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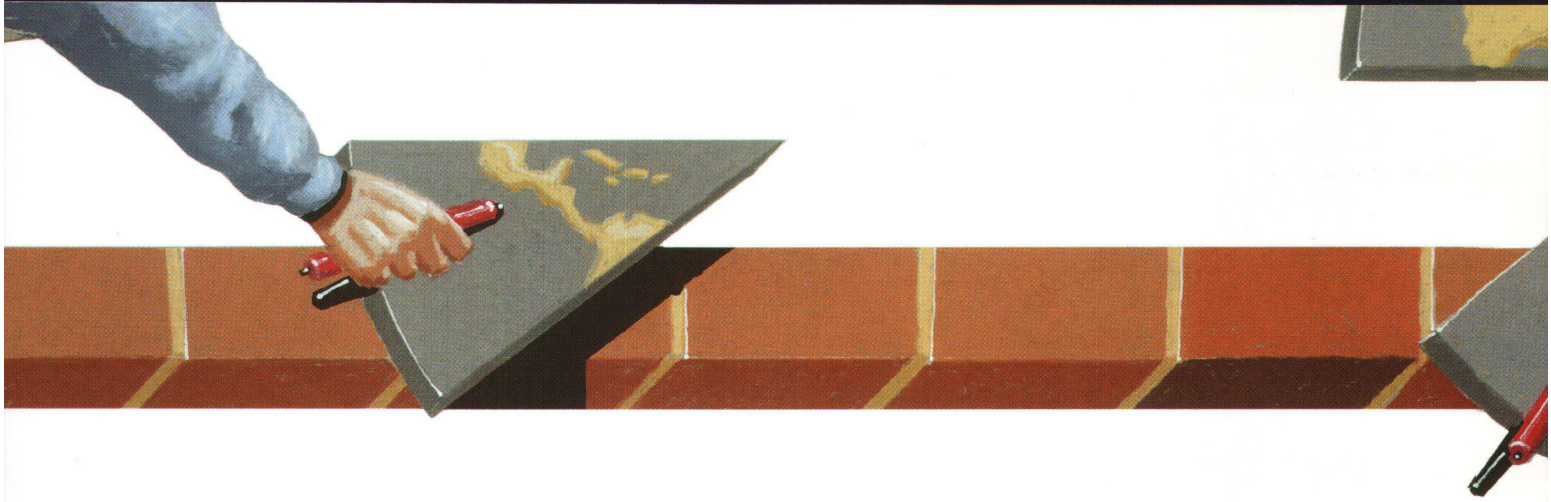
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The architect in the era of globalisation

J. DURÓ PIFARRÉ
UIA PRESIDENT 1993-96

During my time as President of the UIA, which took place concurrently with the Marrakech Accords, I had the opportunity of setting up the accords needed for architects to obtain a professional profile worldwide. The result of this first step was that we succeeded in having approved documents that were necessary in the two fundamental fields of architecture: the «Charter for Architectural Education» and the «Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice». Work on the finer details of these two documents continues to be done by the two Commissions set up for this purpose.

The fact that the Barcelona Assembly unanimously approved the above texts was a great achievement. In the Uruguay Round Table of the GATT were signed for the first time accords for liberalising trade in services on a world scale. The GATT is constituted of 118 member countries which together carry out about 90% of world trade.

This, and the already apparent tendencies towards the unification of markets in all sectors of economic activity lead easily to foresee that, in the middle and long term, our profession will be affected by the repercussions of the above accords signed by representatives of the GATT member states on 15 April 94, in Marrakech. Consequently, the UIA and ACE must prepare themselves to face the challenges presented by this new situation, and that is why from the very start, I personally took on the responsibility for carrying out the necessary activities and actions.

These actions will, no doubt, contribute to the elaboration of the Accords for Mutual Recognition needed for putting into application the General Accord on Trade in Services (GATS).

The work resulting from the collaboration UIA and UNESCO and which has served in establishing a «Charter for Architectural Education» must also be placed in this context. The GATS, as is well known, gives the states the right to regulate their requirements and minimum conditions in relation to the qualifications required to practise. Henceforth, these requirements and conditions must be based on objective and transparent criteria such as competence and capacity to carry out a service, and should not be more onerous than is strictly necessary to ensure work of quality. Thus, the «Charter for Architectural Education» endorsed by UNESCO (educational organisation of the United Nations) and by the UIA (only world organisation of architects) will constitute an incontestable reference for a fair solution, and one based on possible future conflicts about whether a particular educational training is sufficient or not.

With the same objective, I asked the Professional Practice Commission to put together a document defining the architect as a professional and taking into consideration different questions such as the general tasks the architect carries out, the personal nature of the architect's relationship with the client and its particularities, the architect's registration with a professional body or on an architectural register with whose rules he/she has to comply in order to be able to practise, etc. In an advanced preparation phase of this document, we hope to be able to establish the crite-

ria or a model that can be taken into consideration by all those who, in the future, will have to propose or adapt measures needed to regulate international architectural practice.

I must add to my above comments, that this preoccupation with questions related to the current liberalisation of architectural services on an international scale is not limited to the purely economical aspects but also includes those of a cultural or social nature inherent in our work.

As a consequence, we must see to it that this liberalisation is not carried out to the detriment of each person's right to decent housing, and it must be done without underestimating the architectural culture of each country.

To this end, the cohesion of architects within the UIA must be re-enforced so that legal recognition of the professional «status» of the architect is acquired in those countries where this is not the case, and so that the liberalisation of trade in services does not carry prejudice against architects in countries that welcome foreign professionals nor against the values defended by the architectural profession.

In this vein, I have always tried to listen to the points of view of local architects on the current situation and where possible, I have always tried to get into contact with the authorities to convince them that the legal protection of architects not only helps promote a specific sector of professionals but that its effects in the long term also extend to those who will ultimately benefit from their work.

ARCHITECTURE ET MONDIALISATION

Durant mon mandat à la présidence de l'UIA, je me suis atelé à l'élaboration de deux documents fixant le profil des architectes dans le monde entier, à savoir la «Charte de la Formation dans le domaine de l'architecture» et les «Normes minimales de professionnalisme dans l'exercice de la profession».

L'Uruguay Round orchestré par le GATT a permis la signature de traités libéralisant le commerce international et qui auront une influence sur le métier d'architecte. Je me suis donc impliqué dans la préparation de contrats de reconnaissance mutuelle garantissant à notre niveau l'application de l'Accord général du commerce et des services (GATS).

Le GATS permet aux différents pays de fixer des conditions minimales pour l'exercice de la

profession. Ces conditions doivent obéir à des règles logiques, raison pour laquelle la «Charte de la Formation dans le domaine de l'architecture» soutenue par l'UNESCO constitue ici un fondement incontournable. Le profil professionnel des architectes devrait quant à lui bientôt être décrit dans un document à l'intention de tous ceux qui seront appelés à émettre des prescriptions.

La libéralisation n'a pas que des aspects économiques, et on aurait bien tort de négliger la question de l'habitat ou de ne pas respecter la culture architecturale des différents pays. Le statut de l'architecte doit être reconnu partout, et la libéralisation ne saurait impliquer sa dépréciation. Les autorités doivent être convaincues que tous profiteront au bout du compte des réalisations et des garde-fous imposées par les architectes.

ARCHITEKTUR UND GLOBALISIERUNG

Während meiner Amtszeit als Präsident der UIA hatte ich die Möglichkeit zwei Dokumente zu erarbeiten, die das Berufsprofil der Architekten auf der ganzen Welt festlegen werden: «The Charta for Architectural Education» und «Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice». In der Uruguay-Runde des GATT wurden Verträge abgeschlossen, die den Handel weltweit liberalisieren. Diese Verträge werden auch den Beruf des Architekten beeinflussen. Darum habe ich persönlich veranlasst, Verträge über die gegenseitige Anerkennung vorzubereiten, damit der «General Accord on Trade of Services» (GATS) in Kraft gesetzt werden kann. GATS erlaubt es den Staaten, Mindestanforderungen für die Berufsausübung festzu-

setzen. Diese müssen nachvollziehbaren Regeln gehorchen, und darum ist die «Charter for Architectural Education», hinter welcher die UNESCO steht, ein unumgängliches Fundament. Das Berufsbild des Architekten soll in einem Dokument beschrieben werden, damit alle, die in Zukunft Vorschriften erlassen, sich daran orientieren können.

Die Liberalisierung hat nicht nur wirtschaftliche Aspekte. Deshalb darf sie nicht dazu führen, dass die Wohnungsfrage vernachlässigt und die architektonische Kultur der einzelnen Länder unterschätzt wird. Der Status des Architekten muss in allen Ländern anerkannt werden und die Liberalisierung darf nicht zur Abwertung dieses Status führen. Die Behörden müssen davon überzeugt werden, dass vom Rechtsschutz der Architekten am Ende alle profitieren.