

Under the slogan 'AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVATION: REMOVING BARRIERS'

## ARCHITECTS PROMOTE THE GLOBAL DEBATE ON ACCESS TO ADEQUATE DECENT HOUSING AT THE UIA'S INTERNATIONAL FORUM MADRID 2022

- The International Union of Architects (UIA), the Consejo Superior de Colegios de Arquitectos de España (Higher Council of Architects' Associations of Spain, or CSCAE) and the Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid (Official College of Architects of Madrid, or COAM), together with the collaboration of UN-Habitat and the support of the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Autonomous Community of Madrid and the City Council, are organising the UIA International Forum *Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers (AHA Madrid 2022)*.
- Starting in January, the UIA 2022 *Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers* International Forum will promote a collaborative and innovative framework that will mobilise international stakeholders with parallel events and will conclude with the Forum in Madrid, 18-20 May.
- International experts in architecture, engineering, economics, urban planning, environment, sociology, design and art will analyse the barriers that impede access to housing from a cross-cutting perspective, identifying success stories that advance solutions.
- The Forum will have a hybrid format: face-to-face, with a strong experiential focus; and virtual, through the Forum's website [www.ahamadrid.com](http://www.ahamadrid.com).

**Madrid, 14 December 2021.** Madrid will lead the international debate to address the global problem of access to housing with the celebration of the UIA International Forum 2022. Under the slogan *Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers (AHA Madrid 2022)*, the event aims to promote international coordination, creating a collaborative, innovative, avant-garde and paradigm-changing framework for bringing together and analysing proposals in order to determine the current state of access to housing and possible courses of action in the medium and long term. All of this with an inclusive, analytical, disciplined and transversal approach.

The UIA 2022 International Forum will be activated from January through the promotion of parallel activities around the world, and will culminate in an event in Madrid from 18 to 20 May that will bring together international experts in the fields of architecture, engineering, economics, urban planning, the environment, sociology, design and art. Promoted by the International Union of Architects (UIA), the Higher Council of Spanish Architects' Associations (CSCAE) and the Official College of Architects of Madrid (COAM), it is supported by the Government through the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Autonomous Community of Madrid and the City Council, and has the collaboration of UN-Habitat.

The official presentation of the UIA 2022 *Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers* International Forum was held this morning in an event that was opened by Iñiqui Carnicero, Director General of Urban Agenda and Architecture, with the participation of the following institutional figures: José María García Gómez, Deputy Regional Minister for Housing of the Community of Madrid; Álvaro González López, Councillor for Housing, Madrid City Council; Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat; Robert Lewis-Lettington, Chief, Land, Housing and Shelter Section, Secretary, Global Land Tool Network at UN-Habitat; Carmen

Sánchez Miranda, Head of the UN-Habitat Office in Spain; José Luis Cortés, President of the UIA; Lluís Comerón, President of CSCAE; Sigfrido Herráez, Chair of COAM; and Joan Clos, President of the *Affordable Housing Activation* Advisory Council and former Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

**UN-Habitat Executive Director** Maimunah Mohd Sharif participated in the launch event of the UIA 2022 International Forum through a pre-recorded video. She stressed: "Addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency and the housing emergency will require a new social contract, grounded on access to adequate housing for all, and on government interventions to respect, protect and fulfil this fundamental right. Achieving the right to adequate housing for all must ultimately be acknowledged as a shared responsibility, which also includes architects and professionals. Their role is critical in developing sustainable and affordable solutions that can be scaled for the production of quality housing and the rehabilitation of existing buildings, always putting people at the centre of the process."

On the part of the authorities, Iñiqui Carnicero, **Director General of Urban Agenda and Architecture**, stated: "The Forum will place Spain at the centre of the debate on as issue as important as the right to decent and accessible housing, serving as a driving force for the development of quality and sustainable architecture that guarantees the well-being of citizens. We must work to gain knowledge of the barriers that prevent access to housing in order to identify patterns that are repeated, as well as those initiatives that are working and that can be replicated in other territories."

For his part, José María García Gómez, **Vice-Minister of Housing of the Community of Madrid** highlighted: "It is an opportunity that the relevant authorities have decided on Madrid as the location for the UIA Forum 2022. Architecture focused on the common good is capable of creating a quality product for the social housing we are developing in the capital. In this world gathering to discuss architecture there will be debate and reflection, and public-private collaboration must also be encouraged as a dynamic element of this response to the needs of citizens, so that the impact is seen on society as a whole."

Álvaro González López, **Councillor for Housing at Madrid City Council**, emphasised: "The organisation of the Forum in May 2022 will contribute to Madrid becoming the city of reference in the face of the huge challenges and shared problems that we are facing. The choice of location places the capital front and centre for the analysis of the right to housing at international level."

The **president of the CSCAE** declared: "Universal access to decent and adequate housing together with environmental, economic and social sustainability are two global challenges that are clearly our mission as architects. At a time of change like the present, we must promote the transformative capacity and potential of architecture to contribute to the access to decent, adequate housing. This Forum needs to be an instrument for architects and administrations to acquire the conscious responsibility that, through our actions, we can transform things and that together we will facilitate access to housing."

### **A launch event with top-level authorities and experts**

The presentation also included a brief dialogue between the president of the UIA, the director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the president of the Programming Advisory Council of the UIA International Forum 2022 *Affordable Housing Activation: Removing Barriers* and former executive director of UN-Habitat. In his speech, **José Luis Cortés stressed that** "Madrid is the best place to discuss the issue of access to housing. This is a holistic issue on

which not only architects, but all citizens depend. Housing is what gives meaning to our existence, whoever does not live in a habitable space cannot be said to live well on this planet."

For his part, **Robert Lewis-Lettington** stated: "The gap between what people can afford and what the market offers has been exacerbated by the fact that, in many cities, house prices have risen much faster than incomes. For this reason, if adequate housing is to be a right and not a privilege, public intervention is clearly essential. This should start with housing strategies at municipal and regional level that consider the full spectrum of housing needs according to the projected size and structure of the population."

**Joan Clos** concluded by saying: "In Spain we have made a lot of progress in terms of housing accessibility, but there is still work to be done. Now, with this forum, we are going to qualify the conversation; we are going to find the necessary ambition to do things well."

### **An innovative format open to the world**

The UIA 2022 International Forum *Affordable Housing Activation Forum: Removing Barriers* will be held in a hybrid format: face-to-face with a strong experiential focus; and virtual, disseminated through the Forum's website ([www.ahamadrid.com](http://www.ahamadrid.com)). In addition, activities that have already been programmed will be included under the AHA umbrella, together with the promotion of new proposals for parallel events around the world, all with specific views on access to housing, which complement and add value to the content of the forum.

At the global level of debate, the overall event design will involve all the agents who want to be part of this movement and who want to contribute to compiling, sharing, disseminating and synthesising knowledge and "Removing Barriers" best practice from January to May 2022, with the aim of generating a collaborative model of action of a permanent nature.

### **An event with broad institutional backing**

The General Assembly of the International Union of Architects (UIA), held at the Baku Forum on 11 June 2019, approved by a large majority the choice of Madrid to host the UIA 2022 International Forum on Access to Housing. The candidacy was successfully completed thanks to the broad institutional backing of the project, which has the support of the Government of Spain, through the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Autonomous Community of Madrid and Madrid City Council, and the collaboration of UN-Habitat.

The support of the professional structure in Madrid is guaranteed through the COAM and that of the building sector through the Observatory 2030 of the CSCAE, which brings together all the agents involved in the design of cities in Spain.

### **About the International Union of Architects (UIA)**

The UIA was founded as a federation of organisations in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1948. It currently has 104 member sections, representing 115 countries and more than 1,500,000 architects worldwide, making it the international organisation with the greatest capacity for global influence in architecture and one of the most influential on urban, design and heritage issues, with all its activities and commitments linked to international agendas and sustainability. The UIA forums were created to generate meetings around the

major challenges facing the profession and to link architecture with other disciplines and perspectives in the resolution of common challenges. For more information [www.uia-architectes.org](http://www.uia-architectes.org)

### **About the CSCAE**

Created in 1931, the CSCAE is the body that brings together all the architects' associations in Spain for the defence of architecture and the achievement of goals of general common interest. It represents the associations and the more than 47,000 professionals who practise architecture and who are members in our country before public and private corporations and international organisations.

For more information [www.cscae.com](http://www.cscae.com)