



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

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Political Affairs

Dinner Debate on Sustainable Architecture and the Built Environment

Report of the Event

Final

Introduction

On the 1st April 2009 the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) co-organised with the Intergroup Urban.Logement of the European Parliament a Dinner Debate that was held in Brussels. The Event was attended by 27 persons including four Members of the European Parliament and many highly placed Officials within the European Commission and other European Institutions and Professional Organisations. The list of those present and their function is appended to this Note in Annex 1.

At the meeting three presentations was made. The first by the President of the ACE, Juhani Katainen, the second by Rob Docter, President of the European Forum for Architectural Policies (EFAP) and the third by Jean-Marie Beaupuy, President of the European Parliament Intergroup Urban.Logement. Following the presentations there was a debate animated by the Secretary General of the ACE, Alain Sagne.

This Report contains a summary of each of the three presentations and of the main points raised during the debate. The text of the presentations made by Juhani Katainen and Rob Docter are available on request at the Secretariat of the ACE at the following email address:

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Report

The theme of the Event was *Sustainable Architecture and the Built Environment – Realising European Citizens' Needs* and its objective was to bring to the attention of highly placed personalities in the European Union the importance of the contribution that architecture can make to sustainable development. The timing was chosen so as to precede the European elections 2009 and marked the first of a series of actions aimed by the ACE towards the new Members of the European Parliament and the new European Commission due to take up their posts in 2009. Invitations had been sent out together with a document setting out the theme for the evening and a document posing potential questions that could be considered during the Debate.

The Three speeches made are summed up below:

Juhani Katainen, President of the ACE, welcomed all the participants to the Dinner Debate and acknowledged the valuable assistance provided by the Intergroup Urban.Logement in the organisation of the evening. He signalled to the audience the very good relationship that the ACE has enjoyed during the past five years with the Intergroup and acknowledged the significant advances that it has made during the legislature.

He then went on to speak about the significant impact that architecture has on society and on its potential for having a positive influence on the attractiveness of European cities and regions and thus on productivity, prosperity and well being for citizens. He then introduced the ACE explaining that it is the Representative Body for the profession at European level and he reported briefly on the outcome of the survey of the architectural profession at European level completed at the end of 2008. This survey showed the great diversity that exists in the architectural profession and he pointed out that this is a great strength that allows to properly reflect the cultural diversity within Europe. He then went on to report that the ACE is preparing a series of recommendations and policy statements that will be used as a vehicle for lobbying candidates to the European Parliament and for informing elected Members and new Commissioners of the critical subjects that the profession wishes to see delivered at this time

of economic crisis. This led to a critique of the method by which buildings are procured and of the tendency in hard economic times to ignore quality criteria and to opt for lowest price only. He reported that the ACE believes that quality based procurement is the only viable means of procuring buildings if the beneficial potential that architecture can have on society is to be safeguarded.

He then went on to refer to the fact that if the profession is to deliver the quality of service rightly expected by society then the education and training of architects must be of a high quality and include a period of professional practice experience within the market. He ended by referring to the enormous societal challenge that is facing the world at the present time – climate change. He highlighted how addressing this urgent societal challenge requires an urgent societal response and he called on the audience to ensure that the required improvements in our society will be based on the best knowledge and technology. He referred to the G 20 Summit taking place at the same time expressing the hope that its work would bring the resources to allow all sectors including the construction sector to assist the economic recovery.

He ended by referring to the expected adoption of the revised rules for the expenditure of Structural Funds, which would permit immediate funding of housing projects in all Member States of the EU, something strongly welcomed by the ACE. He then recalled the content of the ACE Conference in 2008, which had anticipated the negative influence of market forces on the built environment, and he finished by informing the participants that two further speeches will take place followed by a moderated debate.

The next speech was presented by Rob Docter, President of the EFAP:

Rob Docter, President of the EFAP AISBL, thanked the organisers for the invitation to address this high-level Group. He then presented the EFAP stating that it is now approaching its tenth Anniversary and that it is a network that brings together three groups involved in the built environment: Member State Governments, architectural professional organisations and cultural organisations from the Member States of the European Union. He went on to state that the EFAP normally holds two events per year in close collaboration with the Presidency of the European Union and that its work has been gaining more and more political support overtime.

He went on to refer to the significant work carried out under the French EU Presidency in the first half of 2008, which culminated in the adoption of Conclusions on Architecture, culture's contribution to sustainable development, adopted on the 20th November 2008. He reported that the EFAP had been closely engaged in developing these Conclusions and that the final document recalled that architecture is an illustration of what culture can contribute to sustainable development. He went on to remark that it is not common practice to use the capacity of the architectural discipline in planning and decision making about sustainable development arguing that this is something that should absolutely be the case during the 21st century, particularly as such great challenges are being faced. He went on to argue that architects must not only be engaged in the actual building of the built environment but should use their skills to concentrate on their role as public intellectuals thus guiding the way to constructing a sustainable society.

He then returned to the Council Conclusions recalling that there are seventeen actions included in the document, several of which he mentioned. He mentioned the need to incorporate the architectural dimension in relevant policies, to encourage innovation and experimentation, to develop the economic growth and employment potential represented by architecture as a creative cultural industry and a number of more concretely defined actions such as research, an annual European architecture Event and measures to enhance better education and public awareness.

He then said that the EFAP will use these Recommendations and actions to stimulate its core task of supporting their implementation. In this context he reported that the French Ministry of Culture has generously put one of its officials at the disposal of the EFAP to manage the implementation of the Conclusions over the coming period.

He finished his speech by referring the upcoming EFAP Event under the Czech Presidency that will take place in Prague from the 16th to the 18th of April and he spoke of his expectation that the work of the EFAP would continue to have a beneficial influence for citizens in realising their needs.

The third and last intervention was presented by Jean-Marie Beaupuy, MEP.

Jean-Marie Beaupuy, MEP (France), President of the Intergroup Urban.Logement of the European Parliament, started by referring to the structure of the Intergroup and its work over the past five years. He reported that its work had been efficient and that it had developed an interesting approach, which took the citizen into account. In order to illustrate this citizen's centred focus, he told the following story:

A small 9-year old boy is awake each morning by his mother, who is unmarried and lives in a high-rise apartment building. But the little boy is not happy to go to school and he reluctantly gets out his bed and talks back to his mother, misbehaving as he eats his breakfast. On his way to school he walks slowly, puts graffiti on walls, rings to doorbells to annoy older people and generally misbehaves. At the school this behaviour continues and the teacher is fed up with him. On his way home he is noticed by the police and as he runs back to his building the concierge is disturbed as he knocks over a bucket of water. At the end of the day the teacher complains to her headmaster, the concierge complains to the management company and police officer complains to the commissioner of police stating that with so many young people misbehaving they all need extra resources. The story sounds familiar but there is one crucial element missing: Who takes care of the needs of the boy?

Mr. Beaupuy drew the conclusion of the story that policy makers do not tend to focus on the source of difficulty and do not tend to engage in solving and dealing with the matters of crucial importance in their work. He also used the story to state that giving extra resources to a problem is all well and good but that when a holistic approach that takes account of all factors (in this case the small boy) is not used then the problems remain and even get worse. He expressed the hope that the Intergroup will be re-established in the new Parliament and that the relationships it has developed, particularly with architects and urbanists, will strengthen so as to be able to address all aspects of city living together.

He went on to make a second major point, which is that architects have a lot that they can offer to decision makers. For example, he agreed that the lowest price approach to procurement of architectural services and urban projects is not adequate and that holistic aspects in such procurement must be respected. He believes that architects and the Intergroup could lobby decision makers in order to urge them to take account of the knowledge and experience that resides in the profession in order to incorporate that into their work.

He then referred to the proposed changes to the rules for Structural Funds stating that it will release approximately 8 billion euros which, when matched by private financing will allow for the upgrading of approximately 1 million housing units, create approximately 50,000 jobs, save approximately 40 million tons of CO₂ emissions per year and save each family in an upgraded housing of unit 450 euros per year. Despite the impressive figures he recalled that this will only represent a drop in the ocean as there are approximately 160 million housing units needing work within the European Union. He finished by saying that there is plenty of work for the profession of architect and many others and that it is his hope that this challenge will be faced up to in the coming legislature and that the fine words of documents such as the Council Conclusions can be put into action for the benefit of citizens'.

Debate

Following the interventions a moderated debate based on 4 pre-prepared questions took place. The debate demonstrated that the audience was well informed and thoroughly concerned about the issues raised by the ACE and the Intergroup in the interventions.

The moderator, Alain Sagne, referring to the adoption of the Leipzig Charter in May 2007 and the Ministerial declaration on urban development adopted in Marseille in November 2008 and to the Council Conclusions on Architecture and Sustainable Development also of November 2008, asked the participants what are the most immediate measures that must be taken in order to ensure an effective incorporation of the architectural dimension in relevant European policies and what are the most useful, concrete proposals that the architectural profession can bring forward in this respect? Replies were delivered as follows:

1. **Philip Stein** of URBACT referred to the need for affordable housing that must be delivered together with affordable architecture. By this he meant that there is a need to draw the distinction between

emblematic architecture and ordinary architecture in the public realm. He expressed the view that the built environment is not about architects as individuals but that there is a need to increase awareness of what architecture means to the ordinary day-to-day life of the citizen. He used the example of a Belgian supermarket, which may be a simple square box; the same facility in the UK will have some decoration to give it the appearance of fitting its surroundings; in Austria there is a supermarket chain that holds an architectural design contest for each and every new unit and which promotes sustainable architecture. In this last case the architecture demonstrates a respect for ordinary people that provides a quality built environment for them.

Intervening in order to turn to a topical question, the moderator, Alain Sagne, referred to the tendency of contracting authorities to use lowest price approaches to the procurement of architectural services. He referred, in particular to a recent Contract Notice from the Commission seeking to appoint architectural firms for a framework agreement in which the only award criteria mentioned was lowest price. More generally he asked if participants think that this approach can provide sufficient sustainability and quality for the built environment in Europe and if not, what types of safeguards should be put in place to ensure quality in these cases?

2. In referring to the use of lowest price for the selection of architects, **Veronica Manfredi** of the Cabinet of Commission Vice President Siim Kallas referred to the recent architectural competition, which saw the selection of the architect de Portzamparc for the renovation of the European Quarter (Rue de la Loi). She stated that the Commission firmly believes that there is a misunderstanding about its use of lowest price criteria in a recent contract notice and she emphasised that the Commission is only looking for a technical assistance office. She went on to state that the Commission believes so much in architectural quality that it is adopting an architectural policy for its own buildings that should be released soon.

3. In a reply to a further question from the moderator about the use of Public Private Partnerships in Belgium for the procurement of approximately 50 schools, **Chantal Dassonville** reported that the French Community in Belgium is, like many countries, facing difficulties. She reported that within her own administration she has fought long and hard for the incorporation of architectural quality but she admitted that concern for architectural quality has evaporated in the face of the heat to deliver low cost solutions. She acknowledged that the ACE takes a critical view of this model but called for debate on the issue.

4. **Nathalie Griesbeck**, MEP (France), took up the issue of Public Private Partnerships and said that she is personally very interested in architecture even if her main work relates to budgets wherein she tries to ensure the best value for money on behalf of the taxpayers of Europe. She stated that it has been her experience that procuring good quality architecture cannot be related to higher expense. On the contrary she recognised that it is the creativity of the architect and the architects' ability to use the means at hand that are the critical deciding factors. She ended by saying that the new Parliament will offer a new opportunity that should not be missed and she referred to the good work of the Intergroup and its qualitative and holistic approach, which she supported. She ended by saying that she supported the idea that the manner in which structural funds are to be expended should be assessed on a qualitative basis and not on a purely economic basis.

5. Defending the model of Public Private Partnerships Ulrich Paetzold, the Director General of FIEC (European Federation of the Construction Industry) stated that the model is usually viewed simply as a means of financing or a model for financing and that in fact it is much more than that. He therefore stated that it is easy to include the architect and architecture in Public Private Partnerships but that the real need is to ensure the involvement of all actors including contractors at the earliest moment possible.

In order to move the debate on to a wider range of issues, the moderator recalled for the participants that the built environment dimension is not included in the European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and he asked if the built environment dimension should be introduced at the time of the next review of the SDS?

6. Referring to the review of the Sustainable Development Strategy of the EU **Jan Maarten de Vet** of ECORYS reported that he had been involved in the review in 2007 and in that review it emerged that the many different strands covered did not come together properly in the Strategy and he stated that it was a fact that the Built Environment dimension to mention was entirely forgotten. He said that it is a great shame as the built environment is precisely a topic that brings all strands of sustainability together and he felt strongly that it must be included in the upcoming review scheduled for 2010.

7. Posing a rhetorical question **Claude Brulant, former Head of unit at the European Parliament** referred to all types of buildings such as high rised wellings and asked whether or not in a difficult time there is a need to return to these models and if so under what conditions? He stated that his view was that urban sprawl was unacceptable and may be more unacceptable than high-rise.

8. **Isidore Zielonka**, represetative of the FAB (Royal Federation of Architects Societies of Belgium) and associate in the Architectural Office Art+Build (that was, notably, responsible for the renovation of the Berlaymont and CESE/CoR Buildings) made the proposition that, in order to ensure quality in all projects, procurement authorities should not seek the lowest price but rather should declare their budget and ask for proposals for the most economically advantageous tender that meets the needs that are to be fulfilled. He believed this would stimulate greater innovation and creativity and lead to a higher quality in the built outcome.

9. Referring to the fact that she is an economist, **Corinne Hermant** of DG Regional Policy, stated that in the analysis of the URBAN Community initiatives, she noted that, on average, around 40% of the funds were used for infrastructure and public facilities (principally for urban regeneration projects) and that 60% were dedicated to expenditure linked to educational, social and cultural services or accompanying economic measures (training, crèches, assistance to companies etc.). She believes that this was part of what made the URBAN Community initiative a success. It shows that it is necessary to support a wide range of activities in order to generate a positive outcome in the quarters addressed. She stated that she sees the risk that if developments are isolated from necessary services and infrastructures such as good transportation, local shops, job opportunities etc., quality of the built environment might be achieved but that a real quality of life will not result. As an example she referred to the need to ensure that any energy efficiency strategy is linked to a broader vision of a cities future so as to avoid the risk of further developing dormitory towns around large cities - a particular blight for quality of life. She finished by stating her strong belief that there is a need for integrated urban development approaches by referring to the recently published report of the Commission that assessed the mainstreaming of the urban dimension in the Operational Programmes. This report shows that while mainstreaming has been successful in some regions, the "integrated urban approach" has not been widely understood and so sectoral approaches are still prominent, thus demonstrating the need for capacity building in this area to be reinforced.

10. The Chair of the ACE Work Group on the Environment and Sustainable Architecture, **Paula Cadima**, reported to the audience that a lot has already been done at the European level especially in relation to energy efficiency but that energy efficiency is frequently not the first priority of the user of Housing Units. She stated that, in order to convince users of the need for technical upgrading it is recommended to speak about the other impacts such as increased comfort and greater quality in the indoor air that generally go along with comprehensive energy efficiency renovation. She continued by saying that social housing models vary greatly across the EU and one possible solution to encourage very wide uptake of energy efficiency improvements is to use energy performance contracting instead of traditional models. In this model an outside company takes over the provision of energy to a building, increases the efficiency of lighting and other systems within the building and then takes the benefit of the saving on energy use as its profit.

11. **Gordon Sutherland**, Project Officer at the European Agency for Competition and Innovation, fully agreed with Paula Cadima expressing the view that all of life is about people, buildings are about people and buildings don't consume energy, people do. While stating that he is an engineer by training he stated his view that architecture is the fabric of society in a literal way. He said that architecture arises from Greek meaning an all-encompassing art and he believed strongly that it was the all-composing art of life and that therefore there is no need to justify the incorporation of architecture into policies. He reminded the audience that he has been closely involved in the recast of the Energy

Performance of Buildings Directive and that the core element of the recast Directive is to encourage cost optimal approaches to improving energy efficiency. He finished by saying that as the construction sector represented approximately 9 % of GDP and that buildings consume approximately 40 % of the energy in the EU, it was clear to him that the built environment cannot be ignored in the new sustainable development strategy of the EU.

The moderator introduced the last question asking the participants what they believe should be the role that architects should play in the coming years?

12. **Chantal Dassonville** from the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium, referring to the intervention by Corinne Hermant stated that architects and architecture are becoming more and more integrated into multi-disciplinary teams where their ability to see all aspects of a problem is much valued but that it seems that the education of architects is getting more and more narrow. She reported that the famous French architect, Odile Decq, who is now teaching as well as practising architecture says that she spends a lot of her time trying to open the minds of her students to wider possibilities as she believed this is a central characteristic that architects must display.

13. **Isidore Zielonka** said that he believed new measures are needed for architecture and that it is not correct to continue its evaluation on the basis of beauty but rather it would be better to measure the quality of architecture on the basis of the well being of occupants.

14. **Philip Stein** ended the debate by referring to two projects in URBACT that are looking at cultural issues and how to bring this aspect back to the main stream of architectural thinking. He said that there is a feeling that architectural heritage has been sidelined and that these projects are seeking to discover how architectural heritage can contribute to an integrated approach.

Conclusion

The Moderator, Alain Sagne, thanked all of those who had intervened and who have replied to the questions posed and who had freely given their opinions. He closed the Event by reminding participants that the proceedings of the ACE Conference had been published and were available in book form and that a report of the meeting would be circulated to all participants.

The President of the ACE then added his thanks saying that it had been a most stimulating evening and that he felt much benefit had been gained for the ACE in that the debate had provided an insight into the views of key European stakeholders.

End of Notes

Annex: List of Participants

DINNER DEBATE**1st April 2009**

Last Name	First Name		Organisation
Beaupuy	Jean-Marie		MEP - President of the Intergroup Urban.logement
Brulant	Claude		Ancien Chef d'unité au Parlement européen - Association culturelle
Cadima	Paula		Chair of the ACE Work Group Environment and Sustainable Architecture
Cassidy	Sheamus		European Commission, DG Education & Culture, Unit Culture
Dassonville	Chantal		Ministère de la Communauté Wallonie Bruxelles - Infrastructures culturelles
de Vet	Jan Maarten		ECORYS Brussels - Managing Director
Docter	Rob		European Forum for Architectural Policies Association-EFAP, President
Griesbeck	Nathalie		MEP - Member of the Intergroup Urban.Logement
Goutoudis	Tania		CEMBUREAU, Head of Marketing
Hermant	Corinne		European Commission - DG Regional Policy, Unit Urban Development and Territorial Cohes
Joyce	Adrian		Architects' Council of Europe -Senior Adviser
Kallenbach	Gisela		MEP - Vice-President of the Intergroup Urban.Logement
Katainen	Juhani		Architects' Council of Europe - President
Lesniak	Christophe		European Commission, DG Research
Leuliette	Alexandra		Assistant to Mr. Beaupuy, President of the Intergroup Urban.logement
Lins	Christine	excused	EREC (European Renewable Energy Council) - Secretary General
Lutz	Felix		European Parliament - Secretariat ITRE
Manfredi	Veronica		Cabinet of Vice-President Siim Kallas
Masson	Yvette		European Forum for Architectural Policies Association-EFAP
Olbrycht	Jan	excused	MEP - Vice President Regional Devpt. Cee - Vice President of the Intergroup Urban.Logement
Paetzold	Ulrich		FIEC (European Construction Industry Director General
Piskorski	Pawel	excused	MEP- Member of the Intergroup Urban.Logement
Sagne	Alain		Architects' Council of Europe -Secretary General
Smith	Jeremy	excused	Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) - Secretary General
Stein	Philip		URBACT II Thematic Pole Manager
Sutherland	Allan-Gordon		Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI), Head of Unit
Van Rompaey	Sara		Order of Architects of Belgium - International Relations
Vlasak	Oldrich		MEP- Vice President of the Intergroup Urban.Logement
Zielonka	Isidore		Fédération royale des sociétés d'architectes BE - Bureau d'architecture Art & Build and FAB



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

Dinner Debate

Sustainable Architecture and the Built Environment - Realising European Citizens' Need 1st April 2009, Brussels

Speech by **Juhani Katainen**, President of the Architects' Council of Europe

Members of the European Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to welcome you to this dinner debate, which has been jointly organised by the Architects' Council of Europe and the Inter-Group Urban.Logement of the European Parliament. I hope that the evening will afford us the opportunity to exchange views and ideas on how we can work together, in the interests of the European citizen, to create a higher quality of life for all, particularly a higher quality of the built environment.

I take this opportunity, on behalf of the ACE, to thank the Intergroup Urban.Logement and, in particular, its President, Mr Jean-Marie Beaupuy, who is our partner in organising this event. I would also like to thank him and the Members of the Bureau of the Intergroup, several of whom are present here tonight, for the excellent cooperation that we have been able to develop over the years. Moreover the ACE is greatly impressed by the significant achievements that the Intergroup has realised during this legislature.

The output of the services delivered by Architects has a profound impact on society and, therefore, the ACE is particularly keen to ensure that the policies and legislation adopted by the EU that affect the built environment will take more fully account of this aspect in the upcoming, new legislature.

The attractiveness of European Cities and Regions and the productivity, prosperity and well-being of their inhabitants is closely tied to the architectural, functional and technical quality of the built environment that forms our human habitat. We jointly share a clear responsibility towards future generations to properly manage the built environment that they will inherit.

The Architects' Council of Europe currently represents European Architects from 32 countries that include all of the Member States of the EU, the Accession Countries, Norway and Switzerland. It therefore represents, through its Member Organisations, approximately 480,000 architects. In order to better understand the structure and profile of the profession, the ACE organised a Sector Study in 2008. It was a great success with over 8,000 individual replies received from 17 countries.

The results showed that there are more than 130,000 architectural practices in Europe and that more than half of them are one-architect firms. In fact, only 1% of the architectural practices in Europe employ more than 30 architectural staff. The analysis of the answers shows that there is great heterogeneity in the architectural profession across Europe – a diversity that is welcomed as it ensures that cultural expression in the built environment will reflect the cultural diversity of Europe - and that there is a real need to carefully consider how policy decisions will affect the profession and its business in the future. These facts create a great challenge for ACE, especially in these times of serious economic difficulty.

Taking up this challenge, the ACE has prepared a series of recommendations that it intends to promote towards the new European Parliament and Commission later this year. They will also be promoted, by our Member Organisations, towards the profession itself and towards the governments, regions and cities in the Member States. In the meantime we will also seek to approach the candidates through our Member Organisations.

One critical message that we wish to transmit is that the procurement of buildings, and, in particular, of architectural services, must never be based on the sole criterion of the lowest price. The ACE is aware that the current economic crisis makes it tempting to adopt this seemingly easy route, also in order to shorten the time of response, but this is a road to ruin for us and for future generations. Such procurement MUST be quality-based

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

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where the most economically advantageous offer is accepted taking account of social, environmental and sustainability issues including life cycle costs.

In establishing the necessary criteria, we must, of course, include all technical, functional and economical aspects but these must be supplemented by social and cultural considerations that also include the heritage aspects of the existing built environment. It follows from this that some models of procurement are not appropriate for the procurement of buildings; here I am referring to Public Private Partnerships. These approaches are attractive to politicians because they offer a way to quickly deliver new facilities, and they may well be justified and successful in some specific cases, notably for large and complex infrastructure projects. However, the bulk of experience in those countries that have used this model for many years shows that the results are generally sub-optimal and have received criticism from all quarters. Governments and public purchasers at all levels may not give away their social responsibility by deferring to a later stage over time the actual cost to society, whereby inevitably it becomes much higher in the end, in reality.

To ensure that the architectural profession can deliver the necessary quality and adequate sustainability, it is essential to provide a high level of quality in the education and training of architects that must include a period of supervised practical experience after the completion of the necessary academic studies and also offer life-long education and training that permits architects to keep up to date with the changes that are occurring in the sector throughout their careers.

I would like to end my short intervention by briefly addressing one of the key questions of our time – climate change. It is clear that the human race has triggered climate change and that we will be forced to face the consequences in the coming decades no matter how many measures we take today. However this is not a reason to be complacent and to do nothing. On the contrary there is an enormous amount that can be done and, for the built environment, the most effective actions will be to upgrade existing buildings to be more energy efficient and, at the same time, provide more comfort.

Addressing this urgent societal challenge will require a societal response on a scale rarely seen in history and in order to ensure that the required improvements are based on the best knowledge and technology, the necessary financial and intellectual resources must be dedicated to researching the best solutions and to bringing them into practice in an accelerated timescale. For new buildings, there is no excuse – all new buildings should, in addition to answering the needs of the client and of society at large, be highly energy efficient, even energy positive, producing more energy than they consume. Much progress has already been made in that respect, and more can be done and architects are seeking to lead towards the paradigm shift.

The current period of the Structural Funds and Cohesion Policy and, indeed, the European Economic Recovery Plan of President Barroso, offer a unique opportunity for making a true societal breakthrough and change behaviours. In that respect a further example of the Intergroup's effectiveness finds its pace in current events with the proposal for a new Article 7 of the European Regional Development Fund Regulation related to energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in housing, in which the Intergroup has played an active role and that is going to culminate tomorrow by, we believe, a positive vote in the Plenary Session. Let me use the opportunity to mention that in the Recommendations that I have already mentioned the ACE calls, in particular, for the continued existence of the Parliamentary Intergroup Urban Logement.

I would also like to recall that during a European Conference organised last year with as a title "Designing for the Future – Architecture and Quality of Life" the Architect's Council of Europe had already drawn attention to the urgent need to adopt more integrated policies and holistic approaches. The proceedings of this Conference have recently been published and copies are at your disposal in this room for those of you who have not yet seen them.

I leave you with the message that the Architects' Council of Europe and its Member Organisations are ready to contribute their expertise and experience to assist the EU Institutions, Member States and all relevant decision-makers in the realisation of the objectives described above.

Mr Rob Docter, President of the European Forum for Architectural Policies, will make a brief presentation after the starter, and Mr Jean-Marie Beaupuy will also present give a political outlook.

Then before the dessert there will be a short Questions-Answers session that will be moderated by Alain Sagne, Secretary General of the ACE.

I thank you all for your attention and wish you a "Bon appétit".

Sustainable Architecture and the Built Environment
Realizing European Citizens' Need
Brussels, 1 April 2009

Rob Docter
President EFAP a.i.s.b.l.

First of all, let me thank the Architects Council of Europe and the European Parliament Inter Group Urban Logement for this opportunity to present the European Forum for Architectural Policies, our objectives and some of the projects we are presently working on.

The European Forum for Architectural Policies (that I will refer to as EFAP from now on), approaching its tenth anniversary already, is a network that brings together three groups of interest in the built environment from all European member states: the governments that create conditions for architecture, the policy makers, the political decision makers, the chief government architects and planning officers. Then there are the architects organizations, representing the profession: the regional or national unions, architects chambers etc. And of course also the Architects Council of Europe (ACE) is a member of EFAP. The third interest group are the cultural institutions that together form the platform of debate and feed the discourse on architectural quality - and how to promote it. Soon also representatives of architectural educations will join the EFAP family.

It has become a tradition that EFAP conferences are organized by each EU Presidency. Sometimes as an expert meeting, sometimes as part of the official program. In that way EFAP occasionally has the opportunity to play an advising role in the drafting of important policy documents, such as the Leipzig Charter.

In the past ten years EFAP has become the voice of the cultural mission of architecture in Europe, able to confront the hard core economic interest of the building sector with social and cultural arguments. The construction industry is still one of the largest motors of economy in Europe. It has a fundamental impact on the everyday living environment, without

any cultural agenda. Objectives of property development and profit are not often combined with cultural ambitions. EFAP is one of the few European umbrella organizations that is not lobbying for one specific issue, but trying to bridge the economic and cultural aspects of the built environment. It is therefore a great opportunity for EFAP to have been invited to participate in the European Commission cultural sector platform 'Access to Culture' and even chair the platform on 'Potentials of Cultural and Creative Industries'.

Last year was an important year for EFAP. The French EU Presidency involved EFAP in the drafting of the French Presidency's 'Conclusions on architecture, culture's contribution to sustainable development' that were adopted by the Council of the European Union in November.

These Council Conclusions form a great challenge for EFAP and others, to strengthen the position of architecture on the political agenda, on a European level and in the member states. They point out that architecture, as a discipline involving cultural creation and innovation, including a technological component, provides a remarkable illustration of what culture can contribute to sustainable development, in view of its impact of the cultural dimension of towns and cities, as well as on the economy, social cohesion and the environment.

That was one sentence, in the best 'Brusselesque' tradition trying to capture all the relevant keywords in one statement with at least ten comma's. Nevertheless, it is a very important one. It leads to the argument that the discipline of architecture, being capable as no other to combine conflicting interests and synthesize these into a vision on the future, can play an integrating and innovative role in implementing sustainable urban development.

Strange enough it is not common practice to use this capacity of the architectural discipline in planning and decision making on sustainable development. The architect comes in the picture in the stage of building, constructing. However, influencing the debate at large, giving a visionary input from the beginning on, form a new challenge for architecture in the 21st century.

According to the figures mentioned by Juhani Katainen, there must be well over half a million architects in Europe that are facing shrinking portfolios, cancelled commissions and a collapsing building sector. It is in this period of financial crisis, economic and social instabilities and conflicts, that architecture must rethink its societal role and cultural meaning.

In stead of building, architects must use this opportunity to concentrate on their role as public intellectuals and guide a way to constructing a sustainable society, to redefine the cultural meaning of architecture in society and to create a future vision on society, inventing a new balance between the conflicting interests of populations, economic stakeholders and cultural and ecological values.

The European Council's Conclusions call on the member states and the European Commission to take the arguments on the societal potential of architecture into account and to encourage no less than 17 actions.

I will mention a few:

- Most important is the call to make allowance for architecture in all relevant policies, especially in research, economic and social cohesion, sustainable development and educational policies.
- To encourage innovation and experimentation in sustainable development in architecture, urban planning and landscaping, in particular within the framework of European policies and programs and when commissioning public works.
- To help develop the economic growth and employment potential of architecture as a creative, cultural industry.
- And a number of more concretely defined actions, such as research, an annual European architecture event and measures to enhance better education and public awareness.

The European Forum for Architectural Policies sees it as its core task to play a stimulating and supporting role in that respect. The past French EU Presidency has generously placed one of the principle authors of the conclusions, Yvette Masson Zanussi, at the disposition of EFAP to manage the implementation of the different actions mentioned and supplied the financial means to do so. In the mean time the members of EFAP throughout Europe are activated to spread the gospel of architecture's contribution to sustainable development and to organize meetings and activities to that end.

Later this month, in Prague, we will make up a first balance of actions that hopefully will bring a new awareness of the power of architecture and its potential to help creating a better Europe, and to meet the European citizens' need for a comfortable, hospitable, identifiable, and above all sustainable living environment. ACE as well as the Inter Group Urban Logement are already actively contributing to that mission. EFAP with its own specific composition and objectives is a relatively new voice in that concert. I call on you all to

support EFAP in advocating our shared ideals with regard to a better designed sustainable Europe.