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## Facing the urban challenge

### Architecture and commitment to better quality of life

In the light of the forthcoming elections, the Kamra tal-Periti calls on all stakeholders to collectively re-commit themselves to better quality in architecture and urban design, and to higher standards in the construction of buildings and urban spaces for the benefit of the community.

This statement follows the launch last November of the Kamra's Policy Document on the state of the built and natural environment entitled The Urban Challenge: Our Quality of Life and the Built Environment.

The document reinforces the belief that quality is essential in adding value to any investment in the country's future. More so where the country's built environment is concerned, since better standards will result in a better quality of life for our citizens and an environment better geared to attract investment and tourism.

During the annual general meeting of December 7, members of the Kamra tal-Periti expressed unanimous support to this position paper and called on the country's political parties to endorse this document and to include its recommendations within their electoral programme.

Exposure over recent years to the workings of the Architect's Council of Europe (ACE) and the European Forum for Architectural Policies (EFAP) encouraged the Kamra to embark on the process leading to the publication of this document, intended to promote the Kamra's urgent call for a more sustainable development of the built and rural environment and for the endorsement of quality in design as an essential tool for the nation's economic and social development.

The publication of this paper represents a significant step towards the Kamra's longer term goals of having a national policy of architecture adopted by Government and of establishing a national centre for architecture and the built environment, including the creation of an Independent Design Review Commission.

The position paper makes recommendations for better protection of the nation's heritage (built and natural) and the strengthening of the process and management of change (planning), which needs to embrace and build on the values inherent in the country's cultural and geopolitical standing in a global society. It suggests more focus on our education system, encouraging creativity and innovation from an early age, and sets an agenda for the renovation of the profession, recognising the important contribution of all stakeholders.

Architect Vincent Cassar, currently a member of the KTP council, has been elected on the executive board of the ACE during elections that were recently held in Brussels. Seven representatives from six European Chambers, including

Spain, France, Poland, UK, Belgium and Malta contested the elections, held during the General Assembly of the ACE.

Architect Cassar was the third elected with a total of 258 votes from 19 countries and was confirmed as treasurer of the ACE for the next two years. This is the second time the KTP is to be represented on the ACE executive board.

Architect David Felice, current KTP president and former member of the executive board and ACE delegate on the EFAP, is also secretary general of the Mediterranean Union of Architects (UMAR). The KTP council is made up of David Felice, president and chair Board of Professional Conduct; Vincent Cassar, vice-president and co-ordinator Architecture Centre Work Group; Simone Vella Lenicker, honorary secretary; Alberto Miceli Farrugia and Philip Grech, co-chairs Built Environment Standing Committee; Anthony Fenech Vella, chair International Standing Committee; Damian Vella Lenicker, chair Professional Practice Standing Committee; Danica Mifsud and Etienne Micallef Grimaud, co-chairs Communications and Events Standing Committees; Keith Cole, chair Education Standing Committee; and Frank Giordmaina Medici, chair Finance Standing Committee.

More information about the KTP as well as a digital version of The Urban Challenge may be downloaded from [www.ktpmalta.com](http://www.ktpmalta.com).