach as it is a big landowner, owns its own energy-supply and waste management and housing companies.

The city currently has a big building programme – to build 2000 dwellings each year, with special housing units for the 18-29 year-olds who cannot access the housing market. Gothenburg is also promoting public transport, using various measures to encourage its use, plus promoting cycling and walking as forms of mobility.

In terms of its energy-efficiency goals, only 1% of households use oil for heating, and 40% of the new dwellings are “passive houses”, with modern, efficient heating systems. There are also measures to help those with mental illnesses, or with other special needs.

All these measures are being evaluated, using 19 goals to measure progress, so the city council can then redo the budget to improve the activities.

Round table discussion

Mr Lawrence responded to the speakers’ contributions, saying one needed to convince citizens that an integrated approach works, and to show how improvements in one system, feed into another. He referred to the concept of “fungibility” in which funds for one purpose can be used for another if it solves the problem, and regretted that the way funds are allocated usually works against an integrated approach.



Session D – Culture

In this session, architecture was described as the art that combines all the aspects of today's world. Speakers spoke of the importance of culture in Europe, and how the European Union was beginning to accept this, particularly as culture can be good for the economy. The French government described the measures it would be taking during the EU Presidency to push the cultural agenda forward.



Round table 4: The “Fourth Pillar” – (Building) Culture, key to balanced urban and spatial development

**Odile Quintin, “EU’s cultural sector accounts for 2.6% of EU GDP
– more than chemical production”**

Odile Quintin, Director-General, Education and Culture, the European Commission, said that architecture was the art that best combines all the difference aspects of today's world.

The European Commission has accepted the importance of culture in Europe, and its ‘Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world’, issued last year, stresses that culture is at the heart of the EU project.

Culture, including architecture, can be good for business she said. An analysis of the economy of culture carried out in 2006 showed that the EU’s cultural sector accounts for 2.6% of EU GDP – which is higher than car production or the chemicals industry. In 2004, 1.5 million people in Europe were working in the architecture or engineering sectors - giving an added value of €73 billion.

The EU uses its Structural Funds to support European culture, while the European regional development fund supports architecture through urban initiatives. The EU’s cultural programme promotes cultural cooperation, and sponsors the Mies van der Rohe Award for contemporary architecture.

The European Agenda for Culture wants to develop culture platforms to encourage dialogue between the cultural sectors and the EU public authorities, and Ms Quintin hoped that architects would play a role in these.

Rob Docter: “Architects must use architecture to restate social values”

Rob Docter, President of the European Forum for Architectural Policies (EFAP Association) explained that the EFAP was an informal network of experts in the field of architectural policies in Europe that works to promote architectural policies, document best practices in the field, and lobby for the quality of architecture.

At the beginning of the 20th century Europe's city fathers had formulated a cultural agenda to improve citizens' quality of life, and this had sometimes resulted in exciting coalitions between public clients and architects. However, since the 1990s, public goods – social housing and the public realm as the place for cultural expression - had been privatised and left to the will of PPP constructions, with a resultant declining interest in culture.

Architects must reclaim responsibility over the public domain, and use architecture as a political instrument to restate social values, said Mr Docter. While architects must perform in market conditions, they also have an ethical responsibility as public intellectuals who can reflect on the future of society.

The concept of *Baukultur* – (the quality built environment) demands an integrated approach, and architects must play a leading role through synthesising all the elements of urban development. While they have the ability to create a coherent vision of sustainable development, sadly, they are rarely included in planning for this, which he described as like “having a cook book without a cook”.

While the market has been responsible for some poor constructions, architecture must claim back the construction of the living environment, as the current “ready-made” supply of buildings cannot inspire individuals to create their own living spaces. Architects have the ability to envision society's aspirations, and architecture is one of the most powerful social, cultural and economic forces, he finished.

Hans Ibelings: “Since 1989, there has be a homogenisation of architectural culture”

Hans Ibelings, Editor-in-Chief, A10 Architecture Magazine, the Netherlands, described architecture as a collection of buildings which can make a big effect on human beings. Despite this, 90% of Europe's buildings are not architect-designed.

He believed that during the Cold War period, the historical study of architecture was restricted to buildings in Western Europe, as the ‘Iron Curtain’ hid many of Eastern Europe's best buildings. After 1989, there was a new reality in Europe and this, added to the effects of globalisation, has sadly resulted in a homogenisation of architectural culture.

In the light of ecological and demographic changes, he believed that rather than designing and constructing new buildings, a better solution would be to reuse existing buildings, particularly given the low standards of some of the new buildings.

Jean Gautier: “Under French law, architecture is an aspect of culture”

Jean Gautier, Director of Architecture at the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, began his presentation by pointing out that under French law, architecture is defined as an aspect of culture.

He agreed that architecture plays a crucial role in sustainable development, and that architectural diversity is very important, as it both represents cultural diversity and enriches European cities. However, said Mr Gautier, this cultural diversity can only thrive under a continuing democracy, and more education is needed to explain the benefits of this.

When it assumes the EU Presidency, the French government will be undertaking the following measures in relation to culture and architecture. It will:

- follow in Slovenia's footsteps, by pushing the EU Council of Ministers to continue with the Leipzig Charter;

- encourage the exchange of ideas through the European Forum, which will present its 'Conclusions' to the Council of Ministers stressing the role of architecture in European policies, and encouraging individual Member States to apply these;
- address the problems of 'urban sprawl' stressing the crucial role that architects and urban planners have in correcting this;
- encourage an integrated approach, encouraging the refurbishment of existing - abandoned - buildings for other uses, thus preserving heritage.

Mr Gautier hoped that the Council of Ministers would react to these conclusions (mentioned above) by adopting its own Conclusions with proposals for concrete actions, such as integrating architecture in the territorial programmes for the Structural Funds.

In addition, the French Presidency will encourage the dissemination of scientific ideas and the exchange of good practices on sustainable development, as well as encouraging EU Member States to bring in an architectural adviser for all public and private developments, and develop educational programmes on urban development.

A meeting of the European Forum of Architectural Policies will be held in Bordeaux in October to talk about setting standards and objectives for sustainable development, and this meeting will draft the Conclusions to be submitted to the Council of Ministers.



Debate

Ms Quintin commented that she did not consider architecture and markets to be incompatible, as culture can help to develop markets.

Laurie Neale from Europa Nostra commented that architecture could actually be a market force, as redeveloping abandoned buildings helps surroundings to blossom.

Mr Ibelings responded that the market needs architects. In Europe it is often only publically-owned buildings which employ architects, and one can notice the difference between these, and many private buildings which are not architect-designed.

Mr Gautier stressed that measures must be taken so that the European institutions understand the important role that architecture can play, and he hoped that governments would act on the

conclusions that the European Forum on Architectural Policies is submitting to the European Council.

In response to a point that had been made on the need of a more cross-policy approach to the cultural dimension in the Commission services **Ms Quintin** argued that the European Commission must have a specific structure in charge of culture – as it is currently the case -rather than “streamlining” culture across all the Departments, although she is willing to enhance coordination activities.



General view of Conference Hall – The Flagey Studio



A question from the floor

Closing Session

During the closing session, the Conference themes were summarised, including the importance of involving all parties in urban regeneration, taking an integrated, holistic approach, using public procurement to promote sustainability and quality. Architecture was described as a positive tool in this process.

Closing Speech by Janez Podobnik, Slovenian Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning, and President-in-Office of the EU Council of Ministers responsible for Environment Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion

Janez Podobnik: “We need to focus on how to provide a culturally attractive, environmentally acceptable, socially-friendly and economic built environment”



In his closing speech, **Janez Podobnik** highlighted some of the most important issues raised at the conference, which will guide future thinking:

- creating and maintaining a quality built environment *Baukultur* is a permanent process that requires constant monitoring and adaptation;
- developing an urban programme demands everybody's participation and involvement;
- cooperation between planners/designers, the construction industry and citizens gives added value and solutions for sustainable cities and the built environment;
- architecture is a positive tool for policies to steer investment towards sustainable development;
- public procurement on all levels should be used to promote sustainability and quality.

One of the lessons from the Conference is that success on one level is not enough – only multi-level governance within the planning process can achieve a better living environment.

For architects, tackling climate change is just one of the tasks, as they must take a holistic approach to all policies, and provide a direct link between the Lisbon Strategy, which guides European policies, and urban planning.

We need to focus on how to provide a culturally attractive, environmentally acceptable, socially-friendly and economic built environment, said Mr Podobnik. Given the importance that the Conference has given to open space, building on existing open spaces should be “the last option”.

The Conference confirmed architecture's added value in achieving the sustainable quality of the built environment. Politicians and architects can work together as allies, as they have through history, constructing epoch-defining buildings such as the pyramids of ancient Egypt, and the buildings of renaissance Florence.

Jan Maarten de Vet: “Designing for the future requires a long-term vision, recognising that sustainability means added-value”



Jan Maarten de Vet, Director of Ecotec and the **Conference facilitator** summarised some “personal conclusions” from the Conference:

- people need to feel “comfortable again”, so architects must respond to people’s needs and desires, foresee the needs of tomorrow’s citizens and cities, and understand the importance of public space;
- tomorrow’s cities need “to be themselves” and be truthful to their origins and identity, but be able to learn from other cities;
- high quality planning, design and building needs an integrated, holistic approach, with good cooperation between architects, other professionals, city leaders and citizens.
- we have to be aware that citizens’ desire for high quality built environment does not always translate into concrete demands for high quality.
- designing for the future requires a long-term vision, recognising that sustainability means added-value;
- governments at all levels have to assume their responsibilities – especially in areas where the market has failed to produce good results, and this includes public procurement, where the focus should not be on cost alone.
- we operate within the context of globalisation, where concern for the environment and cultural diversity will be an added value, bringing social, economic and environmental benefits. At the same time, we need to exploit our European identity.

Juhani Katainen, President of the Architects' Council of Europe, thanked all the participants and the Partners and Sponsors and he brought the Conference to a close.



At the closure the audience was treated to an inspiring, unexpected, piano recital from **Jordi Querol y Piera, Vice-President of ACE, from Spain**, who played pieces by Frederic Chopin and Manuel de Falla



Press Release

Architects Conference sets out the Brussels Statement for a sustainable built environment

Architecture is a central element towards achieving a sustainable, high quality built environment, says the ACEI (Architects' Council of Europe)

At an international conference organised on 10 April 2008 in Brussels by the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE), held under the Patronage of José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, over 400 of Europe's leading politicians – at International, European, national and local level - administrators, industry representatives and professionals in the field met in Brussels to draw up the agenda for tomorrow's built environment.

In his opening speech to the Conference, Siim Kallas, Vice-President of the European Commission spoke about the new integrated approach that the Commission has adopted to its buildings that is to include an architectural policy and he unveiled an international urban design competition for the Rue de la Loi (European Quarter) in Brussels that is a joint cooperation between the Commission, the Region Brussels-Capital and the City of Brussels. In a later presentation during the day, Charles Picqué, Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital Region gave more details about the competition and about the objectives that are to be pursued to achieve ambitious targets for the buildings within the area, which is the subject of the competition, notably in terms of energy efficiency and architectural quality.

During the Conference, Richard Parker, Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, pointed out that while modern architecture has a shared communal ability to cultivate real beauty, this is often "profoundly incompatible with markets - the defining institutions of our time – and there is thus a need to bridge this democratic deficit".

Professor Riccardo Petrella from the Academy of Architecture of Switzerland-Italy urged the audience to "reinvent cities as places of "common goods", providing public services for all" and to renew them as spaces of representative and direct democracy.

Jean-Marie Beaupuy, Member of the European Parliament, President of the European Parliament Inter-Group Urban.Logement lent his support to the architects call when he said "We need to have a more coherent approach to the forms of governance in cities, as this will help to improve the social, cultural and economic standards of its citizens, so this October the Inter-Group will present a report to the European Parliament on introducing an integrated approach".

Building on the spirit of the Bristol Accord on Sustainable Communities and the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, and in the context of the EU Treaty concept of Territorial Cohesion, the Conference overwhelmingly agreed the Brussels' Statement (attached in annexe). This stressed that:

architecture is a positive tool in steering investments towards sustainable development;
developing cities demands an integrated, holistic approach, with input from politicians, architects, developers and civil society;
planners, designers, the construction industry and end users must work together to create and maintain a quality built environment to provide solutions for sustainable cities;
public procurement at all levels should be used to promote sustainability and quality, and particular attention should be given to rectifying the current misuse of Public-Private Partnerships.

ACE President Juhani Katainen welcomed the Statement, which he said demonstrated that architects are "now setting the agenda for the built environment, working with city leaders, practitioners and citizens to make cities worthy of their citizens".

1 Founded in 1990 the ACE is the representative association for the architectural profession, acting as its voice in relations with the EU Institutions. It currently has 45 Members who are the representative and regulatory architectural bodies from all of the EU Member States, the Accession States, Norway and Switzerland. It therefore represents, through its Members, over 450,000 architects across Europe.

In a closing speech to the Conference, Janez Podobnik, Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia and President in Office of the EU Council of Ministers, reminded the audience that in the past architects and politicians had together created epoch-defining buildings – from the pyramids of Egypt to the buildings of renaissance Florence – and that they continue to do so nowadays. They will continue to fulfil that role in building the new Europe, harnessing growth to develop a high quality built environment for the 21st century.

Contact Alain Sagne, Secretary General at:

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For further information on the ACE see:

www.ace-cae.org

ARCHITECTS' BRUSSELS STATEMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Conclusions of the ACE Conference:

Designing for the Future: The Market and Quality of Life

A high quality built environment requires high quality in planning, design, building and management with good, timely cooperation between architects, other professionals, city leaders, administrations and citizens. A long-term vision for the built environment has to recognise the importance of the four pillars that constitute the basic framework for sustainable development.

A. Social pillar

1. A real challenge for all professionals in the construction sector lies in their ability to capture quality and 'beauty' and to translate them into completed projects and measurable values. There is a need to better understand why the market does not fully respond to the desire of citizens for a high quality built environment – and to address these constraints one by one.
2. Good design benefits all citizens. The role of design in achieving greater equity and justice needs to be explored through pilot projects and best practice.

B. Economic pillar

3. The cities of tomorrow can only be deemed successful if they fulfil the genuine needs and responsible desires of people. The true needs of citizens must be anticipated and long-term viable solutions devised to respond to them for which economic aspects are decided on the basis of life cycle costing.
4. Governments have to effectively and urgently assume their responsibilities and must see that it is not acceptable to privatise public policy. This is especially the case in the areas where the market fails to produce good results. In particular, reform of the public procurement process must be devised in which quality outcomes become the main goal over and above lowest cost.

C. Environmental pillar and sustainability

5. Designing for the future is a long-term vision. It must be recognised by all built environment professionals that sustainability is an absolute. A challenge that waits to be faced is the need to retrofit our cities, devising policies and techniques at the scale of the challenge faced that will lead our existing cities to a sustainable future.
6. Governance and decision-making processes that lead to the creation of the built environment must adopt an integrated approach drawing on all fields that affect the quality of the daily lives of all citizens.

D. Cultural pillar

7. Seen within the context of globalisation, cultural quality and diversity provide dynamism, identity and real attractiveness to places resulting in economic, social and environmental benefits. We need to recognise, cherish and promote our European identity.

Architecture has visionary and synthesising power to contribute to the achievement of these statements.

The Architects' Council of Europe

10th April 2008

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ENDS

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