

Official joint declaration at the conclusion of the international conference on the role of the architect as a vector of development, held in Tunis on May 22, 2024 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Ordre des Architectes de Tunisie (OAT), host of the event

UIA-UMAR-FAFA-AAF-OAT Joint Declaration

We, the representatives of the following international and regional architects' organisations:

- International Union of Architects (UIA)
- Union of Mediterranean Architects (UMAR)
- Fédération des Architectes Francophones d'Afrique (FAFA)
- Alliance des Architectes Francophones (AAF)
- Ordre des Architectes de Tunisie (OAT)

Having met in Tunis on 22 May 2024 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Ordre des Architectes de Tunisie (OAT) and discussed the essential role to be played by Architects in the processes of development, construction, reconstruction and spatial planning;

and having been informed and reminded once again of the catastrophic and unprecedented human and material consequences of the conflict in the Gaza region,

we solemnly:

- 1. Reiterate our warm congratulations to the OAT and to Tunisian architects** on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Ordre and the promulgation of the law regulating the profession of architect in Tunisia, as well as our thanks for the invitation, hospitality and warm welcome extended to us,
- 2. Praise the major efforts made by the OAT** and its partners to ensure the success of this event and its related activities, particularly in terms of organisation,
- 3. Thank the Tunisian authorities for having facilitated the missions of our delegations** and the overall running of the event in a respectful, safe and friendly manner,
- 4. Recognise the essential role of architects in safeguarding our heritage, both natural and built, and in the design and implementation of development projects in our countries and regions.** Their skills in the design, preservation, planning and management of urban and architectural projects are essential to meeting the challenges facing our cities and lands, including the climate crisis, the green transition and health risks, as well as the reconstruction of regions and urban areas affected by disasters and conflicts,
- 5. Affirm that architects must be fully involved in the decision-making, planning and implementation processes related to post-conflict development and reconstruction projects,** in close collaboration with the relevant local and national authorities,

6. **Encourage the establishment of training and capacity-building programmes for architects as well as the sharing of experience and expertise**, particularly in countries that have suffered conflicts and natural disasters, in order to develop their technical skills and their role as mediators between the different stakeholders,
7. **Call on governments, international institutions and donors to allocate the financial and human resources** needed to fully involve architects in post-conflict and post-disaster development, renovation and reconstruction processes,
8. **Undertake to promote international cooperation between our institutions**, and to strengthen programmes and projects for the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practice between architects' organisations and professional bodies, with a view to contributing effectively to development and reconstruction efforts,
9. **Recall the declarations already made** by the UIA and UMAR and call on the relevant international bodies, in particular the UN and major international stakeholders, **to establish an immediate and unconditional ceasefire throughout the Middle East region affected by conflict, particularly in the Gaza Strip in Palestine**, in order to alleviate the suffering of those affected, as well as to urgently lift the siege of Gaza so as to allow humanitarian access for the provision of vital and lasting assistance to millions of civilians and thus fulfil humanitarian obligations,
10. **Stress the importance of giving priority to the safety and well-being of innocent people**, including through reconstruction efforts and the re-establishment of supply chains for resources essential to human life. This war has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, considerable damage to infrastructure and the forced displacement of countless people,
11. **Reiterate our commitment to pooling our efforts and deploying our technical expertise and human resources to meet the challenges of rebuilding these areas** in a way that prioritises the safety and dignity of all the communities affected and especially of women and children, who are statistically the most vulnerable.



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