

1981

The Warsaw Declaration of Architects

PREFACE

Nearly 50 years ago, the C.I.A.M. developed a basic statement on philosophy and principles of planning of human settlement, which later became known as the Charter of Athens. Many of these original principles remain as applicable today as they were innovative a half century ago.

In recent years, however, the accelerated pace of spontaneous urbanization throughout the world has forced new consideration of those principles and made even more urgent their application by professionals and governments in the service of people of all nations.

The United Nations Conference on human Settlements (HABITAT) in 1976 resulted in a Vancouver Declaration, a powerful international statement on human rights and needs within the man-made environment. In the same year, the working groups of the U.I.A. meeting in Kazimer, Poland, endorsed this statement.

On the initiative of the National University Federico Villarreal of Peru, an international group of architects, planners and educators in 1977 formulated the "Charter of Machu Picchu", a synthesis of principles and philosophy for guiding urbanization and integrating emergent environmental, economic and social factors with the ideas of the Charter of Athens.

The XIII World Congress of Architects of the International Union of Architects (U.I.A.) issued the Declaration of Mexico, building upon the growing body of world-wide concern for the quality of life in the urbanizing areas of the world.

Recognizing its obligation to provide leadership and philosophical foundations for architectural activities concerned with the quality of life, the U.I.A. at its XIV World Congress in Warsaw, in 1981, adopts the following Declaration of Architects of the World.

This Declaration is adopted in Warsaw, a city wantonly destroyed during World War II but now standing again as a symbol of highest human ambitions and dignity. The heroic rebuilding of Warsaw and the restoration of its historic heritage gives inspiration to architects and people of all nations in pursuit of progress and self-fulfillment in their urban environment.

I. RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF PEOPLE

Improving the quality of life for all people should be the primary objective of every program for human settlement. In addition to meeting basic needs for food, shelter, clean water, employment, health, education, training and security without discrimination as to race, color, sex, language, religion, ideology, national or social origin, programs must provide a framework of freedom, dignity, equality and social justice.

1. Every individual has biological, economic, social and spiritual needs. Decent, safe and sanitary shelter affords only partial satisfaction of these needs.
2. In addition to shelter, every human being also requires:
 - peace and security
 - meaningful employment
 - opportunity for intellectual development
 - social recognition
 - self-fulfillment
 - aesthetic and emotional satisfaction
3. The spiritual and physical needs of people are equally important and must be pursued simultaneously in programs for human settlements.
4. Each society as a whole has need for identity and continuity of its indigenous culture.

FOR TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION THESE NEEDS HAVE NOT YET BEEN MET. THEREFORE, ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS SHOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEETING THESE NEEDS IN THE PROCESS OF SHAPING EVERY NEW ENVIRONMENT

II. MAGNITUDE AND CHARACTER OF CHALLENGE POSED BY THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

"There is arising a crisis of world-wide proportions involving developed and developing countries alike: the crisis of human environment. Portents of this crisis have long been apparent in the explosive growth of human populations, in the poor integration of a powerful and efficient technology with environmental requirements, in the deterioration of agricultural land, in the unplanned extension of urban areas, in the decrease of available space and the growing danger of extinction of many forms of animal and plant life. It is becoming apparent that if current trends continue, the future of life on earth could be endangered"

U –Thant*

1. Since the Second World War, the world's population has doubled, causing grave crisis in the balance of world energy, food supply and ecological systems. Since the growth rate of cities has exceeded by far the natural increase of world population, urban deterioration has been especially severe, resulting in scarcity of housing, degradation of public services and transportation and a general worsening of the quality of life.
2. Trends in world population growth indicate that mankind will double again in the next 25 years, thereby more than doubling the present demands for food, shelter and all other facilities necessary for human life and dignity, which are already inadequate in many areas.
3. More and more people are entering the stream of modern civilization. Their needs and aspirations are growing. Development of new technologies, mass production and mass media is accelerating. The spontaneous character of this process makes predictions difficult, imposes unforeseen problems and frequently results in undesirable

consequences, threatening the balance between nature, man-made environment and human culture.

4. There exists profound differentiations in the contemporary world. People differ in their living standards and conditions of life. They live in various geographical regions, different climates and different socio-economic systems. They have different cultural backgrounds, habits and scales of values. Therefore, the ways of their future development logically should be different. Human settlement planning must seek to improve the quality of life for people with full respect for indigenous cultural and social needs. Thus, the exchange of experiences among various countries and geographical regions must never be seen as a simple transfer of ready-made solutions, but as a means of stimulating local imagination.
5. The circumstances of life for vast numbers of people in human settlements are unacceptable, particularly in developing countries, and unless positive and concrete action is taken at national and international levels, these conditions are likely to be aggravated by :

Unbalanced economic growth, reflected in the wide disparities in wealth that now exist between countries and among individuals

Social, economic, ecological and environmental deterioration, exemplified at national and international levels by inequalities in living conditions, social segregation, racial discrimination, acute unemployment, illiteracy, disease and poverty, the breakdown of social relationships and traditional cultural values, and the increasing degradation of life-supporting resources of air, water and land.

Involuntary migration, resulting in the relocation or expulsion of people from their national homelands.

6. The major functional problems of the world-wide human settlement systems are:

Uncontrolled urbanization and consequent conditions of overcrowding, psychological tensions, pollution and deterioration of the environment.

Rural backwardness, which places a majority of mankind at the lowest standard of living.

Persistent unemployment in major metropolitan areas and simultaneous aging of rural hinterland populations.

7. Three adverse phenomena characteristic of contemporary urban development may be discerned:

The first, massive in-migration of rural population, resulting in uncontrolled growth of squatter settlements without public services and urban infrastructure, is common to cities in developing regions. Management of this phenomenon lies beyond the scope of means currently available to the majority of the authorities responsible for the urban planning process.

The second phenomenon is evident in "housing monoculture", resulting from large scale construction of dwellings of in multi-family blocks of flats. Functional and formal uniformity

follows the technology of mass production. Although the physical results, expressed by the sheer number of such new dwellings, responds in part to mounting human needs, the inhuman scale of such new environments fails to satisfy social and cultural needs and aspirations, leaving no space for individuality and self-expression. The citizen is unable to identify with his closest surroundings, or even with the city.

A third phenomenon, characteristic of industrialized societies, has been an exodus, aided by the automobile, of more affluent members of society from central cities to suburbs. Newcomers and those left in the central cities lack the means to support the residual urban structure and public services.

8. Needs for shelter, infrastructure and services are nearly always greater than the capacity of societies to provide them. Therefore, throughout the world, but especially in the developing countries, people have traditionally provided housing and rudimentary services for themselves and will continue to do so in the future. These efforts should be seen as a logical complement to governmental infrastructure and housing programs.
9. One of the gravest problems of today in many countries is the rapidly worsening contamination of the environment, now attaining an unprecedented and potentially catastrophic magnitude. It is a direct consequence of explosive urbanization and excessive exploitation of the earth's natural resources. The inhabitants of the urbanized areas of the world are subjected, at an ever increasing rate, to environmental conditions incompatible with enlightened concepts and standards of human health and welfare.
10. The general dysfunction between macro-scale economic planning and planning for actual urban development has wasted scarce resources and reduced the effectiveness of both. Urban areas too often reflect the adverse secondary effects of decisions based on broad and relatively abstract economic strategies. Economic decisions at national and regional levels seldom include direct consideration of city priorities and solutions to urban problems, or of the functional links between general economic strategy and planning of urban development. As a result, the potential advantages of systematic planning and architecture of ten fail to benefit the great majority of people.
11. Human settlements of today embody the outcome of generations of ideas, decisions and physical investments. It is not possible, therefore, to achieve radical modifications overnight. However, population growth and rapid changes in the location of human activities proceed at such a pace that, by the end of the century, there will be need to "build another world on top of the present one." If properly directed, this formidable task could mobilize untapped resources and be turned into a unique opportunity for changing the man-made environment; this is the challenge of human settlement strategies.
12. Human settlements must be seen as an instrument and object of development. The goals of settlement policies are inseparable from the goals of every sector of social and economic life. Solutions to the problems of human settlements must therefore be conceived as integral parts of the development process of individual nations and the world community.

A NEW AWARENESS OF THE FUTURE MUST INSPIRE CURRENT THINKING, PLANNING AND ACTION, FOR NEVER BEFORE HAS MANKIND'S FUTURE BEEN SO CONDITIONED AND ENDANGERED BY PRESENT DECISIONS.

III. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS

Architecture is the complex art and science of creating a setting for human life. The architect is responsible for integrating both existing and new elements, natural as well as man-made. He is responsible for the aesthetic quality of the cityscape as well as the design of spaces sensitive to human scale. He should protect and develop the heritage of the society for which he creates new forms and maintain the continuity of cultural development. This approach transcends the traditional understanding of the profession and the architect's responsibility only for his own commissioned work. It constitutes a new order of challenge for the design professions.

1. The common objective of economic planning, city planning, urban design and architecture must be to interpret and respond to human needs. The design process should result in the provision of urban services, facilities and forms appropriate to the needs of people in the context of available resources and cultural values. To achieve these ends, architecture and planning must be based on systematic and continuous interaction and collaboration among the design professions and related scientific disciplines, city dwellers and community and political leadership. At every stage or level of the society's development, the balance between the available technical means, economy and emergent, as well as existing values in human culture must be sought.
2. The present world is characterized by differentiated socio-political and economic systems. These offer varied opportunities for planned development and many impose some limitations on comprehensive physical design and development actions. The responsibility of the design professions is to use the tools available in every system in the most efficient way to safeguard the common social interests in development and in bettering the man-made environment.
3. Planning must reflect, within the context of ongoing urbanization process, the essential dynamic unity between the city and its surrounding region and establish functional relationships between neighborhoods, districts and other elements of urban structure.
4. It is a responsibility of architects and planners to recognize that human interaction and communication are the essential reason for the city's existence. Human settlements, therefore should be designed to provide a living environment in which identities of individuals, families and societies are preserved and adequate means for maintaining privacy, as well as the possibility of face-to-face interactions, and public participation in the decision-making process are allowed.
5. Diversity in the characteristics of human settlements reflecting cultural and aesthetic values must be respected and encouraged. Areas of historical, religious or archeological importance and natural areas of special value preserved for posterity. Values of fundamental importance in defining community, as well as national character must be protected.
6. Housing must no longer be regarded merely as a utilitarian commodity, but as a powerful tool for fostering social development. Housing design must be flexible and permit easy adaptation to changing social demands and encourage creative

participation of the users in design, as well as where appropriate, in construction. There is also a pressing need to develop low-cost building components readily available to people in need of them.

7. Planning, architecture and design should not treat the city as a series of component parts, but must strive to create an integrated multifunctional environment. The new concept of urbanization seeks a continuity of the built environment, implying that each building is no longer an isolated object, but an element of a continuum, requiring a dialogue with other elements to complete its own image. The emphasis is no longer on the container, but on the contents, no longer on the isolated building, no matter how sophisticated and beautiful, but on the continuity of urban texture.
8. Planning for human settlements should recognize known hazards which could lead to increased risk of natural disaster. The planning of reconstruction after natural or man-caused disasters should be used as an opportunity to improve the quality of the whole settlement, its spatial patterns, functions and environment.
9. Future policies on urban area traffic planning and management should subordinate the private automobile to the development of general public transportation systems. Transportation and communication should satisfy the needs of the majority of the population, assuring the distribution of activities to favor mass transportation and to reduce congestion and pollution by motor vehicles. The social costs and benefits of transport system alternatives should be duly considered in planning for the future growth of cities.

AT EVERY STAGE OR LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ARCHITECT IS TO REFLECT THE VALUES OF HUMAN CULTURE. HIS RESPONSIBILITY MUST EXTEND TO INCLUDE THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH HE WORKS AND TO ENSURE THAT HIS WORK WILL BE A NEW STIMULATING CONTRIBUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL HARMONY.

IV. STRATEGY

Every society, every nation and humanity as a whole must establish efficient methods to influence and control the processes of environmental development and to secure balance at every level and scale. It is beyond the scope of professional responsibility to determine ways and means of development control, but the effectiveness of professional activity is conditioned by the degree of commitment and leadership in society.

1. It is the responsibility of governmental authorities at every level to prepare and pursue plans and policies for human settlements. Such plans and policies must be essential components of an overall development strategy, in harmony with policies on industrialization, agriculture, social welfare, and environmental and cultural preservation.
2. Policies, strategies, plans and programs require appropriate instruments for implementation. In the field of human settlements, these take the form of political, administrative and technical institutions, as well as enabling legislation and regulations in support of programs for the development of human and other resources.
3. Human settlement policies and programs should establish and pursue progressive minimum standards for acceptable quality of life. These standards will vary within and

among countries, as well as over periods of time, and therefore must be flexible, to respond to changing conditions and new opportunities.

4. The construction of the physical components of human settlements – be they rural or urban, dwellings or roads, with traditional or modern technologies – in sufficient volume to meet the needs of society, should be considered a leading sector of the economy and the major generator of meaningful employment, rather than as a residual of other “productive” activities.
5. Land, because of its unique nature and the crucial role it plays in human settlements, should not be treated as an ordinary commercial asset. Unregulated exploitation of basic land resources and limited availability of urban land are obstacles to planning and implementation of development programs in the public interest. There is a need to establish legal frameworks that can permit orderly and efficient ways of using urban land to meet the emergent needs of societies and solutions capable of producing substantial improvements in the near future.
6. In countries where urban land has been communalized, the problem of its availability is solved. But the new problem, of determining land values in relation to use, an important concept in the process of planning, remains unsolved.
7. Planning at all scales must include continuing coordination, monitoring, evaluation and review at different levels and must include feedback from the people affected.
8. Design and technologies for shelter, infrastructure and services should reflect present demands, provide for adaptation to future needs, make optimal use of local resources and skills, and be capable of incremental improvement.
9. National housing policies must aim at providing adequate shelter and services to the lower income groups, distributing available resources on the basis of greatest needs.
10. Human settlements are characterized by significant disparities in living standards and opportunities. Harmonious development requires the reduction of disparities between rural and urban areas, between regions and within regions themselves. It is necessary to adopt policies which aim at decreasing the differences between living standards and opportunities in urban and non-urban areas.
11. The public and their governments must be made aware that planning is a dynamic process which should include not only the formulation of plans, but also their implementation, and continuing review of their effects.
12. Citizen participation should be facilitated by removing political and institutional obstacles and by providing information in clear and meaningful terms. It can also be stimulated by providing opportunities for early and continuing involvement in the selection of alternatives. Public involvement is an indispensable element in the formulation of planning strategies and in their implementation and management; it should influence all levels of government in the decision-making process to further the political, social and economic growth of human settlements.
13. Effective public participation requires the free flow of information among all parties concerned and should be based on knowledge, mutual understanding and trust.

14. The overriding objective of settlement policies should be to make shelter, infrastructure and services available to those who need them, in the sequence in which they are needed, and at affordable monetary and social costs. Social justice depends on the way in which these facilities are distributed among the populations and on the extent to which they are made accessible.
15. The authorities regulating urban development must take immediate steps to prevent further deterioration of the environment and to restore its basic integrity in accordance with acceptable standards of public health and welfare. Similar steps must also be taken in economic and urban planning, in architectural design, in engineering standards and criteria and in planning and development policies.

THE GOALS OF SETTLEMENT POLICIES ARE INSEPARABLE FROM THE GOALS OF EVERY SECTOR OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE. SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS MUST THEREFORE BE CONCEIVED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF INDIVIDUAL NATIONS AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY.

CONCLUSIONS

We are working in a differentiated and changing world. We have therefore to face different situations and problems, using different tools in our professional activities. But our responsibility is of universal character. We are to shape new environments for man. In the contemporary world we must seek balance between technical means and social aims reflecting our scales of values and between the development of technology and culture.

The process of development today reflects a constant tension between traditional culture and emergent technologies, which threatens the existing order. Architecture, an art closely connected with technology, is near the center of this struggle. Its history proves, however, that the necessary balance may be achieved at different stages of development of technology and civilization.

The task of architects and planners is to seek forms of human settlements which truly reflect the needs and aspirations of societies, generating alternatives, receiving responses, and participating in constant dialogue with users and their communities. Architecture and culture may be conceived as modes of self-expression, where sharp distinction between the creator and consumer ceases to exist. The form and pattern of the city and each structure should express the changing times, the new social order and the growth of human dignity.

THESE DECLARATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS HAVE MEANING ONLY IN A WORLD WITH PEACE AMONG NATIONS. IT IS THE HIGHEST OBLIGATION OF GOVERNMENTS OF ALL MEN TO MAINTAIN PEACE AS THE ESSENTIAL BASIS FOR REALIZING THE NEEDS AND AMBITIONS OF PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

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