

**Special Session of the Architects' Council of Europe
17 April 2015 – Tallinn, Estonia
Final Declaration**

Whereas, the forthcoming United Nations Climate Conference to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015 (COP 21) provides a considerable challenge for society in general and our profession in particular;

Whereas the built environment is responsible for 32% of global final energy use and 19% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the world, and that, under business-as-usual projections, use of energy in buildings globally could double or even triple by 2050;

Whereas urbanisation, combined with the growth of the world's population could add another 2.5 billion people to urban populations by 2050, and that two thirds of the inhabitants of our planet will be concentrated in cities by 2050;

Recalling the 2050 Imperative Declaration, signed at the occasion of the 2014 UIA Congress, which stressed the urgent need to phase out CO₂ emissions in the built environment;

Recalling the Manifesto signed in November 2014 in Milan, at the occasion of the joint CNAPPC-ACE-EFAP Forum *EU-Cities Reloading*, which emphasises that Architecture is the instrument able to integrate the different disciplines and competences to tackle the challenges European cities are facing;

We, the Member Organisations of the Architects Council of Europe, and the representatives of the International Union of Architects and the American Institute of Architects, representing the architectural profession at international, European and national levels:

1. Believe that global and local challenges of our time are intrinsically linked and cannot be overcome separately. Achieving sustainability globally requires to take action locally, taking into consideration local priorities and needs; taking advantage of local resources; suiting local cultures, reflecting local practices and standards, and involving local communities. Achieving sustainability locally requires, on the other hand, to reflect global challenges and the establishment of common visions that transcend national borders and local objectives;
2. State that the architectural profession has the responsibility to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. The profession has a unique expertise to plan and design low-carbon, resource-efficient, resilient, smart, healthy and inclusive built environments, thus contributing to mitigate climate change and adapt buildings and cities to its effects;
3. Underline the importance of urban regeneration, and the ability of the architectural profession to plan and design sustainable built environments in a holistic and integrated manner, taking into consideration economic, social, environmental, political and cultural aspects, resulting in more inclusive communities;
4. Recall that architectural heritage is a capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value, and recall the key role of the architectural profession to preserve this heritage;
5. Stress the importance of investing in the architectural education – a continuum ranging from the academic training, to practical experience, to continuing professional experience and to research – in order to deliver and maintain high quality professionals able to make better places that address the manifold challenges we are currently facing.

We believe that the architectural profession has a key responsibility in tackling the critical local and global challenges of our time, in particular with respect to climate change, urban regeneration, social inclusion and heritage conservation. Having accepted this responsibility, we commit to promote in our respective organisations the unique expertise of the architectural profession in planning and designing better places, facing the challenges of our time, for the well-being of humanity and future of our planet.