

COP17 International Union of Architects (UIA)

Declaration of values and intent.

DURBAN, December 1st 2011

We, the Architects *of the world* declare that Architecture is a **necessary** Human right,

because more humans live in cities than in rural or natural environments, and design is an essential mediator of competing concerns in these conditions,

because population growth, climate change and diminishing resources will require design to offer a new way of life in order for our species to survive and thrive,

because our wisdom and expertise can ameliorate the suffering of many,

because Architecture and its associated urban spaces are the primary building block of cities, and structures its ways of life,

because Architecture is more than a single building, but is also the symphony of buildings and spaces in conversation with nature and humanity,

because Architecture supremely marries the technical and symbolic requirements of our humanity,

because design is the creative, lateral, rigorous and inspired process to create solutions which address technical, pragmatic, intangible, cultural, spiritual and human needs,

because we inhabit and are all citizens of one interdependent and fragile planet ***which now requires both developed and under-developed people on it to change their ways of life and consumption regardless of cultures, social standings, religious inclinations and political ideologies.***

We declare that through design, Architects must,

Consider the ethical dimension of their processes, and outputs and treat society as the ultimate client,

seek a balance between the demands of the individual client/s and the needs of communities.

do no harm in the service of the powers that mobilise Architecture, nor stay silent in the midst of such actions,

seek to provide solutions and processes which recognise that economic opportunity has direct enablers in the configuration of the primary elements of the built environment; being Architecture, Urbanism, Nature, transport and infrastructural services, and we recognise that design must hold these elements in harmony and accountable to broader society,

work with community, client and society and allied professionals without abrogating our responsibility to provide balance and leadership to the product and process,

seek for a quality of life in which our social, spiritual, economic and symbolic ambitions can be pursued without compromising on social or environmental justice.

seek a built environment which enhances the natural environment and its biodiversity,

seek an environment which brings delight, joy, reflection, intellectual; stimulation, safety and opportunity to its inhabitants,

seek a built environment in which design is the arbiter of the pragmatic and the poetic, and that considerations for generations to come, precedes the demands of the day,

seek a built environment which enables our history to be reflected tangibly, but equally allows the future to be manifest,

seek a built environment in which a new abundance is achieved, but not at the expense of hinterlands, but through efficiency and designing with constraints and modesty,

seek a built environment that will be independent of a carbon intensive economy.

We declare that Architects must,

through design play a leading role in how society is shaped; as social behaviour is influenced by the physical environment, and so,

through design seek an environment whose shape, form and performance will be resilient to political and economic change.

through design seek an environment that is imbued with hope, that will be a refuge for the weak, and equally be a place where the desire for success can be satisfied,

through design seek an environment which supports the evolution of humanity into enlightened beings, and supports an ethical stewardship of place, space, resources and social cohesion.

through design seek an environment which moves beyond shelter but supports dwelling, and 'being.'

We declare that through design Architects must,

seek an environment in which the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, and that actively seeks to integrate that which was torn asunder, by designing for the dignity of all citizens through social cohesion, exposure and celebration of difference.

seek an environment which pursues excellence, eschews mediocrity, sloth and its associated cruelty and inadvertent erosion of dignity,

seek an environment which inspires its citizens to constructive action,

seek a world in which architecture brings *hope*, nobility and dignity to all.

seek an environment which reflects our shared destiny and duty as citizens of this lonely planet.

Seek an environment in which almost all persons get to know the existence of architecture, such their knowledge of the existence of other professions such as medicine, law, teaching, preaching, etc. and therefore seek to make the built environment permeable for access by citizens to visually to enjoy irrespective of status, wealth or other negative discrimination.

It is for these reasons, that Architecture is a *necessary* human right and we declare that,

by 2014, dignity and justice will have an experiential, architectural and ultimately a phenomenological oriented foundation, so the 'right to *the* city', and its promise of livelihood must be articulated ongoingly in part through the critical and creative lens of architecture.

Authored by Mokena Makeka on behalf of Architects and their concerns for society, **COP17 DURBAN**,
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